

[CIA Aircraft Shell Companies; FAA notices 119,000 unregistered aircraft for epic drugflight lols; Afghan drug informant/patsy blamed; Evergreen Dispersant Chemtrails; DEA rents plane from drug traffickers for total win in Fake War on Drugs](#)

Submitted by HongPong on Mon, 2010-12-13 09:03



via [Evergreen B747 Supertanker™ : The World's Fastest, Largest Aerial Firefighting And Multi-Use Application Vehicle](#)

Going back to 2005:[C.I.A. Expanding Terror Battle Under Guise of Charter Flights - New York Times](#)

While posing as a private charter outfit - "aircraft rental with pilot" is the listing in Dun and Bradstreet - Aero Contractors is in fact a major domestic hub of the Central Intelligence Agency's secret air service. The company was founded in 1979 by a legendary C.I.A. officer and chief pilot for Air America, the agency's Vietnam-era air company, and it appears to be controlled by the agency, according to former employees.

Behind a surprisingly thin cover of rural hideaways, front companies and shell corporations that share officers who appear to exist only on paper, the C.I.A. has rapidly expanded its air operations since 2001 as it has pursued and questioned terrorism suspects around the world.

An analysis of thousands of flight records, aircraft registrations and corporate documents, as well as interviews with former C.I.A. officers and pilots, show that the agency owns at least 26 planes, 10 of them purchased since 2001. The agency has concealed its ownership behind a web of seven shell corporations that appear to have no employees and no function apart from owning the aircraft.

The planes, regularly supplemented by private charters, are operated by real companies controlled by or tied to the agency, including Aero Contractors and two Florida companies, Pegasus Technologies and Tepper Aviation.

...[the Masri rendition flight] ... episode illustrates the circumstantial nature of the evidence on C.I.A. flights, which often coincide with the arrest and transporting of Al Qaeda suspects. No public record states how Mr. Masri was taken to Afghanistan. But flight data shows a Boeing Business Jet operated by Aero Contractors and owned by Premier Executive Transport Services, one of the C.I.A.-linked shell companies, flew from Skopje, Macedonia, to Baghdad and on to Kabul on Jan. 24, 2004, the day after Mr. Masri's passport was marked with a Macedonian exit stamp.

Son of Air America: Aero appears to be the direct descendant of Air America, a C.I.A.-operated air "proprietary," as agency-controlled companies are called.

Just three years after the big Asian air company was closed in 1976, one of its chief pilots, Jim Rhyne, was asked to open a new air company, according to a former Aero Contractors employee whose account is supported by corporate records.

.....As the C.I.A. tries to veil such air operations, aviation regulations pose a major obstacle. Planes must have **visible tail numbers, and their ownership can be easily checked by entering the number into the Federal Aviation Administration's online registry. So, rather than purchase aircraft outright, the C.I.A. uses shell companies whose names appear unremarkable in casual checks of F.A.A. registrations.**

On closer examination, however, it becomes clear that those companies appear to have no premises, only post office boxes or addresses in care of lawyers' offices. Their officers and directors, listed in state corporate databases, seem to have been invented. A search of public records for ordinary identifying information about the officers - addresses,

phone numbers, house purchases, and so on - comes up with only post office boxes in Virginia, Maryland and Washington, D.C.

But whoever created the companies used some of the same post office box addresses and the same apparently fictitious officers for two or more of the companies. One of those seeming ghost executives, Philip P. Quincannon, for instance, is listed as an officer of Premier Executive Transport Services and Crowell Aviation Technologies, both listed to the same Massachusetts address, as well as Stevens Express Leasing in Tennessee.

No one by that name can be found in any public record other than post office boxes in Washington and Dunn Loring, Va. Those listings for Mr. Quincannon, in commercial databases, include an anomaly: His Social Security number was issued in Washington between 1993 and 1995, but his birth year is listed as 1949.

Mr. Glerum, the C.I.A. and Air America veteran, said the use of one such name on more than one company was "bad tradecraft: you shouldn't allow an element of one entity to lead to others."

The Fake War On Drugs - exhibit 12245-12831221:



[Propping Up a Drug Lord, Then Arresting Him - NYTimes.com](#)

WASHINGTON — When Hajji Juma Khan was arrested and transported to New York to face charges under a new American narco-terrorism law in 2008, federal prosecutors described him as perhaps the biggest and most dangerous drug lord in Afghanistan, a shadowy figure who had helped keep the Taliban in business with a steady stream of money and weapons.

But what the government did not say was that Mr. Juma Khan was also a longtime American informer, who provided information about the Taliban, Afghan corruption and other drug traffickers. Central Intelligence Agency officers and Drug Enforcement Administration agents relied on him as a valued source for years, even as he was building one of Afghanistan's biggest drug operations after the United States-led invasion of the country, according to current and former American officials. Along the way, he was also paid a large amount of cash by the United States.

Meanwhile the Federal Aviation Administration concedes that its recordkeeping on more than a hundred thousand aircraft is totally hosed. This is amusing because the FAA was from the beginning set up this way to enable the rich and powerful to use small aircraft for protected criminal conspiracies. It has always been trivial for them to use shell companies and various dead-end forms of paperwork magic to hide direct ownership of drug trafficking planes. A state employee spelled a lot of this out for me, as if it were almost common knowledge.

Evergreen, Polar Air Cross, Air America, Civil Air Transport, the Flying Tigers, L3, Titan, Skyway Aircraft, Vortex, these are just a few of the classics from then and now. AIG had tons of aircraft and got its start by insuring drug planes around Asia quite a bit.

Contractors are allowed to import as much drugz as they want, and they are able to routinely use special bypasses inside airports. For example Evergreen was frequently able to get the keys to the 'sterile corridors' at JFK Airport which let them circumvent Customs. These kinds of criminal conspiracies are what the National Security Act of 1947 is all about.

Let's have some lulz:

[The Associated Press: US senator calls for hearings on plane registry](#)

NEW YORK (AP) — The chairman of the Senate subcommittee overseeing aviation said Friday he would recommend holding congressional hearings on aircraft registration after The Associated Press reported the Federal Aviation Administration was missing data on one-third of U.S. planes.

"We need to find out why, and how it can be brought back to have a registry that has credibility," said North Dakota Sen. Byron Dorgan, a Democrat.

The FAA says as many as **119,000 of the 357,000 U.S.-registered aircraft have "questionable registration" due to missing paperwork, invalid addresses and other paperwork problems.**

In reports in 2007 and 2008, **the agency warned that the gaps were causing loopholes that terrorists, drug traffickers and other criminals might exploit. Law enforcement agencies were increasingly turning to the FAA for information, and the registry needed more accuracy as the government launched new computer systems to track suspicious flights, it said.**

On Friday the FAA said it was taking "proactive steps" to clean up the database by requiring all aircraft owners to re-register their planes over the next three years.

"The agency is moving to a mandatory re-registration system like the ones most states use to register automobiles, so we have more current and complete registration information in our database," the agency said.

Dorgan's counterpart in the House of Representatives, Rep. Jerry Costello, D-Ill., said Friday the FAA needs to improve its recordkeeping but stopped short of calling for hearings.

"Given the security issues at stake, revising and modernizing the registration process is necessary," Costello said in a written statement. "The FAA needs to ensure the re-registration process runs as smoothly as possible and that the maintenance of records is improved, and I believe the FAA is proceeding accordingly."

Both congressmen will soon be stepping down from their leadership roles in the aviation committees. Dorgan is retiring in January, and Senate leaders have not yet chosen a new committee chair.

Costello, a Democrat, will lose the post when Republicans take control of the House in January. His likely replacement, Rep. Tom Petri, R-Wis., was unavailable for comment on Friday, a spokeswoman said.

Until now, aircraft owners were only required to register once, when they purchased an aircraft. Errors accumulated over decades as new purchasers forgot to register, owners died, invalid addresses went uncorrected and junked aircraft went unreported, the FAA says.

In addition to law enforcement purposes, the FAA said it uses the database to contact owners about safety problems and locate planes that go missing.

Pilot groups said the outdated registry was not a security risk, noting the United States has other safeguards against terrorism.

The Transportation Security Administration does background checks on student pilots from other countries, air traffic controllers watch for suspicious flights, and the Department of Homeland Security has launched new computer systems to screen aircraft arriving from other countries.

EVERGREEN 0WNZ TEH CHEMTRAIL OPS IN GULF!

Photo of fire suppressant-equipped plane from Evergreen



I got a kick out of a pretty interesting expose about Evergreen, which is a massive CIA cutout corporation created because the Church Commission was flushin' out a lot of covert ops. Evergreen's planes, many C-130s, were supposedly under the control of the US Forest Service for firefighting purposes, hence the tree name metaphor.



Evergreen is still extremely active and gets a lot of contracts. [Evergreen International Aviation, Inc.](#)

During the last 50 years, we've had the privilege of serving throughout the world. We have been dedicated to supporting a diverse customer base with the utmost safety and a dedicated staff of thousands. Thank you to those who have entrusted their business to us. We look forward to serving you in the future.






Looking for hard-to-find aircraft parts?



> Evergreen is a global leader providing quality and reliable total aviation support services

Employee Access | Weight & Balance DL | © Evergreen International Aviation, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Notice to Customers, Suppliers and Contractors (Affirmative Action and Non-Discrimination Obligations)

The website IntelHub.com posted that Evergreen is what else, engaged in spraying nasty chemtrails all over the place. [Evergreen Air and a Secret Chemtrail Facility](#) :

On Feb 18, 2010 NotForSale from the Intel Hub interviewed a whistleblower employed as a private contractor at an Evergreen Air facility. The information he provided was mind blowing. Never before had a whistleblower come forward about this top secret facility located in the Arizona desert north of Tucson. In the interview the whistleblower described how the facility is heavily secured by well armed personnel. During his time at the facility he was involved in retro fitting 727 and 747-c aircraft with liquid discharge tanks and aerosol sprayer devices. He has also confirmed reports of triangular black jets at the facility as well during his time there in the early 1990's. It is also important to note that the facility owns fully functional warbirds that have been fully restored from WWII, where all of the weapon systems and bomb bay doors are operable on the craft. This type of craft is not authorized by civilian, public or private use within the U.S. This would indicate that Evergreen Air is indeed a CIA operation. The Whistleblower has also heard there is an underground base at the facility and confirms there is a possible "Black Helicopter" base on site as well. Note: Evergreen Air also specializes in unmanned aerial drones.

Riki Ott: 'People Now Dropping Dead' In the Gulf : - claimed here Evergreen is spraying dispersants around the Gulf even now. A ton of posts saying Evergreen is involved: [Search Results evergreen](#) :

JFK airport attacker (patsy) worked at Evergreen: 'Plot to blow up New York airport would have made 9/11 look small' - Times Online

It is claimed that Mr Defreitas, 63, a naturalised US citizen born in Guyana, told the informant that he wanted to attack the airport because in the early 1990s he had seen missiles being shipped to Israel while he was working for Evergreen International Aviation.

Great list here: [Known CIA Fronts](#) includes Evergreen.

[SSP SCIENCE TEAM MEETS NASA OFFICIALS AT EVERGREEN AIR CENTER](#)



Nibbles from LewRockwell.com - William Norman Grigg:

"The CIA has always been involved in drug smuggling, and Evergreen or Air America has played a big role in it," Kleiman told me in a recent phone interview. "When I was working Customs at JFK, we had this huge problem with **airline personnel using their secure keys to give unauthorized access to 'sterile corridors' that bypassed Customs inspection.** Quite often this involved drug smuggling, and I've got ample reason to believe that Evergreen and other CIA assets were involved in it."

A few notes from AllSeeingI member @ AboveTopSecret: [Chemtrails Flights Exposed - Evergreen Aviation \(A CIA Front\)](#), page 1

EVERGREEN AVIATION...

Is possibly the largest Aviation and logistics company which is a major front for Government Black Ops. Also possibly the company responsible for the so-called Chemtrails Flights. Read what I have to say....

I have worked in a number of different aviation related jobs at a handful of airports over the past 15 years. I worked for FedEx for a few years as well as had direct contact with Evergreen Aviation and their employees.

The USPS (United States Postal Service) contracts all of the USPS Express mail, airmail, and overnight types of USPS services to FedEx because of the FedEx Express air logistics network which always has connecting overnight aircraft.

Evergreen Aviation is contracted by the USPS to pick-up the USPS shipments from FedEx. Evergreen Aviation then sorts the deliveries and USPS trucks pick-up the sorted deliveries and takes them to the individual post offices.

This system offers the perfect opportunity for a government run package logistics cover operation. Any airport which handles USPS can therefore be used to ship secret government shipments of ANYTHING (weapons, drugs, secret equipment, tech, documents, bombs, use your darkest imagination).

Also because the USPS is operated within the government the situation allows very easy financial back-scratching both ways and makes it easy to cover it up using a combination of methods such as contracts, special accounts, and fake front companies to pay for the shipments. Just imagine how easy it would be for a guy in a suit to show up at a post office in Washington D.C. with a package and ship it overnight via the USPS and pays a huge amount for the service using a front-company government black-budget credit card to pay for it.

At my job with FedEx at two different airports, both times FedEx had this relationship with Evergreen Aviation. They would pick up the containers filled with USPS Express shipments from FedEx once we unloaded our FedEx aircraft. Then later, Evergreen would bring back outbound shipments for us to load on outbound FedEx aircraft.

I noticed a consistency with Evergreen Aviation at both locations: Their equipment and personnel were substandard. But from what I heard they were paid very well and had great benefits. This also sounds like a government operation: Contract work which is over-budgeted overpaid employees, equipment which is poorly maintained, and employees who don't ask questions.

And check it their website even promotes Weather Modification!

Supertanker Services, Inc.

- Why a Supertanker?*
- Why Evergreen?*
- Safety*
- Capabilities*
- Markets*
- FAQs*
- Image Gallery*
- Contact Us*

MARKETS:

- **Firefighting**
- **Oil Spill Containment**
- **Weather Modification**
- **Biochemical Decontamination**

The Evergreen Supertanker is not just limited to fighting fire. It will be a true utilitarian aircraft with the capability to configure to different applications on short notice. This multimission aircraft can support sensitive security and environmental missions. The aircraft's exceptional drop capabilities, loiter time and size make it an ideal tool to perform challenging homeland security missions, able to neutralize chemical attacks on military installations or major population centers, and help control large, environmentally disastrous oil spills.

In addition, the upper deck of the Boeing 747 provides over 200 square feet of space that could be assigned as a command and control center. EIA possesses an FAA exemption number 1870C that permits the carriage of up to five individuals that are not crewmembers in the upper deck. This area is capable of providing space for command and control components that would assist in sophisticated mapping, incident monitoring and video/communications downlink relay that might require additional personnel over and above the required crew.



> Protecting Valuable Resources with an Advanced Multi-Mission Aircraft

© Evergreen International Aviation, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Massive contracts: A bunch of these are clearly not the same Evergreen but it's funny: [Federal Contracts to Contactor\(s\) matching "evergreen", FY 2007, list of contractors](#)

FedSpending.org a project of OMB Watch

home contracts assistance recovery

HOME | ABOUT THE DATA | CONTACT

Contracts to Contractor(s) "evergreen" (FY 2007)

Search Criteria Used (More)

Federal Fiscal Year: 2007 GO

Level of Detail: Low (list of contractors) GO

Output: HTML GO

MAP IT

List of Contractor Parent Companies for FY 2007

You can click on the column headers below to re-sort the search:

Parent Company Name	Contractor Name(s)	Total Amount (for this search)
DAVID J. ANSTETT	EVERGREEN COLLISION CENTER INC	\$47,100
EVERGREEN ADVENTURES INC	EVERGREEN ADVENTURES INC	\$3,416
EVERGREEN AG INCORPORATED	EVERGREEN AG INCORPORATED	\$62,631
EVERGREEN ALASKA INCORPORATED	EVERGREEN ALASKA INCORPORATED	\$0
EVERGREEN APPRAISALS	EVERGREEN APPRAISALS (7344)	\$6,000
EVERGREEN ASSOCIATES	EVERGREEN ASSOCIATES	\$111,106
EVERGREEN AT BOZEMAN L L C	EVERGREEN AT BOZEMAN L L C	\$13,955
EVERGREEN AT BUTTE LIMITED LIA	EVERGREEN AT BUTTE LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY	\$157,749
EVERGREEN AT LIVINGSTON LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY	EVERGREEN AT LIVINGSTON LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY	\$12,413
EVERGREEN AVIATION GROUND LOGISTICS ENTERPRISES INCORPORATED	EVERGREEN AVIATION GROUND LOGISTICS ENTERPRISES INCORPORATED	\$25,000
EVERGREEN AVIONICS INCORPORATED	EVERGREEN AVIONICS INCORPORATED	\$20,120
EVERGREEN BUSINESS CENTER INVESTMENTS LLC	EVERGREEN BUSINESS CENTER INVESTMENTS LLC	\$228,437
EVERGREEN BUSINESS GROUP INCORPORATED	EVERGREEN BUSINESS GROUP INCORPORATED	\$19,008
EVERGREEN COMMONS SENIOR CENTER INCORPORATED	EVERGREEN COMMONS SENIOR CENTER INCORPORATED	\$61,673
EVERGREEN COMMUNICATIONS	EVER GREEN COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES INCORPORATED	\$26,071
EVERGREEN CONSTRUCTION	EVERGREEN CONSTRUCTION	\$6,750
EVERGREEN CONSULTING INCORPORATED	EVERGREEN CONSULTING INCORPORATED	\$679,243
EVERGREEN COUNTRY SHOPPER INCORPORATED	EVERGREEN COUNTRY SHOPPER INCORPORATED	\$796
EVERGREEN DESIGN	EVERGREEN DESIGN	\$30,265
EVERGREEN DISPOSAL INCORPORATED	EVERGREEN DISPOSAL INCORPORATED	\$62,374
EVERGREEN ENVIRONMENTAL INC	EVERGREEN ENVIRONMENTAL INCORPORATED	\$22,871
EVERGREEN ESTATES MHP	PRESTWICK INVESTMENTS; EVERGREEN ESTATES MHP	\$87,410
EVERGREEN EXTERIOR SERVICES	EVERGREEN EXTERIOR SERVICES	\$3,253
EVERGREEN FIRE ALARMS, LLC	EVERGREEN FIRE ALARMS, LLC; EVERGREEN FIRE ALARMS LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY	\$3,517,632
EVERGREEN FLYING SERVICES INC	EVERGREEN FLYING SERVICE INCORPORATED	\$2,131,025
EVERGREEN FORESTRY SERVICES	EVERGREEN FORESTRY SERVICES	\$7,045
EVERGREEN GREASE SERVICE INCORPORATED	EVERGREEN GREASE SERVICE INCORPORATED	\$540
EVERGREEN GROUP INC	THE EVERGREEN GROUP INCORPORATED	\$13,559
EVERGREEN HEALTHCARE	EVERGREEN HEALTHCARE	\$19,971
EVERGREEN HEALTHCARE MANAGEMENT LLC	EVERGREEN HEALTHCARE INCORPORATED (0000); EVERGREEN HEALTHCARE MANAGEMENT LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY; EVERGREEN HEALTHCARE INC	\$544,428
EVERGREEN HOLDINGS INCORPORATED / CONTACTS METALS AND WELDING INCORPORATED	CONTACTS METALS AND WELDING INCORPORATED	\$242,970
EVERGREEN I ASSOCIATES, LLC	EVERGREEN I ASSOCIATES, LLC	\$254,721
EVERGREEN IMPLEMENT INCORPORATED	EVERGREEN IMPLEMENT INCORPORATED	\$10,904
EVERGREEN INDUSTRIES INC	EVERGREEN INDUSTRIES INCORPORATED	\$29,476
EVERGREEN INTL AVIATION, INC.	EVERGREEN HELICOPTERS OF ALASKA INCORPORATED; EVERGREEN HELICOPTERS INCORPORATED; EVERGREEN HELICOPTERS INTERNATIONAL INCORPORATED; EVERGREEN HELICOPTERS OF ALASKA; EVERGREEN AIRCRAFT SALES AND LEASING	\$21,434,431

The contracts database is compiled from government data last released on 05/28/2009

OMB WATCH

A moment for the Mad Cow Productions:

We can't touch this topic without referencing MadCowProd.com and Daniel Hopsicker, who was all up in the business with schemes like the massive Wachovia/Wells Fargo giga-moneylaundering conspiracies for years. Hopsicker has had to spend a lot of time on Venice, Florida, from whence the 9/11 flight trainer conspiracy and various other weird things have emerged. Supporting Hopsicker is worthwhile because as he sez: "Today's Drug Lords don't look like Tony Montana in "Scarface," but preppy Yale and Harvard-educated scions of America's traditional political elite, which in point of fact is what that they are."

Latest: [Chairman Chavez, Oliver North & "co-conspirators not named as defendants"](#)

[From Tampa Bay to Timbuktu](#)

[New DEA Chief Tough on Chavez, Soft on American DrugLords](#)

[GOTCHA! 9/11 Heroin Pilot's 10-year Crime Spree Stopped](#)

The Brassington Files Teterboro Crash Trial Coverup

9/11 Drug Pilot Linked to Operation Blue Lightning

Pilot for 9/11 flight school considered "grave threat to national security"

Charter Company Ran Second Jet Off Runway

Arrested Pilot Flew Jets Owned by Clinton White House Official

CIA Drug Pilot Linked to Russian Mob

Pilot in New Jersey Crash Is Key Figure in Caribbean Probe

Dusty & 'the boys' - The CIA, the Narco-Republicans, & 5.5 tons of cocaine

etc etc.

Phoenix Air has its own shadyPlanez:



PostScript: Tulsa has Epic DrugWar Corruption Explosion! Drugs, money, police, informants. Scandal in Tulsa. - Drug WarRant // Scandal Roils Tulsa Police - WSJ.com including fake informants!

For Moar: cryptogon.com excellent early writeup, [FAA Loses Track of 119,000 Aircraft](http://www.faa.gov); [Situation Could Facilitate Terrorism and Drug Trafficking](http://www.foxnews.com).

.... **more random bits** - Via IntelHub, a researcher into rad energy systems had a creepy-as-hell VeriChip and tumor removed. Good luck Bob Boyce!!!! [Bob Boyce's un-requested Verichip and associated tumor removed](http://www.foxnews.com). SICK!

UPDATE 12/16: Consider [Cryptome.info](http://cryptome.info) featuring the Aero operations: <http://cryptome.info/cia-plane-nc.htm>

Also this has some moar shells listed: <http://www.wikiwatch.info/us-war/rendition/Shell-companies/>

- [aviation](#)
- [CIA](#)
- [Colombia](#)
- [Conspiratoria](#)
- [covert ops](#)
- [deep politics](#)
- [Drugs](#)
- [evidence](#)
- [heroin](#)

- [Iran-Contra](#)
- [opium](#)
- [Pentagon](#)
- [war](#)
- [War on Drugs](#)
- [War on Terror](#)
- [18 comments](#)

UN crime chief Costa says it again: banks bailed out by now "laundered" drug money

Submitted by HongPong on Mon, 2009-12-14 00:39

There was a quip about this a while ago, now it is more established. Posted in full cause it's a big deal.... [via Agonist](#) .

These people are criminals!

Drug money saved banks in global crisis, claims UN advisor

Drugs and crime chief says \$352bn in criminal proceeds was effectively laundered by financial institutions

- [The Observer](#), Sunday 13 December 2009

Drugs money worth billions of dollars kept the financial system afloat at the height of the global crisis, the [United Nations'](#) drugs and crime tsar has told the *Observer*.

Antonio Maria Costa, head of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, said he has seen evidence that the proceeds of organised crime were "the only liquid investment capital" available to some banks on the brink of collapse last year. **He said that a majority of the \$352bn (£216bn) of drugs profits was absorbed into the economic system as a result.**

This will raise questions about crime's influence on the economic system at times of crisis. It will also prompt further examination of the banking sector as world leaders, including Barack Obama and Gordon Brown, call for new International Monetary Fund regulations. Speaking from his office in Vienna, Costa said evidence that illegal money was being absorbed into the financial system was first drawn to his attention by intelligence agencies and prosecutors around 18 months ago. **"In many instances, the money from drugs was the only liquid investment capital. In the second half of 2008, liquidity was the banking system's main problem and hence liquid capital became an important factor," he said.**

Some of the evidence put before his office indicated that gang money was used to save some banks from collapse when lending seized up, he said.

"Inter-bank loans were funded by money that originated from the [drugs trade](#) and other illegal activities... There were signs that some banks were rescued that way." Costa declined to identify countries or banks that may have received any drugs money, saying that would be **inappropriate because his office is supposed to address the problem, not apportion blame. But he said *the money is now a part of the official system and had been effectively laundered.***

"That was the moment [last year] when the system was basically paralysed because of the unwillingness of banks to lend money to one another. The progressive liquidisation to the system and the progressive improvement by some banks of their share values [has meant that] the problem [of illegal money] has become much less serious than it was," he said.

The IMF estimated that large US and European banks lost more than \$1tn on toxic assets and from bad loans from January 2007 to September 2009 and more than 200 mortgage lenders went bankrupt. Many major institutions either failed, were acquired under duress, or were subject to government takeover.

Gangs are now believed to make most of their profits from the drugs trade and are estimated to be worth £352bn, the UN says. They have traditionally kept proceeds in cash or moved it offshore to hide it from the authorities. **It is understood that evidence that drug money has flowed into banks came from officials in Britain, Switzerland, Italy and the US.**

British bankers would want to see any evidence that Costa has to back his claims. A British Bankers' Association spokesman said: "We have not been party to any regulatory dialogue that would support a theory of this kind. There was clearly a lack of liquidity in the system and to a large degree this was filled by the intervention of central banks."

Thanks Costa!!

- [Afghanistan](#)
- [analysis](#)
- [cocaine](#)
- [Conspiratoria](#)
- [covert ops](#)
- [crime](#)
- [deep politics](#)
- [dirty old men](#)
- [Drugs](#)
- [Economics](#)
- [evidence](#)
- [Federal Reserve System](#)
- [heroin](#)
- [opium](#)

- [Public Relations](#)
 - [secrecy](#)
 - [Suspicious Activities](#)
 - [The Establishment](#)
 - [The Vortex](#)
 - [war](#)
 - [War on Drugs](#)
 - [War on Terror](#)
 - [whistleblower](#)
 - [WTF](#)
-
- [5 comments](#)

[A time for truth: New York Times reports Brother Karzai is taking CIA money & movin teh drugz as DEA agents die senselessly](#)

Submitted by HongPong on Wed, 2009-10-28 01:37

I was a bit surprised to see the *New York Times* report this evening that embattled Afghan President Hamid Karzai's brother has been taking mad CIA cash for some time. [Or rather, the three journalists who did the story are oddly emphasized, 'compartmentalized' on this risky exposure.]

Earlier [William Engdahl described the need for opium money to keep Wall Street liquidity flowing](#):

One of the most remarkable aspects of the Obama Presidential agenda is how little anyone has questioned in the media or elsewhere why at all the United States Pentagon is committed to a military occupation of Afghanistan. There are two basic reasons, neither one of which can be admitted openly to the public at large.

Behind all the deceptive official debate over how many troops are needed to "win" the war in Afghanistan, whether another 30,000 is sufficient, or whether at least 200,000 are needed, the real purpose of US military presence in that pivotal Central Asian country is obscured.

Even during the 2008 Presidential campaign candidate Obama argued that Afghanistan not Iraq was where the US must wage war. His reason? Because he claimed, that was where the Al Qaeda organization was holed up and that was the "real" threat to US national security. The reasons behind US involvement in Afghanistan is quite another one. The US military is in Afghanistan for two reasons. First to restore and control the world's largest supply of opium for the world heroin markets and to use the drugs as a geopolitical weapon against opponents, especially Russia. **That control of the Afghan drug market is essential for the liquidity of the bankrupt and corrupt Wall Street financial mafia.**

Sadly a bunch of DEA agents also got killed in some helicopter incident/accident, having arrived to perform some sort of political control upon the local opiate-oriented economy. [Their deaths](#) are yet another travesty from this terrible situation -- and we can only hope it will soon draw to a close.

DEA Identifies Special Agent Casualties OCT 27-- WASHINGTON, DC-- It is with great sadness that the Drug Enforcement Administration announces the deaths of three Special Agents who were supporting counternarcotics operations in Afghanistan.

The following Special Agents died on Oct. 26:

Special Agent Chad L. Michael, 30, of Quantico, VA.

Special Agent Forrest N. Leamon, 37, of Woodbridge, VA.

Special Agent Michael E. Weston, 37, of Washington, D.C.

Special Agents Leamon and Michael were members of DEA's FAST (Foreign-deployed Advisory and Support Teams); and Special Agent Weston was assigned to DEA's Kabul Country Office.

People with integrity are bailing out of the bullshit fest going down in Afghanistan.

[Wikileaks did everyone a favor by exposing the official "strategic communications" NATO agenda in Afghanistan -- this being the 'Powerpoint centric' root of the whole spinstorm:](#)

The encrypted document, which is dated October 6, and believed to be current, can be found on the Pentagon Central Command (CENTCOM) website oneteam.centcom.mil. [UPDATE: Fri Feb 27 15:18:38 GMT 2009, the entire Pentagon site is now down--probably in response to this editorial, parts of the site can still be seen in [Google's cache](#)]

The encryption password is *progress*, which perhaps reflects the Pentagon's desire to stay on-message, even to itself.

Among the revelations, which we encourage the press to review in detail, is Jordan's presence as secret member of the US lead occupation force, the ISAF.

Jordan is a middle eastern monarchy, backed by the US, and historically the CIA's closest partner in its extraordinary rendition program. "the practice of torture is routine" in the country, according to a January 2007 report by UN special investigator for torture, Manfred Nowak.^[1]

The document states NATO spokespersons are to keep Jordan's involvement secret. Publicly, Jordan withdrew in 2001 and the country does not appear on this month's public list of ISAF member states.^[2]

Some other notes on matters to treat delicately are:

- Any decision on the end date/end state will be taken by the respective national and/or Alliance political committee. Under no circumstances should the mission end-date be a topic for speculation in public by any NATO/ISAF spokespeople.
- The term "compensation" is inappropriate and should not be used because it brings with it legal implications that do not apply.
- Any talk of stationing or deploying Russian military assets in Afghanistan is out of the question and has never been the subject of any considerations.
- Only if pressed: ISAF forces are frequently fired at from inside Pakistan, very close to the border. In some cases defensive fire is required, against specific threats. Wherever possible, such fire is pre-coordinated with the Pakistani military.

Altogether four classified or restricted NATO documents on the Pentagon Central Command (CENTCOM) site were discovered to share the 'progress' password. Wikileaks has decrypted the documents and released them in full:

- [NATO Media Operations Centre: NATO in Afghanistan: Master Narrative, 6 Oct 2008](#)
- [ISAF Afghanistan Theatre Strategic Communications Strategy, 25 Oct 2008](#)
- [NATO-ISAF Afghanistan Strategic Communications External Linkages, 20 Oct 2008](#)
- [NATO-ISAF Strategic Communications Ends, Ways and Means, slide, 20 Oct 2008](#)

[There was a DOD one too.] Glenn Greenwald reflects on the [resignation of Matthew Hoh](#), who seems basically like a tough sumbitch who's had enough of bullshitting politicians and these pot smoking hippies too, [as he told WaPo](#).

Digby is all over this stuff:

It seems that our two abstract, endless Orwellian wars --- the War on Drugs and the War on Terror --- have officially merged. And the complications stemming from that decision are going to be immense. What are we fighting for again?

[McClatchy posted the abuse of DEA agents made pawns in this lethal criminal farce:](#)

As the Obama administration ramps up the Drug Enforcement Administration's presence in Afghanistan, some special-agent pilots contend that they're being illegally forced to go to a combat zone, while others who've volunteered say they're not being properly equipped.

In interviews with McClatchy, more than a dozen DEA agents describe a badly managed system in which some pilots have been sent to Afghanistan under duress or as punishment for bucking their superiors.

Such complaints, so far mostly arising from the DEA's Aviation Division, could complicate the Obama administration's efforts to send dozens of additional DEA agents to Afghanistan as part of a civilian and military personnel "surge" that aims to stabilize the country.

And now the big obscenity! [NYTimes: Brother of Afghan Leader Is Said to Be on C.I.A. Payroll](#)

This article is by Dexter Filkins, Mark Mazzetti and James Risen.

KABUL, Afghanistan — Ahmed Wali Karzai, the brother of the Afghan president and a suspected player in the country's booming illegal opium trade, gets regular payments from the Central Intelligence Agency, and has for much of the past eight years, according to current and former American officials.

The agency pays Mr. Karzai for a variety of services, including helping to recruit an Afghan paramilitary force that operates at the C.I.A.'s direction in and around the southern city of Kandahar, Mr. Karzai's home.

The financial ties and close working relationship between the intelligence agency and Mr. Karzai raise significant questions about America's war strategy, which is currently under review at the White House.

[.....]A C.I.A. spokesman declined to comment for this article.

"No intelligence organization worth the name would ever entertain these kind of allegations," said Paul Gimigliano, the spokesman. [Adding LOLLOL]

Now, with more American lives on the line, the relationship with Mr. Karzai is setting off anger and frustration among American military officers and other officials in the Obama administration. They say that Mr. Karzai's suspected role in the drug trade, as well as what they describe as the mafialike way that he lords over southern Afghanistan, makes him a malevolent force.

These military and political officials say the evidence, though largely circumstantial, suggests strongly that Mr. Karzai has enriched himself by helping the illegal trade in poppy and opium to flourish. The assessment of these military and senior officials in the Obama administration dovetails with that of senior officials in the Bush administration.

"Hundreds of millions of dollars in drug money are flowing through the southern region, and nothing happens in southern Afghanistan without the regional leadership knowing about it," a senior American military officer in Kabul

said. Like most of the officials in this article, he spoke on the condition of anonymity because of the secrecy of the information.

....A former C.I.A. officer with experience in Afghanistan said the agency relied heavily on Ahmed Wali Karzai, and **often based covert operatives at compounds he owned**. Any connections Mr. Karzai might have had to the drug trade mattered little to C.I.A. officers focused on counterterrorism missions, the officer said.

"Virtually every significant Afghan figure has had brushes with the drug trade," he said. "If you are looking for Mother Teresa, she doesn't live in Afghanistan."

The debate over Ahmed Wali Karzai, which began when President Obama took office in January, intensified in June, when the C.I.A.'s local paramilitary group, the Kandahar Strike Force, shot and killed Kandahar's provincial police chief, Matiullah Qati, in a still-unexplained shootout at the office of a local prosecutor.

Senior Afghan investigators say they know plenty about Mr. Karzai's involvement in the drug business. In an interview in Kabul this year, a top former Afghan Interior Ministry official familiar with Afghan counternarcotics operations said that a major source of Mr. Karzai's influence over the drug trade was his control over key bridges crossing the Helmand River on the route between the opium growing regions of Helmand Province and Kandahar.

The former Interior Ministry official said that Mr. Karzai was able to charge huge fees to drug traffickers to allow their drug-laden trucks to cross the bridges.

But the former officials said it was impossible for Afghan counternarcotics officials to investigate Mr. Karzai. "This government has become a factory for the production of Talibs because of corruption and injustice," the former official said.

Some American counternarcotics officials have said they believe that Mr. Karzai has **expanded his influence over the drug trade, thanks in part to American efforts to single out other drug lords**.

In debriefing notes from Drug Enforcement Administration interviews in 2006 of Afghan informants obtained by The New York Times, one key informant said that Ahmed Wali Karzai had benefited from the American operation that lured Hajji Bashir Noorzai, a major Afghan drug lord during the time that the Taliban ruled Afghanistan, to New York in 2005. Mr. Noorzai was convicted on drug and conspiracy charges in New York in 2008, and was sentenced to life in prison this year.

Habibullah Jan, a local military commander and later a member of Parliament from Kandahar, told the D.E.A. in 2006 that Mr. Karzai had teamed with Haji Juma Khan to take over a portion of the Noorzai drug business after Mr. Noorzai's arrest.

[How many hundreds of millions of dollars in drug money are moving through the southern region of Manhattan?!]

It certainly appears on the surface that the death of these three DEA agents flushed the CIA hypocrisy on the "war on rival drug traffickers" to the surface!

My condolences to everyone involved in this tragedy. Best of luck to all of you....

- [Afghanistan](#)
- [CIA](#)
- [deep politics](#)
- [dirty old men](#)
- [Drugs](#)
- [espionage](#)
- [Geo](#)

- [heroin](#)
- [Karzai](#)
- [opium](#)
- [Pashtuns](#)
- [Russia](#)
- [Taliban](#)

[Afghanistan UN elections approval unit breaks up under fraud pressure;](#) **[Gold explodes as foreign banks start pacing back from the dollar!](#)**

Submitted by HongPong on Tue, 2009-10-06 19:12

Gold busted up and out of the old confines as good ol' snarly British antiwar journalist Robert Fisk broke the big news: the Petrodollar cycling system is finally going off the rails as the world's central bankers start digging for a new solution. [This Petrodollar system was the big achievement of the Bush-Kissinger-era big players, they just can't cook stuff up that good anymore. Sorry guys...]

These people are in no mood for all their oil dollars to get devalued by the inflation disaster cooking in the Federal Reserve System, so why not make a new basket currency?! I kind of thought that the "COMEX paper gold" racket would unravel before Petrodollars. Shows what I know :-P

[The demise of the dollar](#)

In a graphic illustration of the new world order, Arab states have launched secret moves with China, Russia and France to stop using the US currency for oil trading

In the most profound financial change in recent Middle East history, Gulf Arabs are planning – along with China, Russia, Japan and France – to end dollar dealings for oil, moving instead to a basket of currencies including the Japanese yen and Chinese yuan, the euro, gold and a new, unified currency planned for nations in the Gulf Cooperation Council, including Saudi Arabia, Abu Dhabi, Kuwait and Qatar.

Secret meetings have already been held by finance ministers and central bank governors in Russia, China, Japan and Brazil to work on the scheme, which will mean that oil will no longer be priced in dollars.

The plans, confirmed to The Independent by both Gulf Arab and Chinese banking sources in Hong Kong, may help to explain the sudden rise in gold prices, but it also augurs an extraordinary transition from dollar markets within nine years.

.....The Chinese believe, for example, that the Americans persuaded Britain to stay out of the euro in order to prevent an earlier move away from the dollar. But Chinese banking sources say their discussions have gone too far to be blocked now. "The Russians will eventually bring in the rouble to the basket of currencies," a prominent Hong Kong broker told The Independent. "The Brits are stuck in the middle and will come into the euro. They have no choice because they won't be able to use the US dollar."

Chinese financial sources believe President Barack Obama is too busy fixing the US economy to concentrate on the extraordinary implications of the transition from the dollar in nine years' time. The current deadline for the currency transition is 2018.

The US discussed the trend briefly at the G20 summit in Pittsburgh; the Chinese Central Bank governor and other officials have been worrying aloud about the dollar for years. Their problem is that much of their national wealth is tied up in dollar assets.

"These plans will change the face of international financial transactions," one Chinese banker said. "America and Britain must be very worried. You will know how worried by the thunder of denials this news will generate."

Iran announced late last month that its foreign currency reserves would henceforth be held in euros rather than dollars. Bankers remember, of course, what happened to the last Middle East oil producer to sell its oil in euros rather than dollars. A few months after Saddam Hussein trumpeted his decision, the Americans and British invaded Iraq.

[Reuters covers the shockwave of fallout over this report](#), which left [gold prices spiking up and out](#) of previous containers.

Meanwhile in Afghanistan the UN Mission is breaking up & having mass epic fail resignations over the failure of a massive election fraud coverup, which was necessary to continue the fiction of Hamid Karzai's 'widespread popularity.' So sad! No, really, though, a lot of people have died to bring things to where they are today -- now the 'State,' such as it was, is further hobbled & ready to be displaced by the Islamic Sharia structure & local ethnic warlords that has only gotten stronger in the region since 1979.

[If the U.S. banking system loses its grip on the opium money, another nail in the coffin there as well.]

[UK Times:](#)

The head of the UN mission in Afghanistan has been accused by his former deputy of ordering a

In an attack on the role of the UN in the elections on August 20, Peter Galbraith, who was sacked as Deputy Special Representative to the UN mission in Kabul last week, says that Kai Eide ordered him not to reveal evidence of fraud or to pass it to the authorities.

As a result, he said, the elections had handed the Taliban "its greatest strategic victory in eight years of fighting the United States and its Afghan partners".

He says that the UN collected evidence that a third of Mr Karzai's votes were fraudulent. If the claim was found to be true it would push Mr Karzai below the 54 per cent that the preliminary election results give him, necessitating a second round of voting.

Another note -- the radically fuzzy nature of Federal law, which can [let people get prosecuted for truly nasty and open-ended reasons](#). US Attorneys have so many options, their whole layer of the law enforcement system needs further examination...

All credits on these links to Cryptogon.com, which is terrific for all matters along these lines.

- [Afghanistan](#)
 - [analysis](#)
 - [China](#)
 - [Federal Reserve System](#)
 - [Geo](#)
 - [heroin](#)
 - [International Politics](#)
 - [opium](#)
 - [Russia](#)
 - [Taliban](#)
 - [Tracking election irregularities](#)
-
- [1 comment](#)

[New Frontiers of Social Control incl. killa robots, ECHELON, new FBI 9/11 timeline, USAID for Bolivian separatists & more!](#)

Submitted by HongPong on Wed, 2009-05-27 09:45

[New Frontiers of Social Control incl. killa robots, ECHELON, new FBI 9/11 timeline, USAID for Bolivian separatists, drugging students for the Cube & more!](#)

It just never gets old... [Smedley Butler War is a Racket. \(online in full here\)](#)

"I spent 33 years and four months in active military service and during that period I spent most of my time as a high class muscle man for Big Business, for Wall Street and the bankers. In short, I was a racketeer, a gangster for capitalism. I helped make Mexico and especially Tampico safe for American oil interests in 1914. I helped make Haiti and Cuba a decent place for the National City Bank boys to collect revenues in. I helped in the raping of half a dozen Central American republics for the benefit of Wall Street.

I helped purify Nicaragua for the International Banking House of Brown Brothers in 1902-1912. I brought light to the Dominican Republic for the American sugar interests in 1916. I helped make Honduras right for the American fruit companies in 1903. In China in 1927 I helped see to it that Standard Oil went on its way unmolested. Looking back on it, I might have given Al Capone a few hints. The best he could do was to operate his racket in three districts. I operated on three continents."

First up: Defender O Freedom Nathan Hansen finds the secret DNA stash run by the state of Minnesota. [Globalism and Pandemics: The International Monetary Fund, World Bank, WHO, et al vs. Individuals and the Sovereignty of Nations.](#)

The mechanics of the UK-USA/ECHELON international eavesdropping apparatus got laid out here in the [Nicky Hager](#) book *Secret Power*, now available as [PDF](#). YUMZ! (h/t as always [Cryptogon.com](#))

WIN - another great moment for hierarchies, and authority as well! [UN wants 'flood of drugs' in Afghanistan to devalue opium | guardian.co.uk](#) Splendid! Bravo nascent global government & information warriors... meanwhile [Tpaw kills MJ](#).

New Bolivian synthetic Contra-style movement underway. USAID Win!! [Bolivia Rising: Newly declassified documents reveal More than \\$97 million from USAID to separatist projects in Bolivia. *We can has Evidence Filez PDF NOMS Index /2008-USAID!*](#) Anyone who can guess how they'll pay for this can roll up the \$20 and put it up the schnoz :-D [...these pawn separatists have been popular in the Andean / Condor region & its transnational rightwing paramilitary apparatus, or whatever you want to call it. See also earlier [Venezuela Declares Solidarity with Bolivia's Government in Face of Separatist Effort](#).

Killa Robots as promised: PW Singer spooky in precise outlines of prerequisite for Rise of the Machines scenario. [Gizmodo - Why the Terminator Uprising \(Probably\) Won't Ever Happen - terminator](#). Meanwhile also [Google's Creepy New Algorithm Knows If You're Going to Quit Your Job Before You Do](#).

The Police State Gravy Train Continues! Tom Burghardt does it again! [Democracy Going Dark: The Electronic Police State:](#)

The Federal Bureau of Investigation's budget request for Fiscal Year 2010 reveals that America's political police intend to greatly expand their high-tech surveillance capabilities.

According to ABC News, the FBI is seeking additional funds for the development of "a new 'Advanced Electronic Surveillance' program which is being funded at \$233.9 million for 2010. The program has 133 employees, 15 of whom are agents."

Known as "Going Dark," the program is designed to beef up the Bureau's already formidable electronic surveillance, intelligence collection and evidence gathering capabilities "as well as those of the greater Intelligence Community," ABC reports....

[See also [America's growing surveillance state | guardian.co.uk](#)]



Boring Yet Serpentine PR Stunts in Lebanese Election: Meanwhile in Lebanon, the perpetually dumb propaganda battle over "*who blew up Rafik Hariri?!©*" took a funny turn as the German magazine *Der Spiegel* announced a bunch of draft papers floating around the almighty UN truthfinding committee, the Mehlis Commission, proved that Hezbollah blew up Hariri.

[More Israeli spies surface in Lebanon - UPI](#). Hezbollah accused Der Spiegel of being dumb & conspiring with a cheesy Mossad PR stunt, which it does appear to be. Sheikh Nasrallah, who has been playing things pretty carefully lately, said " [Hezbollah accuses German magazine of conspiring with Israel - CNN](#):"

"It is all about the timing; the Israelis and Americans are talking about their worries of these elections. So what can they do? Here, they have Der Spiegel ready," he said. ... later: "The danger here is not in the timing but in the strategy. When Hariri was assassinated, they wanted to first accuse the Shiites of the crimes. Now they are accusing Hezbollah. They are telling the Sunnis that whether you like Hariri or not, Hezbollah is the one who killed your leader. Your revenge is with them, your war is with them, so go and fight them. They are your new enemies."

Lebanese elections are really interesting - there is some convoluted ethnic/religious power sharing deal in their Parliament. And furthermore I don't know if anyone gets why the Hariri blame is such a big deal - people get blown up all the time, it's obvious the only prize is some propoganda mileage. **BORING!** [More interesting is the secret US Lebanese airbase construction agenda...]

Suspicious false flag incident scheduled for May 31 border operation etc. [More AFP](#) May 18:"If Israel plans on pulling anything during the manoeuvres (May 31 to June 4), we're sending it a message that we stand ready and they will fail," he added. "We will not bury our heads in the sand."

Shady Business in FBI-sponsored NYC fake synagogue bomber thing: [Informant offered liver transplant for Bronx terror suspect's brother, sez mom](#). One sad layer after another in this FBI sham. Weak sauce. This lets [Dick Morris claim that domestic terror is real!!](#) What a shame. [FBI Lured "Jihadis" with Piles of Cash, Gifts, Weed](#). Ah yes, the vaunted FBI False Flag Stoner Bomber gig -- how the fuck do you put that on your resume?

Really Uber Awesome FBI 9/11 timeline gets out via FOIA, proving hijackers kicked it with a Saudi "aviation support contractor". This was really good stuff. The FBI put together some big 9/11 Timeline that the 9/11 Commission thought was just fantastic (their report has dozens of footnotes to it) yet until now, the timeline hadn't been released.

[ATS Forum: FBI documents contradict 9/11 Commission report](#). It's a solid 300 pages and includes the nifty bits about how two of the 9/11 hijackers met up right away with some weird Saudi dude (rather than 2 weeks later as the Commission claimed). This of course proves yet again the obvious angle that **foriegn intelligence ties were all over 9/11. SHhh!**

[Full story here](#). The FBI Report! [Part 1](#) // [Part 2](#) // [Part 3](#) . 9/11 Commission Panel member [John Lehman said Karl Rove was filtering all the presidential documentation](#). Good times.

Social control and drugs for the boys: Ritalin and the Cubicle-directed education system: NYT WIN! [The Case for Working With Your Hands - NYTimes.com](#)

A gifted young person who chooses to become a mechanic rather than to accumulate academic credentials is viewed as eccentric, if not self-destructive. There is a pervasive anxiety among parents that there is only one track to success for their children. **It runs through a series of gates controlled by prestigious institutions. Further, there is wide use of drugs to medicate boys, especially, against their natural tendency toward action, the better to "keep things on track."** I taught briefly in a public high school and would have loved to have set up a Ritalin fogger in my classroom. It is a rare person, male or female, who is naturally inclined to sit still for 17 years in school, and then indefinitely at work.

What a great graf. Way to go Matthew Crawford.

Misc Jumble & Techs: [Red Bull is full of cocaine traces](#). I didn't like some of this crazy article (icky Zionist paranoia etc) but it is about [FBI informants & their widespread use by Chris Bollyn](#). Meanwhile mysterious: [Occult Symbols in Corporate Logos](#) « [Dprogram.net](#). Funny roundup from [Big Dan's Big Blog](#). haha!

[Mashable: Top 10 Social Media Stories You Missed this Weekend](#) More techtips: [Hashtags 101: How-To Use hashtags](#). I never saw [Lunch.com](#) before. It is some collaborative thing.

[How digging up expense reports led a journalist to clobber British govt - Boing Boing](#). Also this was interesting b/c I haven't yet looked @ the [WetPaint](#) collaborative service: [Twittering in the trenches - Computers, Freedom, and Privacy](#)

Can't knock it: [UNDERNEWS: A SHORT HISTORY OF CIA LIES TO CONGRESS](#) // Chucklz from my friendly associate Mr Deeran: [Dealing with Conspiracy Theorists | BNET](#) which led to these laff hit pieces straight from the Feds: [Rumors, Myths, and Fabrications | A Guide to What Isn't True](#) » [Structure of Conspiracy Theories - Engaging the World - America.gov](#)

Localz: [MN Stories: Stencil mural thing](#). **More art:** [Finger Painting: New Yorker Blog](#). How [Technicolor and Color spaces work](#).

Lulz: Right wing guy [can't figure out to tame feral cat family](#). Feed them ALL out the back door dude. Jeesh. I wanted to send him an email for the sake of the poor kittens but the damn site is useless. Patriarchy/authoritarianism nexus is strong with this one.

- [9-11](#)
- [Afghanistan](#)
- [analysis](#)
- [Data Mining](#)
- [deep politics](#)
- [Drugs](#)
- [espionage](#)
- [Israel-Palestine](#)
- [opium](#)
- [Rise of the Machines](#)
- [Total Information Awareness](#)

[The late great Robert Nichols, a \\$250 billion Treasury Note, the Octopus Wiki \(all your Iran-Contra/PROMIS style tiebacks\) and Main Core, to boot](#)

Submitted by HongPong on Wed, 2009-05-13 08:31

In a popular culture that has gotten more sympathetic to conspiracies, things that nagged at us out on the shady Internets have been shot into the mainstream in a weird way lately - it seems people like Glenn Beck and Michele Bachmann are "gatekeeping" around very weird stories -- they inject a bunch of crazy spin to some very strange, but real, facts, leaving a messy ideological wreckage behind, leaving existing small Internet communities of thoughtful observers dazed and confused...

(the leading recent example here would be how Alex Jones tried to raise alarm about the "FEMA Camp" federal paperwork and policies out there, and Bachmann and Beck parachuted in and made it all seem crazy, which caused the documentation-driven alarm from Jones to get totally overrun with nonsense. Not that Jones' analytic framework is necessarily good all the time - but in this case it was substantive).

But *no one like Beck or Bachmann will stir up the loose change left behind by Danny Casolaro or the Octopus. You can bet on it.*

One of the great figures in the whole Iran-Contra/BCCI/Savings&Loan scandal complex mix was Danny Casolaro, a journalist who got into what he called the Octopus. Casolaro was abruptly murdered by someone like Oliver North's henchmen, or something roughly along those lines.

A new Octopus tentacle, which happens to match pretty well with an old one, washed up dead in Switzerland. Robert Nichols' name goes right back through everything, and it matches nicely the latest turn -- sadly, he turned up dead in February. From there, it gets into the Original Big Murky Ink Cloud.

One angle to this whole thing is that corrupt and powerful people can sometimes obtain really awesome letters of credit from government entities, and stash them away. The notes can then be used to build new financial instruments and complex frauds - Al Martin's book *The Conspirators* (almartinraw.com) had a bunch of stuff about the Bush family doing this in the 1980s.

So it made a very certain sense to me when I caught this story - off a site that seems to be run by Casolaro's daughter (or someone else whose parent was murdered in the broader Iran Contra/Octopus mix). Haters of the Federal Reserve, check it out!

[\\$250 Billion Treasury Note Cloaked in Mystery – Evades Public Scrutiny | Desertfae](#)

It all started with a Bloomberg News article entitled "*Bayou's Israel Cheated in Scam*," published on July 15, 2008 by court reporters David Glovin and Bob Van

Voris. <http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601127&sid=aLCwdJsx0V3M&refer=law>

The article talked about Samuel Israel of Bayou Management Group LLC being cheated by Robert Booth Nichols, "who in a 1993 lawsuit claimed to have worked for the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency for 20 years. Nichols was also the target of a 1987 probe by the Federal Bureau of Investigation of organized crime in the entertainment industry," wrote Bloomberg.

An excerpt of the article read as follows: "*As Samuel Israel grew desperate to raise money in 2004 to save his Bayou Group LLC hedge fund firm, he turned for help to a Hawaii man who promised a windfall and then conned him out of \$10 million, said a U.K. investigator.*

"Robert Booth Nichols cheated Israel, later convicted in his own \$400 million theft, in a 'prime bank' fraud, a scheme used by con-artists promising quick riches in secret markets, the U.K. investigator said in a document filed in June in

federal court in New York. U.S. prosecutors seeking to recover funds for Bayou investors won a British judge's ruling in November freezing \$1 million Nichols held there, and they may be pursuing millions more in Singapore, Nichols's lawyer said."

Robert Booth Nichols, 65, denied wrongdoing and sought to retain the \$1 million in London. He said in court papers that he helped Israel invest in a legitimate, though unspecified **"project" involving U.S. government obligations**. Nichols said he had no reason to believe Israel was engaged in fraud.

"He was asked to find something, and he found it," Nichols's lawyer, Joseph Bainton, told Bloomberg, declining to elaborate. "There are very few people capable of performing this service, **for which he was paid a lump sum of \$10 million.**"

Nichols said in court papers that he believed the investment was on behalf of Israel personally, that Nichols was told his services **"involved matters of national interest," and that a first cousin of President G. W. Bush, John P. Ellis, vouched for the legitimacy of the transaction**. Nichols said the deal required him to contact representatives of foreign governments that he knew, according to court documents.

