

Alternatives to War and Occupation

International Iraq Conference

on the 5th anniversary of the invasion

Berlin, 7-9 March 2008

Humboldt University, Audimax
(Unter den Linden 6)

(Last update: February 21, 2008)

After five years of war and occupation, the situation in Iraq is catastrophic. Nobody denies this any more. However, the discussion here of the reasons for this is focused on the conflicts between Iraqi forces, such as the criminal actions of the militias, violence motivated by religion, and terrorist attacks. Although the occupation is the central political reality in Iraq, its dominant role is barely mentioned in Western discussions. The violence committed by the occupying troops is also ignored. They are regarded only as forces desperately trying to bring peace and stability to a conflict-ridden country.

One focus of the conference will therefore be the question of to what extent the U.S.A. and its allies are responsible for the general situation and the current, horribly high level of violence – as in the report “War and Occupation in Iraq”, published by thirty internationally known human-rights groups (see <http://www.globalpolicy.org>).

The second focus will be the discussion of possible alternatives to the occupation and realistic approaches to the subsequent construction of a stable and democratic Iraq. There are proposals for this – both from independent Western experts and from the Iraqi opposition to the occupation.

Friday, March 7th

8:00 p.m. - Panel discussion

“The War on Terror” - Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran

The strategy of the U.S.A. and its allies in the Middle East

Moderation: **Eckart Spoo**, free-lance journalist and editor of *Ossietzky*

- **Dr. Khair El-Din Haseeb**, director-general of the Centre For Arab Unity Studies, Beirut
- **William R. Polk**, national-security advisor to the Kennedy administration, member of the Council on Foreign Relations, USA
- **Congressman Dennis Kucinich**, USA, House of Representatives (Democrat, Ohio)
- **Dr. Werner Biermann**, Germany, University of Paderborn

Saturday, March 8th

9:30 -10:00 am: Welcome and Introduction

- **Dr. Arne Seifert**, Ambassador aD., Speaker of the „Diplomats for Peace with the Islamic World“

PANEL I: 10:00-12:30

FIVE YEARS OF OCCUPATION – AN OVERVIEW

Moderation: *Andreas Zumach*, journalist and author

- **Sanctions, occupation, and war – summing up two decades of Western policy on Iraq**
Dr. Hans von Sponeck former UN humanitarian coordinator in Iraq (1998-2000)
- **Life under occupation**
Dahlia Wasfi Iraqi-American physician, Global Exchange for Peace
- **City of widows – war and resistance from women's point of view**
– *Haifa Zangana*, UK, Iraqi novelist and feminist
- **See nothing, hear nothing, say nothing**
– **The debate on the numbers of victims of war and occupation**
Les Roberts, epidemiologist, USA, co-author of the “Lancet Study” about the numbers of victims since March 2003
- **Occupied or a sovereign state?**
Is the occupation really over from the perspective of international law, as the US and its allies claim? How do we judge the German support of US troops? How legitimate are the new Iraqi constitution or the new laws on oil?
Prof. Norman Paech, Germany, expert in international law, foreign-policy spokesman of the Die Linke in the Bundestag

•Discussion

Lunch break 12:30-1:30 pm

PANEL II 1:30 - 4:00 p.m:

OCCUPATION, CIVIL WAR, AND TERRORISM – CAUSES OF THE VIOLENCE

Moderation: *Ingelis Gnutzmann*, free-lance TV journalist for channel 1 of German TV (WDR/ARD)

