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THE NEOCONS' SECOND FRONT

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Inside Track

The Neocons' Second Front

May 26, 2005

By Anne Williamson

"The idea of countries helping others become free, I would hope that would be viewed as not revolutionary, but rational foreign policy, as decent foreign policy, as humane foreign policy." -George W. Bush



Two hand-in-glove presidential appointments – Undersecretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz to the World Bank, and Undersecretary for Arms Control John Bolton as US Ambassador to the UN – have had wildly divergent histories. In



Wolfowitz's case, once the initially-hesitant WB Directors were assured their jobs, their cut of the pie and their national companies' contracts would continue unabated, they slipped right into place while

praising the "intellectual depth" of a man who has never so much as written a book.

Bolton, on the other hand, for weeks has had to sweat and grapple his way to a Senate floor vote, humiliated by having failed to acquire the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's endorsement despite its Republican majority. Yet Bolton's damaged goods are ones the president declines to abandon, despite their unexpected political drag. Why?

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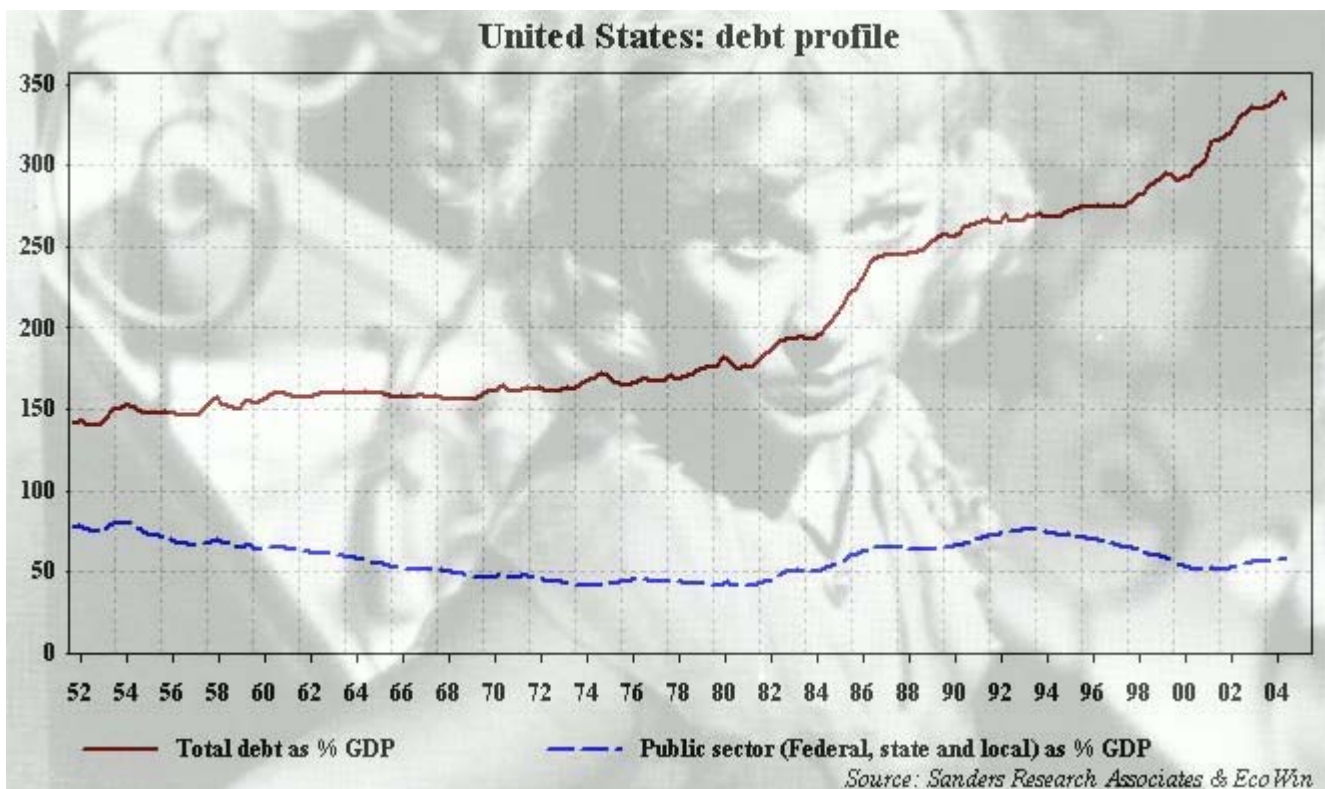
What is the task that any garden variety bully in an administration crowded with overbearing blowhards couldn't do just as well?

