

# National Sovereignty & Universal Challenges: Choices for the World After Iraq

Background Document

## “Towards an Integral Analysis of the Iraq Crisis”

- Gregory Wilpert, April 2003

The cognitive dimension of integral means, among other things, examining an issue from as many perspectives as possible (all quadrants/all levels, AQAL, in Wilber’s terms) and then integrating these perspectives into a more or less coherent whole, so as to form a more integral (and aperspectival, as Gebser says) analysis and course of action.

Using the AQAL map as a guideline, we can examine the different perspectives on the Iraq conflict, as they relate to the quadrants and the levels of arguments (meaning-making). To simplify things a bit, I will divide the perspectives on Iraq into two large categories: pro-war and anti-war. Perhaps this is not the best way to go about this because it reinforces a dichotomization of perspectives. However, my hope is that at the end of the analysis, we will be able to dissolve the dichotomy.

While examining each perspective, I will try to also pay attention to the level and quadrant perspective of reasoning/meaning-making employed. Based on this analysis, I will then venture some recommendations that integrally informed advocates or policy makers could push for.

## *Perspectives on the War against Iraq*

### **Pro-war arguments:**

1. Based on the premise that Hussein has and will use WMD (Weapons of Mass Destruction) for illegitimate reasons, Hussein is threat to:
  - a. neighboring states – While Hussein has attacked neighboring states and his own population, no neighboring country seems to be concerned about the danger that Iraq poses (not even Israel, since it has a very credible deterrent, in the form of its own fairly large arsenal of WMD). One could classify this reasoning as “green,”<sup>1</sup> assuming it is sincere, in that the motivation is to protect weaker or marginal parties in a potential conflict. One could also classify it as “orange,” in so far as it rests on international law, which might require the international community to protect the rights of aggrieved nations. Finally, the argument could (but hardly is) be “blue,” if we were talking about protecting a population that has a similar ethnic

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<sup>1</sup> I will be using Spiral Dynamics and Wilber’s quadrant terminology, simply as a shorthand for different developmental levels and perspectives. For an explanation of the quadrant terminology, see: <http://wilber.shambhala.com/html/books/kosmos/excerptA/part1.cfm> For an explanation of the Spiral Dynamics level terminology, see: <http://members.ams.chello.nl/f.visser3/wilber/beck2.html>

background (i.e., European) as the nation(s) interested in engaging in protective activity. One could perhaps say that the U.S.' interest in protecting Israel is of this order.

- b. his own population – This threat seems very real, given the repression Hussein's regime practices. But the West's concern rings somewhat hollow if one considers that Hussein gassed the Kurds with the knowledge and tacit support of the West (which largely supplied the chemicals) and that his repressive practices against his own population did not become an issue until his invasion of Kuwait three years later (up until which point U.S.-Iraqi relations were quite chummy). But even immediately following the Gulf war, Hussein launched a serious campaign against his Shiite population, which the West could have prevented, but permitted. In any case, for many in the pro-war camp, this is no doubt a sincere argument for getting rid of Hussein and should thus be taken seriously. As for the type of reasoning, it could be considered "green" in that it represents the defense of a marginalized people. It has recently also been called "humanitarian intervention."
- c. the "West" (terror attacks on the U.S., for example) – Often mentioned in this context is Hussein's supposed connection with Al Qaeda. However, as many analysts have pointed out, such a connection probably does not exist, mainly because Al Qaeda considers Hussein an enemy of Islam. Hussein might be interested in terrorist attacks of his own on western targets. While no actual terrorist attacks have yet to be linked to Hussein, it is not too far-fetched to believe that he would have the motivation to launch attacks against western countries, if he had the capability. One could thus say that the concern is one of self-defense, which is a right, according to international law. Attacking Iraq on this basis is being called "pre-emptive self-defense," which has a basis in international law. However, "pre-emptive self-defense" applies only to an immediate danger, such as when bombers are already in the air and have not yet dropped any bombs. Rather, this is a case of "preventive war," since there is no clear and present danger to the U.S., and this does not have a basis in international law. Still, one could classify this reasoning as "orange," in the sense that it involves the calculated pursuit or defense of self-interest.
- d. regional stability – This would be another plausible concern, were it not for the problem that a war against Iraq could cause as much instability as Hussein currently does to the region. The concern for stability can be considered a typical "orange" or "green" type of concern, depending on why instability is considered a problem. If it's because it is harming certain interests (such as economic profit-making), one could say that it is orange. If it harms an interest in maintaining stability for its own sake, as a systems concern, then it could be considered "green."