- **Sunni against Shi'a? – the myth of a divided Iraq**
On traditional conflicts, the main lines of conflict today, and the perspectives after the withdrawal of the occupying forces
Prof. Walter Sommerfeld, Germany, specialist in Mesopotamian history, University of Marburg
- **The picture painted and the reality**
– **On the responsibility of the occupying power for shortages, misery, and violence**
In a detailed report on the situation in Iraq, international human-rights groups document evidence of the central responsibility of the occupying power for violence and human-rights violations, thus correcting the distorted image presented by the mass media.
Céline Nahory, USA, Global Policy Forum, co-author of the report
- **Why I left**
Accusations by U.S. soldiers of brutal actions of U.S. troops corroborate accusations by Iraqis
Clifton Hicks, USA, former tank driver and gunner in Baghdad, Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW)
- **Militias, security forces, and death squads – the dirty war against the opposition**
The Iraqi police and army are made up to a large extent of the militias of the government parties. What role do they play in the kidnappings and murders, and what proportion are by terrorist groups? To what extent is the U.S.A. involved in these activities itself?
Iman Ahmed Khammas, journalist, Women's Will Association, Baghdad,

• Discussion

Coffee break 3:00-4:00 pm

PANEL III: 4:00 pm:

APPROACHES TO ENDING THE OCCUPATION

Moderation: *Martina Doering*, *Berliner Zeitung* and *Birgit Wentzien*, SWR Berlin studio

- **Programs, proposals, and ideas from Iraq**
 - *Dr. Khair El-Din Haseeb*, Iraq/Lebanon, director-general, Centre For Arab Unity Studies, and leader of the National Iraqi Initiative to End the Occupation
 - *Dr. Sa'eed Hasan al-Musawi*, former Iraqi ambassador to the U.N.
 - *Fuad Ghafur*, Association of Former Political Prisoners of Kurdistan
- **“Out of Iraq – why, when and how” – a practical plan for withdrawal**
 - *William R. Polk*, U.S. national-security advisor under President Kennedy, member of the U.S. Council on Foreign Relations
- **Twelve-point plan to end the war**
 - Congressman Dennis Kucinich*, USA, Democratic member of the House of Representatives
- **Towards peace in and with Iraq – a proposal by the TFF Transnational Foundation**
 - *Dr. Hans v. Sponeck*, former U.N. humanitarian coordinator for Iraq (1998-2000), TFF board member

6:00 p.m. Break, followed by:

- **Panel discussion**
 - Khair El-Din Haseeb, William R. Polk, Hans v. Sponeck, Dennis Kucinich, Sa'eed Hasan al-Musawi and Fuad Ghafur*
- **Audience participation in the discussion**

Sunday, March 9th

Haus der Demokratie, Greifswalder Straße 4

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 Workshops:

- **German participation**
 - What role does Germany play with respect to Iraq; how important is its logistical support for the U.S. armed forces?
 - With *Christopher Steinmetz*, advisor to the Left Party parliamentary caucus, and *Hans-Peter Richter*, Network Against Military Bases, et al.
 - Moderation: *Monty Schädel*, Deutsche Friedensgesellschaft (DFG-VK)
- **Experience in war – involvement for peace**
 - GIs report on their missions in Iraq, the situation of U.S. troops, and ways in which the German peace movement can help them get out.
 - With *Chris Capps*, former signals technician at Camp Victory, Baghdad, Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW), et al.
 - Moderation: *Dr. Gernot Lennert*, DFG-VK Mainz
- **Shortages of essentials and destitute refugees**
 - **International responsibility and grass-roots aid**
 - With *Ruth Jüttner*, Amnesty International, *Norbert Trosien*, UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) Berlin, *Bernd Duschner*, Freundschaft mit Valjevo, et al.
 - Moderation: Attorneys *Eberhard Schultz*, International League for Human Rights, and *Verena Frey*, Arbeitskreis kritischer Juristinnen und Juristen
- **Ways out of the war**
 - Continuation of the previous evening's discussion with the international and German guests

12:00 – 1:30 p.m. Discussion session

- **Forbidden knowledge: Depleted uranium and the consequences**

With *Nina Hagen*, singer and actress

Marion Küpker, Nonviolent Action to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (GAAA), co-coordinator of the 2003 International Uranium Weapons Congress

Frieder Wagner, maker of the film presented at the Berlinale, *Deadly Dust* about the use of uranium weapons et al

12:30 – 2:00 p.m. Final plenary session

Summary of the ideas from the workshops, coordination of the next activities

www.irakkonferenz2008.de

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