

The Link

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The Neocons...



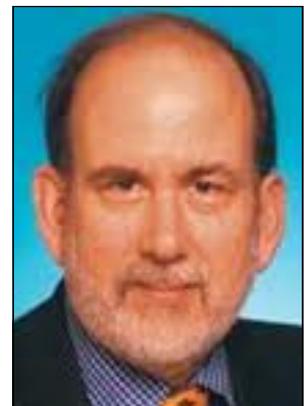
They're

Back



By

John Mahoney



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About This Issue

The names of those pictured on our front cover are, on the left, from top to bottom: Richard Perle, Paul Wolfowitz, I. Lewis Libby, and Douglas Feith; and on the right, from top to bottom: David Wurmser, William Kristol, John Bolton, and Michael Ledeen.

Each of the above played a prominent role in the buildup to the U.S. war in Iraq, as detailed in our Sept.-Oct. 2004 *Link* "Timeline for War." Eight years later, Americans are again being told that another Middle East country is threatening us — and Israel.

Those who pushed for regime change in Iraq are now pushing for regime change in Iran by all necessary means, including force. They are commonly referred to as neoconservatives, or neocons, and while our cover title proclaims they're back, truth is, they never went away.

Sylvia Schwarz is a member of the International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network. On page 14 she tells AMEU president Bob Norberg about her organization. For those who may feel a bit depressed after reading our feature article, I urge you to visit the IJSN website: www.ijsn.net.

Our video selection is found on page 15. Due to space limitations, we were unable to include our book page in this issue. Our complete catalog of books, including several that are now out-of-print, may be found on our recently redesigned website: www.ameu.org.

* * *

Sadly, we report the deaths of two previous *Link* writers: Fahim Qubain and Naeim Giladi.

Fahim's *Link* ("One Man's Hope," Jan.-March 2007) began with an incident that took place in Dec. 1987, in a West Bank

refugee camp, when a 15-year-old stone-throwing Palestinian told a Wall Street Journal reporter that he'd like to become a doctor. Inspired by that account, Fahim, a Palestinian-American living in Virginia, along with his wife Nancy, founded the Hope Fund. By the time of his death on April 16 of this year, the Hope Fund had made it possible for 32 impoverished Palestinian refugees from the West Bank, Gaza, Jordan and Lebanon to obtain undergraduate education at American colleges. We are pleased to note that, as a result of Fahim's *Link* article, the Hope Fund received substantial support from our readers.

All our *Link* issues going back to 1968 are now archived on our website and easy to download. So it was of interest to us—and of no little surprise—to learn that the most downloaded issue is our April-May 1998 *Link* "The Jews of Iraq" by Naeim Giladi. In his opening paragraph, Naeim, born an Iraqi Jew, says he is writing because he wants to tell Americans, and especially American Jews, "that Jews from Islamic lands did not emigrate willingly to Israel; that, to force them to leave, Jews killed Jews; and that, to buy time to confiscate ever more Arab lands, Jews on numerous occasions rejected genuine peace initiatives from their Arab neighbors."

Naeim put his body where his words are and left Israel, bringing his family to America, where he worked as a security guard. For the preparation of his article, he invited three of us from AMEU to his modest home in White Stone, New York. But before we could talk about the article, his wife Rachael, also from Iraq, treated us to a multi-course Arabic meal. "It's our Arab culture," Naeim said proudly.

John Mahoney
Executive Director

The Neocons Today

Between June 5 - 6, 2007, an international gathering called the Democracy & Security Conference took place in Prague, the Czech Republic. Sponsored, in part, by the Adelson Institute for Strategic Studies in Jerusalem, its List of Participants included Sheldon Adelson, the casino and hotel magnate, worth an estimated \$21.5 billion, who, with his wife Miriam, recently gave \$22 million to Newt Gingrich's presidential campaign, a campaign in which the former speaker referred to Palestinians as "an invented people."

Other participants included: Natan Sharansky, a member of the Likud party who, in 2006, formed the Adelson Institute for Strategic Studies and who, in 2009, became chair of the Jewish Agency for Israel, the organization in charge of immigration and absorption of Jews worldwide into the Jewish state; Richard Perle, former chair of the Bush administration's Defense Policy Board during the invasion of Iraq in 2003; Jose Maria Aznar, former prime minister of Spain, who actively encouraged and supported the Bush administration's invasion of Iraq; and U.S. Senator Joseph Lieberman, also an outspoken supporter of the Iraq invasion.

There, too, was Reza Pahlavi, identified on the List of Participants as "Opposition Leader to Clerical Regime of Iran." He is Crown Prince Reza Pahlavi, son of the deposed Iranian dictator Mohammed Reza Shah Pahlavi and heir to the Peacock throne, who now lives in Maryland, from where he calls for regime change in Iran. The American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), the major pro-Israel lobby in the U.S., and the conservative Washington D.C. think tank, the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), have both come out for regime change in Iran, and AIPAC has indicated its support for the return of Reza Pahlavi to the throne.

Once again the drums of war are beating to top-ple yet another Middle East leader. In our Sept.-Oct. 2004 Link "Timeline for War," we traced the buildup to President Bush's 2003 invasion of Iraq. Now, in this issue, we go back to look at the protagonists of that war—often referred to as neoconservatives or neocons—and we ask what are they up to now?

Richard N. Perle

Our 2004 *Link* traced Richard Perle's pivotal role among the neocons in launching President Bush's invasion of Iraq. Dubbed "The Prince of Darkness," he was chair of the Pentagon's Defense Policy Board (DPB), which provided the rationale for war and coordinated public opinion both inside and outside the administration.

In 2006, Perle traveled to Libya twice to meet with Col. Qadhafi. He went as a paid senior adviser to the Monitor Group, a Boston-based consulting firm, whose project was to enhance the profile of Libya and Muammar Qadhafi. Other prominent figures the Monitor recruited to travel to Libya were Princeton Middle East scholar Bernard Lewis and Nicholas Negroponte, the brother of John Negroponte, former U.S. Ambassador to Iraq and first ever director of national intelligence. The Monitor group charged the government of Libya \$250,000 per month (\$3-million per year), plus expenses that were not to exceed \$2.5 million.