Without further detail other than the word "reform", the Average Joe is left thinking the administration wants to clean the place up what with the oil-for-food scandal, and UN peacekeepers' sexual abuse, and, he thinks, that's probably a good thing. If it doesn't work, then Bush will just shut it down, and, under those circumstances, that, too, would be a good thing. Ah, if only the situation was so sweetly judicious – but it is not.

Building America's second front

Bolton and Wolfowitz are part of the Bush administration's initial redeployment of neo-con assets in the building of the American empire's second front. John Bolton is being put in place to militarize the UN. As for Paul Wolfowitz, he is not leaving the Pentagon so much as he is bringing the Pentagon to the World Bank.

In his misbegotten quest for empire, George W. Bush faces two potentially decisive shortages – money and soldiers. The deficits in boots and dollars are becoming acute. Precipitously falling military enlistments for a US military stretched thin in Iraq, Afghanistan, and 128 other countries around the world, indicate Bush has about 18 months to solve the boots problem. But it is America's Blanche DuBois economy, whose debt levels – public and private – have gone parabolic, that threatens the entire imperial enterprise. Without the ready funds normally forthcoming from the Treasury bill market, a double maltd of human kindness courtesy of foreign central banks, the president would have to rely upon a highly-indebted population that simultaneously has no savings and yet retains great expectations of the public purse. Clearly such a people can not carry the imperial standard. At least, not alone they can't.



Reconstruction of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty

A number of informed observers have made the case that the tip of Bolton's spear is to be the reconstruction of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Seventh Review of which by representatives of the 188 signatories is now convened in New York City. [1] In a nutshell: the administration alleges, without evidence, that Iran is developing nuclear weapons and must be stopped. But since the Iranians are not in violation of the treaty, the treaty must first be changed or destroyed, and then the matter rushed to the Security Council. [2] If Bolton can only be in position by June, then the plans Bush reportedly ordered last year

for bombing the Iranian nuclear reactor at Bushehr can still be executed before the Russians fuel the completed works, thereby taking them off the target map.[3]



source: www.globalsecurity.org

However it happens, once the United Nations is struck dumb in conditions made shambolic by yet another US demand for a pre-emptive attack on a sovereign nation that presents no direct threat to the US, it will either be militarized or scrapped. Should the UN fail to take up its “responsibilities” in the War on Terror, Bolton, with his willingness to tailor intelligence, to by-pass procedure, to spy on and intimidate, if not to blackmail, colleagues and underlings, is the perfect Big Bad Wolf to huff and puff and threaten to blow down the UN’s house, along with the out-sized benefits and privileges and opportunities for colossal graft international bureaucrats prize above all else. [4] (Perhaps this is why the *Wall Street Journal* has begun greasing the wheels of an outfit known as the League of Democracies.) [5]

Time for a World Army

The idea of a UN army isn’t new, but mostly it was an idea of assorted world-improvers of the socialist left. Now that the “cornpone fascists” [6] of the right are on the march, it is an idea whose time has come. World courts, world investment agreements, world trade organizations, world environmental agreements, world bans on personal firearms, world struggles against terrorism, and world data bases require a capability for coercion under a single authority. UN Peacekeepers, funded by donation and deployed by consensus, are clearly not a solution to the demands of one-superpower-realpolitik.

The Clinton administration did its best to advance America’s reach through the UN, only to find what it thought was a better path through Nato.

In 1992, it was UN General Secretary Boutros Boutros-Gali who did propose a UN standing army (composed of a 1,000 troops from each country to be available within 24 hours) along with a UN tax to fund the effort. [7] And it was only in the autumn of 1997 that Bill Clinton did make an unheralded \$200,000 contribution towards a UN study of how to realize Boutros-Gali’s proposal, [8] but by 1994, the US president had already got as far as dispatching US troops under UN command in Somalia, Macedonia and Haiti.



