

refuses to take that path. **If Saddam Hussein were to allow a new disarmament body into Iraq, he could quickly move towards suspension if he cooperated with the weapons inspectors.'**

Hain said on 11 Sept. 2000, '**1284 is the way forward** and essentially what it allows for is sanctions to be suspended in return for a new arms inspection team under Dr Hans Blix to go into Iraq and begin inspections... There is a very clear policy and it is a **win-win for everybody**. UN inspectors could return, Iraqi people get relief, Iraq's neighbours feel safer with Saddam Hussein's weapons under some measure of control.' (Hain defended sanctions on 24 Mar. 2000 saying, 'One of the arguments that the critics of sanctions have to face is that although sanctions have had many consequences, one of them has been the containment of Saddam Hussein's war machine.')

British Ambassador to the UN, Sir Jeremy Greenstock, spoke to the Security Council on behalf of the Blair Government on 17 Dec. 1999, praising the new resolution: 'The Council now has the policy which it needs; and this resolution is now the law of the globe... The Security Council needs, and the UN system as a whole needs, the weight of the full Council and the full membership in implementing this mandatory resolution... If we succeed in that, it will be to the advantage of the people of Iraq and of the region, in the interests of the future authority of the United Nations, and to the great credit of this Council.' (Hain and Greenstock quotes are from the Foreign Office website: <www.fco.gov.uk>)

Foreign Secretary Jack Straw said on 21 Feb.: 'It is for [Saddam Hussein] to prove that he has, once and for all, given up what we know he has.' (*Telegraph*, 22 Feb., p. 14) This can only be done properly and in accordance with international law and UN Resolutions if clear and precise 'key disarmament tasks' are spelt out. It is for Jack Straw and the British and US Governments to follow 'the law of the globe', to make Iraq's neighbours 'feel safer', to create 'relief' for the Iraqi people, and to defend 'the future authority of the UN', by allowing the weapons inspectors to implement 'mandatory resolution' 1284, and define Iraq's remaining key disarmament tasks.

On 25 Feb. Tony Blair is due to say in the House of Commons, 'He knows, and the world knows, what he has to do.' (*Sunday Times*, 23 Feb. 2003, p. 2) This isn't true. It is up to the anti-war movement to make it true, to allow the inspectors to disarm Iraq: a real 'win-win' situation for everybody.

ARROW BOOK *War Plan Iraq: Ten Reasons Against War On Iraq* by Milan Rai (Verso, 2002) 'Readable and well-sourced' *The Times* 'Excellent' *Tariq Ali* 'Required reading' *Professor Paul Rogers*

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KEY TASKS

The Vulnerability At The Heart of The New Resolution ARROW Anti-War Briefing 31 (23 February 2003) WAR PLAN IRAQ Update Number 10

SUMMARY: THE US IS TRYING TO DITCH A KEY RESOLUTION

UN weapons inspectors should be setting out clearly defined and precise tasks for Iraq to carry out to verify that its weapons of mass destruction capability is disarmed. The US is blocking this process, and trying to get a 'war resolution' instead of a 'disarmament checklist'.

THE INSPECTION PROCESS WE SHOULD BE FOLLOWING

The UN weapons inspection process broke down in Dec. 1998 after the US asked inspectors to withdraw from Iraq to create the right political climate for a four-day US/UK bombing raid (see *War Plan Iraq*, Chapter IV, for details).

After a year, in Resolution 1284, passed in Dec. 1999, the Security Council created a new inspectorate UNMOVIC (UN Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission), and a new timetable for inspections by UNMOVIC and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

THE CENTRAL PROVISION: KEY DISARMAMENT TASKS

Para. 7 of Resolution 1284: the Security Council 'Decides that UNMOVIC and the IAEA, not later than 60 days after they have both started work in Iraq, will each draw up, for approval by the Council, a **work programme** for the discharge of their mandates, which will include... the **key remaining disarmament tasks to be completed by Iraq**... and further decides that **what is required of Iraq for the implementation of each task shall be clearly defined and precise**'. <www.un.org/Depts/unmovic/> After four months of co-operation, economic sanctions could be suspended (Para. 33).

NO MORE MOVING THE GOALPOSTS

The point of the 'key disarmament tasks' is that the Security Council is supposed to set out in black and white exactly what Iraq has to do in order to get economic sanctions first suspended, and then eventually lifted. The tasks must be 'clearly defined and precise' in order to stop the US and UK from being able to 'move the goalposts'. This is precisely what has been happening since Iraq invited the inspectors back in on 16 Sept. 2002. First the key area was said to be 'access', particularly to the 'Presidential palaces'. When these

were inspected without problems, new issues were raised, including flights by US U-2 spy planes and interviews with weapons scientists. As each problem is resolved, the US and UK jump to another issue. The *Guardian* comments, 'the US and Britain are not just moving the goalposts. They are widening the goalmouth and doubling the size of the penalty area.' (*Guardian*, 27 Jan., p. 19)

The White House spokesperson dismisses all forms of co-operation: 'It would not surprise the US if Saddam Hussein pretends all of a sudden to have change of heart and allow the U2 to fly or to show up with some of the weapons he promised he never had. But it wouldn't change the fact that Saddam Hussein is not co-operating.' (*Times*, 7 Feb., p. 1) However much co-operation there is in reality, according to US propaganda Iraq is 'not co-operating'. This is because the US is determined on war. Inspections are an unwanted obstacle to war. Co-operation is an unwanted obstacle to war.

