

Alliance linking Washington, Tel Aviv and Riyadh bodes ill

By Mark A. Bruzonsky

It's nonsense now to talk about a "new world order" - self-serving rhetorical nonsense manufactured in the White House to deceive the American people into acquiescence.

FROM WASHINGTON

Rather, what is happening in front of our eyes is the emergence of an even more brutal, more hypocritical and more dangerous Pax Americana - a new international conspiracy brought about by the collapse of Soviet power coupled with the emergence of a new alliance that links Washington, Tel Aviv and Riyadh with satellite offices in London and Cairo.

Not only is the American empire - seriously troubled at home by unsolvable but containable economic and social problems - lashing out with this spasm of destruction to assert its continuing dominance. But the terribly repressive and corrupted oil-rich regimes throughout the Gulf region have now cast their fate with the empire in opposition to both nationalist and religious forces within their own societies.

Saddam Hussein, like Salvador Allende years ago, Daniel Ortega more recently, and a whole host of others over the past few decades, is to be made an example of.

New world machinations

The lesson is simple: If you are with us safeguarding our concerns, our pocketbooks, and our friends, we will in turn protect you and help manipulate your societies in your favor as well as ours. But if you are against us and want to pursue your own national agenda in opposition to our concerns then we will take you out one way or another, preferably covertly but through military force if need be.

What George Bush is pronouncing his "new world order" is actually a "new world machination" to use American

force to bludgeon those who stand in opposition to this Pax Americana. Furthermore, it is a geo-political arrangement drawing on the huge surpluses of Arab petro-dollars to finance the scheme, to manipulate those numerous institutions and individuals ready to cheerlead (and to co-opt those who are not), as well as to massively propagandize the general public both in the Western and Arab worlds.

What we are living through in these dark days is nothing less than a conspiracy of historic proportions - American volunteers will be used to fight and die, Western advanced technology will be used to destroy and repress, and the petro regimes will keep the aspirations of their own peoples in check while pocketing part of the region's wealth and recycling an even larger part back to Western banks and institutions.

The manipulation of Iraq

Hard and irrefutable evidence is difficult to come by of course. By many of the best experts on the region, and in the region, have been discussing among themselves that this war with Iraq could well be something that the U.S. and Israel have manipulated, rather than simply a response to Iraq's takeover of Kuwait.

There is considerable circumstantial evidence to buttress this thesis. Furthermore, the very history of American, European and Israeli involvement in Arab affairs lends substantial credibility to giving considerable weight to what facts and linkages to exist.

For years in fact the U.S. has been purposefully causing tension between Kuwait and Iraq by encouraging Kuwaiti support for oil price and supply policies contrary to Iraqi interests and needs.

Then, in the days before the Iraqi takeover of Kuwait, not only did the U.S. specifically signal Saddam Hussein that there would be no major American response, but at the same time Washington was also attempting to pressure the Kuwaitis to take American troops within their own territory.

Then, in the immediate days following August 2nd, the U.S. specifically turned away Iraqi

attempts to reach a political settlement, specifically undermined an attempt by the Arab League to find an "Arab solution," and then specifically turned away even long-time American friends like King Hussein of Jordan who came to argue for their own version of a different kind of new world order.

For many months before August, of course, the Israelis and their friends were already pushing and shoving to break the American connection with Iraq. And then, it was primarily Israel's supporters and political agents who began to whip up sentiment for pushing American forces into the Gulf and attacking Iraq.

Iraqi attempts at political settlement all rebuffed

A crucial yet unreported attempt by Iraq to reach a settlement took place even before Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney and Saudi Ambassador Prince Bandar flew to Riyadh to frighten King Fahd into accepting what at the time was to be a small number of American troops to protect the Kingdom against a possible Iraqi assault.

A wealthy well-connected Arab businessman, then in London, was repeatedly called by Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz and told that if he would approach his high-level friends in Washington he could tell them Iraq would consider withdrawing from all but the two strategic islands leading to the Arabian Gulf and the disputed oilfield in the north. Washington's reaction, at the highest levels next to the President, was don't bother us, we're not interested in any such deals.

Various other attempts to find a political way out were pursued by Baghdad. But in each case the reaction from the White House was only to cover themselves for public relations purposes. At no moment did Washington show any serious interest in a real political settlement.

In short, Saddam Hussein never really was given a choice by George Bush other than that of

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Unholy alliance...

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complete humiliation followed by the likelihood of an ongoing embargo and a future attack by Israel. Of course, in retrospect, he could have possibly played his cards better than he did - that's always the case though.

But the currently available evidence actually points to attempts to put Saddam up against the wall and refuse to give him a way out. It's almost as if the psychological profiles available to Western leaders about Saddam were used not to find a way to make a deal with him, but rather to find a way to entrap him and force him to dig in.