Overall, the perspectives/arguments presented in #1a-c reflect a focus on the upper quadrants, in that they focus either on Hussein's behavior (UR<sup>2</sup> - threatening

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<sup>2</sup> UR, UL, LL, LR are abbreviations that refer to the four quadrants Upper Right (exterior individual), Upper Left (interior individual), Lower Left (interior collective), and Lower Right (exterior collective).

behavior) or his intentions (UL – psychopathic and power-hungry dictator). Only #1d (regional stability) brings in systemic (LR) issues.

2. Democratization of the region – That is, the defeat of Hussein would allow the creation of a democratic Iraq, which would set a positive example for the region and perhaps lead to more democracy in the Middle East. Insofar as this perspective reflects an interest in promoting the political development of the countries in the region, it should be a concern of any integral approach (the Basic Moral Intuition). So, one could consider this argumentation yellow, but one has to beware that its implementation is not poisoned by “blue” western values, in the sense of imposing a “western democracy” on countries, or “orange” self-interest disguised as altruism (green would generally dismiss this argument, seeing “democratization” as an imposition of western values per se). In terms of the quadrants, this argument reflects a LR perspective, in the sense that it is interested in setting up democratic institutions. A more integral approach, however, would also pay attention to the LL and the need to promote a democratic political culture. Of course, the big question is whether democratic culture and institutions can actually best be promoted via an invasion and subsequently western style democratic institutions. While there have been some limited historical precedents (the most important that Bush policy officials have mentioned is post-WWII Japan), it is very doubtful whether this will happen in Iraq, given its ethnic diversity, its mostly pre-orange cultural development, and the interests of other countries in the region, which do not want to see currently marginalized (but majority) ethnic groups strengthened. A recent March 14 article in the *Los Angeles Times* uncovered a confidential State Department analysis, which flatly contradicts Bush’s claim that the region could be democratized through U.S. force.<sup>3</sup>
3. Legitimate concern over strategic and essential resources (oil) – this is perhaps the least openly articulated concern, but, if one is to believe the strategy papers that Bush appointees have written,<sup>4</sup> this is perhaps one of the most important Bush administration concerns regarding the Middle East. Just because it has only rarely been publicly articulated, does not mean that it is not a valid concern. However, it is taboo to openly articulate such a blatant self-interest – one which has no basis in international law, on top of it all. Most public expressions of this argument focus on guaranteeing U.S. might and the protection of unnamed U.S. interests and values. But what are U.S. interests in the Middle East? There is little doubt that it is oil – and not just Iraq’s, but OPEC’s in general. High-level government analyses have been leaked that argue that Iraq is merely going to help the U.S. break Saudi Arabia, OPEC’s most powerful member and the origin of nearly all of the 9/11 terrorists. This perspective is embedded in an orange level type of concern (as long as it is rationally legitimated, otherwise it could be blue or red,

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<sup>3</sup> See: <http://www.commondreams.org/headlines03/0314-06.htm> - reprinted in CommonDreams, since the LA Times charges for its articles.

<sup>4</sup> see Project for a New American Century [www.newamericancentury.org](http://www.newamericancentury.org)

depending on the reasoning) that focuses on the LR, the supply of a material resource.

### **Anti-war arguments:**

1. A war without UN authorization violates international law (and without an authorization from the U.S. Congress it would violate the U.S. constitution). This is a fairly straight-forward “orange” argument that urges strict adherence to the rule of (rational/orange, not traditional/blue) law. In terms of the quadrants, the emphasis on legal norms belongs to the legal-rational culture, as Weber would say, thus the LL.
2. The U.S. is pursuing illegitimate imperial interests. This perspective looks at pro-war arguments 1 & 2 above and doubts their sincerity. Instead, it focuses on #3, saying that the pursuit of national interests goes far beyond the legitimate and are much darker than Bush’s policy experts let on.