Nichols' lawyer told Bloomberg that **"Mr. Ellis attended some meetings and gave Mr. Nichols some assurance with respect to the approval of the United States."** Ellis worked at GH Venture Partners in 2004, according to Nichols' court documents.

The criminal case is U.S. v. Israel, 05cr1039, U.S. District Court, Southern District of New York (Manhattan).

The bankruptcy case is In re Bayou Group LLC, 06-22306, U.S. Bankruptcy Court, Southern District New York (White Plains).

The missing link in the above story is the \$250 Billion Treasury Note secured by 2,500 metric tons of gold at the Atlanta Federal Reserve, Serial Number SC 3040-20. Robert Booth Nichols' lawyer described this to Bloomberg as an unspecified "project" involving U.S. government obligations. However, the reporters had no knowledge at the time they wrote the story that the "project" for which Nichols was paid \$10 million allegedly involved Nichols locating and obtaining the Treasury Note for Samuel Israel and depositing it at the London Safe Deposit Box Company Ltd. <http://londonsafedeposit.co.uk/>

Yumz. Now we are getting somewhere. Christopher Story (Worldreports.org) also talked a lot about this certain raid against the London safe deposit boxes - the idea is that several months ago the London Metropolitan Police raided a huge bunch of safe deposit boxes, and these boxes contained all sorts of weird items, blackmail, leverage, the shadow wealth of a bunch of players who believed themselves untouchable.

But London Metro managed to take their stuff, and thereby actually, roughly speaking, damaged a huge chunk of the shady "intelligence power" as Mr Story likes to call it.

So that is one side... i will leave it there for now. Wayne Madsen had stuff on it too.

Anyway the Desert Fae blog has a lot of backstories like for example [the Frank Sinatra mob stuff - Dr Nichols is showing up](#) at the Cabazon Indian Reservation in the 1980s (Cabazon was where, according to the great Iran Contra Octopus tapestry, they were hacking PROMIS backdoors, something about weird weapons and the Contras, it was quite a classic set of data points that you find, when you go looking...)

Meanwhile running attached is [The Octopus Wiki!](#) Not too shabby!! It sort of suggests that major drug cartels and the Italian mob are subsets or sub-pathways of the Octopus. From the Wiki front page, just a few of the angles you need to nibble at:

The Inslaw Affair

[Danny Casolaro](#), [Michael Riconosciuto](#), [Robert Booth Nichols](#), and others were mentioned rather prominently in the final House of Representatives Report #102-857 released to the public on September 10, 1992. The Investigative Report, put together by the Committee on the Judiciary headed by Senator [Jack Brooks](#) of Texas, entitled "The [Inslaw Affair](#)," summarized a three year investigation into the theft of the [PROMIS](#) software from Bill and Nancy Hamilton, owners of [Inslaw](#) Corporation in Washington D.C. (The investigators who handled the three-year probe were listed on the Report as James E. Lewin, Chief Investigator, and John D. Cohen, Investigator.)

As a result of media exposure, Inslaw's owners, Bill and Nancy Hamilton, had received information which subsequently led them to believe that the Department's actions were part of a high level conspiracy within Justice to steal the "enhanced" version of [PROMIS](#).

[Inslaw](#) alleged that former Attorney General [Edwin Meese](#) and Deputy Attorney General Lowell Jensen forced [Inslaw](#) into bankruptcy by intentionally creating a sham contract dispute over the terms and conditions of the contract which led to the withholding of payments due [Inslaw](#) by the Department.

Two federal court judges and the House Judiciary Committee ultimately concluded that "the [United States Department of Justice](#) acted willfully and fraudently" and "took, converted and stole" Inslaw's enhanced [PROMIS](#) software by "trickery, fraud and deceit."

EXCERPTED from *High Times Magazine*, August 2001 issue, Vol. No. 313 – Title of article: "[The Ghost of Danny Casolaro](#)." [3]

" --- [Danny Casolaro](#)'s tragic death essentially opened a Pandora's Box which the [DOJ](#) was never able to close.

During the last week of his life, Danny had discovered a connection between [Mike Abbell](#), a former director of international affairs for the [Justice Department](#), the Cali Drug Cartel, and [Robert Booth Nichols](#), an international intelligence operative whom he had been interviewing extensively for months. Danny's last phone bills indicated he'd spent hundreds of hours on the phone with Nichols, most of the calls averaged one to two hours. This in effect, was one tentacle of the Octopus.

"Danny had confronted Nichols about [Mike Abbell](#) and the Cali Cartel while staying in Martinsburg. It was the last conversation Danny ever had with Nichols, and with Bob Bickel, a friend whom Danny confided in. Bickel subsequently confirmed the conversation, but for reasons unknown, the Abbell - Cali Cartel connection was never published in any of the official investigative reports on Danny's death. These included the DOJ report of September 27, 1994.

"In fact, a note handwritten by Danny four days before his death, found by relatives, read as follows: '[Bill Hamilton](#) - August 6. MR ... also brought up 'Gilberto.' Unknown to anyone outside the DOJ at that time, a [secret]FBI investigation of Mike Abbell was underway at the time of Danny's death. Years later, an indictment unsealed in Miami on June 6, 1995 charged Abbell with laundering money for the Cali Cartel. Surveillance reports indicated he'd made frequent visits to the home of Gilberto Rodriguez, leader of the Cali Cartel in Bogota, Columbia.

Top notch.

PROMIS was originally Prosecutor's Management Information System - early in the era, it seems to have been a kind of nice IT case management system that would let the suits tie into various government databases. According to reams of odd stuff out there (yet never definitively presented to the American public) it got stolen from INSLAW and mutated by the CIA and other assorted lunatics. (American intelligence sold a backdoor'd PROMIS to the RCMP and the Mounties were fucking pissed when they found out - I want Dan Aykroyd to play the Mountie boss in the film.)

From there PROMIS sort of seems to morph into a magic skeleton key into all types of data mining - by extending its ability to probe around into all government databases.

It seems too much the handy conspiracy program: It sort of plays like a MacGuffin or other placeholder "program that all the players have, to dominate reality in bizarre and invisible ways." There's no other program out there in the Internet conspiracy world I know of that compares to PROMIS. But I don't get what that means!

The idea from Chris Ketcham is that PROMIS became extended into MAIN CORE, the master NSA program that was spun out of DARPA's Total Information Awareness effort. Check this out - it does have the areas about "Continuity of Government" -- which is often an odd kind of logistical code or cipher for hardcore martial law, it seems, especially in the REX84 era (also Operation Sledgehammer, and Ollie North's Civilian Labor Inmate Facility [CLIF] proposal) --- myahhh I'm getting caught up in keywords now.

Check the Ketcham article for how MAIN CORE grew from PROMIS: [The Last Roundup : Information Clearing House - ICH](#)

More goods:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Core

<http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article19871.htm>

<http://digitizedrevolution.wordpress.com/2008/05/23/christopher-ketcham-the-last-roundup-2/>

(great google ads at the end of this one ^)

<http://harpers.org/archive/2008/05/hbc-90002972>

<http://cryptogon.com/?p=2590>

Excerpt of Wayne Madsen: <http://www.waynemadsenreport.com/articles/20090508>

May 8-10, 2009 -- Was Clan Bush involved in looting of other Federal Reserve Banks?

There is additional information to report on the Treasury Note that is secured by \$250 billion in gold (2500 metric tons) at the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta. After the sudden resignation of New York Federal Reserve Bank Chairman Stephen Friedman, a one-time top economic adviser to President George W. Bush and someone who apparently profited from the government's bailout of Goldman Sachs while he served as both Chairman of the New York Fed and as a board member for Goldman Sachs, the entire Federal Reserve Bank system appears to be involved in a massive ploy to loot the United States of its gold and cash reserves.

On May 5, 2009, WMR reported: "According to WMR's sources, the FBI and London police are working together on a case that involved a \$250 billion U.S. Treasury Note seized by the FBI from a London safety deposit box company, London Safe Deposit Company, Ltd. The box was reportedly placed at the London firm by self-described 20-year CIA veteran Robert Booth Nichols, who reportedly died in Geneva, Switzerland on February 14, 2009.

A heart attack was believed to have been the cause of death but there was a blow to Nichols's head. A 'friend' of Nichols, a New York stockbroker who was reportedly helping Booth move a large sum of cash, bonds and gold in Geneva, arranged for a quick cremation of Nichols's body and the U.S. embassy in Bern was notified.

Well, consider yourself educated at least in a few classic slices of Octopus lore, and how, in theory, they fit into the modern NSA panopticon. That's the damn thing about these freakkin conspiracies:

the same people pop up over and over and over. ***It's really fuckin' annoying.***

- [CIA](#)
- [cocaine](#)
- [Conspiratoria](#)
- [deep politics](#)
- [Economics](#)
- [evidence](#)
- [Federal Reserve System](#)
- [heroin](#)
- [Iran-Contra](#)
- [Military-Industrial Complex](#)
- [opium](#)
- [Political Journalism](#)
- [Scandal](#)
- [The Establishment](#)
- [whistleblower](#)

<http://www.hongpong.com/archives/tags/geo/drugs/opium>

This archive page is obsolete. [See the front page](#) for the new Drupal system. Thanks.

HongPong.com: Military-Industrial Complex Archives

October 02, 2006

Our special Republican drug trafficking week begins: RJR Nabisco global mafia narcotics money laundering; Feb. 1985: Another great moment in CIA drug trafficking history: Justice Dept allows CIA to not report narcotics violations

2. The DEFENDANTS [**RJR Nabisco**] knowingly sell their products to organized crime, arrange for secret payments from organized crime, and launder such proceeds in the United States or offshore venues known for bank secrecy. DEFENDANTS have laundered the **illegal proceeds of members of Italian, Russian, and Colombian organized crime** through financial institutions in New York City, including The Bank of New York, Citibank N.A., and Chase Manhattan Bank. DEFENDANTS have even chosen to do business in Iraq, in violation of U.S. sanctions, in transactions that financed both the Iraqi regime and terrorist groups.

3. The RJR DEFENDANTS have, at the highest corporate level, determined that it will be a **part of their operating business plan to sell cigarettes to and through criminal organizations and to accept criminal proceeds in payment for cigarettes by secret and surreptitious means**, which under United States law constitutes money laundering. The officers and directors of the RJR DEFENDANTS facilitated this overarching money-laundering scheme by restructuring the corporate structure of the RJR DEFENDANTS, for example, by establishing subsidiaries in locations known for bank secrecy such as Switzerland to direct and implement their money-laundering schemes and to avoid detection by U.S. and European law enforcement.

This overarching scheme to establish a corporate structure and business plan to sell cigarettes to criminals and to launder criminal proceeds was implemented through many subsidiary schemes across THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY. Examples of these subsidiary schemes are described in this Complaint and include: (a.) Laundering criminal proceeds received from the Alfred Bossert money-laundering organization; (b.) Money laundering for Italian organized crime; (c.) Money laundering for Russian organized crime through The Bank of New York; (d.) The Walt money-laundering conspiracy; (e.) Money laundering through cut outs in Ireland and Belgium; (f.) Laundering of the proceeds of narcotics sales throughout THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY by way of cigarette sales to criminals in Spain; (g.) Laundering criminal proceeds in the United Kingdom; (h.) Laundering criminal proceeds through cigarette sales via Cyprus; and (i.) Illegal cigarette sales into Iraq.

--European Union indictment of RJR Nabisco - (a curiously underplayed story in the United States. Kraft ad money, anyone?)

It's October right now, so I've decided to run a special feature this week on HongPong.com: **Republican drug trafficking** - the long love affair among America's right-wing with illicit smuggling and narcotics operations. Barry Seal, the great CIA drug trafficker who met his end after he threatened to talk about CIA-Contra-Cocaine activities, would say:



Let's set the scene a bit. NarcoNews.com is the spot to go for the real dish on the "War on Drugs." Why not a bit of Catherine Austin Fitts report on this: I hadn't actually run into this until now, so I suggest everyone check it out. We're gonna take the narco-ball and run with it... Fitts was a top executive at Dillon, Read & Co. Inc, and saw a lot of weird shit go down there, and a vast level of fraud at the Department of Housing and Urban Development in the 1980s.

Catherine Austin Fitts presented: A Six-Part Series for The Narco News Bulletin starting February 27, 2006: [Dillon, Read & Co. Inc. and the Aristocracy of Prison Profits: Part I: Inside the Financial World, Government Agencies and their Private Contractors Lies a Hidden System of Money Laundering, Drug Trafficking and Rigged Stock Market Riches](#)

"Make a Law, Make a Business"
— Old New Jersey street saying

There is a strongly held myth in America. The myth says that large corporations are efficient. They have big profits. They have lots of capital to hire the best people, the best accountants and the best law firms. Everyone looks so spiffy. Their technology is the latest. The best thing for the economy, sings the siren song, is for inefficient government to defer to corporate leaders and corporate "survival of the fittest." Powerful corporations, the myth goes, earned their power through performance in the marketplace by providing the best services and products.

The real truth on the corporate model is far darker, however, and can be found by understanding our current central banking-warfare economic model and the resulting total economic return of activities. That means not just looking at the corporate profits and growth in stock price, but the true cost to people, the environment and government of a particular corporate activity. This necessitates understanding the economy as an ecosystem that is a dynamic living system in places. **If corporate profits come from laundering narcotics trafficking used to destroy communities, and from**

government contracts used to build expensive prisons crammed full of small time non-violent drug distributors and customers, then they are part of a “negative return on investment” economy. This is an economy where the real cost of things is hidden behind secret black budgets, complex government finances, under-the-table deals, market manipulations and economic and military warfare, until they finally show up in the most irrefutable ways: environmental destruction and the exhaustion and death of communities. I refer to this destructive economic force as “the tapeworm” — a financial parasite that weakens and even kills its host.....

.....Bush climbed through Republican politics to become Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) during the Ford Administration. After spending four years displaced by the Carter Administration, Bush was now Reagan’s Vice President with Executive Order authority for the National Security Council (NSC) and U.S. intelligence and enforcement agencies. Bush’s new authority was married with expanded powers to outsource sensitive work to private contractors. Such work could be funded through the non-transparent financial mechanisms available through the National Security Act of 1947, and the CIA Act of 1949.

This was a secret source of money for funding powerful new weaponry and surveillance technology and operations owned, operated or controlled by private corporations.[3] Carter’s massive layoffs at the CIA had created plenty of private contractor capacity looking for work.[4] An assassination attempt on President Reagan’s life two months after the inauguration meant that Vice President Bush and his team were called on to play an expanded role. Meantime, Nicholas Brady continued as an intimate friend and collaborator from his position as Chairman of Dillon Read.[5]

.....According to Dillon Read, the firm’s average return on equity for the years 1982-1989 was 29 percent. This is a very strong performance, and compares to First Boston, Solomon, Shearson and Morgan Stanley’s average returns of 26 percent , 15 percent, 18 percent and 31 percent respectively.[13] Given what we now know from the European Union’s lawsuit and other legal actions against RJR Nabisco and its executives, this begs the question of what Dillon’s profits would have been if the firm had not made a small fortune **reinvesting the proceeds of — if we are to believe the European Union — cigarette sales to organized crime including the profits generated by narcotics flowing into the communities of America through the Latin American drug cartels.**

To understand the flow of drug money into and through Wall Street and corporate stocks like RJR Nabisco during the 1980s, it is useful to **look more closely at the flow of drugs from Latin America during the period — and the implied cash flows of narco dollars that they suggest. Two documented situations involve Mena, Arkansas and South Central Los Angeles, California.**

And a little slice from Part II:

[Narco Dollars in the 1980s — Mena, Arkansas](#) (March 1, 2006)

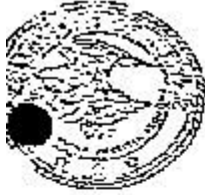
During the 1980s, a sometime government agent named Barry Seal lead a smuggling operation that delivered a significant amount of narcotics estimated to be as much as \$5 billion from Latin America through an airport in Mena, Arkansas.[1] According to investigative reporters and researchers knowledgeable about Mena, the operation had protection from the highest levels of the National Security Council then under the leadership of George H.W. Bush and staffed by Oliver North. According to investigative reporter and author Barry Hopsicker, when Seal was assassinated in February 1986, **Vice President George H.W. Bush’s personal phone number was found in his wallet.** Through Hopsicker’s efforts, Barry Seal’s records also divulged a little known piece of smuggling trivia — RJR executives in Central America had helped Seal smuggle contraband into the U.S. in the 1970s.[2]

The arms and drug running operation in Mena continued after Seal’s assassination. Eight months later, Seal’s plane, the “Fat Lady,” was shot down in Nicaragua. The plane was carrying arms for the

Contras. The only survivor, Eugene Hassenfuss admitted to the illegal operation to arm the Contra forces staged out of the Mena airport. **Hassenfuss' capture inspired Oliver North and his secretary at the National Security Council to embark on several days of shredding.** The files that survived North's shredding that were eventually provided to Congress contain hundreds of references to drugs.

Let's take a quick trip back to the 1980s and enjoy this primary source documentation. Note the part where the Attorney General says that the CIA doesn't have to tell anyone at all about narcotics activity.

These classics deserve a post of their own. Right here, full authorization for the CIA to NEVER tell the DEA or anyone else a damn thing about what the boys are doing. What more can I say? ([source](#) / [zip file](#))



Office of the Attorney General
Washington, D. C. 20530

Executive Registry
72-124712

February 11, 1982

Honorable William J. Casey
Director
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D.C. 20505

Dear Bill:

Thank you for your letter regarding the procedures governing the reporting and use of information concerning federal crimes. I have reviewed the draft of the procedures that accompanied your letter and, in particular, the minor changes made in the draft that I had previously sent to you. These proposed changes are acceptable and, therefore, I have signed the procedures.

I have been advised that a question arose regarding the need to add narcotics violations to the list of reportable non-employee crimes (Section IV). 21 U.S.C. §874(h) provides that "[w]hen requested by the Attorney General, it shall be the duty of any agency or instrumentality of the Federal Government to furnish assistance to him for carrying out his functions under [the Controlled Substances Act]" Section 1.8(b) of Executive Order 12333 tasks the Central Intelligence Agency to "collect, produce and disseminate intelligence on foreign aspects of narcotics production and trafficking." Moreover, authorization for the dissemination of information concerning narcotics violations to law enforcement agencies, including the Department of Justice, is provided by sections 2.3(c) and (i) and 2.6(b) of the Order. In light of these provisions, and in view of the fine cooperation the Drug Enforcement Administration has received from CIA, no formal requirement regarding the reporting of narcotics violations has been included in these procedures. We look forward to the CIA's continuing cooperation with the Department of Justice in this area.

In view of our agreement regarding the procedures, I have instructed my Counsel for Intelligence Policy to circulate a copy which I have executed to each of the other agencies covered by the procedures in order that they may be signed by the head of each such agency.

Sincerely,

William French Smith
Attorney General

FOR THE RECORD



U.S. Department of Justice

Office of Intelligence Policy and Review

Washington, D.C. 20530

February 8, 1985

MEMORANDUM FOR MARK M. RICHARD
Deputy Assistant Attorney General
Criminal Division

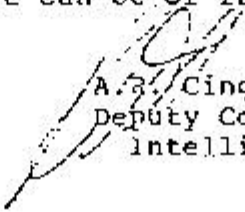
SUBJECT: CIA REPORTING OF DRUG OFFENSES

Pursuant to our discussion yesterday, attached are copies of the procedures governing CIA's reporting of crimes and the transmittal letters between the AG and DCI. As you can see, alleged violations of Title 21 by non-employees are not required by the procedures to be reported. In lieu of formal reporting, however, the Attorney General's letter notes "the fine cooperation the Drug Enforcement Administration has received from CIA" and the Department's expectation of "continuing cooperation ... in this area." Accordingly, it would appear that if CIA and DEA can work out a mutually satisfactory arrangement regarding the kinds of offenses at issue, there would be no need to modify the procedures, at least so far as non-employees are concerned.

With regard to CIA employees, however, the procedures require reporting of alleged violations of "any federal criminal statute," unless such allegations are found upon preliminary inquiry to be "without basis." Thus, it would appear that credible allegations of even minor drug offenses by employees must be reported.

As you noted yesterday, however, the procedures provide for periodic (at least quarterly) oral reporting of allegations that "are in the opinion of the General Counsel of such a minor nature that no further investigation or prosecution of the matter is necessary." In such instances, if the Assistant Attorney General or his designated Deputy concur in the General Counsel's opinion, "no further reporting" is required under the procedures.

Please let me know if we can be of further assistance.


A. B. Cinguegrana
Deputy Counsel for
Intelligence Policy

Attachment

A little more context on this from Fitts: (part 2 of the series)

Mike Ruppert is a former Los Angeles Police Department narcotics investigator who was run out of LAPD after declining an offer from the CIA to protect their Los Angeles narcotics trafficking operations. After being accosted by Ruppert and the threat of his formidable evidence in support of Webb's story in a town hall meeting in South Central Los Angeles in November 1996, then Director of the CIA, John Deutsch promised that the CIA Inspector General would investigate the "Dark Alliance" allegations.

This resulted in a two volume report published by the CIA in March and October of 1998 that included disclosure of one of the most important legal documents of the 1980s — a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the CIA dated February 11, 1982 in effect until August 1995.[8] At the time it was created, William French Smith was the U.S. Attorney General and William Casey, former Wall Street law partner and Chairman of the SEC was Director of the CIA. Casey, like Douglas Dillon, had worked for Office of Strategic Services (OSS) founder Bill Donovan and was a former head of the Export-Import Bank. Casey was also a friend of George Schultz. Bechtel looked to the Export-Import Bank to provide the government guarantees that financed billions of big construction contracts worldwide. Casey recruited Stanley Sporkin, former head of SEC Enforcement, to serve as general counsel of the CIA. When Schultz joined the Reagan Administration as Secretary of State, such linkages helped to create some of the personal intimacy between money worlds and national security that make events such as those which occurred during the Iran Contra period possible.

No history of the 1980s is complete without an understanding of the lawyers and legal mechanisms used to legitimize drug dealing and money laundering under the protection of National Security law. Through the MOU, the DOJ relieved the CIA of any legal obligation to report information of drug trafficking and drug law violations with respect to CIA agents, assets, non-staff employees and contractors.[8] Presumably, this included the corporate contractors who, by executive order, were now allowed to handle sensitive intelligence and national security outsourcing.

With the DOJ-CIA Memorandum of Understanding, in effect from 1982 until rescinded in August 1995, a crack cocaine epidemic ravaged the poorer communities of America and disenfranchised hundreds of thousands of poor people into prison who, now classified as felons, were safely off of the voting roles. Meantime, the U.S. financial system gorged on what had grown to an estimated \$500 billion-\$1 trillion a year of money laundering by the end of the 1990s. Not surprisingly, the rich got richer as corporate power and the concentration of investment capital skyrocketed on the rich margins of state sanctioned criminal enterprise.

These guys were ready to party. To be continued....

Posted by HongPong at [12:45 AM](#) | [Comments \(135\)](#) Relating to [Conspiratoria](#) , [History](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Quotes](#) , [The White House](#)

September 28, 2006

AIPAC + Sibel Edmonds + Turkish spy + nuclear trafficking scandal breaks big?

Over here at Hongpong.com, I've tried to keep tabs on the Sibel Edmonds case. I won't get into the details right now, but basically... um, one of those neo-conservatives, Marc Grossman, more or less committed espionage/treason by exposing Valerie Plame's Brewster Jennings group as a CIA front to the Pakistani ISI and Turkish spies (involved in major drug trafficking networks) way before the Novak thing. When Sibel Edmonds

worked at the FBI as a translator, she stumbled into the Turkish spy angle of the case, and efforts at the top of the FBI to cover up this massive spy scandal.

AIPAC and its sister organization JINSA, the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs, are implicated as allies of the American Turkish Council.....

goto waynemadsenreport.com for the latest on this case. gotta run.....

Posted by HongPong at [01:52 PM](#) | [Comments \(536\)](#) Relating to [Military-Industrial Complex](#)
September 23, 2006

Justice Dept "Influence of Drug Trafficking Organizations" in the United States; Various theories connecting 9/11 to Sibel Edmonds, drug money, heroin, PROMIS and those Israelis watched by the DEA

"When I ran into the drugs I was told that if I mentioned the money to the drugs around 9/11 that would be the end of me."

--Indira Singh

The 9/11 terror plot itself, intersected with the activities of a drug trafficking network of international scope, in ways that form a "crystal clear" picture of what was going on -- to quote Sibel Edmonds.

[Fintan Dunne, Editor BreakForNews.com](#) (at this link, Daniel Ellsberg's support of Edmonds is noted - [Ellsberg was cool on Colbert Report](#) this week)

SIBEL: Essentially, there is only one investigation – a very big one, an all-inclusive one. Completely by chance, I, a lowly translator, stumbled over one piece of it. But I can tell you there are a lot of people involved, a lot of ranking officials, and a lot of illegal activities that include multi-billion-dollar drug-smuggling operations, black-market nuclear sales to terrorists and unsavory regimes, you name it. And of course a lot of people from abroad are involved. It's massive. So to do this investigation, to really do it, they will have to look into everything.

CD: But you can start from anywhere –

SIBEL: That's the beauty of it. You can start from the AIPAC angle. You can start from the Plame case. You can start from my case. They all end up going to the same place, and they revolve around the same nucleus of people. There may be a lot of them, but it is one group. And they are very dangerous for all of us.

['The Stakes Are Too High for Us to Stop Fighting Now', An interview with FBI whistleblower Sibel Edmonds by Christopher Deliso](#)

Now THIS is what I call a map. This comes directly from the National Drug Intelligence Center in the Department of Justice, [National Drug Threat Assessment 2006, January 2006](#). Today I'm going to post a lot of stuff that I

certainly don't consider the Gospel Truth. It's purely for your careful consideration with barrels of salt. So let's kick things off with the DOJ:

Influence of Drug Trafficking Organizations



And this is just funny. I suspect the purple patches are notorious 'rebel zones' in the War on Drugs, where the federal and state government policies have split apart entirely. But they forgot eastern Tennessee... and of course *everywhere else*.



We will be returning to the one about the Russian-Israeli crime organizations. Florida drug money is connected to some of the loose ends around 9/11. The 9/11 drug money connection has many potential angles, but first note here that the DEA marks Miami as a key heroin and cocaine distribution area.

Now we're going into stuff that seems hard to believe, and beyond here, I *don't* claim that any of these people are telling the truth.

This is just a small slice of the material on the internet about how the rich & powerful skim huge amounts of cash out of the addicted masses of America through the profitable geopolitics of illicit drugs. Some people claim there is a strong connection between drug trafficking and 9/11 financing. Certainly all the players in Afghanistan since 1979 have been up to their ears in it, including the CIA and its favored contractors (who make up around half the CIA personnel these days).

This is certainly part of a trend towards the criminalization of war, which corresponds to the increasing privatization of war. We will have more on this angle in the coming days. Even if there are no operational links to the real

September 11 conspiracy itself, the drug-militarization angle really needs to be investigated seriously, perhaps by a Democratic Congress with subpoena and immunity powers. Even snooping at possible loose 9/11 connections immediately reveals a world awash in drug money, with Bush and the Establishment generating vast cash flows from conflict zones - and enforcing loyalties among players from Afghanistan to South America by aligning these cash flows with military force. Sometimes privatized paramilitary forces. Why not?



"Kill the Messenger:" Sibel Edmonds is on the radar a bit more than usual, as they have apparently whipped up a documentary to expose more of her surreal role in the weird world of intelligence after 9/11, named appropriately enough, Kill the Messenger. (perhaps she shouldn't be trusted, one guy suggests) A blog supporting Edmonds' film, sibeledmonds.blogspot.com is operated by Lukery at wotisitgood4.blogspot.com, who has covered her case in detail. To recap what I have posted before, Edmonds worked as a translator at the FBI, where she discovered a conspiracy within her unit to cover up a Turkish espionage ring in the United States. One of her co-translators was spoofing the wiretaps for FBI agents, and when Edmonds tried to bring this to her superiors, they suppressed the whole thing. Also Dennis Hastert was taking big bribes from the Turks, and there is some kind of global nuclear parts trafficking conspiracy connected to the AQ Khan network and some Israeli mobster types - probably Marc Rich type guys. The guys running the secret nuclear trafficking network were enemies of the CIA's Brewster-Jennings counter-proliferation operations and Valerie Plame, adding yet another twisted concourse to *that* scandal. And the AIPAC stuff and Chalabi are laterally related, since so much of it revolves around the same neo-con cats in DC and their foreign allies.

Lukery summarized:

Sibel makes 2 specific related claims: a) **Sibel claims that she has information which proves that senior officials knew that there were plans to attack America months before 9/11.**

Specifically: "There was general information about the time-frame, about methods to be used but not specifically about how they would be used and about people being in place and who was ordering these sorts of terror attacks. There were other cities that were mentioned. Major cities with skyscrapers." and "President Bush said they had no specific information about 11 September and that is accurate but only because he said 11 September," she said. There was, however, general information about the use of airplanes and that an attack was just months away."

b) **Sibel claims that she has evidence of a global multi-billion dollar smuggling/dealing network of weapons and drug which is hidden in plain view.** Of course, there is also the requisite money-laundering infrastructure. She claims that the network comprises senior american government officials, terrorists, and 'unsavoury regimes.'

and they merge, giving us: **"drug trafficking, money laundering, foreign names and American names directly involved in the financing of the 9-11 attacks on WTC (World Trade Center) and the Pentagon."**

After a mere 3 months in the FBI, Edmonds publicly claims that all this stuff was going on, covered up at numerous levels in the federal government – though Ashcroft-era gag orders prevent her from sharing many aspects of the story. A virtual hailstorm of individual criminal conspiracies, involving top neo-cons, drug trafficking, all kinds of crazy shit. She has mentioned [Coleen Rowley as an ally in the whistleblower field](#).

There is another potential side to this: Edmonds is herself possibly a red herring, a player or a dupe in the conspiracy, posing as an opponent. [Conspiracy gurus suggest she might be a "limited hangout,"](#) or a channel to expose parts of the story, and fill other parts with disinformation. Edmonds comes from a prominent family in Turkey, so perhaps she has a bit of Turkish partisanship against some groups back home. One blogger named xymphora [suggested she speaks the conspiracy-ese](#) a bit too well:

"Edmonds sometimes makes me a bit nervous as she seems overly adept with the terms and arguments of conspiracy theory for someone who is supposed to have been a lowly FBI translator (it's like she's been reading Peter Dale Scott!). Is she part of the battle in Washington between the Bush Administration enablers involved in the drugs/arms business who don't mind directly or indirectly supporting al Qaeda if it is good for business, and those old-fashioned types who still consider that dealing with American enemies is treason?"

And she gives [interviews with patently crazy people like Tom Flocco](#). Here is a fragment tying some of the [neo-cons to some nasty shit](#):

Although Grossman "has not been as high profile in the press" FBI whistleblower Sibel Edmonds cryptically told me the other day, "don't overlook him – he is very important." She was not speaking about the Plame affair, though Grossman did indeed have a key role there, as we will see.

According to her, **Grossman was one of three officials – the other two, she says, are Richard Perle and Douglas Feith – who had been watched by both Valerie Plame's Brewster Jennings & Associates CIA team,** and by the major FBI investigation of organized crime and governmental corruption on which she herself was working until being terminated in April 2002.

Marc Grossman has served in a number of interesting countries and positions over the past 29 years. From 1976-1983, at a pivotal point in the Cold War, he was employed at the U.S. embassy in Pakistan – America's key regional ally, through which millions of dollars in weapons and other "aid" were delivered by Pakistan's ISI intelligence service to the mujahedin following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979.

[Grossman](#) is definitely part of the Valerie Plame scandal, no doubt. Well, it all still makes her story worth adding to the mixture. Here is the documentary trailer. Please let's take some bets if this will be aired in the United States.



Florida drug money angles (and there are many!) There was this funny story about one of the flight school proprietors in Florida who trained the 9/11 hijackers. The flight school owner was [caught with 43 pounds of heroin just after the 9/11](#) hijackers got to his school, and somehow this story never got fully explored. See [MadCowProd.com](#) for a lot of amusing tales of south Floridian drug trafficking. It's worth considering what the site's proprietor Daniel Hopsicker says, "[THE 9.11 HEROIN CONNECTION](#)" is "The Biggest Censored Story of the 21st Century." He cites Thomas Pynchon: "If they can get you asking the wrong questions, they don't have to worry about answers."

More recently, and quite funny, is the "SkyWay Aircraft" case, where [Tom DeLay's buddy + Homeland Security defense contractor accidentally getting busted with 5.5 tons of cocaine](#) on a [DC9](#) connected with the Titan defense contractor. Naturally, the DEA ducking and covering from obvious political pressure ensued. Good times. And perhaps this link is connected to [Zacharias Moussaoui and 9/11 financing](#). (Bonus: MadCowProd says Adnan Kashoggi finances the 9/11 Truth Movement? Now that's what I call a conspiracy!)

Ruppert on Hawalas, PTECH, PROMIS, 9/11 and some heroin networks, BCCI-style. From Mike Ruppert's [FromTheWilderness.com](#) last year, "[PTECH, 9/11, and USA-SAUDI TERROR: PART II](#)" which offers some evidence that PROMIS software connected to 9/11, and possible narcotics / heroin money connections to 9/11. Ruppert himself offers a theory that advanced software like PROMIS was capable of manipulating computers throughout the financial sphere and the federal government. [Ruppert's book Crossing the Rubicon](#) suggests that Dick Cheney could have executed 9/11 himself by using PROMIS and other whizbang technologies to, for example, insert extra radar blips in air traffic control towers across America. It seems kind of like a Deus Ex Machina conspiracy argument to me, but it is still an interesting, if far-fetched hypothetical argument that raises serious questions about how PROMIS and the rest of the fed's information technology really is run. At a dense 675 pages, crossing the Rubicon is one hell of a book, summarized thusly:

"In my book I make several key points:

1. I name Vice President Richard Cheney as the prime suspect in the mass murders of 9/11 and will establish that, not only was he a planner in the attacks, but also that on the day of the attacks he was running a completely separate Command, Control and Communications system which was superceding any orders being issued by the FAA, the Pentagon, or the White House Situation Room;
2. I establish conclusively that in May of 2001, by presidential order, Richard Cheney was put in direct command and control of all wargame and field exercise training and scheduling through several agencies, especially FEMA. This also extended to all of the conflicting and overlapping NORAD drills -- some involving hijack simulations -- taking place on that day.

3. I demonstrate that the TRIPOD II exercise being set up on Sept. 10th in Manhattan was directly connected to Cheney's role in the above.

4. I also prove conclusively that a number of public officials, at the national and New York City levels, including then-Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, were aware that flight 175 was en route to lower Manhattan for 20 minutes and did nothing to order the evacuation of, or warn the occupants of the South Tower. One military officer was forced to leave his post in the middle of the attacks and place a private call to his brother - who worked at the WTC - warning him to get out. That was because no other part of the system was taking action.

5. I also show that the Israeli and British governments acted as partners with the highest levels of the American government to help in the preparation and, very possibly, the actual execution of the attacks."

"There is more reason to be afraid of not facing the evidence in this book than of facing what is in it."

Approach #2: Peter Dale Scott's "[The Global Drug Meta-Group: Drugs, Managed Violence, and the Russian 9/11](#)". haven't looked through all of it, but it seems an interesting source to begin looking at how the gears really turn in Central Asia and thereabouts.

it also seems possible that the U.S. government might contemplate using Hizb ut-Tahrir and the meta-group for political changes in Russia itself, even while combating the Islamism of al-Qaeda elsewhere. This would be far from the first time that the U.S. Government had used drug-trafficking proxies as assets, and would do a lot to explain the role of the U.S. in 2001 in restoring major drug traffickers to power in Afghanistan. Dubious figures like Nukhaev, Khodorkovskii, and Khashoggi have already shown their interest in such initiatives; and western business interests have shown their eagerness to work with these allies of the meta-group.

It is fitting to think of most U.S. intelligence assets as chess pieces, moved at the whim of their controllers. That is however not an apt metaphor for the meta-group, which clearly has the resources to negotiate and to exert its own influence interactively upon the governments it works with.

Since first hearing about the meta-group's role in the Russian 9/11, I have pondered the question whether it could have played a similar role in the American 9/11 as well. At this point I have to say that I have found no persuasive evidence that would prove its involvement. The fact remains that two informed and credible witnesses, Sibell Edmonds and Indira Singh, have spoken independently of the importance of international drug trafficking in the background of 9/11.

The Bush Administration has paid Sibell Edmonds the tribute of silencing her on the grounds of national interest. She has nonetheless made it clear that what she would talk about concerns that part of the world where the meta-group has influence:

SE [Sibel Edmonds]: It's interesting, in one of my interviews, they say "Turkish countries," but I believe they meant Turkic countries - that is, Turkey, Azerbaijan, and all the 'Stans, including Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, and [non-Turkic countries like] Afghanistan and Pakistan. All of these countries play a big part in the sort of things I have been talking about.

CD [Chris Deliso]: What, you mean drug-smuggling?

SE: Among other things. Yes, that is a major part of it. It's amazing that in this whole "war on terror" thing, no one ever talks about these issues.[120]

Indira Singh, who lost her high-tech job at J.P. Morgan after telling the FBI about Ptech and 9/11, was even more dramatic in her public testimony at a Canadian event:

I did a number of things in my research and when I ran into the drugs I was told that if I mentioned the money to the drugs around 9/11 that would be the end of me.[121]

The False Dilemmas of 9/11 Theories

I said earlier that by suppressing awareness of the role of drug-trafficking in our society, we give drug traffickers a de facto franchise to exert political influence without criticism or opposition. An example of this is the discussion of 9/11 in America, which usually fails to consider the meta-group among the list of possible suspects.

I have tried to suggest in this paper that in fact the meta-group had both motive – to restore the Afghan opium harvest and increase instability and chaos along the trade routes through Central Asia – and opportunity – to utilize its contacts with both al-Zawahiri in al Qaeda and the CIA in Washington. It is furthermore the best candidate to explain one of the more difficult anomalies (or indeed paradoxes) of the clues surrounding 9/11: that many of the clues lead in the direction of Saudi Arabia, but some lead also in a very different direction, towards Israel.[122]

Here it is worth quoting again the well-informed remark of a Washington insider about the meta-group's predecessor, BCCI: "Who else could wire something together to Saudi Arabia, China, Israel, and the U.S.?"[123] The current meta-group fills the same bill, for it unites supporters of Muslim Salafism (Saidov) with at least one Israeli citizen (Kosman).

The meta-group's involvement in the Russian 9/11 of course does nothing to prove its involvement in the American one. However awareness of its presence – as an unrecognized Force X operating in the world – makes previous discussions of 9/11 seem curiously limited. Again and again questions of responsibility have been unthinkingly limited to false dilemmas in which the possible involvement of this or any other Force X is excluded.

An early example is Michael Moore's naïve question to President Bush in *Dude, Where's My Country*: "Who attacked the United States on September 11 – a guy on dialysis from a cave in Afghanistan, or your friends, Saudi Arabia?"[124] A far more widespread dilemma is that articulated by David Ray Griffin in his searching critique of the 9/11 Commission Report:

There are two basic theories about 9/11. Each of these theories is a "conspiracy theory." One of these is the official conspiracy theory, according to which the attacks of 9/11 were planned and executed solely by al-Qaeda terrorists under the guidance of Osama bin Laden....Opposing this official theory is the [sic] alternative conspiracy theory, which holds that the attacks of 9/11 were able to succeed only because they were facilitated by the Bush administration and its agencies.[125]

Griffin of course is not consciously excluding a third possible theory – that a Force X was responsible. But his failure to acknowledge this possibility is an example of the almost universal cultural denial I referred to earlier. In America few are likely to conceive of the possibility that a force in contact with the U.S. government could be not just an asset, but a force exerting influence on that government.

My personal suggestion to 9/11 researchers is that they focus on the connections of the meta-group's firm Far West, Ltd. – in particular those which lead to Khashoggi, Berezovskii, Halliburton and Dick Cheney, and Diligence, Joe Allbaugh, and Neil Bush.

As a grain of salt, we should remember that Florida is so thoroughly laden with drug money that it is quite likely people would catch false leads to September 11 among the huge forest of shady people getting rich from the Business. The loose end about how the DEA was tracking Israelis who lived virtually around the corner from the 9/11 hijackers is an interesting one, but perhaps the density of shady business in Hollywood, Florida is just that high, one block of criminal enterprises after another. This IS Florida we're talking about.

The [Israeli 9/11 angles](#) are still worth checking out – the supposed Mossad front company [Urban Moving Systems and the rest](#). From one of America's most respected Jewish periodicals, Forward:

[Spy Rumors Fly on Gusts of Truth: Americans Probing Reports of Israeli Espionage](#)

MARCH 15, 2002

By MARC PERELMAN, FORWARD STAFF

"Despite angry denials by Israel and its American supporters, reports that Israel was conducting spying activities in the United States may have a grain of truth, the Forward has learned.

However, far from pointing to Israeli spying against U.S. government and military facilities, as reported in Europe last week, the incidents in question appear to represent a case of Israelis in the United States spying on a common enemy, radical Islamic networks suspected of links to Middle East terrorism.

In particular, a group of five Israelis arrested in New Jersey shortly after the September 11 attacks and held for more than two months was subjected to an unusual number of polygraph tests and interrogated by a series of government agencies including the **FBI's counterintelligence division, which by some reports remains convinced that Israel was conducting an intelligence operation. The five Israelis worked for a moving company with few discernable assets that closed up shop immediately afterward and whose owner fled to Israel.**

Other allegations involved Israelis claiming to be **art students who had backgrounds in signal interception and ordnance.** (See related story, Page 8.)

Sources emphasized that the release of all the Israelis under investigation indicates that they were cleared of any suspicion that they had prior knowledge of the September 11 attacks, as some anti-Israel media outlets have suggested.

The resulting tensions between Washington and Jerusalem, sources told the Forward, arose not because of the operations' targets but because **Israel reportedly violated a secret gentlemen's agreement between the two countries under which espionage on each other's soil is to be coordinated in advance.**

Most experts and former officials interviewed for this article said that such so-called **unilateral or uncoordinated Israeli monitoring of radical Muslims in America would not be surprising.** In fact, they said, Israeli intelligence played a key role in helping the Bush administration to crack down on Islamic charities suspected of funneling money to terrorist groups, most notably the Richardson, Texas-based Holy Land Foundation last December.

"I have no doubt Israel has an interest in spying on those groups," said Peter Unsinger, an intelligence expert who teaches justice administration at San Jose University. "The Israelis give us good stuff, like on the Hamas charities." According to one former high-ranking American intelligence official, who asked not to be named, the FBI came to the conclusion at the end of its investigation that the **five Israelis arrested in New Jersey last September were conducting a Mossad surveillance mission and that their employer, Urban Moving Systems of Weehawken, N.J., served as a front.**

After their arrest, the men were held in detention for two-and-a-half months and were deported at the end of November, officially for visa violations. However, a **counterintelligence investigation by the FBI concluded that at least two of them were in fact Mossad operatives,** according to the former American official, who said he was regularly briefed on the investigation by two separate law enforcement officials.

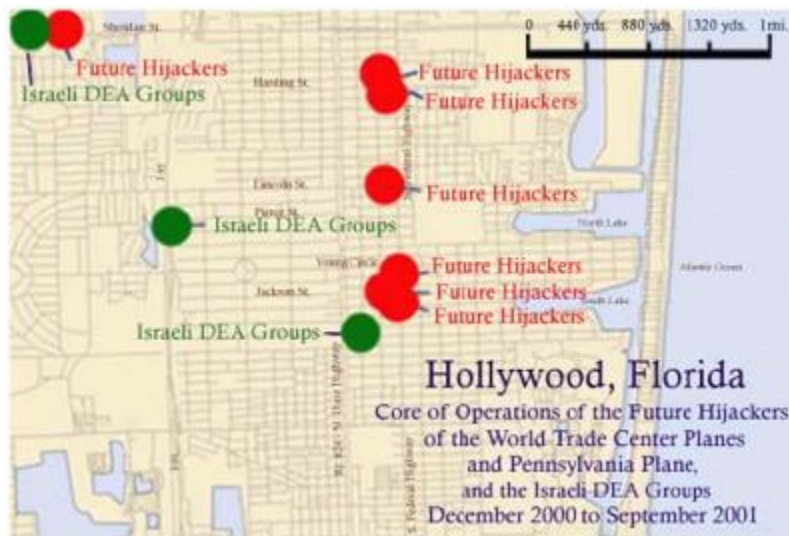
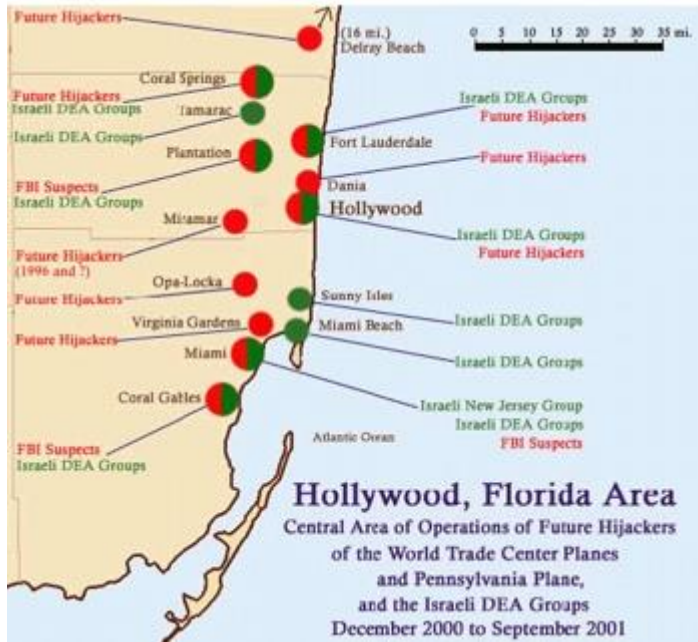
"The assessment was that Urban Moving Systems was a front for the Mossad and operatives employed by it," he said. "The conclusion of the FBI was that they were spying on local Arabs but that they could leave because they did not know anything about 9/11."

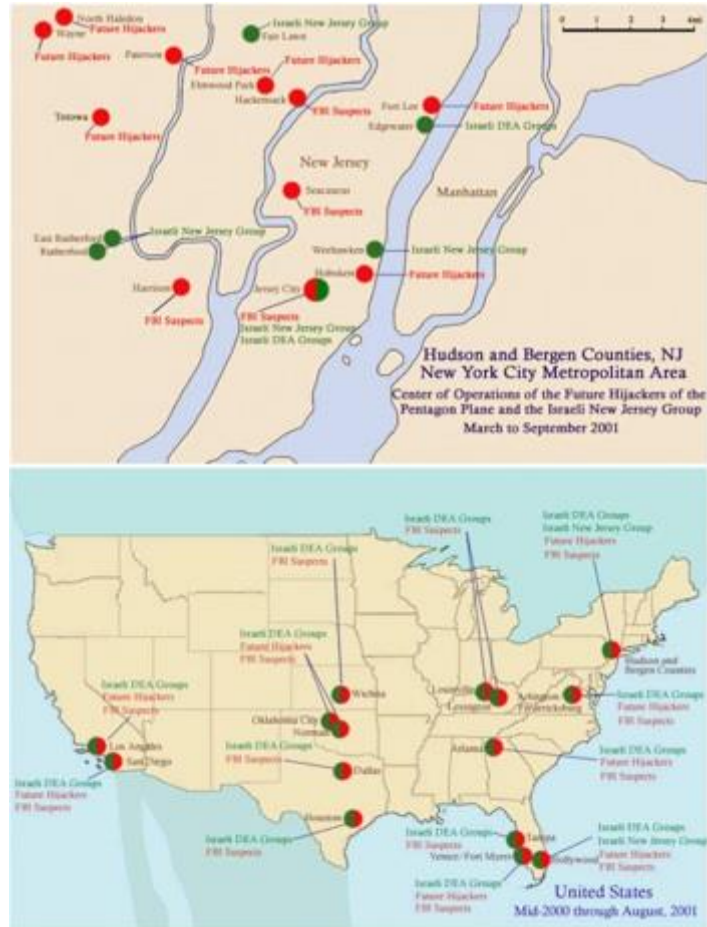
However, he added, the bureau was "very irritated because it was a case of so-called unilateral espionage, meaning they didn't know about it."

Spokesmen for the FBI, the Justice Department and the Immigration and Naturalization Service refused to discuss the case. Israeli officials flatly dismissed the allegations as untrue. However, the former American official said that after American authorities confronted Jerusalem on the issue at the end of last year, **the Israeli government acknowledged the operation and apologized for not coordinating it with Washington.**

The five men — Sivan and Paul Kurzberg, Oded Ellner, Omer Marmari and Yaron Shmuel — were arrested eight hours after the attacks by the Bergen County, N.J., police while driving in an **Urban Moving Systems van. The police acted on an FBI alert after the men allegedly were seen acting strangely while watching the events from the roof of their warehouse and the roof of their van.....**

A retired corporate lawyer, [Gerald Shea, put together all the government reports on Israeli DEA groups](#) he could find, and corroborated the locations of Israeli groups the DEA monitored and where in Florida the 9/11 hijackers lived when they were training. The results had interesting geographic distribution (which correlates with the Russian-Israeli organizations in Florida admittedly monitored by the Department of Justice as I noted above). These maps are from the [Shea's PDF file](#):





All righty then. That's a lot of heady stuff to consider. I'll note again that I am not a true believer in anything in today's post. I just want to offer some of the interesting things out there on the internet today. I strongly believe that the Republican establishment in America today is very complicit in international drug trafficking – especially since we've got a lot of the same guys who ran cocaine angles in Central America during the Iran-Contra affair. Past behavior is a guide towards future actions, if not ironclad proof.

Arbitrage is power: the buying and selling of goods across geographic space supports the global "shadow economy" that makes up a huge proportion of economic activity. Whoever controls the space, controls the money. Half of Afghanistan's economy is heroin production, for example. Follow the cash: it's one heck of a loose end of September 11, and the war on terror.

Posted by HongPong at [05:19 PM](#) | [Comments \(25\)](#) Relating to [4GW](#) , [Afghanistan](#) , [Conspiratoria](#) , [Information operations](#) , [International Politics](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Politics in Minnesota](#) , [The White House](#) , [War on Terror](#)

September 20, 2006

Thailand, PACOM and dominating the world through military coups

My perspective on Thailand is filtered by my dad's experience in Chile, when he was hitchhiking after college in the summer of 1973. There were CIA guys hanging around Santiago bars, and he recalled US Navy ships stationed offshore. The evidence is pretty clear that Nixon and Kissinger were supportive of the plot. My dad, sensing trouble, cleared out of there around Sept. 3 or so, a week before the Pinochet's coup.

My point here is to wonder about the links between the Thai coup leaders today and the U.S. [unified combat command](#) of the region, AKA USPACOM. What messages went between PACOM and Thailand this week as the Prime Minister was in New York? It wouldn't be the first time that a PM was at some American-related function as gears suddenly spun to get rid of him.

As the relative influence of the State Department and ambassadors has waned, the relationship between PACOM, CENTCOM, the other COMs and various local militaries has deepened. The link between our generals and the elite generals of other nations might be seen in the neocon worldview to be the ultimate safe power link, not subject to those pesky "election" thingies. The "New World Order" could be a tier of global generals tacitly allowed to overthrow democracies, with PACOM et al. handling the details and perhaps planting pretexts and back-stories, the information operations required to slot it into American discourse.

I recall an disturbing episode of "E-Ring" that featured a South American republic overthrown by a glorified general with Swift Return to Elections Promised Right Away, leaving Dennis Hopper as a proud American who preserved our all-important bauxite concession.

I don't know much (anything) about Thai politics, so I don't know if this coup was carried out by factions with tacit American support, like Rummy's recent attempt in Venezuela. However, I suspect a major element of global securitization trend, i.e. the political-military structures set up for "the war on terror", is to create security arrangements that supercede democratic structures. A tonic of temporary military fascisms and martial laws, normalized by "war on terror" ideology. (not that they would dare try it here.... ...)

Robert Kaplan is one of the President's favorite geopolitical writers, and his piece called "[Supremacy by Stealth](#)" (Atl. Monthly, July/Aug. 2003) suggests a secretive network of self-sustaining military leadership cells in nations around the world that can intervene when local democracy makes problems for the United States. Sort of a decentralized shadow military dictatorship kinda thing. I don't know if that's Thailand now, but when they claim a "good

coup," this I suspect is the implementation of the theory. Of course, the private military corporations - mercenary corporations like DynCorp and MPRI, full of retired American officers - are an ideal organizational glue for this whole approach.

Kaplan: (prolly should read all of it!)

Precisely because they foment dynamic change, liberal empires-like those of Venice, Great Britain, and the United States-create the conditions for their own demise. Thus they must be especially devious. The very spread of the democracy for which we struggle weakens our grip on many heretofore docile governments: behold the stubborn refusal by Turkey and Mexico to go along with U.S. policy on Iraq. Consequently, if we are to get our way, and at the same time to promote our democratic principles, we will have to operate nimbly, in the shadows and behind closed doors, using means far less obvious than the august array of power displayed in the air and ground war against Iraq. "Don't bluster, don't threaten, but quietly and severely punish bad behavior," says Eliot Cohen, a military historian at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, in Washington. "It's the way the Romans acted." Not just the Romans, of course: "Speak softly and carry a big stick" was Theodore Roosevelt's way of putting it.

.....

The United States has set up military missions throughout the formerly communist world, creating situations in which U.S. majors, lieutenant colonels, and full colonels are often advising foreign generals and chiefs of staff. Make no mistake: these officers are policymakers by another name. A Romanian-speaking expert on the Balkans, Army Lieutenant Colonel Charles van Bebber, has become well known in top military circles in Bucharest for helping to start the reform process that led to Romania's integration with NATO. Such small-scale but vital relationships give America an edge there over its Western European allies. One of the reasons that countries like Romania and Bulgaria supported the U.S. invasion of Iraq is that they now see their primary military relationship as being with America rather than with NATO as such.

.....

Rule No. 4
Use the Military to Promote Democracy

In an age of expanding democracy, military and intelligence contacts are more important than ever. Civilian politicians in weak and fledgling parliamentary systems come and go. But leading military and security men remain as behind-the-scenes props, sometimes even getting themselves elected to high office-as has happened in Nigeria, Venezuela, and Russia. "Whoever the President of Kenya is, the same group of guys run their special forces and the President's bodyguards," one Army Special Operations officer told me. "We've trained them. That translates into diplomatic leverage."

