



Backgroundunder

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WHY AMERICA MAY NOT HAVE TO GO IT ALONE: THE GROWING ANTI-SADDAM COALITION

NILE GARDINER, PH.D.

In an historic speech to the United Nations General Assembly, President George W. Bush made a powerful call to the international community to join the United States in addressing the threat posed by Saddam Hussein, the Iraqi regime, and Iraq's growing arsenal of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and ballistic missiles. Warning that Iraq poses "a grave and gathering danger," he called on the U.N. to "choose between a world of fear and a world of progress. We cannot stand by and do nothing while dangers gather. We must stand up for our security and for the permanent rights and hopes of mankind."

The President's direct challenge to members of the United Nations marked the official beginning of his effort to build an international coalition that will confront the totalitarian regime in Iraq, which has defied 16 Security Council resolutions in the past decade. Though world leaders appear deeply divided over the issue, there are clear signs that the tide is turning against Baghdad and support is growing for the Bush Administration's call for a regime change.

The strongest support for the Administration's position has come from Great Britain, which is almost certain to join the United States in seeking an end to the dictatorship in Iraq.

A military campaign against the Iraqi government is likely to be a combined U.S.–U.K. operation, with the strong possibility that Australian forces will also take part. It is conceivable that new members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), such as Poland and the Czech Republic, could also make a military contribution. NATO allies such as Turkey, Italy, and Spain, and a number of Arab nations such as Kuwait and possibly Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Qatar, should step up to provide logistical and strategic support. Diplomatic backing could come from a growing number of allies once it becomes clear that Saddam Hussein has no intention of complying with U.N. demands and that a military strike is inevitable.

As the debate continues in capitals across the world, it is more widely expected that the United

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States will not have to go it alone in Iraq. However, Washington will need to continue its efforts to cement support within the U.N. Security Council, Europe, and the Arab world. Specifically, the Bush Administration must:

- **Continue to press for a new U.N. Security Council resolution to deal with the threat posed by Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.** Saddam Hussein's latest offer to grant access to U.N. weapons inspectors should be seen by the international community as a continuation of the destabilizing status quo and rejected as a cynical and desperate ploy to cling to power.
- **Continue working with Great Britain to build the international coalition that will deal with the Iraqi problem.** Allied military, diplomatic, and strategic support will be vitally important not only for a campaign to destroy Iraq's WMD and eliminate its WMD programs, but also after the war to ensure that long-term war aims are implemented. These aims include supporting the Iraqi people's efforts to rebuild their country and establish a successful ruling federation representing the major sub-national groups; protecting Iraq's energy infrastructure and resources and assuring Iraq access to world markets; and preventing a possible attempt by Iran to assert its influence aggressively in the region once Saddam is gone.
- **Condemn the policies of appeasement of Iraq pursued by the European Union and the Arab League.** Leading opponents of taking action against Iraq, such as Germany, should be strongly reproached for moral cowardice and their failure to take a stand against a totalitarian regime that threatens regional and world security.
- **Establish joint U.S.–U.K. command of a post-war security force in Iraq.** U.S. and British chiefs of staff should retain central control over all coalition forces, including forces from countries such as France and Russia if they wish to participate. The Administration should oppose

the division of Iraq into administrative regions run by different allies on the model of Kosovo or post-war Germany.

CONCLUSION

The opponents of war in Iraq have predicted that America, the world's only superpower, would have to wage war on its own, with perhaps at best the support of the United Kingdom. However, mounting evidence suggests that the people of Iraq may be liberated by one of the biggest strategic and diplomatic coalitions in modern times. A significant and growing number of international allies support a regime change. President Bush's speech to the United Nations was a powerful wake-up call for action by an international community that, for a decade, has been in a state of denial and suspended animation in dealing with the Iraqi threat.

While the bulk of military operations will probably be carried out by U.S. and British forces, strategic and diplomatic support may be provided by a substantial number of allies, including key European nations such as Italy and Spain and some of Iraq's Arab neighbors. There is little likelihood that Arab troops will participate in the military action to liberate Iraq, but invaluable strategic support will be provided by Kuwait and possibly by Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Qatar. It appears more likely that the U.N. Security Council will not stand in the way of military action. Russia and France have indicated that they may support a U.S.-led strike, while China is likely to abstain. Many more countries will want to participate in a post-war presence in Iraq to help its people rebuild their nation into a successful and free federation.

Clearly, the tide is turning against Baghdad, and the United States may not have to go it alone to rid the world of the threat to security and peace posed by Saddam Hussein.

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WHY AMERICA MAY NOT HAVE TO GO IT ALONE: THE GROWING ANTI-SADDAM COALITION

NILE GARDINER, PH.D.¹

In an historic speech to the United Nations General Assembly, President George W. Bush made a powerful call to the international community to join the United States in addressing the threat posed by Saddam Hussein, the Iraqi regime, and Iraq's growing arsenal of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and ballistic missiles. Warning that Iraq poses "a grave and gathering danger," he served notice that

the purposes of the United States should not be doubted. The [U.N.] Security Council resolutions will be enforced, the just demands of peace and security will be met or action will be unavoidable and a regime that has lost its legitimacy will also lose its power.²

The President also called on the U.N. to choose between a world of fear and a world of progress. We cannot stand by and do nothing while dangers gather. We must

stand up for our security and for the permanent rights and hopes of mankind.³

This challenge marked the official beginning of his effort to build an international coalition to confront the totalitarian regime in Iraq that has defied 16 U.N. Security Council resolutions in the past decade. As a member of the United Nations, the United States has the authority under international law to proceed with military action to remove the Iraqi regime. U.N. Resolution 678 specifically authorizes member states "to use all necessary means" to "restore international peace to the area."⁴

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1. The author thanks Carrie Satterlee, Research Assistant in the Kathryn and Shelby Cullom Davis Institute for International Studies at The Heritage Foundation, for her assistance with this paper.
2. President George W. Bush, address to the General Assembly of the United Nations, New York, September 12, 2002.
3. *Ibid.*
4. See Brett D. Schaefer, "U.N. Authorization for War Is Unnecessary," Heritage Foundation *Executive Memorandum* No. 831, September 4, 2002.