Sidebar: Clearly, this is the type of argument that the left typically focuses on and, as such, it is also the type of argument championed by critical theory – that is, it represents what some have called (Jürgen Habermas and Paul Ricoeur) a “hermeneutics of suspicion.” The founders of this hermeneutics are (according to Habermas & Ricoeur) Freud, Marx, and Nietzsche. While there is little integral about their approaches (except Nietzsche, perhaps), integral theory ought to include the hermeneutics of suspicion. The hermeneutics of suspicion usually is un-integral because it tends to privilege a particular quadrant and level over all others, as Wilber has argued in several of his works (for Freud the sexual/physical - UL and beige to red; for Marx the economic - LR and orange; and for Nietzsche it is power – which could be given an integral interpretation, since power is very diffuse and can have roots in any quadrant and level). What integral-critical theorists thus ought to figure out is an integral hermeneutics of suspicion, which does not reduce everything to one quadrant/level, but which figures out what Q/L it is appropriate to trace truth claims to in given circumstances.

The existing (un-integral) hermeneutics of suspicion (anti-war perspective #2) comes in three basic variants. Most public pronouncements of this perspective, especially from the old left (which tends towards the “orange” and LR) and the new left (tends towards the “green” and LL) focus on the Marxist hermeneutics of suspicion: reduction of motives to economic (LR orange) or Anglo-European cultural interests (LL green). These boil down to a critique of U.S. efforts to establish:

- a. World economic hegemony – Clearly a LR perspective, which comes in two variants:
  - i. The pursuit of energy and oil-related profits. In other words, it reduces the war on Iraq to a “blood for oil” deal, whereby the U.S. is seen to pursue a secure and continuous supply of oil and of

profits. This is essentially a critique of pro-war perspective #3, saying that the interest in maintaining a profitable oil supply is illegitimate for several reasons. First, it is illegitimate to wage war in the name of material gain. Second, others say that it is illegitimate to wage war over someone else's resource, with which they are free to do as they please. Third, some say that it is illegitimate to wage war over a resource that is unsustainable and harmful to the environment. In effect, all of these arguments say that the need to preserve life and peace precedes any interest in maintaining access to an important but unsustainable resource. One could interpret this line of argumentation as being part "orange," in that it questions the legality of the argument, and part "green," in that it raises the interest in peace above material interests. To skeptics of this line of argumentation, one would have to point to the rather compelling (in my view) evidence that the U.S. is pursuing these interests in its war with Iraq. For now, let me just point out that a U.S. government official has stated that an aim of U.S. policy was to "break OPEC's back." That is, the hermeneutics of suspicion says that the U.S. is aiming to control Iraqi oil so that it can give profitable contracts to U.S. oil companies, which then flood the oil market, which then could ruin the economies of Saudi Arabia and Venezuela (at the very least), eventually leading to the fall of unwanted governments in these countries.<sup>5</sup>

- ii. Maintenance of dollar hegemony. U.S. economic might is based to a very large extent on the fact that the dollar is the world's currency. This hegemony, however, is being threatened by the Euro and, indirectly, by Iraq. In 1999 Iraq switched its oil transactions to Euros and there has been some open speculation among other OPEC countries to switch all OPEC oil transactions to Euros, which would cause a collapse of the dollar and of the U.S. economy. One way to prevent this from happening would be to control Iraq, and destroy OPEC (see i. above).<sup>6</sup>
- b. World political hegemony – This is certainly related to the above point, but the emphasis is on U.S. political and military power. In a sense, political and military hegemony are needed so as to maintain economic hegemony (Noam Chomsky tends to make this argument). One can find particularly strong evidence for this analysis of U.S. motivations in the writings of the Project for a New American Century.<sup>7</sup> Also, world systems theorist Immanuel Wallerstein (the foremost world social systems theorist)

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<sup>5</sup> For a detailed analysis of oil and Iraq, see: <http://www.worldwatch.org/press/news/2002/11/26/> For a strong counter-argument of this perspective, see: <http://www.cato.org/dailys/03-18-03.html>

<sup>6</sup> For an interesting article on this, see: <http://www.stopworldwar3.com/article.pl?sid=03/03/19/0241206>

<sup>7</sup> for an analysis of their writing, see: [http://truthout.org/docs\\_03/022803A.shtml](http://truthout.org/docs_03/022803A.shtml)

argues that the U.S. is globally on the decline and that its military forays are its last desperate efforts to ward off this decline.<sup>8</sup>

- c. World cultural hegemony – This last hermeneutic is the postmodern variant, which reduces the U.S. government’s motives to efforts to establish the dominance of western (blue/Christian) culture – these analysts see Samuel Huntington’s *Clash of Civilizations* as being the prime embodiment of this type of motivation.

