

Chicken-Hawks Are Pushing To Spread 'Perpetual War'

by Edward Spannaus and Jeffrey Steinberg

While some deluded souls may wish to believe that the war in Iraq is over, the reality is that from the standpoint of the neo-conservative fanatics who have seized control of Bush Administration policy, the conflict with Iraq is only the opening phase in a drive for U.S. global domination, in which any and all challengers will be swept aside. The first priority for this "chicken-hawk" cabal is to redraw the map of the entire Middle East, through a "domino" of regime changes, rapidly extending from Iraq to Syria, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt. The overall agenda of massive instability in the entire Arab Near East was spelled out most graphically in the July 1996 "A Clean Break" report, prepared by Richard Perle, Douglas Feith, David Wurmser and others, for incoming Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

One leading spokesman for this neo-con group, former CIA Director James Woolsey, unabashedly declared in late March, before a student audience at the University of California in Los Angeles, that we are already fighting "World War IV." Fortunately, a group of LaRouche Youth Movement activists were on hand to challenge Woolsey's insane war-cries, with the confrontation captured by a C-SPAN camera crew, and broadcast nationwide.

Michael Ledeen, the self-professed "universal fascist" and resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), spoke at the Willard Hotel in early February, and worried aloud that the Bush Administration might not have the stomach to face the reality that a war on Iraq would actually trigger a full-scale regional war against Iraq, Syria, Iran, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the Palestinian Authority. Ledeen welcomed such a war.

Another leading neo-con loudmouth, former *New York Post* editorial page editor John Podhoretz, penned an April 10 op-ed in that Rupert Murdoch yellow sheet, calling for a *jihad* against the "fence-menders," typified by Colin Powell

and Brent Scowcroft, who opposed the Iraq War, and are now pressing for a gesture of "goodwill towards the Arab world," by pushing for implementation of the "Road Map" for establishing a sovereign Palestinian state. Scowcroft had delivered a speech a day earlier in Oslo, Norway, in which he again denounced the Iraq War, as he had done in August 2002, and predicted chaos and a big jump in anti-American terrorism as the result of the war.

On April 10, 2003, the Oakland *Tribune* reported, "One intelligence source with good access to Pentagon civilian authorities said that [Defense Secretary Donald] Rumsfeld last week ordered the drawing up of contingency plans for a possible invasion of Syria, and that Pentagon Undersecretary Douglas Feith is working on a policy paper highlighting how Syria's support of terrorist groups is a threat to the region." The Feith report is likely just an update of a study he helped draft for the Jerusalem-based Institute for Advanced Strategic and Political Studies in 1997. The report, "Coping with Crumbling States: A Western and Israeli Balance of Power Strategy for the Levant," was a 33-page elaboration on the "Clean Break" document, which prioritized "regime change" in Damascus.

Iraq War: Still No Exit

Even as Rumsfeld, Feith, et al. were setting the stage for an invasion of Syria, the "facts on the ground" were that the war within Iraq was still far from over. In addition to the chaos of looting and communal violence erupting in various parts of the country, expert observers expect a prolonged guerrilla-type irregular warfare resistance against the U.S. and British occupation forces.

The April 10 assassination of Abdul Majid al-Kho'i, the Shi'ite cleric chosen by American and British invaders as "their man" in Najaf, one of the important Shi'ite holy cities



There is no “post-war,” but only “the next war,” with the neo-conservatives now dominating the Bush Administration. Secretary Rumsfeld is threatening Syria and North Korea; his Deputy Wolfowitz is imposing an unworkable occupation government on Iraq.

in southern Iraq, was seen by many regional experts as the harbinger of a much larger blood-letting, first targetting Iraqis profiled as “quislings” of the invading and occupying Anglo-American forces. The day after al-Kho’i’s brutal murder by a mob that hacked him to death with machetes at a Shi’ite holy mosque in Najaf, a photograph of al-Kho’i and British Prime Minister Tony Blair, walking together in London, appeared prominently in the British and American media.

Al-Kho’i’s assassination was almost a foregone conclusion, after he released “coalition” disinformation, claiming that the Grand Ayatollah of the Iraqi Shi’ite community, al-Sistani, had issued a *fatwa*, or religious decree, ordering Shi’ites not to resist the American and British invaders. The Grand Ayatollah issued a personal statement, denouncing the al-Kho’i claim as false.

As Lyndon LaRouche has said repeatedly since his speech to a Schiller Institute conference in Germany on March 21, there is no “post-war” to the Iraq invasion; there is only *continuing* war. Until the stranglehold over the Bush Administration of the “universal fascist” disciples of the late University of Chicago professor Leo Strauss is broken, the world will be facing a series of provocations and confrontations, spreading throughout the Middle East and beyond, that can take us into world war.

Who’s Next?

No sane person believes that the Bush Administration intends to stop with Iraq. Top Administration officials such as Vice President Dick Cheney and Defense Secretary Rumsfeld have made it clear that Syria and Iran are at the top of the list of the next targets, and semi-official spokesmen such as Perle and Woolsey are even more explicit.

