

# Bush wanted war from the beginning

*The U.S. bashed Germany and blackmailed the Third World—anything to stop peace in West Asia. Part 2 from a forthcoming white paper by Joseph Brewda.*

*We continue an abridged serialization from the upcoming EIR white paper on the Bush administration's systematic sabotage of every attempt at a peaceful solution to the Persian Gulf crisis. Many Arab states, the Vatican, and some forces in Europe wanted peace; Britain, the U.S., and the Anglo-American-dominated U.N. Security Council wanted war. In this excerpt we cover what the Bush administration did to force through U.N. Security Council Resolution 678 on Nov. 29, 1990 which set a Jan. 15 deadline for war.*

Throughout November, the Bush administration deployed in force to ensure that war with Iraq would not be blocked, despite the best efforts of several nations. The drive included blackmailing and bribing several nations to vote on behalf of a then planned resolution to set a deadline on the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait, following which the U.N. would authorize war. The drive was successful and on Nov. 29, the U.N. Security Council authorized war by Jan. 15.

Bush signaled the more aggressive diplomatic posture on Nov. 8—two days after the mid-term elections—when he proclaimed, at a surprise press conference in Washington, that he would be sending a vast number of new troops to Saudi Arabia to ensure a U.S. “offensive capability.” Previously, the pretext given for Operation Desert Shield had been to “defend Saudi Arabia” from Iraq.

One day earlier, Bush's mentor, then-Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, in her address to the opening of Parliament, declared, “Time is running out for Saddam Hussein. . . . Either he gets out of Kuwait soon, or we and our allies will remove him by force.” On Nov. 1, the U.S. government said it would be introducing a resolution before the U.N. Security Council to mandate a militarily aided resupply of the closed U.S. embassy in Kuwait, either by sending an armored column from a base in Saudi Arabia, or by sea—a move that would trigger war.

On Oct. 28-29, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachov and French President François Mitterrand held a meeting in Paris on the crisis. The purpose seemed to be to pursue their two-track policy of seeking to avoid war, while positioning themselves to make the most out of any war that developed. A

few hours prior to their meeting, both leaders had received a letter from Saddam Hussein, as later revealed in the Arab press, in which the Iraqi President offered to release all the foreign hostages held by Iraq if the two leaders publicly committed themselves to a political solution. The meeting ended without such a joint statement. Following the Oct. 28-29 meeting, Gorbachov called for the convening of an Arab summit to find a peaceful solution, stressing the importance of “the Arab factor” in avoiding war. The call was rejected by Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak the next day. It would only be a “summit of insults,” Mubarak stated, adding that “Arab countries held a summit on Aug. 10 without accomplishing anything”—the same summit he had sabotaged under U.S. instructions.

## **A new Arab-German initiative**

Responding in alarm to the drive toward war, Jordan's King Hussein began a new peace initiative on Nov. 5, coordinated this time with former West German Chancellor Willy Brandt. On Nov. 5, Brandt left for Iraq for meetings with Saddam Hussein, Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz, and other Iraqi leaders, as well as visiting Palestine Liberation Organization chairman Yasser Arafat. The European Community leaders had agreed at their summit in Rome on Nov. 2-3 to “discourage” all “personal” initiatives toward Iraq. But informed European sources report that the trip had the blessing of the Italian and German governments. The Iraqis told Brandt, according to European sources, that Germany could play a key role in avoiding a big war, because they had had no past as a colonial power in the West Asian region and sent no troops to the Gulf.

Brandt's proposal, as later leaked to the German media, was:

- Iraq would withdraw from Kuwait and release of all hostages.
- An internationally controlled transitional status for Kuwait would be established; no simple return to the domination of the country by the Sabah family. The government formation would be decided by a plebiscite of the Kuwait population.

- Territorial claims that Iraq had on Bubiyan and Warba islands in the Gulf would be settled, which would broaden Iraq's access to the sea.

- Compensation claims would be settled for the losses caused to Iraq by Kuwait's exploitation of the Iraqi Rumailah oil fields, before the August intervention.

- An oil consortium of a new kind would be established to avoid the previous practice of oil price dictates by the small oil-producing states over the big producer Iraq.

Upon his return to Germany, after his last meeting with Saddam Hussein Nov. 9, Brandt met Germany's leaders on the results of his discussions. In an essay published by the weekly *Der Spiegel* on Nov. 19, Brandt wrote: "The weight of Germany must be placed in the scales in favor of peace and those human beings that are exposed to danger. It can even be an advantage for discussions and/or negotiations that German troops are *not* stationed at the Gulf." The next day, Iraq announced it would release all Germans still kept hostage, in a gesture of gratitude to the "positive role of Germany in this crisis."

