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Whose War?

A neoconservative clique seeks to ensnare our country in a series of wars that are not in America's interest.

by *Patrick J. Buchanan*

The War Party may have gotten its war. But it has also gotten something it did not bargain for. Its membership lists and associations have been exposed and its motives challenged. In a rare moment in U.S. journalism, Tim Russert put this question directly to Richard Perle: "Can you assure American viewers ... that we're in this situation against Saddam Hussein and his removal for American security interests? And what would be the link in terms of Israel?"

Suddenly, the Israeli connection is on the table, and the War Party is not amused. Finding themselves in an unanticipated firefight, our neoconservative friends are doing what comes naturally, seeking student deferments from political combat by claiming the status of a persecuted minority group. People who claim to be writing the foreign policy of the world superpower, one would think, would be a little more manly in the schoolyard of politics. Not so.

Former *Wall Street Journal* editor Max Boot kicked off the campaign. When these "Buchananites toss around 'neoconservative'—and cite names like Wolfowitz and Cohen—it sometimes sounds as if what they really mean is 'Jewish conservative.'" Yet Boot readily concedes that a passionate attachment to Israel is a "key tenet of neoconservatism." He also claims that the National Security Strategy of President Bush "sounds as if it could have come straight out from the pages of *Commentary* magazine, the neocon bible." (For the uninitiated, *Commentary*, the bible in which Boot seeks divine guidance, is the monthly of the American Jewish Committee.)

David Brooks of the *Weekly Standard* wails that attacks based on the Israel tie have put him through personal hell: "Now I get a steady stream of anti-Semitic screeds in my e-mail, my voicemail and in my mailbox. ... Anti-Semitism is alive and thriving. It's just that its epicenter is no longer on the Buchananite Right, but on the peace-movement left."

Washington Post columnist Robert Kagan endures his own purgatory abroad: "In London ... one finds Britain's finest minds propounding, in sophisticated language and melodious Oxbridge accents, the conspiracy theories of Pat Buchanan concerning the 'neoconservative' (read: Jewish) hijacking of American foreign policy."

Lawrence Kaplan of the *New Republic* charges that our little magazine "has been transformed into a forum for those who contend that President Bush has become a client of ... Ariel Sharon and the 'neoconservative war party.'"

Referencing Charles Lindbergh, he accuses Paul Schroeder, Chris Matthews, Robert Novak, Georgie Anne Geyer, Jason Vest of the *Nation*, and Gary Hart of implying that "members of the Bush team have been doing Israel's bidding and, by extension, exhibiting 'dual loyalties.'" Kaplan thunders:

The real problem with such claims is not just that they are untrue. The problem is that they are toxic. Invoking the specter of dual loyalty to mute criticism and debate amounts to more than the everyday pollution of public discourse. It is the nullification of public discourse, for how can one refute accusations grounded in ethnicity? The charges are, ipso facto, impossible to disprove. And so they are meant to be.

What is going on here? *Slate*'s Mickey Kaus nails it in the headline of his retort: "Lawrence Kaplan Plays the Anti-Semitic Card."

What Kaplan, Brooks, Boot, and Kagan are doing is what the Rev. Jesse Jackson does when caught with some mammoth contribution from a Fortune 500 company he has lately accused of discriminating. He plays the race card. So, too, the neoconservatives are trying to fend off critics by assassinating their character and impugning their motives.

Indeed, it is the charge of "anti-Semitism" itself that is toxic. For this venerable slander is designed to nullify public discourse by smearing and intimidating foes and censoring and blacklisting them and any who would publish them. Neocons say we attack them because they are Jewish. We do not. We attack them because their warmongering threatens our country, even as it finds a reliable echo in Ariel Sharon.

And this time the boys have cried "wolf" once too often. It is not working. As Kaus notes, Kaplan's own *New Republic* carries Harvard professor Stanley Hoffman. In writing of the four power centers in this capital that are clamoring for war, Hoffman himself describes the fourth thus:

And, finally, there is a loose collection of friends of Israel, who believe in the identity of interests between the Jewish state and the United States. ... These analysts look on foreign policy through the lens of one dominant concern: Is it good or bad for Israel? Since that nation's founding in 1948, these thinkers have never been in very good odor at the State Department, but now they are well ensconced in the Pentagon, around such strategists as Paul Wolfowitz, Richard Perle and Douglas Feith.