BENCHMARKS AND KEY DISARMAMENT TASKS

Hence the importance of implementing 1284 and drawing up clear, precise and unmoveable 'key disarmament tasks'. On 24/25 Feb., Hans Blix is presenting to the UNMOVIC College of Commissioners, an advisory group of experts, 'a list of more than 35 outstanding issues surrounding Iraq's disarmament'. (*Guardian*, 22 Feb., p. 4) 'His questions are inspired largely by resolution 1284'. (*Telegraph*, 22 Feb., p. 14) Critically, 'some countries would like to turn the Blix list into an ultimatum to Iraq'. (*Independent*, 22 Feb., p. 4) 'Seeking a way through, some countries have pushed for clear benchmarks on co-operation by which Iraq can be measured. But US officials say even those could be manipulated. There are serious doubts whether an ostensibly technical solution can bridge a fundamentally political question.' (*FT*, 21 Feb., p. 5)

The US and UK are desperate to prevent the key disarmament tasks being formulated and presented to the Security Council. 'In private, British officials fear that Mr Blix's "benchmarks" for Iraqi compliance may make their uphill struggle to win the resolution even more difficult. Mr Blix's questions could be seized upon by opponents of war—France, Germany, Russia, China and Syria—to string out the UN process on grounds that the UN must be given time to provide clear answers. Diplomats said America and Britain will resist any attempt to insert the benchmarks into the resolution as part of a formal ultimatum to Iraq. They are worried that this would invite another interminable series of discussions over whether Iraq has disarmed and whether inspectors should be given more time, and may invite a third resolution.' (*Telegraph*, 22 Feb., p. 14)

'Some countries have suggested that those questions could be used to formulate specific tasks ahead of the end of March, possibly with a deadline, which could clarify matters for the Security Council's middle ground as it approaches decision time. But the US argues that resolution 1441 is all the benchmark it needs, amid fears that a list of tasks could be used to string out the process. Colin Powell, secretary of state, has said he does not expect the resolution itself to set a "timeline". "The chances of it being put forward by the US or the UK is close to nil," said one Council official. But "around the debate there will be a lot of trying to find measures by which to judge Iraq".' (*FT*, 22 Feb., p. 6) In other words, there will be some members of the Security Council trying to implement Resolution 1284, despite US/UK obstructionism.

At the time of writing, it is possible that Paris will make a serious effort in this direction: 'The French memorandum—expected to be tabled "in the next few days", according to a senior official—will continue to stress the disarmament of Iraq through peaceful means, but propose strict deadlines for the dismemberment of Iraq's alleged illicit arms programme. The US has so far resisted setting benchmarks, amid fears they could sow further ambiguity and string out discussions.' (*FT*, 24 Feb., p. 1)

The real danger to the US is quite the opposite: **unambiguous** 'benchmarks' could help Iraq prove its co-operation and its disarmament are full and complete, thus denying the US the war it craves. For example, 'France now wants a precise deadline for inspectors to interview the 83 experts who Baghdad claims destroyed its chemical weapons stockpiles.' (*FT*, 24 Feb., p. 1)

TASKS TIMELINE

The British broadsheets say that the 'key disarmament tasks' required by Resolution 1284 must be drawn up by 27 Mar., after 120 days of resumed work, rather than the 60 days specified in 1284. (*Telegraph*, 22 Feb., p. 14; and 24 Feb., p. 14), (*FT*, 22 Feb., p. 6), (*Times*, 21 Feb., p. 17) This is because UNMOVIC has decided that the first two months were not really 'work', and that the 60 days started on 27 Jan. (Phone conversation, Ewen Buchanan of UNMOVIC, 24 Feb.) It is difficult to believe this was a purely internal UNMOVIC decision, and that the US had nothing to do with it.

Resolution 1284 says that 120 days after an 'Ongoing Monitoring and Verification' (OMV) programme becomes fully operational, economic sanctions can be suspended. But the OMV plan has not yet been approved.

1284 WAS ONCE 'THE WAY FORWARD'

Peter Hain, then a Foreign Office minister, wrote in the *Independent* on 7 Aug. 2000, 'The Security Council Resolution for which Britain worked so hard last year offers Iraq a path towards the suspension of sanctions, but Saddam