The U.S. military's bilateral relationships with foreign armies and their officer corps play a substantial role in safeguarding democratic transitions. Militaries have been the pillars of so many Third World societies for so long that the advent of elections can scarcely make them politically irrelevant, especially in Africa and Latin America. In some places, such as Turkey and Pakistan, the military and security services have at times actually enjoyed a reputation for greater liberalism than the civilian authorities. In Colombia in the mid-1990s the civilian government was tainted by drug money; the military police, who were seen to be less corrupt, helped to save our bilateral relationship.

.....

Our strategy in Colombia and Yemen is unspoken but simple: establish not a totally reformed military but a self-sustaining structure of a few specialized units. That's the best we will be able to do, and it will not require a heavy American military presence.

.....

Rule No. 6
Bring Back the Old Rules

Refer to the pre-Vietnam War rules by which small groups of quiet professionals would be used to help stabilize or destabilize a regime, depending on the circumstances and our needs. Covert means are more discreet and cheaper than declared war and large-scale mobilization, and in an age when an industrial economy is no longer necessary for the production of weapons of mass destruction, the American public, burdened with large government deficits, will demand an extraordinary degree of protection for as few tax dollars as possible. Impending technologies, such as bullets that can be directed at specific targets the way larger warheads are today, and satellites that can track the neurobiological signatures of individuals, will make assassinations far more feasible, enabling the United States to kill rulers like Saddam Hussein without having to harm their subject populations through conventional combat.

.....

As shocking as some of the above may sound, much of what I advocate is already taking place. The old rules, with their accent on discretion, were on the way back even before 9/11. Witness the increasing use of security-consulting firms and defense contractors that employ-in places as diverse as South America, the Caucasus, and West Africa-retired members of the U.S. military to conduct aerial surveillance, to train local armies, and to help struggling friendly regimes. Consider Military Professional Resources, Inc. (MPRI), of northern Virginia, which during the mid-1990s restructured and modernized the Croatian military. Shortly afterward Croatian battlefield success against the Serbs forced Belgrade to the peace table.

Encouraging an overall moral outcome to the Yugoslav conflict involved methods that were not always defensible in narrowly moral terms; the Croats, too, were murderers. And moral ambiguity is even greater in protracted wars, such as the Cold War and the war on terrorism, in which deals will always have to be struck with bad people and bad regimes for the sake of a larger good. The war on terrorism will not be successful if every aspect of its execution must be disclosed and justified-in terms of universal principles-to the satisfaction of the world media and world public opinion. The old rules are good rules because, as the ancient Chinese philosophers well knew, deception and occasional dirty work are morally preferable to launching a war.

Wikipedia quotes:

* "It is firm and continuing policy that Allende be overthrown by a coup. It would be much preferable to have this transpire prior to 24 October but efforts in this regard will continue vigorously beyond this date. We are to continue to generate maximum pressure toward this end, utilizing every appropriate resource. It is imperative that these actions be implemented clandestinely and securely so that the USG and American hand be well hidden..." — A communique to the CIA base in Chile, issued on October 16, 1970

* "[Military rule aims] to make Chile not a nation of proletarians, but a nation of entrepreneurs." — Augusto Pinochet

* "We didn't do it. I mean we helped them. [Garbled] created the conditions as great as possible. — Henry Kissinger conversing with President Nixon about the coup.

Posted by HongPong at [01:32 PM](#) | [Comments \(54\)](#) Relating to [International Politics](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [The White House](#) , [War on Terror](#)

September 16, 2006

Al Qaeda is still out there, military industrial profits are up and Colbert gets a Hungarian bridge!

We are not posting much until the new drupal site is rolled out. There has been a setback in the last couple days, as the image uploader mysteriously stopped working. Frustrating to have feature collapse!

Sweet t-shirt:



Neoconservative intelligence spoofing alert (via wotisitgood4.blogspot.com):

Laura Rozen:

"Interesting [Warren Strobel/John Wolcott](#) piece on an eerie echo of phony pre-war Iraq intelligence from discredited exile groups and figures being injected into the system via unconventional US government offices, this time on Iran
[.....]

And they nod to a piece I reported in the LAT a couple months back -- that a new "Iranian directorate" has been set up inside the same Pentagon policy shop that oversaw the Office of Special Plans.
[....]

It's hard to imagine that this office would wittingly use Ghorbanifar directly for Iran intelligence; but you don't have to go far to find the model that is more likely to be employed. Check out how Ghorbanifar worked with Congressman Curt Weldon -- using a cut-out, "Ali," Ghorbanifar's longtime business partner. And read the Chalabi section of the new Senate Intel committee Phase II report to see the pattern writ large -- the system by which almost a dozen fabricators were pushed forward by the INC to ply their wares on the US government, echoing and providing "confirmation" for the fabrications put forward by an earlier one; some of them have now totally disappeared. Some were pushed forward by the likes of Jim Woolsey through the DOD. I would think that responsible parties in the US government, say at the National Security Council where Stephen Hadley should by now know about Ghorbanifar because he approved the original Pentagon meetings with him in 2001, would want to be very careful with what they're getting this time on Iran from places like DIA and DoD, and be pressing back hard to question the validity and chain of custody of the original sources."

So they are fabricating another war in the usual ways. Fuck it.

Chavez pledges to support Iran in invasion: Sep. 14, 2006. 09:20 PM
ASSOCIATED PRESS

HAVANA — Venezuela's president pledged Thursday his country would support Iran if it was invaded as a result of its nuclear standoff with the UN Security Council.

The UN has demanded Iran suspend uranium enrichment amid concerns by some nations that it could be used for nuclear weapons. Iran insists the enrichment is aimed solely at producing electricity.

"Iran is under threat; there are plans to invade Iran, hopefully it won't happen, but we are with you," Hugo Chavez told Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad at a meeting of the Group of 15 developing nations on the sidelines of a Nonaligned Movement summit in Cuba.

Anti-U.S. states try to cement accord Sat Sep 16, 2006 5:00 PM By Anthony Boadle

HAVANA (Reuters) - Iran, North Korea, Venezuela and Cuba moved to cement an anti-U.S. alliance and support Tehran's right to nuclear technology at a summit of Non-Aligned nations on Saturday.

More than 40 heads of state and leaders from over 100 developing countries were debating a document supporting Iran's right to nuclear technology for peaceful ends and another sharply critical of Israel's recent war in Lebanon. But governments with friendly ties to Washington, among them India, Pakistan, Chile, Peru and Colombia, sought to steer the summit way from confrontation and finger-pointing at the United States.

North Korea blasted the United States for unilateral actions against individual countries and called for a revitalised NAM to raise a united voice. "The United States is attempting to deprive other countries of even their legitimate right to peaceful nuclear activities," North Korea's second-ranking leader, Kim Yong-nam, said.

A batch of info mostly from JuanCole.com, the indispensable guide to all things Middle Eastern. For example, dissecting a [Republican report on Iran](#) packed with disinformation ([more here](#)). Cole's [recap of 9/11 myths](#) is a good one. Also Steve Clemons' [TheWashingtonNote.com](#) is doing good things, such as predicting ahead of time that [John Bolton's recent re-nomination was sunk](#).

Indian guys observe that some [World Trade Center scrap found its way to India](#), since of course there was no reason to keep *evidence* around.

Valerie Plame scandal flips upside down? [CNN.com - Outed CIA agent Plame adds Armitage to lawsuit](#). The Armitage thing is a strange angle since Armitage was definitely not part of the neo-con camp in the run-up to the war - he was more of a Powell loyalist. It seems like in reality he was burned by his co-Deputy at State at the time, Marc Grossman, who is a shady neoconservative connected with drug trafficking since the good old days of Pakistan in the 1980s. According to some sources, Grossman sent Armitage a memo with Plame's name that did not flag her status as a covert agent.

In a tiny [tidbit](#), Sibel Edmonds has noted that on the morning of September 11, Marc Grossman was meeting with then-Rep. Porter Goss, Senator Bob

Graham, and Mahmoud Ahmed, the director of Pakistan's ISI intelligence agency, the guys that created the Taliban! Ahmed apparently [wired \\$100,000 to Mohammed Atta](#) before September 11. If you want some mind-blowingly weird shit about [Sibel Edmonds, Douglas Feith, Richard Perle](#), financing around 9/11 and other intrigues, check [this post](#), [this](#) and [this one](#) on [wotisitgood4.blogspot.com](#). Nice.

In the recently released Bin Laden tape, there were [odd discrepancies in how global media like chinese Xinhua and Al Jazeera](#) described the hijackers. Either media errors or Vast Conspiracy, I guess.

[BAE profit rises 28% on US orders for Iraq:](#)

Thursday, September 14, 2006

LONDON, SEPT 13: BAE Systems Plc, Europe's biggest weapons maker, said first-half profit rose 28%, more than analysts estimated, on US orders for Bradley fighting vehicles used in Iraq.

Net income increased to 405 million pounds (\$759 million), or 12.4 pence a share, from 317 million pounds a year earlier, BAE said on Wednesday in a statement. Profit beat the 354 million-pound estimate of six analysts surveyed by Bloomberg. BAE purchased United Defense Industries Inc, the maker of the Bradley, in June 2005 to become the Pentagon's seventh-biggest contractor. London-based BAE on September 6 recommended shareholders approve the sale of its 20% stake in Airbus SAS to concentrate on US defence acquisitions.

The sale "will allow BAE to focus on the defense sector and not be distracted by some serious problems that Airbus is facing," David Hart, an analyst at Fat Prophets in London, said in an interview. "Refitting Bradleys will be a strong market for them for years to come."

The spooky new pope, in his infinite wisdom, decided to quote some fossilized Byzantine emperor named [Manuel II Palaiologos](#), who hated Muslims and was therefore worth quoting.

The U.S. military is [starting to fray in a lot of ways](#), with gang members and white supremacists now getting recruited.

Sen. [Tom Harkin down in Iowa talking about the situation](#). [John Bolton's gonna fuck everything up](#). [Great Britain's role in the war in Lebanon - many details of nitty gritty](#) that Blair is going to pay for. Your [Iraq statistic reference](#).

A little humor: [Top ten dumbest secret identities](#). [Bert Blyleven drops the F-BOMB twice](#) during a Twins game broadcast!! Awesome. [Five great comedians that have totally lost it](#). Excellent.

Colbert scores a Hungarian bridge, or does he? Watch the video!

Most [middle eastern leaders tell Kofi the war has been a disaster](#) for them. Al Qaeda in Iraq - or not: check out the reasonable overview from a UPI analysis of the Iraq Sunni fundie situation:

[Eye on Iraq: The al-Qaida myth, By MARTIN SIEFF UPI Senior News Analyst](#)

Why did the tactical U.S. successes against al-Qaida within Iraq fail to have any positive impact on quelling the insurgency? Part of the answer is that al-Qaida and its allies had already succeeded in pulverizing the credibility of Iraq's three democratically elected governments by the time U.S. forces could make real inroads against them.

Also, U.S. planners failed disastrously to bring in enough American troops right after the fall of Saddam Hussein in April 2003 to ensure stability and the rapid restoration of basic government services in Iraq.

The U.S. obsession with ambitious, cumbersome constitutional processes distracted American planners and military from being able to focus on the primary issues of restoring power, running water and having enough reliable U.S. and allied troops to ensure law and order in Iraq's cities and towns. As a result, every one of the three civilian governments Iraq has so far had no grassroots credibility or been able to deliver basic protection or reliable services to a significant element of the population by itself.

Even in supposedly peaceful Shiite majority provinces across southern Iraq, the government forces only operate in alliance with, or at the sufferance of, a patch-quilt of Shiite militias that they do not control.

However, the real reason is that al-Qaida was never the only, or even the main, part of the Sunni resistance against U.S. forces in Iraq. By the time Zarqawi was killed, he was only the first among equals in a shifting coalition of anti-American Sunni militia groups. And when Zarqawi succeeded in provoking an overwhelming Shiite violent reaction after the Al-Askariya bombing, he achieved his ultimate strategic goal of making Iraq ungovernable through the U.S.-guided democratic political process that had been set up.

U.S. grand strategy in Iraq, in its obsession with Zarqawi and al-Qaida, never confronted the messy religious and ethnic political and paramilitary realities of the country. President George W. Bush, Vice President Dick Cheney and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld remained convinced through June that once Zarqawi was hunted down and killed and al-Qaida's operational command structure was smashed, then the Sunni insurgency would evaporate and peaceful, democratic political processes would at last triumph in Iraq.

But it has not happened that way and there is no real sign that it will. The condition we have described in these columns as "Belfast rules" or "Beirut rules" -- the condition of ongoing, many-sided sectarian war between different militias after a central governing authority has collapsed -- continues to be the case in Iraq. Conditions in that unhappy country will only start to improve when U.S. policymakers finally confront this unpleasant fact.

Doomed Palestinians trapped in Iraq: Talk about double jeopardy: Palestinians that resettled after the Nakba (catastrophe of Israel's creation) in Iraq are now pretty much screwed, in particular since Shiites don't like them. This is yet another material reason that West Bank settlements are extremely bad for the world, Arabs and the United States.

Reuters: [IRAQ: Palestinian refugees targeted by militants receive no help](#)

13 Sep 2006 13:29:12 GMT

BAGHDAD, 13 September (IRIN) - The deteriorating conditions of Palestinians in Iraq have been highlighted in a report by US-based NGO Human Rights Watch (HRW).

The report, released on 10 September, said that Palestinian refugees living in Iraq are being targeted by mostly Shi'ite militant groups and are also being harassed by the government.

"Since the fall of [former president] Saddam Hussein's government, Palestinian refugees in Iraq have increasingly become targets of violence and persecution," said Sarah Leah Whitson, HRW's Middle East director.

"Shi'ite militant groups have murdered dozens of Palestinian refugees, and the Iraqi government has made it difficult for these refugees to stay legally in Iraq by imposing onerous registration requirements," she added.

Since we are posting Prof. Juan Cole-derived goodies today, I'm going to have to pilfer his post on 9/11 and Al Qaeda because it makes 1000% more sense than any other bullshit in the media in the last week. I hope he understands!

September 11, 2006: [The War with al-Qaeda](#)

The war with al-Qaeda has many dimensions. There is the war with the organization itself. There is the struggle against its offshoots and copycats. There is cooperation with Muslim governments and communities in derailing the threat. There is the question of the strength of Sunni fundamentalist parties that might support al-Qaeda. And there is winning hearts and minds in the Muslim world.

The war with the organization itself largely succeeded by 2003 and no further progress seems to have been made since that time. Some 600 al-Qaeda operatives were captured in Pakistan, many of them through a sting arranged inside the Karachi Western Union office, according to Ron Susskind. The original al-Qaeda has been badly disrupted as to command and control.

It is not, however, dead. Every evidence is that the London subway bombings of a little over a year ago had a strong connection to Ayman al-Zawahiri. He appears to have worked with a Pakistani terrorist group such as Jaish-i Muhammad or Lashkar-i Tayyibah or whatever they are calling themselves these days to recruit the young Britons that carried out the attack. Al-Zawahiri had in his possession their suicide tapes, and broadcast them on Aljazeera. It is urgent that Usamah Bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri be captured. [Declan Walsh explains why this is difficult.](#)

It may well be that the Egyptian Islamic Jihad offshoot operating in the Sinai, which conducted the Sharm El Shaikh and Taba bombings of tourist hotels, has a link to Zawahiri.

Al-Qaeda's popularity is declining in some quarters. A Pew poll in 2005 found that significantly fewer numbers of Moroccans, Turks and Indonesians were confident in Bin Laden that year than the two previous years. On the other hand, a majority of Jordanians and Pakistanis continued to have a high regard for his competency.

The Madrid train bombings show the severe challenge posed by local copycat groups that do not have a direct connection to al-Qaeda, but take up one of its calls to action and learn techniques from the internet. If a group has at least some email connections to a known terror group or individual already under surveillance, at least there is a chance of cracking the plot. If they are all "newskins," that makes them invisible.

US cooperation with Middle Eastern governments is at a high level, from all accounts. The operation

against Abu Musab al-Zarqawi appears to have been very significantly a Jordanian operation. Egypt and the US conduct joint military exercises. I have a sense that the relationship with Morocco has deepened. Algeria's government fought a decade-long civil war against Islamist political forces, some of them very violent, and has reason to cooperate.

On the negative side, the Sunni Arabs of Iraq appear ever increasingly to be organized by radical Muslim fundamentalist forces of various sorts. This population of some 5 million had been among the bulwarks of secular Arab nationalism in the past, but those days are long gone.

The Islamic Action Council in Pakistan, some members of which sympathize with al-Qaeda and the Taliban, continues to rule the Northwest Frontier Province. The central government, however, which is more secular, has stopped it from implementing Islamic law and hisbah (measures that give anyone standing in enforcing morality on others). Parliament has even moved to [rewrite Pakistan's flawed rape law](#), which is based on Gen. Zia ul-Haq's Islamization measures and is so poorly framed that it often ends up allowing the victims to be punished!

Four MPs from the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan went to mourn Zarqawi's death with his family, triggering sanctions against them. The incident raised questions about how much distance there is between the Salafi Jihadis, the violent revivalists, and the conservative religious parties that seem to eschew violence and pursue ordinary politics.

The US pressured Egypt to open up its parliamentary elections last fall, and the Mubarak regime took revenge by letting 88 Muslim Brother delegates be seated in a chamber with a little over 400 members. These supported Hizbullah in the recent Israel-Lebanon War and have demanded that the Camp David Accords be revoked.

Hamas won the elections in the Palestine Authority. The Israelis have taken many of the elected Hamas representatives and officials into custody, however, and have repeatedly bombed the Interior Ministry in Gaza. These developments have added to the popularity of Hamas and radical fundamentalism while making a mockery of the Bush administration's stated commitment to democratization.

Hizbullah itself achieved enormous popularity, and enhanced the prestige of radical Muslim fundamentalism, by its ability to make a stand before the Israeli military machine. This development will ripple through the region, to the disadvantage of more secular, moderate forces.

The evidence with regard to hearts and minds is mixed. The [Pew Global Attitudes Project](#) reports on Indonesia, the world's largest Muslim country, with a population of 224 mn. In 2000, 70 percent of Indonesians viewed the United States favorably. (Such numbers were typical for US Muslim allies in areas not consumed by the Arab-Israeli conflict). In 2002 as a result of the Afghanistan war, the number fell to 60 percent. Then in 2003 after Bush invaded Iraq, it fell to **15 percent**. After Bush sent the US Navy to help Indonesia in the aftermath of the tsunami, the numbers rebounded in 2005 to 38 percent. In 2006 they have fallen again, down to 30 percent.

So since 2000, we have fallen from 70 percent approval in Indonesia to only 30 percent, and at some points we were way down. This story contains a caution and also some encouraging news. The caution is that we are losing the Indonesia public because of this Iraq occupation. It is true in Turkey, as well, and lots of other places. The good news is that it is not irreversible. Do some nice things for someone, and the numbers go up. (The numbers also went up in Pakistan after we diverted some military helicopters to help the victims of the Kashmir earthquake). If we ended our Iraq presence, there is a chance we could repair these relationships with some munificent gestures.

In Turkey, the favorability rating of the US in 2002 was 52 percent. It is now 15 percent. That is a scary plummet! I suspect it is all about Iraq, and **particularly the feeling that the US is letting the**

Iraqi Kurds harbor the PKK terrorists, who are blowing things up in Turkey.

The only really good news in the Pew findings is that the US has grown in popularity in Morocco, to nearly 50%, and is especially popular with youth and women. Moroccans have said they are worried about terrorism and about too much influence of religion in politics. I don't entirely understand what is driving the Morocco numbers, since they were pretty upset about Iraq, but the change should be studied for what it can tell us about doing things right. One thing that helps is that Morocco is a long way from the Arab-Israeli conflict, and, in fact, has good behind the scenes relations with Israel.

The Arab world mostly just dislikes US policy, mainly because of kneejerk support for Israeli depredations against Palestinians. The dislike doesn't change that much, though we reached a nadir in 2003-2004. In 2002 76 percent of the Egyptian public disapproved of us. In 2004 that rose to **98 percent**. It has fallen down to 86 percent in 2006. Very few Egyptians approve of US foreign policy. They don't even like US intervention to open up the Egyptian political system.

To the extent that small terrorist groups benefit in their recruitment and in motivating recruits from deeply negative attitudes to the United States, these polling numbers are extremely disturbing. The main things driving a polarization between Muslim publics and the US are not al-Qaeda or terrorism, however. They are Iraq, Palestine and Lebanon. It is the policy. The policy can provoke anger and engender threat, and that is why it had better be a damn good policy. It can also make for friendships, which is what we should be aiming at.

It wouldn't take much now to settle the Israel-Palestine thing, and the time is ripe to have Israel give back the Golan to Syria and the Shebaa Farms to Lebanon in return for a genuine peace process. The Israelis are not made more secure by crowding into the West Bank or bombing Gaza daily. South Lebanon has demonstrated the dangers of ever more sophisticated microwars over rugged territory. It is time for Israel, and for the United States, to do the right thing and rescue the Palestinians from the curse of statelessness, the slavery of the 21st century. Ending this debilitating struggle would also be the very best thing for the Israelis themselves. In one fell swoop, the US would have solved 80 percent of its problems with the Muslim world and vastly reduced the threat of terrorism.

But of all the things this administration has done badly, it has been worst of all at making friends in the region. That could end up hurting us most of all, and playing into Bin Laden's increasingly ghostly hands.

Well that does it for now. Have a nice weekend.

Posted by HongPong at [06:34 PM](#) | [Comments \(96\)](#) Relating to [Conspiratoria](#) , [Iran](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#)

September 03, 2006

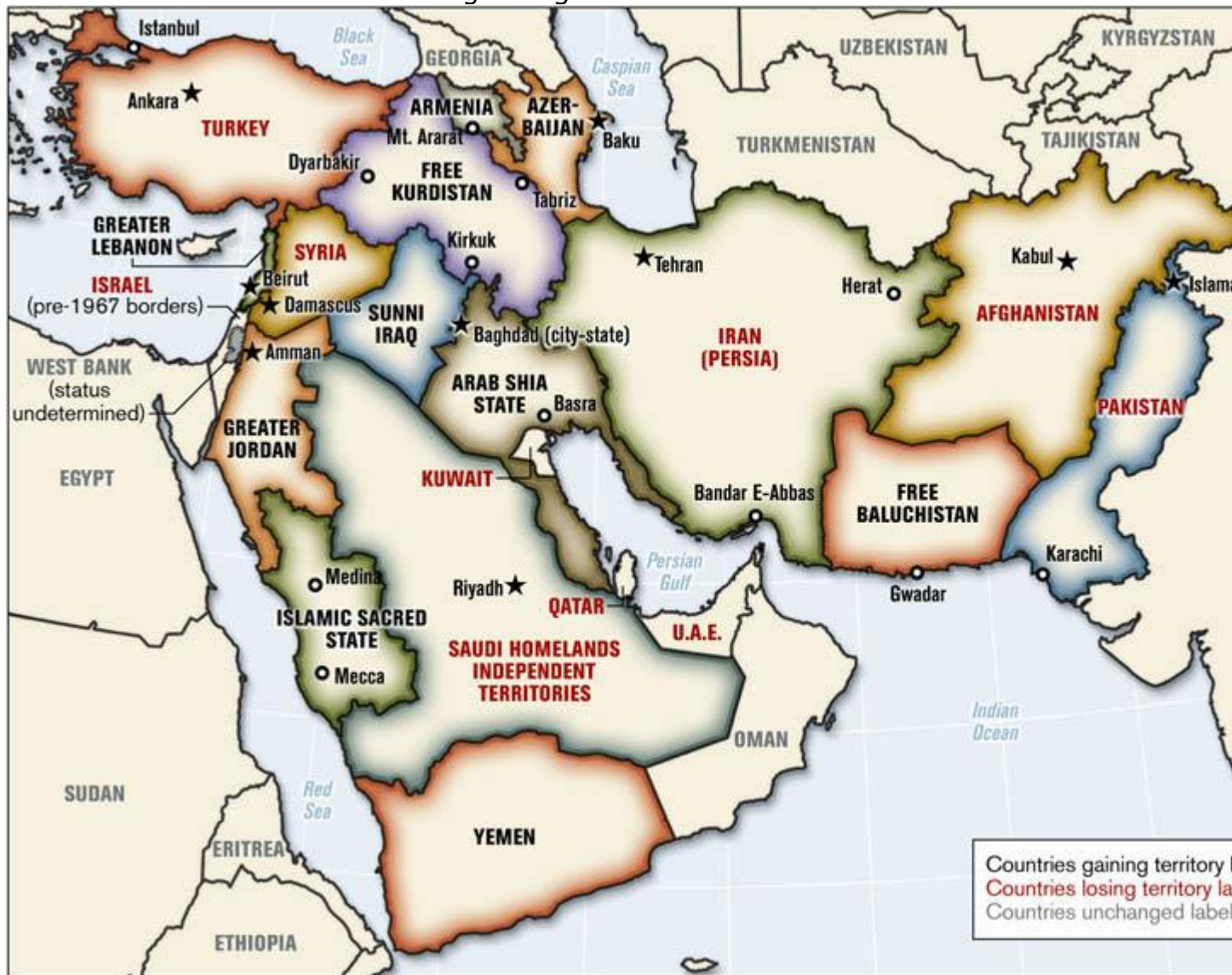
NEVER AGAIN: "Ethnic cleansing works:" Something wrong with this picture: namely, an apocalyptic scene of violence and carnage for years to come

There are some things that should set off the old alarm bells. As PrisonPlanet put it in their usual understated way, [Military-Industrial Complex Kingpins Call For Genocide To Kick-Start World War Three](#). But that would appear to be the [plan](#):

"There will be no peace. At any given moment for the rest of our lifetimes, there will be multiple conflicts in mutating forms around the globe. Violent conflict will dominate the headlines, but cultural and economic struggles will be steadier and ultimately more decisive. The de facto role of the US

armed forces will be to keep the world safe for our economy and open to our cultural assault. To those ends, we will do a fair amount of killing."

This scheme published in a Pentagon periodical is one of the more wicked things imaginable:



The pathway to the apocalypse lies in grand plans...

Armed Forces Journal: [Blood borders: How a better Middle East would look](#)

By Ralph Peters

International borders are never completely just. But the degree of injustice they inflict upon those whom frontiers force together or separate makes an enormous difference — often the difference between freedom and oppression, tolerance and atrocity, the rule of law and terrorism, or even peace and war.

The most arbitrary and distorted borders in the world are in Africa and the Middle East. Drawn by self-interested Europeans (who have had sufficient trouble defining their own frontiers), Africa's borders

continue to provoke the deaths of millions of local inhabitants. But the unjust borders in the Middle East — to borrow from Churchill — generate more trouble than can be consumed locally.

While the Middle East has far more problems than dysfunctional borders alone — from cultural stagnation through scandalous inequality to deadly religious extremism — the greatest taboo in striving to understand the region's comprehensive failure isn't Islam but the awful-but-sacrosanct international boundaries worshipped by our own diplomats.

.....**Oh, and one other dirty little secret from 5,000 years of history: Ethnic cleansing works.**

Begin with the border issue most sensitive to American readers: For Israel to have any hope of living in reasonable peace with its neighbors, it will have to return to its pre-1967 borders — with essential local adjustments for legitimate security concerns. But the issue of the territories surrounding Jerusalem, a city stained with thousands of years of blood, may prove intractable beyond our lifetimes. Where all parties have turned their god into a real-estate tycoon, literal turf battles have a tenacity unrivaled by mere greed for oil wealth or ethnic squabbles. So let us set aside this single overstudied issue and turn to those that are studiously ignored.

Well, ducking the nuclear reactor of tension that is the West Bank settlement complex is one way to help yourself along to a greater ethnic cleansing project, especially one that would "work" so well.

From time to time, other people have developed maps to represent reorganizing the regions they deem to be inherently subordinate. Thanks to Wikipedia for noting [Reichskommissariat Ostland](#): The Ostland was the "East Land" of Poland that the Nazis wanted to reshuffle - with ethnic Germans in the western sector, Poles in the center, and the Jews pushed off to the east, destination unresolved. The Jews were first detained into camps or executed at random by Einsatzgruppen SS units.



The result was rationalized annihilation:





"Ethnic cleansing works."

We need to listen very carefully to what they say. To which we can only reply:

NEVER AGAIN.

Not even in "free Baluchistan".

Posted by HongPong at [01:48 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [War on Terror](#)

August 31, 2006

A classic verse of the drug wars: "The Central Intelligence Agency takes weight faithfully"... it still adds up



It occurred to me the other day that a couple song lyrics on this album deserved their own post... This album was among my favorites for a while. In fact, listening to it while writing a paper had a seriously disruptive effect on my thinking. Immortal Technique played Macalester with Jean Grae once and it was pretty good. I said hi. The artwork in 'Revolutionary Volume II', featured above, was indeed pretty goddamn sweet, Secret Service-freakout worthy. The second song here implies that 9/11 was a controlled demolition, and that Bush just takes orders on his cell phone from the same guys that sabotaged Senator Wellstone.

In some ways I used to be more skeptical, but as time has passed, it just seems more and more relevant... Check out [this interview](#), his [site is over here](#). Looks like he'll get another album out sometime this year.

In the cocaine song I always thought the lyric was "these walls have ends," not "ears." That seemed clever, as the war on drugs is basically an ugly joke that arcs right back to the top of power. After all, any real geopolitical player would be involved with the one good that gets them the best arbitrage over geographic space. When I finally get this site over to Drupal, there's going to be a whole section on this...

In the war on drugs, which side is the CIA on?

In the meantime, check out '[Crack the CIA](#)', a 9-minute video posted on the [Guerrilla News Network](#) site a while ago, is a pretty good introduction to the Barry Seal and the Iran-Contra-Cocaine nexus, Mena AK, Michael Ruppert's confrontation in a packed, angry Los Angeles community meeting with CIA director John Deutsch with stories of covert operations channeling powder into California during the 1970s and 80s. Good stuff. 9 minutes...

Immortal Technique: [Revolutionary, Volume II](#) (2003). [Peruvian Cocaine](#): (f/ C-Rayz Walz, Diabolic, Loucifer)

[Intro: from the film "Scarface"]

Host: I've heard whispers about the financial support your government receives from the drug industry.

Guest: Well, the irony of this, of course, is that this money, which is in the billions, is coming from your country. You see, you are the major purchaser of our national product, which is of course cocaine.

Host: On one hand, you're saying the United States government is spending millions of dollars to eliminate the flow of drugs onto our streets. At the same time, we are doing business with the very same government that is flooding our streets with cocaine.

Guest: Mmm-hmm, si, si. Let me show you a few other characters that are involved in this tragic comedy.

[Beat starts]

Two Men Speak in Spanish

[Immortal Technique - Worker]

I'm on the border of Bolivia, working for pennies
Treated like a slave, the coke fields have to be ready
The spirit of my people is starving, broken and sweaty
Dreaming about revolution (REVOLUTION!) looking at my machete
But the workload is too heavy to rise up in arms
And if I ran away, I know they'd probably murder my moms
So I pray to "Heso Presto" when I go to the mission
Process the cocaine, paced and play my position

[Pumpkinhead - Cocaine Field Boss]

Ok, listen while I'm out there, just give me my product
Before we chop off ya hands for worker's misconduct
I got the power to shoot a copper, and not get charged
And it would be sad to see your family in front of a firing squad
So to feed your kids, I need these bricks
40 tons in total, let me test it, indeed I (*sniff*)
Shit, this is good, pass me a tissue
And don't worry about them, I paid off the officials

[Diabolic - Peruvian Leader]

Yo, it don't come as a challenge, I'm the son of some of the foulest
Elected by my people...the only one on the ballot
Born and bred to consult with feds, I laugh at fate
And assassinate my predecessor to have his place

In a third-world fashion state, lock the nation
With 90% of the wealth in 10% of the population
The Central Intelligence Agency takes weight faithfully
The finest type of China white and cocaine you'll see

[Tonedeff - American Drug Distributor]
Honey I'm home, nevermind why our bank account's suddenly grown
It's funny, we're so out of this debt from this money we owe
Woulda ya...mind if I told you I had two governments overthrown
To keep our son enrolled in a private school, and to keep ya tummy swollen
C'mon, our fuckin' home was built on the foundation of bloody throats
The hungry stolen of they souls, of course this country's runnin' coke
I took a stunted oath to hush the one's who know
But CIA conducts the flow of these young hustlers who lust for dough

[Poison Pen - Drug Dealer]
I don't work in the hood (Hit my connect)
Plus what's really good, they supply for the hood
These dudes fucking crack me up, scrutinize like we inferior
Petrified when we meet in my area (calm down)
My dude's'll shoot until I say so, got the loot?
Give me the YAY YAY like Ice Cube, so don't play with my llello
We won't stop for you bastards
Must choose (?), chop it and bag it

[Loucifer - Undercover Police Officer]
Taking pictures and tapping phones
Debating snitches and cracking codes
Past a couple, blast the fo',
Want any hustler stacking dough with probably crack the blow
And my overtime is where your taxes go
I gain your trust
Get you to hand weight to us because we paid up front
On the low with cameras taping ya
Getting pop away? The prison sentence is going to
Make the officer leave with two ki's out the evidence room

[C-Rayz Walz - Prison Inmate]
Out the evidence room (*Said with Loucifer*)
Went my fame, truck, boat or plane, they watching you
You think you got work? They copping too
We control blocks, they lock countries
Ya own companies, we had nice cars and sneaker money
Now there's players out there, talking 'bout the holding
With bugs in they house like they down South with windows open
Your dough ain't long, you wrong, you take shorts and (?)
Feds will be up in your mouth...like forks and spoons
So enjoy the rush, live plush off Coke bread
Soon you'll be in a cell with me, like Jenny Lopez
In school, I was a bully, now life is fully a joke
I keep a flow on a boat for Peruvian Coke
Players do favors for governors and tax makers
Fat Quakers smoke crack and sex acts with bad mayors
The walls got ears, you big mouths probably scared

Not prepared to do years like Javier

[Immortal Technique Speaking]

The story just told is an example of the path that drugs take on their way to every neighborhood, in every state of this country. It's a lot deeper than the niggas on your block. So when they point the finger at you, brother men, this is what you've got to tell them:

[Wesley Snipes - from "New Jack City"]

I'm not guilty. YOU'RE the one that's guilty. The lawmakers, the politicians, the Columbian drug lords, all you who lobby against making drugs legal. Just like you did with alcohol during the prohibition. You're the one who's guilty. I mean, c'mon, let's kick the ballistics here: Ain't no Uzi's made in Harlem. Not one of us in here owns a poppy field. This thing is bigger than (Immortal Technique). This is big business. This is the American way.

"Cause of Death" - same album... with an intro from... Mumia Abu Jamal!

To think about the origins of hip hop in this culture and also about homeland security is to see that there are at the very least two worlds in America. One of the well-to-do and the struggling. For if ever there was the absence of homeland security it is seen in the gritty roots of hip hop.

For the music arises from a generation that feels with some justice that they have been betrayed by those who came before them. That they are at best tolerated in schools, feared on the streets, and almost inevitably destined for the hell holes of prison. They grew up hungry, hated and unloved. And this is the psychic fuel that seems to generate the anger that seems endemic in much of the music and poetry. One senses very little hope above the personal goals of wealth and the climb above the pit of poverty.

In the broader society the opposite is true, for here more than any place on earth wealth is more wide spread and so bountiful. What passes for the middle class in America could pass for the upper class in most of the rest of the world. They're very opulent and relative wealth makes the insecure. And homeland security is a governmental phrase that is as oxymoronic, as crazy as saying military intelligence, or the U.S Department of Justice.

They're just words that have very little relationship to reality. And do you feel safer now? Do you think you will anytime soon? Do you think duck tape and Kleenex and color codes will make you safer? From Death Row, this is Mumia Abu Jamal...

[Talking]

Immortal Technique

Revolutionary Volume 2

Yeah, broadcasting live from Harlem, New York

Let the truth be known..

[Verse 1]

You better watch what the fuck flies outta ya mouth
Or I'ma hijack a plane and fly it into your house
Burn your apartment with your family tied to the couch
And slit your throat, so when you scream, only blood comes out
I doubt that there could ever be...a more wicked MC

'Cuz AIDs infested child molesters aren't sicker than me
I see the world for what it is, beyond the white and the black
The way the government downplays historical facts
'Cuz the United States sponsored the rise of the 3rd Reich
Just like the CIA trained terrorists to the fight
Build bombs and sneak box cutters onto a flight
When I was a child, the Devil himself bought me a mic
But I refused the offer, 'cuz God sent me to strike
With skills unused like fallopian tubes on a dyke
My words'll expose George Bush and Bin Laden
As two separate parts of the same seven headed dragon
And you can't fathom the truth, so you don't hear me
You think illuminati's just a fuckin conspiracy theory?
That's why Conservative racists are all runnin' shit
And your phone is tapped by the Federal Government
So I'm jammin' frequencies in ya brain when you speak to me
Technique will rip a rapper to pieces indecently
Pack weapons illegally, because I'm never hesitant
Sniper scoping a commission controllin the president

[Hook]

Father, forgive them, for they don't know right from wrong
The truth will set you free, written down in this song
And the song has the Cause of Death written in code
The Word of God brought to life, that'll save ya soul...

Save ya soul motherfucker...save ya soul..

Yeah, yeah, yeah

[Verse 2]

I hacked the Pentagon for self-incriminating evidence
Of Republican manufactured white powder pestilence
Marines Corps. flat (?) vest, with the guns and ammo
Spittin' bars like a demon stuck inside a piano
Turn a Sambo into a soldier with just one line
Now here's the truth about the system that'll fuck up your mind
They gave Al Qaeda 6 billion dollars in 1989 to 1992
And now the last chapters of Revelations are coming true

And I know a lot of people find it hard to swallow this
Because subliminal bigotry makes you hate my politics
But you act like America wouldn't destroy two buildings
In a country that was sponsoring bombs dropped on our children
I was watching the Towers, and though I wasn't the closest
I saw them crumble to the Earth like they was full of explosives
And they thought nobody noticed the news report that they did
About the bombs planted on the George Washington bridge
Four Non-Arabs arrested during the emergency
And then it disappeared from the news permanently
They dubbed a tape of Osama, and they said it was proof
"Jealous of our freedom," I can't believe you bought that excuse
Rockin a motherfucking flag don't make you a hero
Word to Ground Zero

**The Devil crept into Heaven, God overslept on the 7th
The New World Order was born on September 11**

[Hook]

[Verse 3]

And just so Conservatives don't take it to heart

I don't think Bush did it, 'cuz he isn't that smart

He's just a stupid puppet taking orders on his cell phone

From the same people that sabotaged Senator Wellstone

The military industry got it poppin' and lockin'

Looking for a way to justify the Wolfowitz Doctrine

And as a matter of fact, Rumsfeld, now that I think back

Without 9/11, you couldn't have a war in Iraq

Or a Defense budget of world conquest proportions

Kill freedom of speech and revoke the right to abortions

Tax cut extortion, a blessing to the wealthy and wicked

But you still have to answer to the Armageddon you scripted

And Dick Cheney, you fuckin leech, tell them your plans

About building your pipelines through Afghanistan

And how Israeli troops trained the Taliban in Pakistan

You might have some house niggaz fooled, but I understand

Colonialism is sponsored by corporations

That's why Halliburton gets paid to rebuild nations

Tell me the truth, I don't scare into paralysis

I know the CIA saw Bin Laden on dialysis

In '98 when he was Top Ten for the FBI

Government ties is really why the Government lies

Read it yourself instead of asking the Government why

'Cuz then the Cause of Death will cause the propaganda to die..

[Man talking]

He is scheduled for 60 Minutes next. He is going on

French, Italian, Japanese television. People

everywhere are starting to listen to him. It's embarrassing...

You better watch what the fuck flies outta your mouth...

Posted by HongPong at [01:22 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Conspiratoria](#) , [International Politics](#) , [Kulturny](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Music](#)

August 23, 2006

New Loose Change edition; Purple Heart Iraq sgt. / Intel analyst labeled "disloyal" to US for questioning 9/11's lack of DC/PA plane debris. He suggests "the military-industrial complex"... Sweet

I have heard there are some odd things about 9/11. I am not a big believer in the grand conspiracy theories out there, but I do think that there ought to be a fresh investigation. These days, they are going after soldiers who actually try to address the '9/11 skeptics' or '9/11 truth' movement, whatever you want to call it. It's a little bit weird, and it's tougher for the media to deal with the issue of '9/11 skepticism' than the average person.

Your everyday guy still knows that *politics is theater* and that they should take all this shit with a grain of salt to begin with. That's why half the country thinks the government concealed something about that day:

In the telephone survey of 1200 individuals, just 47% agreed that "the 9/11 attacks were thoroughly investigated and that any speculation about US government involvement is nonsense." Almost as many, 45%, indicated they were more likely to agree "that so many unanswered questions about 9/11 remain that Congress or an International Tribunal should re-investigate the attacks, including whether any US government officials consciously allowed or helped facilitate their success."

.....

This rough balance in opinions is itself a striking finding. **It suggests that doubts about the officials accounts of 9/11, far from representing an extreme fringe position, have become a standard component of anti-establishment attitudes.**

When asked specifically if they thought there had been a government coverup of evidence that contradicts the official story, the results were again not far from an even split, with 48% rejecting the idea of a deliberate coverup and 42% supporting it. **Belief in a coverup was the majority position among Democrats, 18-29 year olds, and a few other groups.**

In an attempt to focus more specifically on the attitudes of those who were best informed about the events of 9/11, the poll asked its responders if they were aware of WTC Building 7, whose collapse on September 11 for no obvious reason was not investigated by the 9/11 Commission. **Only 52% answered that they were aware of the collapse of Building 7, but out of that subgroup, 73% believed it should have been investigated.**

On a related topic, those polled were asked if they felt the Bush Administration had exploited the September 11th attacks to justify the invasion of Iraq or if Bush had been right to go into Iraq because Saddam Hussein supported terrorism. Here the country was divided exactly, 44% to 44%, with the answers following party lines more closely than those to the 9/11 questions. Among Republicans, 72% felt the invasion was appropriate, while among Democrats 69% felt it was not.

A whole range of weird things have yet to be explained about the day which justified virtually everything that came after.

Perhaps all the 9/11 skepticism is more about blowback about how its meaning has stretched from Tax Cuts to threatening Syria. If the sheer evilness of 9/11 encompasses the All-Meaning of All-Politics, its been stretched too far, all the way to the Eschaton in symbolic logic. The logical break of 9/11 felt apocalyptic, but it actually wasn't the apocalypse. However, as a 'pretext,' a political object that constructs morality for the Everyday Joe, it is like this infinite pool of power. The Bush Administration's representation of 9/11's symbolic force is supposed to overwhelm everything else.

Since this is totally impossible, everyday folks are going to nitpick at how loose a weave the official story really is.

If September 11 is supposed to be some unprecedented historical Leviathan around which all politics and morality revolve, more people are going to

suspect that its innards, its Official Story of Total Victimization, might be false as well.

In any case, I think that everything should be rehashed in a complete investigation of primary evidence sources from the top down, starting with NORAD and the war games that day. There should be a [bullet list of 40 things](#) that a new investigation should specifically answer. Oh wait, that [spooky list already exists](#).

Power is a shady thing, but people in this country aren't going to buy a really complex theory, with unclear motives and a mishmash of silly shit. Or are they? This seems to be DaVinci Code America now, anyway. The competing cases ought to be made all over again, official and the constellation of 'conspiracy theories'.

What the major media portrays as "Conspiracy theories" are often just interpretations of evidence, and naughty, improper questions. Throughout history, conspiracy theories have featured ethnic stereotypes, psychological projection of fear and chaos onto other groups, illusions of loss of autonomy, centrality, messianism, and connecting pieces that just plain aren't really connected. Oh wait, that does sound a bit like the official story...

So don't leap onto any quick and easy explanation of some event, Loose Change or otherwise. The official story came pretty quick and easy, then they stonewalled real investigations for a long time. And of course destroyed the evidence of the WTC rubble itself. But besides that, everything is Kosher as Cecil's Deli.

Loose change controls the demolition of the Man's official version of 9/11?



There is a slightly newer version of '[Loose Change](#)', the premiere 9/11 conspiracy video, freely available now via Google Video. Or you can see it embedded below. It is the "2nd edition recut", and as an [interview posted on Alternet](#) talked about, the producers of this tiny video, done on less than \$10,000, have managed to get a pretty damn amazing amount of buzz for their little Final Cut Pro project. (I recognize those FCP filters & transitions. Anyway...) They basically just [put together stories that were floating around the Internet](#), shot a couple interviews and got some really excellent DJs. This version is different than v2-original, with some nicer map backgrounds and animated scenes. Some lines have been changed, and I think the narrator's voice might be someone else, though that may be a sound codec issue.

The spookiest addition was a little more footage of the sudden 'crimping' of the WTC structure itself, and there's a sweet new song at the end. It also has a long bit with that University of Wisconsin professor against Hannity on FOX, and a much extended version of an interview they shot with a WTC maintenance guy who talks about the continuous explosions he heard during the attack.

Here are direct links to some good bits of the movie using Google Video time-bookmarks: [the animation of the plane intersecting the Pentagon](#). Even better, [spotting the 'controlled demolition' of the WTC](#), marked by nifty little brackets. This is the new bit with [9/11 skeptic U/W prof Barrett vs Hannity. Conclusion with sweet new song](#). Not that I am a believer, but it is all presented quite well. Embedded here for ya:



SFC Buswell:

I mean how are Arabs benefiting from pulling off 911? They have more war, more death and dismal conditions, so, how did 911 benefit them? Answer: It didn't. So, who benefited from 9-11? The answer is sad, but simple; The Military Industrial [sic] Complex.

The Lone Star Iconoclast Online: (nice name for a site!) Under Fire! U.S. Army Intelligence Analyst Targeted For Suggesting New Independent 9/11 Investigation

Monday, August 21, 2006 - By Stephen Webster, Investigative Reporter

Army: Doubting Official 9/11 Story Is 'Disloyal To The United States'

FT. SAM HOUSTON, Texas — Forty-one-year-old Sergeant First Class Donald Buswell is a hero. Having served over 19 years in the United States Army, Buswell has seen a lot of terrain. On April 15, 2004, he was injured in a rocket attack while serving a tour in Iraq. For this, SFC Buswell was given a Purple Heart. And until recently, Buswell was an Intelligence Analyst stationed at Ft. Sam Houston, Texas.

But if one were to ask Buswell's Commanding Officer what he thinks of the Sergeant, the response would likely sound a little bit more like, "No comment."

Such were the words given to The Iconoclast by Lieutenant Colonel Jane Crichton after inquiring why SFC Buswell is the focus of an investigation initiated by Colonel Luke S. Green, Chief of Staff at Fifth Army in Ft. Sam Houston.

According to unnamed military sources contacted by The Iconoclast, SFC Buswell "used his Government issued email account to send messages disloyal to the United States ..." Because of these statements, SFC Buswell could soon find himself dishonorably discharged, court marshaled, or worse.

It all started as a simple response to a common, unsolicited mass email, sent to 38 individuals at Ft. Sam Houston on Aug. 2, 2006. The message, as well as Buswell's response, is among documents obtained by The Iconoclast. The sender of the first message is identified as "Anderson, Larry Mr JMC". It reads:

This is being sent more as assurance for what happens when a plane hits a nuclear site more so than in response to that German website alleging a government conspiracy related to the 9/11 Pentagon plane crash (though the website does present an interesting perspective) – LarrySubject: F-4 vs. Concrete Wall

Take a look at this clip [not included] and you'll get a good feel for what happens to an airplane when it hits a concrete wall. Many of you have seen the produced (but not factual), Michael Moore-esque website that asks the question; "If it's true that a Boeing airliner hit the Pentagon, what happened to all the parts of it? Why do we not find more pieces of it?

Where did all that mass GO???" (Therefore, the paranoid loony liberal reasoning, 9-11 must have been a US gov't conspiracy!) Well, for those who question what happened to "all the mass of that airplane".....watch this clip.

It's the old Air Force engineering tests of the concrete barrier that surrounds nuclear reactor domes — tests to see if it will indeed survive an aerial attack. With the hi-speed cameras rolling, they

accelerated an F-4 Phantom to 500mph and.....

Recall: "What happens when an 'Unstoppable Force' meets an 'Immovable Object'???" (Remember, as you watch in slow motion as the F-4 turns to vapor, the Phantom was one of the toughest airplanes ever built).

SFC Buswell responded later that day, saying:

Subject: F-4 vs. Concrete Wall Hello,

*I receive many unsolicited e-mails daily, this one I chose to respond to. The below mentioned premise that an F4 Phantom fighter jet hitting that hardened concrete barrier is akin to the alleged 757 hitting the Pentagon is like oil and water; they don't mix, and they serve to muddy the issue. **The issue is 911 was filled with errors in the 'official report' and 'official story' of that day, and, what happened that day. We all know and saw 2 planes hitting the WTC buildings, we didn't see the 757 hit the Pentagon, nor did we see the plane crash in Shanksville PA. Both the PA and Pentagon 'crashes' don't have clues and tell-tale signs of a jumbo-jet impacting those zones!***

The Pentagon would have huge wing impacts in the side of the building; it didn't. Shanksville PA would have had debris, and a large debris field; it didn't.

Getting back to the F4...The Pentagon isn't a nuclear hardened structure, so I can't follow your weak logic that since an F4 vaporized itself in a test impact on a nuclear hardened structure that the alleged 757 hitting the Pentagon should have exhibited the same characteristics!

*I say Occum's razor is the best way to deduce this 'day of infamy'; **if you weigh all options, do some simple studying you will see 911 was clearly not executed by some arabs in caves with cell phones and 3 day old newspapers! I mean how are Arabs benefiting from pulling off 911? They have more war, more death and dismal conditions, so, how did 911 benefit them? Answer: It didn't. So, who benefited from 9-11? The answer is sad, but simple; The Military Industrial [sic] Complex.***

*It's not a paranoid conspiracy to think there are conspiracies out there...and, it's not Liberal Lunacy either, nor is it Conservative Kookiness! People, fellow citizens we've been had! **We must demand a new independent investigation into 911 and look at all options of that day, and all plausibilities [sic], even the most incredulous theories must be examined.***

Upon returning to his office the next day, Buswell discovered the locks had been changed, his security clearance was revoked, and an investigation had been launched. Buswell's commanding officer, Colonel Luke Green, drafted a letter assigning Major Edwin Escobar to the investigation. According to sources, Colonel Green has asserted that SFC Buswell failed to obey Army regulations when he used his government issued email account to send what have been termed as messages disloyal to the United States with the intent of stirring up disloyalty, in a manner that brings discredit upon the United States Army.

It has been reported that **Colonel Green also wrote that SFC Buswell claims to have information proving a conspiracy on the part of the United States Military Industrial Complex to attack targets within the United States**, e.g., The Pentagon. Officials have suggested that the email response sent by SFC Buswell may be in violation of CFR 2635.705(a), DoD-R 5500.7, and Joint Ethics Regulation paragraph 2-301b. These rules SFC Buswell is said to have perhaps violated regulate how soldiers utilize government resources, how they use their off-duty time, and how they use their official time.

[.....]

"That is so ridiculous," said Winthrop Buswell. "[To say he is disloyal to the United States] is totally ridiculous. And the discourtesy was, ah, very apparent at that particular time. ... I've always thought the American way is this: to disagree is important. To dissent is important. And my son simply said, without any fanfare, 'Look, let's take a look at the whole picture. If you want to take a look at that, maybe there are a few paragraphs that a Michael Moore might want to emphasize.' That is all that my son has said. Never, however, to at all disparage the country and the patriotism that is so necessary for all of us. But, patriotism, as suggested by FOX News' [Bill O'Reilly], is following the line of George W. Bush and cohorts completely! All my son is saying is, 'Hey, maybe there's a what if.' Never, though, did he get sidetracked from the fact that [he loves his] country."

"What disturbed him more than anything else, I think, was the fact that the Iraqi citizens suffered so much and are suffering so much now," said Winthrop Buswell. "The time that he was injured, there were several Iraqis burning to death in front of him. He tried to put out the fire. It was a traumatic experience for him. ... He spoke about that a number of times, and how terrible that was to see the citizenry being killed and suffering so much."

"One of his heroes is Abraham Lincoln," Winthrop Buswell continued. "And Abraham Lincoln said many things, but one of the things he said - and I'm paraphrasing - was, 'I may disagree with the fellow who's speaking, but I will stand and defend his right to speak.' That's my son's position. He does look at the what if's. But that doesn't take away from his dedication and his patriotism. I don't know a fellow who gets more chills running up and down his spine when he sees the flag flying."

"As a boy, [Donald was] always a very curious fellow," he added. "Very daring, but never risking anything or stepping over the line. He loved motorcycles, but was always very cautious about it, always wearing proper clothing, always wearing a helmet. Also, he was very active in little model racing cars. He was in Cub Scouts. I remember walking to the gymnasium with him and having wonderful conversations with him years ago. His mother and I went through a divorce, and that is never easy for anyone. My son was also very close to his grandfather on his mother's side, and also his grandfather and grandmother on my side. Donald loves railroading, and my father has the best job that anyone could ever have. He's a locomotive engineer, and my son related to that. My son also has a strong belief in a power greater than ourselves."

"But one of the things that stands out ... is his love and his caring," said Winthrop, choking back tears. "He loves children. He's just the greatest guy, as far as I am concerned. He walks into a room with a big smile on his face. ... He's like my dad - he makes you feel like, you know ... I ... I care for you. Ah, he's ... He's my son ..."

Via the [Loose Change official blog](#), a sweet flyer. Click the thumbnail for high-resolution, print quality. There will obviously be a big event at ground zero, so these guys are gonna paste flyers and all that, all over NYC. Is that guy towards the right supposed to be Alex Jones?