Also in 2006, Perle received a phone call from an Iranian prisoner, a 30-year-old "student" by the name of Amir-Abbas Fakhrahar. From his cell in the notorious Evin prison in Iran, Fakhrahar had been phoning the pro-monarchist satellite station in Los Angeles. How he came by a phone in prison is unknown. Equally astonishing is his explanation that the prison authorities, after torturing him, let him out of prison to take a university exam, expecting him to return voluntarily. Instead, he went on the lam for 10 months before showing up in Dubai, where Perle was there waiting for him.

From Dubai, Perle arranged Fakhrahar's entry into the United States, and commenced his public relations tour with a private lunch at the American Enterprise Institute, where the "opposition leader" met State Department and Pentagon officials, as well as the neoconservative hawk, Michael Ledeen.

The celebrated dissident was interviewed by Perle in a 2007 documentary, "The Case for War: In Defense of Freedom," part of a PBS series "America at the Crossroads." In it, Fakhrahar called upon Americans to send the Marines into his country to stop the Hitler-like dictators from making nuclear bombs.

In a Jan. 20, 2007 interview with Ynet, Fakhraivar predicted that, if the West did launch a military attack on Iran, "the top brass will flee immediately ... many of the mid-level officials will shave off their beards, don ties, and join the (civilians) in the street."

And in meetings with members of the U.S.-Iranian community, Fakhraivar said that he respected Reza Pahlavi and would support the people of Iran if they voted for a constitutional monarchy.

Likewise, in a visit to Israel, he assured his television audience that the Iranians loved Jews.

During this time, more than one commentator observed that Richard Perle, who was promoting Amir-Abbas Fakhraivar, was the same Richard Perle who had boosted the cause of Ahmed Chalabi, the Iraqi exile who provided much of the misinformation that had led to the U.S. invasion of Iraq.

These days Perle criticizes the Obama administration for not supporting Iranian dissidents in exile and anti-government protesters on the inside. Why? Because it is in America's interest to do so. And why is that? Because, as he explained in a Feb. 18, 2011, Newsmax interview, "The Iranians are killing Americans at every opportunity in the places we are now fighting. They support terrorism around the world, and they're headed toward nuclear weapons."

In a Dec. 15, 2011 interview with Kurt Nimmo of Infowars.com, he put it bluntly: "I do not think there is any question about it, I am willing to accuse Iran of building nuclear weapons."

And what if we don't act? The Prince of Darkness offered his own Occam's choice in a 2004 book, "An End to Evil": "There is no middle way for Americans," warned Perle, "it is either victory or holocaust."

Paul D. Wolfowitz

Four days following the 9/11 attacks, President Bush gathered his national security team at Camp David for a war council. Years later, then-Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld would recall that the first person in the room to bring up going after Iraq was his deputy secretary of defense, Paul Wolfowitz.

Wolfowitz's determination to topple Saddam was reinforced by an unlikely foreign national by the name of Shaha Riza. Paul and Shaha had met in 1999 and had become romantically involved, even though each at the time was married. A British national and Muslim, with family roots in Libya, Turkey, Syria and Saudi Arabia, Shaha held a degree in International Relations from Oxford University, with a focus on spreading democracy in Middle Eastern countries.

After the 2000 election, Wolfowitz was on the short-list to head the Central Intelligence Agency (C.I.A.). That was until his wife of 30 years, Clare Wolfowitz, wrote a letter to president-elect George Bush telling him that her husband's extra-marital affair with a foreigner posed a national security risk. A mutual friend of the Wolfowitzes, I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby, tried to dissuade Clare from sending the letter, but she sent it. And it worked. Wolfowitz's name was removed from consideration. Again, Scooter Libby, at the time Vice President Dick Cheney's chief of staff, intervened to have his boss recommend Wolfowitz for deputy secretary of defense under Donald Rumsfeld.

From this post Wolfowitz would emerge as the most hawkish of the administration's Iraq policy advocates. Bringing democracy to Saddam's dictatorship was, he insisted, "doable;" the U.S. would be greeted as liberators; Iraqi oil would pay for the reconstruction costs, and military estimates of needing several hundred thousand troops to do the job were "widely off the mark."

By March 2005, the "doable war" in Iraq had resulted in the killing of over 1,000 U.S. soldiers and an estimated 12,000 to 15,000 Iraqi civilians. It was at this time that President Bush promoted his deputy secretary of state by nominating him to head the World Bank. On March 31, 2005 Paul Wolfowitz was unanimously approved as the Bank's president. Two years later, he was forced to resign.

The issue, again, was Shaha Riza. She was already employed by the World Bank when Paul took over, which presented a problem since the Bank's ethic rules precluded sexual relationships between a manager and a staff member, even if one reports to the other indirectly through a chain of supervision. So Riza was assigned a job at the State Department

under Liz Cheney, the daughter of the vice-president, with the task of promoting democracy in the Middle East. To compensate her for any potential disruption in her career prospects, Wolfowitz directed the Bank's human resources chief to increase her salary from \$132,660 to \$193,590 per year, tax-exempt.

When news of this broke in the Washington Post on March 28, 2007, it sparked calls for the resignation of the Bank's president. An investigation was launched at the Bank and Wolfowitz handed in his resignation on April 28, 2007.

Today Paul Wolfowitz works for the American Enterprise Institute, known to Washington insiders as Neocon Central.

And he continues the drumbeat for war. In a June 19, 2009 op-ed piece in the Washington Post, the intellectual godfather of the Iraq war criticized Obama for not imposing democracy in Iran, warning, "It would be a cruel irony if, in an effort to avoid imposing democracy, the United States were to tip the scale towards dictators who impose their will on people struggling for freedom."

By this time 4,315 U.S. military had been killed in the Iraq war, along with some 1.3 million Iraqis.