German Chancellor Helmut Kohl himself leaked in a radio interview Nov. 18 that many sensitive diplomatic initiatives were being pursued—details of which were "not fit for the public at this moment, naturally." Kohl made known the initiatives in an interview broadcast nationwide in Germany at almost exactly the moment President Bush arrived for consultations.

### **U.S. denounces Brandt, sabotages Moroccan plan**

U.S. media and the White House ridiculed Brandt's trip and German efforts to secure a peace. The United States "discourages visits that Iraqis can exploit for propaganda purposes," State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler said on Nov. 2 in commenting on Brandt and other trips. "I have no time for this nonsense," Brandt told a television reporter on Nov. 11, about such U.S. media and administration criticism. It has also been reported that before his second meeting with Saddam Hussein in Baghdad on Nov. 9, Brandt told European reporters in Baghdad, answering a similar question, that he is still waiting for "a reasonable idea coming from the people in Washington." During a visit to Speyer Cathedral shortly before his consultations with Kohl, Bush was publicly urged by the Catholic Bishop of Speyer, Anton Schlembach, a close friend of Kohl's, to "restore law and sovereignty" in the Gulf "by deterrence and economic pressure, rather than war and bloodshed."

What exactly Kohl and Bush discussed at their meeting following the trip to the cathedral is not public.

Certain conclusions can be drawn, however, from angry comments delivered to the U.S. media by senior members of the executive staff who were traveling with the President. Kohl told Bush, they leaked, that the NATO treaties bound him to lend logistical support to the U.S., but the German

government would not deploy troops, nor back any offensive military action against Iraq as long as there were still options for progress on the diplomatic level.

On Nov. 11, shortly after Brandt returned to Germany, Morocco's King Hassan II urgently called for an Arab summit on the crisis. In response, Iraqi President Saddam Hussein dispatched First Deputy Prime Minister Taha Yasin Ramadan to Morocco, and another envoy to Tunisia and Libya—where Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak was also present on a surprise visit to Muammar Qaddafi. Mubarak had told the Egyptian press earlier that week that his country's troops in the Gulf would not participate in a U.S. invasion of Iraq.

Although Ramadan implied at the airport before leaving Morocco that Iraq favored a summit, another opportunity was lost. On Nov. 14, Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud al-Faisal publicly ridiculed King Hassan's call for an emergency Arab summit as "unfruitful."

### **Bush, Baker cut a deal with France**

To the end of ramming through a U.N. vote authorizing the use of force, both Bush and Baker separately traveled widely in Europe and the Middle East for several weeks in November. Bush traveled to six countries in seven days, meeting at least eight heads of state and foreign ministers. Baker traveled to 12 countries in 24 days, meeting 18 foreign ministers and heads of state.

Bush began his trip with a Nov. 17 meeting with Czechoslovakia's President Vaclav Havel in Prague, where Bush induced the former playwright to praise the Anglo-American deployment as worthy of Eastern European support. The Czechoslovakian government—pressured by both East and West—had earlier capitulated to a call for it to join the coalition. Havel sent a 150-man chemical-biological warfare unit to the Gulf, which was later increased to 250 men.

From Prague, Bush traveled to Paris, to confer with French President François Mitterrand. The meeting consolidated French support for the U.N. vote. On Dec. 3, France received part of its reward. Kuwaiti Ambassador to Algeria Yusuf al Anayzi announced that his "government" had agreed to purchase \$900 million worth of French military equipment. On Dec. 4, the Saudis announced that they would be purchasing \$680 million worth of weapons from France. The announcements came just a few days after France had voted in favor of war with Iraq at the U.N. on Nov. 29. Earlier, Kuwait's Emir Jaber al-Ahmad al-Sabah had threatened to pull out his multimillion-dollar investments into the French-English Channel Tunnel project.

Well-placed European sources contend that Mitterrand was close to British intelligence even before his enthusiastic support of the 1956 Anglo-French-Israeli invasion of Egypt. He is representative of those sections of the French elite that retain an imperialist policy toward North Africa. French imperialists tend to both cooperate with, and compete with,

their imperialist cousins in London.

This faction is also allied with Israel for similar reasons. First Lady Danielle Mitterrand is one of the main patrons of the French Zionist lobby. "She is a Zionist *par excellence*," one Arab diplomat with long experience in France noted, "as is her close associate [Presidential adviser] Jacques Attali." On Oct. 15, President Mitterrand himself indicated his support for Israeli expansionism by using the phrase "disputed territories" in a Paris press conference to describe the Israeli Occupied Territories. Just days earlier, on Oct. 8, Israeli troops shot 23 Palestinians to death in occupied Jerusalem, provoking even a U.N. Security Council condemnation. In February, his crony, Pierre Maurois, the head of the French Socialist Party, said that Arafat and the PLO could no longer be considered representatives of the Palestinian people.

