

EIR Feature

LaRouche: It's Time To Get Out of Iraq

by Jeffrey Steinberg

Lyndon LaRouche is on record as the first prominent American political figure to call for the immediate withdrawal of all American military forces from Iraq. On Nov. 28, 2003, LaRouche issued a statement through his Presidential campaign committee: "Declare the intention of the President of the United States, to be, to cease the U.S. military occupation of Iraq at the earliest feasible occasion, and to notify the UN Security Council of the U.S. intention to reopen the matter of Iraq's earliest restoration to sovereignty in its affairs, and of the U.S. government's solicitation of UN Security Council assistance in bringing about the desired state of affairs." Until such a pullout of U.S. forces is announced and executed, LaRouche warned, "We have the U.S. troops and their command in a situation which is, for them, comparable to U.S. forces in Indo-China during and after the Tet Offensive; and, as others have noted, more comparable to the Algeria war at the time of Jacques Soustelle's role there."

Underlying LaRouche's call for a pre-emptive U.S. withdrawal from Iraq, apart from its own urgent merits, are a more profound set of issues. Under the "Cheney Doctrine," the United States Armed Forces are being rapidly "transformed" into an imperial legion, modeled on the Roman Legions, the French Foreign Legion, and the private armies assembled by the British East India Company during the 17th Century. The leading presence of Cheney's own former oil firm, Halliburton, in Iraq, underscores the East India Company parallels.

At no time in U.S. history have our armed services been so far removed from the concepts of citizen-soldier, strategic defense, and logistics in depth, which informed American military policy from the period of the American Revolution, through the founding of West Point, the defeat of the British-instigated Southern secessionist revolt, and the American mobilization-in-depth during World War II to defeat Nazism and fascism worldwide.

While Samuel P. Huntington's 1957 book, *The Soldier and the State*, stands as the first explicit call for the transformation of the U.S. military into a chivalric cult



French President Charles de Gaulle, in Algiers in 1958, had the true leader's commitment to the general welfare, which enabled him to pull France out of Algeria, putting down rebellion from those who called it national humiliation. French forces had apparently beaten the resistance in a "dirty war," but lost all credibility with Algerians.

of violence, divorced completely from republican civil society, it was only after Dick Cheney became Secretary of Defense, and later, Vice President of the United States, that these ideas were put into practice—with deadly consequences.

Cheney not only toiled for a dozen years to establish a new U.S. national security doctrine of preventive nuclear war. As Secretary of Defense under President George H.W. Bush (1989-93), Cheney launched the privatization of many military functions, including combat logistics and security. Today, in Iraq, as the result of the "Cheney Doctrine," 25,000 private mercenaries are deployed side-by-side with American soldiers. They operate under no rules of engagement, outside the framework of the Geneva Convention. Under the rubric of the "coalition of the willing," an international coalition of professional assassins—from Israel, South Africa, Britain, the United States, and God knows where else—are running amok inside Iraq—with the full blessing of Defense Secretary Rumsfeld and Cheney.

This state of affairs has so alarmed some members of the U.S. Senate, that, on April 8, twelve Democratic Senators co-signed a letter to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld by Sen. Jack Reed (D-R.I.), demanding a full accounting of the presence of private security contractors in Iraq. Citing the deaths of four Blackwater, Inc. security contractors in Fallujah, Reed wrote, "These security contractors are armed and operate in a fashion that is hard to distinguish from military forces, especially special operations forces. However, these private security companies are not under military control and

are not subject to the rules that guide the conduct of American military personnel." Reed warned, "It would be a dangerous precedent if the United States allowed the presence of private armies operating outside the control of governmental authority and beholden only to those who pay them. . . . Security in a hostile fire area is a classic military mission. Delegating this mission to private contractors raises serious questions."

Among the co-signers of the Reed letter were Carl Levin (D-Mich.), Minority Leader Tom Daschle (D-S.D.), Minority Whip Harry Reid (D-Nev.), Ted Kennedy (D-Mass.) and Jay Rockefeller (W.Va.), the ranking Democrat on the Senate Intelligence Committee.

