

More on That Meeting in Prague...

The Neocon International Meets to prepare for Confrontation in the Mid-East

By [Jim Lobe](#)

Global Research, June 16, 2007

LobeLog.com 14 June 2007

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

In-depth Report: [IRAN: THE NEXT WAR?](#)

A closer look at the [participants list](#) at the Prague Democracy and Security conference that was the subject of my [last post](#) discloses some intriguing associations that I had not noticed at first glance but which may warrant additional attention. Not only was the gathering a kind of “Neo-Conservative International” and the corridor chatter all about Iran, as [Anne Bayefsky reported](#) in the National Review Online, but some of the participants appear to be institutionally inter-related in ways that I had not anticipated.

First, focused as I am on U.S. foreign policy, I failed to note the presence of a couple of people who should have been further identified; namely, Richard Dearlove, who, as head of Britain’s MI6 (2001-2004), purportedly authored the infamous “Downing Street Memo” and, after his retirement, joined the [Henry Jackson Society](#), a mainly British version of the Project for the New American Century (PNAC); and Uzi Arad, currently the director of Israel’s Institute for Policy and Strategy, who served as Binyamin Netanyahu’s top foreign policy adviser when he was prime minister.

But these two, like the American Enterprise Institute’s (AEI) Richard Perle, are relatively well known, as, of course, were other participants I noted in the last post, including the other four members of the AEI delegation, Karen Hughes, Reza Pahlavi, and the conference convenors — former Czech President Vaclav Havel, former Spanish Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar, and Natan Sharansky, the former Soviet dissident and Likud minister who broke with Ariel Sharon over his disengagement from Gaza and who now heads the [Adelson Institute](#) of the [Shalem Center](#), a Likudist think tank close to Netanyahu.

While Sharansky was identified by his affiliation with the Adelson Institute, one of his main non-governmental vehicles over the last six years has been an organization called [One Jerusalem](#), a group described by its mission statement as an “educational foundation...(with) one objective - maintaining a united Jerusalem as the undivided capital of Israel.” It was created in January 2001 after the Camp David talks broached the idea of Jerusalem’s shared sovereignty between Israel and a Palestinian state, a notion considered anathema to hard-core Likudists. Besides Sharansky, the group’s founders included Douglas Feith (then the soon-to-be-nominated undersecretary of defense for policy); another top Netanyahu adviser, Dore Gold; David Horowitz; the former chairman of the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs (JINSA), David Steinmann; and Jackie Mason.

What is particularly interesting is that two of the lesser-known participants at the Prague Conference – David Goder and Allen Roth — have also played major roles in One Jerusalem (indeed, Roth is listed on the One Jerusalem site as its president) but are not identified as such on the participants list. Instead, Roth’s institutional identification is given as “Policy

Forum,” while Goder’s is called “Case for Freedom,” an organization that was apparently launched at the conference but whose website, www.caseforfreedom.org, is “currently under construction.” Yet another participant at the conference was also identified with “Case for Freedom” – [Devon Cross](#), a member of the Defense Policy Board; sister of [Frank Gaffney](#) (see [my 2006 profile](#)), the head of the ultra-hawkish Center for Security Policy (CSP); and, at least until last week, the executive director of another organization called the Policy Forum on International Security in London, presumably the same “Policy Forum” as Goder’s. In fact, the participants list identifies yet another attendee as the “director” of the “Policy Forum,” Steven Schneier.

So, there appears to be an interrelationship between One Jerusalem, the new Case for Freedom, and Cross’ Policy Forum — an interrelationship that is underlined by the fact that, until a few weeks ago, Cross’ Policy Forum email account, press@policyforumuk.com, was hosted by the “onejerusalem.org” mail server, according to VisualRoute tracking software. (It has since been moved to Gmail, but here is a [screen capture before the change](#).)

Now, while One Jerusalem’s activities are laid out on its website and Case for Freedom is still too young to know precisely what it will do (although, it appears to be posting videos of various speeches and interviews at the Prague conference on the Internet through YouTube), Cross’ (now Schneier’s?) Policy Forum’s operations have been carried out largely below the radar, and apparently deliberately so. According to a “Donor’s Guide” compiled by the Smith Richardson Foundation entitled “The Struggle Against Radical Islam:”

“The Policy Forum on International Security Affairs was launched in November 2002, as it became increasingly obvious that the overseas press had little understanding of U.S. foreign policy and even less sympathy for American policies in the War on Terror. Based in London, the Policy Forum hosts a series of roundtable discussions for members of the U.S. policy committee (sic) and the international press corps. Given the central role of the U.K. among America’s alliances, the Forum is located in Britain. Furthermore, London also serves as the center of the Arab press, and the Policy Forum regularly gathers key Arab media in small sessions as well.

“Although the Forum works closely with U.S. government officials, it provides the media a certain distance from official circuits and offers both sides greater candor in discussions, many of which are off-the-record. The Policy Forum’s director, Devon Cross has twenty years (sic) experience working with private foundations involved in national security issues. She serves on the Pentagon’s Defense Policy Board and her many contacts in this field have yielded a wide range of speakers for the Policy Forum’s roundtables, including senior officials from the Departments of Defense and State, as well as leading outside analysts such as Henry Kissinger, R. James Woolsey, and political commentator Michael Barone.”