Though world leaders appear deeply divided over the issue, there are clear signs that the tide is turning against Baghdad and in favor of the Bush Administration's policy. In recent days, for example, Saudi Arabia has stated that it may make its bases available for an allied military offensive. Italy and Spain have pledged their full support. France has stepped back from a stance of unequivocal opposition to the use of military force. And Russia and China have indicated that they may be willing to soften their opposition to war.

The strongest support for the Bush Administration's position has come from Great Britain, which is now almost certain to join the United States in seeking an end to the dictatorship in Baghdad. Prime Minister Tony Blair has joined with President Bush in warning against the threat from Saddam Hussein and his weapons of mass destruction, including the clear and present danger posed by Iraq's attempts to develop a nuclear capability. The two leaders have developed a "shared strategy" on Iraq. In Blair's view, "it is an issue not just for America, not just for Britain, it is an issue for the whole international community. The policy of inaction is not something we can responsibly adhere to."⁵

A military campaign against the regime in Iraq is likely to be a combined U.S.–U.K. operation, with the strong possibility that Australian forces will also take part. It is conceivable that new members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), such as Poland and the Czech Republic, could also make a military contribution. Logistical and strategic support should be provided by NATO allies such as Turkey, Italy, and Spain, and by a number of Arab nations, such as Kuwait and possibly Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Qatar. Diplomatic backing could well be offered by a growing number of allies once it becomes clear that Saddam Hussein has no intention of complying with U.N. demands and that a military strike is inevitable.

In terms of operational efficiency and intelligence gathering and sharing, this is a desirable scenario. An unwieldy oversized military coalition would make it difficult for the United States to proceed with its key war aims. An operation led by the United States and the U.K. would combine the best fighting forces in the world, with extensive combat

experience and a rich tradition of joint operations that in recent years have included campaigns in the Persian Gulf, Kosovo, and Afghanistan. It is no coincidence that the United Kingdom was the only nation to join the United States in launching military strikes against the Taliban on the opening day of the Afghanistan offensive.

The involvement of international allies in a post-war Iraq is likely to be far more extensive. Once it becomes clear that a regime change is inevitable, many nations that are hesitant to participate in military action are likely to want to get involved in the rebuilding of Iraq once the war is over. This would greatly ease the manpower and financial burden placed upon the United States, allowing the Administration to reallocate resources to other theatres of operation in the wider war against terrorism.

It is conceivable that several European and some Arab nations might wish to contribute forces to a post-war security force in Iraq. The participation of French and Russian troops in such a force should not be ruled out. Former members of the Warsaw Pact and now applicants for membership in NATO, such as Romania and Estonia, will be keen to prove their military and peacekeeping potential. In addition, non-combat police, medical, and technical units could be drawn from a wide range of countries.

It is imperative that overall command of the allied forces in post-war Iraq be held by American and British generals, both to ensure that key war aims are carried out and to help make sure that the security force is not riven by national or ethnic rivalries. A post-war geographical division of Iraq among different Western powers (on the model of post-war Germany or, more recently, Kosovo) would be undesirable.

As it moves forward in dealing effectively with the growing threat from Iraq, the Bush Administration should take the following specific actions:

- **Continue to press for a new U.N. Security Council resolution to deal with the threat posed by Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.** Saddam Hussein's latest offer to grant access to U.N. weapons inspectors should be seen by the international community as a continuation of

5. Joint press conference by Prime Minister Tony Blair and President George W. Bush, Camp David, September 7, 2002.

the destabilizing status quo and rejected as a cynical and desperate ploy to cling to power.

- **Continue working with Great Britain to build the international coalition that will deal with the Iraqi problem.** Allied military, diplomatic, and strategic support is vitally important not only for a campaign to destroy Iraq's WMD and eliminate its WMD programs, but also a post-war effort to ensure that long-term war aims are implemented. These include supporting the Iraqi people's efforts to rebuild their country and establish a successful ruling federation representing the major sub-national groups; protecting Iraq's energy infrastructure and resources and assuring Iraq access to world markets; and preventing a possible attempt by Iran to assert its influence aggressively in the region once Saddam is gone.
- **Condemn the policies of appeasement of Iraq pursued by the European Union and the Arab League.** Leading opponents of taking action against Iraq, such as Germany, should be strongly reproached for moral cowardice and their failure to take a stand against a totalitarian regime that threatens regional and world security.
- **Establish joint U.S.–U.K. command of a post-war security force in Iraq.** U.S. and British chiefs of staff should retain central control over all coalition forces, including forces from countries such as France and Russia if they wish to participate. The Administration should oppose the division of Iraq into administrative regions run by different allies on the model of Kosovo or post-war Germany.

ASSESSING SUPPORT FOR A WAR IN IRAQ

As the debate continues in capitals around the world, it is becoming clearer that the United States will not have to go it alone. However, Washington will need to continue its efforts to cement support within the U.N. Security Council, Europe, and the

Arab world. It is important that the United States and its allies not allow themselves to become divided once again over the issue of Iraq's compliance with U.N. mandates about weapons inspectors. Such division would be the trump card that enables Saddam Hussein to remain in power.

