Desperate Neo-Cons Launch Third 'Committee on the Present Danger'

by Michele Steinberg

It could have been called "The Committee To Blow Up the World." On June 16, for the third time since World War II, the proponents of preventive war launched a massive propaganda campaign using the moniker "The Committee on the Present Danger." The CPD's rebirth took place at a gathering of 80-100 of Washington's leading neo-cons to discuss "Iraq and the War Against Terrorism." The midwife was Clifford May, the president of the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies (FDD), which sponsored the event; the leading ideologue was William Kristol, editor of the *Weekly Standard;* and the arrival was proudly announced by Democratic Sen. Joe Lieberman (Conn.), who said that the CPD's creation "for the third time," was necessary because "today, in America, support for the [Iraq] war is in jeopardy" (see *EIR,* June 25). The piggy-bank for the event, at least in part, was Australian-British media mogul Rupert Murdoch, who owns the publications, and FOX-TV networks, by which most of the speakers are paid.

There was only one real reason for the gathering: Bush and Cheney are in increasing trouble, and "Super Watergate" is in the air. It was an attempted regroupment by the angry neo-cons, who were trying to recoup their losses after the Administration turned against their chosen Iraqi leader, Ahmed Chalabi, and who were furious that the Administration had returned to the United Nations for a resolution.

Speakers had a stark message: war, war, more war; and kill, kill, kill more Muslims. And despite overwhelming evidence that this kind of "counter-terrorist" policy is *increasing* the danger to the United States and to global stability, this gathering said that Dick Cheney's doctrine of preventive war is not being applied hard enough. Throughout the day-long event, one heard a *spiel* for imperial policy, and a chilling threat: If the Cheney policy is abandoned, there will be another 9/11—this time much worse.

Perversely, these neo-cons believe that another 9/11 attack will help their cause. Perhaps the biggest "present danger" they fear is that their forces—especially Vice President Cheney—will be ousted from power. Kristol and May complained that the Administration—under pressure of the 2004 election campaign—was backing off in Iraq, trying to substitute "stability" for victory. May claimed that the word is out in the Bush-Cheney campaign to keep Iraq "quiet" through Nov. 4. They blamed this policy shift on unnamed advisors, and CIA leaks.

But Ralph Peters, the retired lieutenant colonel turned action novelist, who works for Murdoch's *New York Post,* blamed it on Bush himself. The President, said Peters, acted "foolishly and unforgivably" in Fallujah, by turning the city over to an Iraqi general. Peters branded this "the most serious American retreat since Saigon."

CPD and the Children of Satan

The *anti*-American System faction of the U.S. establishment has used the "Committee on the Present Danger" name for the last 54 years, to push utopianism. In 1950, a group of "eminent" establishment foreign policy experts created CPD-I, whose target was China, Russia, and "communism." It was supposedly an independent "citizens group," working to alert the nation to the "present danger" of the communist threat, especially after the June 24, 1950 North Korean move south across the 38th parallel. But the records of the Truman Presidency show that the CPD was part of the files of Truman's top secret Psychological Strategy Board (PSB), established by a Presidential Directive on April 4, 1951 to coordinate psychological warfare efforts.

For three months in 1951, the CPD launched an anti-communist scare campaign on the NBC network, every Sunday night, promoting increased defense spending and a "roll-back" of communism.

But was the CPD really "private"? At exactly the same time, the PSB was running the Congress of Cultural Freedom (CCF), the CIA-funded anti-communist group (see *EIR,* June 25). In some ways, the CPD was the "military" parallel to the CCF.

In 1976, the founders (largely Democrats) of CPD-II, set out to stop arms negotiations with the Soviet Union; they wanted the option of nuclear strikes. When their candidate, Sen. Henry "Scoop" Jackson (D-Wash.), lost badly to Jimmy Carter in his bid for the Presidential nomination, the CPD moved into the Republican Party. It was exactly these CPD policies, upheld by then-Defense Secretary James R. Schlesinger and the "Scoop" Jackson Democrats, that Lyndon LaRouche attacked in his first national TV broadcast, in his 1976 Presidential campaign.

The history of the CPD is actually three generations of what LaRouche identifies as the "Children of Satan." In a

series of three pamphlets issued by his 2004 Democratic Presidential primary campaign, called "Children of Satan I: The Ignoble Liars Behind Bush's No-Exit War," "Children of Satan II: The Beastmen," and "Children of Satan III: The *Sexual* Congress for Cultural Fascism," LaRouche exposed the networks behind perpetual war and "empire." The impact of these mass-circulated reports cannot be underestimated; according to the neo-cons themselves, LaRouche is behind the "troubles" befalling them and Cheney.

