

# THE INVASION OF IRAQ

by Rutherford

To accomplish the objective (the invasion of Iraq and the installation of a friendly government – what used to be called “colonisation”), two potential obstacles had to be overcome: the lack of international support and American public opinion. In its rejection of numerous international agreements, the administration made it clear from the outset that international support doesn’t matter and that public opinion could be trusted to look the other way.

We are expected to believe that the Bush administration acted in good faith: that they honestly believed that Saddam Hussein possessed weapons of mass destruction and that he posed a grave and immediate threat to the US.

The case for the invasion of Iraq has come apart at the seams.

When the UN weapons inspection team<sup>i</sup>, the IAEA<sup>ii</sup> and even its own intelligence services revealed that the administration had manipulated and/or falsified intelligence to justify the invasion of Iraq<sup>iii</sup>, Deputy Defense Secretary Wolfowitz explained that, in fact, it didn’t matter if the evidence was false. In an interview with *Vanity Fair*<sup>iv</sup>, he confirmed that Iraqi weapons of mass destruction were not, after all, the reason for the invasion, but were simply “the one issue that everyone could agree on” to support the invasion to remove Saddam Hussein.

If, by “everybody”, Wolfowitz means ‘those who lobbied for this war’, his admission implies that “everybody” knew in advance that the evidence had been falsified, but had agreed on this cover story as the best way to sell the invasion to the public. This is called “bait and switch”; selling used cars this way is illegal, but it’s apparently acceptable when used to send people to their death. This has been a shell game – and played for the same ends.

What, then, what was the real motive for “regime change”?

*“We have to have regime change because Saddam Hussein is a threat to our national security.”*  
How is he a threat?

*“He is a threat because he has/is developing weapons of mass destruction.”*  
But you manufactured the evidence of his WMD program

*“It is necessary to overthrow him to rid the world of a brutal dictator who has done terrible things to innocent people.”*

Please. Even a cursory knowledge of recent history shows that we have supported more brutal regimes than we have overthrown.

The right-wing think tank, THE PROJECT FOR THE NEW AMERICAN CENTURY, released a document in 2000 entitled *Rebuilding America's Defenses: Strategy, Forces and Resources For a New Century* that outlines what this group believes is the need to drastically increase defence spending in order to fulfil what the group claims is America’s destiny to rule the world. One of the central issues discussed in this document is the necessity to control the territory of Iraq (and this was written *before* Bush was appointed President.). While it is true that groups dreaming of world domination have always come and gone, when the group in question includes people like Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, Richard Pearle and Paul Wolfowitz who possess the means to make their plans a reality – there is reason to take notice.

When Hans Blix resigned his post in early April, he told a German reporter that, throughout his assignment in Iraq, the Bush administration consistently attempted to have him support their claim about Iraq's possession of WsMD. In an interview with a German reporter, Blix was quoted as saying that the Bush administration:

... wanted us to omit certain points of our inspections in order to get the Security Council to endorse a resolution for military action. <sup>v</sup>

While it was suspected that the Bush administration put pressure on Blix and his team to provide justification for the plan to invade Iraq, it is worth noting that Blix has confirmed this on the record. Not surprisingly, this is only one of many significant facts that went unreported by the major North American media. Another was the discovery reported by the BBC<sup>vi</sup> that Pte. Jessica Lynch's 'rescue' by US forces had been nothing of the sort. Yet after the exposure of this bit of 'feelgood' PR for the folks back home, *USA Today* continued to repeat the claim of her "rescue" months later in an article on her triumphant return home.<sup>vii</sup>

So Bush now claims to have been "misled" by the CIA about Iraq's efforts to buy uranium from Niger. The *IHT* says that Bush's assertion "...turned out to be based on unreliable intelligence information" (Bush says CIA cleared address, 12-13 July, 2003). This is a nice euphemism. The "information" about Iraq's attempt to buy uranium from Niger turned out to have been forged – including the signature of an official who wasn't even in office at the time<sup>viii</sup>. Furthermore, Chief Deputy Steven Hadley had been warned that the CIA would not stand by the claim that Saddam Hussein was attempting to buy uranium for weapons from Niger (or any of the other three African countries that produce uranium<sup>ix</sup>). The bullshit just gets thicker and thicker. The really scary part is that no-one seems to notice – or care.

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Now we read that the administration has signed contracts with a select number of companies to rebuild Iraq whose payment will be financed by the proceeds from Iraqi oil (which explains why the Bush administration wanted the sanctions lifted). Should we be surprised that the biggest winner in these sweeps is Halliburton: the company controlled by the administration's *éminence grise*: Vice-President Cheney and which, just before the war, was Iraq's largest foreign supplier? According to a letter from the US Army Corps of Engineers, the contract awarded to Halliburton is worth as much as \$7 billion over two years<sup>xi</sup>. The other big winner is Bechtel (a company on which George Schultz: Secretary of State in the Reagan administration is a director). Although NOT the most lucrative of all the "rebuilding" contracts, Bechtel will receive an initial \$34.6 million -- a figure that, according to the *IHT*, is expected to rise to \$680 million over 18 months<sup>xii</sup>. Repeat after me: "This was not all about oil."

In crossbreeding the moral self-righteousness of Poindexter and North with the imperial dreams of Cheney, Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz and Perle, would the offspring not be prepared to let a number of citizens 'take one for the team' in the interests of a 'higher cause' or to achieve the 'greater good'? Had someone predicted it, would we have believed that George H.W. Bush would invade Panama to retain US control over the Panama Canal<sup>xiii</sup>? That the his son of would strip-mine the savings of thousands of Americans held in Savings and Loans?

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- i Warum sind Sie gescheitert, Herr Blix? *Welt am Sonntag*, Tuesday, 8 April 2003
  - ii Atomic agency challenges Bush's key claim against Iraq, *International Herald Tribune*, 11-12 January, 2003  

In its March 03 2003 edition, Newsweek reported that a highly-placed defector, Iraqi weapons chief (and son-in-law to Saddam Hussein) General Hussein Kamel told inspectors for the International Atomic Energy Agency and the UN inspections team that, after the Gulf War, Iraq destroyed all its chemical, biological weapons stocks and the missiles to deliver them. Although denied by the CIA, the complete transcript of Kamel's debriefing was obtained by Glen Rangwala (the same Cambridge University analyst that exposed the Blair government's "intelligence dossier" had been plagiarised from a student's thesis).
  - iii Efforts to show Iraq-Qaeda link cause friction within FBI and CIA, *International Herald Tribune*, 03 February, 2003
  - iv *Vanity Fair*, July 2003
  - v Warum sind Sie gescheitert, Herr Blix? *Welt am Sonntag*, Tuesday, 8 April 2003
  - vi War Spin: The Truth about Jessica, documentary film directed by John Kampfner, 2003
  - vii Lynch, grateful to supporters, returns home, *USA Today*, 23 July, 2003
  - viii The Washington Post, 22 March, 2003
  - ix According to Ambassador Joseph Wilson, former acting Ambassador to Iraq, interviewed by Jon Stewart, the Today Show, 24 July, 2003
  - x Bush says CIA cleared address, *International Herald Tribune*, 12-13 July, 2003
  - xi Questions on Iraq contract, *International Herald Tribune*, 12-13 April, 2003
  - xii US awards rebuilding contract to Bechtel, *International Herald Tribune*, 19-20 April, 2003
  - xiii The Panama Deception 1992 (winner of an Academy Award for Best Feature Documentary)  
The Empowerment Project, Director: Barbara Trent