"If Stanley Hoffman can say this," asks Kaus, "why can't Chris Matthews?" Kaus also notes that Kaplan somehow failed to mention the most devastating piece tying the neoconservatives to Sharon and his Likud Party.

In a Feb. 9 front-page article in the *Washington Post*, Robert Kaiser quotes a senior U.S. official as saying, "The Likudniks are really in charge now." Kaiser names Perle, Wolfowitz, and Feith as members of a pro-Israel network inside the administration and adds David Wurmser of the Defense Department and Elliott Abrams of the National Security Council. (Abrams is the son-in-law of Norman Podhoretz, editor emeritus of *Commentary*, whose magazine has for decades branded critics of Israel as anti-Semites.)

Noting that Sharon repeatedly claims a "special closeness" to the Bushites, Kaiser writes, "For the first time a U.S. administration and a Likud government are pursuing nearly identical policies." And a valid question is: how did this come to be, and while it is surely in Sharon's interest, is it in America's interest?

This is a time for truth. For America is about to make a momentous decision: whether to launch a series of wars in the Middle East that could ignite the Clash of Civilizations against which Harvard

professor Samuel Huntington has warned, a war we believe would be a tragedy and a disaster for this Republic. To avert this war, to answer the neocon smears, we ask that our readers review their agenda as stated in their words. Sunlight is the best disinfectant. As Al Smith used to say, "Nothing un-American can live in the sunlight."

We charge that a cabal of polemicists and public officials seek to ensnare our country in a series of wars that are not in America's interests. We charge them with colluding with Israel to ignite those wars and destroy the Oslo Accords. We charge them with deliberately damaging U.S. relations with every state in the Arab world that defies Israel or supports the Palestinian people's right to a homeland of their own. We charge that they have alienated friends and allies all over the Islamic and Western world through their arrogance, hubris, and bellicosity.

Not in our lifetimes has America been so isolated from old friends. Far worse, President Bush is being lured into a trap baited for him by these neocons that could cost him his office and cause America to forfeit years of peace won for us by the sacrifices of two generations in the Cold War.

They charge us with anti-Semitism—i.e., a hatred of Jews for their faith, heritage, or ancestry. False. The truth is, those hurling these charges harbor a "passionate attachment" to a nation not our own that causes them to subordinate the interests of their own country and to act on an assumption that, somehow, what's good for Israel is good for America.

The Neoconservatives

Who are the neoconservatives? The first generation were ex-liberals, socialists, and Trotskyites, boat-people from the McGovern revolution who rafted over to the GOP at the end of conservatism's long march to power with Ronald Reagan in 1980.

A neoconservative, wrote Kevin Phillips back then, is more likely to be a magazine editor than a bricklayer. Today, he or she is more likely to be a resident scholar at a public policy institute such as the American Enterprise Institute (AEI) or one of its clones like the Center for Security Policy or the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs (JINSA). As one wag writes, a neocon is more familiar with the inside of a think tank than an Abrams tank.

Almost none came out of the business world or military, and few if any came out of the Goldwater campaign. The heroes they invoke are Woodrow Wilson, FDR, Harry Truman, Martin Luther King, and Democratic Senators Henry "Scoop" Jackson (Wash.) and Pat Moynihan (N.Y.).

All are interventionists who regard Stakhanovite support of Israel as a defining characteristic of their breed. Among their luminaries are Jeane Kirkpatrick, Bill Bennett, Michael Novak, and James Q. Wilson.

Their publications include the *Weekly Standard*, *Commentary*, the *New Republic*, *National Review*, and the editorial page of the *Wall Street Journal*. Though few in number, they wield disproportionate power through control of the conservative foundations and magazines, through their syndicated columns, and by attaching themselves to men of power.

Beating the War Drums

When the Cold War ended, these neoconservatives began casting about for a new crusade to give

meaning to their lives. On Sept. 11, their time came. They seized on that horrific atrocity to steer America's rage into all-out war to destroy their despised enemies, the Arab and Islamic "rogue states" that have resisted U.S. hegemony and loathe Israel.

The War Party's plan, however, had been in preparation far in advance of 9/11. And when President Bush, after defeating the Taliban, was looking for a new front in the war on terror, they put their precooked meal in front of him. Bush dug into it.

Before introducing the script-writers of America's future wars, consider the rapid and synchronized reaction of the neocons to what happened after that fateful day.

