

BUSH'S WAR

Blood for oil? A closer look at the history of Iraqi-American relations can tell what is really at stake. Just how much have the interests of U.S. oil corporations influenced the government's policies and actions, including the invasion of Iraq? To whose benefit are we risking our soldiers, our national treasury, and our traditional alliances with other nations?

Following the defeat of the Ottoman Turks, England and France artificially created the nation of Iraq at the end of World War I when they occupied the Middle East as League of Nations' Mandates. Arbitrarily drawing lines on maps back in Europe, they dismembered Kurdistan, leaving half in Turkey and half in "Iraq." Ignoring other tribal boundaries, they created the nation of Iraq composed of Kurds, Sunnis and Shiites, and which for a while included Kuwait. They installed Feisal, son of Hussein of Mecca, to reign over their creation, and they installed another son, Abdullah, to rule Trans Jordan. Hussein had been an ally in the war against the Turks; however, he lost out to Ibn Saud for control of Arabia.

In 1920, there was a national uprising against English rule in Iraq. Although the revolt involved both Shiites and Sunnis, the majority Shiite religious and tribal leaders played the leading role. The revolt was violently put down by the English, and thereafter they primarily relied upon the Sunnis to govern Iraq.

In 1932, after the mandate ended, Iraq became a sovereign country and joined the League of Nations; however, its oil fields and production facilities continued to be operated by foreign interests. In 1958, a popular revolution led by Abd al-Karim Qasim removed the king and ended foreign control.

Iraq, along with Britain, Turkey, Iran and Pakistan, was a member of the "Baghdad Pact" formed in the 1950s to defend the region against Soviet aggression.

When Qasim began to purchase arms from the Soviets and to install communists in his government, the CIA recruited

Saddam Hussein to assassinate him. Saddam botched the attempt and was slightly wounded in his calf by a fellow would-be assassin. He escaped through Syria into Beirut, where he was provided an apartment and was briefly trained by the CIA, who then moved him to Egypt and installed him in an apartment in the upper-class neighborhood of Dukki. He spent his time playing dominos in a local café and visiting his CIA contacts at the American Embassy. After Qasim was killed in a CIA sponsored coup by the Ba'ath Party, Saddam returned to Iraq where he became head of the al-Jihaz a-Khas, the Party's secret intelligence service.³⁷⁶

The Ba'athists did not consolidate their power until 1968, when General Ahmed Hassan Bakr became president and Saddam Hussein was appointed as his vice president. Saddam created a secret police force to identify and eliminate all political opponents.³⁷⁷

In 1972, General Bakr nationalized Iraq's oil resources and production facilities and quickly rose to the top of President Nixon's list of foreign enemies. The United States placed Iraq on its list of terrorist-sponsoring nations and began to arm the Iraqi Kurds. However, once Iraq ceded control over the Shatt-al-Arab waterway to America's ally the Shah of Iran, the flow of arms ceased.³⁷⁸

Coincident with the overthrow of the Shah of Iran in 1979, Saddam's personal fortunes improved. In one bloody day, he eliminated General Bakr and all of his Ba'athist rivals and seized total dictatorial powers. In 1980, encouraged by President Carter's National Security Advisor, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Saddam invaded Iran to regain control over the Shatt-al-Arab waterway. Although the Reagan campaign had made a secret deal with Iran to hold off on the release of the American Embassy hostages until after Reagan was sworn in, once he was in office, Reagan increasingly tilted toward Iraq and began to actively supply arms and intelligence to Saddam. In 1982, Iraq was removed from America's list of nations that support terrorism, and full diplomatic relations were restored in 1984.³⁷⁹

America became fully involved in Iraq's war against Iran after it appeared that Iran might defeat Saddam. The United

States supplied advanced weapons, satellite and AWACS intelligence, and helped plan and evaluate air strikes. Moreover, there is substantial evidence that the Reagan administration, which included Vice President Bush, was fully aware of and condoned the regular use of chemical weapons against Iran.³⁸⁰ Directly, and through other countries such as Chile,³⁸¹ the United States authorized the sale to Iraq of poisonous chemicals and biological viruses, including anthrax and bubonic plague.³⁸² The United Nations inspection teams later found documents showing that Iraq dropped over 13,000 chemical bombs during the war.

In 1984, Reagan sent Donald Rumsfeld as his special envoy to shake Saddam's hand and to tell him that the United States government "recognizes Iraq's current disadvantage in a war of attrition since Iran has access to the gulf while Iraq does not (and that the United States) would regard any major reversal of Iraq's fortunes as a strategic defeat for the west." Rumsfeld wrote to Secretary of State George Shultz, "I added that the U.S. had no interest in an Iranian victory; to the contrary, we would not want Iran's influence expanded at the expense of Iraq."³⁸³

In 1986, Reagan sent a secret message to Saddam through Vice President Bush urging Iraq to increase its air attacks and bombings of Iran. However, Reagan was playing both sides, and he approved the covert sale of 1,000 TOW missiles to Iran and the secret transfer of the purchase money to the Nicaragua Contras.

Vice President Bush also took a secret message in 1986 to Saudi King Fahd and asked him to pressure OPEC to raise prices. The Saudis complied with the request and raised the price of oil to \$18 a barrel, resulting in higher gas prices in the United States and greater profits for American oil companies.³⁸⁴

To facilitate Iraq's shipment of oil through the Persian Gulf where Iran was bombing neutral Kuwaiti tankers, the United States "reflagged" the tankers with American registration and deployed the U.S. Navy to protect them.³⁸⁵

In 1987, Vice President Bush met with Iraq's ambassador to the United States, Nizar Hamdoon, and informed him that Iraq

would be allowed to purchase dual-use technology, which could be used for military purposes.³⁸⁶

With the assistance of the CIA, U.S. military intelligence, and Saudi AWACS surveillance aircraft, Saddam was able to avoid defeat and reach an agreement with Iran in 1988 to end the war, which had consumed a million lives.

The next year, in 1989, President Bush Sr. signed a top-secret directive ordering closer relations with Iraq and providing for the delivery of \$1 billion in aid over the objections of several federal agencies.³⁸⁷

Iraq's economy was in shambles, world oil prices were falling, and Saddam blamed Kuwait for his inability to earn more oil revenues. On July 25, 1990, Saddam met with U.S. Ambassador April Glaspie regarding his dispute with Kuwait, which Iraq claimed was an historical part of Iraq. Glaspie told Saddam, "I have direct instructions from President Bush to improve our relations with Iraq. We have considerable sympathy for your quest for higher oil prices, the immediate cause of your confrontation with Kuwait." Saddam stated he would "give up all of the Shatt (waterway) to defend our claims on Kuwait to keep the whole of Iraq in the shape we wish it to be." In other words, he wished Kuwait to be a part of Iraq. When Saddam asked what the United States' opinion was regarding this, Glaspie answered, "We have no opinion on your Arab-Arab conflicts, such as your dispute with Kuwait. Secretary (of State James) Baker has directed me to emphasize the instruction, first given to Iraq in the 1960's, that the Kuwait issue is not associated with America."³⁸⁸

Why would Bush Sr. do this? The answer is simple. Higher oil prices would also prop up American oil companies and increase their profits.

On August 3, 1990, apparently trusting in Bush Sr.'s lack of concern, Saddam invaded and occupied Kuwait, threatening Saudi Arabia and America's Middle East oil supply. The United Nations condemned the invasion and imposed economic sanctions that cut off 70 percent of Iraq's food supply. Acting pursuant to a United Nations resolution, an international

coalition of military forces led by the United States deployed 400,000 troops in the region. On January 14, 1991, following an ignored ultimatum, the coalition launched a bombing blitz against Iraq that lasted for 42 days. The air assault had five basic targets, one of which was "population will." The Iraqi civilian infrastructure, including electricity, water, and sanitation, was almost entirely wiped out to "degrade the will of the civilian population."³⁸⁹

When Saddam continued to refuse to leave Kuwait, a ground invasion commenced on February 23, 1991; three days later Saddam abandoned Kuwait, and Iraq agreed to a cease-fire on February 28, 1991.

During the three-day invasion, thousands of Iraqi soldiers, most of them conscripts and reserves armed with rifles, had been deployed in World War I style trenches along Iraq's border. Although some of them were able to surrender before the mechanized invasion swept around and over them, thousands were buried alive as Abrams battle tanks, equipped with huge front plows, swept along both flanks of approximately 70 miles of trenches, pouring avalanches of sand down upon the Iraqi soldiers. The tanks were followed by combat earthmovers that filled in and smoothed over the trenches creating unmarked mass graves.³⁹⁰

The Geneva Convention prohibits "denial of quarter," that is, refusing to accept an enemy's offer of surrender. Following the war, then Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney justified the live burials in his report to Congress as being "a gap in the law of war in defining precisely when surrender takes effect or how it may be accomplished. ... Because of these uncertainties and the need to minimize loss of U.S. lives, military necessity required that the assault ... be conducted with maximum speed and violence."

The United States refused to disclose the location of the burials and has never officially published the numbers of military and civilian deaths in Iraq resulting from the Gulf War.³⁹¹ When later asked, Colin Powell stated it was not something he was particularly interested in. During the Gulf War, as many as 100,000 military personnel and 15,000 civilians

died.³⁹² Do you feel our government acted honorably in its failure to comply with the rules of war? Does it bother you that our government may have committed war crimes?

During the air assault, President Bush Sr. had urged the Iraqi people to rise up against Saddam, and following the cease-fire, there were rebellions by the Kurds in the north and the Shiites in the south. These revolts were violently put down by Saddam after Bush Sr. allowed him to fly his helicopters across U.S. lines to attack the rebels. Tens of thousands were killed and were buried in mass graves. When elements of the Republican Guard rose up against Saddam, they were not allowed access to their surrendered weapons. Once Bush Sr. failed to act, Saddam violently crushed all resistance to his rule.³⁹³

The United States, England, and France imposed, without the authorization of the United Nations, a "no-fly" zone in the north and south of Iraq. France later withdrew from enforcement of the zone; however, the United States and England continued to fly at will over the zones and to destroy any radar installations that sought to "lock on" their planes.³⁹⁴

In response to criticism of Bush Sr.'s failure to remove Saddam, then Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney explained on April 13, 1991, why they had not tried to impose a regime change on Iraq during the Gulf War: "If you're going to go in and try to topple Saddam Hussein, you have to go to Baghdad. Once you've got Baghdad, it's not clear what you will do with it. It's not clear what kind of government you would put in place of the one that's currently there now. Is it going to be a Shia regime, a Sunni regime or a Kurdish regime? Or one that tilts toward the Ba'athists, or one that tilts toward the Islamic fundamentalists? How much credibility is that government going to have if it's set up by the United States military when it's there? How long does the United States military have to stay to protect the people that sign on for the government, and what happens to it once we leave?"³⁹⁵ Remember these words.