Additionally, the North Korea situation remains extremely dangerous, with the possibility of a U.S. pre-emptive strike looming. It is no secret, among U.S. war planners, that if a conflict erupts on the Korean peninsula, with 37,000 American soldiers within the range of North Korean missiles, the United States would face an instant prospect of using tactical nuclear weapons against the North, a nightmare event that would almost certainly drive the Russians to begin rattling their own formidable arsenal of Soviet-era nuclear weapons and delivery systems.

While there are relatively sane individuals like Secretary of State Powell inside the Bush Administration, who firmly oppose such insane utopian brinksmanship, the neo-cons as a group, and individuals like Pentagon arms control chief John Bolton, are intent on bringing down every “axis of evil” regime, using whatever military means are required—including “mini-nukes.” On April 7, President Bush’s National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice was in Moscow, meeting with top Russian officials. According to one source close to her, Rice pressed for Russian help in cooling out the North Korea crisis. But so long as the chicken-hawks are credibly seen as the dominant force in the Bush national security team, prospects are bleak for a solution to this North Asia crisis.

The drumbeat for war on Syria also is not abating, across the Potomac at the Pentagon. Rumsfeld issued the latest in a series of threats to that nation on April 9, stating that Syria “would be well-advised not to provide military capabilities to Iraq.” On the same day, John Bolton warned Syria, Iran, and North Korea to “draw the appropriate lesson from Iraq, that pursuing weapons of mass destruction is not in their national interest.” In February 2003, Bolton had given an interview to the *Washington Times*, in which he announced that

the Bush Administration would no longer abide by the 25-year U.S. pledge never to use nuclear weapons against a non-nuclear-armed state. Bolton came to the State Department from AEI, where he was vice chairman. Former AEI Fellow and "Clean Break" co-author David Wurmser is his arms control deputy.

But it's not only the Middle East. In an interview with a Russian news service, Richard Perle, who was forced out of the chairmanship of Rumsfeld's Defense Policy Board on March 27, said that the war with Iraq has reinforced the long-term goals of U.S. foreign policy, that the United States will take "appropriate action" against states believed to be harboring terrorists or building weapons of mass destruction. He added that he hoped that the Syrians would "voluntarily" change their policy, and warned likewise that the North Koreans should give up their nuclear program "voluntarily"—with the implication that they will face U.S. military action if they don't.

One of the clearest articulations of what the chicken-hawk crowd is planning, came from the mouth of former CIA Director Woolsey, who also sits on Rumsfeld's Defense Policy Board, and who is slated to become "Minister of Information" in the Pentagon's military occupation government in Iraq.

Woolsey has been going around the country for months, touting "World War IV." A few months ago, he was describing this fourth World War as a war against radical Islam, but now he has taken to dressing it up, as "a war to extend

democracy to those parts of the Arab and Muslim world that threaten the liberal civilization we worked to build up and defend throughout the 20th Century in World War I, World War II, and the Cold War (World War III)."

Woolsey charges that, besides Iraq, "Iran, Syria, Sudan, and Libya sponsor and assist terrorism in one way or another. All five have sought weapons of mass destruction. Clearly, the terror war is never going to go away until we change the face of the Middle East, which is what we are beginning to do in Iraq."

Military Occupation Government

The policy coup which Rumsfeld and the Straussians who surround him are carrying out is also manifest in the plans for the war-time occupation government in Iraq.

It is well known, that there has been a bitter fight between Colin Powell's State Department, and the civilians in the Pentagon, over what sort of governing structure will be put in place in Iraq. The Pentagon civilians, led by Deputy Secretary Paul Wolfowitz, and Undersecretary for Policy Doug Feith, are planning a military occupation government, headed by the Israeli-linked retired General Jay Garner, for which the London-based banker Ahmed Chalabi is to be the "native" front-man. Outside of the Pentagon, Chalabi is regarded as a bad joke, but the Pentagon gang could care less.

With the assassination of the Shi'ite cleric in Najaf, Chalabi himself may be getting cold feet. Among Iraqis in-country, according to one Iraqi living in Scandinavia, Chalabi is referred to as "the dead man walking." Like many other well-known exile collaborationists who are now being tapped for top posts in a "Vichy" interim regime, he is not considered a good candidate to be sold a life insurance policy.

Inside the United States, not to mention the rest of the world, there is a widespread disgust at the efforts of the Wolfowitz-Feith-Perle cabal to create "facts on the ground," by unilaterally proceeding to install their imperial occupation government, while telling the United Nations, the European allies, and everyone else, to go to Hell.

Rumsfeld is also telling Congress that it can go to hell, by asserting that he (and President Bush) will override Congress's Constitutional responsibility to appropriate "war reconstruction" funds and oversee their expenditure. Both the Senate and the House appropriations committees have prohibited the spending of reconstruction funds through the Defense Department, and are requiring that they be handled through the State Department.

