

‘Chickenhawk Down’: The Real Target Is Iran

by Jeffrey Steinberg

In response to the James Baker III and Lee Hamilton-directed Iraq Study Group report, President Bush and Vice President Cheney turned to their chickenhawk allies at the American Enterprise Institute to craft a counter-plan, based on the fantasy premise that a “surge” of American troops could secure victory in Iraq before the next Presidential election in November 2008. On Dec. 14, AEI fellow Frederick Kagan released the Institute’s utopian scheme, “Choosing Victory: A Plan for Success in Iraq Interim Report.” The 52-page power-point presentation, delivered by Kagan at an AEI forum, argued, in effect, that a two-year “surge” of upwards of 50,000 additional U.S. combat soldiers into Baghdad and into the Sunni stronghold al-Anbar Province, would break the back of the resistance and bring peace and stability to Iraq. The AEI document outright rejected the idea at the heart of the Baker-Hamilton study: that the U.S. must negotiate directly with all of Iraq’s neighbors, including Iran and Syria, and settle the Israel-Palestine conflict, if there is any hope of stabilizing Iraq and withdrawing the American forces—without having to shoot their way out of the country.

In fact, the Kagan scheme, according to sources familiar with the latest neo-con maneuverings, is premised on the creation of a Sunni bloc of “moderate” states, that will confront Iran and the Shi’ite “extremists” throughout the Persian Gulf and Eastern Mediterranean region—in a de facto alliance with Israel. Unspoken, but underlying the “Choosing Victory” plan, is the ludicrous idea that Saudi Arabia will cut off the flow of funds and weapons to the Sunni insurgents, thus hastening their defeat. The “Sunni bulwark” scheme, which was peddled to Saudi Arabia’s King Abdullah by Vice President Cheney when he visited Riyadh in late November 2006, just before the release of the Baker-Hamilton report, is premised

Where Baker-Hamilton Stands

by Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr.

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Since the majority of the leading European press surveyed has promoted a falsified view of the current political situation inside the U.S.A., I report the following essential facts of the situation there.

The framers of the Baker-Hamilton Commission’s report have informed leading circles inside the U.S.A., that the report was composed on the basis of foreknowledge that both President George W. Bush, Jr. and Vice-President Dick Cheney, would reject those proposals, unless maximum public pressure from relevant circles would mobilize broad popular and other opinion to bring about the adoption of those proposals.

The new U.S. Congress will not be seated until shortly after the beginning of the new calendar year. In the meantime, there is no doubt among well-informed circles inside the U.S.A., that Vice-President Dick Cheney is committed to a massive aerial attack on Iran at some time during the immediate few months ahead. Throughout the U.S., the opposition to the present war in Iraq has reached the level of a widespread demand for Cheney’s early impeachment.

Europeans should not underestimate that demand for

on an expansion of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), to include Egypt and Jordan; and the buildup of a military alliance between the “GCC-Plus-Two” and NATO.

As *EIR* warned in the “Behind the Cheney Trip to Riyadh” report of Nov. 27, any move by the Anglo-Americans to provoke a Sunni versus Shi’ite confrontation would lead inevitably to the outbreak of a new Hundred Years War, which would rapidly spread out from Southwest Asia to engulf the entire planet.

While the AEI “Choosing Victory” report was written by Kagan and represented his views alone, the final power-point page listed the participants in the study group. Apart from several retired military officers, including Gen. Jack Keane and Lt. Gen. David Barno, the task force was stacked with the neo-con “usual suspects,” including many of the participants in the Project for the New American Century (PNAC). Frederick Kagan, brother of fellow neo-con Robert Kagan, and son of Straussian professor Donald Kagan, were all on PNAC. Other AEI task-force participants included PNAC co-founders Thomas Donnelly and Gary Schmitt. Other leading task-

force neo-cons include Michael Rubin, Reuel Marc Gerecht, and Danielle Pletka.

If there were any doubt that the Kagan AEI report was cooked up with Cheney’s complicity, to insure that the Baker-Hamilton report would be “dead on arrival” at the White House, National Public Radio reported, on Dec. 21, that Kagan, along with Elliot Cohen and other participants in the “Choosing Victory” study, had met with President Bush at the White House earlier in the week, and received strong support for their “surge” scheme. This, despite the fact that the Joint Chiefs of Staff have unanimously opposed the idea of sending more U.S. troops to Iraq, arguing that the U.S. Army and Marine Corps are already at the breaking point, and cannot sustain any additional combat deployments.