Clinton, stymied by the Balkan Conflict, chafed under the fact that post-Vietnam, American public opinion restrained the use of the US Armed



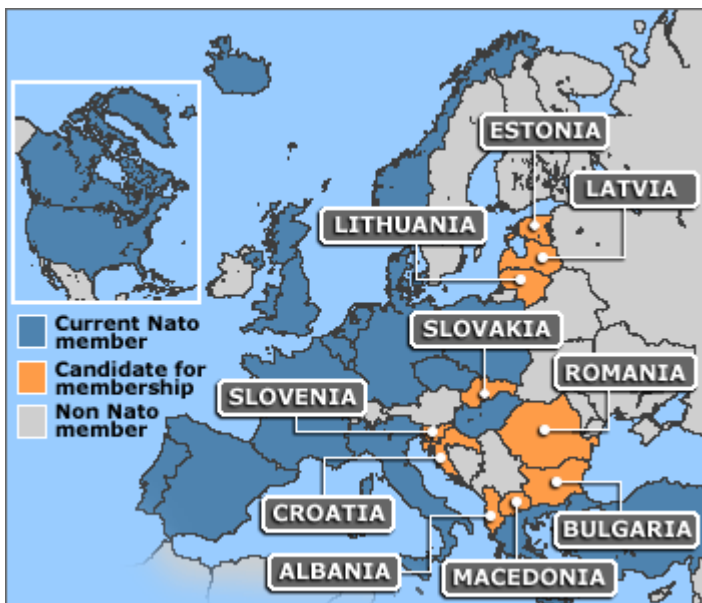
Forces. The Somalian misadventure had been quite enough for most Americans. It was Clinton's appointment of a diplomatic amateur and KGB protégé, former *Time Magazine* journalist, Strobe Talbott, as his man at the State Department that soon dealt him a more promising hand. A Harvard man, Talbott had had a moment of genius early in his tenure: Why not give the Treaty of Versailles a second shot and call it "Nato expansion"?

The resulting Partnership-for-Peace program provided a framework for Nato troops to engage in war games at US taxpayers' expense with the shattered armies of the Warsaw Pact in locales once considered exotic, like Ukraine. In reality, the program laid the crucial groundwork for public acceptance of the routine movement of Nato troops outside the alliance countries' national boundaries on the basis of a vague, post-cold war gesture towards the defeated Soviet block. Later, when a still-frustrated president turned to Nato (in contradiction to Article 5 of the formerly defensive Alliance's founding treaty) and along with other ally contingents, the US army was set down in Bosnia like a porcupine in a wire mesh cage, the only real debate, however muted, was about the deployment of US armed forces.

Nato Expansion or when is a Treaty not a Treaty?

Simultaneously, the Clinton administration advanced its cause with something known as "The Founding Act". The Founding Act is an agreement between Nato and Russia governing the two entities' relations in light of an enlarged alliance, but it was designed to be an end run around the US Constitution, which requires Senate approval for a "Treaty", but not for an "Act". This semantic camouflage enabled an agreement with a foreign nation regarding the terms of a proposed and as yet-unauthorized expansion of a long-standing military alliance. In late April 1998, with debate sidelined by media focus on the "Act" and not the expansion, 81 Senators, their pockets stuffed with \$33 million of defense manufacturers' campaign contributions, authorized the "rolling expansions" of Nato enlargement. Less than a year later, the Nato bombing campaign against a falsely-demonized Serbia commenced with no dissent of consequence worldwide.

In the Clinton team's grand vision of an expanded Nato, officers would be first and foremost Americans, then Brits and Germans mostly with a judicious sprinkling of French officers added to the mix. The second tier of Nato forces would be composed of second tier EU alliance members and fighting troops were to be drawn initially from those Central European nations aspiring to EU membership like Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria and the Czech Republic (as did happen years later in the invasion of Iraq). Upon their ascension to the EU, thereby putting in place the final bricks of Fortress Europe, troops would be drawn from nations further east that also aspired to either or both Nato and EU membership. Thus would the office of the US executive have its own international army, and congress escape the constitutional responsibilities of its war-making powers.