"The Secretary of State is the appropriate manager of foreign assistance," said Rep. Jim Kolbe (R-Ariz.), the chairman of the House Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, adding, "Bottom line: Reconstruction is a civilian role."

But Rumsfeld says it makes no difference what Congress does. When asked about this at the April 7 Pentagon press briefing, he said cavalierly that "in the last analysis, it doesn't matter which pocket it's in; it will be spent in the way that the President feels is appropriate."

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The question raised, is whether the Pentagon's imperial war-policy is aimed at the United States Constitution, as well as at the rest of the world. This gang has already launched a war without the Constitutionally required Congressional Declaration of War, and now they want to move into the next phase, of imperial military occupation, in defiance of Congress's Constitutionally mandated prerogatives.

The Pentagon's power-grab has come to the point, that knowledgeable sources in Washington are discussing the possibility that Secretary Powell may issue a series of ultimatums to the President—regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and the military occupation of Iraq—and will threaten to resign, unless the Rumsfeld Pentagon gang is reined in.

Specter of More War Shows in Iraq

After the much-celebrated fall of Baghdad, the continuing conflict inside the country threatens to assume a new character, with the involvement of forces from neighboring countries. First, there is the problem of the Iraqi "opposition," supposed to become a new government. Although Ahmed Chalabi, leader of the Iraqi National Congress (INC), has been chosen by Defense Secretary Rumsfeld as a figurehead to run a government for the U.S. military, he is neither acknowledged by the rest of the opposition nor by the people. A leading Shi'ite group and others were refusing to take part in an April 12 meeting in Nasiriya, with American "free Iraq pro-consul" Zalmay Khalilzad and "Viceroy of Baghdad" Gen. Jay Garner. Hamid al-Bayati, London representative of the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), announced April 9, "We are not going to take part in this meeting in Nasiriya. We think this is part of General Garner's rule of Iraq." Ayatollah Mohammed Bakr Hakim, chairman of SCIRI, in confirming its opposition, referred back to pre-war discussions among the opposition groups, which were characterized by the illusion that they would be free to elect their own government, without U.S. military presence. The Shi'ites represent the majority religious group in Iraq. Although they have opposed the Saddam Hussein regime militantly in the past, they oppose an American occupation force as much.

The supreme religious leader of the Shi'ites is Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, based in the holy city of Najaf, Iraq. In March, al-Sistani issued a *fatwa*, banning any cooperation with the invading forces; later he called on Iraqi Shi'ites to "defend the homeland against the invaders."

Needing a compliant Shi'ite, the Anglo-Americans recruited Abdul Majid al-Kho'i, son of the former religious leader of Najaf, who entered Iraq alongside British and American forces, and immediately claimed that al-Sistani had called for Iraqis to stop resisting. This was denounced as a lie by al-Sistani's office, which issued a further *fatwa*

for the defense of Iraq "against the enemies of Allah and the enemies of humanity." Al-Kho'i was denounced by other leading religious figures, including Ayatollah Mohammed Mahdi al-Asefi, who stated: "Both Saddam and the U.S.-U.K. invaders are evil. The Iraqi people are trapped in a holocaust. They should not be drawn into it. However, if the Americans attempt to occupy the country, then Iraq's people should resist them. The U.S. is not in Iraq to bring to the Iraqi people a political project for freedom." One Iraqi source in Iran told *EIR* that any American military administration "would have to face an uprising from the Iraqis in the South," and the outcome could be civil war.

Al-Kho'i paid for his collaborationism with death. On April 10, he together with another Shi'ite Haidar al-Kadar, were stabbed with knives and swords, inside the mosque in Najaf which houses the holy shrine of Imam Ali.

On April 10, the status quo in the North of Iraq was challenged, as Kurdish forces, who have been working with the Americans, entered Kirkuk. Turkish Foreign Minister Abdallah Gul immediately called Secretary of State Powell, who reportedly reassured him that the United States would remove Kurdish forces from Kirkuk. But Gul announced that Turkey was sending "military observers" to the city. Kurdish control over Kirkuk has been defined by Turkey as the "red line," which, once crossed, would trigger deployment of Turkish troops there. Prime Minister Recep Erdogan, on April 7, stated that "Entering northern Iraq will not be on the agenda as long as Iraq's territorial integrity is preserved and there is no move aimed at seizing the oil of Mosul and Kirkuk." Now the red line has been crossed; direct conflict cannot be ruled out.

Kirkuk is surrounded by the richest oil fields in the area, which have been supplying Turkey, as well as other consumers. Its pipelines to Turkey's Mediterranean port of Ceyhan carried 1 million barrels of crude per day in 2002. The Kurds claim Kirkuk as their historic "capital" for an independent Kurdistan, and their street celebrations, when the Iraqi regime fell in Baghdad, resounded with cries of "On to Kirkuk!" Were the Kurds to move to control Kirkuk or to establish an independent entity, not only would Turkey move rapidly; so would Iran and Syria, which have significant Kurdish populations.—*Muriel Mirak-Weissbach and Hussein Askary*