One could say that insofar as the Bush administration embodies blue Christian fundamentalism (Bush’s rather strong evangelical orientation comes out in his speeches against the evil of Hussein and is well documented in Bob Woodward’s rather sympathetic portrait of Bush in: *Bush at War*), as well as orange oil/profit interests (most major figures in Bush’s cabinet come from the oil and energy industry) it believes it can kill two birds with one stone with its war in Iraq. Of course, the additional justification that the war will protect Iraqi minorities (a “green” concern) and promote political development (a “yellow” concern) makes the whole endeavor look integral, as Alan Tonkin (of the Global Values Network: newsletter #43) argues.

The hermeneutics of suspicion, however, casts doubt on how sincere the latter two concerns are, especially in light of the West’s history in the region. That is, the U.S. helped create Hussein in the first place (just as it helped create the Taliban in Afghanistan) and therefore should not be trusted to do the right thing in Iraq now. That is, historical evidence is presented to provide further proof for the hermeneutics of suspicion. Also, the evidence suggests that the West lacks a clear understanding of the internal dynamics within Middle Eastern countries such as Iraq and therefore cannot be trusted to come up with a decent solution to the somewhat pathological developments in the region. A truly integral approach to the problem would suggest that an integral analysis of the region and how its problems could best be solved is required.

3. Pro-war arguments #1a & 1c are false: Hussein does not present a threat to the region or to the U.S. (no serious analyst doubts that he threatens his own people). This is where the U.N. debate is centered: does Hussein have weapons of mass destruction and, if so, how can one most effectively disarm him? War opponents say that he either does not have them or, if he does, one should spend more time tracking them down and destroying them under UN supervision. In effect, we are dealing here with a purely empirical (left quadrant) question that can be answered with orange cognitive skills. The need for more time is primarily challenged by the practical issue that going to war with Iraq in the summer, which is quite difficult, due to the heat. This overall anti-war perspective is based in the orange questions of international law and what is empirically true. Based on the numerous criticisms leveled against the Bush administration’s “evidence” of

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<sup>8</sup> See Wallerstein’s analysis in Foreign Policy Magazine, “The Eagle Has Crash Landed”  
[http://www.foreignpolicy.com/issue\\_julyaug\\_2002/wallerstein.html](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/issue_julyaug_2002/wallerstein.html)

Hussein's possession of WMDs, this anti-war perspective seems quite damning for the case for war.<sup>9</sup>

4. War is always wrong or, at least, should be the very last resort, exercised strictly in self-defense. This is, of course, one of the main reasons for why there is international law and a Just War Theory in the first place (when it is used to prevent war instead of justify it, as is all too often the case). With the emergence of the orange meme (or world-centric perspective) people began to realize that war had better be waged for very good reasons, if we ever want to live in peace, thus leading to the creation of rules governing the engagement in war. The most important rule in this respect is perhaps the one that resulted from the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia, which provided the origins for the notion of national sovereignty. International law builds on this, especially with the founding of the United Nations.

While international law and the prevention of war are based on “orange” values, I would suggest, however, that with every subsequent stage the ability to avoid war while still maintaining one's values becomes greater. That is, while “orange” recognizes the basic shared humanness in all humans (something “blue” might not recognize, given its group-centered perspective), the de-centered perspective of “green” sees that “orange,” despite its universal principles, has a tendency to marginalize and disregard the victims of its supposedly universal rationality. The typical “green” complaint here being the about the marginalization and victimization of the Third World at the hands of universalistic “orange” capitalist principles. The proto-typical “orange” war and “green” critique of it is the Vietnam War, where “orange” rationality said, “we must destroy the village in order to save it [from communism].” “Green,” though, can at times condone war, as it did in the “humanitarian” war in Kosovo. That is, if the war is to protect a marginalized group, it could see this as being legitimate, since this is green's *raison d'être*. Other examples of “green” supporting warfare are the liberation theologians of Latin America (and the northern movements of solidarity with Latin American insurgents), who supported guerilla movements of various kinds against tyrannical regimes.

An integral perspective on war would transcend and include the concern for the victims of “orange” (in contrast to Tonkin) and could also envision war for humanitarian reasons. However, the integral (a-centric) perspective demands a more comprehensive and meta-perspectival understanding of the causes and consequences of war, which ought to lead it to devising better ways for avoiding war (for conflict management), while still living up to its highest values (the BMI), than either “orange” or “green” could.