That, indeed, is what it has done. It appears that when senior U.S. officials or other sympathetic and preferably neo-conservative pooh-bahs like Woolsey travel through London or Paris, Cross, who incidentally also served as an Advisor to the Lincoln Group, the Pentagon contractor that [paid Iraqi newspapers to print pro-U.S. propaganda](#), arranges small, off-the-record get-togethers in de luxe restaurants or clubs (the Carlton Club is a favorite in London, Le Meurice in Paris) for a select group of targeted journalists. Indeed, she appears at times to serve a quasi-governmental function, coordinating with Eric Edelman, Feith’s successor at the Pentagon and a former top Cheney aide, who has himself been the guest of honor at at least three such sessions since last summer. Other guests over the past

year have included former assistant secretary of defense for international security affairs Peter Rodman and ret. Gen. Jack Keane, one of the main architects and proponents, along with Frederick Kagan and other AEI fellows, of Bush's "Surge" strategy in Iraq.

But now, at least according to the participants list, Cross appears to be moving over to Case for Freedom, along with One Jerusalem's Goder, while Roth, One Jerusalem's president, has become associated with the Policy Forum which, again according to the participants list, is now directed by Steven Schneier.

Like Cross, Schneier has left a surprisingly small paper trail. According to a 1999 'Jewish Week' investigative article by Lawrence Cohler-Esses entitled "Likud's Tangled Charity Web," however, a Steven Schneier served as a key fund-raiser for and top aide to Netanyahu while working as the director of the "Israel Development Fund" (IDF), a "charity" that was apparently to funnel campaign contributions from Likud's supporters in the U.S. — among them, casino king Irving Moskowitz, a major backer of the Jewish settler movement in East Jerusalem and the West Bank (not to mention Gaffney's CSP and Cheney aide David Wurmser during his stay at AEI in the late 1990s); and Manfred Lehmann, "the late philanthropist who defended Dr. Baruch Goldstein's murder of 29 Palestinians in Hebron in 1994."

"...[A]ccording to close associates of Netanyahu..., IDF functioned as a base and source of cash for Netanyahu while he was raising money in the U.S. for his ultimately successful 1993 primary election campaign to lead Likud," wrote Cohler-Esses.

"One former Netanyahu associate, who would speak only on condition of anonymity, said IDF's sole paid staff member, Steven Schneier, used the charity to raise money for Netanyahu's political ambitions.

"'Steve Schneier would tell people to write checks to IDF to enable them to get a tax deduction,' said this source. "The money went first for the 1993 Likud primary, and then to rebuilding the party."

"...[O]nly about half of the more than [\$]1.7 million IDF raised over six years of activity went to any charity groups in Israel at all."

In the mid-1990's, according to Cohler-Esses, Schneier went on the payroll of the Shalem Center while he apparently also worked for another Likud-controlled "charity," the Israel Research Foundation (IRF). When both the IRF and the IDF were dissolved in 1997, Cohler-Esses reported, Schneier went to work for Ronald Lauder, who was also the chief funder of both the Shalem Center and the IRF at the time. A long-time Republican who served as Ronald Reagan's ambassador to Austria, Lauder, who also appeared on the participants list for the Prague conference, has been both close to and a major supporter of Netanyahu since the latter served as Israel's UN ambassador in the 1980s.

All of this naturally helps illustrate the connections between neo-conservatives in the U.S. and the Likud Party in Israel. But it also raises some interesting questions. If the Steven Schneier at the Prague conference, for example, is indeed the one described by Cohler-Esses eight years ago, and if, as indicated by the participants list, the same Schneier is now directing the Policy Forum, will he still be coordinating off-the-record press briefings in London or Paris by senior U.S. officials with the Pentagon? And if the Bush administration is seriously committed to a genuine two-state solution that does not exclude the possibility of

shared sovereignty of Jerusalem, why is Bush himself addressing a conference whose principal organizers and sponsors are so closely associated with hard-line Likudist positions, from which even Ariel Sharon and Ehud Olmert had distanced themselves? And, finally, if Bush wants to reaffirm his commitment to the spread of liberal democracy and “freedom” throughout the Arab world, in particular, how does this forum enhance his credibility with the intended audience?

Last week’s speech in Prague—and the participants before whom it was given—is yet one more indication that, while the realists in the administration have made great headway on a number of foreign-policy fronts over the past year and a half, the neo-conservatives and other hawks in the White House and Cheney’s office are a long way from defeated when it comes to the Middle East.

Jim Lobe is best known for his coverage of U.S. foreign policy, particularly the neo-conservative influence in the Bush administration. The Washington Bureau Chief of the international news agency Inter Press Service (IPS), Lobe has also written for Foreign Policy In Focus, Alternet, Tompaine.com, and was featured in BBC and ABC television documentaries about motivations for the US invasion of Iraq.

The original source of this article is LobeLog.com
Copyright © [Jim Lobe](#), LobeLog.com, 2007

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Jim Lobe](#)

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca