

New McCarthyites Target Ritter's 'Waging Peace'

by Michele Steinberg

Retired U.S. Marine and former United Nations weapons inspector in Iraq, Scott Ritter, has become a target of those New McCarthyites out to form a nationwide "thought police" to stifle any criticism of the Utopians' Iraq war in the press, universities, military, or government. In retaliation for Ritter's effective work in opposing the Bush Administration's insane Iraq war drive, the *Washington Post* opened a full page of its widely read "Style" section to an attempted character assassination of Ritter. The Oct. 21 article, "Fighting Words. Scott Ritter . . . Critics See a Loose Cannon" by Richard Leiby, is virtually a case study of the apparatus described by *EIR*'s Oct. 18 *National* lead story, "Lieberman and Cheney March in the Footsteps of McCarthy and Himmler."

Press slanders, financial pressure, and three FBI investigations have been aimed against Ritter, for being the one person who can rip through the lies about Iraq—because he was there, serving as an UNSCOM chief weapons inspector from 1991-98, and earlier as a U.S. Marines intelligence officer in Desert Storm.

For more than a year, Ritter, who on Sept. 8 became the first American ever to address the National Assembly of Iraq, has made himself "public enemy" to the Iraq war propagandists. He has become an invited speaker at many anti-war events; he addressed a special meeting of British Members of Parliament, including what became the Labour Party leadership of the Sept. 28, anti-Blair/anti-war rally of 400,000 people in London. He is described as playing a major role in convincing the Iraq government that they have no choice but to accept full weapons inspections by the UN teams, and to disarm as required by the UN resolutions.

Neo-Conservatives' Lying Exposed

As Ritter himself describes, he's "waging peace," and this has not escaped the notice of the Chicken-hawk war-mongers, who have been able to keep him out of U.S. Congressional hearings, but who have not been able to puncture the solid evidence he convincingly lays out.

Ritter gave an example of his ability to frustrate the neo-conservatives' last year, when his former boss as UN Chief of Inspectors, Australian Richard Butler, cynically used the anthrax letter attacks in the United States in October 2001, to promote his own book on Iraq, by pointing the blame at Saddam Hussein. Ritter nailed him for spreading false information and hysteria about Iraq. Ritter turned out to be right.

Even clearer was Ritter's Sept. 15 debate on Cable News Network with Chicken-hawk big-mouth Frank Gaffney, head of the Center for Security Policy—a neo-conservative/Israeli intelligence front—and co-founder of the McCarthyite "Americans for Victory Over Terrorism." When Gaffney railed, "There are two Scott Ritters"—coming up with the now pat line that Ritter used to oppose, but now supports, Iraq—Ritter demolished him efficiently: "The point is, Iraq hasn't been disarmed. There's a big difference between saying that we have not accomplished the tasks set forth by the Security Council, and saying that Iraq now poses a grave and imminent risk to international peace and security, that requires the United States to flout the foundation of international law set forth by the Security Council regarding disarming Iraq, and seek unilateral removal of Saddam Hussein. . . . We have to get inspectors in."

In the Defense Policy Board Cross-Hairs

EIR is investigating whether the attack on Ritter was planned during the Oct. 10-11 meeting of Richard Perle's Defense Policy Board, where two former UN weapons inspectors—David Kay and Charles Duerfler—favorites of the neo-conservative war-mongers—gave secret testimony. Perle and Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz are fuming that President Bush opted to go through the motions of consulting the UN, and they are trying to silence the anti-war drumbeat. Policy Board witness David Kay was prominently featured in the *Post* article, attacking Ritter. So was Richard Butler, who suggested that only "a psychoanalyst" might explain Ritter's actions. The *Post* added, that Ritter "has been deemed a symp for Saddam Hussein, a sellout and a traitor."

But the real threat lay at the point where author Leiby wrote, "Over the past decade the FBI has investigated Ritter three times. . . . In each case it found no violation of the law." In 1991, the FBI investigated whether the fact that Ritter's wife, Marina, is Russian, constituted a threat to national security; it did not. In 1998, the FBI investigated Ritter for allegedly "trading information on Iraq with Israeli intelligence sources, which he says was . . . approved by his UNSCOM bosses." Most recently, the FBI—Attorney General Ashcroft's enforcement arm of the New McCarthyism—investigated the documentary Ritter produced with backing from an Iraqi emigré, Shakir al-Khafaji, a Michigan businessman who has lived in the United States for 30 years. The most suspicious thing about the film, for which al-Khafaji was the executive producer, is that it reveals the devastating effects of the UN sanctions and concludes that "Iraq is a defanged tiger."

Ritter is a thorn in the Chicken-hawks' sides. Following his September visit, Congressmen Nick Rahall (D-W. Va.), David Bonior (D-Mich.) and Jim McDermott (D-Wash.), and former Sen. James Abourezk (D-S.D.), also went to Iraq, helping open the door to a diplomatic solution. And then there's his new book, *War on Iraq: What Team Bush Doesn't Want You To Know*.