To end the Gulf War, Saddam agreed to eliminate all weapons of mass destruction and to allow verification inspections by the United Nations. In the meantime, the United Nations economic sanctions were to continue. Because of the

sanctions, and certainly because of the priorities set by Saddam, there were significant delays in obtaining spare parts to repair Iraq's infrastructure, including its power grid, water treatment plants and sanitation systems, much of which was destroyed in the air attacks. Moreover, the population was denied access to adequate food supplies and essential medicines. UNICEF has estimated that as many as a million Iraqis died as a result of the sanctions, and that 500,000 of them were children.³⁹⁶

Between April 14 and April 16, 1993, Bush Sr. visited Kuwait, ostensibly to commemorate the Gulf War victory. He was accompanied by two of his sons and his former Secretary of State, James Baker, who was there to arrange contracts for Enron to rebuild Kuwait's damaged power plants. Neil Bush tagged along because he wanted a part of the fees to operate Enron's power plants, and Marvin Bush wanted to sell an electronic security system to Kuwait on behalf of a Washington firm.³⁹⁷

After Bush and his commercial entourage left, the Kuwait government arrested 17 persons and accused them of having plotted to kill Bush Sr. using a car bomb. The CIA concluded that Saddam likely directed a plot to kill Bush Sr., and President Clinton launched a cruise missile attack against the building in Baghdad that housed the Iraqi intelligence service. The attack killed eight persons, including one of Iraq's most gifted artists. In an extensive article published on November 1, 1993, reporter Seymour M. Hersh found that the "government's case against Iraq—as it has been outlined in public, anyway—is seriously flawed."³⁹⁸

Between the end of the war in 1992 and 1998, the United Nations conducted intensive and intrusive inspections throughout Iraq and was able to verify that Iraq had destroyed virtually all of its mass destruction capability, including all factories used to produce nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and all long-range missiles. What Iraq did not destroy, the inspection teams did. Given the fact that chemicals and biologicals used in weapons degrade with time and become harmless within five years, and without factories to replace the materials, it is relatively certain that Iraq ceased to have a weapons capability.

Initially, Saddam refused to allow Americans to be included on the inspection teams; however, he relented, and CIA agents were included on all inspection teams, as they had valuable information useful to the inspection mission. However, the CIA ultimately took over the signals intelligence program and used it to directly spy on Saddam and his government.

Matters came to a head in 1998 when Richard Butler, the UN's chief inspector was encouraged by the U.S. to "carry out very sensitive inspections that had nothing to do with disarmament but had everything to do with provoking the Iraqis." Iraq agreed to a set of "Modalities for Sensitive Site Inspections;" however, Butler insisted on unrestricted access to the Ba'ath Party headquarters in violation of the Modalities. When Saddam balked, Butler ordered the inspectors to leave the country to clear the way for a U.S. bombing attack. The Iraqis did not order the inspectors to leave.³⁹⁹

On December 16, 1998, on the eve of his impeachment trial, President Clinton announced "Operation Desert Fox" by U.S. and British forces to "attack Iraq's nuclear, chemical and biological weapons programs." Over the next four days, there were repeated air strikes in central Iraq. However, none ever targeted weapons of mass destruction, because no such weapons could be identified. Instead, Iraq's conventional military assets were targeted, along with its industrial infrastructure. The inspectors did not return to Iraq, and over the next three years, U.S. and British forces continued to fly at will in the no-fly zones and to bomb radar targets.⁴⁰⁰

Meanwhile, back in the United States, President Clinton was acquitted in his impeachment trial; Vice President Gore received the Democratic nomination; and the American people voted to elect him. The Supreme Court gave the presidency to the losing candidate, Bush Jr., who came to office determined to make up for his father's failures in Iraq and to extend and consolidate the United States' power over the Middle East and Central Asia.

An Ideological History of Bush's Never-Ending Preemptive War

In 1986, Irving Kristol, co-editor of *The Public Interest* magazine, proposed a doctrine of "global unilateralism" that urged the United States to adopt a less risk averse policy and become "far less inhibited in its use of military power." He believed the U.S. would be better off acting alone than in concert with allies "who were hampered by a failure of will, a loss of faith in their own values, and a barely submerged hostility toward Jews—which they manifested in an incurable hostility to Israel." Irving Kristol is considered to be the "godfather" of neoconservatism, and is the actual father of William Kristol, who served as Vice President Dan Quayle's chief of staff. William Kristol is editor of *The Weekly Standard* magazine, and is one of America's most ardent "neocons."⁴⁰¹

In 1991, shortly after failing to remove Saddam overtly, President Bush Sr. signed a secret directive ordering the CIA to conduct a covert operation to overthrow him. The CIA employed a public relations firm and spent more than \$23 million producing videos and comic books ridiculing Saddam and broadcasting radio programs over Iraqi airwaves mocking his government. None of these were effective; however, the firm helped organize the Iraqi National Congress (INC) to merge various groups who opposed Saddam. The CIA appointed Ahmed Chalabi as the head of the INC in 1992, although he had been criminally convicted in 1989 in Jordan and was wanted to serve a 22-year prison term for fraud and embezzlement of \$70 million. The CIA channeled \$12 million to the INC between 1992 and 1996, even though Chalabi failed to properly account for the funds.⁴⁰²

In 1992, Paul Wolfowitz was working on a policy paper for then Secretary of Defense Cheney and included arguments for an invasion of Iraq in a draft of the "Defense Policy Guidance." The invasion proposal was leaked to the media, and President Bush Sr. publicly rejected it.⁴⁰³

In 1996, Richard Perle was working for Benjamin Netanyahu, who was seeking election as Israel's prime minister. Perle co-

authored a study, "A Clean Break," in which he argued for a "focus on removing Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq—an important Israeli strategic objective in its own right—as a means of foiling Syria."⁴⁰⁴

In 1996, William Kristol co-authored a document entitled, "Toward a Neo-Reaganite Foreign Policy,"⁴⁰⁵ which became an inspiration for the neocon movement. The next year, Kristol helped establish The Project for the New American Century (PNAC) at the American Enterprise Institute, a conservative think tank. Other founders included Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz, Newt Gingrich, Jeb Bush, and Richard Perle (an associate of Chalabi).^{*} PNAC advocated taking a harder line with Iraq and lobbied for higher military spending in a return to the "peace through strength" policies of the Reagan administration.⁴⁰⁶

In 1998, Congress was considering the Iraqi Liberation Act, which endorsed a "regime change" in Iraq as U.S. policy and authorized \$97 million to help opposition groups make the change. PNAC lobbied for its passage, and Paul Wolfowitz testified that the act would get rid of Saddam without the necessity of U.S. troops, saying "Help the Iraqi people remove him from power. However—and I think this is very important—the estimate that it would take a major invasion with U.S. ground forces seriously overestimates Saddam Hussein."⁴⁰⁷

In 1998, some of the PNAC founders, including Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz, Kristol, Perle and others, wrote to President Clinton and urged him "to take the necessary steps, including military steps [in Iraq] to protect our vital interest in the Gulf." They argued that Clinton "should aim, above all, at the removal of Saddam Hussein's regime from power."⁴⁰⁸

^{*} Many neocons have also been labeled as "Chicken Hawks," because they successfully managed to avoid actual military service, including George W. and Jeb Bush, Cheney, Perle, Wolfowitz, William Kristol, and Rush Limbaugh. (Lobe, Jim, "The Chicken Hawk Factor," AlterNet.org.)

In concert with the 2000 presidential campaign, PNAC published a report entitled "Rebuilding America's Defenses: Strategy, Forces and Resources for a New Century" as a military battle plan for world domination.* The report was built upon the Department of Defense's published policy in 1992 under Cheney for "maintaining U.S. preeminence, precluding the rise of a great power rival, and shaping the international security order in line with American principles and interests."⁴⁰⁹ According to PNAC, as the "world's only superpower," which "faces no global rival, America's grand strategy should aim to preserve and extend this advantageous position as far into the future as possible." The report called for the development of "a new family of nuclear weapons ... safer and more effective nuclear weapons" required "in targeting the very deep, underground bunkers that are being built by many of our potential adversaries." Conventional nuclear weapons and ICBM's were to "provide a secure basis for U.S. power projection around the world."⁴¹⁰

To accomplish America's mission, the report stated that the United States must "perform the 'constabulary' duties associated with shaping the security environment in critical regions." The report called for the deployment of U.S. troops throughout the world as the "first line of defense" of America's "security perimeter," to serve as "the cavalry on the new American frontier." The report recommended new permanent and "forward operating" military bases in the Middle East and Southeast Asia. In the Persian Gulf, from an "American perspective, the value of such bases would endure even should Saddam pass from the scene ... and retaining forward-based forces in the region would ... be an essential element in U.S. security strategy given the longstanding American interests in

* PNAC called for the U.S. to "Control the New 'International Commons' of Space and 'Cyberspace,' and pave the way for the creation of a new military service—U.S. Space Forces—with the mission of space control." The report envisioned a world-wide deployment of an "effective, robust, layered, global system of missile defenses" based on an array of "global reconnaissance and targeting satellites ... linked to a global network of space-based interceptors (or space-based lasers)." ("Rebuilding America's Defenses," pp. v, 54.)

the region.” The report goes on, “The United States has for decades sought to play a more permanent role in Gulf regional security. While the unresolved conflict with Iraq provides the immediate justification, the need for a substantial American force presence in the Gulf transcends the issue of the regime of Saddam Hussein.”⁴¹¹ Read “American interests” as “O-I-L” and “immediate justification” as an excuse for invasion.

As soon as he took office, Bush established the removal of Saddam as an immediate priority. The subject was discussed at his very first National Security Council meeting and a memorandum was circulated that outlined a “Plan for post Saddam Iraq.”⁴¹²

Upon hearing about the 9/11 attack, Rumsfeld made the following notes that were later leaked to the news media: “Best info fast. Judge whether good enough hit S.H. [Saddam Hussein] at same time. Not only UBL [Osama bin Laden]. Go massive. Sweep it all up. Things related and not.”⁴¹³ Crazy or not, it is clear that Iraq was a target from the beginning and had been for a long time.

The day after the 9/11 attack, Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz pressured Bush to target Iraq in the first battles against terrorism, and Wolfowitz argued in a National Security Council meeting that Iraq was an easier target than Afghanistan.⁴¹⁴ Rumsfeld complained there were insufficient targets in Afghanistan and that the U.S. should consider bombing Iraq where there were better targets. Bush replied that the U.S. should change Iraq’s government, not just strike it with cruise missiles.⁴¹⁵

On September 12, 2001, Bush instructed Clarke “to go back over everything, everything. See if Saddam did this. See if he’s linked in any way.” Clarke responded, “But, Mr. President, al Qaeda did this.... We have looked several times for state sponsorship of al Qaeda and not found any real linkages to Iraq.” Bush again directed, “Look into Iraq, Saddam.”⁴¹⁶

Clarke complied with Bush’s direction and developed an official position on the relationship between Iraq and al Qaeda. “All agencies and departments agreed there was no cooperation

between the two. A memorandum to that effect was sent up to the President..."⁴¹⁷

At a National Security Council meeting on September 15, 2001, Secretary of State Powell spoke against starting a war with Iraq. He argued that since we weren't going after Iraq before 9/11 and there was no evidence that it was responsible for the attack, the coalition he was building would "view it as a bait and switch—it's not what they signed up to do."⁴¹⁸ Richard Clarke thanked Powell for his support saying, "Having been attacked by al Qaeda, for us now to go bombing Iraq in response would be like our invading Mexico after the Japanese attacked us at Pearl Harbor."⁴¹⁹ Powell later tells General Hugh Shelton, "What the hell! What are these guys thinking about? Can't you get these guys back in the box?"⁴²⁰

On September 20, 2001, PNAC sent a letter to Bush encouraging him to extend the war to Iraq, as well as destroying the al Qaeda network.* He was also urged to take measures against Iran, Syria, Lebanon and the Palestinian Authority.⁴²¹

On September 20, 2001, Bush hosted British Prime Minister Blair and England's Ambassador to the U.S., Sir Christopher Meyer, at a private White House dinner where the subject of discussion was the U.S. intention to remove Saddam Hussein from power. According to Meyer, Blair told Bush he should not get distracted from dealing with the Taliban and al Qaeda in Afghanistan. Bush agreed saying, "We must deal with this first. But when we have dealt with Afghanistan, we must come back to Iraq. Even though forewarned, Blair continued to insist that "no decisions had been taken" regarding Iraq until just before the subsequent invasion.⁴²²

On January 8, 2002, the Pentagon provided Congress with a secret report that detailed its contingency plans to use nuclear weapons as a tool for fighting wars, as well as for deterrence. The Pentagon had to be prepared to use nuclear weapons against hardened targets designed to withstand conventional attack or "in the event of surprising military developments."⁴²³

* The letter was signed by 20 PNAC members, all but one of whom are Chicken Hawks.