The Administration must focus on the fact that Baghdad has continually defied the will of the United Nations and has played hard and fast with international law. The Anglo–U.S. “special relationship” will play an especially important role in the coming months in building and strengthening what should become one of the biggest coalitions ever assembled to remove the grave threat to peace and security posed by a tyrannical regime.

BRITAIN

Tony Blair's Principled Position.⁶ Since President Bush's State of the Union address last January, in which he addressed the threat posed by the rogue states of Iraq, Iran, and North Korea, Tony Blair has been forthright in his condemnation of the Iraqi regime. In fact, Blair has stated his belief that a pre-emptive strike may be needed against Baghdad to deal with the growing threat posed by Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.⁷

The British Prime Minister recently laid out the position of his government in a major press conference in his parliamentary constituency of Sedgefield, Yorkshire. In a strongly worded rebuttal of European critics of President Bush's policy toward Iraq, Blair criticized the growing anti-American rhetoric emerging on the continent, describing it as “wrong, misguided and dangerous.”⁸ He described the Hussein administration as “an appalling, brutal, dictatorial, vicious, regime,” emphasizing that “I have absolutely no doubt at all that the vast majority of Iraqi people would love to get rid of Saddam Hussein.” Blair told reporters that “Iraq poses a real and unique threat to the security of the region and the rest of the world” and that this threat is a vitally important matter of national security for the international community:

6. For an assessment of British political opposition to Blair's support for President Bush, see Nile Gardiner, “Tony Blair's Challenge in Securing British Support for a War Against Iraq,” Heritage Foundation *Backgrounder* No. 1596, September 27, 2002.

7. “Blair Warns of Need for a Pre-emptive Strike on Iraq,” *Financial Times*, July 17, 2002.

8. Press conference by British Prime Minister Tony Blair, Sedgefield, Yorkshire, September 4, 2002.

The rest of the world has a responsibility, not just America, to deal with this. And if Britain and Europe want to be taken seriously as people facing up to these issues too, then our place is facing them with America, in partnership with America.⁹

Blair also has warned Iraq, stating that “there is not going to be negotiation about the existing resolutions, they are going to have to be complied with fully under a regime that actually works.” He has emphasized that a regime change may eventually be a necessary course of action:

The issue is making sure it is not a threat and either the regime starts to function in an entirely different way, and there hasn’t been much sign of that, or the regime has to change. That is the choice, very simply.¹⁰

It is expected that, over the coming months, Blair will play an increasingly important role in bolstering international diplomatic support for the British and U.S. position.

British Military Preparations. British involvement in the Iraq war will be crucial from a military, strategic, and diplomatic perspective. Without the active support and participation of the U.K., the United States will find it extremely difficult to build an international coalition to support a strike against Iraq and rebuild the nation once the Iraqi regime has been eliminated.

Baghdad already has made it clear that it believes Britain holds the key to America’s ability to build an international coalition against Saddam Hussein,¹¹ and the Iraqi strategy is to weaken or divide the Anglo–U.S. alliance and international opinion through bogus offers of access for U.N. weapons

inspectors. It is a strategy doomed to failure. Both Downing Street and the White House reject Iraq’s latest rhetoric in response to the President’s speech at the U.N.

In a clear indication that U.S.–U.K. war plans are already at an advanced stage, British Minister of Defence Geoff Hoon spent several days in early September holding talks with U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and other officials at the Pentagon to discuss war strategy. The recent resignation of Admiral Sir Michael Boyce, Britain’s Chief of Defence Staff and the most outspoken British military critic of U.S. plans to expand the war on terrorism,¹² will provide a boost to Anglo–U.S. military cooperation in the run-up to war. He will be replaced by General Sir Michael Walker, who successfully negotiated the withdrawal of Serbian forces from Kosovo.¹³

Reports from London indicate that the U.K. is gearing up to send over 30,000 military personnel, involving land, air, and sea forces, to participate in a U.S.-led offensive to remove Saddam Hussein from power. The British contribution is expected to include a division of 20,000 (both armored and infantry brigades) and an aircraft carrier group.¹⁴ Britain’s Special Air Service (SAS) and Special Boat Service (SBS) have been earmarked for sabotage strikes on Iraqi sites that house WMD.¹⁵

The U.K. also would be in a position to offer up to four Royal Navy nuclear-powered submarines equipped with Tomahawk cruise missiles, RAF Tornado GR4 bombers, and rapidly deployable light forces (such as the Parachute Regiment).¹⁶ The British Indian Ocean island of Diego Garcia, with its facilities for heavy long-range bombers and a harbor for pre-positioning military hardware ships, may be an important base during an Iraq conflict.¹⁷

9. *Ibid.*

10. *Ibid.*

11. See “Blair Is Our Last Hope, Says Iraq,” *The Guardian*, August 7, 2002.

12. See Admiral Sir Michael Boyce, “UK Strategic Choices Following the Strategic Defence Review and the 11th September,” Royal United Services Institute Annual Chief of Defence Staff Lecture, December 10, 2001.

13. “Forces Chief Who Upset U.S. to Quit,” *The Guardian*, July 24, 2002.

14. “British Troops Will Stay in Iraq for Five Years After Saddam Is Ousted,” *The Daily Telegraph*, July 14, 2002.

15. “SAS Plan to Blow Up Germ Sites,” *The Times*, July 12, 2002.