The Battle of the Casbah

One prominent retired U.S. Army officer, with decades of experience in the Middle East, has told *EIR* that the United States has lost the Iraq war three times already. First, we lost when we went in, in the first place. The war was unjustified and, therefore, doomed to create a worse mess than if the invasion had never occurred. Second, we lost the war in Autumn 2003, when American forces were largely confined to barracks, because it was no longer safe for them to move about freely in Iraq. Third, we lost the war in early April, when Shi'ite insurgents joined the largely-Sunni asymmetric war against the American-led occupation.

The same day that the 13 Senators were writing to Rumsfeld, retired U.S. Army Col. Andrew Bacevich wrote an op-ed in the *Los Angeles Times*, highlighting the parallels

between Algeria and Iraq. “Day by day, the evidence mounts that an ugly war is turning uglier,” he wrote. “U.S. and coalition troop losses, which have again spiked upward, provide one measure of that ugliness. The ratcheting up of American firepower and the climbing toll of Iraqi dead, many of them evidently innocent bystanders caught in the crossfire, provide a second. But there is a third measure, perhaps the most troubling of all: hints that the discipline of U.S. forces is beginning to fray.”

Bacevich explained: “Welcome to urban guerilla warfare—a type of war radically different from the United States’ last unhappy encounter with guerillas in Vietnam. . . . Cities like Baghdad and Falloujah have become focal points of resistance. . . . This is where the Algerian parallel becomes instructive. . . . In their efforts to destroy the National Liberation Front, French authorities found that conventional tactics did not work. . . . So in their frustration, the French opted to fight a ‘dirty war,’ employing systematic torture, extra-judicial killings and their own brand of terror.” Bacevich noted that, while the “dirty war” tactics “temporarily dismantled much of the resistance network and regained control of Algiers . . . the army destroyed the last shreds of French legitimacy in Algeria and thereby laid the foundation for eventual French defeat.”

France was fortunate that Gen. Charles de Gaulle came

back into power in 1959, and, as you will read below, had the courage to pull French forces out of Algeria, and oversee a smooth transition to full sovereignty for the longtime French colony.

A deeper glimpse into the Algerian “dirty war” is found in Gen. Paul Aussaresses’ memoirs of his tenure as a top figure in the French counterinsurgency effort, *The Battle of the Casbah—Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism in Algeria, 1955-1957* (Enigma Books: New York, 2002).

The Republican Alternative

On March 30, Lyndon LaRouche gave a two-hour interview to Arkansas radio host Lee Tibler. In the course of the interview (see page 7), the candidate was asked about the military doctrine of a LaRouche Administration. His response focussed on the issues of Classical military doctrine, beginning with the notions of strategic defense as devised by Lazare Carnot and Gaspar Monge at the French École Polytechnique between 1793 and 1804.

LaRouche has been a passionate advocate of a return to Classical republican military doctrine for decades. During his 1980 campaign for the Democratic Party Presidential nomination, he wrote a “Military Policy of the LaRouche Administration,” in which he stated: “A LaRouche administration will have two leading points in military policy. First, commitment to the development of advanced-technology weapons able to ‘kill’ incoming missiles in the stratosphere [later adopted by President Ronald Reagan as the Strategic Defense Initiative—ed.]; second, the establishment of universal military training—not the draft—as the means for providing the United States a pyramid of maximum in-depth war-fighting capabilities.”

In both that paper and his recent Tibler interview, LaRouche emphasized the vital role of the Corps of Engineers, which assures the capacity of a nation to marshal its entire productive capacities for national defense in times of crisis. As he wrote in the cited 1980 campaign white paper, “Except for the purely military aspect of the program, universal military training should cost the nation nothing in net. The establishment of the qualifications of a junior engineer in some field of applications as a standard requirement for citizenship means a qualitative upgrading of the nation’s labor force. Provided these improved talents are employed in high-technology capital-intensive productive occupations, the gains in productivity will be very large relative to the costs of the engineering training.”

Compare that LaRouche policy to the outsourcing of jobs—including military logistics—of the Cheney-led Bush Administration, and the underlying issues become painfully clear: Will the United States, under LaRouche leadership, return to its former status as the leading republican political force on Earth, or will the United States, under the present Bush-Cheney dogma, continue to slide into the trap of imperial overreach on the steppes of Baghdad?

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