So we establish all these new military bases where we may not be entirely welcome and then we go nuclear if they try to throw us out and we get into trouble? Somewhere along the way, we forgot the principles of “how to win friends and influence people” – to put it mildly.

In early February 2002, in response to rumors that U.S. attacks on Iraq were inevitable, Richard Perle, who had become one of Rumsfeld’s senior advisors, stated, “I don’t think there’s anything Saddam Hussein could do that would convince us there’s no longer any danger coming from Iraq.” He said that Bush was on “a very clear path” in the direction of war with Iraq.⁴²⁴

In March 2002, Cheney confidentially informed a group of U.S. senators that “The question was no longer if the U.S. would attack Iraq.” The only question was when.⁴²⁵

On June 1, 2002, President Bush spoke at the West Point graduation ceremony, telling cadets that “The only path to safety is action, and this nation will act.” He said that all Americans must be “ready for preemptive action when necessary to defend our liberty and to defend our lives.” “If we wait for threats to fully materialize, we will have waited too long.”⁴²⁶

On September 20, 2002, Bush released “The National Security Strategy of the United States,” in which enemies are to be prevented from even threatening us with weapons of mass destruction. In the future, the United States will be defended “by identifying and destroying the threat before it reaches our borders. While the United States will constantly strive to enlist the support of the international community, we will not hesitate to act alone, if necessary, to exercise our right of self defense by acting preemptively against such terrorists.”

While in the past, the legitimacy of preemption was predicated upon the existence of “an imminent threat—most often a visible mobilization of ... forces preparing to attack,” Bush now declared: “We must adapt the concept of imminent threat to the capabilities and objectives of today’s adversaries.” And, “The greater the threat, the greater is the risk of inaction—and the more compelling the case for taking anticipatory action

to defend ourselves, even if uncertainty remains as to the time and place of the enemy's attack."⁴²⁷ What then is the standard, and who judges us if we are wrong?

In 1953, after he reviewed plans to launch a preventive war against the Soviet Union, President Eisenhower stated, "All of us have heard this term 'preventive war' since the earliest days of Hitler. I recall that is about the first time I heard it. In this day and time ... I don't believe there is such a thing; and, frankly, I wouldn't even listen to anyone seriously that came in and talked about such a thing."⁴²⁸

As justification for Bush's War, the White House relied upon misleading information provided by Chalabi and the INC over the more accurate intelligence provided by the CIA. The Pentagon brought pressure on the CIA to produce more supportive intelligence reports; however, the CIA viewed Chalabi as being ineffectual and the INC as corrupt. Vincent Cannistraro, a former senior CIA official, stated that the INC's intelligence wasn't "reliable at all. ... Much of it is propaganda ... telling the Defense Department what they want to hear ... they make no distinction between intelligence and propaganda, using alleged informants and defectors who say what Chalabi wants them to say, [creating] cooked information that goes right into presidential and vice-presidential speeches."⁴²⁹

Two days before Baghdad fell, the Pentagon flew members of the "Free Iraqi Forces," the military wing of the INC, into Iraq. Chalabi set up shop with his daughter in the Hunting Club, a former hangout of Saddam's son, Uday.⁴³⁰ On May 5, 2003, the U.S. administrator, General Jay Garner, appointed Chalabi as one of five members of the interim government.

Why was all the attention paid to Iraq? Why were so many members of the Bush administration so determined to fight a war against Iraq, and why was it so important to get Chalabi into power? The answer should not even require a clue, but let's spell it out. Iraq has proven "O-I-L" reserves of 112 billion barrels, second only to Saudi Arabia in the world.⁴³¹ Chalabi and the INC believe that Iraq's oil resources should be explored and extracted by a private consortium of oil companies, including British Petroleum, ChevronTexaco, and ExxonMobil.⁴³²

In September 2002, Ariel Cohen of the Heritage Foundation, which has close links with the Bush administration, presented "The future of a Post-Saddam Iraq: A Blueprint for American Involvement," which lays out a plan for the privatization of Iraq's oil industry, and a warning that French, Russian, and Chinese oil contracts would not be honored by the new INC-led government. Cohen's proposal would split up the Iraqi National Oil Company into three large companies, generally in line with the ethnic and geographic divisions of Shia, Sunni, and Kurd.⁴³³ So much for self-determination.

In October 2002, Chalabi met with the executives of three U.S. oil companies to negotiate the division of Iraq's oil reserves once Saddam was eliminated. Although Iraq has existing oil contracts with Russia, France, and China, Chalabi has stated that he would reward the United States with lucrative oil contracts for removing Saddam, and that "American companies will have a big shot at Iraqi oil."⁴³⁴

In addition to simple greed on the part of the oil companies, the neocons want to destroy OPEC, which they believe to be evil, i.e., incompatible with American business interests. Strategically, they want to reduce the United States' reliance upon Saudi oil and diminish Saudi Arabia's influence on world oil prices through its dominance of OPEC. In their view, once the oil starts flowing from an Iraq controlled by the United States, it will be much more difficult for OPEC to control prices.

On January 16, 2003, the *Wall Street Journal* reported that government officials had been meeting informally with executives from Halliburton, Schlumberger, ExxonMobil, ChevronTexaco and ConocoPhillips to plan the expansion of Iraq's oil production once Bush's War secured the fields.⁴³⁵

Any question about Bush's business intentions in Iraq seems to have been laid to rest on July 17, 2003, when Judicial Watch, a conservative public interest group that investigates and prosecutes government corruption and abuse, revealed the product of its Freedom of Information Act lawsuit against the

Department of Energy.* Surrendered documents from Cheney's energy task force included a map of Iraqi oilfields, pipelines, refineries and terminals, as well as two charts detailing Iraqi oil and gas projects, and "Foreign Suitors for Iraqi Oilfield Contracts."⁴³⁶ Perhaps now we can better understand why Cheney continues to be so afraid to reveal the participants and proceedings of his task force. Moreover, is it any surprise that, following the invasion, the Pentagon was more interested in protecting Iraq's oil infrastructure than its archeological treasures?⁴³⁷

Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz eliminated any doubt as to Bush's intentions in Iraq when he candidly answered a reporter's question about why North Korea, a nuclear power, was being treated differently than Iraq, where no weapons of mass destruction were located. Wolfowitz stated, "Let's look at it simply. The most important difference between North Korea and Iraq is that economically, we just had no choice in Iraq. The country swims on a sea of oil."⁴³⁸

More than the oil, there is yet another reason why Bush and his gang of neocons were so eager to go to war with Iraq. According to Olivier Roy, a specialist on the Islamic world at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, the "professional thinkers" at the American Enterprise Institute believed "the Israeli-Palestinian stalemate is America's most worrisome foreign entanglement, and can be broken only if the overall existing order in the Middle East is shaken up first." Roy goes on to observe:

* Cheney continued to refuse to reveal who met with his energy task force and appealed the District Court's order. After the U.S. Court of Appeals in Washington upheld the order, U.S. Solicitor General Theodore B. Olson filed an appeal at the U.S. Supreme Court. On December 15, 2003, the Supreme Court agreed to hear the appeal. Three weeks later, Cheney flew with Justice Antonin Scalia on Air Force Two to a duck hunting expedition in Louisiana. Should Scalia recuse himself from hearing the case? He says no. "I do not think my impartiality could reasonably be questioned?" (Savage, David G., "Senators Inquire of Justices' Recusal Rules," *Los Angeles Times*, January 23, 2004, p. A10.)

In this sense, the rationale for the military campaign in Iraq was not that Iraq was the biggest threat but, on the contrary, that it was the weakest and hence the easiest to take care of. The invasion was largely aimed at demonstrating America's political will and commitment to go to war. Reshaping the Middle East does not mean changing borders, but rather threatening existing regimes through military pressure and destabilizing them with calls for democratization.

After Baghdad's fall, Tehran, Damascus and Riyadh should understand that America is back. The Israelis, for their part, are now insisting that the Iranian nuclear program be dealt with immediately. Pentagon officials hint that Syria is the next target.⁴³⁹

In late 2003, Bush poured gasoline on the flames of endless war in the Middle East by giving Israel 100 Harpoon cruise missiles, which Israel immediately equipped with nuclear weapons and installed aboard three submarines purchased from Germany. These missiles provide Israel with the ability to strike any of its enemies in the Middle East, including all sites where Iran may be working on nuclear weapons.

According to a story in the *Los Angeles Times*, "Arab diplomats and U.N. officials said Israel's steady enhancement of its secret nuclear arsenal, and U.S. silence about it, has increased the desire of Arab states for similar weapons. 'The presence of a nuclear weapon program in the region that is not under international safeguards gives other countries the spur to develop weapons of mass destruction,' said Nabil Fahmy, Egypt's ambassador to the United States. 'Any future conflict becomes more dangerous.'"⁴⁴⁰

Relying upon Bush's doctrine of preemptive war, a spokesman for Israel's foreign ministry insisted, "Israel views every state that is harboring terrorist organizations and the leaders of those terrorist organizations who are attacking innocent citizens of the state of Israel as legitimate targets of self defense."⁴⁴¹

In February 2003, Undersecretary of State John Bolton reassured Israeli officials that America would deal with Syria, Iran, and North Korea after it finished with Iraq. He later argued to Congress that Syria's possession of chemical and biological weapons posed a threat to the stability in the Middle East. One CIA official said that the neocons "want to go there next."⁴⁴²

William Kristol would seem to agree. He writes, "President Bush is committed, pretty far down the road. The logic of events says you can't go halfway. You can't liberate Iraq, then quit."⁴⁴³

Richard Perle goes even further, "This is total war, ... We are fighting a variety of enemies. There are lots of them out there. All this talk about first we are going to do Afghanistan, then we will do Iraq ... this is entirely the wrong way to go about it. If we just let our vision of the world go forth, and we embrace it entirely and we don't try to piece together clever diplomacy, but just wage a total war ... our children will sing great songs about us years from now."⁴⁴⁴

When Rumsfeld was asked what would constitute a victory in Bush's War, he stated, "Now, what is victory? I say that victory is persuading the American people and the rest of the world that this is not a quick matter that's going to be over in a month or a year or even five years. It is something that we need to do so that we can continue to live in a world with powerful weapons and with people who are willing to use those powerful weapons. And we can do that as a country. And that would be a victory, in my view."⁴⁴⁵

Thus, Bush's War may never end and victory becomes our approval. On another occasion Rumsfeld said the war could last as long as the cold war, perhaps for 50 years, and Cheney said it could go on for a "long, long time, perhaps indefinitely."⁴⁴⁶

Bush himself says, "Our war with terror begins with al Qaeda, but it does not end ... until every terrorist group of global reach has been found stopped and defeated." In doing so, Bush doesn't mind if we alienate the rest of the world, "At some point, we may be the only ones left. ... That's OK with me. We are America."⁴⁴⁷

Thus it was that Bush's endless war came to be invented. Is this the kind of world you want to live in? Have you ever read 1984? If not, you should. You're not stupid! Get the truth.

The Propaganda and Politics of Bush's War

During his trial for war crimes at Nuremberg, Hermann Goering stated, "Of course the people don't want war. But after all, it's the leaders of the country who determine the policy, and it's always a simple matter to drag the people along whether it's a democracy, a fascist dictatorship, or a parliament, or a communist dictatorship. Voice or no voice, the people can always be brought to the bidding of the leaders. That is easy. All you have to do is tell them they are being attacked, and denounce the pacifists for lack of patriotism, and exposing the country to greater danger. It works the same way in every country."⁴⁴⁸ And it has worked that way in America for the past three years.

