

CIA STEPS UP PRESSURE ON IRAQ

Nov. 27 (IPS)--The Iraqi government today accused the United States, Great Britain, and Iran of planning to occupy oil-producing countries in the Middle East. The accusation, released through official government organs, is clearly in response to recent intense provocations by the CIA against anti-Rockefeller Iraq.

Yesterday, the United States aircraft carrier Constellation, with 100 aircraft aboard and accompanied by the destroyers Berkeley and Cochrane, carried out maneuvers in the Persian Gulf, in what the Pentagon called a brief "familiarization deployment." According to an Associated Press news dispatch, this is the first time in 25 years that a U.S. aircraft carrier has entered the Gulf.

When questioned about these maneuvers and the continuing step-up of provocations against Iraq, a Washington-based Strategic Studies veteran who recently returned from CIA Middle East headquarters in Iran frankly detailed increasing Iranian-CIA bellicosity. Asked, for example, about the Iran-supported Kurdish war against the pro-Soviet Iraqis, this think-tanker proclaimed that the Kurdish situation was small stuff compared to the Iraqi-Iranian tension around the waters of the Tigris-Euphrates headgulf. Iran has consistently ignored a long-existing treaty between the two states over the waters, and in fact recently evacuated the border town of Abadan to avoid possible Iraqi shelling and to set the stage for new escalations against Iraq.