Posted by HongPong at [08:47 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) [Relating to](#) [Conspiratoria](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [The White House](#) , [War on Terror](#)

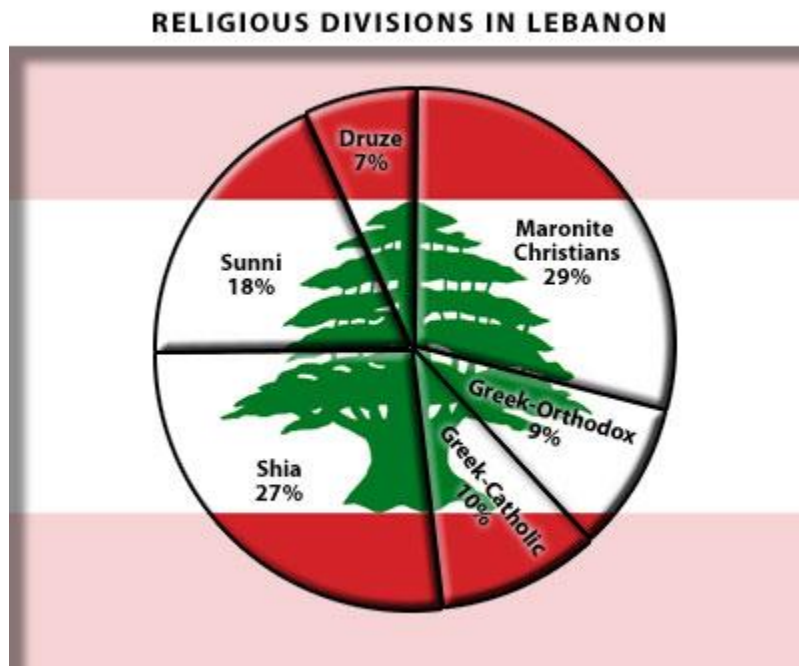
August 21, 2006

Goals, resources & tactics in a "New Middle East": it's still about WATER and OIL, folks

Iraqi intuition: As Joe Biden and Chris Matthews talked about on Hardball the other night, apparently President Bush did not expect Iraqi [Shiites to support Hezbollah](#). This is the shrewd leadership of the War on Terror, folks. [Sy Hersh was talking about how Cheney's office spoofed the intelligence on Lebanon and Israel](#). Again, the rosy shock-and-awe type scenarios failed tactically and strategically, as they always do. Strategic bombing never really works.

Apparently, The Pentagon's Air Force types were convinced Israel's planned tactical air campaign (long planned) would work. According to Hersh and others, the Marines and the Army are very skeptical about attacking Iran, since they would get sent in to invade Iran when the Air Force plan fails. It

turns out that the intuitions of the Pentagon skeptics were right, not surprisingly. Any kind of military action on Iran would make our whole Middle East situation completely fall apart – and yes, the Iranians have a lot of fancy missiles they've bought with all the oil money. Iran's mountainous terrain makes South Lebanon look like a golf course.



This image comes [from](#) former Defense Intelligence Agency officer Pat Lang's blog, [Sic Semper Tyrannis](#), which has had some of the best commentary on the tactics between the IDF and Hezbollah.

Various commentaries: ["How I found myself with the Islamic fascists"](#) by Jonathan Cook. This essay would make Bill O'Reilly's head explode. ["Israel, Defeated: Round one: Lebanon, 1 – Israel, 0"](#) by

Justin Raimondo at AntiWar.com.

Huzzah for Shias: Check out the book review of [The Shia Revival](#).

Hezbollah's suicide bombers in past campaigns were mostly *not Shiite*: this is fascinating because it indicates that 'religion' per se is not the motivating factor for suicide attacks. What is? Foreign military occupation. Evidence: Professor Robert Pape found this, posted in the Guardian: [What we still don't understand about Hizbollah](#), August 6:

This week, world terrorism expert Robert Pape will share with the FBI the findings of his remarkable study of 462 suicide bombings. He concludes that such acts have little to do with religious extremism and that the West must engage politically to halt the relentless slaughter: Israel has finally conceded that air power alone will not defeat Hizbollah. Over the coming weeks, it will learn that ground power won't work either. The problem is not that the Israelis have insufficient military might, but that they misunderstand the nature of the enemy.

In terms of structure and hierarchy, it is less comparable with, say, a religious cult such as the Taliban than to the multi-dimensional American civil rights movement of the 1960s. What made its rise so rapid, and will make it impossible to defeat militarily, was not its international support but **the fact that it evolved from a reorientation of pre-existing Lebanese social groups.**

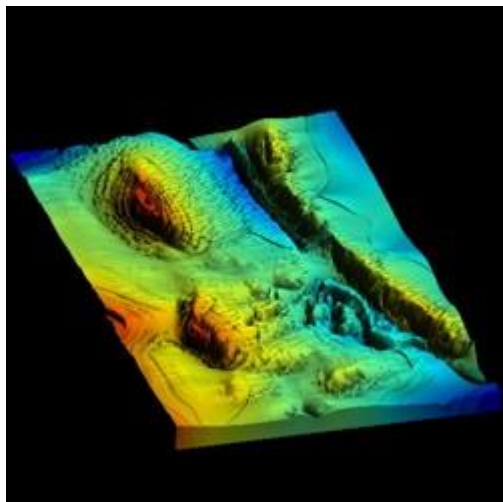
Evidence of the broad nature of Hizbollah's resistance to Israeli occupation can be seen in the identity of its suicide attackers. Hizbollah conducted a broad campaign of suicide bombings against American,

French and Israeli targets from 1982 to 1986. Altogether, these attacks, which included the infamous bombing of the marine barracks in Beirut in 1983, involved **41 suicide terrorists**. Researching my book, which covered all 462 suicide bombings around the globe, I had colleagues scour Lebanese sources to collect martyr videos, pictures and testimonials and biographies of the Hizbollah bombers. Of the 41, we identified the names, birth places and other personal data for 38. We were shocked to find that **only eight were Islamic fundamentalists; 27 were from leftist political groups such as the Lebanese Communist Party and the Arab Socialist Union; three were Christians, including a female secondary school teacher with a college degree. All were born in Lebanon**. What these suicide attackers - and their heirs today - shared was not a religious or political ideology but simply a commitment to **resisting a foreign occupation**. Nearly two decades of Israeli military presence did not root out Hizbollah. The only thing that has proven to end suicide attacks, in Lebanon and elsewhere, is withdrawal by the occupying force.

Previous analyses of suicide terrorism have not had the benefit of a complete survey of all suicide terrorist attacks worldwide. The lack of complete data, together with the fact that many such attacks, including all those against Americans, have been committed by Muslims, has led many in the US to assume that Islamic fundamentalism must be the underlying main cause. This, in turn, has fuelled a **belief that anti-American terrorism can be stopped only by wholesale transformation of Muslim societies**, which helped create public support of the invasion of Iraq. But study of the phenomenon of suicide terrorism shows that the presumed connection to Islamic fundamentalism is misleading.

There is not the close connection between suicide terrorism and Islamic fundamentalism that many people think. Rather, what nearly **all suicide terrorist campaigns have in common is a specific secular and strategic goal: to compel democracies to withdraw military forces from territory that the terrorists consider to be their homeland. Religion is rarely the root cause**, although it is often used as a tool by terrorist organisations in recruiting and in other efforts in service of the broader strategic objective. Most often, it is a response to foreign occupation.

Understanding that suicide terrorism is not a product of Islamic fundamentalism has important implications for how the US and its allies should conduct the war on terrorism. Spreading democracy across the Persian Gulf is not likely to be a panacea as long as foreign troops remain on the Arabian peninsula. The obvious solution might well be simply to abandon the region altogether. Isolationism, however, is not possible; America needs a new strategy that pursues its vital interest in oil but does not stimulate the rise of a new generation of suicide terrorists. The same is true of Israel now.....



The backdrop is energy resources, and water too. [From The Wilderness](#) teased a pay story:

AS THE WORLD REELS FROM ISRAELI ATTACKS ON INNOCENT CIVILIANS DURING THE PAST THREE WEEKS, CULMINATING IN THIS WEEKEND'S ATROCITIES AT QANA, WE HEAR LITTLE ABOUT THE PIPELINE POLITICS AND WATER ISSUES BEHIND THE SCENES. BUT ISRAEL'S DESPERATE MILITARY MADNESS CANNOT BE FULLY UNDERSTOOD WITHOUT GRASPING THE FRANTIC RESOURCE WARS THAT FORM THE BACKDROP OF THE CURRENT MIDDLE EAST CARNAGE.

True enough. Encircling the Shiite's area of oilfields is important to guys like Dick Cheney. The situation in Iraq is fueled

by the conflict over Iraq's oil revenue, of course. That crazy relief map is from [here](#). It shows the Rumaila and other key oilfields around the Kuwaiti-Iraqi border. [Rumaila was one of the key reasons Saddam invaded Kuwait.](#) He claimed they were [slant-drilling under the border](#), which was probably true since the Kuwaitis are dickheads.

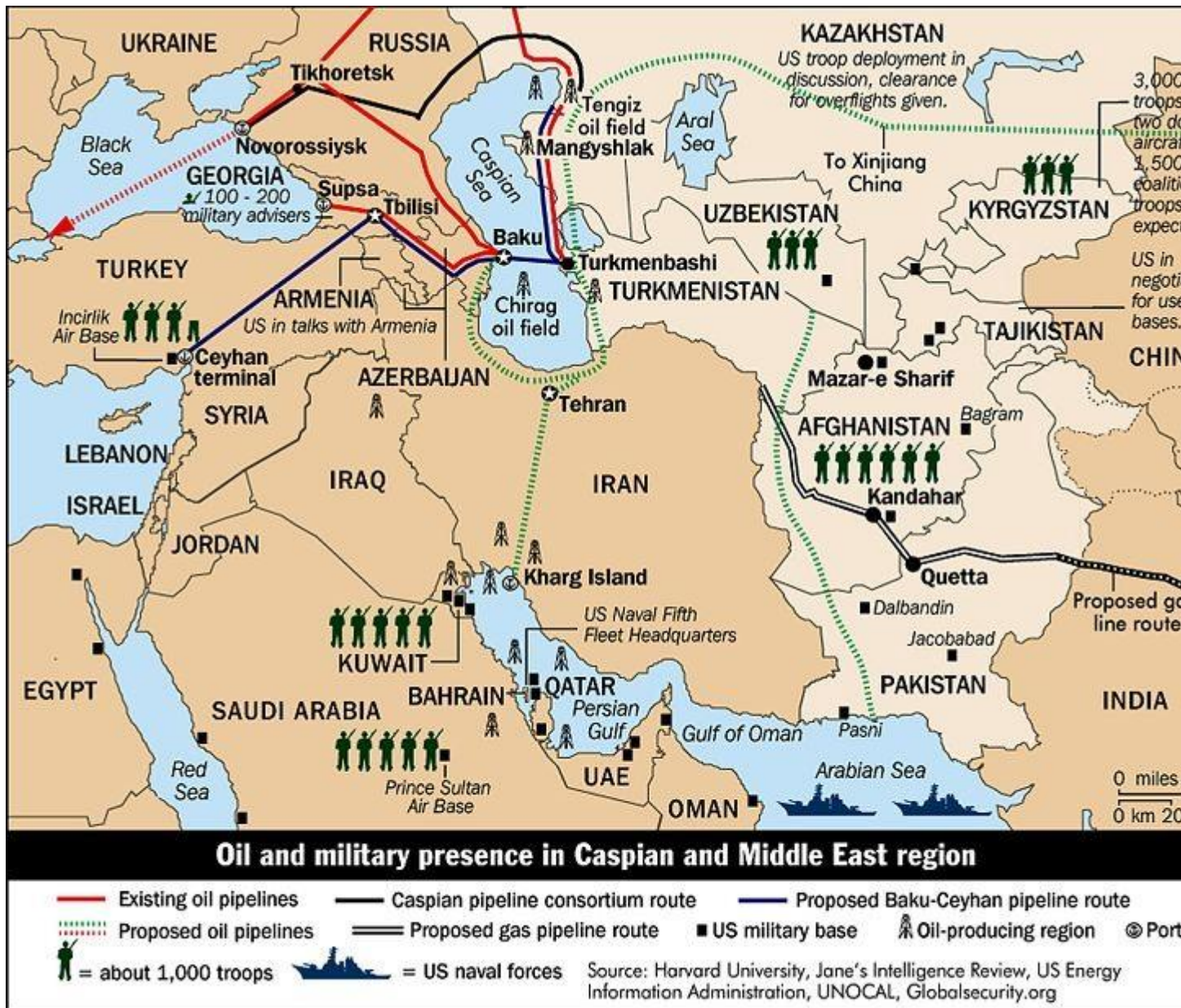
Here is a map of the Sunni-Shiite distribution. In my opinion it actually doesn't show the Shiites of eastern Saudi Arabia correctly, but oh well... Shiites are darker.



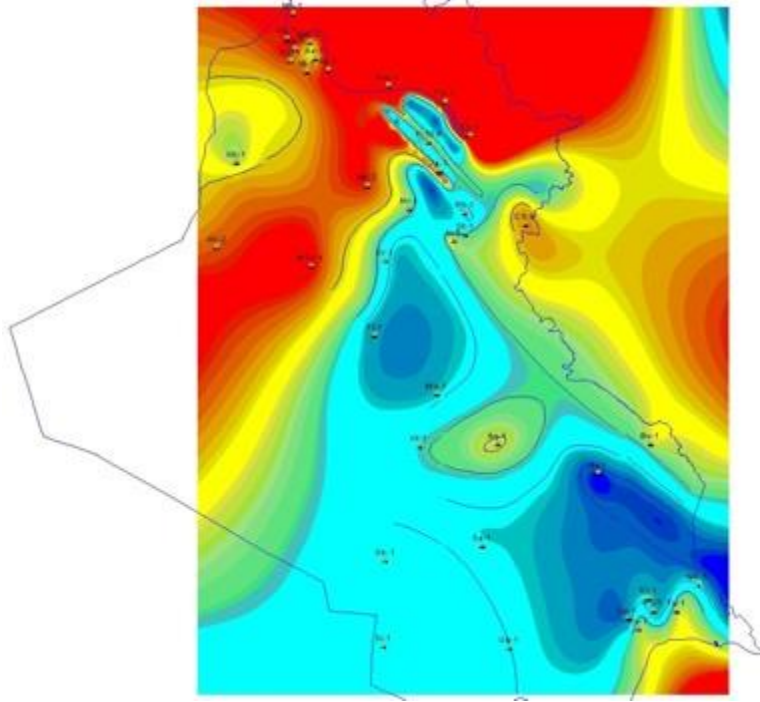
And here is the famous [Iraq oil map](#) (PDF) from [Cheney's energy task force](#):



There is this kind of strategy to encircle the general area... The Christian Science Monitor had this [badass](#) map showing where American troops are, relative to the pipelines: ([more on this here](#))



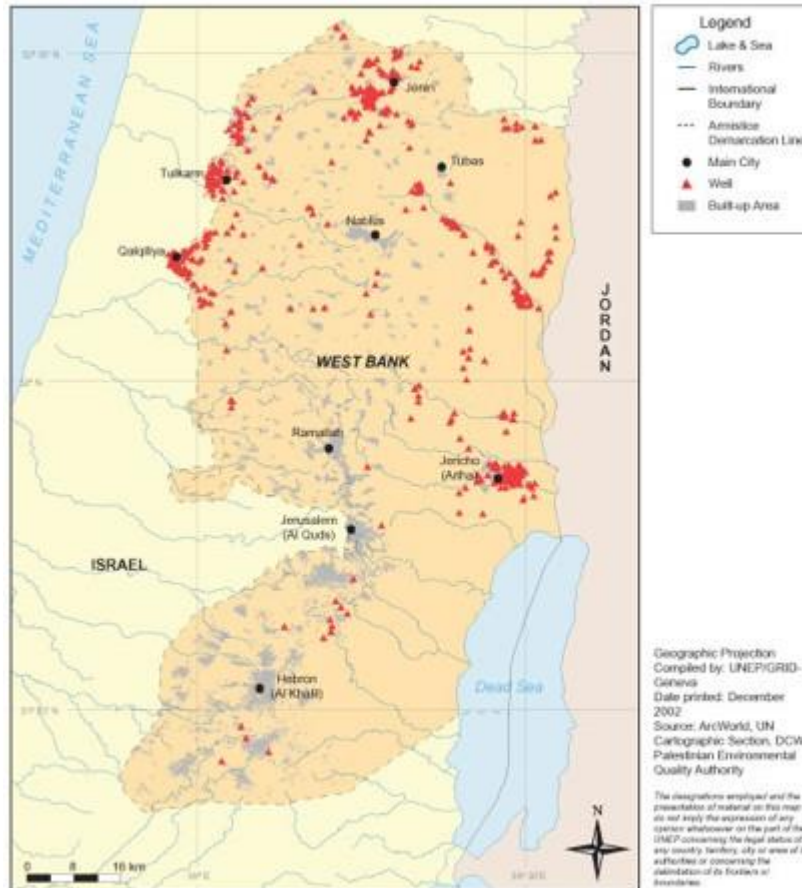
I don't know what the hell this is, some kind of "heat map", but it looks cool from a [cool-looking site](#):



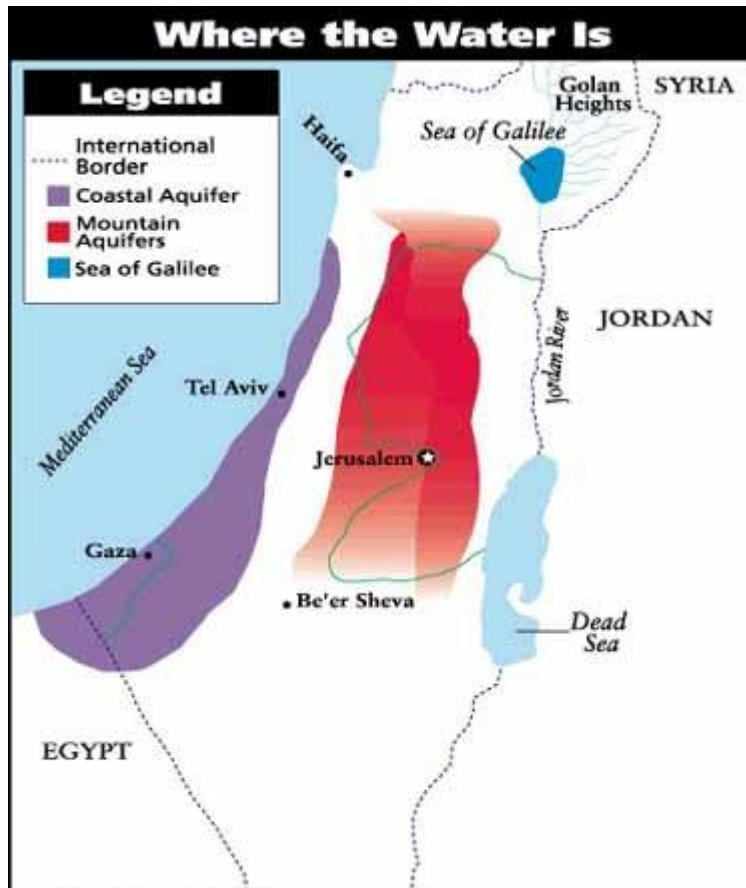
The Israelis are holding the Golan Heights because of water, as they tell you, and the West Bank wall is laid out to cut off many wells from Palestinian access. The largest settlement in the West Bank, Ariel, is situated on a ridge area in the north, directly above the main aquifer. One wonders why the Litani River is such a big deal anyway. [More on Ariel](#).

[source \(more\)](#)

Well Distribution in the West Bank

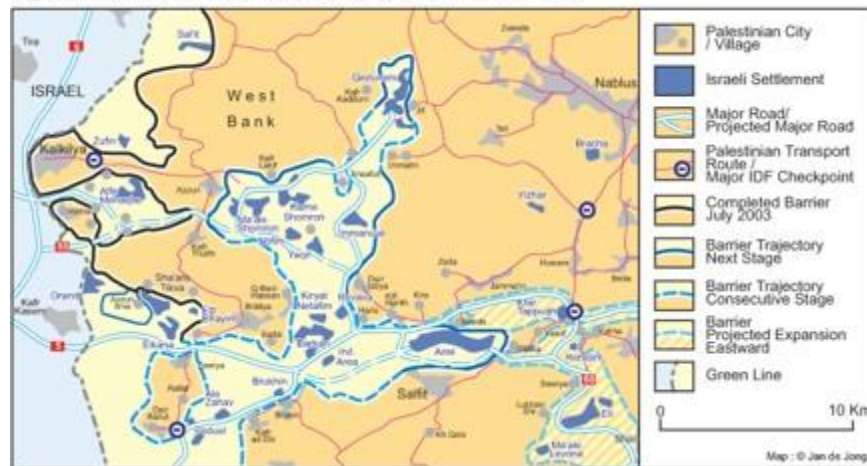


I recommend reading this page about [Israel's water wars](#). It's very relevant. For your comparison here, the 'nose' of the West Bank that juts just outside of the red mountain aquifer is Kalkilya - the northern West Bank's westernmost Palestinian city. Ariel, the most horizontal blob, is centered on the red aquifer, as you can see with the power of imagination (since the American media is never going to fucking tell you this).



*AQUIFER LOCATIONS ARE APPROXIMATE

Separation Barrier - Ariel Settlement Bloc, November 2003



Source of this one - [direct](#):

Mountain and Coastal Aquifers



Iran noise: so we've gathered that this whole thing was an overture to a war in Iran (aka "World War III"). As one pretty pissed off international studies professor, Alon Ben-Meir put it:

The war of perception: Israel`s failure will undoubtedly embolden Iran to challenge it at a different time and circumstance, while Syria may decide that Israel is not such a formidable military after all and resort to more aggressive tactics to regain the Golan.

Hamas` resolve to resist Israel may harden, and Hezbollah which, by every objective military standard, suffered a strategic defeat, has already emerged as triumphant in the eyes of the Arab world for having withstood the Israeli onslaught with valor, may be emboldened to lie in wait for the next confrontation.

Having lost the war of perception Israel must be careful not to translate this into real strategic losses in dealing with the Arab-Israeli conflict or with Iran.

.....

The real danger in the future comes from Iran, and it looms extremely large. If it is to respond effectively, Israel must develop strategies that deny Iran not just the opportunity to meddle in the Arab-Israeli conflict but make Tehran fear for its very existence, and so refrain from even contemplating any act of hostility against Israel.

An Israel that is, rightly or wrongly, perceived as weak, will simply invite more serious military challenges because Israel's real enemies like Iran are relentless, and now they smell blood.

That's all for now. I really like maps!

Posted by HongPong at [12:59 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Lebanon](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Security](#) , [Technological Apparatus](#) , [War on Terror](#)

Hezbollah tactics and weaponry: the analysis rolls in

Now that the dust is settling, we are hearing reports from the field about what exactly Hezbollah was doing down in South Lebanon. For more military analyses look at this excellent thread on Agonist.org [Lessons Learned](#). Guys like [William Lind](#) have good stuff too.

For the moment, we are going to post a big chunk of Anthony Cordesman's summary of the whole damn thing. The [press conference is here](#) (PDF), the [actual doc is here](#).

Center for Strategic and International Studies

1800 K Street, N.W. • Suite 400 • Washington, DC 20006

Phone: 1 (202) 775-3270 • Fax: 1 (202) 457-8746

Web: <http://www.csis.org/burke/>

[Preliminary "Lessons" of the Israeli-Hezbollah War \(PDF\)](#)

Anthony H. Cordesman, Arleigh A. Burke Chair in Strategy acordesman@aol.com

Working Draft for Outside Comment, Revised: August 17, 2006

[Page 16]...

Lessons and Insights into Various Tactical, Technological, and Other Military Aspects of the War

Once again, it is important to stress that many key details of the tactics, technology, and other aspects of the fighting are not yet clear. There are, however, several additional lessons that do seem to emerge from the conflict.

High Technology Asymmetric Warfare

There is virtually no controversy over whether the fighting with the Hezbollah shows just how well a non-State actor can do when it achieves advanced arms, and has strong outside support from state actors like Iran and Syria. Top-level Israeli intelligence personnel and officers stated that most aspects of the Hezbollah build-up did not surprise them in the six years following Israel's withdrawal in Lebanon.

Mosad officials stated that they had tracked the deployment of some 13,000 Katyushas, far more sophisticated Iranian medium and long-range artillery rockets and guided missiles (Zelzal 3), better surface-to-air missiles like the SA-14, SA-16, and possibly SA-8 and SA-18, the CS-801 anti-ship missile, and several more capable anti-tank weapons like the AT-3 Sagger Two and Kornet. They also identified the armed UAV the Hezbollah used as either the Iranian Mirsad-1 or Ababil-3 Swallow.

Israeli intelligence officials also stated that they knew some 100 Iranian advisors were

working with the Hezbollah, and that they knew Iran not only maintained high volumes of deliveries, but also had created a Hezbollah command center for targeting and controlling missile fire with advanced C2 assets and links to UAVs. They noted that they had warnings of better sniper rifles, night vision devices, and communications as well as of technical improvements to the IEDs, bombs, and booby traps that the Hezbollah had used before the Israeli withdrawal.

Israeli officials and officers were not consistent about the scale or nature of the technology transfer to the Hezbollah or of how many weapons they had. In broad terms, however, they agreed on several points.

Hezbollah Rocket and Missile Forces

Israel faced a serious local threat from some 10,000-16,000 shorter-range regular and extended range versions of the Kaytusha. These are small artillery rockets with individual manportable launchers. The rockets have small warheads and ranges of 19-28 kilometers (12-18 miles) that can only strike about 11-19 kilometers (7-12 miles) into Israel unless launched right at the border. They can easily be fired in large numbers from virtually any position or building, and the Hezbollah had a limited capacity for ripple fire that partly made up for the fact that such weapons were so inaccurate that they hit at random, could only be aimed at town-sized targets, and had very small warheads. They were, however, more than adequate to force substantial evacuations, paralyze local economic activity, and drive the Israelis that remained to shelters.

Israeli officers and officials made it clear that Israel's real reason for going to war, however, was the steady deployment of medium and longer range systems, and the potential creation of a major Iranian and Syrian proxy missile force that could hit targets throughout Israel.

This force included Syrian 220mm rockets and systems like the Fajr 3, with ranges of 45-75 kilometers, capable of striking targets as far south as Haifa and Naharia. The IAF was able to destroy most of the Iranian Fajr 3 launchers the first night of the war, but the IDF did not know the Syrian rockets were present.

The Fajr 3, or Ra'ad, has a range of 45 kilometers, a 45-kilogram warhead, a 240-mm diameter, a 5.2-meter length, and a weight of 408 kilograms.

A total of some 24-30 launchers and launch vehicles, carrying up to 14 rockets each, seem to have been present.

The IAF feels it destroyed virtually all launchers that fired after the first few days, but Israeli officers did not provide an estimate of how many actually survived.

They also included the Syrian 302-mm artillery rockets and Fajr 5, with ranges of 75 and higher kilometers. The IAF again feels that it was able to destroy most of the Iranian Fajr 5 launchers the first night of the war, but the IDF again did not know the Syrian 302-mm rockets were present.

The Fajr 5 is launched from a mobile platform with up to four rockets per launcher, and has a maximum range of 75 kilometers, a 45-kilogram warhead, a 333-mm diameter, a 6.48-meter length, and a weight of 915 kilograms.

A total of some 24-30 launchers and launch vehicles seem to have been present. Again, the IAF feels it destroyed virtually all

launchers that fired after the first few days, but Israeli officers did not provide an estimate

of how many actually survived.

The level of Hezbollah capabilities with the Zelzal 1, 2, and 3 and other possible systems has been described earlier. These missiles have ranges of 115-220 kilometers. The Zelzal 2 is known to be in Hezbollah hands and illustrates the level of technology involved. It is a derivative of the Russian FROG 7, and has a range in excess of 115 kilometers. It has a 610-mm diameter, a 8.46-meter length, and a weight of 3,545 kilograms.

It requires a large TEL vehicle with a large target signature.

Anti-Ship Missiles

The Hezbollah C-802 missile that damaged an Israeli Sa'ar 5, one of Israel's latest and most capable ships, struck the ship when it was not using active countermeasures. It may or may not have had support from the coastal radar operated by Lebanese military fires destroyed by IAF forces the following day.

According to Global Security, the Yingji YJ-2 (C-802) is powered by a turbojet with paraffin-based fuel. It is subsonic (0.9 Mach), weighs 715 kilograms, has a range 120 kilometers, and a 165 kilogram (363 lb.). It has a small radar cross section and skims about five to seven meters above the sea surface when it attacks the target. It has good anti-jamming capability.

Anti-Armor Systems

The IDF faced both older anti-tank guided missile (ATGM) threats like the AT-3 Sagger, AT-4 Spigot, and AT-5 Spandrel—each of which is a wire-guided system but which become progressively more effective and easier to operate as the model number increases.

The IDF also faced far more advanced weapons like the Russian AT-13 Metis-M which only requires the operator to track the target, and the AT-14 Kornet-E, a third generation system, that can be used to attack tanks fitted with explosive reactive armor, and bunkers, buildings, and entrenched troops. Many of these systems bore serial numbers that showed they came directly from Syria, but others may have come from Iran.

The AT-14 is a particularly good example of the kind of high technology weapon the US may face in future asymmetric wars. It can be fitted to vehicles or used as a crew-portable system.

It has thermal sights for night warfare and tracking heat signatures, and the missile has semi-automatic command-to-line-of-sight laser beam-riding guidance. It flies along the line of sight to engage the target head-on in a direct attack profile. It has a nominal maximum range of 5 kilometers. It can be fitted with tandem shaped charge HEAT warheads to defeat tanks fitted with reactive armor, or with high explosive/incendiary warheads, for use against bunkers and fortifications. Maximum penetration is claimed to be up to 1,200mm.

Other systems include a greatly improved version of the 105.2-mm rocket-propelled grenade called the RPG-29 or Vampire. This is a much heavier system than most previous designs. It is a two-man crew weapon with a 450-meter range, and with an advanced 4.5-kilogram grenade that can be used to attack both armor and bunkers and buildings. Some versions are equipped with night sights.

The IDF saw such weapons used with great tactical skill, and few technical errors, reflecting the ease with which third generation ATGMs can be operated. They did serious damage to buildings as well as armor. The Hezbollah also showed that it could use the same “swarm” techniques to fire multiple rounds at the same target at the same time often used in similar ambushes in Iraq. As of August 11th, however, a total of 60 armored vehicles of all types (reports these were all tanks are wrong) had been hit. Most continued to operate or were rapidly repaired in the field and restored to service. Only 5-6 of all types represented a lasting vehicle kill.

Anti-Aircraft

The IDF estimates that the Hezbollah at least have the SA-7 and SA-14 manportable surface-to-air missile system, probably have the SA-16, and may have the SA-18. The SA-14 and SA-16 are much more advanced than the SA-7, but still possible to counter with considerable success. The SA-18 Grouse (Igla 9K38) is more problematic. According to the Federation of American Scientists, it is an improved variant of the SA-14 that uses a similar thermal battery/gas bottle, and the same 2 kilogram high-explosive warhead fitted with a contact and grazing fuse. The missile, however, is a totally new design and has much greater operational range and speed. It has a maximum range of 5200 meters and a maximum altitude of 3500 meters, and uses an IR guidance system with proportional convergence logic, and much better protection against electro-optical jammers.

It is possible that it may have been given a few SA-8 Gecko (Russian 9K33 Osa) SAM systems that are vehicle mounted, radar-guided systems with up to a 10-kilometer range, and six missiles per vehicle.

The IDF is concerned that these systems would allow the Hezbollah to set up “ambushes” of a few IAF aircraft without clear warning—a tactic where only a few SA-8s could achieve a major propaganda victory. This concern, coupled to the risk of SA-16 and SA-18 attacks, forced the IAF to actively use countermeasures to an unprecedented degree during the fighting.

Low Signature; Asymmetric Stealth

One key aspect of the above list is that all of the systems that are not vehicle-mounted are low signature weapons that very difficult to characterize and target and easy to bury or conceal in civilian facilities. Stealth is normally thought of as high technology. It is not. Conventional forces still have sensors geared largely to major military platforms and operating in environments when any possible target becomes a real target. None of these conditions applied to most Hezbollah weapons, and the problem was compounded by the fact that a light weapon is often easier to move and place without detection in a built-up area than a heavy one.

This signature issue applies to small rockets like the Qassam and Kaytusha that require only a vestigial launcher that can be placed in a house or covert area in seconds, and fired with a timer. Israeli video showed numerous examples of Hezbollah rushing into a home, setting up a system, and firing or leaving in a time in less than a minute.

It also applies to UAVs. Israel’s normal surveillance radars could not detect the Iranian UAVs, and the IDF was forced to rush experiments to find one that could detect such a

small, low-flying platform. (This may be an artillery counterbattery radar but Israeli sources would not confirm this.)

Technological Surprise

Israeli officers and experts did indicate that the IDF faced technological surprise and uncertainty in some areas.

Syria evidently supplied nearly as many medium range artillery rockets—220 mm and 302 mm—as Iran, and a major portion of the Katyushas. The RPG-29 anti-tank weapon and possible deployment of more advanced anti-tank guided weapons was not anticipated. It was not possible to determine how advanced the surface-to-air missiles going to Hezbollah forces were. It was not possible to determine the exact types and level of capability for Iran's long-range missile transfers because the three types of Zelzal are so different in performance, and other Iranian systems (including ones with much better guidance) are similar to what Israel calls the Zelzal 2 and 3.

The fact Israel faced some degree of technological surprise should not, however, be a source of criticism unless there is evidence of negligence. If there is a lesson to be drawn from such surprise, it is that it is almost unavoidable when deliveries are high and many weapons are small and/or are delivered in trucks or containers and never seen used in practice.

It is even more unavoidable when rapid transfer can occur in wartime, or new facilities are created, such as the joint Iranian-Syrian-Hezbollah intelligence (and advisory?) center set up during the fighting in Damascus to give the Hezbollah technical and tactical intelligence support. *The lesson is rather that the war demonstrates a new level of capability for non-state actors to use such weapons.*

Cost

The US and Israel quote figures for the cost of these arms transfers that can reach the billions, and talk about \$100-\$250 million in Iranian aid per year. The fact is that some six years of build-up and arms transfers may have cost closer to \$50-\$100 million in all. The bulk of the weapons involved were cheap, disposable or surplus, and transfers put no strain of any kind on either Syria or Iran.

This is a critical point, not a quibble. Playing the spoiler role in arming non-state actors even with relatively advanced weapons is cheap by comparison with other military options. The US must be prepared for a sharp increase in such efforts as its enemies realize just how cheap and easy this option can be.

Reevaluating the Level of Tactical and Technological Risk in the Forces of Asymmetric and Non-State Actors

Experts like Sir Rupert Smith have already highlighted the risk posed to modern military forces and states by opponents that fight below the threshold in which conventional armies are most effective. Iraq has shown that even comparatively small transfers of technology like motion sensors, crude shaped charges, and better triggering devices can have a major impact in increasing the ability of insurgents and terrorists.

The Hezbollah have raised this to a whole new level, operating with effective sanctuary in a state and with major outside suppliers—which Al Qa'ida has largely lacked. It is also only the tip of the iceberg. It does not seem to have used the advanced SAMs listed above, but the very threat forces IAF fighters and helicopters to constantly use countermeasures. The use of ATGMs and RPG-29 not only inhibits the use of armor, but

sharply reduces the ability to enter buildings and requires dispersal and shelter.

The simple risk of long-range rocket attacks requires constant air and sensor coverage in detail over the entire Hezbollah launch front to be sure of hitting launchers immediately. The IDF's task also could grow sharply if Iran/Syria sent the Hezbollah longer-range rockets or missiles with precision guidance—allowing one missile to do serious damage to a power plant, desalination plant, refinery/fuel storage facility with little or no warning.

The lesson here is not simply Hezbollah tactics to date. It is the need to survey all of the weapons systems and technology that insurgents and terrorists could use in future strikes and wars with the thesis that technology constraints are sharply weakening, and the US and its allies face proliferation of a very different kind. It is to explore potential areas of vulnerability in US forces and tactics non-state or asymmetric attackers can exploit, carefully examine the holdings of state sponsors of such movements, and reexamine web sites, training manuals, etc, to track the sharing or exploration of such technology. Like Israel, the US and its other allies face long wars against enemies that have already shown they are highly adaptive, and will constantly seek out weaknesses and the ability to exploit the limits to conventional warfighting capabilities. The US must anticipate and preempt when it can, and share countermeasure tactics and technologies with its allies.

Informal Networks and Asymmetric "Netcentric Warfare"

Like insurgent and terrorist groups in Iraq and Afghanistan—and in Arab states like Algeria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and other states threatened by such groups—the Hezbollah showed the ability of non-state actors to fight their own form of netcentric warfare. The Hezbollah acted as a "distributed network" of small cells and units acting with considerable independence, and capable of rapidly adapting to local conditions using media reports on the, verbal communication, etc.

Rather than have to react faster than the IDF's decision cycle, they could largely ignore it, waiting out Israeli attacks, staying in positions, reinfiltrating or reemerging from cover, and choosing the time to attack or ambush. Forward fighters could be left behind or sacrificed, and "self-attrition" became a tactic substituting for speed of maneuver and the ability to anticipated IDF movements.

Skilled cadres and leadership cadres could be hidden, sheltered, or dispersed. Rear areas became partial sanctuaries in spite of the IDF. Aside from Nasrallah, who survived, no given element of the leadership cadre was critical.

A strategy of attrition and slow response substituted for speed and efficiency in command and control. The lack of a formal and hierarchical supply system meant that disperse weapons and supplies—the equivalent of "feed forward logistics"—accumulated over six years ensured the ability to keep operating in spite of IDF attacks on supply facilities and resupply.

The ability to fight on local religious, ideological, and sectarian grounds the IDF could not match provided extensive cover and the equivalent of both depth and protection. As noted earlier, civilians became a defensive weapon, the ability to exploit civilian casualties and collateral damage became a weapon in political warfare, and the ability to

exploit virtually any built up area and familiar terrain as fortresses or ambush sites at least partially compensated for IDF armor, air mobility, superior firepower, and sensors. The value and capability of such asymmetric "netcentric" warfare, and comparatively slow moving wars of attrition, should not be exaggerated. The IDF could win any clash, and might have won decisively with different ground tactics. It also should not be ignored. The kind of Western netcentric warfare that is so effective against conventional forces has met a major challenge and one it must recognize.

Well that sounds like some badass shit. More later, but for now, dig the asymmetrical networkality of the low apogee swarm missile strategy. It delivers the goods!

Posted by HongPong at [03:06 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [4GW](#) , [Iran](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Lebanon](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Security](#) , [Syria](#) , [Technological Apparatus](#) , [War on Terror](#)

August 17, 2006

Conspiracy buzz from Planet Northwoods: The Terror poll bounce, False flags, liquid bombers & UK Labor coups, nuking Hawaii, the Alex Jones "synthetic government terror alert" & other stuff no good person should contemplate



The next point is worthy of special note, and of imitation by others; I don't want to pass lightly over it. When the duke [[Cesare Borgia](#), aka Duke Valentino - pic via [Wikipedia](#)] took over Romagna, he found it had been controlled by impotent masters, who instead of ruling their subjects had plundered them, and had given them more reason for strife than unity, so that the whole province was full of robbers, feuds, and lawlessness of every description.

To establish peace and reduce the land to obedience, he decided good government was needed; and he named Messer Remirro de Orco, a cruel and vigorous man, to whom he gave absolute powers. In short order this man pacified and unified the whole district, winning thereby great renown. But then the duke decided such excessive authority was no longer necessary, and feared it might become odious; so he set up a civil court in the middle of the province, with an excellent judge and a representative from each city.

And because he knew that the recent harshness had generated some hatred, in order to clear the minds of the people and gain them over to his cause completely, **he determined to make plain that whatever cruelty had come not from him [the Duke], but from the brutal character of the minister.**

Taking the proper occasion, therefore, he had him placed on the public square of Cesena one morning, in two pieces, with a piece of wood beside him and a bloody knife. The ferocity of this scene left the people at once stunned and satisfied.

--Niccolo Machiavelli, [The Prince](#) (written 1513). [Part VII: About New States Acquired with Other People's Arms and By Good Luck](#)

~~TOP SECRET SPECIAL HANDLING NOFORN~~



THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
WASHINGTON 25, D.C.

UNCLASSIFIED

13 March 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Subject: Justification for US Military Intervention
in Cuba (TS)

1. The Joint Chiefs of Staff have considered the attached Memorandum for the Chief of Operations, Cuba Project, which responds to a request of that office for brief but precise description of pretexts which would provide justification for US military intervention in Cuba.

UNCLASSIFIED

JUSTIFICATION FOR US MILITARY INTERVENTION IN CUBA (TS)

THE PROBLEM

1. As requested* by Chief of Operations, Cuba Project, the Joint Chiefs of Staff are to indicate brief but precise description of pretexts which they consider would provide justification for US military intervention in Cuba.

FACTS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM

2. It is recognized that any action which becomes pretext for US military intervention in Cuba will lead to a political decision which then would lead to military action.

3. This plan, incorporating projects selected from the attached suggestions, or from other sources, should be developed to focus all efforts on a specific ultimate objective which would provide adequate justification for US military intervention. Such a plan would enable a logical build-up of incidents to be combined with other seemingly unrelated events to camouflage the ultimate objective and create the necessary impression of Cuban rashness and irresponsibility on a large scale, directed at other countries as well as the United States. The plan would also properly integrate and time phase the courses of action to be pursued. The desired resultant from the execution of this plan would be to place the United States in the apparent position of suffering defensible grievances from a rash and irresponsible government of Cuba and to develop an international image of a Cuban threat to peace in the Western Hemisphere.

UNCLASSIFIED

5

Appendix to
Enclosure A

~~TOP SECRET - SPECIAL HANDLING NOFORN~~

3. A "Remember the Maine" incident could be arranged in several forms:

a. We could blow up a US ship in Guantanamo Bay and blame Cuba.

b. We could blow up a drone (unmanned) vessel anywhere in the Cuban waters. We could arrange to cause such incident in the vicinity of Havana or Santiago as a spectacular result of Cuban attack from the air or sea, or both. The presence of Cuban planes or ships merely investigating the intent of the vessel could be fairly compelling evidence that the ship was taken under attack. The nearness to Havana or Santiago would add credibility especially to those people that might have heard the blast or have seen the fire. The US could follow up with an air/sea rescue operation covered by US fighters to "evacuate" remaining members of the non-existent crew. Casualty lists in US newspapers would cause a helpful wave of national indignation.

4. We could develop a Communist Cuban terror campaign in the Miami area, in other Florida cities and even in Washington.

UNCLASSIFIED

~~SECRET SPECIAL HANDLING NOFORN~~

~~SECRET SPECIAL HANDLING NOFORN~~

UNCLASSIFIED

The terror campaign could be pointed at Cuban refugees seeking haven in the United States. We could sink a boatload of Cubans enroute to Florida (real or simulated). We could foster attempts on lives of Cuban refugees in the United States even to the extent of wounding in instances to be widely publicized. Exploding a few plastic bombs in carefully chosen spots, the arrest of Cuban agents and the release of prepared documents substantiating Cuban involvement also would be helpful in projecting the idea of an irresponsible government.

UNCLASSIFIED

7. Hijacking attempts against civil air and surface craft should appear to continue as harassing measures condoned by the government of Cuba. Concurrently, genuine defections of Cuban civil and military air and surface craft should be encouraged.

8. It is possible to create an incident which will demonstrate convincingly that a Cuban aircraft has attacked and shot down a chartered civil airliner enroute from the United States to Jamaica, Guatemala, Panama or Venezuela. The destination would be chosen only to cause the flight plan route to cross Cuba.

Operation Northwoods - this is a completely real primary source document - the **PDF**

So I caught the end of 'V for Vendetta' back home this weekend, and I remembered that despite typically wooden Wachowski brothers dialogue, it had a lot of useful things to teach us. My favorite character was the police detective, because he was the one who drove the story forward, he's the one who the decision rests on, at the end... But the movie explained pretty damn clearly the concept of 'synthetic terror', or 'false flag' terrorist attacks, as well as making clear why a government would want to generate fear among its own people.

Things seem weird right now. Tensions are real high. The White House just ordered up the killing of a good thousand Lebanese, and it makes you feel like they'd kill us too. (Besides through pollution and debt) A lot of sacred cows have croaked lately and they're afraid of losing power. How is this system going to show its cracks? Strange times where [Spike Lee implies that the levees in New Orleans were sabotaged](#). What is going on here (and what's Lee's [film](#) gonna say)?

Then I ran across this the next day:



Where Politics and Terror collide: I am a skeptic of all these kinds of intriguing internet conspiracy theories, but I do believe in offering what is floating around for your consideration, because here Nothing is True, and Everything is Permissible. Operation Northwoods was one hell of a plan, but it's a little unrealistic to believe that every damn terror scare is really staged by the High Chancellor. However, when something of a real, actual threat occurs, the politicians are going to grand-stand and fear monger. That's what [Hannity and Gingrich](#) do. If you are in mortal fear, you are going to support authority to save you. That's a [handy political tactic](#) called 'terror management theory', and it's expressed as a 'terror alert poll bounce'.

But there were those stories about [British SAS operatives caught with all kinds of explosives in Iraq, though](#).

The Lebanon war, which [Sy Hersh made clear was planned and coordinated by Cheney](#) and the gang months ago, really scares the everyday American, I think. Hezbollah sucks, they say, but what's gonna happen with this creepy blitzkreig + quagmire ideology still banging around the White House? Those Arab kids caught reselling [cell phones had their terrorism charges dropped](#), another timed and trumped-up case. The Liquid Bomb scare, with all the accompanying visual packaging on cable news, sort of seems to be bouncing off people. The Daily Show makes fun of the Fear Music and Fear Fonts. Everyone seems skeptical now. Some are scared, but I just keep hearing about why it seems like bullshit.

Conspiracists unleashed: There's a sense in the air that Republican dominance is going to fall apart in November, but they are going to go deep

into the endless bag of dirty tricks to battle the Democrats one final time. The time is right to suspect an October Surprise, and in the latest mode of conspiracy theories, terror attacks staged by the government are a key way to paralyze the sheep-like public, send them flocking towards anything that looks strong. Alex Jones is of course [the internet's premiere conspiracy guy](#), and he is issuing a full government synthetic terror alert for the rest of election season, which you can [check](#) out on YouTube:

[Alex Jones' Warning: A CALL TO ACTION!](#)

Alex Jones predicted the 9/11 attacks stating "Osama Bin Laden would be blamed for flying planes into buildings including the WTC". He made this warning during the months of July and August of 2001... He is now stating for the first time since 9/11, that all indicators suggest a massive terror attack is imminent, facilitated by corrupt rogue elements in western governments, possibly before October.

Indeed, he did [claim the government was going to stage attacks in July 2001](#) - watch the clip there, it's weird.

There's a sense that something against Iran will happen soon: "[The Pentagon's "Second 9/11": "Another \[9/11\] attack could create both a justification and an opportunity to retaliate against some known targets"](#)": by Michel Chossudovsky of the [CRG](#):

In the month following last year's 7/7 London bombings, Vice President Dick Cheney is reported to have instructed USSTRATCOM to draw up a contingency plan "to be employed in response to another 9/11-type terrorist attack on the United States". Implied in the contingency plan is the certainty that Iran would be behind a Second 9/11.

This "contingency plan" uses the pretext of a "Second 9/11", which has not yet happened, to prepare for a major military operation against Iran, while pressure was also exerted on Tehran in relation to its (non-existent) nuclear weapons program. What is diabolical in this decision of the US vice president is that the **justification presented by Cheney to wage war on Iran rests on Iran's involvement in a hypothetical terrorist attack on America, which has not yet occurred:**

Are we to understand that **US, British and Israeli military planners are waiting in limbo for a Second 9/11, to extend the war beyond the borders of Lebanon, to launch a military operation directed against Syria and Iran?**

Cheney's proposed "contingency plan" did not focus on preventing a Second 9/11. The Cheney plan is predicated on the presumption that Iran would be behind a Second 9/11 and that punitive bombings could immediately be activated, prior to the conduct of an investigation, much in the same way as the attacks on Afghanistan in October 2001, allegedly in retribution for the alleged support of the Taliban government to the 9/11 terrorists. **It is worth noting that one does not plan a war in three weeks: the bombing and invasion of Afghanistan had been planned well in advance of 9/11.** As Michael Keefer points out in an incisive review article:

"At a deeper level, it implies that '9/11-type terrorist attacks' are recognized in Cheney's office and the Pentagon as appropriate means of legitimizing wars of aggression against any country selected for that treatment by the regime and its corporate propaganda-amplification system. . . ." (Keefer, February 2006)

On the way less paranoid side, it also might be helpful to call a terror alert when the Democrats and your own incompetence are getting too much buzz in the media. This is now an old pattern familiar to progressives now, as someone said to me yesterday. I was really impressed by this segment on MSNBC's Keith Olbermann's Countdown. It's 10 minutes recounting 10 separate "Anti-Bush news shattered by well-timed terror alert" media moments since 2002, featuring the Blackwater Contractors in Fallujah, Colleen Rowley and the Democratic National Convention. Really impressed with the **Nexus of Politics and Terror** ([transcript](#)):

Britons widely suspect "Liquid Airplane Bomb" terrorist threat was fabricated by Blair government: for some reason they have a keener nose for 1984 over there, probably since the government watches them on CCTV constantly. "[Blair Government Concocts Terror Threat - Scares British People Into Silence:](#)"

Yawn! Even if I wasn't actually tired, that would still be my response to the latest "terror alert" from the UK government office of Machiavellian nonsense. I mean, seriously, at what point do people start to smell a rat? Is the mass mind of the British public destined to be forever child-like and easily scared, or does the threat of the boogeyman eventually wear off? I mean, how many times can you arrest a group of patsies and claim that they were planning to attack the British public before people begin to wonder if you are just making it up?

Pieces [like this are getting propagated](#) on services like Shoutwire, a social hyperlinking service. Another skeptic: [The UK Terror plot: What's Really Going On?](#) by Craig Murray, at the Center for Research on Globalization:

We then have the extraordinary question of Bush and Blair discussing the possible arrests over the weekend. Why? I think the answer to that is plain. Both in desperate domestic political trouble, they longed for "Another 9/11". **The intelligence from Pakistan, however dodgy, gave them a new 9/11 they could sell to the media. The media has bought, wholesale, all the rubbish they have been shovelled.**

We then have the appalling political propaganda of John Reid, Home Secretary, **making a speech warning us all of the dreadful evil threatening us and complaining that "Some people don't get" the need to abandon all our traditional liberties. He then went on, according to his own propaganda machine, to stay up all night and minutely direct the arrests.** There could be no clearer evidence that our Police are now just a political tool. Like all the best nasty regimes, the knock on the door came in the middle of the night, at 2.30am. Those arrested included a mother with a six week old baby.

For those who don't know, **it is worth introducing Reid. A hardened Stalinist with a long term reputation for personal violence**, at Stirling Univeristy he was the Communist Party's "Enforcer", (in days when the Communist Party ran Stirling University Students' Union, which it should not be forgotten was a business with a very substantial cash turnover). Reid was sent to beat up those who deviated from the Party line.

We will now never know if any of those arrested would have gone on to make a bomb or buy a plane ticket. Most of them do not fit the "Loner" profile you would expect - a tiny percentage of suicide bombers have happy marriages and young children. As they were all under surveillance, and certainly

would have been on airport watch lists, there could have been little danger in letting them proceed closer to maturity - that is certainly what we would have done with the IRA.

In all of this, the one thing of which I am certain is that the timing is deeply political. This is more propaganda than plot. Of the over one thousand British Muslims arrested under anti-terrorist legislation, only twelve per cent are ever charged with anything. That is simply harrassment of Muslims on an appalling scale. Of those charged, 80% are acquitted.

Alex Jones' PrisonPlanet asserts that British Intelligence was not going to intervene! [British Intel Wanted To Bust Liquid Bomb Terrorists After Attack: MI5 Had Agent Inside Bomb Squad](#)

Plot 'almost allowed to come to fruition' - putting 3,000 lives at risk - intelligence agencies wanted to arrest suspects after alleged date of mass attack: Paul Joseph Watson/Prison Planet.com | August 15 2006

According to news reports the British government and MI5 wanted to wait at least a week before busting the liquid terror cell that their agents had fully infiltrated, including planting a mole within the bomb squad. From the acknowledged timeline and admission that the real attack was scheduled for August 16th - **little else can be deduced but the shocking fact that MI5 wanted the bombings to go forward - arresting the perpetrators only after the attack.**

It has been revealed that the alleged terrorist cell who planned to blow up ten planes using liquid explosives had been completely infiltrated for weeks before the announcement of the foiled plot by British intelligence. From the evidence at hand allied with past history - it can be reasonably claimed that an MI5 mole within the group orchestrated the entire operation.

This is compared to an [MI5 agent who infiltrated an IRA bomb cell](#), and was apparently allowed to carry out bombings in 1998. If we are looking at "network warfare" then the 'good guys' who are supposed to catch them have to be enmeshed with the 'bad guys'. Very weird indeed. See also a little more on their "[red alert](#)."

9/11 conspiracy theories keep gaining adherents: Even SNL's [Horatio Sanz knows about Loose Change!](#) There is a reason that people are talking about the weirdness of 9/11. [Aside from the curious fact that 30% of Americans apparently don't know what year 9/11 happened](#), around half the public believes that the government covered up major elements of 9/11. Since I doubt those groups overlap, that leaves 20% of the American public who know the year AND believe everything the government has told them! Check out the [top 40 list of reasons to doubt the official story](#). Recently, spooky stuff around the [Pentagon and the 9/11 Commission have gotten as far as the Washington Post](#):

"We to this day don't know why NORAD [the North American Aerospace Command] told us what they told us," said Thomas H. Kean, the former New Jersey Republican governor who led the commission. "It was just so far from the truth. . . . It's one of those loose ends that never got tied."

Anomalies in NORAD's reactions to the hijacked planes have finally been revealed. Stuff like [9/11 podcasts](#) offer continuing pieces of 'the case' from

911blogger.com. A former CIA analyst says that: [Stop Belittling the Theories About September 11](#) by Bill Christison

"After spending the better part of the last five years treating these theories with utmost skepticism, I have devoted serious time to actually studying them in recent months, and have also carefully watched several videos that are available on the subject. I have come to believe that significant parts of the 9/11 theories are true, and that therefore significant parts of the "official story" put out by the U.S. government and the 9/11 Commission are false."

Even [Lou Dobbs got pissed off about this!](#)

[For some evangelicals, Mideast war stirs hope:](#)

BY ALEXANDRA ALTER, Miami Herald. August

[The Rapture Index](#) -- a popular evangelical Christian Web posting that calculates a global rise in natural disasters, war and inflation -- bills itself as "a Dow Jones industrial average of end-time activity."

An index below 85 signifies a week of "slow prophetic activity." Anything above 145 signals the apocalypse is near.

The Rapture Index this week: 158. The spike reflects many U.S. evangelicals' view that growing conflict in the Middle East signals the start of a global struggle leading to Christ's return.

"We believe 100 percent what the Scripture has to say about this," said Jack Heintz, a South Florida businessman and president of the Christian group Peace for Israel, who recruited 23 evangelical Christians to join a July telephone fundraising event for Israel. "There's going to be a total battle, the battle of Armageddon, and I believe that's very close to happening."

False Christs are only at 2 right now. Gog and Persia are at 5 though.