Lewis "Scooter" Libby

He's known as "Scooter" — once, when his father watched him crawling across his crib as a baby, he exclaimed, "he's a scooter!" and the name stuck. True to his name, as Vice President Cheney's chief of staff, he paid multiple visits to the C.I.A. prior to the Iraq war in order to strong-arm its analysts into reporting that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) as well as links to al-Qaeda. He also provided classified government information to The New York Times reporter Judith Miller that formed the basis of her front-page articles highlighting Iraq's WMDs. And it was Libby who prodded then-Secretary of State Colin Powell to include in his Jan. 29, 2003 U.N. speech specious reports from a disreputable Iraqi source code-named Curveball about the existence of mobile biological weapons labs in Iraq.

As in the case of Paul Wolfowitz, however, what ultimately got Libby into trouble was a woman. Her

name was Valarie Plame Wilson.

In February 2002, Joseph Wilson, a former ambassador, was asked by the C.I.A. and other agencies to investigate claims that Iraq had tried to buy uranium yellowcake from Niger. Wilson returned saying the claims were false.

In a July 6, 2003 op-ed for The New York Times, Wilson faulted President Bush for saying in his Jan. 2003 State of the Union address that Iraq sought to buy nuclear material in Niger. He went on to warn that, if his report had been ignored because it didn't fit preconceptions about Iraq, "a legitimate case can be made that we went to war under false pretenses."

Several days later, columnist Robert Novak revealed that Wilson's wife, Valarie Plame, was an undercover C.I.A. operative specializing in weapons of mass destruction.

Joseph Wilson shot back that the outing of his wife was retaliation for his article and that revealing Valarie's cover effectively ended her career, not to mention putting in jeopardy the lives of her covert contacts.

An investigation ensued to find out who leaked the name to Novak. The New York Times produced documents that showed that Scooter Libby may have first learned of Plame's covert identity from Vice President Cheney. Libby denied under oath he had anything to do with it.

Ultimately, Libby was found guilty on four felony counts of making false statements to the F.B.I., lying to a grand jury and obstructing a probe into the leak. He was acquitted of one count of lying to the F.B.I. On June 8, 2007, he was sentenced to 30 months in prison and fined \$250,000. Soon after, he resigned his post as Cheney's chief of staff.

On July 2, 2007, President Bush commuted his sentence but, despite strong urging from his vice president, he did not grant Scooter a presidential pardon before leaving office. On March 20, 2008, I. Lewis Libby was disbarred from the practice of law, at least until 2012.

Still he speaks out. In a Sept. 7, 2010 interview on Fox TV, he warned that he didn't think sanctions would work, and that Iran would have the bomb within a year.

Douglas J. Feith

He graduated *magna cum laude* both from Harvard University and, in 1981, from Georgetown University Law Center. That year he joined President Reagan's National Security Council (N.S.C.) as a Middle East analyst. A year later he was fired after becoming the focus of an F.B.I. inquiry into his giving classified N.S.C. information to an Israeli embassy official in Washington.

Soon after, Douglas Feith was rehired as special counsel to then-Assistant Secretary to the Secretary of Defense, Richard Perle.

In 2001, with help from Richard Perle and Paul Wolfowitz, Feith joined the Bush administration as Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, the third most senior official in the U. S. Department of Defense. Returning the favor, Feith then worked to have Perle chosen as chairman of the Defense Policy Board.

During this time, Feith created the Office of Strategic Influence, whose purpose was to influence policymakers by submitting biased news stories into the foreign media as a build-up to the Iraq war.

He also headed the Pentagon's Office of Special Plans, a unit he and Wolfowitz created that was closely tied to a parallel intelligence unit within the Israeli prime minister's office. Its purpose was to provide key Bush administration people with raw intelligence on Saddam's Iraq, much of it coming from Ahmad Chalabi, the opportunistic head of the exiled Iraqi National Council.

On Aug. 27, 2004, CBS News broke the story about an F.B.I. investigation of a possible spy for Israel who was working for the Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, Douglas Feith. The spy, later identified as Lawrence Franklin, was caught passing classified presidential directives and other sensitive documents to an AIPAC lobbyist who, in turn, passed them on to Israel. Franklin pled guilty to several charges of espionage, for which he received a sentence of just under 13 years in prison—later reduced to 10 months house arrest. Two AIPAC employees were also indicted, but their cases were dismissed.

In Jan. 2005, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld announced that his undersecretary would be "stepping down." Later that year, Feith joined the

faculty of the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Services at Georgetown University as a Professor and Distinguished Practitioner in National Security Policy; the appointment created an uproar among the school's faculty. Two years later, the school opted not to renew his contract.

In Feb. 2007, the Pentagon's inspector general issued a report charging that Feith's office "developed, produced, and then disseminated alternative intelligence assessments on the Iraq and al-Qaeda relationship, which included some conclusions that were inconsistent with the consensus of the Intelligence Community, to senior decision-makers."

Currently, Douglas Feith is director of the Center for National Security Strategies and a Senior Fellow at the conservative think-tank, the Hudson Institute.

Dalck Feith, Douglas's father, was a Holocaust survivor, and a member in Betar, the militaristic, pre-Likud Zionist youth movement in Poland founded by Ze'ev (Vladmir) Jabotinsky. Jabotinsky, whose assistant was Benjamin Netanyahu's father, declared that every Jew had the right to enter Palestine, that a Jewish state on both sides of the Jordan was the only guarantee of Jewish survival, that all Arabs hate Jews, and that active retaliation and overwhelming Jewish armed force were needed to ensure that the displaced population did not fight to retake their land, a reaction he considered quite natural.

Dalck's son Douglas has hewed to the Likud worldview—both in calling for the overthrow of the Iraqi government, and now for regime change in Iran. In a Winter 2010 *inFocus* article entitled "Obama's Failure to Lead," he argued passionately that the time for talk was past: "There is no realistic prospect that Iran's leaders can be negotiated out of their determination to obtain nuclear weapons."

Condoleezza Rice, it is reported, made the comment, following one of Douglas Feith's presentations to the National Security Council, "Thanks Doug, but when we want the Israeli position we'll invite the ambassador."

