

Bush is biggest obstacle to Gulf peace accord

by Joseph Brewda

A negotiated peace settlement in the Persian Gulf crisis is still possible at the moment of this writing (on Aug. 29), if President Bush takes the opportunity provided by ongoing diplomatic efforts. On Aug. 25, former United Nations Secretary General and current Austrian President Kurt Waldheim traveled to Baghdad, where he reported that he was told "very clearly" by Iraqi President Saddam Hussein that Iraq wants a negotiated settlement. The projected trip of current U.N. Secretary General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar to Iraq in the first week of September, as a followup to Waldheim's, is intended to allow for an Iraqi pullout from Kuwait under U.N., rather than U.S., direction, thereby allowing Iraq a face-saving measure.

Since Iraq otherwise faces saturation bombing and devastation of the sort that the Anglo-Americans used against Dresden in World War II, Saddam Hussein's reported statements are entirely credible.

In another last-minute diplomatic effort, French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze issued a joint declaration on Aug. 26 which called for "collective action to settle the crisis politically." According to Radio Moscow, the two states are concerned with the "burning necessity" of initiating efforts to "settle other conflicts in the Middle East, the Palestinian problem prominently included among them," in the context of finding a solution to the Gulf crisis.

Saddam Hussein had previously proposed on Aug. 12 that all regional territorial disputes be solved comprehensively and according to the same principle. His proposal would establish a framework for negotiations regarding not only the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait, but also the Syrian occupation of Lebanon and the Israeli occupation of parts of Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon. Arab reaction to Saddam Hus-

sein's initiative was largely supportive, especially as Israel has been illegally occupying Arab lands for over 23 years, with the backing of the United States. President Bush immediately rejected the proposal out of hand, and has similarly ridiculed Pérez de Cuéllar's efforts as having "no prospect" of "being fruitful."

Balance of power politics

Since neither the Bush administration, nor the Thatcher regime which advises it, wants peace, what do they want? One obvious Anglo-American objective, the seizure of the region's oilfields, is already being proclaimed by British and American spokesmen.

Writing in the pro-Thatcher London *Daily Express* on Aug. 28, commentator Robert Kilroy-Silk states that the West must "plan for a long stay" in the Gulf. "Some will castigate an occupation as being neo-colonialism, or imperialism. Let them. . . . There is the harsh fact that the Western life-style, prosperity, stability, and civilization depend on the free flow of Gulf oil—oil that is Western, not Arab. It was discovered, extracted, exploited, and developed by the West. . . . Someone has to be the top dog, and it had better be us." The destruction of OPEC is also high on the U.S. administration's list (see article, page 36).

Similarly, on Aug. 14, *Washington Post* columnist Robert Samuelson insisted that the Bush intervention should not be a "passing episode," but "we should be in the Gulf for decades."

As part of this plan, some Anglo-American strategists envision the elimination of Iraq as a sovereign nation, and not merely the elimination of Saddam Hussein as its head of state. According to one proposal floated by Helena Cobban of Georgetown University's Center for Strategic and Interna-

tional Studies (CSIS) in the *Washington Post* on Aug. 26, Iraq would be divided up between neighboring Iran, Turkey, and Syria.

The creation of a Kurdish entity, composed of the minority Kurdish population of northern Iraq, is also an option. Already, U.S. agencies have been in touch with Kurdish insurgents, both through negotiations in Damascus, and through sponsoring the trip of Kurdish terrorist leader Jalal Talbani to the United States.

Iraq is not the only Arab country in the region targeted for destruction. Already, Bush administration mouthpieces are arguing that the Arab states had better become "democratic," which in U.S. government jargon means subservient to the U.S. State Department. Writing in the *New York Times* on Aug. 26, reporter David Ignatius, a frequent U.S. intelligence conduit, asserts that "in the coming new Gulf order, we must help the Arab world join the global democratic revolution." "The key," he states, "is to link the campaign against Saddam to a broader struggle for democracy in the Arab world." Since none of the emirates and kingdoms that Bush is now supporting could be considered "democratic" in anyone's book, it is clear that the future demise of these regimes is already being prepared.