Nuke Hawaii conspiracy: Other websites, such as [Total411.info](#), are trying to warn people about a [Synthetic Terror Alert for Hawaii](#):

A nuclear attack is the only way to successfully conquer Iran -- and a false-flag nuclear attack is the only way the neocon war cabal can justify a nuclear attack on Iran. Such false-flag attacks are regularly bootlegged through military drills and wargames so the warmakers can confuse good people inside the military and divert resources as needed.

Last August this site was instrumental in shutting down the Sudden Response '05 drill. Sudden Response was a mock nuclear drill based in Charleston, South Carolina. The general in charge of the operation had been fired just weeks before and various military flacks were caught in equivocations about the nature of the drill. This site and others pegged the drill as having a high danger of "going live," like drills conducted on 9/11 and in London on 7/7/2005.

These guys claim that one [General Fridovich](#) will be the guy to execute a nuclear blast in Hawaii... Since it's now the 17th, I guess it's gonna happen today. General Fridovich,

....head of Special Operations Command, Pacific (SOCPAC), also based at Camp Smith. Fridovich's background raises red flags for students of false flag terror. Fridovich was Commander of Special Operations Task Force-Philippines in 2002 when an undercover British-American agent in the Philippines, [Michael Meiring, blew himself up](#) constructing a terrorist bomb.

As USPACOM Deputy Director for Operations Gen. Fridovich, [continued to "coordinate" with the Philippine military](#) in 2003, [hundreds of soldiers, led by scores of Philippine officers, rebelled, asserting](#) that two so-called "terror bombings" were in fact false-flag inside jobs orchestrated inside the armed forces. Unsurprisingly, [Fridovich](#) -- a graduate of the British Forces' Royal College of Defence Studies - has continued to rise in the ranks of the Bush/Rumsfeld military through all of this.

Hawaiians, Americans, and humans seeking to thwart false flag terror attacks should ask each other, the media, and public servants the following questions.....

Interesting point about the Philippines. Anyway... Somehow I doubt anything's going to happen, but attempting to intervene against False Flags sounds like an interesting hobby....

[Wayne Madsen](#), a guy I refer to as a weird conspiracy theorist type, or whatever to be taken with many grains of salt, offers us a pretty complete conspiracy tying together Rupert Murdoch wiretapping Prince Charles, a Blair Cabinet shattered by the political pressure of the Lebanon disaster. It's pretty cool-sounding, but is Madsen's story *real-world or exercise?*

Murdoch uncovered Prince Charles-Gordon Brown plot to oust Blair. Phony terror plan cooked up to derail political coup plans.

Aug. 11, 2006 -- UPDATED. According to knowledgeable sources in the UK and other countries, **the Tony Blair government, under siege by a Labor Party revolt, cleverly cooked up a new "terror" scare to avert the public's eyes away from Blair's increasing political woes. British law enforcement; neo-con and intelligence operatives in the United States, Israel, and Britain; and Rupert Murdoch's global media empire cooked up the terrorist plot**, liberally borrowing from the failed 1995 "Oplan Bojinka" plot by Pakistan- and Philippines-based terrorist Ramzi Ahmad Yousef to crash 11 trans-Pacific airliners bound from Asia to the United States. In the latest plot, it is reported that liquid bombs were to be detonated on 10 trans-Atlantic planes outbound from Britain to the United States.

The London terror plan was "known" last Sunday by British and American authorities, according to the Indian press. American Airlines flight 109 from London Heathrow to Boston boarded a family of five, however, after the plane left Heathrow authorities determined that the father appeared on a British suspect list drawn up after the 7/7 London transit attacks. At first, the pilot was instructed to fly all the way to Boston where U.S. authorities could claim credit for apprehending the suspect. However, the pilot, fearing for the safety of his passengers and crew, refused and quickly returned to Heathrow without informing the passengers. Once on the ground, it was discovered that **the male had in his carry-on baggage the type of combination liquid explosive and electronic device** now being hyped by the British and American media.

British sources report that the reason for the delay in informing the airlines and traveling public about the liquid bomb on the American flight was to maximize the beneficial political impact for Blair and George W. Bush, both plummeting in the polls from the situations in Iraq and Lebanon.

Earlier this week, two employees of Murdoch's London tabloid, News of the World, were charged with hacking into the voice and text cell phone messages of three members of the staff of Clarence House, the residence of Princes Charles, William, and Harry. One of those charged with the wiretapping was Clive Goodman, the Royals editor of the News of the World. The same paper earlier tried to politically damage two anti-Iraq war British politicians -- Scottish Socialist Tommy Sheridan and Respect Party MP George Galloway. The paper charges that Sheridan was unfaithful to his wife by going to swinger's clubs. He won a quarter million dollar lawsuit against the paper. Galloway was confronted by Mazher Mahmood, an individual who uses the moniker "Fake Sheik," who posed as a wealthy Arab businessman and tried unsuccessfully to get Galloway to accept cash and make anti-Semitic remarks. In fact, Mahmood was and continues to be a reporter for News of the World, his continued employment approved by Murdoch. Goodman has merely been suspended by Murdoch but he has not been fired.

However, what prompted Murdoch and Blair to hype a new global "terror" threat was what **Murdoch learned from eavesdropping on the phone calls of Prince Charles' staff at the future king's office, home, and limousine. The eavesdropping revealed that Charles was working with Chancellor of the Exchequer Gordon Brown, who is to the left of Blair, to conduct the same type of political maneuver that John Major used to oust Margaret Thatcher from office. London's left-wing Mayor, Ken Livingston, was also in on the Charles-Brown plan and it was expected that in return for his support, Livingston would get a senior position in a Brown cabinet -- a development that sent shock waves through the neo-con circles in London, Washington, and Jerusalem, including British Home Secretary John Reid and Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff.** The Charles-Brown plan was briefed by Blair to Bush during the former's recent visit to Washington. However, because the phony terror plot was known to both leaders -- they decided to be away on vacation when the terror plot was "uncovered." Bush is vacationing at his Crawford, Texas "ranch," while Blair is on vacation in Barbados, staying at Sir Cliff Richard's luxurious villa.

After Blair met with Bush in Washington, he flew to California where on July 30 he attended Murdoch's News Corporation private corporate executive conference at the posh Inn at Spanish Bay golf resort in Pebble Beach. **Blair met with Murdoch, Israeli former Prime Minister Shimon Peres, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Newt Gingrich, and various Fox, Star, and Sky News executives.** The final touches were agreed to by Blair and Murdoch on how the fake terror plot would play out in Murdoch's media empire.

Blair told Bush that a Brown government would move to withdraw British troops from Iraq, break the "special relationship" with the Bush White House, and move closer to the European Union and the United Nations.

The Israeli attack on Lebanon created a rift within Blair's Cabinet with some former Blair loyalists signaling their support for the political coup against Blair. As a result, a suspect passenger was permitted to board an American aircraft at Heathrow with a liquid bomb to lay the groundwork for the media and travel hysteria five days later.

The wiretapping of Charles' messages also indicated that he has weighed in with various European royal families to discourage them from inviting Bush on state visits to their nations. This, reportedly upset the Bush and Blair regimes, who were working together to improve Bush's image in Europe. The White House's displeasure with the monarchies in Spain, Belgium, Sweden, Luxembourg, and Norway are a direct result of the Murdoch eavesdropping on Charles' staff.

Not surprisingly, after Galloway tore into a Sky News reporter on a recent televised interview, The Sun, a Murdoch paper, is now reporting that one of the 24 British aircraft liquid bomber suspects now under arrest, Waheed Zaman, met with Galloway "many times." The paper quotes the sister of the suspect. A Galloway spokesman denies that Galloway knows the suspect. What is suspect is the

Murdoch media empire that makes up news and commits illegal acts to provide cover for the false flag operations being conducted by Britain, the U.S., and Israel.

Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) agency has helped provide the cover story for the alleged liquid bombers. Working with British and U.S. intelligence, the ISI says it broke up the plot after arresting terrorist suspects in Lahore and Karachi. However, the ISI claims that the men were affiliated with the Kashmiri terrorist group Lashkar-e-Toiba, a group that is run and funded by the ISI itself.

The disclosure of the Charles-Brown plot has already created a backlash from the neo-cons. The Murdoch media is already floating the rumor that Home Secretary Reid is now Blair's chosen successor, while there will be an effort to scandalize Charles in an effort to convince the British public that it would be best to skip over him and have Prince William assume the throne upon Queen Elizabeth's death or abdication.

British commentators are noting that it is Reid, a noted neo-con, who is chairing national security "Cobra" meetings in Blair's absence. Blair bypassed Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott and many political observers believe that Prescott was passed over because of evidence that he was involved in supporting the Charles-Brown coup. Prescott chaired Cobra meetings in the wake of the July 7, 2005 (7/7) London transit bombings.

Meanwhile, Republican governors Arnold Schwarzenegger and Mitt Romney used the occasion to boost their sagging popularity by placing their states' National Guardsmen at major airports in their states.

Aug. 14, 2006 -- There is an increasing body of evidence on both sides of the Atlantic that Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation has engaged in a pattern of news manufacturing and illegal activities to hype the "liquid bomb" aviation threat and influence political developments. The police investigation of that incident has now, according to Time Europe, has now graduated from the London Metropolitan Police to the department's anti-terrorism unit, the same unit that is investigating the liquid bomb hoax perpetrated on global air travelers by Murdoch and a vacationing Blair and Bush. **The anti-terrorism probe is now focused on British cell phone companies Vodaphone and O2 and is expanding to investigate whether the News Corporation eavesdropping project was also directed against the reported major plotters against Blair: Chancellor of the Exchequer Gordon Brown, Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott, Leader of the House of Commons Jack Straw, Northern Ireland Secretary Peter Hain, Foreign Secretary Margaret Beckett, Environment Secretary David Miliband, and Home Affairs Committee Chairman John Denham**, all to the left of Blair and all critical of Blair's close relationship with Bush and Blair's acquiescence to Israel's invasion of Lebanon.

In reaction to the plot against Blair, Home Secretary John Reid, who has now supplanted Brown as the neo-con's heir apparent to Blair and who is a firm supporter of the Bush administration, and members of the British security services took over the "investigation" of the liquid bombing "plot," working closely with their counterparts in the Bush administration. Reid, not Deputy Prime Minister Prescott, took over as chair of the Cabinet Office Briefing Room-A (Cobra) meetings during Blair's absence in Barbados.

We can't forget Michael Ruppert's site FromTheWilderness.com on this one: [OPERATION "SLOW BURN?" U.K. Terror Conveniently Forces Demand Destruction:](#)

Cusp of Liquid Fuel Crisis: Social Engineering? Politics as Usual
by Michael Kane, Staff Writer. Research Contribution, by Jenna Orkin

August 15th 2006, 2:40 PM[PST] – For those interested in critically thinking the latest terror plot, the

very best place to do your homework on 9-11 is to thoroughly read Mike Ruppert's CROSSING THE RUBICON: THE DECLINE OF THE AMERICAN EMPIRE AT THE END OF THE AGE OF OIL. When 9-11 is adequately researched, **it is clear that all world events must now be viewed through the lens of Peak Oil. So from here on, we must ask ourselves what Peak Oil has to do with anything that happens geopolitically.** Now ask yourself this question: Over 500 flights were cancelled last week. How much fuel was saved? With the Alaska pipeline down and the U.S. losing 8% of its oil, Saudi Arabia and Venezuela cutting back production dramatically, the world is beginning to feel the pain of Peak Oil. Moreover, the airlines are making it almost impossible to fly, unless passengers want to fly next-to naked. This is only happening in the U.S. and UK—the two nations that consume the most airline fuel. The terror hoax serves many purposes: **Distract attention from the Middle East war, perpetuate the myth of a war on terror, make the Bush Administration look virile, reinforce the criminal violations of civil liberties in the U.S., but very, very importantly, destroy the demand for airline fuel consumption.**

Alright no big damn conclusion, just a batch of the internet's latest and greatest explanations for what Operation Northwoods calls the "**logical build-up of incidents to be combined with other seemingly unrelated events to camouflage the ultimate objective.**" I'm impressed you made it this far without having a stroke. Information warfare gives me a headache.

Posted by HongPong at 09:09 AM | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Conspiratoria](#) , [Information operations](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Security](#) , [War on Terror](#)
August 14, 2006

The curtain falls on failed 'Clean Break' Lebanon War, and Seymour Hersh reveals Washington & Jerusalem planned bombings long before kidnappings: they wanted to "demo" the next war: Iran

The next three paragraphs are horror incarnate. It's like we wrapped everything wrong about the whole last six years into one little ball and fucking nuked the world. [Seymour Hersh's latest](#):

Cheney's office supported the Israeli plan, as did Elliott Abrams, a deputy national-security adviser, according to several former and current officials. (A spokesman for the N.S.C. denied that Abrams had done so.) They believed that Israel should move quickly in its air war against Hezbollah. A former intelligence officer said, "We told Israel, 'Look, if you guys have to go, we're behind you all the way. **But we think it should be sooner rather than later—the longer you wait, the less time we have to evaluate and plan for Iran before Bush gets out of office.**' "

Cheney's point, the former senior intelligence official said, was "What if the Israelis execute their part of this first, and it's really successful? **It'd be great.** We can learn what to do in Iran by watching what the Israelis do in Lebanon."

The Pentagon consultant told me that **intelligence about Hezbollah and Iran is being mishandled by the White House** the same way intelligence had been when, in 2002 and early 2003, the Administration was making the case that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction. "The big complaint now in the intelligence community is that all of the important stuff is being sent directly to the top—at the insistence of the White House—and **not being analyzed at all**, or scarcely," he said. "It's an awful policy and violates all of the N.S.A.'s strictures, and if you complain about it you're out," he said. "Cheney had a strong hand in this."

Securing the Northern Border:

Syria challenges Israel on Lebanese soil. An effective approach, and one with which American can sympathize, would be if Israel seized the strategic initiative along its northern borders by engaging Hizballah, Syria, and Iran, as the principal agents of aggression in Lebanon, including by:

- striking Syria's drug-money and counterfeiting infrastructure in Lebanon, all of which focuses on Razi Qanan.
- paralleling Syria's behavior by **establishing the precedent** that Syrian territory is not immune to attacks emanating from Lebanon by Israeli proxy forces.
- striking Syrian military targets in Lebanon, and should that prove insufficient, striking at select targets in Syria proper.

"A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm" by Richard Perle, Douglas Feith & other neo-cons (1996).

Emphasis mine on 'precedent,' or '**demo**', as it was called in Washington during the Lebanon planning stage earlier this year.

Ten years on, the clean break has run its course:

08:26 Israel's naval and air blockade to remain in effect for the present (Army Radio)

All

Today Online

24 IDF soldiers killed Saturday in Lebanon
 Responses: 559

Moshe Arens: The war was too much for Olmert, Peretz
 Responses: 155

Yossi Beilin: Israel needs a new peace conference
 Responses: 99

Gideon Levy: Our failure may be good news
 Responses: 200

Syria still transferring weapons to Hezbollah
 Responses: 150

Lebanon crisis

* Haaretz Editorial: How to cease the fire

* Yossi Verter: PM's struggle for survival

* Shmuel Rosner: Bush and Terror

* Amir Zohar: Reservists as cannon fodder

* Ze'ev Segal: The 'teeth' of the UN

* Amos Harel: In the name of the Litani

* Sammy Peretz: The Home Front hasn't sent the bill

Rosner's Domain

* Look who's responsible now

* The war guide to winners and losers

Tense calm in Lebanon as UN-brokered cease-fire goes into effect, IDF urges rapid withdrawal

IAF strikes, sirens in Israel precede truce

IDF recommending troops be pulled back to border within 10 days, or as soon as Lebanon army deploys. 08:48

Seven soldiers killed on Sunday, eve of truce

Three names have been released: Eliel Ben-Yehuda of Kfar Tavor, Guy Hasson of Na'ama, Zur Zarhi of Nahalal. 08:52

Officials: Israel to maintain air, sea blockade for now

IDF downs two Hezbollah drones making their way to Israel; IDF suspects drones were carrying explosives. 08:45

Analysis / The IDF must leave Lebanon at once

The UN resolution looks like an undated check: Its redemption date, currency in which it will be paid, still unclear. 02:10

Hezbollah torpedoed Lebanese gov't meeting on disarmament

Anti-Hezbollah Lebanese minister: If Lebanon wants to liberate the south, no other armed force can be there. 00:42



Cars burning in the northern city of Haifa after being struck by a barrage of Hezbollah rockets on Sunday. (Doron Golan / Jini)

More Headlines

Son of novelist, activist David Grossman killed in Lebanon 00:19

Education Ministry agrees to NIS 115 million budget cut 05:07

Livni: IDF goal in wider ground operation is to protect troops 00:48

One person killed as over 250 rockets strike northern Israel 07:29

Families of abducted soldiers 'disappointed' by UN resolution 22:44



IDF fatalities in Lebanon

Twenty-four IDF soldiers were killed in heavy fighting with Hezbollah on Saturday.



Grass in the SS

German novelist Guenter Grass has admitted in an interview that he served in Hitler's SS.

Advertisement

In pictures



The clock just ran out. And now we find out that they were winding it up weeks before Hezbollah captured the Israeli soldiers. The captures were just a pretext: Israel and the United States wanted to smack Hezbollah around to demonstrate how weak the Iranian proxy was, and also to prepare American military planners for an Iranian attack with a "**demo**" of bombing (Shiite) missiles, bunkers and tunnels.

Of course, the demo failed. Failed Big Time. Thousands of dead all around, an inhuman consequence of the war Israel launched with American backing, but it's quite possible that Hezbollah's performance in the war has blown all the Pentagon's Iran fantasies to smithereens. In Washington, Bush and Cheney **planned** to kill lots of Lebanese in order to weaken Hezbollah **and** prepare the Iran war. That alone should chill you for a while.

It should chill you almost as much as witnessing the complete failure of the Western military style's beloved "[full spectrum dominance](#)", which we pretty much just did. Strategy, intelligence, tactics, training, logistics: all were complete failures. The Bush Administration misread Lebanon in a way that Ariel Sharon never would have. Now Israel's vaunted military "posture" has been crushed, revealed to all the world as incapable of defeating a well-armed modern infantry playing defense.

Israel's weak, almost meaningless military performance was one of the 21st century's signature moments – and the cruel ideologies endorsing the carpet bombing of Lebanon – this is the face of the Neoconservative world to come, if we do nothing.

The sense that Israel's military power would create order in the Middle East, forcing the Arabs to accept a peace deal on Israel's dictated terms, was one of the major principles of the Neoconservative philosophy, and the [Revisionist flavor of Zionism](#) before it. In the 1920s, [Vladimir Jabotnisky](#) wrote in [the Iron Wall](#) that only force would or could bring the Arabs to moderation – and today the Neoconservatives refuse, in principle, to negotiate with Evil Ones. Their fantasy that Israel and America could create a new, hard hegemonic (imperial?) alliance over the Middle East, on a foundation of splintered ethnic groups and military force, would never work. (Partly because those pesky subjects of the alliance tend to unite when they get bombed). Today, a core element of the Neoconservative philosophy has just evaporated as the UN saves the day. Its gears are gone.

Part of the Bush administration's plan here, according to Hersh, was to set Lebanon's other minorities against Hezbollah by bombing the common infrastructure of the country. This appears to me a pretty good example of the Iron Wall intended to divide Arabs so they cut a nicer deal with Israel.

And yet again, it failed because it's a stupid fucking idea that has ruined Israel's fortunes with illusory violence at every turn. Hersh:

The long-term Administration goal was to help set up a Sunni Arab coalition—including countries like Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Egypt—that would join the United States and Europe to pressure the ruling Shiite mullahs in Iran. **"But the thought behind that plan was that Israel would defeat Hezbollah, not lose to it," the consultant with close ties to Israel said.**

Maybe Ariel Sharon learned this one the hard way in Beirut. He never wanted to try for the Litani River again, I think we can guess.

The information operation to justify the war was cynical and employed a "family == nation" metaphor designed to help the American audience psychologically project support for the war agenda, in a way that the ordinary spats between Israel and Arabs don't. The Israeli soldiers captured were just the 'morality' window dressing of the war makers. They were nothing but symbolic pawns, deliberately used to inspire the Israeli and American populations to support their leaders. They were just an opening bracket, a façade fronting a sinister "demonstration war" blasted through Lebanon, intended to enhance Israel and America's strategic might – and the Republican Party's dark political prospects in November.

Sy Hersh is giving us the goods again. He will probably be the one man who holds back the Iran war from happening. What he reports here is the hardest version of what I suspected: in DC they egged this war on, they planned it, they wanted to blow the shit out of Lebanon, and then Iran. They've wanted to run the Clean Break program since 1996. It is clear today that it's a failure at every level, but soon they'll hand out medals to make themselves feel better.

You need to read this whole article right away. This is another disastrous execution of an ideology that has critically damaged Israel, the United States, Lebanon and Iraq. The big winners are Al Qaeda and Iran. Tell me again why it's such a fucking good idea.

WATCHING LEBANON: Washington's interests in Israel's war.
by SEYMOUR M. HERSH

Issue of 2006-08-21, Posted 2006-08-14

In the days after Hezbollah crossed from Lebanon into Israel, on July 12th, to kidnap two soldiers, triggering an Israeli air attack on Lebanon and a full-scale war, the Bush Administration seemed strangely passive. "It's a moment of clarification," President George W. Bush said at the G-8 summit, in St. Petersburg, on July 16th. "It's now become clear why we don't have peace in the Middle East." He described the relationship between Hezbollah and its supporters in Iran and Syria as one of the "root causes of instability," and subsequently said that it was up to those countries to end the crisis. Two days later, despite calls from several governments for the United States to take the lead in negotiations to end the fighting, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said that a ceasefire should be put off until "the conditions are conducive."

The Bush Administration, however, was closely involved in the planning of Israel's retaliatory attacks. President Bush and Vice-President Dick Cheney were convinced, current and former intelligence and diplomatic officials told me, that a **successful Israeli Air Force bombing campaign against Hezbollah's heavily fortified underground-missile and command-and-control complexes in Lebanon could ease Israel's security concerns and also serve as a prelude to a potential American preëmptive attack to destroy Iran's nuclear installations, some of which are also buried deep underground.**

[snip.....]

The U.S. government consultant with close ties to Israel told me, however, that, from Israel's perspective, the decision to take strong action had become inevitable weeks earlier [than the kidnapping], after the Israeli Army's signals intelligence group, known as Unit 8200, picked up bellicose intercepts in late spring and early summer, involving Hamas, Hezbollah, and Khaled Meshal, the Hamas leader now living in Damascus.

One intercept was of a meeting in late May of the Hamas political and military leadership, with Meshal participating by telephone. "Hamas believed the call from Damascus was scrambled, but Israel had broken the code," the consultant said. For almost a year before its victory in the Palestinian elections in January, Hamas had curtailed its terrorist activities. In the late May intercepted conversation, the consultant told me, the Hamas leadership said that "they got no benefit from it, and were losing standing among the Palestinian population." The conclusion, he said, was " 'Let's go back into the terror business and then try and wrestle concessions from the Israeli government.' " The consultant told me that the U.S. and Israel agreed that if the Hamas leadership did so, and if Nasrallah backed them up, there should be "a full-scale response." In the next several weeks, when Hamas began digging the tunnel into Israel, the consultant said, Unit 8200 "picked up signals intelligence involving Hamas, Syria, and Hezbollah, saying, in essence, that they wanted Hezbollah to 'warm up' the north." In one intercept, the consultant said, Nasrallah referred to Olmert and Defense Minister Amir Peretz "as seeming to be weak," in comparison with the former Prime Ministers Ariel Sharon and Ehud Barak, who had extensive military experience, and said "he thought Israel would respond in a small-scale, local way, as they had in the past."

Earlier this summer, before the Hezbollah kidnappings, the U.S. government consultant said, several Israeli officials visited Washington, separately, "to get a green light for the bombing operation and to find out how much the United States would bear." The consultant added, "Israel began with Cheney. It wanted to be sure that it had his support and the support of his office and the Middle East desk of the National Security Council." After that, "persuading Bush was never a problem, and Condi Rice was on board," the consultant said.

The initial plan, as outlined by the Israelis, called for a major bombing campaign in response to the next Hezbollah provocation, according to the Middle East expert with knowledge of U.S. and Israeli thinking. Israel believed that, by targeting Lebanon's infrastructure, including highways, fuel depots, and even the civilian runways at the main Beirut airport, it could persuade Lebanon's large Christian and Sunni populations to turn against Hezbollah, according to the former senior intelligence official. The airport, highways, and bridges, among other things, have been hit in the bombing campaign. The Israeli Air Force had flown almost nine thousand missions as of last week. (David Siegel, the Israeli spokesman, said that Israel had targeted only sites connected to Hezbollah; the bombing of bridges and roads was meant to prevent the transport of weapons.)

The Israeli plan, according to the former senior intelligence official, was "the mirror image of what the United States has been planning for Iran." (The initial U.S. Air Force proposals for an air attack to destroy Iran's nuclear capacity, which included the option of intense bombing of civilian infrastructure targets inside Iran, **have been resisted by the top leadership of the Army,**

the Navy, and the Marine Corps, according to current and former officials. They argue that the Air Force plan will not work and will inevitably lead, as in the Israeli war with Hezbollah, to the insertion of troops on the ground.)

[.....]In the early discussions with American officials, I was told by the Middle East expert and the government consultant, the Israelis repeatedly pointed to the war in Kosovo as an example of what Israel would try to achieve. The NATO forces commanded by U.S. Army General Wesley Clark methodically bombed and strafed not only military targets but tunnels, bridges, and roads, in Kosovo and elsewhere in Serbia, for seventy-eight days before forcing Serbian forces to withdraw from Kosovo. "Israel studied the Kosovo war as its role model," the government consultant said. "The Israelis told Condi Rice, 'You did it in about seventy days, but we need half of that—thirty-five days.' "

.....Get ready for the [New October Surprise](#). Michael Ledeen is pissed right now. He's gonna pull some shit to stage an Iran conflict, as [James Bamford warned you in Rolling Stone](#).

Michael Ledeen

NRO Contributing Editor



Who, me?

It's just another disaster for the Jews and the Arabs, and certainly a disaster for America. When will these folks realize that their leaders are the real enemies, paralyzing their nations with fear to secure their own power?

And what about War Crimes charges? Billions of people want to know...

Posted by HongPong at [09:32 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Campaign 2006](#) , [Iran](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Lebanon](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [The White House](#) , [War on Terror](#)

August 10, 2006

Nine centuries of Lebanon fighting with style: From Hashshashin to Hezbollah

The test of the Zionist left. By Yossi Beilin (Haaretz)

There are those who expect the Zionist left to join in the revelry of war, in the pathetic slogans such as "We will win" and in the fiery comments such as "Nasrallah will remember who Amir Peretz is."

There are those who expect us to join the non-Zionist left, which is calling for a unilateral cease-fire, accuses Israel of war crimes, demands that Hamas and Hezbollah be given what they want, and opposes all use of force. Both sides say this is the test of the Zionist left - and they are right.

We have a deep belief in the right of the Jewish people to a democratic and secure state, which has a stable Jewish majority: the state of the Jewish people and all of its citizens. We are convinced our national interest is in completing the moves toward peace with the Palestinians, Syria and Lebanon, and that there is no alternative to an agreement.



I am not gonna feel like writing tomorrow, so it's either now or the weekend. Here are a lot of bits from the past couple weeks in the Lebanon-Israel conflict. The window after the first two weeks was Israel's chance to capture the initiative against Hezbollah and attempt to achieve their hazily articulated goals in this vicious little war. It's a big war, but the space is very small.



Escalations for the weekend: Haaretz: [Security cabinet okays decision to expand ground operation in Lebanon:](#)

.....PM wavered on expansion decision

Olmert was hesitant prior to the meeting on whether to approve the proposed expansion of the IDF ground operation in south Lebanon.

Olmert was concerned that the plan presented by the defense establishment would result in hundreds of casualties, and therefore, wanted to subject it to a careful cost-benefit analysis. In Tuesday's fighting in Lebanon five soldiers were killed and 23 others wounded, two of them seriously. According to a government source, Olmert had also asked the army to present him with several different options for a ground operation.

A decision to send troops deeper into Lebanon is fraught with considerable risk. In doing so, Israel could set itself up for new criticism that it is sabotaging diplomatic efforts. Also, a wider ground offensive might do little to stop Hezbollah rocket fire on Israel, while sharply increasing the number of casualties among Israeli troops.

While most of the cabinet was expected earlier to back whatever Olmert decides, sources in the Prime Minister's Office said that three to four ministers were likely to oppose a large-scale ground operation regardless of Olmert's position. **The IDF's proposal was for a two-week ground operation that would involve conquering the entire area south of the Litani River**, and even a few areas north of it, in order to reduce Hezbollah's short-range rocket launching capabilities.

IDF Chief of Staff Dan Halutz said Tuesday that such an operation was necessary "in order to end this war differently." People who participated in discussions of the plan with him said they had never heard him speak as forcefully in favor of anything as he did in favor of the proposed ground operation. Peretz fully supports the army's plan, which he considers essential for Israel to achieve its diplomatic goals.



[Nine paratroopers killed in attack on home in Dibel; 15 soldiers killed Wednesday in south Lebanon](#)

By Amos Harel and Eli Ashkenazi, Haaretz Correspondents, and Agencies
Last update - 01:59 10/08/2006

Fifteen Israel Defense Forces troops were killed on Wednesday, the IDF announced late Wednesday night, as fierce fighting with Hezbollah guerillas raged in the southern Lebanon villages of Ayta al-Shaab and Debel.

The 15 IDF soldiers were killed in a series of firefights across the front. In the most serious incident, nine reserve paratroopers were killed and 11 wounded by antitank missiles fired on a house in the

village of Debel, in the central sector. Four reservists from an armored brigade were killed in a tank explosion, apparently caused by antitank missiles, in the town of Ayta al-Shaab. An infantryman was killed late Wednesday when he was hit by a mortar in Marjayoun.

DEBKAFfile: Israeli official spokesman say deep ground push into Lebanon approved Wednesday to reduce rocket attacks is put on hold for 48 hours to give more time for diplomacy August 10, 2006, 9:26 AM (GMT+02:00)

DEBKAFfile adds: On the ground, the first troop and tank elements of the advance began moving Wednesday overnight and are continuing Thursday, Aug. 10.

The decision Wednesday, Aug. 9, by 9 votes, none against and 3 abstentions, includes areas up to the Nabatea plateau and Arnoun beyond the Litani River. The object of the extension is to reach and eliminate Hizballah's rocket-launch centers. It deepens Israel's thrust to some 45 km from the border and calls for a further large influx of army reserves.

DEBKAFfile's military sources add the extended operation does not promise the total stoppage of all rocket fire against Israel, but could potentially bring about a sizeable reduction from up to 200 a day to some 30 or 50.

Also: **The stakes of the Lebanon War have shot up with the expansion of the Israeli offensive up to the Litani and Nasrallah's rejection of diplomacy in favor of battle**

Israel's military of old was specialized in quick, mechanized warfare. As they settled into the occupied territories, despite all the heavy weapons, the IDF reoriented itself to battling Palestinians, typically armed with rifles, handguns or machine guns. The Palestinians have some rocket-propelled grenades, as well, but they lack advanced infantry weapons. So the IDF has phased away from preparing for war with real infantries, and instead play supercop on the hapless residents of the West Bank.

They really thought that Hezbollah was only as "thick" as HAMAS, I guess. The Israelis went storming in without realizing that Hezbollah had **lots** of anti-tank missiles - on rocky terrain that doesn't give a lot of space for tanks. The IDF doctrine failed in the face of a new kind of conflict.

Right now we are watching a turning point in the nature of warfare. Everything from pack mules to to hacking to encrypted satellite feeds fits into fourth-generation warfare (pdf). Sub-state actors will basically be able to fight a top-notch modern army.

ANALYSIS: IDF still not in control of strip along Lebanon's border By Ze'ev Schiff, Haaretz Correspondent 08:57 10/08/2006

The large number and the location of the casualties that the Israel Defense Forces sustained Wednesday indicate that the army does not yet control the narrow strip along the border, **although this stage of the ground operation was supposed to have been completed already.**

The two battles also reveal a great deal about Hezbollah's method of fighting. They took place in two relatively small communities, Ayta al-Shab and Debel, close to the international border, on territory that until May 2000 was in Israel's Security Zone.

The ground operation, dubbed "Change of Direction 8," was intended to conquer this border strip. First it was to be a two- to three-kilometer strip. Then it was expanded to five to six kilometers, including numerous Lebanese villages and towns. The mission was to blow up all Hezbollah's outposts in this

strip and drive its forces out.

What happened in Bint Jbail recurred in Ayta al-Shab. Although it seemed that the town had been conquered, it transpired again and again that there were still Hezbollah men in it. Once again, clashes and battles took place, and again, the IDF suffered dead and wounded. **Although the army had conquered the town, Hezbollah men were hiding in underground bunkers well camouflaged from the outside. The bunkers had been stocked with large quantities of food, enough to last for weeks, and ammunition, including antitank missiles and, in several cases, short-range rockets.**

The bunkers are connected to electricity and, according to one report, are air conditioned. When the fighting dies down, Hezbollah fighters emerge from the bunkers and set up ambushes for IDF soldiers and armored vehicles. That is why soldiers are hit repeatedly in the same places.

On several occasions, there have been difficulties evacuating wounded soldiers under fire. **At times, Hezbollah fighters have fired rockets at Israel from areas close to the border that the IDF had supposedly conquered already.** The means available to flush the guerrillas out of their underground shelters are not always employed.

Senior officers have suggested, inter alia, that the army bombard these towns heavily and even destroy them. But in any case, a decision has been made not to reenter them at this stage. The IDF could forge ahead, as it has done in the last two days in the Marjayoun area. But even after such an incursion, Hezbollah fighters who remain in the bunkers could continue launching rockets. In other words, they could fire toward Israel from behind the lines of IDF forces that have progressed deep into Lebanon. It is clear that the Hezbollah men who stayed behind are **equipped with two-way radios and receive information from scouts hiding near the border. This explains the difficulties in managing the fighting in south Lebanon, which the IDF has not encountered before.**

Even if Hezbollah "loses", the writing is on the wall. In the 21st century "the State" itself is weakening. Sub-national organizations like Hezbollah, with economic, military, political, social, educational, medical (and often spiritual) branches are displacing the State.

One should remember that the Middle East's artificial European-drawn boundaries have left many overlapping ethnic groups. The Pashtuns now at the core of the Taliban straddle Afghanistan/Pakistan. The Kurds are organized a bit like Hezbollah, and the ruthless pursuit of the Kurds' interests has rewarded them well since the US toppled Saddam. But they too are divided between parties that ruthlessly fight each other.

In Syria, only a few dozen miles east of Israel's bombing campaign lie many major Arab Sunni tribes like the Dulaimis, who especially live in cities along the river into Iraq, where their cousins' tribes live, sparring with Kurds and Shiites.

In this kind of region, everyday people are going to direct their primary loyalties towards sub-national groups that they believe represent their interests. By the early 1990s, Hezbollah, which the Iranians helped create by binding together different Lebanese Shiites, was seen as something of a successful model – social, political, military: robustly structured to resist

political pressure, infiltration and military assaults from the Israelis and others.

Before Saddam fell, The Iranians used the Lebanese sub-state model inside Iraq, to lay the framework for the Shiite rise to power. Very quickly, SCIRI, Muqtada Sadr's people, and the Dawa Party all had organized cadres of armed guys, but more importantly, social services and methods for trying to restore any sense of law and order shattered with the US invasion. If the guys on the block with guns keep the thieves away, then they are pretty much your state, even if they don't report to Baghdad.



The news in Israel right now is that [15 reservists got killed in Lebanon, with heavy fighting around Bint Jbail](#), a site the IDF captured and subsequently evacuated. As the maps made clear, Bint Jbail is not more than a few kilometers from the border, yet the Israeli forces, despite all the bombing and everything, have not been able to hold that area, once they reached it and tried to occupy.

Reports in the Israeli media indicate that Hezbollah is able to keep attacking in areas the Israelis have already 'captured.' I think it's pretty likely that Hezbollah has drilled tunnels hundreds, if not thousands of meters long, attached to deeply hidden bunkers with all the necessary weapons and supplies. It is an amazing intelligence failure that the Israelis didn't anticipate this, and still, within a very small space the IDF has not been able to block out Hezbollah. The tempo of rocket attacks has not been curtailed in any serious way, and Israeli military analysts don't really think it can be shut down without a wide invasion. Hezbollah is winning the tactical situation by playing very hard-core defense with lots of anti-tank missiles. So far, it's mostly been a successful military strategy.



This is in keeping with the local style: in the good old days of the Seljuk Empire (c. 1100), the [Hashshashin, or Assassins](#), would hang out somewhere between Damascus and Antioch - the home of the Holy Hand Grenade. The map's white spot shows a patch of mountainous land where the Assassins held sway. Mountainous redoubts are easier to defend, and such clever methods have migrated about 200 miles south, where nearly a millennia later, some pretty insane shit is going down.

Well then, that's enough rambling background. Here's some damn links.

The rockets keep coming: [Hizbollah rockets kill 15 in northern Israel](#). Hapless reservists. [An ugly scene](#). [IDF Raids near Tyre](#).

Emotional reaction in Israel propels poor policy:

'Peace' is a term not used in the public space in Israel anymore...No one expects any dialogue on a real practical level. The military always offers a shortsighted immediate way out. The wish to identify with the power of the gun and the uniform is still alive in Israeli tribal DNA. Revenge is a word not used in the open; it is there in the undercurrent of the emotions expressed by the public, our bombardment of Gaza had the same motive behind it.

UK Guardian: [Israeli pilots 'deliberately miss' targets](#): Fliers admit aborting raids on civilian targets as concern grows over the reliability of intelligence

You need to give money to [AntiWar.com](#). Their work is important and [kinda spooky](#). Rumors that [apocalyptic Christian writers are visiting the White House](#). [Stratfor has free podcasts](#). Updates on the [Tikkun Olam blog](#) (תקון עולם: Make the World a Better Place).

Iranian dimensions:

Haaretz: [Nasrallah's dilemma](#) By Amos Harel and Avi Issacharoff

As the war progresses, the depth of Iranian involvement in Hezbollah activity is increasingly being revealed. Hezbollah has established a Tehran-sponsored forward outpost here, under the noses of the Israelis. When the war ends, Iranian soul-searching will include the question as to whether the activity here was not premature: whether the strategic card of the rocket battery was not revealed too early, for the sake of a negligible goal like the release of the four prisoners, instead of saving it for the day of judgment, for the eruption surrounding its nuclear program.

The Iranians are involved up to their necks in Hezbollah activity: Their advisers participated in the firing of the missiles at Israeli ships and in the firing of Strela (SA-7) anti-aircraft missiles at Israeli planes and helicopters. During Israel Defense Forces operations in the south, **sophisticated listening rooms were discovered, via which the Iranians eavesdropped on Israeli communications and telephone networks, both civilian and military.**

Guardian: [Bloody night in Beirut as Israel intensifies aerial bombardment: IDF warns UN troops will be attacked if they repair bridges](#) (aug 8)



Information warfare sector: Olmert [meets with spokespeople to sharpen PR message](#). PrisonPlanet says: [Another Israeli Myth Exposed: There Were No Hezbollah Rockets In Qana but Israeli media alleges Qana killing was staged](#), dubbing this pattern Hezbollywood. With a certain sense of weird horror, Haaretz features "[Where there's smoke, there's liars](#)": "1. The Muslim Lie Mode, or The Dead as Visual Aid (When Arabs report what Israel has done) 2. The Israeli Lie Mode, or The Dead as Enemy Weapon (When Israelis report what Israel has done). 3. The American Lie Mode, or The Dead as Nonexistent." Anyway, [Half of U.S. Still Believes Iraq Had WMD](#).

The US-Israeli link: this looks at Condi and an IDF spokesperson as two flip sides: [Between two friends by Tom Segev](#):

During the past 39 years since the Six-Day War, the United States did not force Israel to pull out of the West Bank, but more than once acted to block Israeli military actions. **Over time, we have grown accustomed to the Americans saving us, not only from the Arabs, but from ourselves too. Not in this war.** It is still unclear whether this war was coordinated with the United States; only the release of government records of the past three weeks will shed light on this. Whatever the case may be, **the impression is that the Americans are linking the events in Lebanon to their failing adventure in Iraq.**

Israel's elites, in all fields, are made up of people who spent a number of years in the United States and returned with not only professional skills but also an appreciation for the value of the individual and basic freedoms. For the most part, this was a useful process, even though it did contribute to a fading of social compassion. This process of **Americanization has led Israel in recent years to covet a role in what Bush has described as a war on the "axis of evil."**

As such, Israel has adopted the moral values of Hezbollah: Whatever they are doing to the residents of northern Israel, we can also do to the citizens of Lebanon, and even more. Many Israelis tended to look at the Qana incident primarily as a media disaster and not as something that imposed on them any ethical responsibility. After all, the restrictions of humanitarian warfare are not applicable to the "axis of evil." Just like in Iraq, the lessons of Vietnam have been forgotten. It is hard to avoid the impression that the routine brutality of oppression in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank is also reflected in the unbearable ease with which Israel has forced out of their homes hundreds of thousands of Lebanese and bombed civilians.

Tense situation with Israel's own Arab population (20%): [Border Police search Israeli Arab homes without warrants](#).

Loss of Momentum by Amir Oren (Haaretz):

The IDF's greatest loss was momentum. The first week of the campaign went reasonably well, borne on the wave of the stunning success of the attack of Hezbollah's long-range rockets. Between the middle of the second week and the middle of the third week the IDF lost a week, not least because of its reaction to the eight Golani Brigade soldiers who were killed in Bint Jbail. That lost week, as the rain of Katyusha rockets continued to fall from on high, undermined the army's self-confidence and thrust it into a posture of public self-defense. It shifted into recovery mode only because of the time it was granted by Washington. Fear of a large number of casualties was the major factor in the government's hesitations, for almost a week, about whether to send more divisions into the fray, entailing a call-up of reserve units.

The General Staff admitted the IDF did not work fast enough. They did not grasp the fact that the context had changed and that this was not just one day of battle or a routine-security incident, but a war, which has its own laws. Commanders who were used to operations in the territories did not internalize the need for speed, persistence and continuity.....

The sweeping criticism did an injustice to Division 91 and to the "hunt" concept in the air force. A colonel in the division said this week that for months the division's senior command "drove officers crazy with alerts to prevent abductions, turned over every stone and laid down new stones in order to turn them over, too." **The abduction, the colonel noted, was comparable to a special operation by an IDF commando unit**, which, in the absence of precise intelligence, is difficult to thwart even after all the preparations across the sector.

Various people yelling at each other: ADL: Hugo Chavez comparison of IDF and Hitler is Outrageous. Yesha (settler) Rabbinical Council objects to ridicule of Chief IDF Rabbi.

Hawks crow: Win that war! (Haaretz). Peace Index: July 2006 / Support for the war and the IDF holds up.

A final batch: I got nothing left after these Haaretz bits: ANALYSIS: There appears to be a command problem in the north. From war, an opportunity. Snatch a possible victory. Down but not out. Little Satan has big teeth. ANALYSIS: Deployment of Lebanese army may be good for both sides.

Well, that's all for a while. Enjoy.

Posted by HongPong at [12:57 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [4GW](#) , [Information operations](#) , [International Politics](#) , [Iran](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Lebanon](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Security](#) , [War on Terror](#)

July 29, 2006

War Link Dump II: Neo-cons sparking Iran war, Israel retreats from Bint Jbeil, Anglican Bishop decries Israeli aggression; Bin Laden wins; Laser-like (or microwave directed energy) weapons in Iraq?!!!!?

Be advised there are graphic images of violence in this post, partly because the American TV networks have suppressed such imagery. Nothing is quite

as elusive as Arab blood on American eyeballs. Now *that's* information warfare.

When God looks down on a "proportionate response," what does S/He see (via [the agonist](#))? Beirut satellite image:



[BBC in pictures:](#)





I won't go into details, but always [look at Juan Cole's site](#). Some of the links come from there today. [The Agonist](#) is also essential reading, and [Antiwar.com's blog](#). Good points about [Western hypocrisy](#), and said [today](#):

This whole thing was about Olmert proving he had stones as big as Sharon. (Shades of Fallujah in 2004 if you ask me.)

Pat Lang, formerly a top dog at the Defense Intelligence Agency, observes of the IDF withdrawal from Bint Jbeil:

[Sounds Like They Couldn't Stand The Heat.](#)

The IDF pulled its ground forces out of Bint Jbeil Saturday all the way back into Galilee. They fought there for days to take the town, lost some men and then started house demolitions. According to my Israeli sources, Hizbullah counter-attacked in strength starting Friday night. The next day Israel withdrew from the town.

It sounds like the politicians couldn't stand the prospect of real war. Or, more fancifully the IAF has laid an elaborate trap for HA. Some of the members of our seminar will prefer that idea.

A week ago the [Jerusalem Post](#) said that a "[civil administration](#)" (i.e. occupation) government for South Lebanon was being prepared, but it looks like it won't be needed at all.



Essential reading (and not just because I [interviewed](#) the [guy!](#)) in the Nation:

[Anger in the Arab World](#) by Rashid I. Khalidi - posted July 27

In what passes for analysis of the war involving Israel, Lebanon and Palestine in US and Israeli government circles, in the well-oiled PR machine that shills for them, and in much of the US media, we are told about a struggle against terrorism by a state under siege. The basic argument is that Israel is "responding to terrorist violence," and that **the only real question is, How soon will Israeli force, backed by**

American determination, prevail? But this scenario has little to do with reality in the Middle East.

There will be no "destruction" of Hezbollah, and no "uprooting" of its infrastructure or that of Hamas, whatever the results of Israel's siege of Gaza and its merciless attacks against Lebanon. **The rhetoric**

about "terrorism" has mesmerized those who parrot it, blinding them to the fact that Hezbollah and Hamas are deeply rooted popular movements that have developed as a response to occupation--of the West Bank and Gaza for nearly forty years, and of southern Lebanon from 1978 to 2000. Whatever one might say about the two movements' callousness in targeting civilians (a subject on which Israel's defenders are hardly in a position to preach), both have won impressive victories in elections and have provided social services and protection to their people.....

.....Much depends on whether an Israeli, American or Israeli-American war with Syria and, much more serious, Iran can be avoided. If escalation of what is already a major war in Gaza and Lebanon can be prevented, the conflict's regional effects will be mitigated. Much depends on how fast European public opinion, turning rapidly, expresses its revulsion at what is happening in Lebanon. **Tales of the massive destruction and civilian casualties are being carried home by tens of thousands of French, British, Italian and German evacuees, many of them dual nationals, appearing on French and British TV talking about the atrocities they have seen.** Much also depends on how adventurous Iran and Syria choose to be, how much punishment Hezbollah can take and still keep fighting, and how wise the Palestinians are in dealing with their difficult internal situation. **And much depends on how far the man in the White House will go with his instincts. If he reins in his darker impulses and those of the Israeli general staff, which is running the show on that end of the alliance, the current slide into the abyss can yet be halted. If not, the Middle East and the United States are headed for catastrophe.**

Sidney Blumenthal in The Guardian: [The neocon resurgence: The delusional US mindset that made the Iraq war a disaster has resurfaced in Lebanon.](#) Lebanon Daily Star: ["America's credibility will be a casualty of Israel's war:](#) Whatever reasons arabs ever had to trust washington are going up in smoke".

Osama Bin Laden wins BIG: July 21: ["Doing bin Laden's Work for Him" by Michael Scheuer,](#) the CIA guy that ran the Bin Laden unit for years. **Gotta read this one:**

Most damaging for G-8 leaders will be this week's **validation for Muslims of bin Laden's assertion that the West considers Muslim lives cheap and expendable.** They will see that three kidnapped Israeli soldiers and several dozen dead Israelis are worth infinitely more to the West than the thousands of Muslims held for years in Israel's prisons, the hundreds already killed in Lebanon, and the eradication of Lebanon's modern infrastructure.

So bin Laden wins without lifting a finger.....The impact of this Israel-Hezbollah round will not stop with the inevitable truce that will be declared after Israel ruins Lebanon. While temporary order may return to the Levant, America, Britain, and the West should not fool themselves. **They have again gratuitously picked sides in a fight between two inconsequential nations;** the survival of neither is a genuine national security interest for any G-8 state. Led by Washington's absurd, **30-year obsession with the minimal Shia threat to America, and blind to the hatred generated among Muslims by their foreign policies, the G-8 have mightily strengthened the enmity, durability, and resolve of the Sunni extremist movement that bin Laden leads and personifies.**

Egyptian Al-Ahram Weekly On-Line: [First Iraq, now Lebanon:](#) Mainstream media is making the same excuses furnished in Iraq for the destruction of infrastructure and the mass killing of civilians in Lebanon, writes Firas Al-Atraqchi.

Where were those Israeli soldiers captured? Obviously the moral foundation of the war is that Hezbollah captured those Israeli soldiers over the 'Blue Line', inside Israel. But there are [stories burbling up that they were actually captured inside Lebanon](#) on some kind of Israeli commando raid. It seems implausible, but the [story](#) is out there.



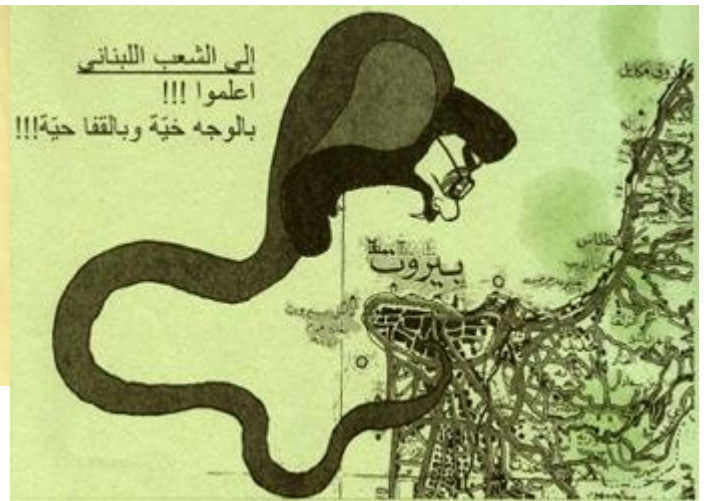
Neo-cons ginning up Iran war NOW: This is a **MUST**-read: [Iran: The Next War](#):

Even before the bombs fell on Baghdad, a group of senior Pentagon officials were plotting to invade another country. Their covert campaign once again relied on false intelligence and shady allies. But this time, the target was Iran. BY JAMES BAMFORD

This story HAS to be read. It explains the AIPAC spy scandal, how Ahmed Chalabi told the Iranians that the U.S. was reading their encrypted messages, how Michael Ledeen is gearing up the Iranian opposition to stir up more trouble in Iran. This is a very big deal. I

won't quote a lot from here, but this story tracks with a lot of the stuff we've tried to cover here on HongPong in the past. And now it is really getting put into motion. Some [jackass on National Review denies everything](#).

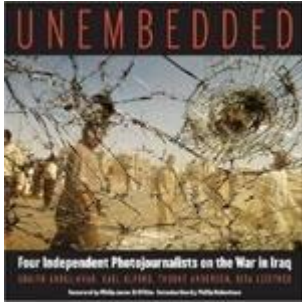
Lebanon Daily Star reports yesterday that [Israeli military casualties has forced a change in Israel's military strategy](#), abandoning a large expansion of ground warfare.



Middle East Report: [Israel's War Against Lebanon's Shiites](#) by Jim Quilty in Beirut - July 25. Features copies of Israeli propaganda leaflets (pictured here). Lots of details about those tricky complexities of Lebanese politics.



CSM: [UN deaths prompt 'diplomatic firestorm': Annan calls attack on observers in Lebanon 'apparently deliberate,'](#) but Israel angrily denies charge. July 28: "[Israeli strikes may boost Hezbollah base: Hezbollah support tops 80 percent among Lebanese factions.](#)" July 26: Asia Times Online: [Hezbollah banks on home-ground advantage](#) By Sami Moubayed.



Antiwar.com: Be sure to read [Fourth Generation War in Lebanon](#) by Ehsan Ahrari. Justin Raimondo: [Lebanon: Are the Yanks Coming? Let's hope not....](#) and [Lebanon: Winners and Losers: Bin Laden wins, and we lose.](#) Also, [Israel is winning the battle, but not the war](#) on July 25. However, it appears they have lost the battle too. [The Fire Next Time](#) by Osamah Khalil about the impact on the rest of the Arab world. [Lawless](#) by Nebojsa Malic. [Israeli Offensive Targeting Relief Efforts?](#) by Aaron Glantz. [Five Myths that sanction Israel's war crimes](#) by Jonathan Cook. (This article was too long though)

On Iraq check out the [review of Unembedded](#), about freelance photo-journalists in Iraq. The photo below was in the book.



Voice of America News conveys Lebanese refugee stories:

'Tehfa says the bombs are not the only danger. Yaroun is all but cut off from the outside world. "Plus, the people die without food. There is no water, no electricity, no gas. Nothing!" she added. Tehfa literally walked to safety, wearing a pair of black flip-flop sandals and carrying nothing but her shiny black handbag. After nearly two weeks under siege, she and a group of about 70 townspeople - waving a large white flag - walked six kilometers to the nearest village, a place called Rmeich. Another Australian, Fatima Salim, managed to find a car to take her to Rmeich, and then slept in a cramped apartment with 80 other people for three days. "I lost my mother, my brother, my sister-in-law. I do not know where they are gone," she said. "Because I go out from one door, they go out from another door. And for one minute, I cannot see my parents. I do not know where they are." '

Some angry Lebanese post [photos of wounded Lebanese children](#), and photos of Israeli children writing messages on bombs. Graphic. They also posted [images of the "Marwaheen Massacre"](#) where Israeli jets pounded and killed a fleeing Lebanese family earlier in fighting. The family had previously been turned away from a UN post, which is why the Blue Helmets had to pick up the pieces, literally:



Washington Post editorial from Tuesday: "[Air Power Won't Do It](#)" as I said earlier. [Interview from a week ago](#) with a former Bush hand on Lebanon in Harpers.



[News updates from Wednesday](#), noted because the Dell this fleeing Beirut guy is heaving over the fence looks just like the old HongPong server. [Civilians killed as Israelis target ambulances](#). From nearly a week ago, the AP was reporting the [tenacity of Hezbollah fighters against Israel](#). [Hezbollah fighters popped up in Beirut shortly after Israeli bombings](#) without delay. On the 26th, UK Times said [Ferocity of Hezbollah comes as a surprise](#) as Israeli intelligence turns out to be incredibly shitty:

[Israeli] domestic support remains strong, but the first cracks have appeared, with media commentators accusing the army of providing **an "insulting level of intelligence" about Hezbollah's defences**. As they munched watermelon yesterday, sweating Israeli soldiers were visibly shocked by the stiff opposition they had encountered, describing their Hezbollah opponents as a "guerrilla army" with landmines and anti-tank missiles capable of crippling a Merkavah battle tank.

