

### ***Week 11: What is America's Agenda?***

With the US declaration of the end of Saddam Hussein's power in Iraq, and with the beginning of setting up a new Iraqi government, Britain and the United States are shifting its focus to Iraq's neighbors. Syria is emerging as the next possible target for US scrutiny on its quest to rid the world of terrorism. I would like to examine this situation further, and with this information, hypothesize America's agenda on its apparent quest to take over the mid east.

First, look at the current situation with Iraq. The US was displeased with the way Hussein was ruling his country. The US and Britain believed Saddam to be both hoarding chemical and biological weaponry and believed him to be helping various terrorist organizations both financially and politically. The US didn't approve of this behavior and, despite UN disapproval, removed Saddam from power with force. The US is now setting up an interim government administered by retired Lt. General Jay Garner who vowed, "A free and democratic Iraq will begin today." The US will aid to install a government in Iraq that does not harbor terrorist organizations or provide them with financial support.

Now US and Britain's attention is turned to Syria. According to the *NY Times*, Britain's Foreign Secretary Jack Straw says that "Syria has an 'opportunity to prove' that it is not what Washington calls a 'rogue nation' sponsoring terrorism, developing chemical weapons and harboring former Iraqi leaders." Apparently it is now up to Syria to prove to the world (or at least the US) that it is not another Iraq. The Syrian ambassador to the US, Rostom Al-Zoubi told CNN that "All these accusations are baseless. We deny them."

This exchange of accusations and denials certainly sounds familiar. Similar words were spoken not more than a month ago. The question is, how have the cards changed, and what is the US agenda? In one aspect, Syria is a strong ally with Spain, a country that supported the US attack on Iraq. Spanish Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar said that Syria will not be a military target, and that he was “convinced that the conflict will not spread to other countries in the region.”

At this time I would like to point out that the Spanish Prime Minister may be making too many assumptions about US motivation for action in the mid-east. It has become clear that, because of its nodal nature, it is nearly impossible to fight terrorism by targeting individual terrorist groups. Evidence seems to be pointing out more and more that the US is intent on fighting its war on terrorism through attacking the governments that support these terrorist groups. It seems the US wants the government that holds up a country's flag to take the responsibility to fight terrorist organizations within its borders. This is all based on the assumption that major terrorist organizations cannot function without money. If we attack the financial source and if we pressure governments to not allow the organizations to live within their countries, the terrorist groups have no place to live and no means to support themselves.

I believe eliminating every government that helps terrorist groups is the key item on the US agenda in the Middle East. First it was Afghanistan, and then it was Iraq. If Syria is suspect, they may be next. It is in this manner the US will attempt to make its homeland safe – a victory for the war on terrorism.