### **Egypt and Turkey are bribed**

Bush traveled to Jeddah to meet Saudi Arabia's King Fahd and the Emir of Kuwait on Nov. 21. The next day he munched on Thanksgiving turkey with the troops. There the President reported that "innocent lives are at stake," and added a new reason for opposing Iraq—the "nuclear threat."

After a meeting with Egyptian President Mubarak in Cairo on Nov. 23, Bush completed his tour by meeting Syria's dictator, President Hafez al-Assad, in Geneva, Switzerland later that day. The meeting was the first between a U.S. President and Assad since 1977. Syria is still on the State Department's list of terrorist countries.

Following that meeting, and before his return to the United States, Bush declared, "We are getting tired of the *status quo*, and so is the rest of the world."

Secretary of State Baker's tour of the West Asian region and Europe began on Nov. 5 with meetings with the Emir of Kuwait, Saudi King Fahd, and other Gulf puppet potentates.

From there, Baker traveled to Cairo to meet Egyptian President Mubarak on Nov. 6. He traveled to Ankara to meet Turkish President Turgut Özal the next day.

What did Egypt and Turkey receive for their support? For one thing, money. Since Aug. 2, the United States and Saudi Arabia have written off \$14 billion in Egyptian debt, approximately one-third of its foreign debt. Turkey obtained only an agreement from the United States to increase the quota on Turkish textile imports by 50%.

Turkey, Egypt, and Syria have also been given cash grants. On Feb. 5, the fourth closed-door meeting, with representatives of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, the United States and Britain, since Aug. 2 took place at the Treasury Department offices in Washington. According to Turkish sources, the group pledged \$14.6 billion in additional aid to Turkey, Egypt, and Syria, on top of the \$6.7 billion already given to the three states. Additionally, the European Community, which had already given \$600 million to the three states, pledged another \$2.3 billion in the same period.

Despite the vast size of these sums, Egypt and Turkey were certainly financial losers as a result of the embargo and later war against Iraq. The embargo itself cost Egypt an estimated \$9 billion, half its gross domestic product, through cuts in workers' remittances, loss in tourism, and decline in Suez Canal traffic. Turkey lost some \$7 billion for similar reasons, just from the embargo, as well.

There were other inducements than cash: Turkey was offered the oil-rich Mosul region of northern Iraq in the projected postwar dismemberment of Iraq. The proposal had been first publicly floated as far back as Aug. 26 by the U.S. National Security Council adviser Helen Cobham in the *Washington Post*. According to the proposal, Iraq would be divided up between Iran, Turkey, and Syria. The creation of a Kurdish entity is also indicated. While Cobham distanced herself from the plan by saying it was leading to a "desert Vietnam," the plan itself indicates the type of thinking going on among the imperialist planners of Washington and London.

Then the Sept. 7 issue of William F. Buckley's *National Review*, a magazine long tied to the CIA, carried an article entitled "Let's Talk Turkey" by J.B. Kelly, that called for the partitioning of Iraq "after Saddam Hussein and his detestable regime have been dealt with." Kelly wrote, "Not only would the transfer of ownership [of Mosul] bring about a welcome and well-deserved transformation of Turkey's economy, but it would deprive the truncated Iraqi state of the revenues which up to date have been largely devoted to mischief-making."

Still later, on Feb. 9, former Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger wrote in the *Montréal Gazette*, "It's not enough to let Saddam Hussein retire with his army intact." The coalition must ensure that Saddam will not recover, said Weinberger. "That involves something more than pushing him out of Kuwait. That means getting rid of the power," including to give Turkey part of northern Iraq.

For its part, well-placed Arab sources reported, Egypt was promised "rights" over Sudan and Libya. Sudan's opposition to the Anglo-American deployment into West Asia enraged the Bush administration. Since Aug. 2, the U.S. government has reduced food aid to that impoverished nation to zero. On Oct. 9, the Sudanese government accused Washington of waging a "campaign which aims to use food as a weapon." Then, in late November, the United States and Israel stepped up their support for the southern Sudanese rebel John Garang, who visited Israel that month to meet the Israeli military leadership. According to some reported Anglo-American plans, the new Sudanese regime they intend to bring into existence through this pressure would be run by Egypt.

### **China agrees to be neutral; Yemen is punished**

Baker was involved in organizing other states. On Nov. 6, Baker met Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen in Cairo.

In that and related meetings, China was induced not to veto the upcoming resolution. On Nov. 7 and 8, Qian Qichen traveled to Saudi Arabia to meet King Fahd and Emir Jaber al-Sabah of Kuwait. Qian then traveled to Baghdad to meet Saddam Hussein on Nov. 12.