David Wurmser

In fact, according to a June 2, 2007 New York

Times article, Condoleezza Rice, at the time secretary of state, was pressured to play down the hawkish talk circulating in Washington of a military option against Tehran. Dr. Mohamed ElBaradei, head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, had called those wanting to bomb Iranian nuclear facilities the “new crazies.” The Times article went on to note that such hawkish statements had been made by a former Pentagon official who was then principal deputy assistant for national security affairs to Vice President Dick Cheney.

His name was David Wurmser.

We first met David Wurmser in our “Timeline for War” *Link*, on July 9, 1996, when he and his wife Meyrav joined with Douglas Feith and Richard Perle to develop a foreign policy paper for then-Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, which called for Israel to overthrow Saddam Hussein and install a pro-Israel regime in his place.

Wurmser next showed up in our July 31, 1998 entry, when he met with Israel’s U.N. representative Dore Gold in an effort to get Israel to put pressure on the U.S. Congress to approve a \$10 million grant to Ahmad Chalabi’s Iraqi National Congress, whose goal was the overthrow of Saddam Hussein.

In a Nov. 1, 2000 op-ed piece in the Washington Times, Wurmser, now at the American Enterprise Institute, called on the U.S. and Israel to broaden the conflict in the Middle East. The United States, he argued, needs “to strike fatally, not merely disarm, the centers of radicalism in the region—the regimes of Damascus, Baghdad, Tripoli, Tehran, and Gaza—in order to reestablish the recognition that fighting with either the United States or Israel is suicidal.”

Shortly after that piece, Wurmser was named by the incoming Bush administration to the post of principal deputy assistant for national security affairs in the office of Vice President Dick Cheney.

On Sept. 12, 2001, the day following the 9/11 attacks, Douglas Feith, now Rumsfeld’s undersecretary of defense for policy, tasked Wurmser to form a secret intelligence unit that would report directly to him; called the Policy Counterterrorism Evaluation Group, its purpose was to find loose ties between Saddam Hussein and al-Qaeda in order to counter C.I.A. analysts who had found no credible links be-

tween the two.

In July 2007, with the war in Iraq well underway, Wurmser left his position with Dick Cheney to found Delphi Global Analysis, a risk-assessment consulting business, with offices in Washington and Israel. While its clients include hedge fund managers and investment bankers, the firm, we are told, also handles a few “sensitive” projects in Israel.

Delphi’s co-founder is David’s wife, Dr. Meyrav Wurmser. Born in Israel and a member of the Likud party, she wrote her doctoral thesis on Revisionist Zionism behind the Herut and Likud parties. She is co-founder of the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI), which critics have accused of disseminating the most extreme, often inaccurate, views from the Arabic and Persian media. In 2008, she was listed as a member of the board of advisors of the Endowment for Middle East Truth, a group that was involved in the distribution of 28 million DVDs of the film “Obsession: Radical Islam’s War Against the West,” a film in which parallels are drawn between Nazi Germany and a monolithic Islam. Twenty-eight million DVDs of the film were provided to at least 70 newspapers that placed them at the doorstep of subscribers in swing states prior to the 2008 presidential election.

Also listed on Delphi’s brochure as a Visiting Scholar is Lee Smith, senior editor at the Weekly Standard. In a Feb. 23, 2012 article in *The Tablet*, Smith quoted David Wurmser as saying that Israel’s war against Iran’s nuclear program was well underway, with lots of money over the past decade having been spent on all sorts of anti-Iranian options, such as computer worms like Stuxnet, covert operations like the assassination of nuclear scientists, sabotage of military installations, and, possibly, commando raids and air strikes.

Yet as prepared as Israel is, according to Wurmser, it is the United States that should use its military might to topple Tehran. Why? Because Iran is America’s enemy. And how does America go about doing this? Just before he left Vice President Cheney’s office, Wurmser wrote a paper advocating that the U.S. must go to war with Iran, not to set back its nuclear program, but to achieve regime change. To establish a *casus belli*, the U.S. would launch airstrikes against

Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps training camps in Iran in retaliation for their smuggling explosives into Iraq that kill and maim Americans fighting there. Iran then would retaliate, which would allow for a rapid escalation of U.S. military force. Cheney acted on Wurmser's advice and tried to get Bush to provoke a war with Iran over Iraq. But Pentagon officials turned it down.

Now, the head of Delphi Global Analysis warns, it's "crunch time" for Israel's leaders. He notes a marked shift in Israel's security establishment, the surest sign being President Shimon Peres's warning that a nuclear Iran poses an existential threat to Israel and is "a real danger to humanity as a whole." And he adds this about his personal friend, Prime Minister Netanyahu, "It's not just about Bibi and his historical legacy anymore. He doesn't need to be a leader in a Churchillian mode, because the consensus on attacking Iran is broad-based."

In the presidential campaign of 2011-2012, candidate Newt Gingrich revealed the names of his foreign policy advisors. Among them was David Wurmser.

William Kristol

On June 18, 2007, the Holland America Line's M.S. Oosterdam arrived in the port of Juneau. On board were three of the Weekly Standard's top writers: Fred Barnes, the magazine's executive editor, Michael Gerson, former speechwriter for President Bush, and the magazine's founder William Kristol.

Upon disembarking, they went straight for lunch to the newly elected governor's mansion, a white wooden Colonial house with six two-story columns. By the time they returned to the cruise ship, the conservative pundits had fallen in love with Sarah Palin.

And no one more than William Kristol. It did not go unnoticed that the Alaskan governor displayed the flag of Israel in her office, nor that she attended Protestant evangelical churches that believe the preservation of the state of Israel is a biblical imperative, nor that she understood Israel's fear of an Iran in possession of nuclear weapons. Months before John McCain picked her for his running mate, Kristol predicted on Fox News Sunday that

"McCain's going to put Sarah Palin ... on the ticket." As one commentator put it: "Kristol was out there shaking the pom-poms ... and things always work out so well when Kristol engages his pom-poms."