16. See the assessment of Michael Evans, Defence Editor, in *The Times*, August 17, 2002.

There are a number of indications that Britain's armed forces are actively preparing for war. Most of Britain's 2,400 troops are being withdrawn from Kosovo.¹⁸ Moreover, 1,500 British troops have been pulled out of NATO's ACE Mobile Force rapid reaction corps, and 3,000 soldiers from Britain's 1st (U.K.) Armoured Division have been recalled from a tank exercise in Poland. The Ministry of Defence is planning a mass mobilization of reservists in the fall.¹⁹

There have also been significant troop withdrawals from Sierra Leone, Afghanistan, Bosnia, and Macedonia.²⁰ The British aircraft carrier *Ark Royal*, with a full complement of Harrier jets, has sailed for an exercise in the Mediterranean, prompting speculation that it eventually may be used in a U.S.-led strike on Iraq.²¹

In preparation for the expanded British role in the war on terrorism, Chancellor of the Exchequer Gordon Brown has announced a rise in defense spending of £3.5 billion (US\$5.4 billion), the most significant increase in 20 years. Britain's defense budget will rise from £29.3 billion (US\$45 billion) in 2002 to £32.8 billion (US\$51 billion) by 2005–2006.²²

Senior defense officials in London are drawing up plans for Britain to play a leading role in the international security force in a post-war Iraq. As many as 15,000 British troops are expected to remain in the country for up to five years after Saddam Hussein has been removed from power.²³ British troops are widely respected for their peacekeeping and policing experience in a number of theatres of operation, from Northern Ireland, Kosovo, and Bosnia to Sierra Leone and Afghanistan.

FRANCE

French President Jacques Chirac has been critical of the Bush Administration's handling of the Iraq issue and its development of a new foreign policy doctrine. Addressing a conference of French ambassadors, Chirac warned the United States against "the temptation to seek to legitimise the use of unilateral and pre-emptive force."²⁴ In a recent interview, the French President attacked the doctrine of pre-emptive action as "extraordinarily dangerous" and warned America that "a few principles and a little order are needed to run the affairs of the world."²⁵

France continues to oppose U.S. plans for military action against Iraq in the hope that a diplomatic solution can be reached through the United Nations and war avoided. It is also keen to project its power through the U.N. Security Council, where it wields veto status. France understands the duplicitous nature of the Iraqi regime and the threat it poses, but it believes that containment is still the best solution.

The French would be content to continue their policy of appeasement of Saddam Hussein and to press for the lifting of U.N. sanctions. Paris is especially concerned not to alienate the more than 4 million Muslims living within France's borders or stoke the fires of Islamic extremism in Europe. It also keen to maintain and expand its economic interests in the region within the confines of the status quo.

However, there is growing evidence to suggest that some French strategists want to enter into a rapprochement with the Bush Administration over Iraq, indicating that French policy will harden

17. See "Windy Soldiers," *The Economist*, August 10, 2002.

18. "No Plans to Attack Iraq, Says Downing Street," *Financial Times*, July 13, 2002.

19. "Reservists Called Up in Build-Up for Iraq," *The Daily Telegraph*, August 19, 2002.

20. "British Troops Will Stay in Iraq for Five Years After Saddam Is Ousted."

21. "Ark Royal Departure Prompts War Talk," *BBC News Online*, September 2, 2002.

22. "Armed Forces Get Funding Rise," *BBC News Online*, July 15, 2002.

23. "British Troops Will Stay in Iraq for Five Years After Saddam Is Ousted."

24. "Chirac Tells Bush Not to Attack Iraq," *The Daily Telegraph*, August 29, 2002; "Chirac Urges Restraint Over Iraq," *The Independent*, August 30, 2002.

25. President Jacques Chirac, interview with *The New York Times*, September 9, 2002.

against Baghdad once it becomes clear that war is inevitable. In the words of a French official,

More and more at the highest levels are saying, “We don’t like a military operation but there’s likely to be one so what do we do?” So the goal is to keep all our options open and not criticize, not to provoke a backlash.²⁶

In a sign that France might eventually consider the possibility of military action if all else fails, President Chirac offered a proposal that the U.N. Security Council should put forth two resolutions on Iraq, the first calling for a three-week deadline on the readmission of weapons inspectors and the second mandating the use of military force if Baghdad fails to comply with the first.²⁷ Defense minister Michele Alliot-Marie has stated that

at the moment, there is no question of France committing itself in Iraq. Having said that, it is clear that the French armed forces are always ready. The aircraft carrier Charles De Gaulle is undergoing routine maintenance but can leave again at any time.²⁸

Once Paris is convinced that the United States will proceed with its effort to force a regime change in Iraq, regardless of U.N. opposition, it is conceivable that France may offer to participate in a post-war security force or even send troops to take part in military action. The French understand that opposition to war once the allies have embarked upon it would be futile and would result in a significant loss of diplomatic, strategic, and economic influence in the region.

President Chirac will be especially keen to be seen as joining the winning side. It is all too often forgotten that there was fierce opposition in France

to participation in the first Gulf War, which resulted in the resignation of President Mitterand’s defense minister, Jean-Pierre Chevenement. Eventually, France committed 20,000 troops to Operation Desert Storm.

French military manpower, including the French Foreign Legion, would be a valuable addition to Anglo–U.S. forces in a post-Saddam Iraq. However, given France’s unfortunate record in peacekeeping operations in Rwanda–Burundi and in the Balkans, it is imperative that French forces remain under the central command of U.S. and British chiefs of staff.

RUSSIA

Russia remains publicly opposed to the prospect of U.S. military action against Iraq and, like France, continues to call for the lifting of economic sanctions. President Vladimir Putin, according to Kremlin sources, has expressed “deep doubts” concerning the justification for war.²⁹

Baghdad sees Moscow as its closest ally and has been making a concerted effort in recent months to consolidate its economic ties with Russia in a desperate attempt to help stave off a U.S. strike. When Iraqi Foreign Minister Najir Sabri held talks in early September with his Russian counterpart Igor Ivanov, Ivanov declared that Russia could not see

a single well-founded argument that Iraq represents a threat to US national security. Any decision to use force against Iraq would not only complicate an Iraqi settlement but also undermine the situation in the Gulf and the Middle East.³⁰

For Russia, its economic interests in the region are paramount. Russia and Iraq recently unveiled plans for a 10-year trade deal worth \$60 billion, involving 67 contracts in oil and gas extraction, communications, and transport.³¹ Russia is Iraq’s

26. “France Mutes Its Criticism of U.S. Stance Towards Iraq,” *The New York Times*, August 29, 2002. See also Dominique Moisi, “France Befriends Its Old Adversary,” *Financial Times*, September 23, 2002.