Israeli and Saudi connections

If one were to do a statistical correlation between who are Israel's long-time supporters and apologists in Washington and who has been beating the war drums the loudest for the past few months, the figure would be exceedingly high, and would involve those ranging from the various institutions that make up the Israeli/Jewish lobby to such associated publications as Marty Peretz's *New Republic* and Mort Zuckerman's *U.S. News & World Report*.

What seems likely is that the U.S. and Israel, through various officials and conduits, including Deputy Secretary of State Larry Eagleburger, former assistant to Henry Kissinger, coordinated all aspects of this war. This culminated with the Bush-Shamir meeting in November and then Eagleburger's pre-war visit to Israel.

Make no mistake about it, the U.S. is now engaged in a war that has been brought to us largely because of both the U.S.-Israeli alliance and the U.S.-Saudi connection. It is furthermore a war

which Saudi Ambassador Prince Bandar, representing the Saudi and Kuwaiti royal families and working in tandem with many of Israel's supporters, has been even more instrumental in bringing about than Israeli officials. Bandar seems to gloat in his new-found influence, but to be unaware that he is likely to get his way only so long as he is allowed to by Washington and Tel Aviv. As an example, Bandar's inability to push through the massive arms sale announced by President Bush last September, even under today's circumstances, clearly shows the limits of Bandar's real influence.

No matter what various U.S. officials have been saying, the magnitude of U.S.-Israeli coordinating - at both the political and military level - has been very substantial, in all likelihood unprecedented. But the same is true about the level of sophistication used to pretend the relationship has been otherwise.

What's likely ahead

Little will return to what it was before in the Middle East even when the war with Iraq is over. The Saudi king is telling his people that all foreign forces will be leaving when this crisis is over; but this crisis isn't going to be over for a very long time.

What is most likely at this point is that substantial American military forces will be placed in "liberated" Kuwait, a great deal of military equipment will be propositioned for any future conflict, and covert American assistance to Gulf regimes will be substantially heightened into the foreseeable future. If the U.S., Saudis and Kuwaitis fully get their way these American forces are, of course, likely to be legitimized by some kind of U.N. and/or Arab presence as well.

In return, the American-sponsored regimes will do America's bidding in the region even more than in the past, including providing ever greater amounts of both oil and petrodollars on terms favorable to American interests. Furthermore

the entire Gulf will favor American, and to a far lesser extent, British economic interests in opposition to those of Germany and Japan.

For the Palestinians, further attempts to foist another Camp David type arrangement on them can be predicted at this time. With considerable new attention focused on the Palestinian issue, on Security Council resolutions, and on the concept of an international peace conference, the Israelis and Americans will most likely act to defuse the situation through more false initiatives.

In this context, a Camp David II is likely to come forward with what will be said to be Israeli concessions to finally support previous American ideas for elections in the occupied territories leading to some kind of autonomy discussions. Such an approach is likely to be accompanied by vague hints at more to come down the road for the Palestinians, but only if these initial steps go forward smoothly.

It will all be another sham of course. But the PLO has proved itself susceptible to such ploys in the past, and the PLO will be substantially weaker in coming months than it has been for a long time.

Meanwhile, of course, instabilities throughout the Middle East region can be expected to show themselves in various forms, along with periodic episodes of what the West calls terrorism. Where this will all end it's impossible to predict, of course. But it's a pretty safe bet that the war beginning now will have ramifications for a very long time to come.

The struggles ahead

The Middle East, sadly, has now come of age. Through an unprecedented combination of American might, Israeli manipulation, Arab petro money, Soviet collapse, and European acquiescence, a new world arrangement, but not a new world order, is being born.

For some time to come the Middle East region now is likely to become the dominant theater of conflict between Western imperial interests and Third World concerns; between the terribly corrupted outlooks of the region's rulers in opposition to the basic aspirations of their subjects; between those benefiting from petro dollars and close links to Washington and those suffering from the same phenomena.

Whatever takes place in the next few days the Arab street is sure to be significantly radicalized in the months and years ahead, Islamic fundamentalism is sure to grow deeper underground roots which will eventually push to the surface, and the American military-industrial establishment is sure to grasp for greater resources and dominance over life within our own shores.

For us Americans, the continuing misuse of our own national resources will further escalate, our victory in the Cold War notwithstanding. Our streets and our banks continue to become less safe, our political hypocrisy seems to know no bounds, and our civil liberties continue to erode as the national security state further asserts control over all of our lives...and futures.

The 1990s, it now seems, will not be years of the peace dividend and the rebuilding of America after all.

Instead, a new struggle for the soul of our own country is before us.

And a new struggle for control of the resources and aspirations of the Arab world, coupled with an associated clash between pro-Western American monarchs and dictators and those who desire to expel Western colonial powers from the region, is just beginning.

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