On Sept. 12, Americans were still in shock when Bill Bennett told CNN that we were in "a struggle between good and evil," that the Congress must declare war on "militant Islam," and that "overwhelming force" must be used. Bennett cited Lebanon, Libya, Syria, Iraq, Iran, and China as targets for attack. Not, however, Afghanistan, the sanctuary of Osama's terrorists. How did Bennett know which nations must be smashed before he had any idea who attacked us?

The Wall Street Journal immediately offered up a specific target list, calling for U.S. air strikes on "terrorist camps in Syria, Sudan, Libya, and Algeria, and perhaps even in parts of Egypt." Yet, not one of Bennett's six countries, nor one of these five, had anything to do with 9/11.

On Sept. 15, according to Bob Woodward's *Bush at War*, "Paul Wolfowitz put forth military arguments to justify a U.S. attack on Iraq rather than Afghanistan." Why Iraq? Because, Wolfowitz argued in the War Cabinet, while "attacking Afghanistan would be uncertain ... Iraq was a brittle oppressive regime that might break easily. It was doable."

On Sept. 20, forty neoconservatives sent an open letter to the White House instructing President Bush on how the war on terror must be conducted. Signed by Bennett, Podhoretz, Kirkpatrick, Perle, Kristol, and *Washington Post* columnist Charles Krauthammer, the letter was an ultimatum. To retain the signers' support, the president was told, he must target Hezbollah for destruction, retaliate against Syria and Iran if they refuse to sever ties to Hezbollah, and overthrow Saddam. Any failure to attack Iraq, the signers warned Bush, "will constitute an early and perhaps decisive surrender in the war on international terrorism."

Here was a cabal of intellectuals telling the Commander-in-Chief, nine days after an attack on America, that if he did not follow their war plans, he would be charged with surrendering to terror. Yet, Hezbollah had nothing to do with 9/11. What had Hezbollah done? Hezbollah had humiliated Israel by driving its army out of Lebanon.

President Bush had been warned. He was to exploit the attack of 9/11 to launch a series of wars on Arab regimes, none of which had attacked us. All, however, were enemies of Israel. "Bibi" Netanyahu, the former Prime Minister of Israel, like some latter-day Citizen Genet, was ubiquitous on American television, calling for us to crush the "Empire of Terror." The "Empire," it turns out, consisted of Hamas, Hezbollah, Iran, Iraq, and "the Palestinian enclave."

Nasty as some of these regimes and groups might be, what had they done to the United States?

The War Party seemed desperate to get a Middle East war going before America had second thoughts. Tom Donnelly of the Project for the New American Century (PNAC) called for an

immediate invasion of Iraq. “Nor need the attack await the deployment of half a million troops. ... [T]he larger challenge will be occupying Iraq after the fighting is over,” he wrote.

Donnelly was echoed by Jonah Goldberg of *National Review*: “The United States needs to go to war with Iraq because it needs to go to war with someone in the region and Iraq makes the most sense.”

Goldberg endorsed “the Ledeen Doctrine” of ex-Pentagon official Michael Ledeen, which Goldberg described thus: “Every ten years or so, the United States needs to pick up some small crappy little country and throw it against the wall, just to show we mean business.” (When the French ambassador in London, at a dinner party, asked why we should risk World War III over some “shitty little country”—meaning Israel—Goldberg’s magazine was not amused.)

Ledeen, however, is less frivolous. In *The War Against the Terror Masters*, he identifies the exact regimes America must destroy:

First and foremost, we must bring down the terror regimes, beginning with the Big Three: Iran, Iraq, and Syria. And then we have to come to grips with Saudi Arabia. ... Once the tyrants in Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Saudi Arabia have been brought down, we will remain engaged. ... We have to ensure the fulfillment of the democratic revolution. ... Stability is an unworthy American mission, and a misleading concept to boot. We do not want stability in Iran, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and even Saudi Arabia; we want things to change. The real issue is not whether, but how to destabilize.

Rejecting stability as “an unworthy American mission,” Ledeen goes on to define America’s authentic “historic mission”:

Creative destruction is our middle name, both within our society and abroad. We tear down the old order every day, from business to science, literature, art, architecture, and cinema to politics and the law. Our enemies have always hated this whirlwind of energy and creativity which menaces their traditions (whatever they may be) and shames them for their inability to keep pace. ... [W]e must destroy them to advance our historic mission.