Back to square one

It was the Bush administration that tore apart Bill Clinton's imperial scaffolding. In the rush to invade Iraq, Nato said no to the United States. After all, what was in it for Europe? The illicit Serbian operation delivered the EU a venue for a supranational energy grid, with pipelines carrying oil from the Caspian and Halliburton-built crude-processing refineries throughout. In Iraq, contrarily, the Bush crowd made clear US enterprises would swallow all the oil and reconstruction contracts while putting an end to everyone else's surreptitious feeding at Saddam's oil-for-food table.

It is no small irony then that the mission of Bush's UN Ambassador, whoever that may prove to be, begins back at Square One circa 1992, a UN standing army to function as the militant arm of the US executive while doing a welcome end-run around the US congress.

And waiting in the wings...

Regarding Wolfowitz, the deployment of multi-lateral lending to imperial purpose is not an idea desperate neocons just recently stumbled on. It's been tucked away in their hip pocket all along. In 1999-2000, the efforts of a handful of Republicans seeking to hold the Clinton Administration accountable for the debacle of Russian reform via hearings on the Bank of New York money laundering scandal by the House Committee on Banking and Financial Services, and the Cox Committee's untitled report on the reform effort's abject failure, both fizzled somewhat mysteriously. But the curious and perplexed had only to peruse back issues of *The Weekly Standard* (shouldn't that be *The Weakening Standard*?), which published the Clinton Administration's Russian/Ukrainian reform bagman Anders Aslund's outrageously self-serving analysis to understand why those partisan efforts faded quickly. The neocons wanted to preserve both the IMF and the World Bank along with the US bilateral foreign aid infrastructure so that all would be at the ready when they returned to power.



The one reform effort in the wake of over \$200 billion IMF bailouts throughout the 1990s (to Mexico, Thailand, Indonesia, Korea, Russia, Brazil Turkey and Argentina) that was allowed to come to fruition was Carnegie Mellon's Allan Meltzer's congressionally sponsored examination of the IMF and the World Bank, which itself was authorized in return for an additional \$18 billion US contribution to the institutions in 1998. Meltzer's International Financial Institution Advisory Commission signed off on a non-binding program to scale back the IMF to its original mandate in which it was to serve only as a short-term lender of last resort to solvent member governments facing liquidity crises, to cease lending to those nations able to raise capital in the international debt markets (like China who gobbled up the World Bank's cheap loans), and for the World Bank to administer poverty alleviation grants instead of loans to the poorest countries, all of which are in chronic, hopeless default on their crushing and truly odious debts. [9]



Unsurprisingly, the only recommendation to catch fire was the grants-over-loans one for the poorest countries. (After all, defaulted loans to deadbeats gum up the imperial works with

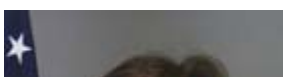
interminable and messy legal consequences – witness Argentina — that could threaten World Bank bond ratings; therefore, the proper solution is to just give the money away!). It is the grants option that Wolfowitz is sure to employ repeatedly to bend the Bank to neo-con purpose.



Money will not so much flow as flood into targeted countries, like Iraq and Israel, even Palestine. (And with Stanley Fischer, a former MIT economics professor and IMF honcho on that institution's Russian reform team, and a newly-minted Israeli citizen, installed as Governor of the Israeli Central Bank as a counterparty for Wolfowitz, the wealth transfer is sure to be significant.)

[10]

Operation Quisling Express



Additional candidates for World Bank attention can be found on a "watch-list" of 25 suspect nations already drawn up

under the auspices of Carlos Pascual, Clinton's late-term Ambassador to Ukraine and today head of the newly formed Office of Reconstruction and Stabilization (initiated at the National Intelligence Council, but moved to the State Department.) Earlier, Pascual distinguished himself as a member of the Clinton Administration's dubious "Steering Committee" which was drawn from key officials from USAID, NSC and the US Departments of State and Treasury and which did so much to keep the West's looting game, via the original non-competed contract between Harvard and USAID as engineered by Larry Summers in 1993, rolling in Russia throughout the 1990s also on the basis of "national security."[\[11\]](#) (Other Clinton-era retreats being brought into the neo-con's Trotskyite fold include former USAID head Brian E. Atwood and yes-man Thomas Dines. All hail the Red State Vanguard and the Fourth International!) In a *Wall Street Journal* op-ed arguing for funding approval for Bush's new "Solidarity Initiative," Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Douglas J. Feith identified the Office of Reconstruction and Stabilization's mission as one of assistance "to help countries develop tools for civil administration," a sort of Operation Quisling Express.[\[12\]](#)

