

Legitimacy of the Post-War Iraqi Government

Now that their epic 12-year struggle to preserve the regime of Saddam Hussein is nearing its final relegation to the cesspool of history, the forces of Weasel are **turning their malevolent attention** to the next government of Iraq. The one that will replace Saddam's.

The thrust of their opposition to Iraq's liberation was that Saddam's regime is *legitimate*. In other words, states are sovereign: no matter what they may do to their people and no matter what future threat they pose to the world (so the theory went), their rule is legitimate. Only the Security Council of the United Nations can take away this legitimacy and since (under the Weasel interpretation at least) it refused to do so, the liberation of Iraq is illegal. Likewise, it is only the UN that can grant legitimacy to any post-war government of Iraq.

Hence, before anyone had any idea what such a government would look like or how it would behave, the Weasels were already **threatening it pre-emptively**:

The European Union issued a blunt warning yesterday that it would not finance the reconstruction of Iraq if Washington went to war without a clear mandate from the United Nations.

Chris Patten, the European external affairs commissioner, said it would be "very difficult" to convince states already facing a budget crunch that they should spend large sums of money repairing the damage done by America in a conflict they opposed.

Just step back and consider the sheer depravity of this threat and what lies behind it. Be optimistic for a moment. Suppose that sometime soon the murder and the torture and the repression and stagnation in Iraq have come to an end and a new government is trying to rebuild the country and feed the hungry. The Europeans will suddenly find it "very difficult" to help. Why? Well, it's all about legitimacy: Let the new government be as democratic and representative as you like; let it respect human rights and religious freedom and let it achieve prodigies of reconciliation; let it recognise Israel's and Kuwait's right to exist and let it disarm so

transparently that Hans Blix completes his work in an afternoon; let

it excel in every virtue known to Paris and beyond, and it will avail it nothing. For what the Weasels will find unforgivable about the new Iraqi government has nothing to do with what that government will do or be. It is not really about Iraq at all. It is that *the Americans deposed Saddam*. For their taint of association with this crime, Chris Patten will withhold aid to the people of Iraq. This is the same Chris Patten, incidentally, who is the principal cheerleader for EU funding of the Palestinian Authority on "humanitarian" grounds, and who scornfully (and successfully) **opposed** the proposed European Parliament investigation into the use of these funds for terrorism.

Will the UN likewise withhold legitimacy? The weasels would certainly have them **threaten to**:

In the face of continued US reluctance to consider a role for the UN in postwar Iraq, Mr de Villepin insisted that the UN was vital to tackling problems in Iraq, and their repercussions in the region. "The requirement for UN approval is both a principle and a necessity," he said. The US and Britain, above all, would find political cover and legitimacy from the UN necessary in the war's aftermath.

Necessary, why? Because should the Coalition be unwilling to pay the Weasels' price, the UN will exert its magical prerogative and deny the new Iraqi government legitimacy.

And what is this price? *Control*:

In the war's aftermath, he accepted that "it is clear that the countries that have taken the lead on the ground may have a special responsibility". But they should exercise it "under the umbrella of the UN to confer legitimacy". The UN should approve, even if it did not run, operations in postwar Iraq.

By what right? What will entitle the Weasels and their bloodstained allies, all the tyrants of the world, to control the destiny of the people whose liberation they tried so long and hard to prevent, and for which Coalition soldiers are today fighting and dying?

Fortunately the legitimacy of governments is not really in the gift of the UN. It comes from **the consent of the governed**. In the long run this is the standard against which it will, in practice, be judged no matter what anyone says. It is a standard against which the United States, but conspicuously not the UN, *wants* its post-war policy to be judged. The UN is not – or at least not yet – a legitimate or honest judge. But whether the UN in future can find a role in a world order based on that criterion of legitimacy, or whether, alternatively, it continues to be a major obstacle to the creation of such a world, is the standard against which the UN must itself be judged.

UPDATE: **The Emperor Misha** has graciously noticed our humble

remarks and has proposed that, consequently, as the war draws to a close, the Weasels would be better renamed "The Axis of Vulture". Good point.

FURTHER UPDATE: The Vultures are **squawking louder**.

Fri, 04/04/2003 - 08:55 | [digg](#) | [del.icio.us](#) | [permalink](#)

Tony Blair

Can Tony Blair be trusted not to betray the US in this matter? I don't like what I'm seeing him say.

by [Chris](#) on Fri, 04/04/2003 - 11:24 | [reply](#)

Tony Blair

I don't like what I'm hearing Blair say either (not that I like what I hear Colin Powell saying, but that's another story).