Passages like this owe more to Leon Trotsky than to Robert Taft and betray a Jacobin streak in neoconservatism that cannot be reconciled with any concept of true conservatism.

To the *Weekly Standard*, Ledeen’s enemies list was too restrictive. We must not only declare war on terror networks and states that harbor terrorists, said the *Standard*, we should launch wars on “any group or government inclined to support or sustain others like them in the future.”

Robert Kagan and William Kristol were giddy with excitement at the prospect of Armageddon. The coming war “is going to spread and engulf a number of countries. ... It is going to resemble the clash of civilizations that everyone has hoped to avoid. ... [I]t is possible that the demise of some ‘moderate’ Arab regimes may be just round the corner.”

Norman Podhoretz in *Commentary* even outdid Kristol’s *Standard*, rhapsodizing that we should embrace a war of civilizations, as it is George W. Bush’s mission “to fight World War IV—the war against militant Islam.” By his count, the regimes that richly deserve to be overthrown are not confined to the three singled-out members of the axis of evil (Iraq, Iran, North Korea). At a minimum, the axis should extend to Syria and Lebanon and Libya, as well as “‘friends’ of America

like the Saudi royal family and Egypt's Hosni Mubarak, along with the Palestinian Authority. Bush must reject the "timorous counsels" of the "incorrigibly cautious Colin Powell," wrote Podhoretz, and "find the stomach to impose a new political culture on the defeated" Islamic world. As the war against al-Qaeda required that we destroy the Taliban, Podhoretz wrote,

We may willy-nilly find ourselves forced ... to topple five or six or seven more tyrannies in the Islamic world (including that other sponsor of terrorism, Yasir Arafat's Palestinian Authority). I can even [imagine] the turmoil of this war leading to some new species of an imperial mission for America, whose purpose would be to oversee the emergence of successor governments in the region more amenable to reform and modernization than the despotisms now in place. ... I can also envisage the establishment of some kind of American protectorate over the oil fields of Saudi Arabia, as we more and more come to wonder why 7,000 princes should go on being permitted to exert so much leverage over us and everyone else.

Podhoretz credits Eliot Cohen with the phrase "World War IV." Bush was shortly thereafter seen carrying about a gift copy of Cohen's book that celebrates civilian mastery of the military in times of war, as exhibited by such leaders as Winston Churchill and David Ben Gurion.

A list of the Middle East regimes that Podhoretz, Bennett, Ledeen, Netanyahu, and the *Wall Street Journal* regard as targets for destruction thus includes Algeria, Libya, Egypt, Sudan, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Hezbollah, Hamas, the Palestinian Authority, and "militant Islam."

Cui Bono? For whose benefit these endless wars in a region that holds nothing vital to America save oil, which the Arabs must sell us to survive? Who would benefit from a war of civilizations between the West and Islam?

Answer: one nation, one leader, one party. Israel, Sharon, Likud.

Indeed, Sharon has been everywhere the echo of his acolytes in America. In February 2003, Sharon told a delegation of Congressmen that, after Saddam's regime is destroyed, it is of "vital importance" that the United States disarm Iran, Syria, and Libya.

"We have a great interest in shaping the Middle East the day after" the war on Iraq, Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz told the Conference of Major American Jewish Organizations. After U.S. troops enter Baghdad, the United States must generate "political, economic, diplomatic pressure" on Tehran, Mofaz admonished the American Jews.

Are the neoconservatives concerned about a war on Iraq bringing down friendly Arab governments? Not at all. They would welcome it.

"Mubarak is no great shakes," says Richard Perle of the President of Egypt. "Surely we can do better than Mubarak." Asked about the possibility that a war on Iraq—which he predicted would be a "cakewalk"—might upend governments in Egypt and Saudi Arabia, former UN ambassador Ken Adelman told Joshua Micah Marshall of *Washington Monthly*, "All the better if you ask me."

On July 10, 2002, Perle invited a former aide to Lyndon LaRouche named Laurent Murawiec to address the Defense Policy Board. In a briefing that startled Henry Kissinger, Murawiec named Saudi Arabia as "the kernel of evil, the prime mover, the most dangerous opponent" of the United States.

Washington should give Riyadh an ultimatum, he said. Either you Saudis “prosecute or isolate those involved in the terror chain, including the Saudi intelligence services,” and end all propaganda against Israel, or we invade your country, seize your oil fields, and occupy Mecca.

