

South News

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Bush Exclusion Zone

by
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As it dives deeper daily, US President George Bush's plunging popularity increasingly inclines him towards the manufacturing of an international crisis in order to divert the attention of the American public away from his disastrous domestic policies - policies which have led to record levels of unemployment and poverty. His strategy for a "Khaki Election" is focused on a plan to start a new war against Iraq.

Since the end of the last Gulf War, the US. and its chief allies, Britain and France, have concocted one excuse after another in an effort to destroy the Iraqi Government and to fragment the Iraqi state. Last month, the New York Times exposed a plot by the US. administration to use a UN. inspection visit to Iraq's Ministry of Agriculture as a pretext to re-launch the Gulf War.

Now, with the help of Britain's Prime Minister John Major, a new pretext has been manufactured.

This sinister plan has as its aim the break-up of the Iraqi state into three separate and sectarian statelets. The intention is to have a Kurdish mini-state in the north, a Shi'a state in the South (Shi'ism is an Islamic religious sect); and a Sunni Moslem state in the centre (Sunnis are the orthodox mainstream tendency in Islam).

Reminiscent of the canonisation of Lebanon by the United States and Israel into Sunni, Shi'a, Druze and Christian fiefdoms, the plan is an ominous threat to the whole Arab Nation.

Shi'ites are a substantial religious minority in Iraq. They are racially and ethnically identical to other Iraqi Arabs. While not being an exact analogue, a simplified approximation of their position in relation to the Sunni would be something like the differences between Catholics and Protestants in the Christian religion.

That other sectarian disaster in the area, the state of Israel, is adequate testimony to the nightmarish consequences of crypto-religious sectarian states.

The overwhelming majority of the Shi'a population support the democratic centralist and socialist government of Iraq under the leadership of the **Arab Ba'ath (Renaissance) Socialist Party**.

A tiny handful of Shi'a fundamentalists are in league with the Iranian regime. Iran has long harboured a wild ambition to seize southern Iraq, particularly as the cities of Karbala and Najjaf contain shrines sacred to the memories of the Shi'ite saints Ali and Hussein.

The Iranian regime regards itself as the defacto leadership



of world Shi'ism and believes that it should control the holy shrines at Karbala and Najjaf. Not unnaturally, the majority of Iraqi Shi'ites have absolutely no desire to be ruled by the blood-thirsty fanatics in Teheran!

As Tony Walker in *The AGE* of 24-8-92 put it:

"Whatever Iran may be saying publicly about allied plans, however, it cannot be too displeased about the ban on Iraqi fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters, since it is deeply involved in supporting Shia rebels in southern Iraq with both weapons and ground support." (our emphasis)

It appears that the C.I.A. made a deal in late 1990 with the Iranian fanatics to keep Iran out of the war and to seize and keep any Iraqi aircraft forced into Iran during the impending conflict.

Allied commander, General Norman Schwarzkopf, drew up plans for an invasion of Iraq as early as 1989! In his youth, Schwarzkopf was educated in Iran. His father was once Chief of Police in Teheran under the Shah.

Now, the US. is honouring its part of the deal by providing air-cover for Iranian-based infiltration of southern Iraq. The US.-Iran deal has its origins in the *Iran-Contra* skuldugery in the 1980's.

Israel, Iran, and the United States colluded to send aid to the right-wing Contra rebels in Nicaragua. The money came from sales of American spare-parts for Iranian military equipment delivered through Israel. This military equipment was being used against...guess who?...yes of course...Iraq-during the Iran Iraq War. On the wider screen, we view the US., Britain, and France (headquarters of multinational Oil companies) acting to keep the Arab Nation divided and oppressed in order to control its vast oil reserves.

Further Balkanization of the Arab World is unacceptable.

Mahathir emerges as Third World's new champion

The Non-Aligned Movement's summit meeting gave Dr Mahathir another opportunity to project himself as the champion of the poor South against the industrialised North.

In his opening salvo on Tuesday, he said the West applied a hypocritical double standard to bloodshed in Yugoslavia and Iraq.

"The Europeans who have always considered the Balkans as their special responsibility... now seem quite unwilling to be involved," Dr Mahathir said.

"The Western attitude towards the daily killings of the Bosnians stands in stark contrast to the response to the alleged killings of the Kurds in Iraq. Ships and planes, men and money have been deployed there even when the evidence is not clear.

"Is this the face of the New World Order? If it is, it is a frightening face because it is grotesquely distorted. While minor human rights infringements will attract retribution, blatant abuses on a massive scale go

unpunished. What kind of New World Order is this?" he said.

He did not mention the United States by name. He didn't have to.

Dr Mahathir, 67, has emerged in recent years as one of the Third World's most vocal critics of Western values in general and the United States in particular.

The combative former physician has been Prime Minister of Malaysia for 12 years. An adroit politician even by the standards of a country where politicking seems to be the national pastime, Dr Mahathir expects his country to be "fully developed" by 2020.

Dr Mahathir urges his 18 million people to "look east" to Japan and South Korea as examples to emulate and derides what he sees as the hypocrisy and double standards of the West in free trade, press freedom and environmental concerns.

His outspoken criticism of "the sole superpower" wins him plaudits in Third World circles.

Dr Mahathir is seeking Asian support for his proposed East Asian Economic Caucus, which excludes and is opposed by the United States as a divisive element in world trade.

Dr Mahathir told the non-aligned summit that "recent history must surely convince us that a unipolar world is every bit as threatening as a bipolar world... the environment, human rights and the democratic system have all become instruments of economic domination".

He contends that poor countries of the South face obstacles that can be attributed to wealthy states of the North, including heavy debt burdens, restricted market access, low commodity prices and the deflection of dwindling financial aid to central and eastern Europe.

Washington may not be listening but the Third World is paying close attention.

Associated Press

Bush the Dark Knight