In fact, any “victory” in Iraq, based on military counterinsurgency actions, would require a minimum of 500,000 occupation troops. A more realistic figure would be 1 million troops, using the widely accepted formula of 1 peacekeeper for every 20-25 civilians. Even these estimates, according to military specialists interviewed by *EIR*, do not take into

Cheney’s impeachment. What Europeans appear to think they are hearing from leading spokesmen for the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate, is based on Europeans’ lack of understanding of the difference between a European parliamentary system, and the U.S. Presidential system.

Concisely, in the case of an impeachment of a U.S. President or Vice-President, the U.S. House of Representatives adopts the role of a Grand Jury in a criminal proceeding, whereas the U.S. Senate acts as the jury which tries the case and delivers the decision. Now, precisely because the impeaching of Cheney, or Bush and Cheney, is actually on the table, the spokesmen from the two branches of the U.S. Congress are obliged to do nothing which would make a delivery of a decision for impeachment appear to be a lynching born of blindly impassioned seeking of vengeance. However, the restraint being shown now by leaders of the two Houses of the Congress does not reflect the mood of the voters, or a growing ration of Republican as well as Democratic officials individually.

The hatred against the war in Iraq, and the hatred against a spread of that war into Iran, has accumulated to something approximate to the level of a political explosion against both the President and Vice-President. The current wisdom is, that the impeachment, or resignation of Vice-President Cheney is imperative, although an impeachment would come about as a more or less circumspect, although impassioned form of due process. If the impeachment, or resignation of the Vice-President does not lead to the Presi-

dent’s conceding to the essential spirit and crucial points of the Baker-Hamilton Commission, then, given the presently onrushing general world monetary-financial and economic crisis, the impeachment of President Bush would soon follow.

Those among those of us who are better-informed U.S. citizens with relevant experience of government, are concerned that whatever we shall do, we shall proceed, as we did with the Nixon case, with the greatest concern that what is done in a governmental crisis such as the present one, shall be done with minimal damage to the institutions of our system of government. This same concern is also tempered by knowledge of the United States’ unavoidably leading role in world monetary-financial and economic institutions under conditions of crisis. The Baker-Hamilton Commission’s report represents a sense of the absolute need for action which both preserves the institutions of the U.S. government, and also maintains the indispensable role of leading cooperation which the U.S. must provide as its role in meeting the challenge of what is presently the oncoming, greatest global monetary-financial crisis in modern memory.

Only the most incompetent sort of member of government, or political organization, in Europe, could believe that the internal politics of the U.S. will stagnate during the months immediately ahead. The current President of the U.S.A. lives in the real world, but his opinions do not. His mind, like a dead Autumn leaf, will go where the winds of change carry it.



DoD/Lance Cpt. Ryan L. Tomlinson

If the madmen in the Bush-Cheney Administration and their chickenhawk allies at the American Enterprise Institute have their way, a “surge” of up to 50,000 additional troops will be sent to Iraq. Show here: a technician prepares a robot to counteract IEDs in Anbar province.

account the fact that the greatest threat to the stability of Iraq is not coming from the Sunni insurgents. It is coming from the fact that the country is already in the throes of a civil war and ethnic cleansing. One recent U.S. estimate is that 65% of Baghdad has been ethnically cleansed—like civil war-torn Beirut of the 1980s.

General Abizaid Bows Out

One casualty of the persistent Bush-Cheney chickenhawk insanity is Gen. John Abizaid, who announced on Dec. 20 that he would be retiring from the U.S. military in March 2007. The current Commander of the Central Command reportedly decided to publicly announce his retirement at that time, because he is convinced that the Bush-Cheney White House is committed to military action against Iran before it leaves office. The recent deployment of an additional U.S. Navy carrier group to the Persian Gulf, according to the sources, is targeted against Iran—and is not part of the expansion of U.S. military forces combatting the Iraqi insurgency.

As of Dec. 30, following Bush and Cheney’s meeting with the National Security Council at the Bush ranch in Crawford, Texas, sources in Washington are reporting that the Administration has already decided on a “surge” of American combat forces in Iraq, and that the announcement will come right after the New Year. However, while all the chatter about a boost in American troops is ostensibly aimed at combatting and defeating the Iraqi insurgency, one well-placed Washington intelligence community source cautioned that the boost is actually part of U.S. plans for a military strike against Iran.

And, while war-planning for a hit on Iran has been handed to the Strategic Command (STRATCOM) under its “Global Strike” doctrine, the source said that an added 20-

30,000 American combat troops would be required to fight the anticipated Shi’ite insurrection against any U.S. attack on Iran—even a “limited” air strike against selected so-called nuclear weapons sites. Abizaid’s March 2007 departure date could be an indication that military action against Iran could occur as soon as the Spring.

