Deep-six the Law of the Sea

by Phyllis_Schlafly

Borrowing the famous words of Gen. Douglas MacArthur, "Old soldiers never die, they just fade away," we can now see that old treaties never die, they can be resurrected years or even decades after taking what we thought was a knockout punch.

President George W. Bush is scheduled to announce any day that he will breathe new life into the old United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which President Ronald Reagan rejected in 1982. Bush's National Security Adviser Stephen Hadley has asked Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Joe Biden, D-Del., to secure Senate ratification "as early as possible."

To defuse expected opposition, the Bush administration has been pursuing a most unusual lobbying campaign: inviting two or three prominent conservatives at a time to the White House without telling them in advance the purpose of the invitation or who will be present. After admission past executive office barricades, the conservatives are subjected to aggressive lobbying by administration heavy hitters: usually the chief counsel for the State Department and the judge advocate general of the U.S. Navy.

The 202-page Law of the Sea Treaty entered into force in 1994 and has been ratified by 153 countries. The treaty created the International Seabed Authority, giving it total jurisdiction over all the oceans and everything in them, including the ocean floor with "all" its riches ("solid, liquid or gaseous mineral resources"), along with the power to regulate 70 percent of the world's surface.

Headquartered in Jamaica, the International Seabed Authority has an assembly, a council, a bureaucracy and commissions, all drawing tax-free salaries. If the United States ratifies the treaty, Americans would have the same vote in the International Seabed Authority as Cuba, an unprecedented surrender of U.S. sovereignty, independence of action and wealth.

Even worse, the threat gives the International Seabed Authority the power to levy international taxes. No one should be fooled by the treaty's attempt to conceal this by labeling the taxes assessments, fees, permits, payments or contributions.

The purpose of the taxing power is to compel the United States to pay billions of private-enterprise dollars to International Seabed Authority bureaucrats, who can then transfer U.S. wealth to socialist, anti-American nations (euphemistically called "developing countries") ruled by corrupt dictators. The treaty asserts that this is for "the benefit of mankind as a whole."

The treaty gives the International Seabed Authority the power to regulate "all" ocean research and

exploration and to deny access to strategic ocean minerals, many of which the United States needs for national defense or industries. The treaty gives the International Seabed Authority power to impose production quotas for deep-sea mining and oil production.

The International Seabed Authority can require the United States to share intelligence, technology and even military information. The treaty puts restrictions on intelligence-gathering by U.S. submarines, activities that are essential to national defense.

The treaty also created the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, headquartered in Hamburg, Germany, with the power to decide all disputes and enforce its judgments. Of course, there is no guarantee that the United States would have even one judge on this 21-member international court, and it's reasonable to assume inherent bias against the United States by the anti-American countries whose representatives will make all decisions.

There can be no appeal from this tribunal's decisions, even though they would affect the sovereignty, security and economic interests of the United States. There is no restriction on the Tribunal's jurisdiction.

Administration lobbyists claim that the original problems with the treaty have been fixed. That is not believable because the text of the treaty can't be changed unilaterally.

Bush apparently expects conservatives to be mollified by the argument that the Navy supports the treaty. But conservatives are smart enough to know that it's impossible for the Navy to oppose the commander in chief's position.

The notion that the U.S. Navy needs approval from foreign bureaucrats in Jamaica in order to enjoy passage through international straits, or for permission to do what our Navy is already doing (such as moving our ships to the waters near Iran), is offensive and insulting to U.S. sovereignty.

It's not only dangerous to national security for the administration to promote the Law of the Sea Treaty, it is a stupid political move that will diminish the shrinking percentage of conservatives who still support Bush. Now a lame duck, Bush is ignoring his supporters and instead pushing the agenda of globalists who are determined to erase sovereign borders and integrate the United States into various multinational structures and tribunals.

- - -

Phyllis Schlafly is a lawyer, conservative political analyst and the author of the newly revised and expanded "Supremacists." She can be contacted by e-mail at phyllis@eagleforum.org.

Deep-six the Law of the Sea by Phyllis_Schlafly