These meetings neutralized any resistance from Beijing to war, as subsequent developments showed.

On Nov. 26, three days prior to the U.N. vote, the Chinese government announced that it had been invited by Washington to send a high-level trade mission to meet U.S. Commerce Department officials on Dec. 10. This was to be the first meeting of its kind since the June 3-4, 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre. The announcement indicated that the U.S. sanctions imposed after the massacre would be easing. The U.S. government also looked the other way as China began meting out stiff prison sentences to pro-democracy students.

Shortly thereafter, Emir Jaber traveled from Saudi Arabia to Beijing to offer major investments in the People's Republic.

After meeting with the Chinese, Baker traveled to Moscow to meet with Soviet President Gorbachov and then Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze on Nov. 8. Next he flew to London to consult with Mrs. Thatcher on Nov. 9, and on to Paris to meet with French President Mitterrand Nov. 10.

After a brief rest in Washington, Baker began another tour, this time simultaneous with Bush's travels.

On Nov. 22, Baker was in Sana, Yemen where he met President Salih. Yemen, a rotating member of the U.N. Security Council, was scheduled to assume the chairmanship of the council for the month of December. The U.S. was concerned that Yemen, which had strongly backed an Arab solution, would attempt to block the pro-war resolution, if the vote on the resolution was deferred beyond November.

In a *New York Times* interview on Nov. 25, Yemeni President Ali Abdallah Salih left no doubt that his nation was opposed to a U.N. vote authorizing force. Such a vote, he said, would be a "very dangerous development." "It is still possible to find a peaceful solution," he stressed. "I know Saddam Hussein is ready for dialogue. Why doesn't President Bush send a personal envoy to Baghdad?"

President Salih's harsh rebuff of Washington and its war drive proved to be costly. In early December, the U.S. State Department released a statement announcing that it had cut previously planned U.S. aid to Yemen "to \$2.9 million from \$20.5 million as a signal of U.S. disapproval for Yemen's negative vote on U.N. Security Council Resolution 678."

### **Colombia bribed, Soviets push for war**

On Nov. 24, Baker also met with Colombian Foreign Minister Luis Fernando Jaramillo and President César Gaviria, in Bogotá on a state visit. Colombia was then also a rotating member of the Security Council, and the Bush ad-

ministration wanted to secure its vote. One Colombian Foreign Ministry official, who has asked not to be identified, described the U.S. pressure at that time. "The United States will seriously threaten a total blockade of the country if we don't vote with them in the U.N. Security Council on the Iraq issue." Another member of the Colombian ruling circles added, "President César Gaviria is not going get into a fight with the United States; that would be suicide."

What did Colombia receive as its reward other than no blockade? According to the Foreign Ministry source, Baker promised to support President Gaviria's negotiations with the cocaine cartels, which would effectively legalize their activity. This controversial negotiation—which the U.S. supported in any case—was publicly accepted by Baker immediately upon the conclusion of the Nov. 24 meeting. Such negotiations with the narco-traffickers "falls to the competence of the Colombian government," Baker approvingly told the press. Within weeks of the meeting, the Colombian government cut a deal with the traffickers whereby they could avoid extradition to the U.S. for narcotics trafficking.

Meanwhile, Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze flew to Beijing in the days before the vote to ensure that China, a permanent Security Council member along with the Soviets, U.S., France, and Britain, was lined up to support the U.N. resolution.

Alarmed by these developments, Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz flew to Moscow Nov. 26 to confer with Soviet President Gorbachov. The meeting went poorly. "Tariq Aziz was firmly told that if Iraq wants a settlement in the region and wants to avoid the worst, it must now openly declare and show by its actions that it is leaving Kuwait," reported a wire from the Soviet news agency TASS after the meeting. TASS dismissed Aziz's comments as "familiar arguments," with "nothing new."

Gorbachov ridiculed Iraq's repeated insistence that all regional problems, notably including the Palestinian issue, be dealt with simultaneously. "An aggression has been committed. It must be stopped," Gorbachov stated to TASS. "Only then is it possible to address other issues of a Middle East settlement."

After visiting six countries in seven days, George Bush proclaimed in Washington Nov. 24 that time had run out for a non-military solution to the crisis. "We have shown patience. We have explored all diplomatic options."

As a result of Washington's extensive strongarming, on Nov. 29, the United Nations Security Council gave the U.S. government the go-ahead to wage a war against Iraq. Resolution 678 set a Jan. 15 deadline for war. Unless Iraq fully complied by that date with all eleven U.N. resolutions against it beginning with Aug. 2, the resolution stated, then U.N. member states may "use all necessary means . . . to restore international peace and security in the area." The resolution passed 12-2. China abstained; only the rotating member states of Cuba and Yemen voted against the resolution.