"It was really scary. **Most of our armoured personnel carriers have holes,**" a paramedic told The

Times after recovering three wounded tank soldiers. "It's a very hard situation. We were in Lebanon before but it wasn't like this for a long time." A tank commander said: "It's a real war." In the Galilee town of Safed, Brigadier-General Shuki Shachar, deputy commander of the northern forces, conceded that the foe was not an easy one. "Hezbollah is a fanatical organisation. It is highly motivated to fight. I don't want to give grades to the enemy, but they are fighting. They are not escaping," he said. He insisted, however, that Israel was "changing the balance" after a belated recognition that the Shia group was dug in deeper than expected.

"After a few days we realised that Hezbollah prepared itself over the last six years with thousands of rockets, with hundreds of shelters, bunkers, with hundreds of rockets hid in houses of civilians inside south Lebanon," he said. [this is one of those small things you figure out BEFORE you launch a war --Dan]

His forces had never intended to "conquer every square inch" of Bint Jbeil but had now achieved their objectives of taking the high ground. Wherever the Israel Defence Forces decided to act, the general said, "we have no problem to do so, no restrictions".

Which is why they have already departed Bint Jbeil. Because they launched a war unaware of the honeycombs of bunkers and rockets. Hmm.

Things are definitely getting worse in Iraq but at least we got Lasers now?!! under the radar, it seems. [News analysis: U.S. could face a showdown with al-Sadr](#), even more so as the U.S. eggs Israel on to kill more Shiites. In a shrewd move, the [U.S. Army fired a gay Arab linguist](#). War Crimes trials for [abusing and torturing detainees are a possibility](#). Time magazine: [How the Lebanon Crisis Complicates U.S. Prospects in Iraq](#). Democracy Now reports: Star Wars in Iraq: [Is the U.S. Using New Experimental Tactical High Energy Laser Weapons in Iraq?](#) It doesn't quite sound like a laser. My money is on directed microwave radiation... I won't make a joke, because this is too creepy:

MAJID AL GHEZALI: Just the head was burnt, and the other parts of the bodies wasn't anything happened on it.

NARRATOR: Al Ghezali reported that he had seen three passengers in a car, all dead, **with their faces and teeth burnt, the body intact, and no sign of projectiles.**

MAJID AL GHEZALI: There wasn't any bullet. I saw the teeth, just the teeth and no eyes, all of them. With the body, nothing for the bodies. **Just the teeth, and all the -- I mean, the heads were burnt.**

NARRATOR: There were other inexplicable aspects. The terrain where the battle took place was dug up by the American military and replaced with other fresh earth. **The bodies that were not hit by projectiles had shrunk to just slightly more than one meter** in height.

.....DOCTOR NO. 2: It seems to be a new weapon.

SAAD AL FALLUJI: Yes, a new weapon.

DOCTOR NO. 2: **They are trying to do experiments on our civilians. Nobody can identify what the type of this weapon.**

Ohohoho those crazy Iraqis and their stories. "How could such a thing be true?" says the skeptic. One possibility: half a billion dollars in spending may have produced something larger than a pen laser to fuck around with occupied Muslim populations. The last bit of the article:

WILLIAM ARKIN: So, right now you have about \$50 million a year being spent on non-lethal weapons. You have about another \$200 million or so being spent on high power microwaves, active denial-type systems. **You've got probably another \$100 to 200 million being spent on secret black laser programs.** And then you've got the big lasers, the high energy laser of the Air Force and **the other tactical lasers.** So probably, when you add all of that up, you know, **the United States is probably spending a half of a billion dollars a year right now on directed-energy weapons,** you know, probably somewhere in the order of 300-400 million euros. So this is a significant amount of money. This is the size of the defense budgets of some countries in Europe.

On a lighter note, Joe Klein on [Lieberman's Last Stand](#) and another [one of his friends ditches him](#). Polls are showing Lamont doing [real, real well](#). Oddly, we discover that [John Ashcroft was against torture](#), which is part of the reason they got rid of him.

Blog bits: [The Guns of August](#) on DailyKos.com was an interesting roundup of everything. William Arkin tries pretty hard at the WaPo to keep [tabs](#) on this stuff. Al Qaeda says it ought to fight [alongside Hezbollah and Hamas](#), a surprising twist. Some general remarks from [Obsidian Wings](#). Neocon [blather about Arab governments supporting Israel](#) turns out to be false. Arab-American [Abu Aardvark notes](#) that the Rome conference was a failure.

Idiot on Fox talks about how great it is that [Israel attacked UN peacekeeping posts](#). Greek antiwar protesters [toppled a statue of Harry Truman](#) (bet you didn't see that one coming). Kind of a [funny video of these cute \(Iranian?\) girls talking](#) about how much they like Hezbollah.

More Haaretz of course: Haaretz has an interesting feature on how Israeli intelligence agencies have attempted to wrap their heads around Hezbollah's tactical reality. [Opening a window on intelligence. "No Time to Lose" by Amir Oren](#) is about the peculiarity of the blaring American "green light" to bomb the shit out of Lebanon. [The plan was 2 kilometers "cleared"](#), but it ain't happening. [Hezbollah, an empire of millions. Big questions, great frustration](#) indeed. [Moral Muddle](#) - interesting questions at an IDF base about the morality of killing Lebanese civilians. A kind of [funny article about Arab journalists](#). Check out [The turnabout will come quickly By Meron Benvenisti](#), a peace guy explaining why the war will be abandoned in Israel. [From Wednesday, The war so far / No goals attained By Ze'ev Schiff. Was there a proper decision process? By Aluf Benn. Has the army failed? By Amos Harel](#) Finally,

[Morality is not on our side By Ze'ev Maoz](#)

There's practically a holy consensus right now that the war in the North is a just war and that morality is on our side. The bitter truth must be said: this holy consensus is based on short-range selective memory, an introverted worldview, and double standards.

This war is not a just war. Israel is using excessive force without distinguishing between civilian population and enemy, whose sole purpose is extortion. That is not to say that morality and justice

are on Hezbollah's side. Most certainly not. But the fact that Hezbollah "started it" when it kidnapped soldiers from across an international border does not even begin to tilt the scales of justice toward our side.

German paper Der Spiegel has [INTERVIEW WITH LEBANESE PRESIDENT EMILE LAHOUD: 'Hezbollah Freed Our Country'](#).

Mitch Prothero in Salon.com on the bullshit about [Hezbollah hiding among civilians](#):

Throughout this now 16-day-old war, Israeli planes high above civilian areas make decisions on what to bomb. They send huge bombs capable of killing things for hundreds of meters around their targets, and then blame the inevitable civilian deaths -- the Lebanese government says 600 civilians have been killed so far -- on "terrorists" who callously use the civilian infrastructure for protection.

But this claim is almost always false. My own reporting and that of other journalists reveals that in fact **Hezbollah fighters -- as opposed to the much more numerous Hezbollah political members, and the vastly more numerous Hezbollah sympathizers -- avoid civilians.** Much smarter and better trained than the PLO and Hamas fighters, they know that if they mingle with civilians, they will sooner or later be **betrayed by collaborators** -- as so many Palestinian militants have been.

For their part, the Israelis seem to think that if they keep pounding civilians, they'll get some fighters, too.

The Anglican [Christian Bishop in Jerusalem gets blown off by American Christians](#). Pretty scathing letter from the Bishop:

.....Movement of residents of the West Bank is difficult or impossible as "security measures" are heightened to break the backs of the Palestinian people and cut them off from their place of work, schools, hospitals, and families. It is family and community that has sustained these people during these hopeless times. **For some, it is all that they had, but that too has been taken away with the continued building of the wall and check points. The strategy of ethnic cleansing on the part of the State of Israel continues.**

This week, war broke out on the Lebanon-Israeli border (near Banyas where Jesus gave St. Peter the keys to heaven and earth). The Israeli government's disproportionate reaction to provocation was consistent with their opportunistic responses in which they destroy their perceived enemy.

In her recent article, "The Insane Brutality of the State of Israel," American, Kathleen Christison, a former CIA analyst says, "The state lashes out in a crazed effort, lacking any sense of proportion, to reassure itself of its strength." She continues, "A society that can brush off as unimportant an army officer's brutal murder of a thirteen year old girl on the claim that she threatened soldiers at a military post (one of nearly seven hundred Palestinian children murdered by Israelis since the Intifada began) is not a society with a conscience." **The "situation" as it has come to be called, has deteriorated into a war without boundaries or limitations. It is a war with deadly potential beyond the imaginations of most civilized people.**

As I write to you, I am preparing to leave with other bishops for Nablus with medical and other emergency supplies for five hundred families, and a pledge for one thousand families more. On Saturday we will attempt to enter Gaza with medical aid for doctors and nurses in our hospital there who struggle to serve the injured, the sick, and the dying.

My plan is that I will be able to go to Lebanon next week - where we are presently without a resident priest - to bury the dead, and comfort the victims of war. Perhaps as others have you will ask, "What can I do?" Certainly we encourage and appreciate your prayers. That is important, but it is not enough. If you find that you can no longer look away, take up your cross. It takes courage as we were promised.

Write every elected official you know. Write to your news media. Speak to your congregation, friends, and colleagues about injustice and the threat of global war. If Syria, Iran, the United States, Great Britain, China and others enter into this war - the consequence is incalculable. Participate in rallies and forums. Find ways that you and your churches can participate in humanitarian relief efforts for the region. Contact us and let us know if you stand with us. I urge you not to be like a disciple watching from afar.

2 Corinthians 6.11:

"We have spoken frankly to you Corinthians, our heart is wide open to you. There is no restriction in our affections, but only in yours. In return - I speak as to children - open wide your hearts also."

Blackwater blowback: As I just mentioned, the [incident with the Blackwater guys in Fallujah was a big deal – so big, it may have crashed the American war](#) effort altogether.

Well that took a long time. I am done blogging for a while, at least a few days. Things are too horrible to leave my mind in this frame. It's the last Saturday in July, and here I am, presenting all this death and doom. I don't want to spend precious days doing stuff like this any more.

Posted by HongPong at [08:20 PM](#) | [Comments \(32\)](#) Relating to [Campaign 2006](#) , [Iran](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#)

July 24, 2006

Air Power strategies don't really work

In any event, the present IDF effort to "cleanse" the south of guerrillas by fire will fail. The IAF and its associated heavy artillery simply lacks the weight of fire needed to drive this enemy from its prepared positions in the stony ground of South Lebanon.

[Col. Pat Lang \(retired\) - former top Middle East guy](#) at the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency



We'll have a little more later from [Haaretz](#) about how, from the start of this war, the Israeli military establishment, led by [Dan Halutz](#) (pictured, thanks Wikipedia), basically cut off Israel's political options, dumped the blitzkrieg plan on the heads of Olmert and Defense Minister Peretz, who, in turn, needed to 'look tough' to them... but first, the problem with Air Power.

Bombing the shit out of people can produce a good tactical situation sometimes, but as a military strategy it only makes sense if it's backed up with appropriate ground forces, and since war is an extension of politics by other means, a political strategy. The problem is that the U.S. Air Force strategic thinking that produced the carpet bombing of Vietnam is at work again in the halls of the Israeli Defense Force headquarters.

This way of thinking believes that dropping enough bombs is enough to evaporate enemy will. There is supposed to be a folding of the enemy's hand, since booms from the sky are sort of perceived like God's unavoidable vengeance, or something.

Donald Rumsfeld suffers from this badly – he was an Air Force boy, he never had to get neck deep in the Vietnamese mud. After Vietnam the U.S. Army had to rebuild its whole doctrine to never get bogged down on land like that again. The Air Force, on the other hand, thought it kicked a lot of ass in Vietnam, since you can make a metric out of identified targets destroyed. This, of course, leaves out the part where the surviving people on the ground are still willing to die fighting you, and they will still be able to get guns from somewhere and mess up your political agenda.

It is also plainly obvious that "shock and awe" was supposed to cause Iraqi will to evaporate from the beginning, and it didn't. Now, sadly, the chief of staff of the Israeli Defense Force is an Israeli Air Force propeller-head who never had to slog around and get sniped at around Ramallah, Nablus or Gaza.

Instead, like Rummy, he thinks he can bomb his way through. And this never really takes care of the problem. Now, the Israeli ground forces are flailing around in far too small of numbers, barely able to get a few hundred yards into Lebanon, and shitloads of airstrikes all over the hapless Lebanese North are supposed to prove the brilliance of this strategy?

Mark my words, the people of this world will have some kind of reckoning with the use of air forces once the dust settles on this round of shit. Killing

civilians by the dozen from planes is equal in morality to killing them with suicide bombers. You can say the policy is better or worse in its goals, but in death, the morality of the act has the same balance. Innocent blood remains so, even when spilled from a flying object.

So we will add these words from an old hand in America's intelligence community, [Pat Lang](#).

[Now, I "get it."](#)

[Dan Halutz](#) is the first IDF chief of staff who is not a soldier. He is a military aviator. I had missed that, but a statement attributed to a "senior officer" of the IDF in a New York Times story today caused me to look at IDF leadership. The "scales" have fallen from my eyes. "I believe in AIR POWER," the officer told the Times and Halutz is likely to be the officer who was interviewed

He has no ground forces experience at all. He reminds me a bit of Rumsfeld, the one time naval aviator and opponent of the use of sizable ground forces. Like Rumsfeld he is a proponent of "modern" warfare, gee-whiz techno- equipment and disdainful of big, heavy armored forces. He has re-organized the armed forces so that the ground forces no longer report directly to him.

Someone will say that Chaim Laskov had been head of the Israel Air Force (IAF) before becoming chief of staff in the early '50s. This is essentially irrelevant as a comparative situation. Laskov was not a pilot and was a ground force commander and a founder of the IDF Armored Corps before he became head of the air force.

Halutz is an ally of right wing political forces in Israel and an extreme proponent of the "Air Power" ideology that has been an active force in military affairs ever since it was enunciated by the Italian [fascist Giulio Douhet](#) in the '20s. The doctrine was taken up by Hugh Trenchard in Britain, Mitchell in the U.S., and the pre-war 2 German Luftwaffe. It persists in many air forces today.

The "Air Power" ideology in its purest form holds that ground forces have largely been made obsolete and useless by the invention and development of aircraft and other air delivered weapons, missiles, etc. "Air Power" theorists believe that this is true at the tactical, operational and strategic levels.

In Lebanon the IDF appears to be following a strategy at all levels that is entirely dictated by "Air Power" theory.

At the tactical and operational levels of war, Israel seems to be intent on destroying Hizballah south of the Litani River and north of Metulla to some unknown depth. **Thus far, just about all the attacks against Hizballah have been made by air weapons and artillery. These weapons are inherently indiscriminate in their application, especially in the hands of "Air Power" theorists who typically want to "make the rubble bounce." This is especially true if the aforesaid airplane enthusiasts see that their theories are not yielding the desired result.** If you still believe in "surgical strikes," look at the pictures from Lebanon. The IAF is "leafleting" all of south Lebanon urging citizens to leave their homes and flee northward. They appear to be intent on "herding the cats" away from their border through the use of aerial firepower. They know that Hizballah is a LEBANESE Shia guerrilla army with its roots in the Shia portion of the Lebanese population. Most of the people of the south are Shia, and the IDF knows that if they remain where they are they will support the Hizballah guerrillas both now and in the future. Indeed, the guerrillas, are, in many cases, villagers from this area. **In any event, the present IDF effort to "cleanse" the south of guerrillas by fire will fail. The IAF and its associated heavy artillery simply lacks the weight of fire needed to drive this enemy from its prepared positions in the stony ground of South Lebanon.** The actual ground maneuver attempted thus far is a joke and typical of the role imagined by "Air Power" advocates for ground forces. "Maroun al-Ras" is a tiny village less

than a mile from the Israeli border, and no amount of fancy graphics on TV "gushed" over by retired generals can alter the fact that its capture is an insignificant achievement that has had and will have no effect on the amount of fire going into northern Israel.

At the strategic level, **the IDF under Halutz is following classic "Air Power" theory which holds that crushing the "Will of the People" is the correct objective in compelling the acceptance of one's own "will" by an adversary or neutral. With that objective in mind, all of the target country is considered to be one, giant target set. Industry, ports, bridges, hospitals, roads, you name it. It is all "fair game."** In this case the notion is to force the Lebanese government and army to accept a role as the northern jaw in a vise that will crush Hizballah and subsequently to hold south Lebanon against Hizballah. Since Lebanon is a melange of ethnic and religious communities of which Shia LEBANESE are a major element and since many Lebanese Shia are supporters of Hizballah, the prospect of getting the Lebanese government to do this is "nil." As for the Lebanese Army, the US attempted for two years (1982-84) to re-structure and re-train the Lebanese Army to make it a "national" non-sectarian force only to learn when this army was committed to battle in 1984 against Druze and Christian forces, that it simply fell apart. The US then abandoned the effort. Nothing much has changed in Lebanon since then.

Bottom Lines:

-Air Power and artillery will not decisively defeat Hizballah or force it to withdraw from rocket range of Israel.

-The Lebanese government and army are not what the Israelis have once again dreamt of and they should have known that. The policy that Israel is following is truly a triumph of hope over experience.

-An international force that will fight Hizballah in the south to disarm it is a pipe dream. Who will do that? The only realistic candidate would be France in terms of military capacity. This would be a major irony of history.

Bottom Line Advice for Israel: **Occupy the ground or expect to suffer the effects of failure.**

Seems sort of obvious, doesn't it?

Posted by HongPong at [07:45 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Iraq](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [War on Terror](#)

July 09, 2006

Where is the 10th Dimension; CIA FOIA Bling

This was pretty cool, a flash animation of the ten dimensions of reality. [Check it out.](#) (via [Shoutwire](#))

Also via Shoutwire, the [CIA is trying to up the fees on FOIA for journalists:](#)

The National Security Archive today filed suit in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia against the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), challenging the Agency's recent practice of charging Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) fees to journalists pursuing news. The FOIA says that "representatives of the news media" can be charged only copying fees since they help to carry out the mission of the law by disseminating government information; but the CIA last year began claiming authority to assess additional fees if the Agency decides any journalist's request is not newsworthy enough. In adopting this new practice, the CIA reversed its prior 15-year practice of presumptively waiving additional fees for news media representatives, including the National Security Archive.

"The CIA takes the position that it should decide what is 'news' instead of the reporters and editors who research and publish the stories," explained attorney Patrick J. Carome of the law firm Wilmer Hale, who is representing the Archive. "If the CIA succeeds in exercising broad discretion to charge additional fees to journalists, despite the plain language of the law, then too often we will find out only what the government wants us to know."

"Today is the day that federal agencies are turning in their FOIA improvement plans under President Bush's Executive Order for a more 'citizen-centered' and 'results-oriented' FOIA system. But the CIA has taken the opposite approach, and is instead trying to close off use of the FOIA by journalists," commented Archive General Counsel Meredith Fuchs.

Posted by HongPong at [01:45 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) [Relating to Crawling Chaos](#) , [Media](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Technological Apparatus](#)

July 08, 2006

Major Florida coke bust conspiracy? Mexican election mess; Underlings misinform Bush; Gaza; Italian intrigues; Army skinheads



Massive 5 ton cocaine bust tied to Bush cronies?:
Yummy stuff.

This weird company called SkyWay Aircraft, which claimed to sell security products to the Department of Homeland Security, got busted with a huge amount of cocaine from Mexico, and both Mexican and American authorities are being curiously silent about it. The Mexican press, on the other hand, has been speculating that high-ranking members of Vincente Fox's government are involved. Of course, SkyWay is based in Venice, Florida, right by where some of the 9/11 hijackers trained.

[MadCowProd.com is offering the goods in this case.](#) They conclude:

DC9's cost money. But the twin airliners weren't being used to demonstrate SkyWay's products, for the simple reason that the company never had a product to demonstrate. The fact is both inescapable and mind-boggling at the same time. Two DC9's painted to impersonate U.S. Government planes were being used for an as-yet unknown purpose... for almost two years.

Like the FAA, the attitude of the DEA toward a drug trafficking case involving 5.5 tons of cocaine seems remarkably laissez faire. A call to the DEA to inquire whether the Agency had mounted an investigation of an American-owned airliner busted with 5.5 tons of cocaine elicited a terse "no comment."

The duty officer at the Tampa Office of the Drug Enforcement Administration revealed no indication that the DEA has taken any interest in the case. Two days of phone calls to the Agency's Public Information Officer in Miami yielded nothing but busy signals.

.....The answer, both here in the U.S. as well as in Mexico, appears to be: Damage Control, for what clearly appears to have been officially-sanctioned drug trafficking. The silence in the U.S. and

Mexico is a tell-tale sign of clandestine activity gone horribly awry. The bust was a mistake.

Once again, low-level personnel just hadn't been "clued-in" to the protected nature of the trade. Because of the sensitivity, everything is on a need to know basis. This creates a continuing problem.

You can't tell just anyone.

Cheney seems to be investing in securities that favor a weak dollar: That's pretty fucked up, observed at [Attu Sees All](#) and [dissected on Kiplinger's Personal Finance Magazine](#).

Are they going to [gut the Freedom of Information Act under the mask of 'counter-terrorism'](#)? (via [The Agonist](#))

The Mexican election is starting to look pretty ugly. How could there possibly be voting fraud south of the US?? [More here](#).



UK Times: [Leftist calls supporters onto streets in Mexican crisis](#)

Mexico's electoral crisis deepened today after a recount separated the two leading candidates by less than 0.5 per cent of the vote and the leftist, Andres Manuel López Obrador, called his supporters onto the streets to protest against the result.

With 99.48 per cent of the vote reviewed by election officials, Felipe Calderon, a pro-business former energy secretary, led Señor López Obrador, a former mayor of Mexico City, by 0.41 per cent, or just 170,000 of the 41 million votes cast on Sunday.

Señor Calderon appeared relaxed at a party in the headquarters of the ruling National Action Party (PAN), saying: "Now is the hour for unity and agreements between Mexicans."

But Señor López Obrador said he would challenge the result in Mexico's highest electoral court, the Federal Electoral Tribunal. He asked his supporters to rally in Mexico City's huge Zócalo square on Saturday afternoon.

"We have taken the decision to challenge the electoral process," he told a press conference. "We cannot recognize or accept these results. There are lots of irregularities."

.....

Señor López Obrador, whose Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) was founded by a populist famously cheated of the presidency in a rigged election in 1988, has alleged throughout the week that PAN activists had counted votes twice in some districts and ignored votes in others.

Today he said that a case before the Federal Electoral Tribunal would expose the "lack of transparency, the lack of independence of the electoral body".

"We have triumphed and this is what we will demonstrate to the tribunal," he said.

Aryan Nations & other hate groups infiltrating the US Army: An army desperate for recruits might be [handing guns to unsavory criminal lunatics](#): NY Times:

A decade after the Pentagon declared a zero-tolerance policy for racist hate groups, recruiting shortfalls caused by the war in Iraq have allowed "large numbers of neo-Nazis and skinhead extremists" to infiltrate the military, according to a watchdog organization.

The Southern Poverty Law Center, which tracks racist and right-wing militia groups, estimated that the numbers could run into the thousands, citing interviews with Defense Department investigators and reports and postings on racist Web sites and magazines.

"We've got Aryan Nations graffiti in Baghdad," the group quoted a Defense Department investigator as saying in a report to be posted today on its Web site, www.splcenter.org. "That's a problem."

.....

The report quotes Scott Barfield, a Defense Department investigator, saying, "Recruiters are knowingly allowing neo-Nazis and white supremacists to join the armed forces, and commanders don't remove them from the military even after we positively identify them as extremists or gang members."

Mr. Barfield said Army recruiters struggled last year to meet goals. "They don't want to make a big deal again about neo-Nazis in the military," he said, "because then parents who are already worried about their kids signing up and dying in Iraq are going to be even more reluctant about their kids enlisting if they feel they'll be exposed to gangs and white supremacists."

The 1996 crackdown on extremists came after revelations that Mr. McVeigh had espoused far-right ideas when he was in the Army and recruited two fellow soldiers to aid his bomb plot. Those revelations were followed by a furor that developed when three white paratroopers were convicted of the random slaying of a black couple in order to win tattoos and 19 others were discharged for participating in neo-Nazi activities.

.....

An article in the National Alliance magazine *Resistance* urged skinheads to join the Army and insist on being assigned to light infantry units. The Southern Poverty Law Center identified the author as Steven Barry, who it said was a former Special Forces officer who was the alliance's "military unit coordinator." "**Light infantry is your branch of choice because the coming race war and the ethnic cleansing to follow will be very much an infantryman's war,**" he wrote. "**It will be house-to-house, neighborhood-by-neighborhood until your town or city is cleared and the alien races are driven into the countryside where they can be hunted down and 'cleansed.'**"

He concluded: "As a professional soldier, my goal is to fill the ranks of the United States Army with skinheads. **As street brawlers, you will be useless in the coming race war. As trained infantrymen, you will join the ranks of the Aryan warrior brotherhood.**"

Holy shit. And let's not forget about Gulf War vet Timothy McVeigh.

The twisted Internal Disinformation of the Bush Regime:

I thought this was pretty nuts. Ron Suskind's new "One Percent Doctrine" is selling pretty well, and the

[review in the NY Times was disturbing](#), for it paints a portrait of a president *protectively misinformed* in order to defend the illogical madness of the war. This is madness:

During a November 2001 session with the president, Mr. Suskind recounts, a C.I.A. briefer realized that the Pentagon had not told Mr. Bush of the C.I.A.'s urgent concern that Osama bin Laden might escape from the Tora Bora area of Afghanistan (as he indeed later did) if United States reinforcements

were not promptly sent in. And several months later, he says, attendees at a meeting between **Mr. Bush and the Saudis discovered after the fact that an important packet laying out the Saudis' views about the Israeli-Palestinian situation had been diverted to the vice president's office** and never reached the president.

Keeping information away from the president, Mr. Suskind argues, was a calculated White House strategy that gave Mr. Bush "plausible deniability" from Mr. Cheney's point of view, and that perfectly meshed with the commander in chief's own impatience with policy details. Suggesting that Mr. Bush deliberately did not read the full National Intelligence Estimate on Iraq, which was delivered to the White House in the fall of 2002, Mr. Suskind writes: "**Keeping certain knowledge from Bush -- much of it shrouded, as well, by classification -- meant that the president, whose each word circles the globe, could advance various strategies by saying whatever was needed. He could essentially be 'deniable' about his own statements.**"

"Whether Cheney's innovations were tailored to match Bush's inclinations, or vice versa, is almost immaterial," Mr. Suskind continues. "It was a firm fit. **Under this strategic model, reading the entire N.I.E. would be problematic for Bush: it could hem in the president's rhetoric, a key weapon in the march to war. He would know too much.**"

Plainly nuts.

The situation in Gaza is pretty ugly right now. On the one hand, the Israeli strategy is brutal, but even worse, it's pointless. [HAMAS has offered a prisoner swap](#), like the old days with Hezbollah. Check out "[The Ideology of Occupation, Revisited](#)" from Israeli peacenik Ran HaCohen. James Zogby observes the [Deadly Silence over the matter](#). I haven't said much about it, but this piece pretty much sums up the problem.



[Captive in Gaza](#): Israel has several objectives in Gaza -- all mutually exclusive, writes Graham Usher

There are four aims behind operation "Summer Rain", the Israeli army's latest invasion of Gaza, according to ministers, officers and analysts. The first is to free "unconditionally" Gilad Shalit, the Israeli soldier captured by Palestinian guerrillas just outside the Strip on 25 June. The second is to end Palestinian "rocket fire" that, in the last month, has peppered Sederot and other Israeli areas on the Gaza border, so far

without serious injury.

The third aim -- undeclared but acknowledged -- is to force the Palestinian government from office via a rising curve of pre-emptive strikes. So far this has included tightened economic and political blockades, destruction of civilian power plants and bridges, military re-occupation, rocket attacks on the prime and interior ministers' offices and the wholesale arrest of Hamas ministers, members of parliament and local authority officers.

The ouster has little to do with the government's refusal to recognise the legitimacy of the Jewish state -- a rejection that suits Israel since it frees it from having to deal with an elected Palestinian Authority. It has more to do with Hamas's success not only in surviving the siege but in enshrining resistance as a central policy in its and any future National Unity Palestinian government, courtesy of the recently agreed Prisoners' Document.

The fourth aim is to repair the battered status of Israel's "deterrence". It is now clear to most Israelis that the relative quiet they enjoyed for the last year or so was not due to their army's military

proWess. It was due to the Palestinian ceasefire, observed above all by Hamas's military arm, Izzeddin El-Qassam (IQ). Since it was renounced, 200 mortars have been fired into Israel, four soldier abductions have been attempted or carried out and two soldiers and one settler have been killed.

Threats Hamas may now take the fight "deep into Israel" reminds most Israelis of the bloodiest days of the Intifada. It destroys the illusion that the Gaza disengagement was somehow a military success. And it casts Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's project to determine unilaterally Israel's eastern border as absolute folly.

Vanity Fair had a lengthy feature on the Duke Cunningham/hookergate scandal and [here's a summary](#).

Italian intrigues: In a small tidbit perhaps related to the Valerie Plame scandal, some of the [top-ranking guys in Italy's SISMI intelligence service were arrested](#), as [noted](#) in the Italian media and [the AP](#). This probably has more to do with furious Italian judges going after SISMI and CIA agents who helped get some terror suspect abducted.

.....the Italian military intelligence organization's deputy director and director of the first "foreign" or counterintelligence division Marco Mancini has been arrested in Italy, allegedly for his role in the CIA extraordinary rendition of Egyptian cleric Abu Omar from Milan in 2003. When I was in Rome on a few recent reporting trips, Mancini was the guy who everybody was literally frightened of even saying his name. I mean literally, people just referred to him as Marco. He was highly involved in Sismi's Middle East affairs, as well, apparently, I am hearing from Rome, in several recent cases of illegal wiretapping and illegal domestic spying in Italy. Arrest warrants have apparently been issued in the same Abu Omar case for four more CIA officials as well, including for the former CIA station chief in Rome.

In fact, on Sismi's behalf, Farina and Libero [led](#) the bogus charge that France was responsible for the Niger forgeries. Farina was also the beneficiary of illegal wiretaps seemingly conducted by friends of Sismi. Interesting times indeed.

From my brief exposure to politics there, I would say Mancini is far more comparable to a Lewis Libby figure than to his ex-CIA deputy director counterpart John McLaughlin, far more wired into the Byzantine politics of the Berlusconi project than a straight intel professional. Although this arrest would seem to be lapping pretty high on the ankles of the ex-Berlusconi administration itself, a friend in Rome writes that it may not go any further, and Prodi is giving indications he may not wish it to, especially as far as Sismi is concerned.

.....

Update: A reader in Rome writes that Libero's Farina is "under investigation not for his articles but because he has allegedly been identified as a Sismi source code-named 'Betulla.' ... [Sismi's] Mancini and Pignero are suspected of having studied Abu Omar's habits and having prepared an initial plan for his abduction which would have the airport of Ghedi as the first destination of Abu Omar after his kidnapping. The plan went otherwise, as Aviano was opted for. They are also accused of spying on Repubblica's Giuseppe D'Avanzo as of May 12th..."

If I understand this and other recent Italian news reports correctly, Mancini was allegedly a liaison to several private Italian dirty tricks intelligence operations.

More on [this here](#).

Ann Coulter's plagiarism situation seems [not that serious](#), but here's the [comprehensive index](#). Xenu, the Scientology warlord, is involved.

The LA Times tries to claim that anti-Lieberman-ism is [a "purge" of the Democratic Party by antiwar fanatics](#), while in fact it's more of a reaction to the fact that Lieberman is a crappy senator all around.

Around the paranoid side: I was advised to check out "[The Resistance](#)" on MySpace. As always PrisonPlanet will fill your daily conspiratoria quotient. Some Montana guy that sold (legal) gun kits was [raided by the FBI, ATF and Canadian law enforcement for handing out 'subversive' Alex Jones material](#), according to... Alex Jones. In a crossposted story from the Sacramento Bee, [Homeland Security denies tracking political activity](#) after the state office got word of a peace rally on April 18. There was a new al-Qaeda video released to mark the 7/7 London bombings, and PrisonPlanet asks a [bunch of questions about 7/7 anomalies](#), suggesting as they have from the beginning it was staged by the UK government.

The guy who invented Ren & Stimpy (a particularly [raunchy but funny one that never went on TV](#) is here) is in a [battle with Warner Bros.](#) because he's been posting their really good but forgotten cartoons on YouTube as Examples of the Art.

Worse than a Star Trek 'red shirt': [10 worst jobs to have in the action film universe.](#)

Well that should tide folks over for a bit of the weekend here...

Posted by HongPong at [01:09 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Campaign 2006](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Media](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [Tracking election irregularities](#)
July 03, 2006

Alright time to get movin again: Bob Saget, Tourette's Guy; NSA research on social networking

One of the things about taking a break on the site is that you're not sure where to get going again. Now that I am opening up the content to more things, I'm thinking about how to streamline the content while sticking to some general direction in the site's form. Random content is part of the appeal, but more focus - or rather a more clear set of foci - would make the site a lot more enjoyable for all.

At the same time I don't want to spend an inordinate amount of time working on it, especially in the nice summer with a more full-time job starting up next week. So there's a balance to be found...

Or a bunch of randomness.



The HBO show Entourage would be far less watchable without Jeremy Piven as Ari Gold, the fanatical agent. Fortunately someone did an [Ari clip video](#). Some guest stars have been excellent, in particular [Bob Saget's turn](#) as a brothel-crazed bong smoking [Bob Saget](#).

Saget's career also blew up a bit with this odd music video that went around a while ago. Jamie Kennedy and George Lucas roll on the strip with Saget.



Fuck Colgate - free Crest Whitestrips!!! Won't make you feel like a piece of shit!!

Which brings us to TourettesGuy, a strange man with his own set of online videos, wherein he [misses a shot in pool](#), screams and shouts "[Bob Saget!!](#)"



And of course, "[Don't talk shit about Total!](#)" and the new one, [Tit Dirt](#). A major crowd favorite.

Cartoon Network is throwing [free Adult Swim shows up](#) including a [new Venture Brothers](#). Venture Brothers is hit-or-miss but this one was entertaining (link only temporary)

The quasi-anarchist-subversive site [Disinfo notes](#) that

['New Scientist has discovered that Pentagon's National Security Agency](#), which specialises in eavesdropping and code-breaking, is funding research into the mass harvesting of the information that people post about themselves on social networks. And it could harness advances in internet technology - specifically the forthcoming "semantic web" championed by the web standards organisation W3C - to combine data from social networking websites with details such as banking, retail and property records, allowing the NSA to build extensive, all-embracing personal profiles of individuals.

It is interesting that the Pentagon itself is taking over all these functions. They are already combing my phone records, high school GPA's for recruiting, all kinds of things. On the other hand, [Disinfo is an entity on MySpace](#). [BlackListedNews](#) has some interesting stuff, but they're on Myspace too..... Even [Alex Jones](#) is on MySpace, yet he says:

...the purpose of this profile is to test the censorship of MySpace--primarily based upon political content... I disagree with the censorship and control of MySpace, which is only one step away from China's Internet policy where anything critical of the government is kept from dissident eyes.

The flick [A Scanner Darkly even has a Myspace page](#)... and Alex Jones is in the movie:



This is all getting much too circular...

Software notes: [Civilization IV for Mac](#) has just been released. Sweet. Also if you need an OS X timer program (my new/old oven doesn't have one), [Chimoo Timer](#) is your best free bet.

Posted by HongPong at [03:23 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Humor](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Technological Apparatus](#) , [Usual Nonsense](#)

June 08, 2006

Yellowcake breakout & Black PSY OPS: DC insiders go on the record to label the Niger forgeries White House "Black Propaganda" sparking the war. We were right

[Vanity Fair:](#)

"To me there is no benign interpretation of this," says Melvin Goodman, the former C.I.A. and State Department analyst. **"At the highest level it was known the documents were forgeries. Stephen Hadley knew it. Condi Rice knew it. Everyone at the highest level knew."** Both Rice and Hadley have declined to comment.

The great Meta-Story – the major narrative, the center of gravity of the past few years – is the "core reality" of why the war in Iraq started, and its interesting corollary, the Republican claim that "investigations will make us sad and hurt America." More or less, all along, the plan was to scare the shit out of America and make the Democrats appear weak. This was done by planting fake stories about evil foreign menaces, and as time goes by, more and more details about this essential backdrop to the 'War on Terror' burble up from the morass of this young, dumb century.

The story of the Niger forgeries is definitely woven into the major Bush Administration scandals - the fake war intelligence, the [AIPAC spy scandal](#), the [Chalabi-defector manipulations](#), and it directly spawned the [Valerie Plame scandal](#). When Plame's husband publicly called out the forgeries, Scooter Libby and others "outed" his wife as a CIA agent, more or less

because they wanted to "play dirty" to defend fake elements of the war propaganda, such as the forgeries.

On March 14, Senator Jay Rockefeller IV, the ranking Democrat on the Senate Intelligence Committee, wrote a letter to F.B.I. chief Robert Mueller asking for an **investigation because "the fabrication of these documents may be part of a larger deception campaign aimed at manipulating public opinion and foreign policy regarding Iraq."** But Senator Pat Roberts, of Kansas, the Republican chair of the committee, declined to co-sign the letter.

Then, on March 19, 2003, the war in Iraq began.

The core of the war's meaning is a kind of elusive ghost, having iterated through WMD paranoia, the fun of Democracy Building, the heavily implied 9/11 link, Palestinian militant financing, and of course a handy sense of racism and imperial control fantasies, along with the often acceptable oil seizure (and for quite a few million fundamentalists, cleansing [Babylon of evil](#), clearing a path for Zion and the Second Coming).

We should observe that Iraq's WMD chase distracted the army from stabilizing Iraq, saving its bureaucracies and businesses, and instead sent it on [wild goose chases](#) for mustard gas shells in the desert. So this deception, labeled "classic psy-ops" in the article, not only started a 'fake war', it directly killed American soldiers and thousands of Arabs. These fuckers are going to prison, someday.

The dicey thing about the invasion of Iraq was that it was a 'heavily engineered' event in history, and the vast majority of reporters and media people can't quite handle the problem, though they're finally getting better. To a true [conspiracy theorist](#), "[engineering](#)" is always behind *everything*, while in reality, historical events come around as much as by chance, self-delusion among leaders (groupthink) and social trends. However, the Iraq war was a centrally propagated, mean little joke on history, and its perpetrators were clustered in the DC beltway. Crucial points that persuaded Congress to support the war were based on planted information and disinformation, subverting the democratic public's ultimate right to make the biggest decisions of war and peace.

Let's summarize what is pretty much known: Basically, in a nutshell, some neo-cons (widely thought to be Michael Ledeen and his boys like Michael Maloof and Larry Franklin) planted Niger government documents forged in French to the U.S. embassy in Rome, using shady Italians to cover their tracks as "[cut-outs](#)." Ledeen, a [top neo-con](#) all-around, and his allies like John Bolton, Scooter Libby, Douglas Feith, Paul Wolfowitz, David Wurmser and a pretty narrow cluster of people used this planted intelligence to spread terrifying stories like "Saddam is getting the Bomb" and "he is

allied to this big Zarfawi conspiracy" throughout 2002, preparing Americans to accept another war.

Ledeen is also suspected to be tied to this scheme because he spent a long time in Italy hanging around with [crazy right-wing P2 Masonic Lodge types](#) (P2 is Propaganda Due - known for doing cool shit in the Vatican Bank scandal and [Operation Gladio](#) - a covert European strategy during the Cold War, intended to suppress Communists and leftists, which spawned all manner of [strange](#) and perhaps mythical episodes of rightwing violence, "false flag" incidents, intended to psychologically manipulate the public - or so say [disputed](#) Wikipedia articles.). Ledeen developed a loving interest in "[Universal Fascism](#)", more or less.

One strange thing is that any low-level analyst could determine they were forgeries because they were *incredibly* bad. This was one reason that [Sy Hersh suggested maybe Ledeen didn't](#) actually do it. They were so bad that they had the wrong ministers for their supposed date, and the French was *really, really* bad.

Now, the Counter-Attack: A bunch of the CIA's oldest and meanest, Colin Powell's chief of staff, and others have stepped forward to label this manipulation as "Black PSY OPS" or something along those lines. They have been in the background, steadily emerging since 2003 (especially on the Internet), offering a flipside alternative to the scrupulously observed media narratives about the war and WMDs as "honest mistakes", supporting Rummy, Bush, and Karl Rove's ballot box engineering nearly every step of the way. Tragically, in 2004, Kerry's "centrist" campaign consultants lacked the *cojones* to attack the intel spoofing, even though [Kerry helped bust up Iran-Contra](#), their grandest scheme.



What is a Black PSY OP?



Aside from the [drug trafficking](#), the trickiest aspect of the War on Terror to understand is the shadowy idea of "[information operations](#)," information dominance or information warfare, military doctrines whose effects on democratic public knowledge and behavior are both highly partisan and quite subversive in nature. Check out the [military's Information Operations overview](#) for info (PDF). Layered above this is the Pentagon's "public relations" or "[strategic communication](#)" (PDF) strategy - the well-lit, Victoria Clarke world, the embedded reporters, the in-your-face narrative, emotionally exciting, an intense Confrontation with that Other presented in the media, especially television.

The process of creating, planting, laundering and marketing those fake stories would properly be called "black propaganda" or "black PSY OPS", especially as they manipulate the American public. "Black" signifies

misdirection or deception in source or content of information or disinformation.

A psychological operation or "PSY OP" is a sort of operation which manipulates the perceptions of a target audience or group. [Sun Tzu understood this](#). For example, using a vast visual display of weapons to intimidate an enemy into surrender is a basically psychological operation. This can also include planting contradictory stories to divide and confuse an enemy. [Background here at the Information Warfare site](#):

'Psychological Operations: Planned operations to convey selected information and indicators to foreign audiences to influence their emotions, motives, objective reasoning, and ultimately the behavior of foreign governments, organizations, groups, and individuals. The purpose of psychological operations is to induce or reinforce foreign attitudes and behavior favorable to the originator's objectives. Also called PSYOP. See also consolidation psychological operations; overt peacetime psychological operations programs; perception management. ' US Department of Defense

Here's an example of where the military PR blends into information operation and Black PSY OPS. These are my rough categories, basically suggestions based on authenticity of content and source, and intended target audience - and its political relationship to the source of the information, especially voter blocs:

- 1) A school is rebuilt in Fallujah and a New York Times reporter is embedded with a unit that is helping open it. This is an authentic "strategic communication" which could also be a **White PSY OP**, but not deceptive in itself.
- 2) The military spokesman falsely says a school is being rebuilt in Fallujah but no reporters can get there and no media offer any dissenting reports. This is an information operation, but perhaps **not a Black PSY OP** because the source is authentic.
- 3) A authentic school story is purchased (by [say the Lincoln Group](#)) in an Iraqi newspaper to reinforce Iraqi public perception of the "clear-hold-build" strategy. **This is a PSY OP, but not a Black PSY OP** because its content is true. It could be a **Gray PSY OP** because its source is mis-represented, though. The Iraqi paper is essentially a "**cut-out**" for the US military PSY OP unit's work.
- 4) A fake school story is purchased by the US military in an Iraqi paper. A military spokesman or media contact tips an American reporter (or a right-wing blogger looking for the "real happy news the media hides") to the story in the Iraqi paper. The translated, planted report boosts the emotions of those Americans who hear it. This is a **Black PSY OP** and **Covert Propaganda**. This especially matters to Democrats because:
- 5) The **Covert Propaganda** and **Black PSY OPS** directed at the American

public by the executive branch and its allies will ***always be designed, by habit or accident, to favor the ruling party.***

Technically it is illegal for the government to [plant "covert propaganda"](#) into the American public's brains, but what this means is unclear. The Bushies have been [caught a few times](#) sending video news releases that have been repackaged by TV networks as authentic news segments.

4th Generation Warfare: The US gets manipulated via information operations: In [4th generation warfare](#) theory, a multi-tiered strategy to achieve political objectives in a tactically fluid and confusing environment is applied by all parties. Unfortunately, with everything in Iraq, some parties have found ways to manipulate the Pentagon by their own information operations. The goal is to trick the US into attacking different parties against their own interest.

This would include how [Iran helped Chalabi generate the fake "defector" intelligence](#) before the invasion of Iraq, and how petty squabbles between Iraqi parties are mis-represented as Terrorists vs Counter-Terrorists, and the US hits one side with overwhelming air and land-power for no compelling reason. In those situations, the US itself has suffered an information operation that caused it to overreact and alienate the population, increasing power for some local parties while directly killing off their rivals. [Chalabi purged the many middle-class professional "Baathists"](#) (in name only), people the US didn't need to attack, but did anyway, because Chalabi manipulated U.S. perceptions. Recent U.S. attacks against recent Marsh Arab tribes around Basra bear the marks of manipulation, according to a [source for Juan Cole](#):

' The [sectarian conflict near Suwayra] faded out in November of last year. It suddenly erupted three days ago. There were actually three days of violence in that area. The first day was an attack on Obaid by members of the Ghuran tribe who were members of the Mahdi army (at least they carried Mhdi army id's). 14 people were killed. The second saw an attack from Suwaira security forces (although the area administratively belongs to Baghdad).

The third day saw a massive assault by Iraqi and US army accompanied by helicopter gunships and fighter planes. The assault lasted for 10 hours . . . It is absolutely fascinating for me to see that piece of information being propagated on Iraqi news channels, newspapers and websites as a land dispute. It was originally based on a "police source".

It is now almost certain that the US army was misled into taking action against one of the two parties yesterday. The whole thing was a 'sectarian' assault that failed miserably the first time. It failed again this time . . .

In yesterday's 'American' raid only one man was killed – young Marwan (!!) 6 were injured and about a dozen detained (exact number unconfirmed).

Today, all tribes in the area (Sunni and Shiite) were in uproar against the Ghurraan. Their 3 acts were seen as treacherous. The Ghurraan shaikh, Saad A. A. al-Bassi sent word to Obaid that he was

enlisting support from his tribe to disown the sub-clan that was responsible (known as Rattaan). A few hours ago I received word (unconfirmed) that Saad was arrested by the Iraqi National Guard!

Another staged petty confrontation would be the [U.S./Shiite operations against the Turkmen Sunnis of Tal Afar](#) & northern Iraq. These could all be examples of the U.S. military *suffering* from successful PSY OPS targeting.

Back to the Forgeries: Two of the "pissed off CIA dudes" we have listed on the sidebar, [Larry Johnson](#) and [Pat Lang](#), have gone [on record with Vanity Fair that the Niger uranium forgeries](#) – the claim that "Saddam Hussein sought uranium in Africa" – was systematically fabricated and inserted by neo-cons into the American intelligence community, a colossal conspiracy which led to trapping the American army in the snake pit of Iraq. The story weaves a byzantine path through the unique hell of Italian intelligence, such as this:

Among those Berlusconi appointed to powerful national-security positions [in 1994] were two men known to Ledeen. A founding member of Forza Italia, Minister of Defense **Antonio Martino was a well-known figure in Washington neocon circles and had been close friends with Michael Ledeen** since the 1970s. Ledeen also occasionally played bridge with the head of SISMI under Berlusconi, **Nicolò Pollari. "Michael Ledeen is connected to all the players," says Philip Giraldi**, who was stationed in Italy with the C.I.A. in the 1980s and has been a keen observer of Ledeen over the years.

Enter Rocco Martino. An elegantly attired man in his 60s with white hair and a neatly trimmed mustache, Martino (no relation to Antonio Martino) had served in SISMI until 1999 and had a long history of peddling information to other intelligence services in Europe, including France's Direction Générale de la Sécurité Extérieure (D.G.S.E.).

By 2000, however, Martino had fallen on hard times financially. It was then that a longtime colleague named Antonio Nucera offered him a lucrative proposition. A SISMI colonel specializing in counter-proliferation and W.M.D., Nucera told Martino that Italian intelligence had long had an "asset" in the Niger Embassy in Rome: a woman who was about 60 years old, had a low-level job, and occasionally sold off embassy documents to SISMI. But now SISMI had no more use for the woman—who is known in the Italian press as "La Signora" and has recently been identified as the ambassador's assistant, Laura Montini. Perhaps, Nucera suggested, Martino could use La Signora as Italian intelligence had, paying her to pass on documents she copied or stole from the embassy.

Shortly after New Year's 2001, the break-in took place at the Niger Embassy. Martino denies any participation. There are many conflicting accounts of the episode. According to *La Repubblica*, a left-of-center daily which has published an investigative series on Nigergate, documents stolen from the embassy ultimately were combined with other papers that were already in SISMI archives.

SISMI director Nicolò Pollari acknowledges that Martino has worked for Italian intelligence. But, beyond that, he claims that Italian intelligence played no role in the Niger operation. "**[Nucera] offered [Martino] the use of an intelligence asset [La Signora]—no big deal, you understand—one who was still on the books but inactive—to give a hand to Martino,**" Pollari told a reporter.

Rocco Martino, however, said SISMI had another agenda: "SISMI wanted me to pass on the documents, but they didn't want anyone to know they had been involved."

As the frightening forgeries materialized in the American intelligence community, one analyst after another marked them as forgeries, but soon one neo-con after another kept stuffing their claims into the speeches of Cheney, Bush, the talking points of pundits on the radio & TV (this was a particular function of the Office of Special Plans, Kwiatkowski has said).

Vanity Fair describes the "echo" effect that manipulated allied intelligence agencies into perpetuating the fake charges. Basically, it is like telling your 10 most arrogant and powerful acquaintances the same bullshit, but passing it through intermediaries or "cut-outs". This makes the artificial disinformation (aka a "PSY OP" that intel agencies are supposed to detect) instead appear authentic and broad.

The Niger forgery is merely one piece that has been traced pretty far back along the chain, via all these pissed off CIA people and others around various parts of the chain. But the same pattern of...

Terrifying Claim->lots of intel agencies get claims->international echo effect in analysis/policy->scary public leaks and tales - a la Judith Miller->drumbeat of scary media stories->WAR

...was the basic pattern around the false stories from Ahmed Chalabi and his defectors, which people like Larry Johnson, Kwiatkowski, essentially this whole gang have railed against for years. So Vanity Fair describes how the intel agencies were bombarded with "Yellowcake" reports:

Over the next two years, the Niger documents and reports based on them made at least three journeys to the C.I.A. They also found their way to the U.S. Embassy in Rome, to the White House, to British intelligence, to French intelligence, and to Elisabetta Burba, a journalist at Panorama, the Milan-based newsmagazine. Each of these recipients in turn shared the documents or their contents with others, in effect creating an echo chamber that gave the illusion that several independent sources had corroborated an Iraq-Niger uranium deal.

"It was the Italians and Americans together who were behind it. It was all a disinformation operation," Martino told a reporter at England's Guardian newspaper. He called himself "a tool used by someone for games much bigger than me."

What exactly might those games have been? Berlusconi defined his role on the world stage largely in terms of his relationship with the U.S., and he jumped at the chance to forge closer ties with the White House when Bush took office, in 2001. In its three-part series on Nigergate, La Repubblica charges that Berlusconi was so eager to win Bush's favor that he "instructed Italian Military Intelligence to plant the evidence implicating Saddam in a bogus uranium deal with Niger." (The Berlusconi government, which lost power in April, denied the charge.)

Then there are the surface political motives for SISMI doing special disinformation favors for the New Bush White House:

During the Clinton era, the neocons persisted with their policy goals, and in early 1998 they twice lobbied President Clinton to bring down Saddam. The second attempt came in the form of "An Open

Letter to the President" by leading neoconservatives, many of whom later played key roles in the Bush administration, where they became known as the Vulcans. Among those who signed were Michael Ledeen, John Bolton, Douglas Feith, Richard Perle, Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz, and David Wurmser.

According to Patrick Lang, the initial Niger Embassy robbery could have been aimed at starting the war even though Bush had yet to be inaugurated. The scenario, he cautions, is merely speculation on his part. But he says that the neocons wouldn't have hesitated to reach out to SISMI even before Bush took office. "There's no doubt in my mind that the neocons had their eye on Iraq," he says. "This is something they intended to do, and they would have communicated that to SISMI or anybody else to get the help they wanted."

In Lang's view, SISMI would also have wanted to ingratiate itself with the incoming administration. "These foreign intelligence agencies are so dependent on us that the urge to acquire I.O.U.'s is a powerful incentive by itself," he says. "It would have been very easy to have someone go to Rome and talk to them, or have one of the SISMI guys here [in Washington], perhaps the SISMI officer in the Italian Embassy, talk to them."

Lang's scenario rings true to Frank Brodhead. "When I read that the Niger break-in took place before Bush took office, I immediately thought back to the Bulgarian Connection," he says. "That job was done during the transition as well. [Michael] Ledeen ... saw himself as making a serious contribution to the Cold War through the Bulgarian Connection. Now, it was possible, 20 years later, that he was doing the same to start the war in Iraq."

Brodhead is not alone. Several press outlets, including the San Francisco Chronicle, United Press International, and The American Conservative, as well as a chorus of bloggers—Daily Kos, the Left Coaster, and Raw Story among them—have raised the question of whether Ledeen was involved with the Niger documents. But none have found any hard evidence.

My evidence is that I [personally talked to Ledeen for a while at Macalester](#) and he seemed diabolical, anarchic and crazy. However that ain't fingerprints. After 9/11, the article describes the path of the Niger forgeries as "murky," and moves on to tackle how tightly Michael Ledeen himself was tied into the rest of the neo-con rhetoric & action machine that catapulted the U.S. into Iraq on all that dodgy intelligence. Of course around here, I have stuck by the line from [Dr. Rashid Khalidi, who told me in an interview](#) way back in October 2003:

Me: **[A Frontline interview with Richard Perle](#) was published with the documentary "Truth, War and Consequences." He talked about the Pentagon's Office of Special Plans, which reviewed intelligence on Iraq prior to the war. Perle said the office was staffed by David Wurmser, another author of the [Clean Break document](#). Perle says that the office "began to find links that nobody else had previously understood or recorded in a useful way." Were the neo-cons turning their ideology into intelligence data, and putting that into the government?**

RK: I can give you a short answer to that which is yes. Insofar as at least two of the key arguments that they adduced, the one having to do the connection between the Iraqi regime and al-Qaeda, and the one having to do with unconventional weapons programs in Iraq, it is clear that the links or the things they had claimed to have found were non-existent. The wish was fathered to the reality. What they wanted was what they found.