Other sources have emphasized that one of the biggest pushers of a U.S. attack on Iran is Saudi Arabia’s national security chief and longtime Ambassador to Washington, Prince Bandar bin Sultan. Bandar is an enthusiast for the Sunni bloc versus Iran, and has been peddling the argument with King Abdullah, that a U.S. attack on Iran, and a surge in U.S. combat forces in Iraq, would benefit Saudi Arabia, binding Washington to an enhanced “strategic partnership” with Riyadh, and assuring American “boots on the ground” in the Persian Gulf for the foreseeable future.

Bandar, according to the sources, was devastated by the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks, responsibility for which was claimed by Saudi national Osama bin Laden, and involved a dozen additional Saudis, turning American public opinion against the Kingdom for the first time. Bandar has been desperate ever since to get Saudi Arabia back in the good graces of the American public, as well as Washington policymakers on both sides of the aisle. This emphatically includes Vice President Cheney and his neo-con allies. It was Bandar who arranged Cheney’s trip to Riyadh in late November—behind the back of then-Saudi Ambassador Prince Turki al-Faisal. According to one source, Bandar ally and chargé d’affaires at the Saudi Embassy in Washington, Rihab Massoud, ran a vicious campaign of backstabbing of Prince Turki, which played a major role in Turki’s decision to quit his post. Massoud is still officially listed as the number two at the Embassy, but is reportedly back in Saudi Arabia, serving as Bandar’s deputy, according to several news accounts.

Among Bandar’s “missions” on behalf of Cheney and the “bomb Iran” faction in the Bush war cabinet: To convince the Saudi King to pay off Sunni tribal leaders inside Iraq to cool down the insurgency—on the grounds that the United States has “switched sides” and will now once again back the “Sunni stability belt” of monarchies and dictatorships.

The Cheney/AEI utopian madness is anything but a guarantee of stability in the extended Persian Gulf/Eastern Mediterranean region. But this reality is far beyond the comprehension of President Bush, Vice President Cheney, or the chickenhawks at AEI who are so obsessed with countering the Baker-Hamilton report that they are blind to the strategic disaster that they are cooking up for the United States and the world.

Any notion that an alliance between Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, and the oil Emirates of the Persian Gulf with the United States and Israel—against a Muslim state—is going to bring stability to the region, is pure folly. How long will those regimes last, in the face of an American or Israeli bombing of Iran? What will be the consequences for world oil prices

and regional stability—in the near, medium, and longterm—if a conflict is induced between Sunni and Shi'ite Muslims?

Cheney Must Go!

In the warped mind of Vice President Dick Cheney and his neo-con allies, Nov. 7, 2006 never happened. The American electorate never voted to sweep the Republican majority out of power in the U.S. Congress. The Baker-Hamilton report was a mere blip on the radar screen, which has already passed into oblivion.

But reality says otherwise. When the House and Senate are sworn in on Jan. 4, 2007, the new Democratic majority—with the backing of some leading Republican lawmakers—will begin vigorous oversight hearings. Once President Bush has delivered his “surge” announcement, the Baker-Hamilton report will take center stage. Leading members of Congress have already promised that they will no longer allow the Bush Administration to finance the Iraq War on the basis of supplemental expenditures, outside the budget and Congressional oversight process. How will an American public, already turned decisively against the Iraq War, react when the true costs of Bush and Cheney’s “surge” are presented?

The political dynamic in Washington is about to change dramatically. The trial of Cheney’s former chief of staff and top national security advisor, Lewis Libby, is scheduled to begin in January, and Cheney is already on Libby’s defense witness list. Subpoenas will be issued during the first week of January for documents and witnesses from the Bush Administration on the pre-Iraq War intelligence process, on Cheney’s energy task force, on the sweetheart deals with Halliburton and other mega-defense contractors.

It is in this context that Lyndon LaRouche has called for the removal of Vice President Cheney from office—immediately. Already, there are senior Republican members of the U.S. Senate who have broken from the Bush-Cheney White House madness, led by Oregon’s Gordon Smith. In the early moments of the new Senate, others are expected to bolt, creating the preconditions for Cheney’s ouster. Among some White House Bush loyalists, Cheney’s departure is part of a “legacy” strategy, to salvage the deeply tarnished Bush Family reputation.

At a recent farewell ceremony for Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, former President George H.W. Bush publicly broke down in tears, in what many saw as a lament over the failure of the George W. Bush Presidency. The next day, ex-Governor Jeb told reporters, “*No tengo futuro*”—“I have no future,” another unambiguous Bush family admission that G.W. has wrecked the dynastic legacy. President Bush’s only way out is to dump his Vice President and bring in a qualified, sane replacement, to steer America towards a safer course over the next two years. Those who are pressing for Bush’s impeachment and Cheney’s ascent are among the most dangerous minds on Earth. Those who are saying that the world can survive two more years of Bush-Cheney are equally mad.