Bill Kristol received his PhD from Harvard University. He is the son of Irving Kristol, long associated with the American Enterprise Institute and Commentary magazine, and considered by many the godfather of neoconservatism.

Kristol is one of three board members of Keep America Safe, a think tank co-founded by Liz Cheney, which includes former McCain campaign managers Michael Goldfarb and Aaron Harrison. Formed to counter what it considers Obama's undercutting of America's war on terror, it promotes the foreign policy objectives of the former vice president, including his support for enhanced interrogation techniques.

Kristol is also co-founder and board member of the Emergency Committee for Israel (E.C.I.). Launched in 2010 as the most pro-Israel of all pro-Israel groups, it was first located in the same office as the old Committee for the Liberation of Iraq, whose Washington, D.C., address happens to be that of Orion Strategies, a consultancy run by Randy Scheunemann—once Sarah Palin's chief foreign policy advisor. Much of E.C.I.'s initial funding came from hedge fund managers, including \$100,000 from Daniel Loeb and \$50,000 from Jonathan Jacobson.

E.C.I.'s favorite tactic is publishing ads that attack politicians and political analysts who question America's unconditional support for Israel. Its campaign to push the U.S. into war with Iran was highlighted in a recent 30-minute video that mocked President Obama's "unshakeable" commitment to Israel's security, particularly his record on Iran. Prior to the March 2012 meeting between Benjamin Netanyahu and Barack Obama, E.C.I.'s Super PAC spent hundreds of thousands of dollars to intimidate critics of the Israeli prime minister and his call to attack Iran sooner rather than later. This included a full-page ad in The New York Times that went after two liberal advocacy groups, the Center for American Progress and Media Matters, denouncing their work as anti-Israel, even anti-Semitic, and disclosing the phone numbers of the groups' donors.

A March 18, 2012 New York Times article cited critics who warned that hawkish voices like E.C.I.'s were indeed pushing the United States closer to military action against Iran and closer to yet another war in the Middle East.

Meanwhile, Bill Kristol, the pundit who, 11 years ago, said that President Bush had to attack Iraq because "Israel's fight against terrorism is our fight," now tells Fox News Sunday, "It would be much better if we use force to delay the Iranian nuclear program than if Israel did."

John R. Bolton

On May 1, 2005, the London Sunday Times published a leaked document in which the chief of Britain's intelligence agency MI6, Richard Dearlove, advised Prime Minister Tony Blair that President Bush had decided on attacking Iraq, even though the case for WMDs was "thin." This, according to the British intelligence head, was not a problem, because "intelligence and facts were being fixed [by the U.S.] around the policy."

Who was cooking the books?

This was a question that the House Government Reform Committee Member Rep. Henry Waxman wanted answered. Following an investigation that included "sensitive and unclassified" papers provided by the State Department, Waxman fingered John Bolton.

Bolton, known as the neocons' neocon, was at the time the undersecretary of state for arms control and international security. According to Waxman, in December 2002, Bolton arranged for false information about Iraq's procurement of yellowcake uranium from Niger to be put in a Fact Sheet that went out to the United Nations and the media, despite the fact that the information had been assessed to be false in C.I.A. intelligence evaluations. Bolton, under oath, denied he had anything to do with the Fact Sheet, to which Waxman replied: "When you're in charge of arms control and the biggest issue is whether we were going to war against Iraq on the issue of nuclear weapons ... don't you think you have some responsibility to know what's going on?"

In another case involving the undersecretary of state, the May 6, 2006 issue of the Jewish publication

The Forward reported that Bolton had been reprimanded for having unauthorized contacts with officials of Israel's intelligence service Mossad without seeking "country clearance" from the State Department. And in its May 9, 2005 edition, US News and World Report carried the story that Bolton allegedly used his position as the Bush administration's top arms control official to shield Israel from charges of violating U.S. laws that prohibit the use of U.S. arms for "non-defensive" purposes. The case involved Israel's July 23, 2000 use of a U.S.-made F-16 bomber to drop a one-ton bomb on a house in a densely populated area of Gaza, killing 14 civilians and injuring more than 100.

In 2005, Bolton was nominated by President Bush to the post of U.S. ambassador to the United Nations—the same institution he allegedly fed false information to. Due to a Democratic filibuster, however, Bush had to wait until congress adjourned before making a recess-appointment. Bolton resigned his U.N. post in December 2006, when the recess-appointment ran out and it was clear he would not receive Senate confirmation.

Before joining the Bush administration, Bolton was at the American Enterprise Institute, which is where he is today. He opines from time to time as a Fox News Channel commentator, and he is involved with other conservative think tanks such as the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs (JINSA). In 2010, he contemplated running for president of the United States in 2012, but later thought better of the idea.

Meanwhile, the neocons' neocon continues boldly on the warpath. In 2009, he suggested to a University of Chicago audience that Israel should consider a nuclear strike against Iran. And in a Feb. 22, 2012 Washington Times article, he promised that a world where Iran has nuclear weapons will be far more dangerous than a world after an Israeli military strike.

Michael A. Ledeen

If Bolton arranged for the false information to go into the Fact Sheet, who falsified the information?

Vincent Cannistraro, former head of counterterrorism operations at the C.I.A., was asked in a 2005

interview if the man behind the forging of the Niger documents that President Bush used to launch a preemptive war against Iraq was Michael Ledeen, then assistant to Undersecretary of State Douglas Feith. Cannistraro replied: "You'd be very close." Philip Giraldi, former C.I.A. counterterrorism officer, confirmed that Ledeen was the logical intermediary in coordinating the falsification of the documents. Ledeen has denied he had anything to do with it.

Michael Ledeen, a leading neo-conservative, left the American Enterprise Institute in 2008, where he had been for 20 years, to take a fellowship at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies (F.D.D.). Other neocons affiliated with the F.D.D. include Bill Kristol, Richard Perle, Newt Gingrich, and Douglas Feith's father, Dalck who gave the F.D.D. \$100,000. Additional donors to the F.D.D. are: Leonard Abramson, founder of U.S. Healthcare, whose family foundation gave over \$800,000 between 2001-2004; the Seagram company heirs, Edgar and Charles Bronfman, who have given over \$1 million; and Home Depot cofounder Bernard Marcus, who contributed \$600,000 between 2001-2003. A 2003 investigative report in *The American Conservative* put F.D.D.'s annual budget at close to \$3 million. In 2008, an F.D.D. spokesman, Brian Wise, confirmed that the foundation had received at least one grant from the U.S. State Department worth \$487,000.