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<sup>9</sup> See, for example, a scathing report by the Washington Post: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A42517-2003Mar17.html> - one of a series of articles questioning the veracity of the Bush administration. By the way, the Washington Post's editorial line is to support the war.

First of all, one has to recognize that all arguments presented in the international public discourse are arguments made from either a world-centered (“orange”) or de-centered (“green”) perspective. Practically no one nowadays would present arguments to the public that come from a socio-centric (“blue”) perspective (such as, “Hussein has violated traditional rules, such as the Qur'an, the Bible, etc.” Although, claims that Hussein is “evil” should be considered “blue”) or on ego-centric (“red”) perspective (“I hate Hussein” - Well, Bush, when he said that Hussein "tried to kill my Daddy," did hint at this kind of perspective) as reasons for going to war.

Partisans of one side or the other generally refuse to take the other side's arguments seriously and will tend to say that their opponent's arguments are just a smokescreen for a hidden agenda. Key to an integral analysis is to first of all take the arguments of all sides seriously, no matter how faulty one might think they ultimately are. As Ken Wilber frequently says, “no one can be smart enough to be 100% wrong.” However, one must also take into consideration the possible hidden agendas, via the hermeneutics of suspicion mentioned earlier. The trick is figuring out how all of the perspectives relate to each other and what their relative values/weights are.

## ***Consequences of war and no war***

A crucial dimension of the analysis that I have only hinted at so far is the careful examination of the possible consequences that war and no war would have had. This is, of course, an extremely difficult thing to do because there could potentially be an infinity of possible courses of action, leading to an infinity of possible consequences. For the sake of simplicity, let us examine only three possible courses of action with regard to the Iraq crisis: war (as it was waged), no war (i.e., what would have happened if weapons investigations had continued as before), and an as yet unspecified integral solution. We ought to examine the consequences particularly in light of the overall health of the spiral of social development (globally and for different nations/peoples).

First of all, the consequences would have been quite different, depending on whether the war had been brief or protracted, which means it would have been somewhat difficult to make educated guesses about the consequences of war beforehand. Still, there are some consequences that seemed reasonably probable in either case. Let's look at them in terms of the aspect of social development health, globally, regionally, nationally, and ethnically.

Global – The maintenance of national sovereignty has been a core principle of international politics for centuries, but in recent years the violation of this principle in the name of higher values has often been tolerated by the international community. However, Bush's and Blair's going to war against Iraq, despite the lack of an international consensus (such as a Security Council resolution) will probably disturb and significantly weaken the principles of international law (not that they were all too strong to begin with). Using similar arguments as the U.S. has used, thus invoking

precedent, other powerful countries could very well proceed to invade less powerful countries that it deems a potential threat to its security.<sup>10</sup> The end result could very well be a regression (as Kinsley suggests) in international politics, where might makes right (i.e., from “orange” right to “blue” and “red” might).

Not going to war, in terms of the global scale might have sent the wrong message to Hussein, as pro-war analysts say, but one has consider what message is being sent to other countries. North Korea, which has WMDs was not attacked, while a nearly completely disarmed Iraq was. This provides a strong incentive for countries to arm themselves. Also, one has to consider which is the worse consequence, given the double-standards that the U.S. practices when it comes to international law and security council resolutions (consider Israel’s constant violation of numerous Security Council resolutions, for example, which the U.S. regularly ignores – according to some counts, Israel is in violation of 64 Security Council resolutions, compared to 17 for Iraq).

Regional and national consequences for the Middle East – A victorious “regime change” in Iraq might mean the possibility of greater democratization in the region. But this seems fairly unlikely because Iraq is not exactly the best candidate for democratization. That is, Iraq is ethnically a very internally divided nation, between tribal peoples (red), modern western educated individuals (orange), and several ethnic groups in between (blue). It is much more likely that democratization will follow similar paths as in Somalia and Afghanistan, instead of Kosovo or Bosnia, let’s say. In other words, the result is more likely going to be more instability for Iraq. On the other hand, a “regime change” in Iraq could have positive material benefits for the people of Iraq, primarily due to the lifting of the trade embargo and perhaps due to the stop of repression, assuming that they do not suffer too much during the war.