27. This proposal should be rejected by the United States and Britain. As it does not threaten the immediate use of force, it is likely to result only in further prevarication by Iraq. For discussion of the French proposal, see Brett D. Schaefer and Baker Spring, “Bush Is Right on Iraq: The Issue Is Compliance, Not Inspections,” Heritage Foundation *Backgrounder* No. 1592, September 19, 2002.

28. “France Concedes That It Might Be Drawn Into a US-Led Attack,” *Financial Times*, September 11, 2002.

29. “Bush Hits Stumbling Block Over Iraq,” *BBC News Online*, September 6, 2002.

30. “Russia Warns of Veto on Iraq,” *BBC News Online*, September 2, 2002.

biggest oil stakeholder, with \$7 billion worth of concessions.³²

Tony Blair is convinced, though, that Russia can be brought on board for a war against Iraq, and the British Prime Minister is due to meet with President Putin in October. To win Moscow's support, Blair will need to assure Putin that Russia's economic interests in the region will be secure. Most important, Moscow needs to be convinced that the estimated £11 billion Cold War debt owed to Russia by the Iraqi regime will be repaid by a post-Saddam Iraqi government.³³

However, Britain and the United States must insist that the issue of repayment of Iraqi debts³⁴ by a post-Saddam government is directly linked to Russian support for a regime change. If Moscow attempts to obstruct U.S. war aims through the U.N. Security Council, it should understand that the allies would not guarantee the return of money owed by Iraq to Russia.

There are signals emanating from Moscow that Russia's position on Iraq may be shifting closer to that of Washington's. Sergei Prikhodko, Deputy Chief of Staff in the Putin government, has stated that "Russia and the United States have a common goal regarding the Iraqi issue—to secure guarantees that Iraq does not have weapons of mass destruction and will not have them in the future."³⁵

Russia has been an important ally of the United States in the war against terrorism, and President Putin will not want to alienate Washington once he is convinced that a war with Iraq is inevitable. It is

conceivable that Russia might offer troops for a post-war security operation in Iraq. Such an offer should be welcomed by the allies, but on the condition that Russian forces be placed firmly under U.S.–U.K. command.

CHINA

The issue of how to deal with Saddam Hussein will dominate discussions between President Jiang Zemin and President George W. Bush when the two leaders meet in Crawford, Texas, in late October.³⁶ China continues to maintain close ties to the regime in Baghdad and has voiced its "non-support" for U.S.-led military action against Iraq.

While China has consistently called for the lifting of U.N. sanctions and, as recently as August 27, had extolled its long friendship with Iraq, the Chinese foreign minister has made a point of warning Baghdad that it must "strictly implement U.N. Security Council resolutions" in order to avoid "the emergence of new complexity with the Iraq issue."³⁷ Subsequent Western news reports have stated that China "opposed" the use of force against Iraq, but this proved inaccurate after it emerged that China's position was merely that it "did not approve" of force and that what it "opposed" was "the arbitrary expansion of the war on terror."³⁸

Reading between the lines, the message Beijing is sending Baghdad is that Iraq has brought its problems on itself and that while China does not "approve" of the use of force, it will not oppose a U.N. resolution authorizing such force because such a resolution would not be "arbitrary." At the

31. "Huge Trade Deal Draws Russia to Iraq," *BBC News Online*, August 17, 2002.

32. Ilan Berman, "Moscow Courts the Axis," *National Review*, August 26, 2002.

33. For discussion of the upcoming summit, see "Blair to Meet Putin for Iraq Talks," *The Guardian*, September 5, 2002.

34. For more on how to deal with Iraqi debts owed to Russia, see Ariel Cohen, "Bringing Russia Into an Anti-Saddam Coalition," Heritage Foundation *Executive Memorandum* No. 812, April 29, 2002.

35. Quoted by *BBC News Online*, September 14, 2002.

36. The author thanks John Tkacik, Research Fellow in the Asian Studies Center at The Heritage Foundation, for his contributions to the analysis of China's position on Iraq.

37. "Chinese Vice-Premier Rejects 'Force' in Talks with Iraqi Minister," Xinhua News Agency, August 28, 2002.

38. See "Tang Jiaxuan Explicates PRC Opposition to US Strike on Iraq," *China Times*, September 10, 2002. Chinese Foreign Minister Tang was quoted as saying China "absolutely opposes...any arbitrary expansion of the scope of the attack." China's Foreign Ministry spokesman said on September 3 that "China always holds that the Iraqi issue should be solved through political and diplomatic channels within the framework of the United Nations, and is not in favor of use or threat of force. At the same time, we hope that Iraq will strictly implement the relevant resolutions of the UN Security Council in full and continue to maintain cooperation with the UN to avoid new complexity of the issue." See <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/34511.html>.

same time, although Chinese Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan averred that military action would “increase regional instability and tensions,” he seemed to signal China’s acquiescence by insisting that “the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Iraq should also be respected” regardless of whether there is a military strike or not.³⁹

While there is no direct prospect of China’s reversing its position and supporting allied military action, Beijing is likely to pursue a policy similar to the one it followed before the first Gulf War. In 1990 and 1991, China abstained over the Iraq issue in the U.N. Security Council, and there is every indication that it will do the same now, particularly if France and Russia decide not to vote against the United States and Britain.