Ledeen believes that trying to negotiate with the Iranian regime is nothing short of appeasement. The U.S., he advocates, should work closely with the "Iranian people" to bring about regime change by arming opposition forces inside the country, by acts of sabotage, by targeted assassinations, by sanctions, by rallying the Iranian community in exile. The most promising ally in this last effort, according to Ledeen, is the former shah's son, Reza Pahlavi.

The crown prince, in turn, has sought closer ties with the neocons, particularly with Ledeen. He addressed the board of the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs (JINSA), which Ledeen cofounded and whose members at one time or another included Richard Perle, Dick Cheney, and Douglas Feith. The prince had also met privately with top Israeli officials, including Benjamin Netanyahu. Indeed, his links to Israel go back to the early 1980s, when he had approached Ariel Sharon with a plan to

overthrow the mullahs in Iran.

On May 19, 2003, at a press conference attended by Ledeen, Kansas Senator Sam Brownback announced that he would introduce a bill, the Iran Democracy Act, seeking \$50 million dollars to promote democracy in Iran and to fund Iranian opposition groups. Supporters of the Iran Democracy Act included the American Israeli Public Affairs Committee and the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs. Commenting on this support, former AIPAC director, Morris Amitay, noted that it was natural for Jewish groups to openly back regime change in Iran.

The introduction of such a bill was significant because it would extend financial support to Iranian opposition groups, much as the congress did in the case of Ahmed Chalabi's National Iraqi Congress. Washington, in effect, would be taking a decisive step towards making regime change in Iran official U.S. policy.

Prior to congressional action, Reza Pahlavi spoke at a private briefing on Capitol Hill organized by the Iranian Jewish Public Affairs Committee (IJPAC). In it he urged Hill staffers to support the idea of funding the Iranian opposition. Later, the president of IJPAC in Los Angeles, Pooya Dayanim, observed in *The Forward*: "There is a pact emerging between hawks in the administration, Jewish groups and Iranian supporters of Reza Pahlavi to push for regime change." Jews, he added, were "in love with Pahlavi" because they saw his father's reign as a golden era for Jews.

In the end, the bill did not pass. Enough senators apparently were able to recall America's disastrous role in bankrolling Ahmed Chalabi. The bill did pass, however, as a non-binding Sense of the Senate Resolution, denouncing Iran's lack of democracy. As such it achieved its main goal of hindering the State Department from exploring further dialogue with Tehran.

Most recently, Michael Ledeen was heard commenting on a March 12, 2012 *60 Minutes* interview with Israel's ex-Mossad chief Meir Dagan, in which the former spymaster urged that Iran's dissidents be better supplied militarily, its nuclear labs sabotaged and more of its scientists targeted for assassination. Ledeen praised the interview. No one, however,

noted the inconvenient fact that it was Dagan's organization, the Mossad, that had built the shah's hated SAVAK police apparatus—that led to the anti-shah revolution.

Security & Democracy

Those two words—the words chosen for the title of that 2007 conference in Prague—are key to understanding how the Jewish state is portrayed today.

Most Americans know Israel as “the only democracy in the Middle East.” And, because it is surrounded by undemocratic, despotic regimes, its security necessitates having military hegemony in the area, which includes its own arsenal of over 200 nuclear bombs, as well as the full force of the U.S. military. Americans get it when Prime Minister Netanyahu comes before them and says that he, as the leader of a sovereign state, has the duty to make sure that Iran does not get the bomb that would threaten to wipe out his small democracy.

Zionists, particularly pro-Likud Zionists, see it differently.

Israel is not a democracy. No one put this more bluntly than Ariel Sharon. Quoted in an article entitled “Democracy and the Jewish State,” in Yedioth Ahronoth, May 28, 1993, the former prime minister noted that it is no accident that the words “democracy” or “democratic” are absent from Israel's Declaration of Independence. What did the framers of Israel's constitution have in mind? Sharon answers: “The intention of Zionism was not to bring democracy, needless to say. It was solely motivated by the creation in Eretz-Israel of a Jewish state belonging to all the Jewish people and to the Jewish people alone. That is why any Jew of the Diaspora has the right to immigrate to Israel and to become a citizen of Israel.” Eretz-Israel, by the way, here refers to the biblical land area roughly corresponding to what is known today as Palestine, Canaan, the Promised Land and the Holy Land; it includes all of the West Bank.

Israeli anthropologist Jeff Halper pointed out in our April-May 2012 *Link* that Israel began exercising its exclusive claim over Eretz-Israel in 1948 when, after seizing half of the partition area allocated to the Arabs, it reduced the Palestinian population living

within its expanded borders from 950,000 to 154,000—a drop of 80%. Then, following the occupation of 1967, it established “facts on the ground” to foreclose any coherent, viable, sovereign Palestinian state. In fact, Israel denies even having an occupation, since it believes all Palestinian lands are part of its biblical inheritance. Those Palestinians who were living on Eretz-Israel in 1948 were caretakers, waiting for the owners to return. And those currently living in Israel or on the West Bank are there at the sufferance of the Jewish people.

So what causes the hostility of Arabs toward Israel? Again, the clearest answer comes from the Zionist militant Ze'ev Jabotinsky, the leader for whom Benjamin Netanyahu's father worked. Jabotinsky saw the Zionist movement as a colonial project, no different from European colonialism. In his 1923 essay “The Iron Wall,” he argued that attempts at dialogue with the Arabs are fantasy, as no nation—and he recognized the Palestinian people as such—would agree to a foreign entity being established on its lands. His conclusion: Jews must be so dominant militarily as to make it impossible for any of its neighbors to impede its colonial ambitions. Part of this strategy is keeping those neighboring regimes weak. Iraq is a case in point.