In closing his PowerPoint presentation, Murawiec offered a “Grand Strategy for the Middle East.” “Iraq is the tactical pivot, Saudi Arabia the strategic pivot, Egypt the prize.” Leaked reports of Murawiec’s briefing did not indicate if anyone raised the question of how the Islamic world might respond to U.S. troops tramping around the grounds of the Great Mosque.

What these neoconservatives seek is to conscript American blood to make the world safe for Israel. They want the peace of the sword imposed on Islam and American soldiers to die if necessary to impose it.

Washington Times editor at large Arnaud de Borchgrave calls this the “Bush-Sharon Doctrine.” “Washington’s ‘Likudniks,’” he writes, “have been in charge of U.S. policy in the Middle East since Bush was sworn into office.”

The neocons seek American empire, and Sharonites seek hegemony over the Middle East. The two agendas coincide precisely. And though neocons insist that it was Sept. 11 that made the case for war on Iraq and militant Islam, the origins of their war plans go back far before.

“Securing the Realm”

The principal draftsman is Richard Perle, an aide to Sen. Scoop Jackson, who, in 1970, was overheard on a federal wiretap discussing classified information from the National Security Council with the Israeli Embassy. In *Jews and American Politics*, published in 1974, Stephen D. Isaacs wrote, “Richard Perle and Morris Amitay command a tiny army of Semitophiles on Capitol Hill and direct Jewish power in behalf of Jewish interests.” In 1983, the *New York Times* reported that Perle had taken substantial payments from an Israeli weapons manufacturer.

In 1996, with Douglas Feith and David Wurmser, Perle wrote “A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm,” for Prime Minister Netanyahu. In it, Perle, Feith, and Wurmser urged Bibi to ditch the Oslo Accords of the assassinated Yitzhak Rabin and adopt a new aggressive strategy:

Israel can shape its strategic environment, in cooperation with Turkey and Jordan, by weakening, containing, and even rolling back Syria. This effort can focus on removing Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq—an important Israeli strategic objective in its own right—as a means of foiling Syria’s regional ambitions. Jordan has challenged Syria’s regional ambitions recently by suggesting the restoration of the Hashemites in Iraq.

In the Perle-Feith-Wurmser strategy, Israel’s enemy remains Syria, but the road to Damascus runs through Baghdad. Their plan, which urged Israel to re-establish “the principle of preemption,” has now been imposed by Perle, Feith, Wurmser & Co. on the United States.

In his own 1997 paper, “A Strategy for Israel,” Feith pressed Israel to re-occupy “the areas under Palestinian Authority control,” though “the price in blood would be high.”

Wurmser, as a resident scholar at AEI, drafted joint war plans for Israel and the United States “to fatally strike the centers of radicalism in the Middle East. Israel and the United States should ...

broaden the conflict to strike fatally, not merely disarm, the centers of radicalism in the region—the regimes of Damascus, Baghdad, Tripoli, Tehran, and Gaza. That would establish the recognition that fighting either the United States or Israel is suicidal.”

He urged both nations to be on the lookout for a crisis, for as he wrote, “Crises can be opportunities.” Wurmser published his U.S.-Israeli war plan on Jan. 1, 2001, *nine months before 9/11*.

About the Perle-Feith-Wurmser cabal, author Michael Lind writes:

The radical Zionist right to which Perle and Feith belong is small in number but it has become a significant force in Republican policy-making circles. It is a recent phenomenon, dating back to the late 1970s and 1980s, when many formerly Democratic Jewish intellectuals joined the broad Reagan coalition. While many of these hawks speak in public about global crusades for democracy, the chief concern of many such “neo-conservatives” is the power and reputation of Israel.

Right down the smokestack.

Perle today chairs the Defense Policy Board, Feith is an Undersecretary of Defense, and Wurmser is special assistant to the Undersecretary of State for Arms Control, John Bolton, who dutifully echoes the Perle-Sharon line. According to the Israeli daily newspaper *Ha'aretz*, in late February,

U.S. Undersecretary of State John Bolton said in meetings with Israeli officials ... that he has no doubt America will attack Iraq and that it will be necessary to deal with threats from Syria, Iran and North Korea afterwards.