The 'No-Exit' War

The CPD-III inaugural featured Washington's leading neo-cons: Kristol, Stephen Hayes, Michael Rubin, Clifford May, Ambassador Mark Ginsberg, Christopher Hitchens—the lot of them drawn from the "chicken-hawk" stables at the *Weekly Standard, New York Post,* Fox News, American Enterprise Institute, *National Review Online,* and the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies. Rubin had worked in Iraq for the occupation government at the Coalition Provisional Authority, but had quit in disgust. The only leading Pentagon neo-con in sight was Harold Rhode, who reportedly had the special job of "handling" Ahmed Chalabi, the Iraqi National Congress leader accused of fabricating intelligence to steer the United States into war with Iraq, and who is now under investigation on the charge of passing U.S. defense secrets to Iran.

The central theme of the conference was that the Bush Administration *must* insist on the link between Saddam Hussein and al-Qaeda, and use the 9/11 attack to extend the military war on terrorism to *every* "rogue state."

It is useful to note that nearly all the current "information" on the links between al-Qaeda and Saddam Hussein comes from one single source, desk jockey Stephen Hayes, who gave the first conference speech on June 16, on the "connections" between Saddam Hussein and al-Qaeda. Hayes became a celebrity and instant expert on al-Qaeda in Fall 2003, when he was leaked a classified document written for the Senate by Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Douglas Feith, on the al-Qaeda/Saddam Hussein "connection," and printed it in the *Weekly Standard.* The Defense Department issued "an advisory" disavowing the reliability of the information in Feith's report; but Hayes continues to repeat it as gospel, even publishing it in a new book called *The Connection.*

Truth is not an issue for the neo-cons' propaganda efforts. As long as they can get a report into print, it can be used by Administration officials to "make their case." Twice, Hayes has played that role for Dick Cheney. In November 2003, Cheney cited the Hayes article as "proof" of why the Iraq War was necessary to stop terrorism! It happened again, immediately after Hayes' June 16 speech, when the staff report of the independent commission investigating the Sept. 11 attacks said that there were no connections between Saddam Hussein and 9/11, driving Cheney into a ballistic fit.

Hayes had asserted that there *is* a connection: "Ahmed Hikmat Shakir . . . appeared on the rolls of officers of the Saddam Fedayem," and "Shakir, whose schedule was determined by a contact in the Iraqi Embassy in Kuala Lumpur, escorted Sept. 11 hijacker Khalik al Midhar" to a meeting in January 2000 where "the planning took place" for the Sept. 11 attacks. It was already established by government investigations that the two Shakirs in question are *completely* different people, with different names. When 9/11 commission member John Lehman tried to defend Cheney and attack his own staff by using Hayes' "Shakir" story, the White House itself said the Shakir link was "mistaken," a confusion over names.

Hayes lied by omission about Shakir, but he still wants them all dead—whoever they are. Referring to alleged al-Qaeda member Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, Hayes said, "Don't indict Zarqawi, kill him."

Peace fares even worse than truth in the neo-cons' onslaught. Thomas McInerney, one of the only two retired military officers among the sea of "chicken-hawks" (warmongers who have never donned a uniform), says that the United States must to go to war immediately with five more countries. "Nation-states are responsible for terrorists," he railed, naming Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, Syria, Libya, North Korea, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan. Three of them are now neutralized—Iraq, Afghanistan, and Libya—but the rest must be subdued, because "the next one is going to make 9/11 look like nothing. . . . We lost 3,000 in two hours. . . . What happens if 10 nuclear weapons go off in 10 American cities? Then it is too late."

Nor do the neo-cons care about the sovereignty of Iraq. Ralph Peters began his talk by calling Iraq "a monster of a nation" which was cobbled together "by European imperialists." "Kurdistan" is the country "that the U.S. *wants* in the Middle East." Because of the Bush Administration's compromises in Iraq, he said, "Fallujah is a terrorist city-state," where the next 9/11s are being prepared. The only way to reverse the mistake is to attack Fallujah again and destroy the Mehdi Army of Shi'a firebrand Moqdatar al-Sadr.

Peters expressed a hatred of the Iraq people, saying they have to "stop whining" like the "infants Saddam Hussein turned them into. . . . I don't see that they're willing" to fight terrorism, and if that is the case, the U.S. should *leave* and build up Kurdistan. Iraq? Where is it? I see Kurdistan. I see the Shi'a south," and a "cancerous" Sunni center. "But Iraq, I only see that on paper."

Hitchens, the latest neo-con convert, attacked any commitment to "preserve the Iraq state." Iraq's borders were drawn by imperialists at the beginning of the last century. "What is more colonial?" to redraw the borders or "to allow them to be un-redrawn?"

The conference was the pure propaganda of a Nazi rally, with no reports on torture of Iraqi prisoners by the U.S. occupation, or other messy issues. All Iraq failures were blamed either on the CIA or partisan "plots" by the Congress. These neo-cons would bring the United States to a new global, nuclear war—started by the United States itself. Their statements speak for themselves.