Despite their troops who are doing a fine job in Iraq, the Brits (particularly that arse Jack Straw) are determined to insist that Israel not be allowed to do exactly what the "coalition" is doing - namely drain the swamp and shoot the rats....Don't trust the Brits. Without W leading the charge they'd have sat this whole thing out too.

by a reader on Sat, 04/05/2003 - 04:03 | [reply](#)

Interesting

The thought that that the UK would stay out of a fight to liberate a country of the oppressed gives me chills. I am hoping that as an Australian, that my government made the decision to deploy to Iraq, not because the UK was involved, but because it was the "right" thing to do. Admittedly, we didn't see too much overt US/UK presence in East Timor, although it was VERY nice to know they were there. The western democracies (why western, look how far east Australia is!) are free countries. If we can create other democracies, it is our legitimate right, nay, our duty, to do so. Oppression by other nations is wrong. I know that sounds simplistic, however this is essentially the crux of the argument, economic factors notwithstanding. We should not tolerate any nation that does not allow a citizen to speak his/her mind, without persecution. I understand personal limitations and inflammatory remarks, however, democracy is a robust concept that has weathered these tribulations before. And will do so gain. Free speech for all. Regardless of colour, race or creed. For fuck's sake, it's deeds, not words, that are the evil actions. Speak evil, be derided as an ignorant asshole. Do evil, be bombed. So sayeth the world.

by a reader on Sat, 04/05/2003 - 13:48 | [reply](#)

(1) That was a brilliant post

(1) That was a brilliant post. I agree completely and wholeheartedly.

(2) It worries the shit out of me to hear all that UN nonsense again and again, with the peaceniks latching onto a new issue to beat the US with. There has been no public information (I refrain from saying anything about the broadcast media) about what an interim government needs to do (flush out the Ba'ath Party functionaries and destroy its power, provide security, institute the rule of law and civil rights, establish freedom of speech and assembly) and how Iraqis will end up with a Russian situation (gangsters, organised crime) or a new set of Saddam-lookalike replacements, if the UN is allowed a hand in things. They have spent 12 years cosyng up to the Ba'ath functionaries, and even now attack the British army for trying to destroy the party's power. People think all you need is a wish and a prayer and the virtuous power to stop evil US corporations getting their hands on the oil. What is perhaps most sickening is that any authority through the UN Security Council would involve Syria, which is hardly any better than Iraq as far as promoting terrorism is concerned, and ought to be taken out next!

by a reader on Mon, 04/07/2003 - 10:46 | [reply](#)

Is it even possible?

We're all kinda assuming this whole thing is possible, but sometimes I wonder. Like, can we take out the regime and impose a better one? How can we be sure that's possible if the people there are still the same people they were before? don't get me wrong--I sure HOPE this is possible. It's necessary! But is it possible? Is Iraqi opinion going to suddenly turn good? How do we know they don't prefer Hussein or that kind of regime? Show me the Arab countries that have a Western democracy. Where are they? Do Arabs want a democracy? Even Turkey's going down the tubes. Aren't we trying to impose our own values on people who just ain't gonna get it? Help me here, guys!

Bill Henderson

by a reader on Mon, 04/07/2003 - 12:41 | [reply](#)

gradual change

Certainly, we can't drag a people into the 21st century, kicking and screaming, but surely we can meet them more or less where thier understanding is, and bring them along through education and democratic institutions? I hope.

by a reader on Mon, 04/07/2003 - 14:30 | [reply](#)

post Saddam Iraq

You are, in general terms, talking my language. Not many weblogs

are presenting anything new or useful.

I set up baghdadskies.blogspot.com in order to work out my ideas in a context of memories of Iraq in the 1950s. Though not as slick as your site - especially in its lack of comments and email - it has some value.

A general algorithm that includes:

FACT

IDEA

CLARIFY

DELIMIT

DEFINE

EXPLAIN

PREDICT

would allow anyone to think through any set of ideas without resorting to the the methods of "argument" outlined on my weblog which Schopenhauer detailed in his "The Art of Controversy".

Sincerely,

Andy

by a reader on Thu, 04/10/2003 - 12:06 | [reply](#)

Duty

"If we can create other democracies, it is our legitimate right, nay, our duty, to do so."

and so by this "duty" we enslave ourselves

by a reader on Sat, 05/17/2003 - 02:49 | [reply](#)

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