Iran is another. In April 1951, the shah of Iran, then the constitutional monarch, appointed Mohammad Mosaddegh prime minister. He turned out to be an exceptionally popular social reformer, introducing unemployment compensation, health-care benefits, land reform laws, and public works projects. He also strengthened democratic political institutions by limiting the monarchy's powers, cutting the shah's personal budget, and transferring royal lands back to the state.

He also called for the nationalization of Iran's oil industry. On May 1, 1951, Mosaddegh nationalized the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (AIOC), later known as British Petroleum or BP, which was the pillar of Britain's economy and its influence in the Middle East. In response, the British government announced a blockade of all Iranian oil, reducing Tehran's income to near zero.

The prime minister also severed all relations with Israel. The shah had welcomed the Jewish state as a “little America” in the heart of the Middle East,

and he pursued a policy of friendship in order to keep in good with the Zionist lobby in the U.S., which he saw as wielding great influence in the congress and in the media. Mosaddegh, on the other hand, saw Israel as the tool of Anglo-American hegemony in the Middle East. His popularity rose.

In August 1953, the shah, who opposed many of his prime minister's reforms, including his nationalization of AIOC, dismissed him. Mosaddegh refused to go, his followers rioted, and the shah fled to Rome.

Winston Churchill called his war-time friend, now U.S. president, Dwight Eisenhower and suggested that Mosaddegh, despite his disgust with socialism and all his democratic reforms, was, or would become, dependent on the Soviet Union. Eisenhower agreed that the Iranian prime minister should go. Under the direction of Kermit Roosevelt, Jr., a senior C.I.A. officer, the C.I.A. and British intelligence funded and led a covert operation to depose Mosaddegh with the help of military forces loyal to the shah.

The plot, called "Operation Ajax," hinged on orders signed by the shah to dismiss the prime minister and replace him with Gen. Fazlollah Zahedi, a choice agreed on by the British and Americans. Mosaddegh was deposed and on August 22, 1953, the shah returned in triumph. A few weeks later, the U.S. government granted Iran a \$45-million emergency loan. Two months after that, Iran resumed diplomatic relations with Great Britain. On August 5, 1954, a new compact was made with the AIOC, and the oil company was compensated for its seized property. The following year the Iranian government and American oil interests in Iran concluded an agreement for an unprecedented 25-75 percent division of profits in favor of Iran.

With the monarchy restored, relations with Israel strengthened. In July 1960, Iran recognized the Jewish state. Israelis, in turn, used their influence in Washington to convince congress to continue the sale of American military equipment to Tehran, while, at the same time, the shah, using his vast oil revenues, purchased up to \$500,000,000 worth of arms and police equipment from Israel in an arrangement called "Project Flowers."

And the shah was buying something else. In

1957, he enlisted Israel's foreign intelligence agency, the Mossad, and the C.I.A., to create SAVAK, the dreaded secret police force, whose personnel was trained by Mossad to suppress all opposition to the shah, with no limits on the use of torture tools to break dissenters. Over the years SAVAK killed and tortured thousands of Iranians.

It took some 27 years before an exiled cleric, who had been smuggling anti-shah, anti-U.S., anti-Zionist audiocassette sermons into Iran—the precursor of today's social media uprisings—returned in triumph to establish an Islamic republic.

In March 2000, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright expressed her regret that Mosaddegh had been ousted, admitting that "the coup was clearly a setback for Iran's political development and it is easy to see now why many Iranians continue to resent this intervention by America."

Following the shah into exile was his son Reza Pahlavi, born October 31, 1960, who, upon his father's death in 1980, became heir apparent to the Peacock throne. This is the man, now 51 years old, who participated in the pro-Likud sponsored conference in Prague. Beginning in 2003, the heir began addressing the Iranian community via the internet and satellite television, earning him the sobriquet "The Internet Prince."

The activism of the exiled, pro-Israel shah-in-waiting did not go unnoticed by the neoconservatives.

Back to the Future

In our *Link* "Timeline" article, it was on Oct. 1, 2002 that the C.I.A. delivered to the White House its National Intelligence Estimate (N.I.E.) on the case for war with Iraq. This was a classified report reflecting the consensus of analysts from 16 agencies, and we now know that in it the C.I.A. hedged its judgments about Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction, admitting it wasn't sure he had them.

Three days later, C.I.A. director George Tenet issued an unclassified white paper, with 79 of the original 93 pages whitened out. This report concluded that Baghdad in fact had chemical and biological weapons and was seeking to reconstitute its nuclear program.

Over the next two weeks, a joint resolution authorizing the use of force was passed by both houses of congress.

We now come to the National Intelligence Estimate on Iran released in 2010. In it the analysts found credible evidence that Iran had halted its nuclear weapons program in 2003 at the direction of the supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who issued a fatwa—recently reaffirmed—against the production, stockpiling and use of nuclear weapons. According to a March 18, 2012 front-page article in The New York Times, “American intelligence analysts still believe that the Iranians have not gotten the go-ahead from Ayatollah Khamenei to revive the program.”

Israeli intelligence experts also warn against attacking Iran. In April of this year, Yuval Diskin, recently retired chief of Shin Bet, Israel’s FBI, accused the Netanyahu government of “misleading the public” about the likely effectiveness of an aerial strike on Iran’s nuclear facilities. Such a strike, warned Diskin, would dramatically accelerate Iran’s nuclear program.

Even the present head of the Israel Defense Forces, Lt. Gen. Benny Gantz, concluded in an April 25, 2012, interview with Haaretz that he did not think Iran’s top leadership would risk building a nuclear weapon.

Not to be deterred, Netanyahu sounds the alarms of war at every opportunity. At an AIPAC gathering on March 12, 2012, the Israeli prime minister warned that “time was running out to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon and diplomacy wasn’t working.” And his recently formed unity government with Shaul Mofaz, the Iranian-born head of Kadima, the nation’s largest opposition party, has heightened fears of an Israeli attack on Iran. On May 11, 2012, Israel’s TV Channel 10 reported that authorities in Washington, D.C., were worried that the Netanyahu/Mofaz alliance brought together two influential party leaders who would both favor an attack on Iran.