The parasites that infest the multilateral institutions ("third rate minds from first rate schools" as the disaffected Nobel-winning economist Joseph Stiglitz famously put it in his insider's criticism of the multilaterals), frustrated for years now by the mounds of imperial dough going to military contractors, will be jubilant in executing their new "mission" involving funds uncritically shoved first into their hands, ten percent of which at least will pass directly into those of corrupt, US-controlled leaders. *Mirabile dictu*, all will be accomplished behind closed doors on the basis of "national security" needs.

Send in the Army

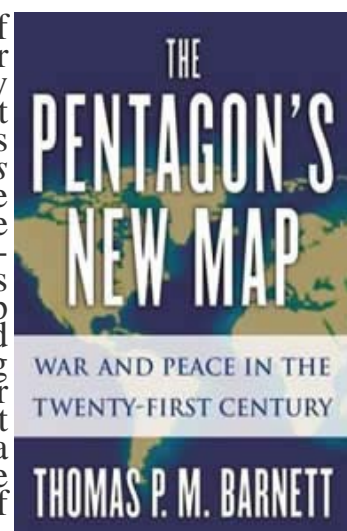
The US military in no way objects to these developments. The reality of invading a country whose government and army dissolved in the course of the attack (only to regroup as a guerilla force) while leaving the subsequent occupation subject to further error compounded by the stupidity and bullheadedness of chest-beating civilians, has overwhelmed the US military. Unable to control even a ten-mile stretch of road from the airport to the Green Zone Iraqi occupation headquarters with 150,000 troops in country, chaos reigns and alone threatens defeat. Underscoring the military's ineffectiveness has been the crowing of the bilateral foreign aid and NGO sedition brigades largely made up of assorted academic, think-tank "nation-builders," and freelancing former USAID personnel and contractors. Have they not delivered Serbia, Georgia, Ukraine, Kyrgyz and now Uzbekistan with their staged rainbow revolutions?[\[13\]](#) So where's their cut of the vig?

Mr. Pascual is in position and stands ready to collect on behalf of the talking classes' socialist world-improvers, with whom the Pentagon is more than willing to share a larger budget. In fact, it was last summer that the military — with Defense Secretary Rumsfeld's blessing — began sinking more money into expanding and training a 100,000 personnel shift into specialties such as military police, engineers, and civil affairs officers to co-ordinate with efforts by public and private forces for intervening in "crisis situations."[\[14\]](#)

Send in the warrior bureaucrats



Thomas P.M. Barnett, a professor of political science at the Naval War College, has come up with a handy ideological framework for the first half of Wolfowitz's agenda in his recently-published *The Pentagon's New Map*. Barnett argues that the world is divided into two parts: "the functioning core" and the "non-integrating gap." It is America's task to integrate nations of the gap into the global economy, and thereby deny terrorists a launching pad anywhere in the world. In order to meet this ambitious goal, Barnett sees the military evolving into a relatively small body of fierce warriors, and a much larger force of



non-warrior “system administrators, a civil affairs-oriented and network-centric, always-on, always-nearby, always-accessible resource for allies and friends in need.” [15] Special-op bureaucrats, in other words.

Wolfowitz's World Bank grants will enable the Pentagon's system administrators to implant themselves throughout targeted countries' governments, not just their central banks and treasuries per usual. When the warriors then arrive to clear the field, though the government may well collapse, the functioning core's agents will still be standing and able to keep a shell government in place until local stooges can be recruited via mass paper ballots and paper dollar bribes for propaganda and administrative purposes.