As for the region, we have to consider the effect U.S. dominance in Iraq will have for OPEC. In all likelihood, the U.S. is going to try to make sure that U.S. oil companies gain better access to Iraq’s oil fields and break Iraq’s OPEC quotas, flooding the market with oil, which the would lead to a dramatic drop in the price of oil (\$10 per barrel seems to be the minimum where profits can still be made). This will have serious consequences for all of the world’s oil producers, but especially for countries such as Iran, Venezuela, Russia, Mexico (all countries that are already producing at near their maximum capacity and which will face massive budget cuts, should the price of oil fall dramatically – the result will be popular unrest in these countries, possibly leading to the fall of the current governments – democratically in the democracies, violently in the autocracies). The most important country in the equation (and most unpredictable, perhaps) is Saudi Arabia. It is already on the brink of upheaval due to popular resentment and growing fundamentalism and could very well fall too.

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<sup>10</sup> Michael Kinsley makes a strong argument along these lines in a recent essay on Slate: <http://slate.msn.com/id/2080455/>.

War, waged unilaterally by two of the region's historically most hated enemies (the U.S. and the U.K.), will probably increase the amount and intensity of fundamentalism in the region (and subsequently of terrorism).

Not going to war against Iraq would mean that the repression against the Iraqi people continues (though, the U.S. missed a chance to get rid of Hussein when there were uprisings against the regime following the '91 Gulf war, which the U.S. allowed Hussein to repress). For the region, it seems the consequences have been exaggerated by the Bush administration. Even Kuwait, which was once invaded by Iraq, does not seem to be concerned about the danger that Iraq currently poses.

Regional and national consequences for the U.S. and Europe – Despite the Bush administration's claim that part of the reason for going to war against Iraq is to prevent terrorism, much more likely is that it will increase terrorism, as internal Bush administration analyses have warned. While the iron fist of the West might lead some to abandon terrorism, more likely, based on what we can observe in Israel and in other locations where efforts are made to crack down on terrorism, individuals inclined towards fundamentalism will experience U.S. intervention as repressive and will lash out against this.

Some analysts (such as Alan Tonkin) have characterized Iraq and Al Qaeda terrorists as being motivated by the "red" value memes, thus requiring "blue" authority to reign them in. However, one can question this characterization. While Hussein personally might act primarily out of the "red" meme, his followers probably are for the most part socio-centric, Islamic "blue" and will not take well to western "blue" authority. The same would go for Al Qaeda. Imposing someone else's blue (the U.S. military's or Bush's) on an Islamic culture's blue meme is just going to lead to more animosity (and thus terrorism). A better strategy, which some have suggested, would be for the region's leaders to reign-in their own.

Another consequence of the war is a tattered relationship between the war allies (U.S., Spain, and Britain) and war opponents (France, Germany, and Russia). On the other hand, one could argue that the relationship would have been just as tattered if war opponents had won out.

### ***Summary: Integrating and balancing the perspectives***

I have attempted to present the issue in as much complexity as I could, given the limitations of a paper of this length. I have tried to look at the problem in terms of:

1. the different level/quadrant perspectives that have been presented to the public,
2. past causes, present considerations, and possible future consequences
3. ethnic, national, regional, and global scales

Obviously, reality is always much more complex than any mere words can grasp and thus much detail is left out, perhaps some important aspects were completely overlooked.

There is a last (4<sup>th</sup>) dimension that has not been explored yet, which is the overall health

of the spiral of development/evolution, which I will focus on in the last section, on what can be done.

Examining the foregoing dimensions of analysis, we can perhaps distill some of the primary factors that ought to be considered in any integral analysis.<sup>11</sup>

From pro-war perspectives:

1. Threats to security – insecurity of: (LR)
  - a. Iraqi people (green)
  - b. Neighboring states (green)
  - c. “The West” (orange)
  - d. The region (orange/green)
  - e. The global community (orange/green)
2. Advancing political development/democratization (yellow)
3. Access to vital resources (LR-orange)

From anti-war perspectives:

1. Respect for international law (LL-orange)
2. Avoid (U.S.) hegemony (green)
  - a. Economic (LR)
  - b. Political (LR)
  - c. Cultural (LL)
3. Verify accuracy of threat perception (LR-orange)
4. Avoid war whenever possible (green/yellow)
5. Advancing political development/democratization (yellow)

Addressing all of the above mentioned concerns, insofar as they are authentic (serious doubts have been raised about the authenticity and sincerity of some of them) they also ought to automatically address the question of how to promote the greatest development for the greatest number of beings. The reason for this is that each perspective expresses a particular concern that if it is not addressed would potentially block or prevent further development.