It was not just the Office of Special Plans, or whatever. There are a lot of institutions in Washington

that were devoted to putting this view forward. Among them, other parts of the bureaucracy, and the vice president's national security staff. The vice president's chief of staff Lewis Libby is a very important member of the neo-con group. He and the vice president have created the most powerful national security staff that anybody has ever had in the office of the vice president. I've read published assessments, which say that this is actually more influential than Condi Rice's staff, the real NSC. This is another center of these views.

And then there are the think-tanks—I would use the word 'think' in quotes—like the American Enterprise Institute, the Heritage Foundation, the Hoover Institution and so on, all of which are devoted to spreading similar ideas. Basically any fantasy that Chalabi's people brought in, "we have a defector who says," was turned into gold by these folks.

We now know this stuff, with a few exceptions, to be completely and utterly false, just manufactured disinformation designed to direct the United States in a certain direction. Whether the neo-cons knew this or not is another question, but I believe Chalabi's people knew it. I would be surprised if some of them didn't know it.

Along this basic line, we have followed along on this case at Hongpong.com [pretty much](#) since it [opened up](#), though we've let it slide lately since very little has happened in the case in a long time, and the Scooter Libby trial it spawned has basically dragged on with only a trickle of information.

Well, that's all for now. I am going to the [DFL convention in Rochester now](#). Remember that your brain is a military target.

Posted by HongPong at 02:28 PM | [Comments \(0\)](#) [Relating to History](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [The White House](#) , [War on Terror](#)

June 07, 2006

Read up: DC insiders call out the Niger forgeries as "black propaganda" to start the Iraq war

Vanity Fair has kind of a blockbuster article out. I have to run off, but you guys need to look at this. It's both "nothing really new" and also "holy shit this is insane" at the same time. I will have more later putting it in some context, but for now smoke crack & enjoy.

[The War They Wanted, The Lies They Needed](#)

The Bush administration invaded Iraq claiming Saddam Hussein had tried to buy yellowcake uranium in Niger. As much of Washington knew, and the world soon learned, the charge was false. Worse, it appears to have been the cornerstone of a highly successful "black propaganda" campaign with links to the White House

By CRAIG UNGER

....."A Classic Psy-Ops Campaign"

or more than two years it has been widely reported that the U.S. invaded Iraq because of intelligence failures. But in fact it is far more likely that the Iraq war started because of an extraordinary intelligence success—specifically, an astoundingly effective campaign of disinformation, or black propaganda, which led the White House, the Pentagon, Britain's M.I.6 intelligence service, and thousands of outlets in the American media to promote the falsehood that Saddam Hussein's nuclear-

weapons program posed a grave risk to the United States.

The Bush administration made other false charges about Iraq's weapons of mass destruction (W.M.D.)—that Iraq had acquired aluminum tubes suitable for centrifuges, that Saddam was in league with al-Qaeda, that he had mobile weapons labs, and so forth. But the Niger claim, unlike other allegations, can't be dismissed as an innocent error or blamed on ambiguous data. "This wasn't an accident," says Milt Bearden, a 30-year C.I.A. veteran who was a station chief in Pakistan, Sudan, Nigeria, and Germany, and the head of the Soviet–East European division. "This wasn't 15 monkeys in a room with typewriters."

In recent months, it has emerged that the forged Niger documents went through the hands of the Italian military intelligence service, SISMI (Servizio per le Informazioni e la Sicurezza Militare), or operatives close to it, and that neoconservative policymakers helped bring them to the attention of the White House. Even after information in the Niger documents was repeatedly rejected by the C.I.A. and the State Department, hawkish neocons managed to circumvent seasoned intelligence analysts and insert the Niger claims into Bush's State of the Union address.

By the time the U.S. invaded Iraq, in March 2003, this apparent black-propaganda operation had helped convince more than 90 percent of the American people that a brutal dictator was developing W.M.D.—and had led us into war.

To trace the path of the documents from their fabrication to their inclusion in Bush's infamous speech, Vanity Fair has interviewed a number of former intelligence and military analysts who have served in the C.I.A., the State Department, the Defense Intelligence Agency (D.I.A.), and the Pentagon. Some of them refer to the Niger documents as "a disinformation operation," others as "black propaganda," "black ops," or "a classic psy-ops [psychological-operations] campaign." But whatever term they use, at least nine of these officials believe that the Niger documents were part of a covert operation to deliberately mislead the American public.

The officials are **Bearden; Colonel W. Patrick Lang, who served as the D.I.A.'s defense intelligence officer for the Middle East, South Asia, and terrorism; Colonel Larry Wilkerson, former chief of staff to Secretary of State Colin Powell; Melvin Goodman, a former division chief and senior analyst at the C.I.A. and the State Department; Ray McGovern, a C.I.A. analyst for 27 years; Lieutenant Colonel Karen Kwiatkowski, who served in the Pentagon's Near East and South Asia division in 2002 and 2003; Larry C. Johnson, a former C.I.A. officer who was deputy director of the State Department Office of Counterterrorism from 1989 to 1993; former C.I.A. official Philip Giraldi; and Vincent Cannistraro, the former chief of operations of the C.I.A.'s Counterterrorism Center.**

Posted by HongPong at 03:19 PM | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Iraq](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [The White House](#)

June 01, 2006

Memorial Day observation

I wandered off and didn't feel like writing on Memorial Day. However the many sacrifices of America's soldiers, sailors and Marines should be noted. Before this strange and dark administration took the helm, I had a pretty serious view of what service in the military meant. In part this was because there were two other Daniel Feidts who fought for the United States.

Daniel S. Feidt Sr., my grandfather, enlisted in the Army Air Corps during World War II, even though he could have avoided service since he was an

elected Minnesota state senator, more than 30 years old, and color-blind. He went into the intelligence section and planned raids against the Axis from Britain, Egypt and late in the war, at the [Poltava air base](#) in recaptured Ukrainian territory. At one point there was a Nazi air raid and a bomb whizzed through his tent and out the other side. He eventually reached the rank of major, and since he was a lawyer, they asked him to go work at the Nuremberg trials, but he declined because it was time to go back stateside and start a family.

Another interesting story was the one of Daniel Feidt of the Pennsylvania Dutch, who fought in the Civil War. We have transcripts of his letters home, which really would be interesting to put up here. I am not certain if he is my direct ancestor, though.



But the Daniel Feidts had the good fortune to survive their brushes with war. Not so for my dad's cousin, [Bruce William Heskett](#), who was killed in a tank in [Quang Tri](#), South Vietnam on 29 June, 1970. He was born 20 April 1945 and came from Spokane. He was a first Lieutenant, cut down only a few months into his tour that commenced on the 8th of February that year. He served in the 5th Infantry Division, A Company, 1st Battalion. His official death code was "Hostile, Died; Ground Casualty; Gun, Small Arms Fire". The summer after 7th grade during our trip to Washington I took an etching of his name on the Vietnam memorial.



Quang Tri province, near the [DMZ](#) and the Ben Hai river that divided the country, saw nine years of fighting, intense bombing, free fire zones, and extensive land mine and Agent Orange contamination. Of the 3,500 villages, only 11 remained by the end of the Vietnam war. (see a [1975 Army study of the Northern Provinces](#))



Just in time for Memorial Day, a batch of [Henry Kissinger's old documents](#) have been [released](#) by the National Security Archives. Almost two years to the day after my dad's cousin fell in central Vietnam, Kissinger had a charming and 'loquacious' [conversation \(PDF\)](#) with the Chinese Prime Minister at the Great Hall of the People. It's interesting for a lot of reasons, but this passage got news [coverage](#):

So we should find a way to end the war, to stop it from being an international situation, and then permit a situation to develop in which the future of Indochina can be returned to the Indochinese people. And I can assure you that this is the only object we have in Indochina, and I do not believe this can be so different from yours. We want nothing for ourselves there. And while we cannot bring a communist government to power, if, as a result of historical evolution it should happen over a period of time, if we can live with a communist government in China, we ought to be able to accept it in Indochina.

The Prime Minister caught me on a particularly loquacious day. (Laughter)
If we can live with a communist government in China, we ought to be able to accept it in Indochina.



Some folks couldn't live with it. These, and a few million more from Southeast Asia. Words can't really wrap around the reality of it. There were worthwhile ventures in the World Wars, perhaps Korea, maybe a bit of the Balkans. And of course keeping the Confederates down. Our citizens (and [immigrants](#) trying to become citizens) who stick it out are braver than my imagination can handle. But their commanders are only carrying out the policies of the generals, and the generals are (hopefully) only developing policies under orders from the civilian leadership, with transparent oversight from Congress. These days several links in that chain seem to be shattered, and the result are dead-end policies in places that American troops shouldn't be, and autonomous actions that don't support any kind of realistic goals.

They go without body armor so that privatized military firms can make off with [fabulously lucrative contracts](#). The brass cower under Rumsfeld and look the other way when units in places like Abu Ghraib and Haditha go crazy under the stress and lack of support, among a confusing labyrinth of enemies, spies, mercenaries, contractors and the hapless local population.

The responsibility falls to those of us state-side to go after the military's uniformed and civilian leadership for its policies of deploying [depleted uranium](#) and caustic [white phosphorus](#), [private mercenaries](#) instead of [body armor](#), picking fights with [clans](#) instead of negotiating, its alarmingly delusional pattern of [planting Psy Ops](#) fake news stories (such as ["Zargawi's February 2004 letter"](#)) instead of taking responsibility for their failed policies.

The good and honorable folks in uniform are getting left to twist in the wind not by us, but by a leadership that has failed to deploy them responsibly, provision them properly, hand down realistic policies, accept blame for failures or plan adequately. It's on us to fish a way out of this, if Memorial Day means anything at all.

Posted by HongPong at [02:12 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [History](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [War on Terror](#)

May 26, 2006

Al Gore says perhaps he'll speak on FL vote fraud someday; Sibel Edmonds tidbits; new 9/11 conspiracy video; the Teflon pharaoh

I am going up to Hibbing to see my aunt's Dylan documentary until Saturday afternoon and probably won't have time to post until Sunday.

A tantalizing nugget: my friend's dad stumbled across a massive embezzlement scheme in the Chicago branch of the Head Start education program. This is only now coming into public view and I will try to get something real on it later.

So the [Administration wants to eat reporters who spill classified information](#). This lends itself to a new strategy: classify everything embarrassing and evil. Now that's your tax dollars at work!

Wednesday night I was hanging out with some folks soon parting ways with Minnesota, and it was a good time. In exchange for a nice old hat, various objects were offered for barter, including a [Krazy Kat](#) book. Krazy Kat was a weird old comic from the 1920s that has reached a kind of Major Art status, while really it's just pretty weird. I noticed that Itchy & Scratchy seems to be kind of based on it, including the cat's androgynous quality. Anyway.



Finally a Democrat in the House is getting busted for a scandal. Poor Jefferson was caught taking major cash in a pretty blunt kind of way and they're saying [indictments next month](#), yet there is a big ruckus from Republicans after the FBI searched his Congressional office and took boxes

of documents. Due to the bipartisan uproar, Bush has sealed the docs from the FBI, at least temporarily.

It's an interesting case. I feel that Republicans are a bit terrified that a potential future Democratic president could find evidence of all kinds of illegal stuff in their offices. For the whole history of this country, the executive hasn't been able to storm these places (or had the guts to). I tend to think that this is appropriate, that there ought to be a sphere of immunity of some sort to protect Congress from the executive. On the other hand, I would like to see Hastert, DeLay and all the other homies get nailed for all their Abramoff corruption. Just because you're in Congress doesn't mean you're above the law. Laura Rozen asks, [is it panic?](#)

But, what if (and certainly this has happened), member X has lots of evidence proving that Gonzales is a lawbreaker himself, that Rummy is a psychopath who permits war crimes, that Cheney helped channel Halliburton contracts and Porter Goss partied with hookers at the Watergate for a decade? In other words, what if I had Sen. Carl Levin's file cabinet? Well, that file cabinet would serve as a crucial check in the pretty corrupt system we've got now, and it seems clear that the founders intended to privilege stuff like that file cabinet. I also think that it should be impossible to charge Rep. Cynthia McKinney for slapping that Capitol police officer (in particular since it's been said that the Capitol police corps have been taken over by southern GOP good-ol-boy sheriff types).

We should note that the great Joseph McCarthy could not be sued for all the crazy slanderous and libelous garbage he puked onto the floor of the Senate during the 1950s, because, well, it was his constitutional right as a Senator to say plainly false and libelous things there. If the legislative branch gets under that kind of pressure, well, they will be 'chilled' in the legal speech sense, and it's curtains for that supposedly equal branch of the government. Never forget that people with their hands on executive power don't necessarily care about the truth, but they'll try to silence those who get in their way. McKinney has been a pretty vocal anti-imperialist (not to mention 9/11 skeptic), despite her silly style, and that whole thing reeks of an effort to kill the messenger. Movin' on.

Al Gore stares into the distance: From New York magazine, via [the Brad Blog](#):

Does he, like many Democrats, think the election was stolen?

Gore pauses a long time and stares into the middle distance. "There may come a time when I speak on that," Gore says, "but it's not now; I need more time to frame it carefully if I do." Gore sighs. "In our system, there's no intermediate step between a definitive Supreme Court decision and violent revolution."

Later, I put the question of Gore's views on the matter to David Boies, his lawyer in the Florida-recount battle. "He thought the court's ruling was wrong and obviously political," Boies says. So he considers the election stolen? "I think he does—and he's right."

Brad Blog was a leading place for [tracking](#) the [election fraud in Ohio](#), and while I don't read regularly, it's well done.

Check out [Wot is it Good 4 by Lukery](#), which has especially followed the case of former FBI translator Sibel Edmonds - with its bizarre stories of drug money laundering, 9/11 links, FBI corruption, the whole bit. Sibel herself ([official site](#)), under many federal gag orders, has said that Lukery has been able to digest the known facts of the case better than anyone else. There's fresh stuff on a daily basis. For example, if you want to get waist-deep in some weird defense contractor shit, connected laterally with Manucher Ghorbanifar, Rep. Curt Weldon (of Able Danger fame), plus Edmonds' belief that Weldon has been kind of duped about some of the fake Iraq intelligence, well [this story is what you need](#), and this one about some kind of corrupt link between neoconservatives, Turkey and military-industrial defense contractors, which Edmonds is also tied up in, [another good one](#).

Read this and trip out: [Bing Bang Boom Shazam](#). The Edmonds case is way under the radar, extremely weird, but it seems to connect to the AIPAC scandal, Chalabi and the fake Iraq intelligence, some kind of secret 9/11 financing arrangements, drug money laundering, Turkish spies, and perhaps illegal money in the campaign coffers of people like Rep. Dennis Hastert. Or maybe not ([Hastert is getting sucked into the Abramoff scandal, either way](#)). I think at some point, Sibel Edmonds will finally break out into a major scandal and I'd like to say that we got a bit of the early word out here. [SourceWatch on Sibel Edmonds](#) too. (tiny side note: Lukery suggests this woman's [skillful negotiation](#) sites)

But who are Sibel Edmonds, Curt Weldon, Able Danger and what do these have to do with 9/11?? Fortunately in the expanding field of 9/11 conspiracy videos, a new one introduces these issues in an accessible way. Check out [Everybody's Gotta Learn Sometime](#). I thought it was better than Loose Change, in terms of consisting of actual information and loose ends. However it doesn't have as many fun video clips. It has a pretty good introduction to the Able Danger, the pre-9/11 military intelligence project that apparently pinpointed some of the hijackers, and then was abruptly shut down with its terabytes of records vaporized. But ironically the problem perhaps might have been that it was based on illegal data mining?

Chinese spy update: Pretty cool stuff on the next hurrah about [Katrina Leung, a pro-Republican Chinese spy who is basically getting let off](#) by the Justice Department. She [admitted tipping off the Chinese](#) to the identities of

FBI agents investigating nuclear sales to China (which mighta been tied to Iran-contra - whew). Evidently, she fed disinformation to the FBI to go after the unfortunate scientist Wen Ho Lee.

OS X operating system design: Check out this [Flash animation if you want to know how OS X is structured](#) internally. This guy's book will kick ass if you are into kernel hacking.

[Israel claims Iran gets nukes in "months"](#): My Ass. Antiwar.com's [Raimondo, in a column bitching about the Iran badge story](#), the peripheral Israeli connections to the fake Iraq intelligence, and new and shiny paranoia from Israel about Iran, notes that well, Israel is definitely going to jerk the U.S. down this path.

AIPAC notes: I thought this was a good writeup about the power of the Israel lobby from Stephen Zunes: [FPIF Special Report: The Israel Lobby: How Powerful is it Really?](#) He points out an interesting example of a Congressman, who, when challenged about his heavily anti-Palestinian votes, basically says that the Jews made him do it for fear of losing fundraising, but even after he announces he won't run again, he still votes against Palestinians. The Jews are just - wait for it - a scapegoat for his actual anti-Arab bias. And of course there's the basic fact that Bush depends a lot more on the hardcore rightwing (and often apocalyptic) Christian Zionists than Jewish ones.

Misc notes: Watch [Lazy Ramadi, a video from some troops](#) with a video camera. You won't regret it.



Sidney Blumenthal notes [Iraq is doomed](#). Of course, it has literally [the most corrupt government ever created](#) (although maybe DC actually wins that right now). Duly noted by the brave Patrick Cockburn:

Iraq is disintegrating as ethnic cleansing takes hold:

[Across central Iraq, there is an exodus of people fleeing for their lives as sectarian assassins and death squads hunt them down](#). At ground level, Iraq is disintegrating as ethnic cleansing takes hold on a massive scale.

By Patrick Cockburn in Khanaqin, North-East Iraq (20 May)

The state of Iraq now resembles Bosnia at the height of the fighting in the 1990s when each community fled to places where its members were a majority and were able to defend themselves. "Be gone by evening prayers or we will kill you," warned one of four men who called at the house of Leila Mohammed, a pregnant mother of three children in the city of Baquba, in Diyala province north-east of Baghdad. He offered chocolate to one of her children to try to find out the names of the men in the family.

Mrs Mohammed is a Kurd and a Shia in Baquba, which has a majority of Sunni Arabs. Her husband, Ahmed, who traded fruit in the local market, said: " They threatened the Kurds and the Shia and told them to get out. Later I went back to try to get our furniture but there was too much shooting and I was trapped in our house. I came away with nothing." He and his wife now live with nine other relatives in a three-room hovel in Khanaqin.

The same pattern of intimidation, flight and death is being repeated in mixed provinces all over Iraq. By now Iraqis do not have to be reminded of the consequences of ignoring threats.

I liked this [list](#) from Juan Cole:

There are now four distinct wars going on in Iraq simultaneously

- 1) The Sunni Arab guerrilla war to expel US troops from the Sunni heartland
- 2) The militant Shiite guerrilla war to expel the British from the south
- 3) The Sunni-Shiite civil war
- 4) The Kurdish war against Arabs and Turkmen in Kirkuk province, and the Arab and Turkmen guerrilla struggle against the encroaching Peshmerga (the Kurdish militia).



The struggle of the Turkmen is starting to branch out into Turkey. Note how Turkey is now red on the lovely Reuters map, seems ominous:

[Kurds say Turkish shells land in Iraq, Turkey denies](#): By Sherko Raouf

SULAIMANIYA, Iraq, May 17 (Reuters) - The government of Iraq's autonomous Kurdistan region accused Turkish forces of shelling an area inside northern Iraq on Wednesday.

A Turkish government official dismissed the accusation as "total fabrication."

Ankara traditionally launches a spring offensive against Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) guerrillas in southeastern Turkey, an area which borders Iraq.

Earlier this month, villagers in Iraq's Kurdistan accused neighbouring Iran of hitting targets inside Iraq, a charge Tehran denied.

Khaled Salih, a senior official of the Kurdish regional government in Arbil, said by telephone that no one was hurt when three shells slammed into a mountainous area close to the town of Kani Masi a few km (miles) inside Iraq.

"A village ... has been bombarded from the Turkish side. There were no casualties, but there was material damage," Salih told Reuters. "This is the second time in a week villages have been bombarded in the north."

"We will report this to the government in Baghdad so that they can contact the Turkish government and ask for an explanation," he said.

Salih said there were no PKK fighters in the area where the shells landed. NATO member Turkey has stationed some 1,500 troops stationed inside northern Iraq since the late 1990s when it launched regular raids into the region to hunt PKK fighters.

In Turkey, a government official told Reuters: "This is not true ... All the measures are on our side of the border." Turkey has sent 40,000 troops to its own Kurdish areas to reinforce the 220,000 already there, the biggest build-up in years after an increase in PKK attacks.

The PKK, seeking a Kurdish homeland including southeastern Turkey, accuses Ankara and Tehran of mounting coordinated operations against the group and its Iranian wing, PJAK.

NSA Total My Phone Bill Awareness: Crusty [CIA veteran Ray McGovern rails against NSA monitoring](#) of Americans. Sy Hersh with a [few bits and pieces on the NSA situation](#). Congressional Quarterly reports on [mysterious data links between Homeland Security and the NSA](#). TPMM observes how [DOJ sends out TONS of subpoenas for data](#) daily, apparently outside of judicial oversight. National Security Letters. Someday, the Letter will come for you (or more likely, me). TPMM also looks at how there is a [cottage industry of companies that handle all our phone records](#), passing them from the telcos to the government, allowing AT&T to claim that they **aren't** giving Big Brother the records **directly**. [Check this: Fuck NeuStar](#), the "scapegoat" for hire.

Billmon hung out in Egypt for some conference. Egypt is autocratic, [the Teflon pharaoh](#). I like that phrase.

As always, Prof. Cole is the go-to man for direct analysis of the situation and Arab media. He also [follows up further on the fake Iran Jew Badge story](#). [Firedoglake traces back the root of the fake Badge story](#). The National Post had to [retract](#) the story:

Last Friday, the National Post ran a story prominently on the front page alleging that the Iranian parliament had passed a law that, if enacted, would require Jews and other religious minorities in Iran to wear badges that would identify them as such in public. It is now clear the story is not true. Given the seriousness of the error, I felt it necessary to explain to our readers how this happened.

Then, of course, the bastards require you to register to read the rest. Fuck! (this [early, erroneous bit on the badge story struck me](#) for its interesting historical content, but also classic pompous ignorati*-style writing)[* *"Ignorati" has been trademarked by Mordred*]

We noted earlier a report about 200,000 AK-47s from Bosnia, that were purchased by the US for the Iraqi security forces, but now there are more reports that the AKs basically vanished and are now in the hands of insurgents because of - you guessed it - private defense contractors!! [BBC reports](#) on how the guns that ruined Yugoslavia are getting dumped straight into the Iraqi civil war.

Ah, the [irony of how shitty neoconservatism worked out](#) to be.

Murray Waas reports that [Rove and Novak may have hatched a conspiracy](#) to cover up the Valerie Plame leak (via [TPMM](#)):

On September 29, 2003, three days after it became known that the CIA had asked the Justice Department to investigate who leaked the name of covert CIA officer Valerie Plame, columnist Robert

Novak telephoned White House senior adviser Karl Rove to assure Rove that he would protect him from being harmed by the investigation, according to people with firsthand knowledge of the federal grand jury testimony of both men. . . .

Rove and Novak, investigators suspect, might have devised a cover story to protect Rove because the grand jury testimony of both men appears to support Rove's contentions about how he learned about Plame.

Chinese PCs feared to be bugged: [There's always time for Sinophobia.](#)

Blockquotes are plagiarism?! Plagarism Today (what a name for a site) talks about how the practice of [blockquoting from other sources is really the new plagiarism](#). I think that's a bit retarded since if you're naming your source, it's not plagiarism at all. However, there are sites that exclusively skim off content and pass it as their own for spamming purposes. There are actually Hongpong.com fragments on spam sites out there. We blockquote a lot here, but damn, ***no one can read the whole damn Internet themselves!*** It seems like a silly argument, but on the other hand, the game ought to be about original content. However, I like to put lots of sources in here, since, well, you gotta at least weigh their credibility apart from mine in order for my arguments to sink in. Anyway, [slashdot reacts](#).

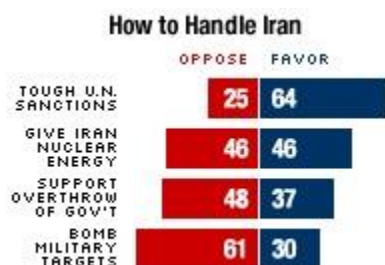
Long ass random post. However more than enough stuff to keep anyone busy for a while. True?

Posted by HongPong at [08:27 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Iran](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [News](#) , [Technological Apparatus](#) , [Tracking election irregularities](#)

May 22, 2006

US-backed Mujahideen e-Khalq covert war in Iran seems to continue as "A Cambone Operation"

Iran shady business: This is an encouraging chart:



It comes via Steve Soto at [TheLeftCoaster](#), who writes on [The Economy and Iran](#) that retired Colonel Sam Gardiner has offered an outline of the opening moves of an Iran war. Gardiner thinks its a terrible idea, and recently said on CNN that a covert war is already underway. His latest:

I. Period of Building Pressure: This could be 60 days or even six months in which the US and European leaders continue to talk to their publics on the failure of the Iranians to comply with "the wishes of the international community." There will be talk and work on sanctions but those, will be for the purpose of building US and international support; they will not be done with any hope of changing Iranian behavior. We should see the US surface a smoking gun during this phase. (Note: this has already happened with the recent "revelation" about Iran's uranium possession in excess of what was anticipated) Some military

deployments might take place. Most visible would be three aircraft carriers in the vicinity.

II. Initial Strike: This would last 36 to 48 hours. It would only be moderately visible to the global publics. Most of the attacks would take place at night. To prevent retaliation, most targets would be other than nuclear facilities.

III. Pause: The strikes would stop. Iran would be warned that if it were to retaliate the strikes would resume. The pause would probably not be long, maybe 72 hours. Either Iran would conduct an operation against US or Israeli targets, or there would be an event that is blamed on Iran. (Note: Gardiner says that it is very likely, especially in the wake of last week's announcement from Iran that any strike by Bush against Iran would be considered as an attack from Israel also, that Iran will hit Israel in response to any attack from America)

IV. Regime Change Targeting: The attacks from this point would shift to targets that could cause the regime to fall. It would include direct attacks on the leadership of Iran.

Gardiner adds that the pressure is being increased:

In the phase of building pressure, I see two indicators. I called one of them the "smoking gun." By that I mean the Administration will reveal that Iran is farther along in its nuclear program than we originally thought. This will most likely be some evidence that AQ Kahn, the Pakistani, sold more to Iran than we knew.

Late Friday we read a leak from a diplomat with the International Atomic Energy Agency that new enriched uranium evidence has been found. This could be the emergence of the smoking gun. The second indicator in the pressure-building phase was the position of aircraft carriers. The Reagan is in the Gulf Region. The Enterprise left Norfolk for the ME (Middle East) on May 2. The Lincoln did a port call in Singapore on April 30, apparently moving in the direction of the ME.

In October 2004, I had the bizarre experience of having lunch with that leading neoconservative Michael Ledeen, who is continually obsessed with Iran, and I wrote the following in "[Lunch Beyond Good and Evil: Around a Table with Michael Ledeen](#)":

His scheme to free Iran was to supply the opposition with the tools to destabilize the regime, "but not a single bullet." I have a hard time believing he could resist arming the Iranian opposition. **In fact, many say that the Pentagon, administered by Ledeen's allies, has courted a weird, cultish anti-regime Iranian guerilla group based in eastern Iraq called the Mujahideen al-Khalq.** If Bush wins, it's quite unlikely that the neo-cons will be able to resist using forces like these to harass Tehran, but we have no idea what sort of reaction this would provoke from the highly mobilized, nationalist Iranians.

This appears to be exactly what is going on now, by some reports, as I noted earlier. On my birthday, Raw Story's Larisa Alexandrovna published a pretty disturbing report about how the situation is getting geared up:

US military, intelligence officials raise concern about possible preparations for Iran strike

Concern is building among the military and the intelligence community that the US may be preparing for a military strike on Iran, as military assets in key positions are approaching readiness, [RAW STORY](#) has learned.... Retired Air Force Colonel and former faculty member at the National War College Sam Gardiner has heard some military suggestions of a possible air campaign in the near future, and although he has no intimate knowledge of such plans, he says recent aircraft carrier activity and current operations on the ground in Iran have raised red flags.....

Advance teams under way; Congress 'bypassed'

As [previously reported](#) by Raw Story, a terrorist organization known as Mujahedeen-e Khalq (MEK) is being used on the ground in Iran by the Pentagon, bypassing US intelligence channels. The report was

subsequently covered by the Asia Times ([Article](#)). Military and intelligence sources now say no Presidential finding exists on MEK ops. ***Without a presidential finding, the operation circumvents the oversight of the House and Senate Intelligence committees.***

Congressional aides for the relevant oversight committees would not confirm or deny allegations that no Presidential finding had been done. One Democratic aide, however, wishing to remain anonymous for this article, did say that any use of the MEK would be illegal. In addition, sources say that a **March attack that killed 22 Iranian officials in the province of Sistan va Baluchistan was carried out by the MEK.**

According to a report by Iran Focus filed Mar. 23, the twenty-two people killed in the ambush included high ranking officials, including the governor of Zahedan. "Hours after the attack took place, Ahmadi-Moqaddam announced there was evidence the assailants had held meetings with British intelligence officers," the Iranian news service reported. "Radical Shiite cleric Mostafa Pour-Mohammadi also claimed the **people behind the attack were the same as those behind a spate of bombings in Iran's south-western province of Khuzestan earlier this year** and in 2005," it added.

Military and intelligence sources say that MEK assets were responsible for this attack, but did not know if the US military was involved or if US military assets were part of the ambush. **One former high ranking US intelligence official described the use of MEK as more of a "Cambone" operation than a "Department of Defense operation." Undersecretary of Defense Intelligence Stephen Cambone, a stalwart neo-conservative, is considered by many to be Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's right-hand man.**

During a White House briefing in early May, outgoing press secretary Scott McClellan denied that the administration was using MEK, among several other terrorist organizations named, for ground activity in Iran....

Here is a lot of [background on the shady, shady Mr Cambone](#). More on this at [WotIsItGood4](#). You need to read [Iran Freedom and Regime Change Politics by Tom Barry](#) at the International Relations Center's Right Web site for more on how AIPAC and other nasty foreign policy lobbies are ginning up the Iran war:

While [AIPAC](#) is the most powerful group advocating a tougher U.S. policy toward Iran, numerous other pressure groups calling for regime change in Iran have emerged over the past several years. One of the earliest, the [Coalition for Democracy in Iran](#) (CDI), formed in late 2002, ceased functioning in mid-2005. Operating out of the office of [Morris Amitay](#), the former director of AIPAC, CDI worked closely with AIPAC to encourage Congress to pass resolutions condemning Iran. The CDI principals continue their efforts to promote regime change in Iran through other organizations, including the [Foundation for Democracy in Iran](#), [Foundation for the Defense of Democracies](#), [Committee on the Present Danger](#), and the [American Enterprise Institute](#).

Raymond Tanter, one of the original members of the Coalition for Democracy in Iran, founded the Iran Policy Committee (IPC) in January 2005. Tanter, who was a senior staff member of the National Security Council during the Reagan administration, is also associated with several other right-wing policy organizations, including the [Washington Institute for Near East Policy](#), Middle East Institute, and the Committee on the Present Danger. Since its founding the Iran Policy Committee has sponsored conferences and policy briefings on the Hill, and has also published four policy papers—**a common theme being that the U.S. government should declassify the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI/MEK) as an international terrorist organization and recognize it as being the "indisputably largest and most organized Iranian opposition group."**

Tangent: [Using soccer to kick Iran](#).

Posted by HongPong at 02:05 AM | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [International Politics](#) , [Iran](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [War on Terror](#)

May 13, 2006

War on Terror & Full Spectrum Dominance encompasses rebellious South Americans, some other randomness

[How to Pick a Satisfying Career: Know Yourself](#)

Hongpong.com Drupal development: Some new advancements: I have organized the menus a bit and set up a [basic forum](#). It is colossally easy to [register an account](#) on the new system, which allows you to put up files and such, as well as personal blogs and [polls](#). Anonymous comments are also turned on.

Check out the new RSS headline [aggregator](#) thingy set up - viewed here as a [big list of mixed things](#), or here [broken into the component sections](#) (or "wires") or a [set of the sources we're putting together](#). **NOTE:** Right now the auto headline updater doesn't work - in other words it won't check sites on its own yet. Therefore I think anyone can hit [drupal.hongpong.com/cron.php](#) to force updating the feeds. (we're gonna do some [SEO](#) somehow, too)

Meanwhile some randomness: Bill Salisbury on [polarization in MN nominating processes](#). He is an intrepid reporter who's been around the Capitol for a long time.

Help [Palestinians but dodge giving Hamas government money](#)? Sounds dubious.

Aspyr is [releasing Civilization IV](#) for Macintosh tentatively in June. I just saw it on PC again, and it is excellent.



Porter Goss: [shitty leader](#) goes back to Capitol Hill. Never should have brought his greasy face outta the House.

You gotta see the [Truth live. The word is law, bitch! Wayne Madsen promotes Al Gore comeback](#) in 2008 in the Salt Lake Tribune.

If you care at all about South America you need to check out Greg Grandin's "[Rumsfeld's Latin American Wild West Show](#)" on TomDispatch.com. Basically the U.S. is militarizing its relations with the whole region, as one country after another slips out of Washington's orbit. Only a small part of a *CRUCIAL* read about how direct American imperialism/[Full Spectrum Dominance](#) has been field-tested south of here:

Latin America, in fact, has become more dangerous of late, plagued by a rise in homicides, kidnappings, drug use, and gang violence. Yet it is not the increase in illicit activity that is causing the Pentagon to beat its alarm but rather a change in the way terrorism experts and government officials think about international security. After 9/11, much was made of Al Qaeda's virus-like ability to adapt and spread through loosely linked affinity cells even after its host government in Afghanistan had been destroyed. Defense analysts now contend that, with potential patron nations few and far between and funding sources cut off by effective policing, a new mutation has occurred. **To raise money, terrorists are reportedly making common cause with gun runners, people smugglers, brand-name and intellectual-property bootleggers, drug dealers, blood-diamond merchants, and even old-fashioned high-seas pirates.**

In other words, the real enemy facing the U.S. in its War on Terror is not violent extremism, but **that old scourge of American peacekeepers since the days of the frontier: lawlessness.** "**Lawlessness that breeds terrorism is also a fertile ground for the drug trafficking that supports terrorism,**" said former Attorney John Ashcroft a few years ago, explaining why Congress's global counterterrorism funding bill was allocating money to support the Colombian military's fight against leftist rebels.

Counter-insurgency theorists have long argued for what they describe as "total war at the grass-roots," by **which they mean a strategy not just to defeat insurgents by military force but to establish control over the social, economic, and cultural terrain in which they operate.** "Drying up the sea," they call it, riffing on Mao's famous dictum, or sometimes, "[draining the swamp.](#)" What this expanded definition of the terrorist threat does is take the concept of total war out of, say, the mountains of Afghanistan, and project it onto a world scale: Victory, says the Pentagon's 2006 [Quadrennial Defense Review](#), "requires the creation of a global environment inhospitable to terrorism."

Defining the War on Terror in such expansive terms offers a number of advantages for American security strategists. Since the United States has the world's largest military, the militarization of police work justifies the "persistent surveillance" of, well, everything and everybody, as well as the maintenance of "a long-term, low-visibility presence in many areas of the world where U.S. forces do not traditionally operate." It justifies taking "**preventive measures**" in order to "**quell disorder before it leads to the collapse of political and social structures**" and shaping "**the choices of countries at strategic crossroads**" which, the Quadrennial Defense Review believes, include Russia, China, India, the Middle East, Latin America, Southeast Asia -- just about every nation on the face of the earth save Britain and, maybe, France.

[Read the next one carefully then check your phone records: -Dan]

Since the "new threats of the 21st century recognize no borders," the Pentagon can, in the name of efficiency and flexibility, breach bureaucratic divisions separating police, military, and intelligence agencies, while at the same time demanding that they be subordinated to U.S. command. Hawks now like to sell the War on Terror as "***the Long War,***" **but a better term would be 'the Wide War,' with an enemies list infinitely expandable to include everything from DVD bootleggers to**

peasants protesting the Bechtel Corporation. Southcom Commander Craddock regularly preaches against "anti-globalization and anti-free trade demagogues," while Harvard security-studies scholar and leading ideologue of the "[protean enemy](#)" thesis, Jessica Stern, charges, without a shred of credible evidence, that Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez is brokering an alliance between "Colombian rebels and militant Islamist groups."

....In Latin America more generally, **it is increasingly the Pentagon, not the State Department, which sets the course for hemispheric diplomacy. With a staff of 1,400 and a budget of \$800 million, Southcom already has more money and resources devoted to Latin America than do the Departments of State, Treasury, Commerce, and Agriculture combined. And its power is growing.**

For decades following the passage of the 1961 Foreign Assistance Act, it was the responsibility of the civilian diplomats over at Foggy Bottom to allocate funds and training to foreign armies and police forces. But the Pentagon has steadily usurped this authority, first to fight the War on Drugs, then the War on Terror. Out of its own budget, it now pays for about two-thirds of the security training the U.S. gives to Latin America. In January 2006, Congress legalized this transfer of authority from State to Defense through a provision in the National Defense Authorization Act, which for the first time officially gave the Pentagon the freedom to spend millions from its own budget on aid to foreign militaries without even the formality of civilian oversight. After 9/11, total American military aid to the region jumped from roughly \$400 million to more than \$700 million. It has been steadily rising ever since, coming in today just shy of \$1 billion.

Much of this aid consists of training Latin American soldiers -- more than 15,000 every year. ***Washington hopes that, even while losing its grip over the region's civilian leadership, its influence will grow as each of these cadets, shaped by ideas and personal loyalties developed during his instruction period, moves up his nation's chain of command.*** [And that in turn, could be the backdoor for American-directed coups and direct political pressure --Dan]

Training consists of lethal combat techniques in the field backed by counterinsurgency and counter-terror theory and doctrine in the classroom. This doctrine, conforming as it does to the Pentagon's broad definition of the international security threat, is aimed at undermining the work civilian activists have done since the end of Cold War to dismantle national and international intelligence agencies in the region.

BagNewsNotes on [Pitching the Zarqawi bloopers](#).
The Ny Times [says today](#):

Two related National Security Agency surveillance programs begun after the Sept. 11 attacks have provoked legal controversy because the agency does not seek court warrants for their operation.

In the domestic eavesdropping program, the N.S.A. listens in on phone calls and reads e-mail messages to and from Americans and others in the United States who the agency believes may be linked to Al Qaeda. Only international communications — those into and out of the country — are monitored, according to administration officials. Until late 2001, the N.S.A. focused on only the foreign end of such conversations; if it decided someone in the United States was of intelligence interest, it had to get a warrant from the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court. Now such warrants are sought only for communications between two people who are both in the United States.

In the telephone record data-mining program, the N.S.A. has obtained from at least three phone companies the records of all calls — domestic and international — showing the phone numbers on both ends of each conversation, and its date, time, duration and other details. The records do not include the contents of any call or e-mail message and do not include personal data like credit card numbers and home addresses, officials say.

Security agency employees perform computer analysis in an effort to identify possible associates of terror suspects.

Meanwhile a nice birthday present from the AP - May 11: [Justice Department Abruptly Ends Domestic Spying Probe](#)

The government has abruptly ended an inquiry into the warrantless eavesdropping program because the National Security Agency refused to grant Justice Department lawyers the necessary security clearance to probe the matter.

The Justice Department's Office of Professional Responsibility, or OPR, sent a fax to Rep. Maurice Hinchey, D-N.Y., on Wednesday saying they were closing their inquiry because without clearance their lawyers cannot examine Justice lawyers' role in the program.

"We have been unable to make any meaningful progress in our investigation because OPR has been denied security clearances for access to information about the NSA program," OPR counsel H. Marshall Jarrett wrote to Hinchey.

Hinchey's office shared the letter with The Associated Press.

Jarrett wrote that beginning in January, his office has made a series of requests for the necessary clearances. Those requests were denied Tuesday.

"Without these clearances, we cannot investigate this matter and therefore have closed our investigation," wrote Jarrett.

Justice Department spokesman Brian Roehrkasse said the terrorist surveillance program "has been subject to extensive oversight both in the executive branch and in Congress from the time of its inception."

Meanwhile it is interesting that the Carlyle Group has some [control over how those security clearances are handed out](#) via the [U.S. Investigative Services](#), USIS, entity. [\\$13 million](#) in a recent contract.

Man, to hell with it. I'm gonna go have fun now.

Posted by HongPong at [10:54 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Campaign 2006](#) , [HongPong-site](#) , [International Politics](#) , [Media](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [War on Terror](#)

May 08, 2006

Hookergate sprawls out: Goss & Foggo leave the CIA; NSA's Hayden tapped to replace; strange dance of 'deep politics' continues

[Anonymous CIA guy on "Dusty" Foggo](#), in an email to ex-CIA dude Larry Johnson:

"Guys who hate him pretty much do so because they wish they had the moxie to get as much poontang as they think he is getting."

It is pretty satisfying when five days after I [introduced our dear readers to the Hookergate/Watergate scandal](#) and posted a Porter Goss pimp image I whipped up, Goss abruptly resigned as CIA director and his #3, [Foggo, goes under criminal investigation](#) for shady Duke-related contracts. The timing is

just too damn good, and by all indications this mess is sprawling out into a sizable summer scandal. Therefore we are issuing an updated image of Mr. Goss.



More and more of this story has come out in the press & various websites last week. Obviously, there are a lot of rumors and speculation, which have only grown since Goss abruptly resigned last Friday afternoon. Here is a darn good summary of the main rumors about why Goss resigned, from Kevin Drum at the Washington Monthly blog [Political Animal: Why did Goss Go?](#)

- [Laura Rozen #2](#): I hear that when Porter Goss went to meet with Negroponte today, he didn't know he was going to be leaving the job. And that it would have been the President's decision, not Negroponte's. And that this may have to do with how Goss handled a management issue concerning Foggo.
- [Justin Rood](#): I've heard it a bit more bluntly: **Goss was told to fire Kyle "Dusty" Foggo, his troublesome Executive Director, and Goss refused.** That's what we're hearing now from knowledgeable sources. But there's a lot of contradictory information.
- [John Podhoretz](#): If Goss were somehow implicated in matters relating to Duke Cunningham, say, there's no way on earth Bush would have made such a friendly show of his departure. Seems more likely to me that there was some kind of showdown between Goss and Negroponte and Negroponte said, "Either he goes or I go," and there Goss went.
- [Time magazine](#): The sudden and unexpected resignation of Porter Goss as Director of the Central Intelligence Agency on Friday **highlights a long bureaucratic battle that's been going on behind the scenes in Washington.** Ever since John Negroponte was appointed Director of National Intelligence a year ago and given the task of coordinating the nation's myriad

spy agencies, **he has been diluting the power and prestige of the CIA....Earlier this week, in a little noticed move, Negroponte signaled that he would be moving still more responsibility from the CIA to his own office, including control over the analysis of terrorist groups and threats.**

We're gonna riff through the material available right now, but first, **it's going to take a special chart to get the general outline of this scandal out there. Time to illuminate the cast of characters: "Dusty" Foggo, Duke, Brent Wilkes, and the rest of the gang. Enjoy!**

Four former deputy directors of operations once tried to offer Goss advice about changing the clandestine service without setting off a rebellion, but Goss declined to speak to any of them, said former CIA officials who are aware of the communications. **The perception that Goss was conducting a partisan witch hunt grew, too, as staffers asked about the party affiliation of officers who sent in cables or analyses on Iraq that contradicted the Defense Department's more optimistic scenarios.**

"Unfortunately, Goss is going to be seen as the guy who oversaw the agency victimized by politics," said Tyler Drumheller, a former chief of the European division. "His tenure saw the greatest loss of operational experience" in the operations division since congressional hearings on CIA domestic spying plunged the agency into crisis, he said.



The media's main Goss storyline has nothing to do with Hookergate: he allegedly just quit because National Intelligence Director John Negroponte had taken too much of his power away, and it pissed Goss off. Certainly, [as Time reported, the CIA is getting gutted](#), with many analysts moving into Negroponte's new ODNI entity created by the recent "intelligence reforms". However, this process could go all wrong, as the CIA could be shredded and the ODNI becoming some sort of weird & monstrous new bureaucracy. This is a separate issue, but important to the whole country. [The CIA's Existential Crisis](#) on POGOblog (from the [Project on Gov't Oversight](#)) has a really good explanation of how the intelligence bureaucracy is being restructured.

It's too damn weird to see the CIA director quit right as stories about a pretty massive sex scandal are looming. Every reporter in town is all over it. Here is [Josh Marshall's basic backstory explanation](#) of how Goss, Foggo, Wilkes and Cunningham fit together, from a TPM post last Friday afternoon:



The hookers in [Hookergate](#) are, of course, the sizzle. But there's a bigger story. It stems directly from the Randy "Duke" Cunningham bribery scandal, which many had figured was over. But it's not. You may have noticed that while Duke Cunningham is already in jail and Mitchell Wade has already pled guilty to multiple charges, **Brent Wilkes has never been touched. Wilkes is the ur-briber at the heart of the Cunningham scandal**, you can see pretty clearly by reading the other indictments and plea agreements. Wade was Wilkes' protege. Now, on the surface one might surmise that the prosecutors are just taking their time, putting together their best case. I hear different.

Wilkes has deep ties into the CIA. The focal point of those ties is to Kyle "Dusty" Foggo, the man Porter Goss appointed to the #3 position at CIA when he took over the Agency last year. Remember, **Wilkes' scam was getting corrupt contracts deep in the 'black' world of intelligence and defense appropriations, where there's little or no oversight.** Foggo was in the contracting and procurement field at the CIA. So you can see how he and Wilkes, who have been friends since high

school, had plenty to talk about.

The CIA wasn't the only place Wilkes and his protege Wade plied their corrupt trade. There were also in the mix contracting on the Bush Pentagon's extra-constitutional spying operations. And I am told that senior appointees at the DOD knew about their corruption but overlooked it.

Now, since the Cunningham scandal got under, and particularly of late, **there's been a big tug of war between federal law enforcement and the CIA over whether to really go after Wilkes.** Probably a little more specificity is in order there, folks at CIA in the orbit of Foggo and presumably Goss.

Now, how does Goss know Foggo? That's how we get into the other part of this story -- those 'hospitality suites', that moveable feast of food, poker and love, **Brent Wilkes ran in Washington for maybe fifteen years. We hear that's how Goss got to be friends with Foggo**, whom he later promoted to executive director of the CIA, the number 3 post at the Agency.

Now, last week, Goss [denied](#) he had attended any of Wilkes' parties, in answer to a question from TPMuckraker. Foggo [admitted](#) attending the parties but claimed he'd never seen the hookers.

Now, corrupt contractors saucing up Agency officials and members of Congress to get contracts and free money. Hospitality suites where the saucing takes place. Hookers in the mix. It's going on for more than a decade, various members of the key committees in the mix. Goss, former member of one of those committees, appoints one of the key players in all this mess as the number three guy at CIA? The feds leaning hard on the limo company owner who probably knows all the details and already has a long rap sheet and can't afford another conviction?

Walter Shapiro in Salon [summarized the case:](#)

Porter Goss' spooky demise: For those practiced in connecting the dots, little artistic training is needed to speculatively link Goss' here's-your-hat-what's-your-hurry departure with the bribery scandal surrounding jailed former GOP Rep. Randy "Duke" Cunningham. NBC News reported Thursday night that the CIA is investigating whether a top agency official, Kyle "Dusty" **Foggo, improperly steered a \$2.4 million contract to his close college friend Brent Wilkes**, a defense contractor implicated in the Cunningham case. Wilkes reportedly supplied prostitutes to Cunningham at poker parties that Foggo also attended, though the CIA official denies seeing the female entertainment.

There is no obvious connection between Goss and Cunningham, aside from their having served together in the House for 13 years. **But the real mystery is how Foggo became the CIA's executive director, the official in charge of day-to-day operations at the entire agency:** He was a midlevel field officer with a procurement background when Goss appointed him in 2004. A CIA spokeswoman, who did not want her name used, said Thursday that the two men met when Foggo testified before the House Intelligence Committee, which Goss chaired from 1997 until 2004, when Bush made him the CIA director. No date was provided for Foggo's testimony before Goss' committee.

Of course, the Foggo-Wilkes connection may have nothing to do with the sudden change in Goss' career arc. Daalder posed the speculative question, "Was there an intelligence blunder that we don't know about -- and that we may never know about?"

The shady intelligence contracts and their security consequences:
Laura Rozen in January wrote ["Duke" of Deception: The overlooked security implications of the Cunningham scandal](#) for the American Prospect magazine.

Viewed as a corruption case, the Cunningham matter has an arc that suggests the possibility of more high-profile indictments to come. But looked at from a counterintelligence angle, it is even more disturbing. The case is still more worrying if it is turned around, and focused not only on the congressman for sale, **but on the defense contractors and foreign-linked financiers who cultivated Cunningham** -- and potentially other lawmakers -- precisely because of their position on the Intelligence and Appropriations Committees.

Cunningham has admitted taking \$2.4 million in bribes from two men who sought and received not only U.S. government contracts, but particular types of contracts. **They were awarded defense and intelligence contracts, including counterintelligence and counterterrorism programs so sensitive their precise details are confined to those with security clearances.** As Cunningham himself bragged in a February 8, 2001, letter to defense contractor executives after he was appointed to the Intelligence Committee, "I feel fortunate to represent the nation's top technological talent in the 'black' world," the San Diego Union Tribune first reported.

Lots more gory details in there, and [another story back](#) in December too. Cunningham set up a lot of contracts that infest the whole system: the Pentagon's "newest and fastest-growing intelligence agency", the Counterintelligence Field Activity (CIFA) agency had major contracts with MZM set up by Cunningham. WaPo reported in March, '[Pentagon Agency's Contracts Reviewed](#)':

...[Cunningham] prosecutors said that in fiscal 2003 legislation, Cunningham set aside, or earmarked, \$6.3 million for work to be done "to benefit" CIFA shortly after the agency was created. The contract went to MZM Inc., a company run by Mitchell J. Wade, who recently pleaded guilty to conspiring to bribe Cunningham.... CIFA, whose exact size and budget remain secret, was established in September 2002 to coordinate policy and **oversee the counterintelligence activities of units within the military services and Pentagon agencies.** In the past three years, it has grown to become an analytic and operational organization with nine directorates and widening authority focused primarily on protecting defense facilities and personnel from terrorist attacks. ***The agency was criticized after it was revealed in December that a database it managed held information on Americans who were peacefully protesting the war in Iraq at defense facilities and recruiting offices.***

So this is one of those Pentagon agencies that spies on America. Hi, guys.



The San Diego Union-Tribune has pushed along the Cunningham story from the beginning. This story about Wilkes from last December, [Contractor 'knew how to grease the wheels'](#), has the goods about his payoffs to DeLay, how ACDS got government contracts, and it had the earliest hints about Wilkes running a "hospitality suite, with several bedrooms, in Washington – first in the Watergate Hotel and then in the Westin Grand near Capitol Hill." (Photo from the Muckers, who reported the [Watergate has been subpoenaed](#))

[House Intel Committee Chair "Not Surprised" Duke Slept with Hookers.](#)

The American Progress Action Fund Progress Report (a liberal organization obviously) had a [really good summary of the whole case on May 4](#) (also [posted on Alternet](#)). Go check that out for lots more material on Wilkes, the poker parties, Foggo's involvement there, Goss, the Limo service and the "Defense Appropriations Committee 'Cabal'." It ends with:

Wilkes was reportedly set to receive a contract to ["create and run a secret plane network"](#) for the CIA before his links to Cunningham were made public. The roots of this scandal may be as much in profiteering as they are in "this club's conviction that [the law is an impediment to the national security cause](#), that the way to run things is through these informal networks."

Who was Nine Fingers? There is some CIA agent in the poker party mix nicknamed "Nine Fingers", whose role may become clearer, as *Newsweek* [identified](#) him as Brant Bassett, an agent in Operations Directorate. [TPMMuckrakers on the case](#):

"Another player was a CIA agent known as 'Nine Fingers,' so named because he lost one of his digits while on assignment," the San Diego Union-Tribune [reported](#) over a week ago in what appeared to be an almost throwaway bit of color.

The Mafia-esque moniker has attracted attention and jokes -- but little new information, until now: Newsweek magazine is the first to [identify](#) Nine Fingers as Brant Bassett, whom they also say is "a former Goss aide." He may be a more central character in our story than the SDUT made him out to be.

Bassett is reported to have been a case officer with the CIA's Directorate of Operations, where Foggo worked. Their paths crossed a number of times over the years and they became friendly, I'm told, which isn't a stretch, given that two publications now put Bassett in poker games with Foggo and Wilkes.

An enduring mystery to this fiasco is **why Porter Goss promoted "Dusty" Foggo to the very top of the CIA. Now, informed sources are speculating that Bassett may be the link that explains that mystery**, at least in part. Bassett, a counsel and staff director for the Human Intelligence panel of Goss' House Intelligence Committee, had ample opportunity to introduce Goss and his close aide Patrick Murray to Foggo. Did he?

Justin Rood and the [Talking Points Memo Muckrakers](#) have been all over Hookergate from the beginning - and isn't it nice that the Internet lets this things get legs so fast now? Hit their [Hookergate archives](#) for more, including [investigations about the corrupt Shirlington Limousine service](#) that moved the prostitutes around, while under a privileged Homeland Security contract. The NY Times reports that Homeland Security doesn't even do [background checks on its contractors](#).

Maverick / weird DC reporter Wayne Madsen has been covering this and [his site had some goodies](#) on it early (he is **very** anti-Hayden too, so check that out). He said May 6:

Although the White House spun Goss' departure as expected following some sort of "transition," it was clear that what WMR has been reporting for some time -- that Goss and his closest advisers, all GOP

political operatives and hacks -- had been implicated in the contractor scandals surrounding Goss' Executive Director Kyle "Dusty" Foggo and ADCS head Brent Wilkes. The scandal involved poker parties at the Watergate Hotel and Westin Grand that reportedly featured prostitutes of both sexes, limousines, and situations in which CIA officials could be subject to potential blackmail. Director of National Intelligence John Negroponte became so concerned about the CIA scandal, he told Goss that it was time for him to go. It is now expected that other members of the Goss team -- including Foggo, chief of staff Patrick Murray, Michael Kostiw (who left the CIA under a cloud in the early 1980s after being arrested for shoplifting a package of bacon from a McLean, Virginia supermarket), Jennifer Millerwise Dyck, and others who Goss brought with him from Capitol Hill -- will be shown the door.

