

Forced democracy upon Muslim world

On Nov. 6, George W. Bush announced that America, through its interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan was leading a "global democratic revolution". That he should have made such remarks on the eve of Leon Trotsky's birthday -- the architect of "global socialist revolution" -- was of course just coincidence.

However, the similarities between Trotsky's idea that socialism should be spread at the barrel of a gun and the idea that democracy can be forced upon the Muslim world through violent occupation and threat of invasion are obvious.

Contemporary American foreign policy is Trotsky's revenge. The neoconservative movement that holds Washington in its thrall is itself merely a warmed-up version of Trotsky's Fourth International. As Michael Lind wrote in Britain's *The New Statesman* (April 7, 2003), the neocons are "products of the largely Jewish-American Trotskyist movement of the 1930s and 1940s, which morphed into anti-communist liberalism between the 1950s and 1970s and finally into a kind of militaristic and imperial right with no precedents in American culture or political history."

If the neoconservative vision of a "democratic revolution" in the Muslim world

mirrors Trotsky's equally flawed vision of a permanent socialist revolution, then will America's reaction to democracy in Iraq mirror Brezhnev's doctrine of "limited sovereignty"?

In early 1968, the Czech Communist Party under Alexander Dubcek attempted to introduce a series of reforms. In May of that same year, Soviet leader

Leonid Brezhnev invaded Czechoslovakia, justifying the invasion by claiming that "Czechoslovakia's detachment from the socialist community would have come into conflict with its own vital interests and would have been detrimental to other socialist states".

In other words, the invasion was to protect socialism as an ideology. Once a nation chose socialism, the soviet state could never allow it to turn back. A nation's sovereignty was limited by a tight ideological straitjacket.

As America attempts to extricate herself from the Iraqi disaster, it has promised a free election next year. If the Iraqi people are given a true democracy, then America must face the bitter prospect that, finally able to choose their political destiny,

Iraq may choose a government that is not malleable to American interests.

As both Shi'ite and Sunni Iraqis mobilise politically, it seems certain that the government ushered to power will actually reflect more the wishes and aspirations of Baghdad and Basrah, than the Beltway. If that happens,

Amir Butler

rurism and promote democracy by vetoing the people's democratic aspirations is, like the strengthening of the West's totalitarian "allies" in the region, a self-fulfilling prophecy. On the day that Pearl Harbour was bombed, ex-President Herbert Hoover warned that as long as

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will America accept that the people have spoken -- albeit with a possibly anti-American and anti-Israeli voice -- or will America invoke its own Brezhnev Doctrine of Limited Sovereignty and demand Iraqis adopt Americas export-grade democracy.

Yet seeking to prevent ter-

America continues "putting pins in rattlesnakes" it is only natural that one day those rattlesnakes would bite. Nineteen of those rattlesnakes attacked America on Sept. 11; these same rattlesnakes kill and attack American soldiers every day in Iraq.

As the neoconservatives push America towards war, they charge those who argue for realism in American foreign policy with "appeasement". Yet, it is not appeasement to recognise that one's actions and policies are counter-productive to one's stated objectives: Fighting terror. There are one billion Muslims in the world who adhere to a religion that has withstood a thousand years of attack by ideological and military opponents. It will take more than the demands of a cabal of intellectuals in Washington to transform the Muslim world.

A secure and prosperous future for America will not be found in "permanent democratic revolution"; "benevolent hegemony"; "creative destruction" or any of the other neocon code-words for empire. Since World War II, the United States has intervened in over twenty countries, with no democracies resulting.

The solution lies in a return to the foreign doctrine articulated by Thomas Jefferson in his farewell address. The United States should seek, "peace, commerce and honest friendship with all nations; entangling alliances with none".

Likewise, John Quincy Adams, the sixth President of the United States articulated, America "goes not abroad in search of monsters to destroy. She is the well-wisher to the freedom and independence of all. She is the champion and vindicator only of her own".

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America fails to see where the real battle for security must be fought. Fighting off the hordes of rattlesnakes is not the answer; nor is "liberating" Kabul or Baghdad. Rather America must liberate Washington from those who are, through their self-destructive idealism and zeal for democratic revolutions, perpetually sticking pins in the tails of these rattlesnakes. America's foreign policy should once again be the shield of the Republic, and not the sword of Empire.