## ***A Possible Framework for Addressing Pro- and Anti-War Concerns, while Promoting the BMI***

First, we could simply assume that the international community of nations possesses the political will to create a framework for properly dealing with the issues that the current Iraq crisis raises. What would such a framework look like, under such circumstances?

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<sup>11</sup> In essence, what I am presenting here is an exterior perspective on the interiors of those who are involved in the debate on the Iraq crisis (mixed-in with some exterior observations on the exterior – such as my critical comments about the accuracy of claims about the threat that Hussein presents and on whether or not the war can bring about democratization). See Ken Wilber’s recent excerpts of Vol. 2 of his Kosmos trilogy ([wilber.shambhala.com](http://wilber.shambhala.com)), for more info on the different perspectives on the interior and the exterior.

Second, and more realistically, we can assume that there is no such will (at least not yet), then what could the most powerful nations do, such as the U.S. and Europe? This too makes a problematic assumption – that the leaders of these countries possess the political will to do what would be in the interest of an integral solution. Third, and perhaps most realistically, we can simply ask what should integrally oriented individuals push for, given the lack of a global and national political will to do what is right from an integral perspective. I will begin with the third and most realistic approach – what can integrally motivated individuals do? – and will then take a brief look at the more utopian perspectives of what, ideally, powerful states and the world community could and ought to do.

Just as the perspective of an integral approach is meta-perspectival, so would the strategy be meta-strategic. That is, rather than just focusing on influencing one's own leaders to adopt a more integral approach or perspective in this particular issue, one should find ways that combine such influence with the larger issue of creating lasting institutions or structures that can cope with future crises in a more integral manner. While in this particular instance one might recommend going to war with Iraq as the most integral approach (which I do not think it is), such a recommendation should not contradict the possibility of creating more integral solutions in the long term. In other words, an integral solution would have its eyes on the long-term ideal solutions, even while formulating short-term proposals to the problem.

Here I am inspired by William Ury's conception of the "Third Side,"<sup>12</sup> which in his conflict resolution approach is the catalyst for defusing violent conflict. However, I would see the role of an integral approach perhaps as the "fourth side," in that it consists of the explicitly integrally-oriented elements within the "third side." That is, the third side, as Ury conceives it, consists of those who are capable of making sense of both sides in a conflict. As such, individuals who are part of the third side are capable of acting as facilitators, mediators, referees, or other roles necessary to de-escalate or resolve conflict. The third side, by virtue of being able to "put itself in the shoes of the other," can bring people on both sides together, build bridges between them, and get them to talk and perhaps even understand each other.

The integral third side would go beyond the conventional third side, in that it would be in a position to apply the skills and insights that would not be available to less integral perspectives. That is, it would not only be able to make sense of all sides in the conflict, but it would be able to figure out how these sides fit together in the larger scheme of things. Also, in the moral dimension, the integral third side would focus on what Ken Wilber has called the "basic moral intuition" of promoting the overall health of everyone's development, rather than just being focused on de-escalating or resolving the immediate conflict.

An integral third side, in my understanding of it, would thus base its advocacy on the following:

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<sup>12</sup> *The Third Side: Why We Fight and How We Can Stop* (Penguin, 2000)

1. Find policies that are forward looking, that go beyond the immediate situation and contribute towards a future in which similar problems are resolved more effectively.
2. Make sense of different perspectives, understand how they relate to each other, and address the perspectives in accordance with how they relate to each other in the larger scheme of things.
3. Contribute towards finding solutions that promote the development of all individuals and of society as a whole (the basic moral intuition).