The Chinese will be particularly concerned not to threaten the increasingly important economic ties between China and the United States by antagonizing American opinion. The United States is China’s largest export market, worth \$100 billion per year. In addition, the Bush Administration’s support for Chinese efforts to counter the threat posed by militant Islamic groups operating in the Central Asia border region, such as the Eastern Turkestan Islamic Movement, is likely to lead to increasing mutual cooperation between the two nations in the war on terrorism.⁴⁰

GERMANY

Chancellor Gerhard Schröder has made it clear that he is opposed to German participation in a U.S.-led military strike against Iraq. Schröder’s election victory means that Germany is certain to play no role in either the military campaign or a post-war security force. Berlin is also unlikely to cooperate with the United States regarding overfly rights and the use of U.S. military bases in Germany in a possible Iraq war.

In an attempt to boost flagging poll ratings, Schröder turned the prospect of an Iraq war into a central issue of his election campaign, exploiting overwhelming German public opposition to war. In an address at his opening campaign rally in Hanover, the Chancellor declared, in reference to German financial backing for the first Gulf War, that “we’re not available for adventures and the time of cheque book diplomacy is over once and for all.”⁴¹

In contrast to many of his European partners, Schröder has ruled out German military support even if it is backed by the United Nations. He believes that the threat posed by Iraq “may be overestimated” by senior advisers to President Bush, such as National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice.⁴²

German criticism of U.S. plans for Iraq has frequently descended into crude anti-American polemic. Ludwig Stiegler, the Social Democrats’ parliamentary leader, for example, has accused President Bush of acting like a Roman dictator: “Bush is behaving as if he were Caesar Augustus and Germany were his province Germania.”⁴³ Chancellor Schröder’s former Justice Minister Herta and Paul Amirault compared Bush Administration policy toward Iraq with Hitler’s strategy before World War II. She told the German regional newspaper *Schwabisches Tagblatt* that “Bush wants to divert attention from his domestic problems. It’s a classic tactic. It’s one that Hitler also used.”⁴⁴

The Social Democratic Party’s cynical election campaign has caused immense and potentially long-term damage to the U.S.–German alliance, which had been carefully crafted over the past half-century. Germany’s leaders are seemingly oblivious to the long-term effects of their antagonistic stance. Their policy position of appeasement toward Sad-

39. Quoted by *The Irish Times*, September 6, 2002.

40. The Afghanistan-based group was recently named as a terrorist organization by the United States. See Richard Armitage, Deputy Secretary of State, press conference at the conclusion of China visit, Beijing, August 26, 2002, at <http://www.usinfo.state.gov/>. See also “American Gives Beijing Good News: Rebels on Terror List,” *The New York Times*, August 27, 2002.

41. Quoted by *The Guardian*, August 6, 2002.

42. Gerhard Schröder, interview with *The New York Times*, September 5, 2002.

43. Quoted by *The Independent*, September 9, 2002.

44. See “Bush-Hitler Remark Shows U.S. as Issue in German Election,” *The New York Times*, September 20, 2002.

dam Hussein and opposition to the U.S.–U.K. plan has caused consternation not only in Washington, but in London and other European capitals as well.⁴⁵

The German administration has displayed moral cowardice in failing to stand by its international allies in confronting the growing threat posed by the Iraqi regime. It may well find itself cold-shouldered within the European Union if efforts to build a European coalition to support allied action against Iraq succeed.

ITALY

Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi has stated that Italy will be prepared to join the United States in using force if Iraq refuses to comply with U.N. resolutions. In a letter to an Italian newspaper, Berlusconi declared that

either things change, or it is necessary to act determinedly, using all diplomatic and political means possible, and without excluding the option of military force, to reinforce global security against a verifiable threat.⁴⁶

While the Italian leader is keen to explore diplomatic avenues first, he warned Iraq in a speech to the U.N. General Assembly that “if things do not change substantially it will be necessary to act within the framework of the United Nations to safeguard global security from a real threat.”⁴⁷

Berlusconi is looking to develop closer relations with President Bush and has avoided the anti-American rhetoric of some of his European counterparts. While he is likely to give full backing to a war against Iraq, in practical terms, Rome will find it difficult to provide combat-ready forces of the quality required to fight alongside U.S. and British troops. Italy’s main role is likely to be strategic, providing the use of its airbases, as well as diplomatic, helping to shore up a pro-war coalition in Europe.

SPAIN

Like Silvio Berlusconi, Spanish Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar has been one of President Bush’s strongest European supporters in the war on terrorism. Spain has cooperated with the United States closely in law enforcement, intelligence sharing, and the tracking of terrorist financial assets. Aznar has pledged his support for an allied strike against Iraq even if it is not supported by the U.N.⁴⁸ In a speech to the Spanish parliament, he made it clear that

we are on the side of those who want to prevent threats to the world.... It is incredible that the Iraqi regime for some time has been trying by all means to acquire weapons of mass destruction and give cover to terrorism. We will always be on the side of those who like us and with us fight for the cause of freedom against terrorism.⁴⁹

It is unlikely, though, that Spain could commit forces to a military campaign in Iraq. Even if it wished to participate in the war, its troops lack combat experience and capability, and they would be unable to make an effective contribution. Spain sent two navy frigates but no ground troops to the first Gulf War.

Spain could play a significant part in a post-war security force, however. Its soldiers have gained experience in the peacekeeping operations in Kosovo, Bosnia, and Macedonia.⁵⁰ Spanish diplomatic support, combined with that of Italy, Britain, and other European nations, will be invaluable for any U.S.-led effort to remove Saddam Hussein from power.