Shortly after 9/11, Rumsfeld established the Office of Strategic Influence (OSI) in the Department of Defense to provide news items, including false information, to foreign media organizations and the Internet. OSI was provided with a multimillion-dollar budget to use disinformation and other covert activities, any of which could easily flow back to the United States and be republished and rebroadcast to domestic audiences as fact.

Following an outpouring of opposition on editorial pages and in Congress, Rumsfeld closed down the operation, saying he had never seen its charter. Bush promised, "We'll tell the American people the truth." Another pair of lies. In a later moment of candor, Rumsfeld said, "And then there was the Office of Strategic Influence. You may recall that. And 'Oh, my goodness gracious, isn't that terrible, Henny Penny, the sky is going to fall.' I went down that next day and said fine, if you want to savage this thing, fine, I'll give you the corpse. There's the name. You can have the name, but I'm going to keep doing every single thing that needs to be done, and I have."⁴⁴⁹

In the summer of 2002, Bush's chief of staff, Andrew Card, told the *New York Times*, "From a marketing point of view, you

don't introduce new products in August." Card described a "meticulously planned strategy to persuade the public, the Congress, and the allies, of the need to confront the threat from Saddam Hussein."⁴⁵⁰ Far better to launch the campaign on a symbolic date, like September 11th and in conjunction with the Congressional mid-term elections.

The White House created an Office of Global Communications and funded it with \$200 million to use advertising techniques to persuade targeted groups that Saddam must be removed. There was a daily meeting to plan media strategy and to keep everyone on message. The White House instructed all civilian and military employees to refer to the invasion as a "war of liberation," and to refer to Iraqi paramilitary forces as "death squads."⁴⁵¹

An observer of Rove's tricks over the years shared his thoughts about Rove's use of provocative language in politics: "it was starting to look like we couldn't win the war on terrorism. Rather than lose that war we redefine that war. Suddenly it wasn't the people who were terrorists who killed us. It was evil itself. They [Bush and Rove] can apply that to anyone they want. Tom Daschle or Hussein."⁴⁵² Another observer added, "Timing is everything in politics and it certainly is helping. ... I think it happened slowly through the Pentagon and [Paul] Wolfowitz leading and Cheney right there with him and Karl put his arms around it and said, 'Yeah, this is gonna help us.'"⁴⁵³ A merging of interests, "Chicken Hawks" plus "Turd Blossom" equals war without end.

Propaganda, or media manipulation, is used to influence the thinking of others. We have come to rely upon public opinion polls to gauge the results, and there are two sets of data that seem relevant here. On the morning of September 11, 2001, Bush's standing in opinion polls hovered at 50 percent, but with the crisis, it jumped to 82 percent within two days.⁴⁵⁴ If only we had known then what Bush had known when.

Shortly before Congress authorized Bush's War against Iraq in October 2002, a CBS news poll found that 51 percent of Americans believed that Saddam was involved in the 9/11 attacks. Later, the Pew Research Center found that two thirds of

Americans agreed that "Saddam Hussein helped the terrorists in the September 11 attacks."⁴⁵⁵ (The percentage later rose to approximately 70 percent, but more about that later.)

Another poll in January 2003 found that 44 percent of Americans believed "most" or "some" of the 9/11 terrorists were Iraqi citizens. Only 17 percent were aware that none were. From this we can see that Bush's propaganda had produced results.⁴⁵⁶ We came to believe something that even Bush had never said. Of course, Saddam had nothing at all to do with the 9/11 attacks.

However, by March 14, 2003, Bush's approval ratings had again fallen to 53 percent, essentially where it was before 9/11. Then, once he declared Bush's War on March 18, 2003, he got the crisis bounce back up to 68 percent.⁴⁵⁷

Common sense tells us that the greater knowledge we have, the better decisions we make. However, war propaganda is not used to inform people; rather, it is intended to mislead people into believing that war is in their best interest. In 1991, a study at the University of Massachusetts correlated public opinion and knowledge of basic facts about the Gulf War. It found "a strong correlation between knowledge and opposition to the war. The more people know, in other words, the less likely they were to support the war policy."⁴⁵⁸

Were you misled by Bush's propaganda? Did you come to believe that Saddam was somehow responsible for the 9/11 attacks? You're not stupid! Get the truth.

A Litany of Lies

Once Bush decided to go to war against Iraq, he and senior members of his administration constantly lied to and misled the American public about Iraq's possession of weapons of mass destruction and its relationship to al Qaeda.

In July 2002, Richard Perle said, "It is likely that chemical weapons, biological weapons in the possession of the Iraqis derived during the Cold War from the Soviet Union, are now being disseminated to terrorists."⁴⁵⁹ In truth, if Saddam had hidden such weapons and had provided them to these terrorists,

it is just as likely that they would have used them on him as on us, since they despised him and his corrupt secular regime.

In August 2002, Rumsfeld lied in saying it "is a fact that there are al Qaeda in a number of locations in Iraq." When asked in September 2002, Condoleezza Rice repeated the lie: "There is certainly evidence that al Qaeda people have been in Iraq. There is certainly evidence that Saddam Hussein cavorts with terrorists."⁴⁶⁰ In fact, Greg Thielmann, a former official in the State Department's intelligence office, later said, "The al Qaeda connection and nuclear weapons issue were the only two ways that you could link Iraq to an imminent security threat to the U.S., and the administration was grossly distorting the intelligence on both things."⁴⁶¹

It was not that the Bush administration was ignorant about the absence of Iraqi links with terrorism. Even his father's former National Security Advisor attempted to educate him. General Brent Scowcroft wrote in August 2002: "But there is scant evidence to tie Saddam to terrorist organizations, and even less to the September 11 attacks. Indeed Saddam's goals have little in common with the terrorists who threaten us, and there is little incentive for him to make common cause with them."⁴⁶²

In August 2002, Cheney said: "Many of us are convinced that Saddam Hussein will acquire nuclear weapons fairly soon."⁴⁶³ He may have been convinced by his own self-delusion, but in truth, the CIA had absolutely no evidence that Iraq had or would soon have nuclear weapons. In fact, the *Washington Post* later reported that Cheney and his chief of staff repeatedly visited CIA headquarters and that some analysts "felt they were being pressured to make their assessments fit with the Bush administration's policy objectives."⁴⁶⁴

On August 26, 2002, Cheney lied: "Simply stated, there's no doubt that Saddam Hussein now has weapons of mass destruction. There is no doubt he is amassing them to use against our friends, against our allies, and against us."⁴⁶⁵ The truth is that Saddam no longer possessed weapons of mass destruction. The fact is that Cheney knew his statements were untrue, because he had been pressuring intelligence analysts to alter their findings. Christian Westermann, a senior intelligence

analyst at the State Department and an expert on biological and chemical weapons, later revealed that he had been pressured to alter his conclusions to conform to the administration's policy.⁴⁶⁶

In September 2002, Cheney lied, or was at best disingenuous, when he stated that "Mohamed Atta, who was the lead hijacker, did apparently travel to Prague on a number of occasions. And on at least one occasion, we have reporting that places him in Prague with a senior Iraqi intelligence official a few months before the attack on the World Trade Center." In truth, the CIA had concluded there was no evidence to support the "reporting," and U.S. intelligence and law enforcement officials actually believed that Atta wasn't even in Prague at the time. In fact, Czech President Vaclav Havel quietly told the White House in October there was no evidence to support the claim.⁴⁶⁷

On September 3, 2002, Rumsfeld lied, "It is the Iraqis that ended the inspections; that we know. We protested when the Iraqis threw the inspectors out. ... Would it be nice if they had not thrown the inspectors out? Yes, that would have been preferable."⁴⁶⁸ In truth, the United Nations pulled the inspectors out for their own safety because the United States was preparing to bomb Iraq.

On September 7, 2002, Bush lied about a report issued by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA): "I would remind you that when the inspectors first went to Iraq and were denied, finally denied access, a report came out of the Atomic—the IAEA—that they were six months away from developing a weapon. I don't know what more evidence we need."⁴⁶⁹ The truth is that the IAEA never issued any such report. In fact, the IAEA issued a report in 1998 that said, "Based on all credible information to date, the IAEA has found no indication of Iraq having achieved its program goal of producing nuclear weapons or of Iraq having retained a physical capability for the production of weapon-useable nuclear material or having clandestinely obtained such material."⁴⁷⁰

To cover up for the first lie, the White House told another and said that Bush had really been referring to a 1991 IAEA report that said Iraq was within six months of building a nuclear weapon. However, the truth is that there was no such report.

Then, to cover up for the second lie, the White House told yet another and said that Bush was actually referring to an International Institute for Strategic Studies report that had concluded that Iraq could develop a nuclear bomb in as few as six months. However, the truth is that first, the report didn't actually say that, and second, it wasn't even issued until two days after Bush's speech.⁴⁷¹ (Is it time to say, "Liar, Liar, pants on fire?")

On September 8, 2002, Condoleezza Rice confirmed Iraq's attempt to purchase aluminum tubes that "are only suited for nuclear weapons programs, centrifuge programs. ... The problem here is that there will always be some uncertainty about how quickly he can acquire nuclear weapons, but we don't want the smoking gun to be a mushroom cloud."⁴⁷²

On September 8, 2002, Cheney said, "We don't have all the evidence [but evidence] tells us that he [Saddam] is in fact actively and aggressively seeking to acquire nuclear weapons."⁴⁷³

Regarding Iraq's nuclear weapons program, former U.N. weapons inspector Scott Ritter stated, "When I left Iraq in 1998, when the U.N. inspection program ended, the infrastructure and facilities had been 100 percent eliminated. There's no debate about that. All of their instruments and facilities had been destroyed. The weapons design facility had been destroyed. The production equipment had been hunted down and destroyed. ... We can say unequivocally that the industrial infrastructure needed by Iraq to produce nuclear weapons has been eliminated."⁴⁷⁴

On September 12, 2002, Bush addressed the delegates of the United Nations and said that what makes Saddam Hussein dangerous are his weapons. Bush then lied to them: "United Nations inspections [in the 1990s] ... revealed that Iraq likely maintains stockpiles of VX, mustard and other chemical agents and that the regime is rebuilding and expanding facilities capable of producing chemical weapons."⁴⁷⁵

The truth is that when U.N. inspectors were pulled out of Iraq in 1998, they may have had some lingering questions about

the existence of hidden chemical weapons, but they did not know it as an established fact. In fact, Rolf Ekeus, the former executive chairman of the inspection program, stated in 2000, "UNSCOM was highly successful in identifying and eliminating Iraq's prohibited weapons—but to the degree that everything was destroyed. ... In my view, there are no large quantities of weapons."⁴⁷⁶

In the same speech, Bush lied to the delegates of the United Nations and to the world when he referred to Iraq's "continued appetite" for nuclear weapons. As evidence, he claimed that Saddam purchased thousands of high-strength aluminum tubes to be "used to enrich uranium for nuclear weapons." He stated, "Iraq has made several attempts to buy high-strength aluminum tubes used to enrich uranium for a nuclear weapon. Should Iraq acquire fissile material, it would be able to build a nuclear weapon within a year."

In fact, the unanimous opinion of Department of Energy experts was that the tubes in question were not intended for use in centrifuges, since aluminum had not been used in centrifuge construction since the 1950s, they were too long, the walls were excessively thick, and the diameters were too narrow. However, the experts were ordered by the White House to remain silent.⁴⁷⁷

In addition, the IAEA, in January 2003, stated that the size of the tubes was identical to those Iraq had used previously to make conventional artillery rockets. Powell later repeated the lie in his speech to the U.N. on February 5, 2003.⁴⁷⁸

On September 13, 2002, Rumsfeld said: "There's no debate in the world as to whether they have those weapons. ... We all know that. A trained ape knows that."⁴⁷⁹

On September 19, 2002, Rumsfeld told Congress that "There are a number of terrorist states pursuing weapons of mass destruction, but no terrorist state poses a greater or more immediate threat to the security of our people than the regime of Saddam Hussein and Iraq."⁴⁸⁰

On September 26, 2002, Rumsfeld lied when he said he had "bulletproof" evidence that Saddam and bin Laden were connected.⁴⁸¹ In fact, there was no such evidence, and Rumsfeld

has yet to produce a smoking gun. In September 2003, Rumsfeld, in response to a question about a poll that showed up to 70 percent of Americans believing that Hussein was connected with 9/11, stated, "I've not seen any indication that would lead me to believe I could say that."⁴⁸²

On September 28, 2002, Bush said: "The Iraqi regime possesses biological and chemical weapons, is rebuilding the facilities to make more, and according to the British government, could launch a biological or chemical attack in as little as 45 minutes after the order is given."⁴⁸³

On October 7, 2002, Bush lied during a speech in Cincinnati regarding Saddam's nuclear weapons program, saying that Iraq was "rebuilding facilities at sites that have been part of its nuclear program in the past."⁴⁸⁴ The truth is that when inspectors searched those sites a few weeks later, they found "At the majority of these sites, the equipment and laboratories have deteriorated to such a degree that the resumption of nuclear activities would require substantial renovation."⁴⁸⁵

Bush continued to lie during his Cincinnati speech when he stated that Saddam was a "significant danger to America," and that "Iraq could decide on any given day to provide a biological or chemical weapon to a terrorist group or individual terrorists. Alliance with terrorists could allow the Iraqi regime to attack America without leaving any fingerprints."⁴⁸⁶

In truth, CIA director George Tenet reported that "Baghdad for now appears to be drawing a line short of conducting terrorist attacks with conventional or CBW (chemical and biological weapons) against the United States. Tenet then went on to warn, "*Should Saddam conclude that a U.S.-led attack [against Iraq] could no longer be deterred, he probably would become much less constrained in adopting terrorist actions.*" *Saddam might conclude "that the extreme step of assisting Islamist terrorists in conducting a WMD attack against the United States would be his last chance to exact vengeance by taking a large number of victims with him. (emphasis added)"*⁴⁸⁷

On November 7, 2002, Bush was asked during a press conference about Tenet's warning. Bush stammered and lied:

"I'm sure that he said other sentences. ... I know George Tenet well. I meet with him every single day. He sees Saddam Hussein as a threat. I don't know what the context of that quote is. I'm telling you, the guy knows what I know, that he is a problem and we must deal with him. ... Well, if we don't do something he might attack us, and he might attack us with a more serious weapon. The man is a threat. ... He's a threat because he is dealing with al Qaeda."⁴⁸⁸ In truth, the intelligence community had no such evidence, and Bush knew that Saddam was not involved in the 9/11 attacks.

According to a story in *USA Today*, Cheney and Rumsfeld had pressured the CIA to confirm reports that al Qaeda members were "hiding in Iraq with Saddam's blessings." The agency could not. Another story in the *Los Angeles Times* noted, "Senior Bush administration officials are pressuring CIA analysts to tailor their assessments of the Iraqi threat to help build a case against Saddam Hussein." Sources identified these officials as Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz.⁴⁸⁹

On November 20, 2002, Bush gave a speech in Prague in which he lied: "Our goal is to secure the peace through the comprehensive and verified disarmament of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction." Or, was Cheney lying when he said in early September, "The president made it clear that the goal of the United States is regime change."⁴⁹⁰

On December 2, 2002, Wolfowitz said that Bush's "determination to use force if necessary is because of the threat posed by Iraq's weapons of mass destruction."⁴⁹¹

On December 5, 2002, Fleischer said: "The president of the United States and the secretary of defense would not assert as plainly and bluntly as they have that Iraq has weapons of mass destruction if it was not true, and if they did not have a solid basis for saying it."⁴⁹²

On December 12, 2002, Rumsfeld said: "It is clear that the Iraqis have weapons of mass destruction. The issue is not whether or not they have weapons of mass destruction."⁴⁹³

On January 7, 2003, Rumsfeld said: "There is no doubt in my mind but that they currently have chemical and biological weapons."⁴⁹⁴

On January 9, 2003, Fleischer said: "We know for a fact that there are weapons there."⁴⁹⁵

The truth of the matter is that back in September 2002, the Defense Intelligence Agency had reported, "There is no reliable information on whether Iraq is producing or stockpiling chemical weapons, or whether Iraq has-or will-establish its chemical warfare agent production facilities."⁴⁹⁶

On January 28, 2003, in his State of the Union speech, Bush stood before the American people, looked us in the eye, and once more lied to us about Saddam's possession of nuclear weapons. Even though he had earlier been caught in three different lies on the same subject, he again lied when he said that the IAEA "confirmed in the 1990's that Saddam Hussein had an advanced nuclear weapons development program."⁴⁹⁷ In truth, the IAEA had maintained for years that it had destroyed Saddam's program.

Bush again lied about Iraq's purchase of the high-quality aluminum tubes "suitable for nuclear weapons production," even though the IAEA had already concluded that they were "not directly suitable" for the refining of uranium. Moreover, there was no secret about the acquisition, as Iraq had posted its purchase order on the Internet.⁴⁹⁸

Bush delivered his most deliberate lie when he said, "The British Government has learned that Saddam Hussein recently sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa." In truth, the CIA had informed the White House in March 2002 that it could not confirm the "Niger" allegations and had labeled the allegations as "highly dubious." In fact, the documents had been shown to be crude forgeries.⁴⁹⁹

In his speech to the United Nations on February 5, 2003, Secretary of State Colin Powell was untruthful when he described the "Khormal" compound in northeastern Iraq allegedly operated by the Islamist terrorist group Ansar al-Islam as a "terrorist chemicals and poisons factory."⁵⁰⁰ The truth is the

“compound” consisted of a few dilapidated concrete outbuildings, with no evidence of chemicals whatsoever. Tragically, the nearby town of Khormal was mistakenly bombed by cruise missiles in the first week of Bush’s War, and 45 villagers were killed.⁵⁰¹

The Ansar al-Islam group was formerly known as Jund al-Islam; it is a splinter of the Iranian-backed Islamic Unity Movement of Kurdistan. Moreover, the group was actually located in the Kurdish area outside of Saddam’s control in the northern no-fly zone. In fact, the group was attacked and many were killed by the Kurds in early 2003 and the rest fled into Iran.⁵⁰² Since the commencement of Bush’s War, it appears that Ansar and al Qaeda have begun to cooperate in their resistance to the invasion. Ansar may be providing its knowledge of the countryside and al Qaeda is providing explosives and volunteers to act as suicide bombers.⁵⁰³

Powell also repeated Bush’s earlier lie to the delegates when he said that “Most U.S. experts think they [the aluminum tubes] are intended to serve as rotors in centrifuges used to enrich uranium. Other experts, and the Iraqis themselves, say the tubes were really for rockets.”⁵⁰⁴ As we have seen, most experts did not believe the tubes were intended to enrich uranium.

On February 26, 2003, Bush addressed a partisan gathering of the American Enterprise Institute at the Washington Hilton Hotel, where he opined that at the Institute, “some of the finest minds in our nation are at work on some of the greatest challenges to our nation. You do such good work that my administration has borrowed 20 such minds. ... We meet here during a crucial period in the history of our nation, and of the civilized world. Part of that history was written by others; the rest will be written by us.”

Unfortunately, the history written by the Institute moles in Bush’s administration, and by Bush himself, is replete with lies. That night, Bush laced his speech with lies: “In Iraq, a dictator is building and hiding weapons that could enable him to dominate the Middle East and intimidate the civilized world. ... This same tyrant has close ties to terrorist organizations, and could supply them with the terrible means to strike this country. ... The safety

of the American people depends on ending this direct and growing threat. Acting against the danger will also contribute greatly to the long-term safety and stability of our world."⁵⁰⁵

None of this was true. In fact, Bush's War has gravely threatened the safety of the American people, and the stability of the world has become greatly unbalanced as a consequence.

Do you believe Bush and his cohorts told you the truth to justify his war? You're not stupid! Get the truth.

Milestones Along the Road to Bush's War

On November 21, 2001, Bush stated, "Afghanistan is just the beginning of the war against terror. ... The most difficult steps in this mission still lie ahead ... [because] there are other terrorists who threaten America and our friends, and there are other nations willing to sponsor them."⁵⁰⁶

In his State of the Union address to Congress on January 29, 2002, Bush said that terrorist camps exist in "at least a dozen countries." He said, "The United States of America will not permit the world's most dangerous regimes to threaten us with the world's most destructive weapons." First mentioning North Korea and Iran, Bush said that Iraq had "agreed to international inspection—then kicked out the inspectors. This is a regime that has something to hide from the civilized world. States like these, and their terrorist allies, *constitute an axis of evil*, aiming to threaten the peace of the world. By seeking weapons of mass destruction, these regimes pose a grave and growing danger (emphasis added)."⁵⁰⁷

Following an eight-month campaign of propaganda and deception, Bush made a speech in New York City on September 11, 2002, with the Statute of Liberty in the background; the next day he requested the United Nations Security Council to authorize his march to war, and a week later he asked Congress to back him in his invasion of Iraq.

On October 10, the House of Representatives voted 296 to 133 to grant Bush the authority to attack Iraq, and the Senate approved 77 to 23 the next day. Although a few members of both parties crossed over the aisles to vote, the resolution was

largely supported by the Republicans and opposed by the Democrats. Senior Senator Robert Byrd of West Virginia attempted to mount a filibuster, but was cut off. He said, "This is the Tonkin Gulf resolution all over again. ... Let us stop, look and listen. Let us not give this president or any president unchecked power. Remember the Constitution."⁵⁰⁸

The resolution authorized Bush "to use the Armed Forces of the United States as he determines to be necessary and appropriate in order to: "(1) defend the national security of the United States against the continuing threat posed by Iraq; and (2) enforce all relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions regarding Iraq."⁵⁰⁹

On November 8, 2002, the members of the United Nations Security Council, responding to intense pressure by the United States, voted to adopt Resolution 1441 which afforded Iraq "a final opportunity to comply with its disarmament obligations," and it "set up an enhanced inspection regime." It required Iraq to provide, within 30 days, "a currently accurate, full, and complete declaration of all aspects of its programmes to develop chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons, ballistic missiles, and other delivery systems." It required Iraq to provide inspectors with "immediate, unimpeded, unconditional, and unrestricted access" to anything the inspectors wished to inspect.

The Security Council decided "to convene immediately upon receipt of a report ... to consider the situation and the need for full compliance with all of the relevant Council resolutions in order to secure international peace and security;" it recalled "in that context, that the Council has repeatedly warned Iraq that it will face serious consequences as a result of its continued violations of its obligations;" and finally, it decided "to remain seized of the matter."⁵¹⁰ In other words, the Security Council took all appropriate action to ensure that Iraq did not possess weapons of mass destruction, and it kept the matter on its agenda. It did not turn over enforcement of its resolution to the United States!

The Security Council's intention to retain control was confirmed by the United States' UN ambassador, John Negroponte, who stated, "There's no 'automaticity,' and this is a

two-stage process. ... Whatever violation there is, or is judged to exist, will be dealt with in the council, and the council will have an opportunity to consider the matter before any other action is taken."⁵¹¹

Two days later, Bush's chief of staff, Andrew Card, stated: "The U.N. can meet and discuss, but we don't need their permission" before attacking Iraq. "The U.S. and our allies are prepared to act."⁵¹²

Secretary of State Powell stated, "I can assure you that, if he [Saddam Hussein] doesn't comply this time, we'll ask the U.N. to give authorization for all necessary means, and if the U.N. is not willing to do that, the United States, with like-minded nations, will go and disarm him forcefully."⁵¹³

Richard Perle admitted that the U.S. would attack Iraq even if the inspectors failed to find weapons, "All he [Dr. Hans Blix, the Executive Chairman of the U.N. inspection teams] can know is the results of his own investigations. And that does not prove Saddam does not have weapons of mass destruction."⁵¹⁴

On November 14, 2002, Rumsfeld was asked what would happen if the inspectors did not find weapons of mass destruction, he answered, "What it would prove would be that the inspection process has been successfully defeated by the Iraqis."⁵¹⁵

On January 11, 2003, Cheney showed Saudi Ambassador Prince Bandar the plans for the invasion of Iraq and asked if Saudi Arabia was in or out. The Prince declined to commit until he knew for sure the invasion was going to occur. Cheney told him "You can count on this. You can take it to the bank. This is going to happen." The next day, Bush asked Prince Bandar, "Any questions for me?" Bandar replied no, and Bush said, "The message you're taking is mine."⁵¹⁶

On January 27, 2003, Dr. Blix reported to the United Nations that (1) Iraq submitted a 12,000 page declaration in compliance with Rule 1441 and, while most was a reprint of earlier documents, "in the fields of missiles and biotechnology, the declaration contains a good deal of new material and information covering the period from 1998 and onward. This is

welcome.” (2) While there had been some problems, “Iraq has on the whole cooperated rather well so far with UNMOVIC in this field. The most important point to make is that access has been provided to all sites we have wanted to inspect and with one exception it has been prompt. We have further had great help in building up the infrastructure of our office in Baghdad and the field office in Mosul. Arrangements and services for our planes and our helicopters have been good. The environment has been workable.” (3) In the preceding two months, 300 inspections at more than 230 different sites were conducted, including 20 sites never before inspected; and (4) UNMOVIC had established “an inspection apparatus that permits us to send multiple inspection teams every day all over Iraq, by road or by air,” all of which was at the disposal of the Security Council.⁵¹⁷

On February 14, 2003, Dr. Mohamed ElBaradei, Director General of the IAEA, reported to the United Nations Security Council that “Iraq has continued to provide immediate access to all locations.” The IAEA completed a detailed review of the 2,000 pages of documents found at the private residence of an Iraqi scientist and found nothing that was not already known to the IAEA, nor anything to alter “the conclusions previously drawn by the IAEA concerning the extent of Iraq’s laser enrichment programme.” The report reiterated “by December 1998, that it had neutralized Iraq’s past nuclear programme and that, therefore, there were no unresolved disarmament issues left at that time.” It concluded: “We have to date found no evidence of ongoing prohibited nuclear or nuclear related activities in Iraq.”⁵¹⁸

Bush refused to accept the observations and conclusions of the United Nations and IAEA inspectors and continued to push for a new Security Council resolution mandating an end to inspections and immediate military action; however, on February 24, 2003, France, Germany and Russia joined together to issue a memorandum in which they concluded: “Full and effective disarmament in accordance with the relevant UNSC resolutions remains the imperative objective of the international community. Our priority should be to achieve this peacefully through the inspection regime. The military option should only

be a last resort. So far, the conditions for using force against Iraq are not fulfilled. While suspicions remain, no evidence has been given that Iraq still possesses weapons of mass destruction or capabilities in this field; inspections have just reached their full pace; they are functioning without hindrance; they have already produced results."⁵¹⁹

With the threat of a veto in the Security Council by either Russia or France, or both, Bush decided to ignore the United Nations. He created a new "Transatlantic Alliance," consisting of the United States, England and Spain to "face and overcome together the twin threats of the 21st century: terrorism and the spread of weapons of mass destruction."⁵²⁰

On March 16, 2003, the transatlantic triumvirate met in the Azores and made their final plans for Bush's War. They issued a "Statement of the Atlantic Summit," which warned, "The responsibility is his. If Saddam refuses even now to cooperate fully with the United Nations, he brings on himself the serious consequences foreseen in UNSCR 1441 and previous resolutions."⁵²¹ How was Saddam not cooperating? Who appointed the triumvirate as the United Nation's police force, and who gave Bush a badge?

On March 16, 2003, Cheney appeared on *Meet the Press* and stated, "I think, if you look at the track record of the International Atomic Energy Agency and this kind of issue, especially where Iraq's concerned, they have consistently underestimated or missed what it was Saddam Hussein was doing. I don't have any reason to believe they're any more valid this time than they've been in the past. We believe [Saddam] has, in fact, reconstituted nuclear weapons."⁵²²

The following day, on March 17, 2003, Bush addressed the American people and laid down a 48-hour ultimatum for Saddam Hussein and his two sons to leave Iraq; otherwise, "Their refusal to do so will result in military conflict, commenced at a time of our choosing."

As justification for his demand, Bush continued his pattern of lying to the American people: (1) "It [Iraq] has uniformly defied Security Council resolutions demanding full

disarmament. ... Peaceful efforts to disarm the Iraqi regime have failed again and again." (2) "Intelligence gathered by this and other governments leaves no doubt that the Iraq regime continues to possess and conceal some of the most lethal weapons ever devised." (3) Iraq "has aided, trained and harbored terrorists, including operatives of al Qaeda."⁵²³ Time will tell that these were three of the greatest lies of this new century.

Bush stated, "No nation can possibly claim that Iraq has disarmed. ... Yet, some permanent members of the Security Council have publicly announced they will veto any resolution that compels the disarmament of Iraq. ... The United Nations Security Council has not lived up to its responsibilities, so we will rise to ours." He said, "The American people can know that every measure has been taken to avoid war."⁵²⁴

Every measure had not been taken to avoid war, and it was not only the reasonableness of continued U.N. inspections that could have avoided it. It later came out that Saddam was desperately trying to make a last-minute deal with Bush to avoid an invasion. Using a Lebanese-American businessman as a go-between, Saddam was offering oil contracts for American companies and to allow U.S. agents to search for weapons of mass destruction. The offer eventually made it to the office of Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz, where it was presented to his aide, Jaymie Durnan.⁵²⁵ The offer was never acted upon because Bush was more interested in the ouster of Saddam than in confirming that he did not have weapons of mass destruction.

On March 19, 2003, at approximately 10:16 p.m., Bush announced that, on his orders, military operations had commenced "to disarm Iraq, to free its people and to defend the world from grave danger." He did so because we "will not live at the mercy of an outlaw regime that threatens the peace with weapons of mass murder."⁵²⁶

Who was the outlaw threatening the peace? According to a *TIME EUROPE* poll, 86.9 percent of over 700,000 respondents in Europe consider the United States to pose the greatest danger to

world peace. Only 6.3 percent thought that Iraq was the most serious threat.⁵²⁷

Where are Iraq's weapons of mass destruction? Do you still believe Iraq posed a grave danger to the United States? You're not stupid! Get the truth.

The Shifting Mission in Bush's War

The United States had two objectives in its invasion of Iraq. One, a regime change, took place rather quickly when Saddam disappeared and the Iraqi army collapsed, with its soldiers either surrendering or deserting. Under the Geneva Convention, the United States and its coalition partners undertook the obligation to govern the country. The second, the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, was even easier, for there were none. To make a long story short: nada, zip, none.

On March 25, 2003, Bush announced his war budget of \$74.5 billion to protect the United States "from a brutal regime that is armed with weapons that could kill thousands of innocent people."⁵²⁸ Rumsfeld repeatedly said that the immediate task was "to find the weapons of mass destruction" and "to eliminate the weapons of mass destruction, their delivery systems, production capabilities, and distribution networks." On March 30, 2003, he said, "We know where they are. They're in the area around Tikrit and Baghdad and east, west, south, and north somewhat."⁵²⁹

Less than two weeks later, on April 11, 2003, Rumsfeld seemed to have become less concerned about weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). He stated, "When there happens to be a weapon of mass destruction site in an area that we occupy and if people have time, they'll look at it."⁵³⁰ When they have time? What were they there for?

On April 17, 2003, Rumsfeld seems to have gotten lost somewhere east, west, south and/or north of Baghdad and/or Tikrit in his search for WMDs, admitting, "I don't think we'll discover anything, myself. I think what will happen is we'll discover people who will tell us where to go find it. It is not like a treasure hunt where you just run around looking everywhere hoping you find something."⁵³¹ The problem was, all of the

captured Iraqi officials were spilling their guts, but what they were saying was that Iraq really, really did not have any WMDs.

Nonetheless, Bush continued to be convinced that he had saved the world from Saddam's weapons of mass destruction: "We know he had them. And whether he destroyed them, moved them, or hid them, we're going to find out the truth."⁵³² Even so, it was time for Bush to duck and weave. The new line from the White House was that the Iraqi had employed the very latest in business school theory and relied upon a "just in time" delivery system which ensured that no spare chemical precursors were lying around on the shelf until just before they were needed to be combined and loaded into shells or missiles—now you see it, now you don't.⁵³³

By mid-May, the 75th Exploitation Task Force, whose job it had been to find WMDs, was winding up and preparing to go home. According to a story in the *Washington Post*, members complained that they "consistently found targets identified by Washington to be inaccurate, looted and burned, or both."⁵³⁴

But in case all this is confusing you, rest assured you're not alone. When asked about reports of the missing WMDs, Rumsfeld stated, "Reports that say something hasn't happened are always interesting to me, because as we know, there are known knowns; there are things we know we know. We also know there are known unknowns; that is to say, we know there are some things we do not know. But, there are also unknown unknowns—the ones we don't know we don't know." This brilliant bit of logic earned Rumsfeld the BBC's 2003 "Foot in Mouth" award.⁵³⁵

With his usual regard for the truth, in late May 2003, Bush responded to a Polish reporter's question about the absence of WMDs: "We found the weapons of mass destruction. We found biological laboratories. ... And we'll find more weapons as time goes on. But for those who say we haven't found the banned manufacturing devices or banned weapons, they're wrong. We found them."⁵³⁶ Perhaps he feels more secure telling such whoppers when he's out of the country. Maybe, in a simple-minded way, he actually believes that we won't hear about it, or that we don't know that we know that we don't know.

By June 2003, it seems the administration was finally giving up on actually finding WMDs, no matter Bush's delusions, and the new mission settled on fighting terrorism. Wolfowitz said, "The issue of WMDs has never been in controversy, where there's been a lot of arguing back and forth about whether the Iraqis have been involved in terrorism."⁵³⁷

Someone changed Bush's cue card, and he too began to shift the mission: "Intelligence throughout the decade showed they had a weapons program. I am absolutely convinced, with time, we'll find out that they did have a weapons program."⁵³⁸ The congressional resolution did not authorize him to find and destroy *weapons programs*; it authorized him to wage war to find and destroy actual weapons of mass destruction.

August 2003 brought yet another shift of mission in Bush's War. L. Paul Bremer, the U.S. civilian administrator for Iraq, marketed the latest theory. Regarding the influx of Islamic militants into Iraq, he stated, "I suppose they could calculate that if we can succeed in Iraq, it will change the entire structure of this area of the world. And so it certainly is attracting a lot of them here, and it shows what the stakes are for all Americans. We've got to win this fight here." *The Washington Times* reported, "Mr. Bremer avoided answering whether the Bush administration set Iraq as a deliberate trap to capture terrorists, although he previously has stated that it is 'better to fight it here than to fight it somewhere else, like the United States.'"⁵³⁹

Bremer was following Bush's lead, who had told reporters on July 2, 2003, "There are some who feel that conditions are such that they can attack us there. My answer is bring 'em on."⁵⁴⁰ Such is the braggadocio of a coward. One wonders if Bush might feel differently about the cost of his war if he had ever had a real fight in his life, if he had actually patrolled the sky over North Viet Nam, rather than Houston, Texas, or if he was a reservist facing hostile crowds in Falluja or Najaf. In the real world, as of May 14, 2004, 571 of America's sons and daughters have died in Iraq since Bush taunted the Iraqi resistance to "bring 'em on."⁵⁴¹

Lt. General Ricardo S. Sanchez, the top military commander in Iraq, said that Iraq was becoming a "terrorist magnet," which

was okay with him. He confided, "But this is exactly where we want to fight them; we want to fight them here, we prepared for them, and this will prevent the American people from having to go through other attacks back in the United States."⁵⁴² Let's make sure we understand this. We sent our sons and daughters to fight in Iraq because we were told there were weapons of mass destruction there, and when we find that there aren't any, we are going to leave our children there as live bait for terrorists? I don't think so.

And now we come to the enduring mission in Bush's never-ending war. We are in Iraq to fight terrorism. However, in actuality, we are fighting to overcome a primarily grassroots resistance to our illegal invasion and occupation. We euphemistically refer to this resistance as an insurgency.

There can be no retreat. On August 26, 2003, Bush stated, "The civilized world will not be intimidated. Retreat in the face of terror would only invite further and bolder attacks. There will be no retreat. We are on the offensive."⁵⁴³ Perhaps Bush was suffering a hangover the morning in class when the battle of Stalingrad was discussed and he failed to learn that lesson of history. According to *The Washington Times*, Bush counsels that "Americans must have patience as the nation begins a lengthy battle to purge terrorism from the world."

Bush is wrong and his own experts know better. In January 2004, the Army War College published a report by Jeffrey Record, a visiting research professor at the College's Strategic Studies Institute, which called for a reduction in the war on terrorism and a refocus on the al Qaeda threat. The report finds Bush's endless war on terrorism may have set us "on a course of open-ended and gratuitous conflict with states and non-state entities that pose no serious threat to the United States."

According to the report, "The global war on terrorism as presently defined and conducted is strategically unfocused, promises much more than it can deliver, and threatens to dissipate U.S. military and other resources in an endless and hopeless search for absolute security. The United States may be able to defeat, even destroy, al Qaeda, but it cannot rid the world of terrorism, much less evil." Record says that Bush's War was

“an unnecessary preventative war” that has “diverted attention and resources away from securing the American homeland against further assault by an undeterrable al Qaeda.”⁵⁴⁴

In September 2002, Prince Moulay Hicham Ben Abdallah of Morocco gave a speech at Princeton University. He said, “Perhaps some American strategists now think it will be easy to roll over these ‘stirred-up’ Muslims with military force alone. But without a sophisticated concurrent political, diplomatic and especially ideological strategy—one that distinguishes and isolates the new *jihad* movement from the Muslim world in general—any military offensive will only exacerbate the polarization between America and the Islamic world. It will lead to upheavals throughout the Muslim world, in which democratic constituencies will find it even more difficult to mobilize, and will increase the probability of prolonged bloody conflicts.”⁵⁴⁵

More simply, as Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak warned us about going to war in Iraq, “there will be 100 bin Ladens afterward.”⁵⁴⁶ Just like Hercules cutting off the heads of the Hydra, for each one cut off, two grow back. How long will it take us to understand that there is a whole generation of young people growing up in the Muslim “street” who can’t wait to be old enough to give their lives to rid their world of infidel crusaders? There will always be more of them *there* ready to lay down their lives to defend their homes and their society, than there will ever be of us *here* prepared to die to enrich Bush’s oil patch buddies.

Why do you think we invaded Iraq? Do you believe we had adequate justification? You’re not stupid! Get the truth.

The Inhumanity of Bush’s War

In the statement of the “Atlantic Summit” on March 16, 2003, Bush undertook “a solemn obligation to help the Iraqi people build a new Iraq at peace with itself and its neighbors. The Iraqi people deserve to be lifted from insecurity and tyranny, and freed to determine for themselves the future of their country.”⁵⁴⁷ On March 19, 2003, Bush promised every “effort to spare innocent civilians from harm.”⁵⁴⁸ In his efforts to liberate the Iraqi people, he immediately caused the deaths of approximately

9,200 military personnel and 3,750 noncombatants.⁵⁴⁹ Given the tribal nature of Iraqi society, it is highly likely that the grief associated with the loss of these lives has been visited upon every family in Iraq. Especially if one considers the untold number of serious injuries, one cannot help but wonder if there is anyone in Iraq who does not have some good reason to hate us.

Civilian suffering has always been associated with the violence of war; however, the high ratio of civilian deaths to military casualties in Iraq (about one civilian for every three Iraqi soldiers) raises questions about Bush's concern for Saddam's victims.

On May 1, 2003, Bush lied when he stated, "Today ... with new tactics and precision weapons, we can achieve military objectives without directing violence against civilians."⁵⁵⁰ We know this was untrue because only one month before, the United States had finally admitted that it was using conventional cluster bombs and artillery shells which were banned by a 1999 Ottawa agreement signed by Britain, France and more than 140 other nations and which have been condemned by Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, Oxfam International, Christian Aid, and Save the Children.⁵⁵¹ The United States has since admitted that it has used more than 10,782 cluster munitions in Iraq.

The United States has refused to sign the Ottawa agreement and continues to use the bombs, each of which contains about 200 bomblets the size of a tin can, which separate and saturate an area the size of two football fields with tiny shards of razor-sharp steel. These bombs kill indiscriminately, much like land mines, because approximately 5 to 15 percent of the bomblets fail to explode immediately and lay about on the ground waiting for a curious child to pick them up. It has been estimated that over 1,000 Iraqis have been killed by cluster bombs in Bush's War.⁵⁵²

On one hand, Rumsfeld says, "No nation in human history has done more to avoid civilian casualties than the United States has in this conflict." Then on the other, he says, "of course we are using cluster bombs, and of course the purpose is to try to kill them ... to be perfectly blunt."⁵⁵³ Such a lie. Such arrogance!

In addition, the Pentagon repeatedly targeted approximately 50 "high value" individuals by tracking their satellite phone use. When these targets were located, an area within a 100-yard radius was saturated with bombs, irrespective of the risk to non-combatants.⁵⁵⁴

A discussion such as this is, in some respects, an intellectual exercise, for we are not there, nor have most of us ever experienced such horror; however, a couple of stories reported by the Project on Defense Alternatives paints a human face on the blank canvas of suffering innocent children: "In the emergency room in the complex of hospitals in Baghdad's Medical City ... eight-year-old Hamed Ali lies unconscious after surgery. Ali, his parents say, had been a curious boy and was playing with unexploded ordnance when he was injured. ... Surgeons give him a 50 percent chance of survival—not because of his injuries ... but because of the risk of infection in a ward terribly short of antibiotics. Safah Ahmed, 12 ... was wounded when an American bomb landed near her home. ... Now doctors have amputated her leg. One of the U.S. Marine guards outside the Medical City Complex ... recalls a boy brought in with all of his face except his lower jaw shot away. The child had been traveling in a car with his parents that had approached a U.S. checkpoint too fast."⁵⁵⁵

Following its occupation by U.S. troops, violence escalated in Baghdad, which resulted in a tripling of violent deaths from around 10 per day to over 28 per day. Prior to Bush's War, gunshot wounds accounted for approximately ten percent of all bodies brought to Baghdad's city morgue; however following the fall of Baghdad, gunshot wounds account for over 60 percent of deaths. Between April 14 and August 31, 2003, there were at least 1,519 excess deaths over the pre-war rates. Similar statistics are not available for other areas, but anecdotal evidence indicates that the phenomenon is widespread throughout Iraq.⁵⁵⁶

As the resistance to military occupation has become more entrenched, it has also become more deadly for those Iraqis who cooperate with the Americans. There have been repeated bombings of police stations and a series of deadly attacks on politicians, professors, and translators. More than 400 Iraqi

police and security personnel, including six police chiefs, have been killed since May 2003. Even four women who worked in a laundry at a U.S. military base were killed on their way to work. An associate of the slain women said, "No one from around here wants to work for the Americans. It is a worry for everybody. We are just trying to make a living." A military spokesman stated, "We believe that the purpose behind [the attack] is to send a message of terror to those people that if you work for the coalition ... we can reach out and touch you."⁵⁵⁷

Deadly suicide attacks on their headquarters have caused the United Nations and the Red Cross to withdraw their workers from Iraq. The week ending February 14, 2004 saw two suicide bombings that killed more than 100 Iraqi military recruits and police officers and an organized attack on a police station in Falluja that killed at least 15 police officers and freed dozens of prisoners. Documents on four slain attackers identified two as Lebanese and one as Iranian.⁵⁵⁸

As an occupying power, the United States is bound by the Fourth Geneva Convention to set up an effective military government in Iraq to (1) maintain law and order; (2) provide health and hospital services to the local population; and (3) operate the basic infrastructure, such as electricity, water and roads. Under these conventions, the United States does not have an option. It has a legal duty to control rampant looting and to safeguard civilian lives from violence, including that caused by the negligence of the occupying power.⁵⁵⁹

Finally, as long as we occupy Iraq and interfere with its sovereignty in exercising government authority, we are subject to the laws of occupation and international law. We are responsible for the deaths of children killed and maimed by playing with unexploded cluster bombs. We are responsible for the deaths of children who die from a lack of basic medical care, and we are responsible for the deaths of the elderly who die from exposure and insufficient nutrition. For this reason, we should withdraw, and we should withdraw as quickly as possible.

Shall we deny the truth and continue to commit war crimes? Or, should we acknowledge our error and encourage the United

Nations to undertake a humanitarian mission to stabilize Iraq, aid its people, and establish a government? Should we provide all possible support and play no further role in the occupation of Iraq, or shall we continue to sacrifice our own children on the altar of greed, attended by the oil-rich elite? You're not stupid! Get the truth.

The Shameful Treatment of American Soldiers

The United States also has a legal, moral, and ethical duty to protect the lives of the military personnel Bush has put in harm's way. In launching his war on March 19, 2003, Bush stated: "I know that the families of our military are praying that all those who serve will return safely and soon. Millions of Americans are praying with you for the safety of your loved ones and for the protection of the innocent. For your sacrifice, you have the gratitude and respect of the American people."⁵⁶⁰ This at least was true, *we* are praying for the safety of our children, and *we* are grateful and respectful of their sacrifice. The problem is that Bush does not share our concern, and his treatment of those who have died and suffered grievous wounds in his war is shameful.

As of May 14, 2004, and the numbers mount every day, 777 U.S. service members have died in Iraq since March 20, 2003 and one has been captured.⁵⁶¹ The majority of these are attributed to hostile action; the remainder is due to accidents, suicide and illness. During the same period, 4,327 soldiers have been wounded in action in Iraq.

When Bush engaged in his phony "Mission Accomplished" carrier landing on May 1, 2003, the death toll stood at 138. It has now more than quintupled, and the attacks against our troops are increasing in accuracy and intensity. Following the invasion, the Iraqi army disintegrated, with most soldiers simply deserting and going home. Now they are regrouping and are engaging in a guerrilla resistance, injuring and killing more and more American soldiers with rocket-propelled grenades, remote-controlled mines, and "improvised explosive devices."

While the Pentagon cannot conceal the daily body count, it does go to extraordinary efforts to conceal the number of severely wounded soldiers. It does not announce such cases

unless a death occurs, and it refers to the wounded as “injured,” as in “on the job.” In fact, since most soldiers wear body armor and many lives are saved by excellent trauma care in the field, the wounds they do suffer are horrible and disabling.⁵⁶²

Gene Bolles, the chief of neurosurgery at Landstuhl, Germany, has cared for many grievously wounded soldiers from Bush’s War. He reports “a number of really horrific injuries now from the war. They have lost arms, legs, hands; they have been burned; they have had significant brain injuries and peripheral nerve damage. These are young kids that are going to be, in some regards, changed for life. I don’t feel that people realize that.”⁵⁶³

Other members of the coalition have also suffered loss of life: British, 59; Italy, 17; Spain, 11, including seven military intelligence agents killed in a single ambush; Bulgaria, 6; Thailand, 2; Denmark, 1; Estonia, 1; El Salvador, 1; Ukraine, 6; Poland, 4, and Netherlands, 1.⁵⁶⁴ Some attacks have targeted civilian workers, including the deaths of two South Korean electricians, a Colombian working as a military contractor, and two Japanese diplomats killed when they stopped at a roadside stand to eat.⁵⁶⁵

A survey by *Stars and Stripes*, a military newspaper, found that half of those questioned described their unit’s morale as low and their training insufficient for their assigned task. They had no intent to reenlist. About a third characterized Bush’s War as of little or no value. Forty percent said their military assignments had little or nothing to do with their training. The article related that “Many soldiers, including several officers, allege that VIP visits from the Pentagon and Capitol Hill are only given handpicked troops to meet with during their tours of Iraq.” And some soldiers who have complained of morale problems have been disciplined.⁵⁶⁶

Many of the troops deployed in Iraq are reserves, and they and their families have much to complain about. Their tours of duty have been extended to 12 or 15 months, and they are often made to feel like second-class soldiers. They are issued old and ineffective body armor, and they are assigned thankless tasks unrelated to their training. The military is offering bonuses of

\$5,000 to \$10,000 for soldiers who reenlist for three years. However, even if soldiers refuse to reenlist, they are not being allowed to come home. So far, thousands of soldiers have been prohibited from leaving the service when their enlistments expired.⁵⁶⁷

One of the differences between this and previous wars is that the soldiers have access to e-mail. One mother related what she had learned from her son: "I don't care what the administration says about flag-waving and children throwing flowers. It is just not true. The stories coming back are horrific. All he told me was that he had seen and done some horrible things, that they had all done and seen some terrible things."⁵⁶⁸

Reports are now coming to light about the torture of Iraqi prisoners in military prisons by reserve troops acting under the direction of active duty military intelligence personnel, CIA officers and private contractors. An Army report detailed "sadistic, blatant and wanton criminal abuses" at the Abu Ghraib prison near Baghdad, the very same prison where Saddam's regime tortured opponents. Detainees were beaten with a boom handle and one was sodomized with "a chemical light and perhaps a broom stick."

Photographs have been released showing a pyramid of naked Iraqi prisoners in the presence of smiling and clowning American soldiers, a naked Iraqi man kneeling in front of another naked Iraqi man, and another showing a female American soldier laughing and pointing to an Iraqi man with a bag over his head, who is masturbating. The purpose was to "set physical and mental conditions for favorable interrogation of witnesses." Much of the abuse was sexual, and such degradations "are particularly humiliating to Arabs because Islamic law and culture so strongly condemn nudity and homosexuality."⁵⁶⁹

This then is the emotional harm done to our children in uniform. By being used as live bait in a terrorist trap where they are unwelcome and do not speak the language, they become hardened and uncaring. According to a story in *The Guardian*, "Others said they detected anger and depression in their e-mails that would be difficult to fix when they returned. 'They're

changing. They have dehumanized the Iraqis. They call them 'haji' now—that's like 'gook.'"⁵⁷⁰

How can it be different when our soldiers see or hear about swarms of Iraqis kicking and looting the bodies of those who are killed or injured? When they see crowds gather and cheer when helicopters filled with troops are shot out of the sky? They are human, after all. They are our children, and they deserve our support and comfort. They deserve to be told the truth, and they are entitled not to be used as pawns in an international chess game between competing business interests.

At least 24 service members are believed to have committed suicide, and as many as 4,500 returning troops have tried to obtain counseling from veteran centers, rather than seek help through military channels.⁵⁷¹ In an effort to help soldiers cope with their depression, the military has commenced a furlough program to allow them to come home for 15 days. However, following the first flights home, about 30 soldiers declined to return to Iraq.⁵⁷²

The Pentagon announced in December 2003 that it plans to completely rotate all troops out of Iraq within the next five months, which will result in a dramatic rise in the number of reserves deployed in the country. Although reserves presently constitute approximately 20 percent of the deployment, after the rotation, they will comprise approximately 40 percent. It is likely that casualties will increase due to the inexperience of the replacement units. As Rumsfeld says, "You lose situational awareness, you lose relationships, you lose the experience."⁵⁷³ Remember the lines from the Vietnam War era song, "Well there ain't no time to wonder why, Whoopee! We're all gonna die."⁵⁷⁴

In addition to combat-related injuries and accidents, Bush's War has imposed other health costs as well. At least 100 soldiers have gotten severe cases of pneumonia; two have died and 13 had to be placed on respirators. *United Press International* reports the crusade of a father whose daughter died of pneumonia after she received anthrax and smallpox vaccinations in preparation for deployment to Iraq. The father, Moses Lacy, stated, "These young people have given their lives to the military and they are getting a raw deal. The Department of Defense is closing their

eyes.”⁵⁷⁵ A federal court ruled in December 2003 that the military could not force its members to be guinea pigs and to require them to undergo dangerous vaccinations for anthrax. Would you take an anthrax vaccination?

The most shameful aspect of Bush's War is the way the Department of Defense secretly brings home those who have given their lives and health because of Bush's lies. A military directive precludes any arrival ceremony or media coverage of “deceased personnel” returning to the Dover Air Force Base, the main reception area for those killed in action. Christopher Simpson, professor of communications at American University said, “In the beginning, the coverage was more personal. ... We saw photos, we were given names. But as the deaths kept coming it became more anonymous, more de-personalized.”⁵⁷⁶

According to a story in the *Denver Post*, “There are no public ceremonies for the dead coming back through the military receiving center in Dover, Del. The flights of wounded to Walter Reed often arrive at night at Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland.”

Senator Patrick Leahy said, “The wounded are brought back after midnight, making sure the press does not see the planes coming in. These are not a broken wrist, or scratched leg. These are terrible wounds: lost limbs, lost eyesight, lifetime disabilities. It is something the administration prefers not to talk about.”

Pfc. Tristan Wyatt, who lost his leg in an ambush relates, “They say ‘wounded’ like they have a cast, or a splinter. There are people who lost both legs, in wheelchairs, here.”⁵⁷⁷ If your son or daughter lost a limb or their eyesight in Bush's War, would you want them to feel ashamed to come home?

David Wood of the *Times Picayune* graphically described the injuries: “Explosions shatter and sever legs and arms. They char flesh and drive debris deep into the soft tissue that remains. Unattached muscles, nerves and tendons dangle. Red-hot shrapnel sometimes punctures torsos below waist-length body armor, ripping bowels and bladders. Concussions bruise skulls and brains. Soldiers thrown into the air are injured again when

they hit the ground.” In an interview with French writer, Natasha Saulnier, a soldier who had lost one leg and the use of the other, says, “Thank God I’m single. I wouldn’t want to have to go through what the other guys do. There’s this one guy who lost his sight and had both of his arms blown off. His wife is pregnant but he’s never gonna be able to hold his baby in his arms.”⁵⁷⁸

Writing about “Our Wounded Warriors,” Bob Herbert of *The New York Times* says, “Thousands of U.S. troops have been wounded and injured in Iraq. They have been paralyzed, lost limbs, suffered blindness, been horribly burned and so on. They are heroes, without question, but their stories have largely been untold.”⁵⁷⁹

Retired Army Colonel David Hackworth, who has inside sources at the Pentagon, reports our military has suffered as many as 22,000 casualties since Bush’s War started. Over 3,255 wounded-in-action soldiers and 18,717 non-battle casualties have been evacuated from Iraq.⁵⁸⁰

Although Bush has promised to give the troops whatever they need to defend themselves, the truth is that he has withheld funding and left major shortfalls in the military budget. Military commanders desperately need an additional \$132 million shortfall for bolt-on vehicle armor and \$40 million for body armor and combat helmets. However, the Bush budget that begins in October 2004 includes no money for Iraqi operations, and there will be no requests until after January 2005 (after the election). In the meantime, the Army has identified nearly \$46 billion in funding needs that was not included in the 2005 budget.⁵⁸¹

What does the future hold for these grievously injured and walking-wounded soldiers? On the same day it unanimously passed a resolution pledging “unequivocal support” for our soldiers in Iraq, the Republican-controlled House of Representatives voted 215 to 212, largely along party lines, to impose billions of dollars in cuts to veteran’s programs over the next 10 years. As a result, veterans’ pensions are threatened and almost half may lose their only source of medical care.⁵⁸² Why were our veterans stabbed in the back? Congress had to come

up with the money to pay for Bush's \$726 billion tax cut that primarily benefited his wealthy contributors.

Is it any surprise that support for Bush's reelection is waning among veterans, military personnel and their families? A bipartisan poll in September 2003 of military families found Bush's approval rating was only 36 percent. Jean Prewitt, the mother of a soldier killed in Iraq says she "just feels deceived. He just kept screaming, screaming, weapons of mass destruction, weapons of mass destruction; we've got to get in there. We got in there, and now there aren't any." A former Bush supporter, a Vietnam veteran, said he was basically "disappointed in his support of veterans... He's killing the active-duty military.... Look at the reserves call-ups for Iraq, the hardships. The National Guard—the state militia—is being used improperly. I took the president at this word on Iraq, and now you can't find a single report to back up or substantiate weapons of mass destruction."⁵⁸³

Military Families Speak Out has begun to organize demonstrations to protest the war. Fernando Suarez del Solar asks, "Bush lies and who dies? My son, Jesus Suarez del Solar Navarro, March 27." Del Solar says he is "very disillusioned with the American government. For it to get involved in an illegal war and to play with the emotions of the American people with 9/11 for politics is wrong."⁵⁸⁴

Military families and antiwar activists have united in asking Congress to censure Bush for his deception and manipulation of intelligence before the Iraq war. Sue Niederer, whose son was killed in Iraq, says "The best way that the United States Congress can honor those brave men and women in uniform who have served in Iraq, and who continue to serve in Iraq, is to honor the truth. They can do so by holding accountable those who deceived and manipulated the American people to justify the invasion and occupation of Iraq, starting with President Bush." The organization, Win Without War has gathered 460,340 signatures endorsing a censure resolution.⁵⁸⁵

Cheney has stated that the U.S. must expand its military in order to wage war quickly around the globe and with 49 percent of soldiers stationed in Iraq saying they will not reenlist, it is

likely that Bush will reinstate the military draft next year if he is reelected. Legislation has been introduced in the House and Senate (S89 and HR163) to bring the draft back as early as spring 2005, just after the election.

The Selective Service System must report by March 31, 2005 that the system, which has lain dormant for years, is ready for activation. "The Pentagon has already had to double the deployment periods of some units, call up more reserves and extend tours of duty by a year..." Reflecting Rumsfeld's prediction that the permanent war on terrorism will be a "long, hard slog," the Pentagon has begun a public campaign to fill all 10,350 draft board positions and 11,070 appeals board slots. Under the new draft, there will be no college deferments, and both boys and girls will be drafted right out of high school.⁵⁸⁶

Are you prepared to allow your teenage sons and daughters, your nieces and nephews, to be drafted? Is the oil worth it? It was always for sale anyway. Is control of the whole wide world worth it? Is our President's ego worth it? What do you think? You're not stupid! Get the truth.

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