

Scott Ritter Says U.S. Plans June Attack On Iran

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02/19/05 -United for Peace of Pierce County (WA) - - Scott Ritter, appearing with journalist Dahr Jamail yesterday in Washington State, dropped two shocking bombshells in a talk delivered to a packed house in Olympia's Capitol Theater. The ex-Marine turned UNSCOM weapons inspector said that George W. Bush has "signed off" on plans to bomb Iran in June 2005, and claimed the U.S. manipulated the results of the recent Jan. 30 elections in Iraq.

Olympians like to call the Capitol Theater "historic," but it's doubtful whether the eighty-year-old edifice has ever been the scene of more portentous revelations.

The principal theme of Scott Ritter's talk was Americans' duty to protect the U.S. Constitution by taking action to bring an end to the illegal war in Iraq. But in passing, the former UNSCOM weapons inspector stunned his listeners with two pronouncements Ritter said plans for a June attack on Iran have been submitted to President George W. Bush, and that the president has approved them. He also asserted that knowledgeable sources say U.S. officials "cooked" the results of the Jan. 30 elections in Iraq.

On Iran, Ritter said that President George W. Bush has received and signed off on orders for an aerial attack on Iran planned for June 2005. Its purported goal is the destruction of Iran's alleged program to develop nuclear weapons, but Ritter said neoconservatives in the administration also expected that the attack would set in motion a chain of events leading to regime change in the oil-rich nation of 70 million — a possibility Ritter regards with the greatest skepticism.

The former Marine also said that the Jan. 30 elections, which George W. Bush has called "a turning point in the history of Iraq, a milestone in the advance of freedom," were not so free after all. Ritter said that U.S. authorities in Iraq had manipulated the results in order to reduce the percentage of the vote received by the United Iraqi Alliance from 56% to 48%.

Asked by UFPPC's Ted Nation about this shocker, Ritter said an official involved in the manipulation was the source, and that this would soon be reported by a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist in a major metropolitan magazine — an obvious allusion to New Yorker reporter Seymour M. Hersh.

On Jan. 17, the New Yorker posted an article by Hersh entitled *The Coming Wars* (New Yorker, January 24-31, 2005). In it, the well-known investigative journalist claimed that for the Bush administration,

"The next strategic target [is] Iran." Hersh also reported that

“The Administration has been conducting secret reconnaissance missions inside Iran at least since last summer.”

According to Hersh,

“Defense Department civilians, under the leadership of Douglas Feith, have been working with Israeli planners and consultants to develop and refine potential nuclear, chemical-weapons, and missile targets inside Iran. . . . Strategists at the headquarters of the U.S. Central Command, in Tampa, Florida, have been asked to revise the military’s war plan, providing for a maximum ground and air invasion of Iran. . . . The hawks in the Administration believe that it will soon become clear that the Europeans’ negotiated approach [to Iran] cannot succeed, and that at that time the Administration will act.”

Scott Ritter said that although the peace movement failed to stop the war in Iraq, it had a chance to stop the expansion of the war to other nations like Iran and Syria. He held up the specter of a day when the Iraq war might be remembered as a relatively minor event that preceded an even greater conflagration.

Scott Ritter’s talk was the culmination of a long evening devoted to discussion of Iraq and U.S. foreign policy. Before Ritter spoke, Dahr Jamail narrated a slide show on Iraq focusing on Fallujah. He showed more than a hundred vivid photographs taken in Iraq, mostly by himself. Many of them showed the horrific slaughter of civilians.

Dahr Jamail argued that U.S. mainstream media sources are complicit in the war and help sustain support for it by deliberately downplaying the truth about the devastation and death it is causing.

Jamail was, until recently, one of the few unembedded journalists in Iraq and one of the only independent ones. His reports have gained a substantial following and are available online at www.dahrjamailiraq.com

Friday evening’s event in Olympia was sponsored by South Puget Sound Community College’s Student Activities Board, Veterans for Peace, 100 Thousand and Counting, Olympia Movement for Justice & Peace, and United for Peace of Pierce County.

Mark Jensen is a member of United for Peace of Pierce County.
<http://www.ufppc.org/>

Britain says no to U.S. Iranian strikes

London, England, Apr. 27 (UPI) — Britain will not support the United States in military action against Iran, British Minister for the Middle East Baroness Elizabeth Symons said Wednesday.

Speaking during a conference on future foreign policy at the Royal Institute of International Affairs, Symons said “absolutely...no, we would not support them.”

Prime Minister Tony Blair and Foreign Secretary Jack Straw have previously failed to entirely rule out military action, although they have made clear they intend to continue negotiating

with Tehran concerning its nuclear facilities.

She denied the United States had a “project” of military action, saying “I do not believe that this is something that the Americans have on the stocks.”

But Air Marshal Lord Timothy Garden, the Liberal Democrats defense spokesman and former assistant chief of defense staff, said the United States’ sale of 100 bunker busting bombs to Israel suggested “a strike is back in somebody’s thoughts in Washington.”

Military action against Iran would be an “insane project” and “militarily ineffective,” Garden said.

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