TURKEY

Turkish cooperation will be extremely important for projected allied operations against Iraq. The airbase at Incirlik, home to 700 U.S. and British per-

45. “UK Fears Schröder’s Stance Will Ruin Hopes of EU Unity,” *Financial Times*, September 10, 2002.

46. Quoted by *The Washington Times*, September 12, 2002.

47. Quoted by the Associated Press, September 15, 2002.

48. “Spanish Leader Backs Bush on Iraq,” Associated Press, September 11, 2002.

49. “Britain, Spain, Italy Urge Tough U.N. Line,” *The Washington Times*, September 12, 2002.

50. For an assessment of Spanish military capability, see Michael Evans, Defence Editor, *The Times*, July 18, 2002.

sonnel, is America's only forward-operating base in the region. It is currently used to run operation Northern Watch, which maintains the no-fly zone over Northern Iraq.

Turkey has expressed serious concern over planned allied military action against Iraq. The Turks are particularly worried that a regime change in Baghdad might give the Kurds in the north of the country free rein to set up their own independent state. An independent Kurdistan might encourage separatist Kurdish tendencies within Turkey. Turkey also fears that war could result in an influx of refugees and economic destabilization in the region.

Turkey is faced with a stark choice: either support its closest NATO ally, the United States, or join many in the Arab world in denouncing military action. The former option will win out; the harsh financial realities facing Turkey, with its \$16 billion loan package from the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, combined with a \$5 billion military debt to the United States, make it unlikely that Ankara will wish to jeopardize its relations with Washington.⁵¹

Although Turkey most likely will not participate in the allied offensive against Iraq, Ankara will probably provide strategic and logistical backing for the U.S.-led operation, including use of its airspace and airbases. Turkish participation in a post-war security force should be encouraged. The Turkish army has gained valuable experience running the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan, and the deployment of Muslim forces in Iraq would be advantageous for the alliance. Turkey will first need to be given firm guarantees by the United States and Britain that Iraq will remain intact once Saddam is overthrown.

AUSTRALIA

Alongside Britain, Australia is the only country to indicate firmly that it may be prepared to send

ground troops to support the United States in a war against Iraq. Australian Prime Minister John Howard has stated that an "armored brigade" could be deployed by Australia in the event of an Iraq war. This is believed to be the 1st Brigade, Australia's "premier war fighting formation" consisting of 3,000 personnel and 200 armored fighting vehicles, including a main battle-tank regiment, a parachute battalion, and a mechanized infantry battalion.⁵²

Australia's Foreign Minister Alexander Downer has expressed support for the Bush Administration's position with regard to Iraq and has condemned the "policy of appeasement" that has allowed Saddam Hussein to continue to develop weapons of mass destruction.⁵³ Iraq has responded to Australia's tough stance by threatening to halve imports of Australian wheat under the U.N. oil-for-food program.⁵⁴

Australia would be able to make a valuable contribution to an allied offensive against Baghdad. Further, with its successful experience of peace-keeping operations in East Timor, Australia's expertise and manpower should be utilized in a post-war security force.

CANADA

In contrast to Australia, Canada remains opposed to the Bush Administration's position on Iraq. Prime Minister Jean Chrétien is against a U.S. military invasion and supports a U.N.-led resolution of the situation involving the return of weapons inspectors.⁵⁵ Defence Minister John McCallum has said that Canada "must not rush into combat" and that "we must be very careful."⁵⁶

As one of the world's eight leading economic powers, Canada has played a role in the international debate over Iraq that is both underwhelming and insignificant, reflecting an attitude of nonchalance toward the U.S. drive to build an international coalition. Chrétien's government remains

51. For discussion of this issue, see "Turks Would Be Reluctant Ally Against Iraq," *The Washington Post*, September 8, 2002, and "Turkish Opposition to U.S.'s Iraq Plans Is Muted," *The Wall Street Journal*, July 19, 2002.

52. "Australia Offers Brigade for Action Against Iraq," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, July 31, 2002.

53. "Downer Signals Australia Will Commit Troops to Attack on Iraq," *Australian Associated Press*, July 13, 2002.

54. "Australia Rejects Iraqi Threat on Wheat," *BBC News Online*, July 23, 2002.

55. "Canada Rejects Strike on Iraq," *The Washington Post*, September 10, 2002.

56. "Dieppe Lessons Apply in Iraq, McCallum Warns," *Toronto Globe and Mail*, August 20, 2002.

virtually alone (together with Germany) in the West in its failure even to acknowledge that Baghdad possesses weapons of mass destruction. Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister Bill Graham has stated, “we have no evidence that he [Saddam Hussein] is in possession of weapons of mass destruction or that he would intend to use them at this time.”⁵⁷

Ottawa’s stance of burying its head in the sand has been likened by Canadian opposition politicians to Neville Chamberlain’s appeasement of Hitler in the 1930s.⁵⁸ Chrétien’s recent remarks linking supposed U.S. arrogance with the events of September 11 also raise serious questions over the Prime Minister’s judgment with regard to the wider war on terrorism.⁵⁹

The prospect that Canadian forces might join in allied military action to remove Saddam Hussein from power is thus remote at this time. Canada, however, has broad experience of peacekeeping operations in a number of war zones, including Afghanistan and Somalia, and if there is a shift in policy on the Iraq question, Canadian forces could make a valuable contribution to a post-war security force.

ARAB NATIONS

Amr Moussa, Secretary-General of the Arab League, has warned that a U.S.-led strike on Iraq would “open the gates of hell in the Middle East.” The 22-member Arab League, which includes a number of rogue states such as Iraq, Libya, and Sudan, has called for the

total rejection of the threat of aggression on Arab nations, in particular Iraq, reaffirming that these threats to the security and safety of any Arab country are considered a threat to Arab national security.⁶⁰

The majority of Middle East governments have publicly condemned U.S. plans for a regime change in Baghdad, with the notable exception of Kuwait.

Kuwait. Kuwait is the only Arab country to strongly come out in favor of removing the threat posed by Saddam Hussein. Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed Sabah Salem al-Sabah has emphasized that “we consider the war against Iraq to have never ended.”⁶¹

Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia, America’s closest ally in the first Gulf War, had been one of the region’s most strident opponents of U.S. military action. The Saudis have continued to develop their economic ties with Iraq in recent months and plan to hold a trade fair in Baghdad in November. Saudi firms earned \$68 million through trade with Iraq in the first half of 2002.⁶²

However, the Saudis recently reversed their position and now indicate that the United States might be able to use its bases if the U.N. mandates military action. This change opens the possibility that the U.S. military could use the Prince Sultan Air Base near Riyadh, home to 5,000 U.S. military personnel, to launch strikes against Iraq. Saudi Arabia also houses the Combined Aerospace Operations Centre (COAC), which became fully operational last year. COAC would be vital for co-ordinating an air campaign in the Gulf.⁶³

As the Saudi turnaround demonstrates, it is important not to overestimate the significance of Arab public opposition to a regime change in Iraq. Arab leaders are keen not to offend domestic opinion and, in some cases, are worried about the stability of their own regimes. Saddam Hussein remains a deeply unpopular figure in much of the Arab world, and it is unlikely that there will be many tears shed in the region over his demise.

57. Quoted by Haroon Siddiqui in *The Toronto Star*, August 8, 2002.

58. See the comments made by Leon Benoit, Defence spokesman for the Canadian Alliance, in reference to the statements of Defence Minister John McCallum, in *The Toronto Globe and Mail*, August 20, 2002.

59. Interview with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, September 11, 2002.

60. “Arabs, By Degrees, Oppose American Attack on Iraq,” *The New York Times*, September 6, 2002; “Arab States Reaffirm Opposition to Attack on Iraq,” *The Washington Post*, September 5, 2002.

61. “Kuwait Breaks Rank on Saddam,” *The Daily Telegraph*, September 2, 2002.

62. “Saudis Confirm Baghdad Trade Fair,” *BBC News Online*, September 10, 2002.

63. See “Saudi Hi-Tech Air Base,” *BBC News Online*, September 16, 2002.

Once war begins, it is conceivable that levels of opposition to regime change will fall dramatically. In practical terms, the Arab world is highly unlikely to stand in the way of U.S. military action. In the words of a Kuwait government official, “there may be the need publicly to be anti-war, but under-the-table deals are being struck.”⁶⁴

Jordan. There is a sharp contradiction between the anti-war rhetoric voiced by some Arab leaders and actual military developments on the ground. Jordan is a case in point. There are growing indications that Jordan has accepted the inevitability of war on its doorstep and is cooperating with U.S. military preparations to oust Saddam. Several thousand U.S. Navy and Marine Corps personnel currently are conducting a joint military exercise with the Jordanian Armed Forces, dubbed “Infinite Moonlight.”

Qatar. Similarly, Qatar, which has publicly voiced its opposition to another war in the Gulf, is hedging its bets with regard to military action by the United States. Like Jordan, Qatar is hoping for a U.N.-brokered agreement to halt a possible conflict.⁶⁵ However, if it becomes clear to Doha that Saddam’s days are numbered, Qatar is likely to cooperate with U.S. aims in the region. It is probable that the huge Adid desert base in Qatar will be used by the United States in the event of a war. America is investing over \$4 billion in developing the Adid base, and the base could be used as an alternative headquarters for U.S. command in the Gulf.⁶⁶

CONCLUSION

The doomsayers and opponents of war have predicted that America, the world’s only superpower, will have to wage war on its own, with perhaps at best the support of the United Kingdom. However, mounting evidence suggests that the people of Iraq may be liberated by one of the biggest strategic and diplomatic coalitions the world has seen in modern times.

Far from being a unilateral action undertaken by the United States, a regime change in Iraq is likely

to be supported by a significant and growing number of international allies. The tide is starting to turn against the opponents of war. The Bush Administration has begun the process of building up the broad-based coalition that will bring about the removal of the despotic dictator, Saddam Hussein, from power. President Bush’s speech to the United Nations was a powerful wake-up call for action by an international community that, for a decade, has been in a state of denial and suspended animation in dealing with the Iraqi threat.

While the bulk of military operations are likely to be carried out by U.S. and British forces, strategic and diplomatic support may be provided by a substantial number of allies, which will include key European nations, such as Italy and Spain, and some of Iraq’s Arab neighbors. There is little possibility that Arab troops will participate in the military action to liberate Iraq, but invaluable strategic support will be provided by Kuwait and possibly by Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Qatar.

There also is an increasing likelihood that the U.N. Security Council will not stand in the way of military action. Russia and France have indicated that they may support a U.S.-led strike, while China is likely to abstain.

It is possible that many more countries will wish to participate in the post-war reconstruction of Iraq, including participation in an international security force. Command of such a post-war force should be jointly operated by the United States and Great Britain. American and British chiefs of staff should retain central control over all coalition forces to assure that war aims are achieved and that the new government of Iraq is given the best chance to succeed. It is imperative that the security of a post-Saddam Iraq is not compromised by the national interests and differing agendas of the wide range of countries that are likely to play a part in the rebuilding process.

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64. Quoted by *The Daily Telegraph*, September 2, 2002.

65. See “Qatar Raises Stakes Over Iraq,” *BBC News Online*, August 26, 2002.

66. “Saddam Woos Arab Friends and Enemies,” *The Guardian*, August 10, 2002; “America’s Gulf Base,” *Foreign Report*, August 22, 2002.