On Jan. 26, 1998, President Clinton received a letter imploring him to use his State of the Union address to make removal of Saddam Hussein’s regime the “aim of American foreign policy” and to use military action because “diplomacy is failing.” Were Clinton to do that, the signers pledged, they would “offer our full support in this difficult but necessary endeavor.” Signing the pledge were Elliott Abrams, Bill Bennett, John Bolton, Robert Kagan, William Kristol, Richard Perle, and Paul Wolfowitz. Four years before 9/11, the neocons had Baghdad on their minds.

The Wolfowitz Doctrine

In 1992, a startling document was leaked from the office of Paul Wolfowitz at the Pentagon. Barton Gellman of the *Washington Post* called it a “classified blueprint intended to help ‘set the nation’s direction for the next century.’” The Wolfowitz Memo called for a permanent U.S. military presence on six continents to deter all “potential competitors from even aspiring to a larger regional or global role.” Containment, the victorious strategy of the Cold War, was to give way to an ambitious new strategy designed to “establish and protect a new order.”

Though the Wolfowitz Memo was denounced and dismissed in 1992, it became American policy in the 33-page National Security Strategy (NSS) issued by President Bush on Sept. 21, 2002. *Washington Post* reporter Tim Reich describes it as a “watershed in U.S. foreign policy” that “reverses the fundamental principles that have guided successive Presidents for more than 50 years: containment and deterrence.”

Andrew Bacevich, a professor at Boston University, writes of the NSS that he marvels at “its fusion

of breathtaking utopianism with barely disguised *machtpolitik*. It reads as if it were the product not of sober, ostensibly conservative Republicans but of an unlikely collaboration between Woodrow Wilson and the elder Field Marshal von Moltke.”

In confronting America’s adversaries, the paper declares, “We will not hesitate to act alone, if necessary, to exercise our right of self-defense by acting preemptively.” It warns any nation that seeks to acquire power to rival the United States that it will be courting war with the United States:

[T]he president has no intention of allowing any nation to catch up with the huge lead the United States has opened since the fall of the Soviet Union more than a decade ago. ... Our forces will be strong enough to dissuade potential adversaries from pursuing a military buildup in hopes of surpassing or equaling the power of the United States.

America must reconcile herself to an era of “nation-building on a grand scale, and with no exit strategy,” Robert Kagan instructs. But this *Pax Americana* the neocons envision bids fair to usher us into a time of what Harry Elmer Barnes called “permanent war for permanent peace.”

The Munich Card

As President Bush was warned on Sept. 20, 2001, that he will be indicted for “a decisive surrender” in the war on terror should he fail to attack Iraq, he is also on notice that pressure on Israel is forbidden. For as the neoconservatives have played the anti-Semitic card, they will not hesitate to play the Munich card as well. A year ago, when Bush called on Sharon to pull out of the West Bank, Sharon fired back that he would not let anyone do to Israel what Neville Chamberlain had done to the Czechs. Frank Gaffney of the Center for Security Policy immediately backed up Ariel Sharon:

With each passing day, Washington appears to view its principal Middle Eastern ally’s conduct as inconvenient—in much the same way London and Paris came to see Czechoslovakia’s resistance to Hitler’s offers of peace in exchange for Czech lands.

When former U.S. NATO commander Gen. George Jouwlan said the United States may have to impose a peace on Israel and the Palestinians, he, too, faced the charge of appeasement. Wrote Gaffney,

They would, presumably, go beyond Britain and France’s sell-out of an ally at Munich in 1938. The “impose a peace” school is apparently prepared to have us play the role of Hitler’s Wehrmacht as well, seizing and turning over to Yasser Arafat the contemporary Sudetenland: the West Bank and Gaza Strip and perhaps part of Jerusalem as well.

Podhoretz agreed Sharon was right in the substance of what he said but called it politically unwise to use the Munich analogy.

President Bush is on notice: Should he pressure Israel to trade land for peace, the Oslo formula in which his father and Yitzak Rabin believed, he will, as was his father, be denounced as an anti-Semite and a Munich-style appeaser by both Israelis and their neoconservative allies inside his own Big Tent.

Yet, if Bush cannot deliver Sharon there can be no peace. And if there is no peace in the Mideast there is no security for us, ever—for there will be no end to terror. As most every diplomat and

journalist who travels to the region will relate, America's failure to be even-handed, our failure to rein in Sharon, our failure to condemn Israel's excesses, and our moral complicity in Israel's looting of Palestinian lands and denial of their right to self-determination sustains the anti-Americanism in the Islamic world in which terrorists and terrorism breed.

Let us conclude. The Israeli people are America's friends and have a right to peace and secure borders. We should help them secure these rights. As a nation, we have made a moral commitment, endorsed by half a dozen presidents, which Americans wish to honor, not to permit these people who have suffered much to see their country overrun and destroyed. And we must honor this commitment.

But U.S. and Israeli interests are not identical. They often collide, and when they do, U.S. interests must prevail. Moreover, we do not view the Sharon regime as "America's best friend."

Since the time of Ben Gurion, the behavior of the Israeli regime has been Jekyll and Hyde. In the 1950s, its intelligence service, the Mossad, had agents in Egypt blow up U.S. installations to make it appear the work of Cairo, to destroy U.S. relations with the new Nasser government. During the Six Day War, Israel ordered repeated attacks on the undefended USS Liberty that killed 34 American sailors and wounded 171 and included the machine-gunning of life rafts. This massacre was neither investigated nor punished by the U.S. government in an act of national cravenness.

Though we have given Israel \$20,000 for every Jewish citizen, Israel refuses to stop building the settlements that are the cause of the Palestinian *intifada*. Likud has dragged our good name through the mud and blood of Ramallah, ignored Bush's requests to restrain itself, and sold U.S. weapons technology to China, including the Patriot, the Phoenix air-to-air missile, and the Lavi fighter, which is based on F-16 technology. Only direct U.S. intervention blocked Israel's sale of our AWACS system.

Israel suborned Jonathan Pollard to loot our secrets and refuses to return the documents, which would establish whether or not they were sold to Moscow. When Clinton tried to broker an agreement at Wye Plantation between Israel and Arafat, Bibi Netanyahu attempted to extort, as his price for signing, release of Pollard, so he could take this treasonous snake back to Israel as a national hero.

Do the Brits, our closest allies, behave like this?

Though we have said repeatedly that we admire much of what this president has done, he will not deserve re-election if he does not jettison the neoconservatives' agenda of endless wars on the Islamic world that serve only the interests of a country other than the one he was elected to preserve and protect.

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Review

Iraq: The War of the Imagination

By Mark Danner

State of Denial: Bush at War, Part III

by Bob Woodward

Simon and Schuster, 560 pp., \$30.00

The One Percent Doctrine: Deep Inside America's Pursuit of Its Enemies Since 9/11

by Ron Suskind

Simon and Schuster, 367 pp., \$27.00

State of War: The Secret History of the CIA and the Bush Administration

by James Risen

Free Press, 240 pp., \$26.00

Today, if we went into Iraq, like the president would like us to do, you know where you begin. You never know where you are going to end.

—George F. Kennan, September 26, 2002^[1]

I ask you, sir, what is the American army doing inside Iraq?... Saddam's story has been finished for close to three years.

—President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of Iran to Mike Wallace on *Sixty Minutes*, August 13, 2006-

In the ruined city of Fallujah, its pale tan buildings pulverized by Marine artillery in the two great assaults of this long war (the aborted attack of March 2004 and then the bloody, triumphant al-Fajr (The Dawn) campaign of the following November), behind the lines of giant sandbags and concrete T-walls and barbed wire that surrounded the tiny beleaguered American outpost there, I sat in my body armor and Kevlar helmet and thought of George F. Kennan. Not the grand old man of American diplomacy, the ninety-eight-year-old Father of Containment who, listening to the war drums beat from a Washington nursing home in the fall of 2002, had uttered the prophetic words above. I was thinking of an earlier Kennan, the brilliant and ambitious young diplomat who during the late 1920s and 1930s had gazed out on the crumbling European order from Tallinn and Berlin and Prague and read the signs of the coming world conflict.

For there in the bunkered Civil-Military Operations Center (known as the C-Moc) in downtown Fallujah, where a few score Marines and a handful of civilians subsisted in a broken-down bunkered building without running water or fresh food, I met young Kennan's reincarnation in the person of a junior State Department official: a bright, aggressive young man who spent his twenty-hour days rumbling down the ruined streets in body armor and helmet with his reluctant Marine escorts, meeting with local Iraqi officials, and writing tart cables back to Baghdad or Washington telling his bosses the truth of what was happening on the ground, however reluctant they might be to hear it. This young diplomat was resourceful and brilliant and indefatigable, and as I watched him joking and arguing with the local sheikhs and politicians and technocrats—who were meeting, as they were forced to do, in the