Based on the foregoing, I would say that an integral approach would lobby for the following complex of responses in relation to Iraq and similar situations:<sup>13</sup>

1. **A consistent world-wide effort to root out groups or individuals that commit crimes against humanity** (as defined by the international criminal court). First of all, such a policy would address the pro-war concerns that regimes such as Hussein's Iraq threaten the security of its own people, of neighboring countries, of the region, or of First World countries. Key, however, to such a policy is that it is consistent. This is one of the main criticisms that war opponents have; that the effort to get rid of Saddam Hussein is a completely inconsistent application of an otherwise possibly decent policy; that the U.S. and its allies oppose tyrants when it is convenient to U.S. national interests, but also supports such tyrants (and the U.S. did support Hussein before he invaded Kuwait, just as it supported the Taliban in Afghanistan when they were fighting the Soviet Union) when it is convenient. In other words, if the U.S. is going to play the role of world police, then it better do so consistently, otherwise it will continue to have little to no credibility in enforcing human rights. A much better but more difficult solution, though, would be if the international community were to institutionalize the pursuit of criminals against humanity (see point 3 below).
2. **Awareness of possible ulterior motives** – on all sides of the debate – and avoid falling prey to these. This recommendation addresses the suspicion of anti-war advocates, who believe that the U.S. is primarily interested in bringing the country with the world's second largest oil reserves under the control of a pro-U.S. government. One way to avoid such a suspicion would be to separate the military pursuit of a regime that has committed crimes against humanity from the future governing of the country whose regime has been changed. In other words, by insisting that the U.S. play the dominant role in rebuilding Iraq (actually in governing – rebuilding will still be left to the Iraqis), the U.S. plays directly into the suspicions that this war was about oil and not about “bringing democracy to Iraq” or about ridding the world of a dangerous tyrant. However, suspicion should

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<sup>13</sup> In response to some of my critics on the post-con-pol discussion list, I want to stress that these recommendations are meant as an integral contribution towards a wider democratic political process that involves all parties, just as Ury's “third side” involves not just the third side, but obviously also the other two sides in a conflict. That is, these recommendations are not meant to be imposed just because someone claims them to be integral (not to mention that such an imposition would be impossible, since integrally informed individuals do not have that kind of power anyway).

also be applied to some anti-war groups, such as the ones that appeared to be supporting Hussein (some elements in the U.S. anti-war movement, such as ANSWER) and opposing the existence of Israel – that these might be more motivated by red-meme hate against the U.S. or Israel than by reasoned (orange or above) reflection, as they claim.

3. **Work towards institutionalizing world-centric (orange) values** (while also paying attention to blue, green, and yellow/integral values). One of the reasons that the Bush administration (and nearly all others before it) has been able to go against the UN is because the UN has indeed become a fairly ineffective organization when it comes to enforcing international law. Such a development is to some extent due to the actions of the U.S. itself.<sup>14</sup> However, a large part of the UN's failings can be traced to its less than world-centric construction. That is, by paying tribute to the world's de-facto powers (by giving veto power to five permanent members: U.S., France, Britain, Soviet Union/Russia, and China), its founders institutionalized power politics of the worst kind, which stand in direct contradiction with the formal world-centric basis of the UN, the International Declaration on Human Rights. Power politics, which can be based in anything from red, to blue, to orange, to green values, have been guiding the policies of the UN ever since it was founded over 55 years ago, and have thus consistently undermined any real implementation or pursuit of the world-centric principles of the international human rights charter. So, the question for anyone seriously interested in institutionalizing world-centric (orange) principles<sup>15</sup> is how to reform the UN or create a world government of some kind that would do so. This is not the place to explore this issue, but a first step would have to involve the democratization of the UN (or similar organization) and a move away from power politics. This, of course, would require the political will for such an agenda and would thus involve a transformation of consciousness among the world's politicians (and their populations) that so far does not seem to be on the horizon. If that is the case, then the most important task of the integral third side is to promote such a transformation of consciousness. As such, this third point indirectly addresses the developmental concerns of both pro- and anti-war perspectives, which argue that the political development of countries like Iraq should be an important concern. That is, the real political development of Iraq would require a real political development of the world's polity (of both political culture/consciousness and political structures, LL and LR).

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<sup>14</sup> The U.S. contributed to weakening the UN when it withdrew from the International Court which ruled against the U.S.'s mining of Nicaragua's harbors, when it refused to sign the treaty that set up the international criminal court, when it rebuffed a Security Council resolution condemning Iraq's invasion of Iran, among many other incidents.

<sup>15</sup> Implementation of world-centric values is what nearly everyone on both sides of the Iraq war debate claim they want. An important exception represent some die-hard green-meme (post-modern, post-development, anti- all forms of globalization) perspectives, which fear that local cultures and traditions would be undermined by the enforcement of human rights and that the world-centric/universalistic rationality of more powerful would prevail.