Funding the empire by introducing military needs to the lending equation

But how on earth can such an ambitious program be funded? In a world threatened by a global deflation in which poor nations work and save only to sustain American consumption – the *ne plus ultra* in vendor financing – through the purchase of US Treasury bills which, in turn, drives down interest rates so that credit-drunk Americans can consume yet more, this game can – alas – go on for a very long time. (Or, at least, until Asia is ready to transition from a collection of export economies feeding American consumers into self-sustaining national ones whose populations enjoy rising wage levels, thereby creating internal demand for their nations' products.)

American business has not been putting its out-sized profits into capital investments. Consumers do go on consuming, but only on credit. Government spending is the only game in town, and it can not stop lest the entire dollar Ponzi scheme collapse. Since the government must continue to spend, why not spend on empire? And, thanks to the dollar's standing as the reserve currency, a nervous world's prosperity is tied to America's pawdy house of financial predation. Thus is Asia doomed to play the part of inflation-eater, a role formerly played by Europeans prior to the 1971 US debt default in an episode otherwise known as “closing the gold window.”



It is the second half of Wolfowitz's agenda that is steeped in revolutionary juice. The game of trading loans and debt bailouts for UN votes, the installation of military bases, or access to precious resources has been going on for decades. The neo-con revolution will be the introduction of military needs into the lending equation. Of course, grants are much more easily politicized than are loans as they allow extraneous conditions to be imposed more readily. Thus will Wolfowitz be in position to demand, as if he were a medieval Sultan building an offensive force of Janissaries, [16] so many young soldiers for dummied-up UN “Liberty Brigades” to complement US foreign-staffed “Liberty Brigades” about which his fellow neo-con Max Boot waxes so enthusiastically. [17] Over time, it will be relatively easy to close the final gap to creating a fully imperial army with the open employment of

mercenaries alongside a dwindling number of national troops. Even better, the US-led multilateral empire of finance capitalism will insure a healthy supply of soldiers for hire; an imperial army will be a welcome jobs program for the “emerging economies” multilateral lending routinely loots and ruins.

And what of Russia and China. . .

A sane world's only hope seems to lie with a Russian and Chinese rebuff, but there is scope for play with both of those nations as well. The US could appease China with any number of inducements; a withdrawal of US demands that the renminbi float, an attractive backdoor deal on Taiwan, a lifting of the EU arms embargo which would decrease China's dependence upon Russian armaments, assurances of safe passage for the 80% of Chinese energy imports from the Middle East and Africa through the Strait of Malacca, or promises of assistance in obtaining long-term energy supplies from the Middle East oil puddle the US intends to control in total. For Russia, there could be the promise of nearly immediate entrance into the WTO, or joint control of

military bases in Central Asia, and/or (sotto voce) an end to the NGO-sponsored sedition movements on the territory of the former Soviet Union, including that of the Russian Federation.

Universal service for all

Concessions, however, will not be a one-way street. In exchange for militarization, the Bush administration may well offer an international tax, a long-term goal of international bureaucrats and neo-Keynesian academics, so that all countries might share in the global “responsibility” of Bush’s War on Terror. Should the administration succeed in militarizing all government everywhere, it can then return to the further militarization of the US by raising the delicate issue of a domestic draft. After all, the argument will go, how can the US demand multilateral debtors pony up imperial troops without a parallel domestic arrangement?

Thanks to the enterprising left, a palatable framework of “universal service” is evolving, in which all of America’s young people will be registered for national service and, drawing on personal information gleaned from the giant government data bases now being built, will be assigned to community service, combat service, or homeland defense. The kicker may be a requirement of completed service before access to higher education and government financing for it will be granted.^[18] It is not improbable to see a “deal” over Social Security reform on the horizon, i.e. in exchange for reduced benefits and an increase in the retirement age Boomer seniors will be guaranteed the services of enscribed “community brigades” for home care.