Meanwhile, the neocons here at home issue their own dire warnings.

John Bolton has dismissed the N.I.E. assessment

as “famously distorted.” In a March 28, 2012 posting on GerardDirect.com, he wrote that diplomacy and sanctions were not working and that the only real alternative left to a nuclear Iran was “a pre-emptive military force.”

And Douglas Feith, writing in the February 12, 2012 National Review Online, concluded: “There is no realistic prospect that Iran’s leaders can be negotiated out of the determination to obtain nuclear weapons.”

William Kristol continues to chide President Obama for putting off action against Iran. In an Oct. 24, 2011 issue of the Weekly Standard, he declared: “It’s long since time for the United States to speak to this [Iranian] regime in the language it understands, force ... We can strike at the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), and weaken them. And we can hit the regime’s nuclear weapons program, and set it back. And lest the administration hesitate to act out of fear of lack of support at home, congress should consider authorizing the use of force against Iranian entities that facilitate attacks on our troops ... and against the regime’s nuclear weapons program.”

Dr. Mohamed ElBaradei, the former director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, calls these neocons the new crazies. But are they? They are well educated, most with post-graduate degrees, many from ivy-league colleges. They are passionately dedicated to advancing the best interests of Israel; Sheldon Adelson, one of the few neocons to have served in the U.S. military, regrets that the uniform he wore was not an Israeli uniform. They have vast sums of money to spend on think-tanks, media outlets—and politicians.

And, despite their championing of a calamitous war in Iraq, and notwithstanding the most recent N.I.E. report, and even assessments from Israeli intelligence agencies, they believe they can convince Americans, and certainly most members of congress, that the United States should send its young men and women yet again into another Middle East war.

Truth is, they are not the crazies. ■

About **The Link's** Links

Go To: www.isjn.net

Sylvia Schwarz is a member of the International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network of the Twin Cities (IJAN-TC) and is also active in local campaigns for Palestinian solidarity. She is a civil engineer and lives in St. Paul, MN. She was interviewed by AMEU President Bob Norberg.



Q: Please describe the International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network.

A: It helps to understand the three pieces of our name: specifically "international," "Jewish," and "anti-Zionist."

We are an international organization with chapters and individuals in many countries around the world.

We are made up of Jews who believe our role in this issue is unique. This is because those of us who believe in human rights, equal rights and justice have always been marginalized among the more vocal Zionist Jews who have convinced people that the Zionist philosophy is a struggle for Jewish self-determination. The Zionists have also convinced people that all Jews think alike and agree with the Zionist ideology. Most damaging, was their ability to convince people that disagreement with this Zionist philosophy was evidence of anti-Jewish hatred. And so we believe we have an obligation to speak out and counter those assertions.

We are anti-Zionist because Zionism, instead of being a liberation movement, as it is portrayed, is a nationalist movement seeking to give a homeland to Jews. In the process of granting a homeland to Jews, the Zionists ethnically cleansed Palestinians from their homes. This is a settler colonial project, similar to other settler colonial projects, which began in the early 20th century and continues today.

Zionism privileges Jews above non-Jews and the state of Israel accomplishes this by use of its legal systems. Privileging one ethnic group over another is the definition of racism. Institutionalizing the racism into a system of laws is the definition of apartheid. So, for example, Israeli laws expressly deny non-Jews rights to own property managed by the Jewish National Fund (93% of the land of Israel), to marry and live with a spouse from the West Bank or Gaza, or live in segregated Jewish-only communities.

Palestinians living in the Occupied Territories are ruled under

military order, rather than Israeli civilian law, as illegal Israeli settlers are subject to, even though the settlers live in close proximity to Palestinians.

IJAN opposes Zionism because of the racism and colonialism, which is endemic to its philosophy.

Q: What are the principal objectives of IJAN?

A: As the IJAN charter says, "We are an international network of Jews who are uncompromisingly committed to struggles for human emancipation, of which the liberation of the Palestinian people and land is an indispensable part. Our commitment is to the dismantling of Israeli apartheid, the return of Palestinian refugees, and the ending of the Israeli colonization of historic Palestine." Towards these commitments we support the 2005 Palestinian civil society call for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) of Israel to force it to comply with international law.

In working towards the goal of liberation and human rights we are involved in specific campaigns such as the "Stop the Jewish National Fund (JNF)" Campaign, which attempts to remove the JNF's tax exempt status in the U.S.; the Never Again for Anyone Tours, world-wide tours of Holocaust survivor Hajo Meyer; the World Social Forum (to take place in Brazil); and many others.

Q: The political Zionist movement, as envisioned by its founder Theodor Herzl, might be said to have begun officially with the First Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland, in 1897. Does anti-Zionism have a long history as well?

A: Yes. In fact some would argue that some of the Biblical prophets were anti-Zionist, or at least anti-nationalist and humanist. In Europe between the World Wars, the Socialist Bund movement was largely anti-Zionist. Many of the remnants of the Bundists who survived the Holocaust were marginalized and worse by Zionists from Palestine who coerced them into immigrating to Palestine when they would have preferred the U.S. or England.

Some Orthodox Jews are anti-Zionist for religious reasons, because they believe that only when the Messiah comes should Jews live in the land of Israel.

In the American Reform movement, the late Rabbi Elmer Berger was very influential, but he also was marginalized and silenced by the Zionist movement. He believed, among other things, that Zionism was bad for Jews, causing rather than relieving anti-Semitism.

Of course anti-Zionism has existed in the Middle East as long as political Zionism, since the Arab peoples understood immediately that the threat they faced was that of colonialism. The anti-Zionism of IJAN is unique among the range of anti-Zionists because it holds this historic understanding of Zionism in relation to the imperialist forces that supported its existence and its premise on systemic forms of racism. We are encouraged by the growth in influence of IJAN around the world. ■

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