

U.N. Official Calls for Study Of Neocons' Role in 9/11

Eli Lake – N.Y. Sun April 10, 2008

A new U.N. Human Rights Council official assigned to monitor Israel is calling for an official commission to study the role neoconservatives may have played in the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.

On March 26, Richard Falk, Milbank professor of international law emeritus at Princeton University, was named by unanimous vote to a newly created position to report on human rights in the conflict between Israel and the Palestinian Arabs. While Mr. Falk's specialty is human rights and international law, since the attacks in 2001, he has devoted some of his time to challenging what he calls the "9-11 official version."

On March 24 in an interview with a radio host and former University of Wisconsin instructor, Kevin Barrett, Mr. Falk said, "It is possibly true that especially the neoconservatives thought there was a situation in the country and in the world where something had to happen to wake up the American people. Whether they are innocent about the contention that they made that something happen or not, I don't think we can answer definitively at this point. All we can say is there is a lot of grounds for suspicion, there should be an official investigation of the sort the 9/11 commission did not engage in and that the failure to do these things is cheating the American people and in some sense the people of the world of a greater confidence in what really happened than they presently possess."

Mr. Barrett, who is the co-founder of the Muslim-Jewish-Christian Alliance for 9/11 Truth, said in an interview yesterday of Mr. Falk, "I would put him on a list of scholars who are sympathetic to the 9/11 truth movement."

He added, "Unlike most public intellectuals today, he is both honest and very, very knowledgeable in that he understands the probable reality of 9/11. He understands that the evidence that it was a false flag operation is very strong."

The narrative that the attacks from 2001 were a "false flag" operation is a recurring theme in the literature challenging the consensus that 19 Al Qaeda hijackers flew commercial jets into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. False flag refers to espionage or covert actions taken by one government made to seem like the work of another. The false flag thesis has it that the Bush administration is somehow responsible for the September 11 attacks as a pretext for the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Mr. Falk yesterday did not return e-mails and phone calls asking for a comment. But in 2004 he wrote the foreword to the book "The New Pearl Harbor," by David Ray Griffin. Mr. Griffin has posited that such an inside job is the likely explanation for the attacks.

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In the preface, Mr. Falk writes, "There have been questions raised here and there and allegations of official complicity made almost from the day of the attacks, especially in Europe, but no one until Griffin has had the patience, the fortitude, the courage, and the intelligence to put the pieces together in a single coherent account."

When asked for a comment about the appointment of Mr. Falk, a former American ambassador to the United Nations, John Bolton said, "This is exactly why we voted against the new human rights council." A spokesman for the American embassy at the United Nations offered no comment yesterday when asked.

A spokeswoman at the United Nations, Nancy Groves, yesterday also declined to comment. "I would not make a comment on how the member states vote on appointments. It is their council, they make their decisions," she said.

Mr. Falk's selection to the post as rapporteur has already prompted the government of Israel formally to request that Mr. Falk not be sent to their country. The Israeli press has reported that he may even be barred from entering the country.

The deputy permanent representative of Israel to the United Nations in New York, Daniel Carmon said, "We are asking the U.N. not to send him. We cannot agree to Mr. Falk's entrance into Israel in his capacity as the rapporteur."

One reason the Israelis are concerned about his appointment is that Mr. Falk has compared Israel's treatment of Palestinian Arabs to the Nazi treatment of Jews in the holocaust. In an April 8 BBC interview, Mr. Falk said he stood by the Israel-Nazi comparison.

The national director of the Anti-Defamation League, Abraham Foxman, issued a statement yesterday saying, "This was clearly a singularly inappropriate choice for this position. Falk's startling record of anti-Israel prejudice should have been enough to preclude him from a position where an unbiased observer is needed to report on the status of human rights in the territories."

In a February 16, 1979, op-ed for the New York Times, Mr. Falk praised Ayatollah Khomeini and bemoaned his ill treatment in the American press. He wrote, "The depiction of him as fanatical, reactionary and the bearer of crude prejudices seems certainly and happily false." Nearly nine months later, student followers of Khomeini invaded the American embassy in Tehran and held 52 diplomats hostage for the following 444 days.

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