No one will like the tax, of course, but it will be mostly evaded by the well-heeled investors and financial institutions meant to pay it, only to devolve in the fullness of time onto some daily activity of ordinary people. American parents will be suspicious, but — having chosen security over liberty — they will eventually resign themselves to their children’s “universal service.” After all, nearly 40 years after LBJ’s promise of a college education for every American, without resorting to government loans few parents have the means to afford the ludicrously bloated costs of not so much educating as certifying their children. And once the intentionally confused and clueless American electorate sees that much of the costs of the War on Terror are being fobbed off on other people through an international tax, that the need for domestic cannon fodder is reduced, and that in their dotage they will have the personal services of young people (to whom they are not related and therefore otherwise not obliged) enforced by the US military, it’s quite likely they will largely cheer the new arrangements.

Alas, since mum’s the word among the corporate media, the Democrats’ welcome challenge to the Bush administration in staving off a Bolton confirmation may prove to be good for little more than a couple of weeks’ of noisy entertainment that will keep the focus on John Bolton, the outrageous bully, instead of the outrageous reforms he and Paul Wolfowitz were selected to pursue in this, the newly-opening second front of the War for US Global Domination. And though Bush may yet be denied Bolton as his Ambassador to the UN, he will not abandon this second front. As the war’s most prominent and eager prisoner, the president can not turn from his insolvent and understaffed empire’s only open window.

^[1]Wanniski, Jude, “The Real Threat From John Bolton,” *LewRockwell.com*, 14 April 2005.

^[2]Prather, Gordon, “Strengthening the NPT?”, *Antiwar.com*, 23 April 2005.

Prather, Gordon, “NPT in Trouble?”, *Antiwar.com*, 23 April 2005.

^[3]Ritter, Scott, “Sleepwalking to Disaster in Iran,” *Al Jazeera*, 30 March 2005.

Wanniski, Jude, “The Bush-Bolton Plan to Bomb Bushehr,” *Memo on the Margin*, 16 May 2005.

[4]Burke, Jason, Hinsliffand, Gaby, and Vuilliamy, Ed, “UN rocked by flood of fraud cases; Officials were ‘addicted to

luxury’,” *The Observer*, 3 September 2000.

[5]“League of Democracies,” *Wall Street Journal*, 1 May 2005.

[6]I am indebted to Stan Goff for this felicitous phrasing, who – in turn – credits James Howard Kunstler.

[7]Greenberger, Robert S., “Bush Advocates Remodeled U.N. But Is Wary of Ideas on the Table,” *Wall Street Journal*, 10 February 1992.

[8]Farah, Joseph, “U.S. Secretly Backs Standby U.N. Army,” *Western Journalism Center*, 30 April 1998.

[9]Adams, Patricia. *Odious Debts: Loose Lending, Corruption, and the Third World’s Environmental Legacy*. London and Toronto: Earthscan Publications, 1991.

“Odious” in the phrase “odious debts” refers to a legal view that debts incurred for the purpose of strengthening despotic regimes, or for purposes contrary to the interest of a nation, or *by persons or groups associated with the government to serve interests manifestly personal*, should be recognized as “odious debts” and properly the responsibility of a certain regime, but not of a nation.

[10]Devi, Sharmila, “Fischer becomes governor of Bank of Israel,” *Financial Times*, 2 May 2005.

[11]Dinmore, Guy, “US prepares list of unstable nations,” *Financial Times*, 30 March 2005.

[12]Feith, Douglas J., “Invest in Solidarity,” *Wall Street Journal*, 18 April 2005.

[13]Laughland, John, “Enemies Bought, Friends Sold,” *The Guardian*, 19 May 2005.

[14]LaFranchi, Howard, “Nation-building, once scorned, is embraced,” *Christian Science Monitor*, 31 March 2005.

Dobbins, James, “Nation-Building Returns to Favor,” *Financial Times*, 11 August 2004.

[15]Barone, Michael, “The Pentagon’s New Map,” *Catholic Exchange*, 1 April 2005.

[16]New, Daniel D., “The Janissaries Are Coming,” *LewRockwell.com*, 29 March 2005.

[17]Boot, Max, “Uncle Sam Wants Tu,” *Los Angeles Times*, 24 February 2005.

[18]Reeves, Tom, “A Draft by Any Other Name....Is Still Wrong,” *Counterpunch*, Weekend Edition, 19/20 March 2005.

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Bill

comment added :: 28th May 2005, 11:50 GMT-07

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