The planned U.S. occupation of the Gulf is also designed to aid Anglo-American pressure against the oil-dependent Europeans and Japanese. Since a September 1989 speech of CIA director William Webster in Los Angeles, the Bush administration has been publicly committed to reorganize its intelligence priorities to confront Japanese and European economic competition, rather than the Soviet Union. U.S. occupation of the Middle East oilfields places such states under the U.S. thumb. Referencing the possible use of this economic blackmail, CSIS strategist Edward Luttwak gloated in the pages of the British *Independent* on Aug. 28 that "non-participating Europeans and Japanese might wish that they had not been abed" when the Anglo-Americans, alone, seized the oilfields.

Japanese sources report that the general evaluation in Tokyo is that the timing of the U.S. military move was also determined by the impending collapse of the U.S. financial markets. Without a military emergency, they say, neither Bush or Thatcher could survive. Japan has been virtually single-handed in bailing out the U.S. dollar and bond market. U.S. de facto control of the region that produces all of Japan's oil represents powerful blackmail against the Japanese, to continue to comply with Washington's bidding. Similarly, the Anglo-Americans hope to use their planned control over Gulf oil to keep a soon-to-be-unified Germany compliant with their demands.

NATO 'out-of-area' deployments

Closely related to the Anglo-American plan to occupy the Gulf, is the establishment of a precedent for NATO "out-of-area" deployments, potentially directed against any nation in

the Southern Hemisphere opposed to Anglo-American policies. If the United States uses nuclear or chemical weapons against Iraq, or otherwise massively bombs Iraq's population centers, this threat of out-of-area deployments against Third World states becomes terrifying indeed. Already, British imperial planners are discussing potential military action against Brazil for "destroying the Amazon," as the next phase of the "North versus South" war that began with the assault on Iraq.

Almost two months before the Aug. 2 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, the British began a major campaign to prepare for restructuring NATO for these out-of-area deployments.

On June 7, Margaret Thatcher told NATO foreign ministers meeting in Turnberry, Scotland, that NATO should recast itself, from its current defense focus toward the East, to a new concentration on potential threats from flashpoints such as the Middle East. She voiced concern over the spread of sophisticated military technology to Middle Eastern countries, in an obvious reference to Iraq.

Then, on June 10, the *Sunday Times* of London published a lead editorial insisting that NATO must be reshaped to fight "Islamic fundamentalism." On June 21, Britain's permanent representative to NATO, Sir Michael Alexander, spoke before the U.K. government-patronized Royal United Services Institute, and declared that NATO was still "very much in business," particularly because of threats from the South, including from the southern flank of the alliance in the Mediterranean area, from North Africa, and from the Middle East. He said NATO could be faced in the coming years with "precise" threats from the South, including a possible attack from a "specific country."

Such propaganda helped prepare for the July 5-6 NATO heads of state summit, whose secret agenda item—out-of-area deployments—was pushed by the Anglo-Americans. One senior NATO consultant told this news service on July 6 that the "real agenda" focused on "increasing tension and rearmament in a number of countries, in North Africa, the Middle East including Palestine, and Asia through, increasingly, to Southeast Asia. . . . There are new dangers from new directions. We are shifting from an exclusive focus on the East-West conflict, to a situation of risk coming eventually or potentially from all directions."

Various European states were already alarmed over the direction that NATO "restructuring" was taking, as evidenced on July 11, when the French daily *Le Monde* reported statements from Robert Pontillon, an intimate of French President François Mitterrand who had just been elected president of the Assembly of the West European Union. Pontillon declared that it was "inadmissible that at the time when President Bush has already twice, without consulting the European allies, announced a cutback in U.S. commitments to NATO, that he is demanding an extension of activities of NATO to out-of-area domains." Pontillon asserted that the "external interests" of Europe are "not identical with those of the United States."