What does [Larry Johnson's](#) anonymous CIA friend say happened?

[Larry](#) is one of the "pissed off CIA dudes" on the Hongpong.com sidebar now. He [posted a very interesting email](#) from one of his buddies who used to be in there:

If you want to know, the way these things worked were that once or twice a week, Dusty would host a poker game either at his house in Vienna or Brent's place at the Watergate, later the Westin. These things went on from the mid 1990's until Dusty went to Frankfurt in the early 2000's. Basically, Dusty used these games to take his mind off of his feud with Buzzy Krongaard, which was a minor thing to Buzzy, but weighed pretty heavily on Dusty's mind. When at Dusty's place, they were pretty much all Agency guys, except for Brent. Dusty's wife laid out the food and drink. When downtown, Brent would invite Duke and some other denizens from the Hill, but the majority were always Dusty's Agency poker buddies. Brent would pop for the drinks and snacks downtown, and the ambiance was kind of like the poker game on *The Sopranos*. At either location, Dusty was the center of attraction and kind of the host. There was always a lot of bitching about Buzzy, even in front of the Hill guys. These were always all guy things, there weren't any women there. Dusty is a big cigar aficionado, in fact, he used to have the license plate CIGRMAN on his car. The room was always filled with smoke.

Downtown, it wasn't unusual for guys to crash in the bedrooms or on the couch before going home at dawn to catch a shower and go in to work. It would not surprise me if Brent used the same rooms at the Watergate and Westin for subsidized Congressional encounters with hookers, but I don't know this to be the case. If Brent did, I doubt that he would've said anything to Dusty about it, because, for all of his judgmental shortcomings, Dusty has enough of a political antenna to realize that he shouldn't be playing poker in the same room where Duke was availing himself of free hookers. As you probably know, Dusty is the type of guy who people either love or hate. In my experience, women who hate him do so because he is an unabashed chauvinist of the old school. Guys who hate him pretty much do so because they wish they had the moxie to get as much poontang as they think he is getting. So there you have it, at least my take.

Who else to check out? Reporter [Laura Rozen has been on the Cunningham case](#) for a long time. The new [Washington Babylon blog at Harpers](#) by Ken Silverstein broke some of the limo stuff.

What else? Duke is gay? Uhm, well, there was this one story ([noted here](#)): ["Duke's House of cards" Washington Blade By CHRIS CRAIN](#) Dec. 02, 2005. Would be funny, wouldn't it?

What you won't read about in these mainstream press accounts is the other double life led by the closet case, Duke, the anti-gay conservative. Cunningham, who is married with grown children, has admitted to romantic, loving relationships with men, both during his Vietnam military service and as a civilian. That was the remarkable story that this publication reported two years ago, when Elizabeth Birch, the former Human Rights Campaign leader, inadvertently outed Cunningham at a gay rights

forum.

Birch never mentioned Cunningham's name, but she talked about a rabidly anti-gay congressman who asked to meet privately with her in the midst of a controversy over his use in a speech on the floor of the House the term "homos" to describe gays who have served in the military. Along with Birch and an HRC staffer, the unnamed congressman shared that he had loved men during his life. In telling the story, Birch offered up a few too many details about the closeted congressman.

CIA Director replacement Hayden is sketchy: This has already gotten overly long, so I will let the Hayden stuff go for now. In the meantime, just ponder, do these fuckers ever actually get around to ***protecting America?!***

Posted by HongPong at 07:59 AM | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [The White House](#) , [War on Terror](#)
May 01, 2006

Conspiracy Theory Rock; Zoroastrianism is still with us; War profits & KBR: not that profitable?



Robert Smigel had this awesome cartoon on a March 1998 SNL called "[Conspiracy Theory Rock](#)" which was really quite amazing ([QuickTime](#) link), as [noted in this Times story](#). It only aired once, and has subsequently been deleted from reruns – instead they run the second Backstreet Boys performance. Basically it conveys, in typical Smigel style, the conflicts of interest and shady military money flows of the major corporate media – and the NBC peacock does embarrassing stuff. [More on it here.](#)



Who was [Zoroaster](#)? A Persian prophet around 1700 BC who gave us the concepts of cosmological good versus evil, the afterlife and the Judgment Day. The Persian king found this to be a handy way to generate a more coherent and submissive population, so Zoroastrianism

became the state religion of Persia. Even though there are fire temples around Asia today, it is still very obscure. The fire temples all have continuously burning fires that are the representations, though not considered supernatural, of [Ahura Mazda](#), the Light. The fires have been burning for centuries. (images from Wikipedia)



Zoroaster's influence went east, where it infused the foundations of Buddhism, and west, where it got into post-Babylonian Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Zoroastrianism is an interesting and under-appreciated pillar of monotheism, and in a sense today you could say we are dealing with a kind of Zoroastrian manichaeism run amok. At least that was the point of this DailyKos entry about the [Prisoners of Zarathustra](#). Also, Zoroastrianism has really freakin' cool Babylon-style art.



War Profiteering ain't that profitable? Slate: [War profiteering—harder than it looks. By Daniel Gross](#). A lot of interesting points about the structure of how KBR works. Also check out [this thing](#) from PBS Frontline, it was quite detailed and long, but a fascinating interview about how in the military-industrial complex, contractors beget subcontractors up to six levels deep. Even more interesting, those [psychopathic guys from CACI and Titan Corporation](#) who were working as private quasi-CIA interrogators at Abu Ghraib had ***no government oversight officers inside Iraq at all***. In other words, there is some kind of mercenary hydra beast with absolutely no checks on it. And it's stealing your money: **Frontline: [Outsourcing military services is in vogue. Why? An interview with Steven Schooner](#)**. Just a few things to kick around.... Try [PrivateForces.com](#) for more on the privatized / mercenary military companies.

Posted by HongPong at [07:27 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Iran](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#)

April 26, 2006

International Relations Blitz: The Maoist Naxalite threat to India, US planning spring offensive & post-Musharraf Pakistan; New SOCOM Special Ops war plan; Iran Defence Forum



Foreign Policy magazine has a blog, with an interesting bit about [the Maoist threat...to India](#), part of their [Top 10 Stories You Missed in 2005](#):

Consistently outwitting and overwhelming Indian police forces, Indian Maoists, also known as **Naxalites**, have taken control of large chunks of territory in several eastern and southern Indian states, such as Orissa and Andhra Pradesh.

They add:

Many Indian analysts have long been [distrressed](#) by the central government's indifference to the problem, leaving it to the ill-armed and corrupt state police forces. But New Delhi, now led by Manmohan Singh's government can no longer ignore the insurgency that is growing in strength. Combined with Kashmir and sporadic sectarian violence between Hindus and Muslims, the internal security problem is really serious.

This is interesting because it shows how less-than-unitary such a huge place as India can be – and it shows that a more complex model than traditional [International Relations unitary state "Realism"](#) is necessary to look at these things. It also reminds me of a certain stubborn Tamil nationalist who would remind us all where things really stood between Indian ethnicities... Photo from the [Wikipedia entry on Naxalites](#).

The [IMF is supposed to fix major trade imbalances](#) now.

AIPAC case: [Condi Rice denies that she leaked the same variety of classified information](#) to AIPAC lobbyists as Larry Franklin. They are trying to get people to believe that "everyone does it", trading secret government deliberations among the right-wing foreign lobbies in DC. I wish I was a powerful rightwing foreign lobby, then everyone would kiss my ass!!



Not international but fun! Joementum evaporating: [more and more people are pissed at Joe Lieberman](#) for fucking over the Democrats constantly. His indicators are falling among

[independents](#), as well. It is entirely possible that Lamont will steal the Democratic primary nomination from him, which is basically unheard of. Hit up the [Lamont Blog](#) for more on the insurgency against this p0nk.

William Arkin at the Washington Post blog [Early Warning](#) is coming up with a [lot of goods](#) on upcoming Iran madness, but [he thinks its kinda funny](#) how he has personally been pegged as a conspirator for Global Zionism, the

left, right, neocons, who knows what. He's got some cool stuff about how [some damn defense contractor is going to be paid to cough up terror warnings](#) because the government is pathologically retarded:

The database is produced by [IntelCenter](#), one of a cottage industry that has sprung up since the early 1990's to feed at the counter-terrorism trough. According to the group's website, the IntelCenter's "primary client base is comprised of military, law enforcement and intelligence agencies in the US and other allied countries around the world."

Space Command wants to obtain 20 licenses to the IntelCenter's U.S. Government Terrorism Threat Intelligence Package (\$1650.00 per license according to the IntelCenter website).

This database, according to Space Command, includes "weekly and or real time email notifications of all significant terrorist, rebel group and other related activity, including bombings, assassinations, kidnappings, significant dates, threats and organizational changes within groups." IntelCenter will also provide warnings relating to "developments concerning intelligence agencies around the world including operational issues, organizational developments, new initiatives, espionage trials, new technologies and other related issues." And finally, IntelCenter will receive "real-time dissemination of raw statements, fatwas, announcements, and other messages directly from terrorist, rebel, extremist, and other organizations themselves."

The immediate question is: **isn't this what all of these new "long war" commands and reorganized and beefed-up intelligence agencies with all of their new databases and data mining and authorities supposed to do?** Okay, by government standards, \$32,000 annually is petty cash. But there must be dozens of additional agencies and commands buying the IntelCenter product and hundreds if not thousands of licenses paid for with your and my tax dollars.

Everyone senses that we have a contractor crisis in our national security community, too many contractors acting like wild west prospectors in Iraq and the Middle East, contractors doing what we used to think of as "mission essential" jobs in headquarters and agencies.

Right on dude, right on.



Special Operations command, SOCOM, is apparently the new heart of the "war on terror" and there are all kinds of plans getting put together to shift intelligence and shadowy combat type stuff into SOCOM - and also, a decisive shift to allow military operations without an ambassador's approval. Are they also coordinating Psychological Operations such as Zaraqawi "letters?" (More on that in a bit, we do have a couple goodies...)

WaPo: [New Plans Foresee Fighting Terrorism Beyond War Zones](#)
Pentagon to Rely on Special Operations By Ann Scott Tyson Sunday, April 23, 2006; Page A01

Details of the plans are secret, but in general they envision a significantly expanded role for the military -- and, in particular, a growing force of elite Special Operations troops -- in continuous operations to combat terrorism outside of war zones such as Iraq and Afghanistan. Developed over about three years by the Special Operations Command (SOCOM) in Tampa, the plans reflect a beefing up of the Pentagon's involvement in domains traditionally handled by the Central Intelligence Agency

and the State Department.

For example, SOCOM has dispatched small teams of Army Green Berets and other Special Operations troops to U.S. embassies in about 20 countries in the Middle East, Asia, Africa and Latin America, where they do operational planning and intelligence gathering to **enhance the ability to conduct military operations where the United States is not at war.** [orwellian phrase of the day]

And in a subtle but important shift contained in a classified order last year, the Pentagon gained the leeway to inform -- rather than gain the approval of -- the U.S. ambassador before conducting military operations in a foreign country, according to several administration officials. **"We do not need ambassador-level approval,"** said one defense official familiar with the order.

This plan details "what terrorists or bad guys we would hit if the gloves came off. The gloves are not off," said one official, who asked not to be identified because of the sensitivity of the subject..... Special Operations Command, led by Gen. Doug Brown, has been building up its headquarters and writing the plans since 2003, when Rumsfeld first designated it as the lead command for the war on terrorism. Its budget has grown 60 percent since 2003 to \$8 billion in fiscal 2007. **President Bush empowered the 53,000-strong command with coordinating the entire military's efforts in counterterrorism in 2004.**

"SOCOM is, in fact, in charge of the global war on terror," Brown said in testimony before the House last month. In this role, SOCOM directs and coordinates actions by the military's regional combatant commands. **SOCOM, if directed, can also command its own counterterrorist operations -- such as when a threat spans regional boundaries or the mission is highly sensitive** -- but it has not done so yet...

Stratfor: US is planning post-Musharraf Pakistan: Arkin has some goods on a planned [spring offensive against Taliban-style guys in Pakistan](#), but alarmingly, The Pakistan Daily Times reports:

[April 21, 2006: US now viewing Pakistan without Musharraf: Stratfor](#) | By Khalid Hasan

There are indications that the Bush administration is now imagining a Pakistan without Gen Pervez Musharraf, according to Stratfor, an American news and analysis service.

In two commentaries in the wake of Richard Boucher's April 5 statement in Islamabad about America wishing to see the ascendancy of civilian rule in Pakistan, Stratfor says this shift in Washington's thinking will create further domestic problems for the Pakistani leader, since his political opponents view the US statements as a signal to intensify their efforts to oust him. The analysis also noted US National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley's comment that the Bush administration will work with Musharraf to ensure that Pakistan's 2007 elections are "free and fair," as well as Condoleezza Rice's congressional testimony earlier this month.

"These statements from the highest echelons of the Bush administration illustrate that the United States is no longer fixated on supporting Musharraf," says Stratfor. **"This is probably because Musharraf's usefulness to the United States is fast becoming negligible.** The principal reason the Bush administration supported the Musharraf regime was due to Pakistan's critical role in the US-jihadist war. It would appear Washington believes it does not need Musharraf at the helm for the United States to continue to prosecute its struggle against militant Islamism, and no longer believes the Pakistani state would collapse without Musharraf. Moreover, the Bush administration likely feels Musharraf is no longer able to keep domestic affairs in order, and sees pinning Washington's entire Pakistan policy on one individual as a liability. Thus, Washington has decided to put some distance between itself and the Pakistani president."

The analysis cautioned that this does not mean that Washington would like to see Musharraf ousted.

Instead, it reflects a decision to initiate a contingency plan to avoid being caught off guard in light of political instability in Pakistan in the months ahead. Not supporting Musharraf the way it has before will allow Washington to ascertain potential alternative political players capable of stepping in and filling the void in the event Musharraf is no longer able to maintain his position.

On the other hand, if they bomb Iran, well Pakistan will probably get all fucked up, and we better rationalize that chaos now, hadn't we?



Want to see what Iranians are saying about the whole situation? Check out the [Iran Defence Forum](#). With such speculation as [will the usa use ground forces in war against iran?](#) Check out, if you will, the thread about "[the true iran and its people](#)," a collection of snapshots of what looks like a frickin sweet civilization with lots of beautiful women.



Note that they wear funny hats in their legislature. The "hat problem" has been the secret root of a great many conflicts.

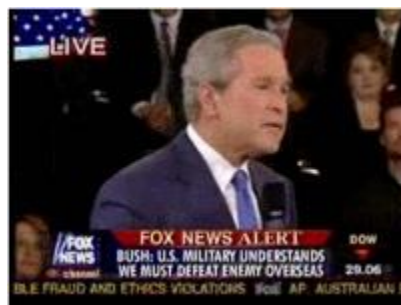




Alright, I think we can all pretty much agree that Tehran is the Central Asian version of Manhattan + Paris. That's all for now.....

Posted by HongPong at [06:42 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [International Politics](#) , [Iran](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [Security](#)

Onward slogging Christian Leader-Man; Net neutrality gets legs; FDA bosses states on pot laws; USAF censors DailyKos



Big Poppa Doom informed everyone that, in a handy and expedient combination of Apocalyptic middle eastern wars and invisible men with booming voices, God is determining our foreign policy. What could go wrong? Catch the [video](#). [Editor&Publisher](#) and the [WaPo](#) on it.

Bush: I base a lot of my foreign policy decisions on some things that I think are true. One, I believe there's an Almighty. And, secondly, I believe one of the great gifts of the Almighty is the desire in everybody's soul, regardless of what you look like or where you live, to be free.

Also the following statement:

One decision he questions: After the successful invasion, "preparing an Iraqi army for an external threat. Well, it turns out there may have been an external threat but it's nothing compared to the internal threat." He did not explain what external threat the Iraqis were being trained for.

FDA 420 political diktat: Last week the [FDA published a fancy condemnation of marijuana medical studies](#) -- and in an odd example of a federal bureaucracy trying to dictate rules to state legislatures, condemned efforts at the state level to reform marijuana laws. It's kind of improper for federal agencies to order state legislatures to Jump. [Scientific American on it](#), and here's the [FDA statement](#).

As more than a [few people are noticing these days](#), this is another example of fake politicized science, like ordering [NASA scientists to shut up](#) about global warming (read the damn [NASA memo](#)). (don't forget that [national parks are falling apart](#) and of course the [government doesn't care about global warming](#)) Go hang out at [smokedot](#) to compensate, and don't forget all those [tax dollars flushed down the toilet](#) for the war on drugs.



Net Neutrality: [Couple more](#) articles about the impending cancellation of the internet's egalitarian structure. Fortunately, Nancy Pelosi is supporting an amendment that would save Net Neutrality. You can become a "[citizen co-sponsor](#)" [about it here](#). The attempt to fix it is called the [Markey Amendment](#). Despite having a serious uphill battle, the word seems to be [spreading](#):

We now have over 75 coalition partners, everyone from the [Parents Television Council](#) to the [Texas Internet Service Provider's Association](#) to [Consumer Action](#), and the blogosphere is on fire. We launched yesterday, and net neutrality [is just blowing up](#).

[Comic book collectors](#), [video gamers](#), [librarians](#), [hip hop sites](#), [music fans](#), [more video gamers](#), [designers](#), [small business owners](#), and [nonprofits](#) have heard of the issue and are very angry at the telecom cartel's move.

And now the tech companies have chimed in with [Don't Mess with the Net](#).

Iraq for Sale: The liberal documentary filmmaker Robert Greenwald ([Outfoxed](#) and others) is working on a new film, [Iraq for Sale](#), about corrupt defense contractors, in time for the election this fall. However, they are trying to get \$50 donations to finance production. I advised them that the trailer on their website doesn't seem to work on Mac.

Air Force censors liberal websites: According to [someone](#) at the DailyKos, the Air Force is blocking the [DailyKos](#), [Atrios Eschaton](#) and [TalkingPointsMemo](#). The roughly equivalent (although more hateful, I would

say) rightwing sites [FreeRepublic](#) and [LittleGreenFootballs](#) are *not* blocked. [More](#) on this. If you are in the military and are trying to circumvent ideologically tainted censorship, try these tips on [Peacefire](#). You can see if a program called SmartFilter is blocking URLs [here](#) (we are classed as "personal pages"). There is something [odd about how the Air Force seems](#) to be the most fundamentalist branch of the military.

It is also interesting that Armed Forces Radio is extremely tilted towards rightwing commentary that is rebroadcast from civilian sources. It's like 90% conservative. More on Armed Forces Radio bias [here](#) and [here](#). This has bad effects, wherein for example, Rush Limbaugh tells soldiers through Armed Forces Radio that the Abu Ghraib torture was basically acceptable to "[blow some steam off](#)".

This website is clearly not blocked at many military installations, including the Air Force. However, I have also been sent screenshots of this site being blocked on military internet at a particular place that I won't elaborate on.

MZM meta-scandal: Corrupt defense contractor trying to start a war in Iran, and pretty much everything else too:

[Disgraced defense contractor planned to promote democracy in Iran](#): March 24
By Warren P. Strobel - Knight Ridder

WASHINGTON - In a new example of disgraced defense contractor Mitchell Wade's attempts to exert influence in Washington and beyond, Wade and two business partners formed a nonprofit group in 2004 to promote democracy in Iran, according to documents and interviews.

Wade and the two partners, who have been large contributors to Republican political campaigns, formed the Iranian Democratization Foundation in April 2004, according to incorporation papers filed in Washington.

....In November 2004, Congress approved spending \$3 million to promote democracy in Iran. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice last month asked Congress for a large boost in funding, to \$75 million. Behrooz Behbudi, who helped incorporate the foundation, said in a telephone interview that **Wade "was supposed to get funds from the Congress" for the project.** The two later fell out over business dealings in Iraq, Behbudi said.

Wade, who headed contractor MZM Inc., pleaded guilty last month to bribery-related charges and making illegal campaign contributions. His chief congressional patron, former Rep. Randy "Duke" Cunningham, pleaded guilty in November to taking bribes. Wade's dealings, which include contracts MZM received from Pentagon intelligence agencies, are under investigation.



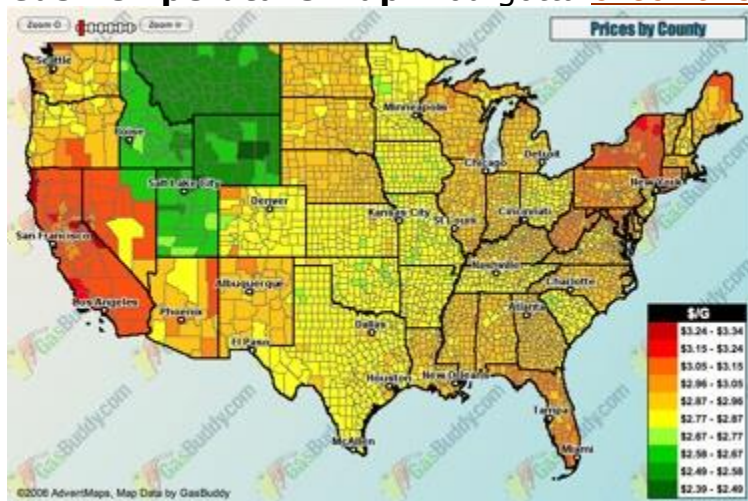
MZM is a fun one. It is interesting how there are so many scandals around Washington, they sort of blend into and overlap each other. [MZM was one of Duke Cunningham's corrupt companies](#), but in the Jack-Abramoff-of-all-trades go-get-em style of DC operators, MZM shadiness has also been a [major cause of Katherine Harris' Senate campaign](#) disintegration in Florida, *and* MZM contractors helped cover up the fake Iraq intelligence in one of the

Congressional investigations, by [working for the Silberman-Robb Commission for WMD Whitewashing](#), as TPMuckrakers have dug up. Isn't DC great? The muckies also said that [MZM helped select bombing targets](#) early in the Iraq war:

In addition to its work at CENTCOM, MZM is known to have had contracts to support [CIFA](#), the Pentagon's domestic spying operation; the FBI's Foreign Terrorist Tracking Task Force; the Department of Energy's [Counterintelligence Office](#); the White House's [Robb-Silberman Commission](#) to study WMD intelligence; the Homeland Security Department's [watch center](#); and the Army's National Ground Intelligence Center.

Check out [PrivateForces.com](#) for more on privatized military firms, the sector of the economy that's gonna eat all the others.

Gas Temperature Map: You gotta [check this out](#). It's getting hot out there.



Posted by HongPong at 10:43 AM | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Iran](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Media](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Movies](#) , [Technological Apparatus](#) , [War on Terror](#)
April 24, 2006

Intel agencies using blogs more, Blackwater lawsuit, etc...

WASHINGTON TIMES: [CIA mines 'rich' content from blogs](#)
By Bill Gertz April 19, 2006

President Bush and U.S. policy-makers are receiving more intelligence from open sources such as Internet blogs and foreign newspapers than they previously did, senior intelligence officials said.

The new Open Source Center (OSC) at CIA headquarters recently stepped up data collection and analysis based on bloggers worldwide and is developing new methods to gauge the reliability of the content, said OSC Director Douglas J. Naquin.

"A lot of blogs now have become very big on the Internet, and we're getting a lot of rich information on blogs that are telling us a lot about social perspectives and everything from what the general feeling is to ... people putting information on there that doesn't exist anywhere else," Mr. Naquin told The Washington Times.

I'm gonna throw some random stuff at you. It's not a waste of time to look at, but it won't tell you one coherent story, so much as some shades of what went down over the last week while I was wrapped up in all the Macalester festivities... which I will elaborate on later.

Tony Snow for WH press sec.?: Lying water carrier for Republicans + doesn't stammer or sweat so much == why not? [Tony Snow's many lies make him an unacceptable press sec'y](#)

New protest album: [NEIL YOUNG - Living With War](#), reviewed [positively](#). Won't be in stores until the beginning of May, but online purchases later this week.

A.Norman sends along [the following cartoon](#):



"I can't wait for the industrial revolution. I hate making shit by hand."



"Dude, have you heard there's going to be an industrial revolution? This is gonna blow."

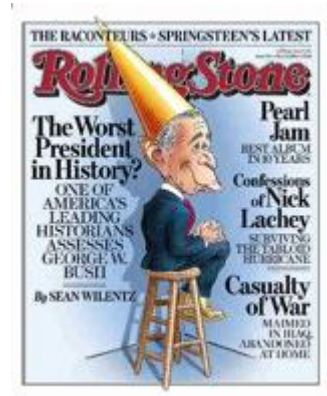
Spam keywords auto-pass NSA filter?: The odd internet journalist Wayne Madsen [offered](#) that

April 20, 2006 -- **Beating Bush's NSA e-mail surveillance simple.** According to NSA sources, there is a simple method to avoid having one's e-mail captured by NSA Internet filters that have been installed within major Internet exchanges, such as the AT&T facility in San Francisco, which is the subject of a class action suit against AT&T. **By typing "Viagra" or "Cialis" in the message text, the filters will automatically identify the e-mail as spam and ignore it.** The e-mail could contain the words "Al Qaeda" or "Bin Laden," but as long as Viagra or Cialis are also contained in the text, the e-mail will pass through the filters without being intercepted.

(Madsen's site design now looks much better, BTW)

Execrable writing: [Powerline has an odd poop fetish](#). They use 'execrable' to describe everyone from Rybak to Kofi. I will have to remember to give Scott Johnson a wedgie when I see him.

Earth Day: This House site is fucking crazy: [On Earth Day website, House Republican Committee seeks to 'dispel environmental myths'](#). Really crazy.



Time to kiss some Caucasian ass as the rather [autocratic president of Azerbaijan visits the White House](#). Bush still claims that final Iraq [war decisions happened after an ultimatum](#). Rolling Stone features: [is Bush the worst President in History?](#)

A really long article in the American Prospect (a liberal mag) about how the [Democrats need to find some values and stuff](#). It may have been a good article but it was too long even for me.

If you have an online group, try [Frappr](#) to map them globally.

Rice is getting roped into AIPAC case: A lot seems to be transpiring in the AIPAC case for this summer, and we'll have to dig into the AIPAC angle a lot later. But for now, [AP reports](#):

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice leaked national defense information to a pro-Israel lobbyist in the same manner that landed a lower-level Pentagon official a 12-year prison sentence, the lobbyist's lawyer said Friday.

Goss CIA analyst crackdown: RawStory: [The CIA announced today](#) that it has fired an employee for leaking classified information to Washington Post reporter Dana Priest. Also a big story in the NY Times on it. Pretty fucked up. [Juan Cole compares](#) how in DC these days, it is good to leak Valerie Plame's name, but bad to inform the American public about a network of secret prisons in eastern Europe.

Secret torture flights: There is a global shadow detention gulag of sorts, and all kinds of rumors about it around the Internet. Perhaps we'll stir up a little trouble later with some of those exotic stories, but in the meantime consider: [Amnesty International claims CIA used private airlines to hide CIA torture flights](#) (from a couple weeks ago).

Apple lawyers say blogs not journalism: [Apple is trying to sue](#) some blogger-type guy [at PowerPage.org](#) and say he's not a journalist with journalist-style credentials because of a story about Apple developing a consumer-oriented Firewire-based GarageBand music interface - [codenamed 'Asteroid'](#) according to AppleInsider.

Corporate dudes are [suing against NSA wiretaps along with the ACLU](#). NSA wiretaps were a prominent part of Sunday's West Wing episode,

wherein President-elect Santos calls up the Chinese premier to do some saber rattling over Kazakhstan – I don't know why the hell Bartlett, or anyone, would place thousands of US troops between the Russian and Chinese armies, but to the West Wing's credit, Santos doesn't like it either.

I loathe that Clifford May and his neocon ways. But "[What to make of the anti-antis?](#)" is a pretty sublime exercise in Orwellian labeling and slanders. Also the Zarqawi psyops story makes an angular appearance I don't really understand – but it appears that he supports the psyops because it manipulates perceptions against "anti-antis"... WTF?

The media, too, have more than their share of anti-antis, and I'm not talking here only about the left-wing blogs that compare President Bush unfavorably to Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden. Recently, the top story on the Washington Post's front page was headlined: "Military Plays Up Role of Zarqawi: Jordanian Painted as Foreign Threat to Iraq's Stability."

Is there anyone -- even Ward Churchill -- who would argue that Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the commander of Al-Qaida in Iraq, is not a "foreign threat to Iraq's stability"?

A seemingly more cogent reason for the Post to object to what it blasts as a U.S. military propaganda campaign: An American colonel is quoted as saying that Zarqawi and other "foreign insurgents" are only "a very small part of the actual numbers" of those fighting Iraqi government forces and the American-led coalition.

The [Moussaoui case distracts from profound problems](#) in the legal system that need to get unraveled.



Is Bush ripping Beatles onto his iPod? The RIAA is [arguing](#) in court that turning your own CDs into MP3s is not fair use, which is insane. But since you can't buy Beatles digitally at all, this means that Bush must have been ripping them. Should the RIAA bust his yarblockoes? Well as [this guy says](#), "They nailed [Al Capone](#) for tax evasion, didn't they?"

Boston Globe says [Bloggers fanning the controversy over Rumsfeld](#). Describing a few milblogs, the blogs in turn hasten to redefine themselves. I am in favor of military blogs, as they open new and interesting channels of information. Among those mentioned: [COUNTERCOLUMN: All your bias are belong to us](#), and [Guidons](#). [OPFOR](#) is apparently the standard bearer these days. Is it part of military.com? Features such bits as "[Somalia Remains Free of US Imperialism, Food, Laws, Prosperity, Peace...](#)" under the category "[The Long War](#)." Real progressive. The [mil blog wire](#) is an aggregator which looks interesting.



The Blackwater lawsuit: Those Defense contractor guys hung on the bridge probably shouldn't have been in Fallujah -- but can their widows sue over it? After the Fallujah hangings, did Blackwater cover up their own negligence and fake documents to protect their Pentagon contract? More on it [here in the DailyKos](#). In the broader context, it's evidence that these private

companies treat their employees like shit while causing the military industrial complex to spiral out of control:

[The Nation: Blood Is Thicker Than Blackwater](#) by JEREMY SCAHILL [from the May 8, 2006 issue]

It is one of the most infamous incidents of the war in Iraq: On March 31, 2004, four private American security contractors get lost and end up driving through the center of Falluja, a hotbed of Sunni resistance to the US occupation. Shortly after entering the city, they get stuck in traffic, and their small convoy is ambushed. Several armed men approach the two vehicles and open fire from behind, repeatedly shooting the men at point-blank range. Within moments, their bodies are dragged from the vehicles and a crowd descends on them, tearing them to pieces. Eventually, their corpses are chopped and burned. The remains of two of the men are strung up on a bridge over the Euphrates River and left to dangle. The gruesome image is soon beamed across the globe.

In the Oval Office the killings were taken as "a challenge to America's resolve," according to the Los Angeles Times. President Bush issued a statement through his spokesperson. "We will not be intimidated," he said. "We will finish the job." Brig. Gen. Mark Kimmitt vowed, "We will be back in Falluja.... We will hunt down the criminals.... It's going to be deliberate. It will be precise, and it will be overwhelming." Within days of the ambush, US forces laid siege to Falluja, beginning what would be one of the most brutal and sustained US operations of the occupation.

.....

Shortly after Helvenston left that message, the men left the base and set out for their destination. Without a detailed map, they took the most direct route, through the center of Falluja. According to Callahan, there was a safer alternative route that went around the city, which the men were unaware of because of Blackwater's failure to conduct a "risk assessment" before the trip, as mandated by the contract. **The suit alleges that the four men should have had a chance to gather intelligence and familiarize themselves with the dangerous routes they would be traveling. This was not done, according to Miles, "so as to pad Blackwater's bottom line"** and to impress ESS with Blackwater's efficiency in order to win more contracts. The suit also alleges that McQuown "intentionally refused to allow the Blackwater security contractors to conduct" ride-alongs with the teams they were replacing from Control Risk Group. (In fact, **the suit contends that Blackwater "fabricated critical documents" and "created" a pre-trip risk assessment "after this deadly ambush occurred."**)

AP: [Israel Preparing to Retake Gaza Strip](#). Probably saber rattling, but the situation is getting really bad. Some other newsbits:

[Senate Bill Shorts Gear for Troops](#) By ANDREW TAYLOR, AP Thu Apr 20, 3:46 PM ET

WASHINGTON - A Senate measure to fund the war in Iraq would chop money for troops' night vision equipment and new battle vehicles but add \$230 million for a tilt-rotor aircraft that has already cost \$18 billion and is still facing safety questions.

[Kyrgyz Leader Threatens to Expel US Troops](#) By KADYR TOKTOGULOV , 04.19.2006, 10:36 PM
Kyrgyzstan's president threatened Wednesday to expel U.S. troops if the United States does not agree by June 1 to pay more for stationing forces in the Central Asian nation.

Some random DailyKos goodies: What is the ['center' in American politics](#)?
What of the [innocent people in Guantanamo](#)? (and what of that [Abbasi](#) guy?)
Are we becoming the [Republic of Gilead](#)?

Some random Israel goodies: "[We could lose the next war](#)" - an interview with idiosyncratic Likud hawk Yuval Steinitz, wherein he suggests that the Israeli military leads its government, not vice versa. Really interesting stuff. He is also paranoid about Egypt. Editorial: [The UN versus Hezbollah](#). [Hebron settlers assault two female international aid workers](#). I had some more links but they disappeared because of that damn Haaretz auto-reload thing.

I promise that the Big Lebowski-themed Iran exegesis is on its way. It's a new week now... Gotta get real before oil goes \$80+/barrel.....

Posted by HongPong at [07:21 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Campaign 2006](#) ,
[International Politics](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Media](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) ,
[Technological Apparatus](#)

April 18, 2006

When Air Force foam goes wrong; military guys in Afghanistan lookin' after their weed

Mordred sent over a nice bit about what happens when [some military guys at Ellsworth AFB test the emergency flame control foam in a hangar](#). And they lose control and can't shut it off, so the entire hangar fills up with foam. It's one of those things that would make working in the military really cool if there weren't any wars. Here's a writeup from the Air Force, wherein they [claim that it was not an accident](#). Here is another [place to see the photos](#) at strategypage.com.



Also, on [HumpingFrog.com](#), we find out [why the occupation of Afghanistan continues](#): the weed is pretty good. The vast amounts of opium help, too.



Posted by [HongPong](#) at [08:17 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Afghanistan](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#)
March 24, 2006

These pieces won't fit themselves: that's your job: AIPAC finally attacked; Corporate media & pundits suck; Back to the Balkans; Elections gear up in Israel; other bits for the weekend

March 20: [CLEVELAND, United States \(AFP\)](#) - US President George W. Bush said he hoped to resolve the nuclear dispute with Iran with diplomacy, but warned Tehran he would "use military might" if necessary to defend Israel.

AIPAC Offensive: Ah what a sublime concept. "Defense". On the same day, news spread of a [report by two high-octane professors of international studies criticizing the United States' alliance with Israel](#), and a detailed dissection of how AIPAC intimidates all opposition to Israeli government policies on Capitol Hill. John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt are big wheels in the international politics arena, and not doctrinaire liberals, nor terrorists. Of course Justin Raimondo at Antiwar has [his take on this](#).

This is a pretty big ol' bombshell to put in the beginning: "[The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy](#)," (PDF, 70+ pages)

"The U.S. national interest should be the primary object of American foreign policy. For the past several decades, however, and especially since the Six Day War in 1967, the centerpiece of U.S. Middle East policy has been its relationship with Israel. The combination of unwavering U.S. support for Israel and the related effort to spread democracy throughout the region has inflamed Arab and Islamic opinion and jeopardized U.S. security. This situation has no equal in American political history. ***Why has the United States been willing to set aside its own security in order to advance the interests of another state?***"

I won't spend any more time on that now. But it's a certainly a big deal, and we will stick around the AIPAC case to see what turns up. Also worth considering: [WHY IRAN WANTS THE BOMB](#).

Corporate media sucks: 1) Chris Matthews is taking [corporate cash to speak places](#). Wow, big surprise that MSNBC is in awash in corporate cash. 2) The [WaPo really uses sloppy terms](#) a lot, such [as](#):

For months the Democrats have resisted calls from their liberal base to more aggressively challenge President Bush.

...as a way to defuse what [Feingold is saying](#) and discredit the *majority of the country* that doesn't believe in White House policies. And to suck at the Teat. At least the Christian Broadcasting Network has the [guts to go with their fanaticism properly](#).

The WaPo gave this [young rightwing RedState jackass a blog](#) on their site. Some negative [reactions](#) from the liberal side, since this guy is apparently allowed to pretty much [make shit up](#) all day long.

From the sphere of friends with websites: PBG has some new stuff up at InfantFoundation.com. I liked this [photo](#). Something about those [gay atheist liberals](#), via the Norman.

For the occasion of the Fourth Year of the war, it is good to look back and remember the insane propaganda we lived in, that sparked the whole fucking mess in the first place. Fortunately, Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting pulled together: ["The Final Word Is Hooray!" Remembering the Iraq War's Pollyanna pundits:](#)

"Tommy Franks and the coalition forces have demonstrated the old axiom that boldness on the battlefield produces swift and relatively bloodless victory. The three-week swing through Iraq has utterly shattered skeptics' complaints."
(Fox News Channel's Tony Snow, 4/27/03)

"The only people who think this wasn't a victory are Upper Westside liberals, and a few people here in Washington."
(Charles Krauthammer, Inside Washington, WUSA-TV, 4/19/03)

"We had controversial wars that divided the country. This war united the country and brought the military back."
(Newsweek's Howard Fineman--MSNBC, 5/7/03)

"We're all neo-cons now."
(MSNBC's Chris Matthews, 4/9/03)

And it goes on and on. And for reasons that escape me, these people still control the fucking debate. **DAMN IT.**

Some random bits: well, [conservatives are skittish](#) right now. Duh. [Pundits suck](#). Duh. In an interview, ABC Nightline [refuses to acknowledge](#) that Billy Graham's son Franklin is a fanatical hater of Islam.

Antiwar.com, some goodies: [How to fix the intelligence process](#) by Charles Peña. Also "[Why Libertarians Should be Critical of War](#)," Raimondo: "[American Megalomania](#)"; TomDispatch: "[Reprogramming the Infinite Loop: The NSA Spying Debate](#)", Solomon: "[War-Loving Pundits](#)".

Check out the [DailyKos straw poll of 2008 presidential candidates](#). Feingold's kickin ass!!

It's not impossible: Jim Webb, a conservative Democrat running for Congress, says: "[The Reagan Democrats](#)" – and how to get them back. A general [criticizes Rummy's total incompetence](#).

Points in Case: [Ten things to believe in](#). Way to go, [Keith Olbermann](#).

Nasty neocon Max Boot suggests that [George Clooney has been pimping the neo-con line](#) throughout his career, noting that Three Kings provides a neocon-certified Moral Basis for attacking Iraq in 2003 (not really true but it reads well), and The Peacemaker alerted people to the hazards of WMD attacks and such.

[Bush White House overdoes 'manliness'](#). But the problem is that they are sort of gay, but weird about it.

Something called the [Iraq Study Group has been set up](#), with a bunch of mostly shady Washington insiders and defense contractors, etc., who are probably going to attempt to whitewash aspects of the war policy, and perhaps some fake intelligence after lunch and tea. And for some of them, keep selling lots of weapons to the government.

Helen Thomas on the [Lap Dogs of the Press](#). Her recent press conference moment with Bush was pretty badass.

Even more random: [Top 10 weirdest animals](#).

A Franz Ferdinand kinda place? Milosevic's death has afforded hawks an opportunity to reminisce about how warm and fuzzy it made them feel to bomb Serbia and stop the ethnic cleansing, although oddly, it seems that the [mass graves](#) in Kosovo [never really turned up in the kinds of numbers](#) we were led to believe at the time.

Of course, the Kosovo intervention was mainly about gaining more American control over the oil and gas energy pathways leading west from the Black Sea (and the surrounding political structures). The [AMBO pipeline](#) (Albania-Macedonia-Bulgaria) and the massive [Camp Bondsteel](#) in Southern Kosovo were the two major products of the war in Kosovo. Aside from these goodies the US [doesn't much care what happens](#) over there.

Israel Goodies: ["Settlers, you have failed" by Aluf Benn](#). Good to hear. Guess what? Israel has its own dickhead spoiler politician named Lieberman, and *better yet*, Avigdor Lieberman is a fanatical settler and is the leader of the far-right Yisrael Beiteinu Party. Apparently National Union, pretty much a fascist party that essentially supports the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians, once had a coalition with Yisrael Beiteinu, but they split up a while ago. They are messing around with Netanyahu and maneuvering to his right. ["Right-wing parties mull ways to contend with rise of Lieberman"](#). Joe and Avigdor are apparently distant cousins.

Also "[Of love and anger](#)" as young Israelis, some of them born and raised ex-Gaza settlers, raise doubts about whether or not the IDF can still be an instrument to bring about the return of the messiah.

Here is a funny story that indicates that "Syria was ready for peace" in the mid-1990s. [Bishara acted as Syria-Israel mediator in 1990s talks](#). Also funny: [Saddam Hussein maintained pretense of chemical arms to prevent Israeli attack](#). Ha. Ha. Ha.

Netanyahu says the next Israeli election will be a kind of referendum on the whole damn mess. "[A referendum indeed](#)" by Uzi Benziman. and [The cynicism of Olmert and Lieberman](#) By Israel Harel. [Nerds for Netanyahu?](#) Augh.

On the left side of the spectrum, see the interview with Meretz leader Yossi Beilin in "[Not afraid of 'autonomy'](#) By Nurit Wurgaft." (there's a bit about Lieberman's ethnic cleansing plans at the end) And don't forget the Israeli Arabs! [Not pawns on the board](#) By Nurit Wurgaft.

Some cool thoughts on Islamic Archaism from one of Islam's best writers. I lost the link to a Haaretz story about Lafif Lakdar, but check out: [Why the Reversion to Islamic Archaism?](#) (also featured [here](#)), and [The modern schizophrenia of Islamic integralism](#). On AnarchistNews.org see the links to "[Islam and \(communist\) Anarchism](#)" as they term it, (far be it from me to try to control their semiotics). And [InfoShop.org's page on Iran](#).

Well that was some stuff I had piled up. Sorry, no pictures. You can enjoy that for the weekend, I think I just want to go watch movies the whole time.

Posted by HongPong at [10:00 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Iraq](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Media](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [War on Terror](#)

March 14, 2006

Introducing "The Long War"; Sadr damns Rumsfeld over civil war; French teacher surrenders; DC Dems suck; blogs of CIA dudes; Neo-cons favor Iraqi civil war

[Juan Cole catches a bitter Muqtada al-Sadr: \(UPI\)](#)

Young Shiite nationalist leader Muqtada al-Sadr said Monday that Iraq is in a state of civil war. He responded to guerrilla provocations against Sadr City, with bombings and mortars having killed over 50 persons there Sunday, by ordering his Mahdi Militia not to engage in reprisals.

Like many Iraqi and Arab observers, Muqtada was shocked when US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld said last week that the US military would not intervene in an Iraqi civil war, leaving that to Iraqi forces.

' **"May God damn you," Sadr said of Rumsfeld. "You said in the past that civil war would break out if you were to withdraw, and now you say that in case of civil war you won't interfere."** '



The Machine Rages On: Raimondo: [Another War for Israel: The amen corner howls for war with Iran, The Shame and the Sorrow](#). UK Independent: [Iraq: The reckoning](#). (photo via [KarbalaNews.net](#))

Welcome to the Long War: We are moving from the War on Terror®© to the Long War©, a hellish state of perpetual warfare forever, but it will be totally badass [according to the Quadrennial Defense Review](#), a Pentagon planning document prepared every four years. It's called the Long War, and most of the stuff in this [article](#) is apocalyptically gloomy and depressing. And they are going to take your money to pay for it too.

On a note that I hope is totally unrelated, from the Antiwar blog, [Why are Marines Training in US Neighborhoods?](#) as reported in the [Toledo Blade](#). Let me fetch my tinfoil.

Blunt Honest Dept: The State Department informs us in "[Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#)" of Iraq's many human rights shortcomings: "The following human rights problems were reported:

- pervasive climate of violence
- misappropriation of official authority by sectarian, criminal, terrorist, and insurgent groups
- arbitrary deprivation of life
- disappearances
- torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment
- **impunity**
- poor conditions in pretrial detention facilities
- arbitrary arrest and detention
- denial of fair public trial
- an immature judicial system lacking capacity
- limitations on freedoms of speech, press, assembly, and association due to terrorist and militia violence
- restrictions on religious freedom
- large numbers of **internally displaced persons** (IDPs)
- lack of transparency and widespread corruption at all levels of government
- constraints on nongovernmental organizations (NGOs)
- discrimination against women, ethnic, and religious minorities
- limited exercise of labor rights"

Other than that, it's peachy. There's a [ton of stuff in there](#), worth glancing at. I like how 'Impunity' has its own bullet.

REALLY, IT'S GOOD: CounterPunch: [Neocon Advocates Civil War in Iraq as "Strategic" Policy; Daniel Pipes Finds Comfort in Muslims Killing Muslims:](#)

"The bombing on February 22 of the Askariya shrine in Samarra, Iraq, was a tragedy, but it was not an American or a coalition tragedy. Iraq's plight is neither a coalition responsibility nor a particular danger to the West. Fixing Iraq is neither the coalition's responsibility, nor its burden. **When Sunni terrorists target Shi'ites and vice versa, non-Muslims are less likely to be hurt. Civil war in Iraq, in short, would be a humanitarian tragedy, but not a strategic one.**" The fact is that the neocons who control U.S. strategy have no interest in preventing a civil war but only in inciting one. Sectarian tensions were virtually unknown in Iraq before the U.S. invasion. And in fact the Iraqi Shia fought loyally as Iraqis against Iranian Shia in the disastrous Iran-Iraq war. So to avoid an Iraqi civil war, the most important step is to get all the U.S. troops home and thus to terminate U.S. provocations. For it is now crystal clear that the neocon strategy is one of civil war to divide and destroy Iraq; and such a strategy amounts to a crime against humanity.

Which will really be a funny notion when the oil ports in eastern (the suppressed Shiite part of) Saudi Arabia get bombed. A real thigh-slapper.

JPost: [India is not Iran](#). But they are Asians with Nukes, which counts for - 10,000 points these days.

Fourth Generation Warfare: I have been saying that this is probably the best model to understand America's current strategic and especially tactical situation. It's gaining more notice now. They even [care about the concept in Grand Forks](#). This [long essay by Michael Mazarr](#), a professor at the U.S. National War College, details a crucial problem with the body of 4GW theory so far: it explains the modes of conflict, but not the underlying causes and motivations.

Libertarian critique of war and socialism: [Iraq and the Democratic Empire by Llewellyn H. Rockwell, Jr.](#)

The US spends money, invades countries, sheds blood, and becomes ever more powerful at home and unpopular abroad. In the end, no matter how powerful its weapons or how determined its leaders, it loses. It loses because people resist empire. It loses for the same reasons that socialism and its central plans always fail. Large-scale attempts to force people into predetermined molds founder on the inability of the state to allocate resources rationally and to anticipate change, as well as the ubiquitous and pesky phenomenon called human volition. Mankind was not meant to live in cages.

Why did the US win wars in the past? Because it fought far poorer governments. **Today it loses because it fights populations – people acting on their own, forming their own associations, using their brains to outwit bureaucrats, and cobbling together resources from underground markets. The market always outruns the planners for the same reason that guerilla armies usually win over regular armies. Decentralized and spontaneous associations of dedicated individuals are smarter and wiser and more committed than centralized and planned bureaucrats who follow their rule books.**

....Therefore, [Mises] said, **war and socialism are both part of the same ideological apparatus. They both presume the primacy of power over property.** In the same way, peace and free enterprise are cut from the same cloth. They are the result of a society with a regime that respects the privacy, property, associations, and wishes of the population. The liberal society trades with foreign countries rather than waging war on them. It respects the free movement of peoples. It does not intervene in the religious affairs of people but rather adopts a rule of perfect tolerance.

I'm sorry, this caught my eye and made me laugh:

[Former Teacher Surrenders at French School](#): Armed Ex-Teacher Holds 23 Hostages, Mostly Students, at French School Before Surrendering:

Vilpail had taught at the Colbert de Torcy High School until two years ago, school officials said. He was armed with a gun that fires rubber bullets, police said, adding that the weapon was nevertheless dangerous. He surrendered after hours of negotiations, said Jean-Luc Prigent, a top aide in the local administration.

Even their crazies surrender!! All right, that's a little crass. But it speaks to a certain less-than-subtle difference in the American character. Our paranoid edge goes all the way to the bitter end -- see *Falling Down*, *Fight Club*, *Glory*, *Bonnie & Clyde*, *Thelma & Louise*. That key part of the American narrative where the suggestion of violent subversion is transformed into *The Real*. It is part of our national psychology. We are proud of it: any proper story tends to go this way. Otherwise it seems half-finished.

In this case, well, the French guy wanted to make a symbolic gesture without quite crossing over into the Real. It appears that he wanted to take a little swipe and then step back like a reasonable European. This is part of the reason that the various apocalyptic segments of the population voted for Bush in droves. It's who we are. No surrender.

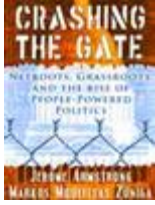
Pissed off CIA dudes are cool: I still dig Larry Johnson's [No Quarter](#) blog, as well as [Pat Lang's Sic Semper Tyrannis](#). Johnson is on point with [tidbits about the Plame case](#), [the 'victory' strategy](#), [Libby's legal tactics](#), etc.

Misc file: [Isaac Hayes quits 'South Park'](#). Hopefully Chef will have a funny death scene. Top [10 strangest Lego creations](#). Radiohead's ['Just' video brought to life via London graffiti](#) (QT). This is really pretty sweet.

DC Democrats are Bastards & Chickenshits®™: [Greenwald](#) lays it out (via [Kos](#) - more [here](#)):

With very few exceptions, national Democrats in Washington see the blogosphere as composed of uninformed, ranting, dirty masses who need to be kept as far away as possible. While they are willing to take your money, many of the Beltway Democrats see the vibrant activism in the blogosphere as some sort of an embarrassment, while others see it as a threat to their fiefdoms.

Here's a tip for DC: ***Your methods suck. Your fiefdoms are powerless.*** You guys have no guts (except Feingold). No one better deserves to put up with Howard Dean than you fuckwits that have absolutely no idea how to tread water, let alone win. Go cry with Joe Lieberman about how no one likes you anymore. ***Go straight to Hell, do not pass Go.***



This was in the context of a [NY Times review of "Crashing the Gate"](#), a new book from Jerome Armstrong of MyDD.com and Markos Zuniga of DailyKos. It details how the Netroots can revolutionize the power structure in America and DC, and how it makes the Confused DLC Douche-bag Consultant Class (or whatever you care to call them) a little hot under the collar. [Order it here](#) from Amazon and I would get a referral kickback. (no one ever does, but hey, its worth a shot)

For his part, Kos has some really [good wisdom today on how blogs can generate fundraising seed money](#) for candidates, as well as [more on the book & tour](#).

Oops, I guess [legal] abortion is doomed: "They Mean It" by digby, worth checking.

Posted by HongPong at [12:12 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Campaign 2006](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [News](#) , [War on Terror](#)

March 12, 2006

Inside military trauma units: a first-hand report

Someone anonymous sent me the following story from a doctor inside the U.S. military's medical trauma operations center. I did a quick check and this has already appeared [here](#) and [here](#) on the Internet, as far back as December. Oh well, enjoy. According to [BlackFive](#), the source is one "Scott D. Barnes, LTC, MC, USA". It's a harsh one, but decidedly all too real...

"Well, as promised, with this letter I have kept my commitment to do better in keeping you informed of what I was doing over here in Iraq. Since I had only sent one letter previously, with this update I have doubled my correspondence. Again, if there is anyone else you think would want to get a copy of this letter, please feel free to pass it along.

I had every intention of trying to get this out just around Thanksgiving but very soon after that holiday, things seemed to pick up at work and I have just been trying to keep pace with the influx.

November has been an interesting month. Certainly not as busy as October but patients would come more in waves than a steady stream. **During the month of October, the 86th Combat Support Hospital (CSH) was the 3rd busiest trauma center in the world!** You read that correctly, only the trauma centers in Miami and Los Angeles did more work that we did. Just think of all the trauma hospitals in New York, Chicago, Baltimore, Dallas, Philadelphia, Washington DC, and those in Europe, Asia, and Central/South America - most of which have 5-10 times the number of staff which we have here. It's amazing what you can get done when you eliminate the burdensome task of JCAHO (hospital regulating organization) and the exponentially expanding administrative tasks that have grown like Kudzu (weed that has overtaken much of the highways in the southeastern US) as they choke off efficient patient care. That and the fact that if you work 24 hours a day and live in the hospital while being locked down to about two square blocks seem to help us see more patients.

This is medical and surgical care practiced the way that many doctors dream. You see problems, diagnose the condition, quickly plan the operation, and you just do it. Patients don't wait, doctors

don't wait, OR staff doesn't wait. It is amazing! We all love it and if it weren't for missing our families or dealing with the occasional rocket and mortar attack, most of us would not want to leave.

I have had the privilege of being adopted by the neuro team. We have world class care here. COL Ecklund is the chief of the neurosurgery program at Walter Reed, COL Ling is the only neuro-intensivist in the entire department of defense (he actually works at Johns Hopkins neurosurgical ICU teaching most of the military's critical care and neurology residents as they rotate through), and COL Mork is the anesthesiologist dedicated to the neurosurgical cases. As a number of head injuries involve eye injuries, it is a somewhat natural pairing. This has afforded me an incredible opportunity to be involved in quite a number of neurosurgical cases. COL Ecklund has shown me how to drill some burr holes in the skull and screw on plates to hold the bones after the case as well as closing up the scalp incisions over the craniotomy at the conclusion of the case. I can operate on the eyeball and use suture much finer than human hair, but to be a surgical assist to such a master as COL Ecklund has been inspiring.

These soldiers, civilians, and even prisoners have no idea how fortunate they are to have such skilled hands at work in their case.

More on the flip:

The integration of the whole team approach is one of the greatest factors in setting this experience apart. Within minutes of a patient hitting the doors of the emergency room you have a general surgeon, neurosurgeon, oral-maxillo-facial surgeon, urologist, orthopedic surgeon, and an eye surgeon all examining and conferring on the way to best care for a patient.

The nursing staff, the OR staff, the radiology techs..everything..it all just appears. Sort of like magic, a couple of doctors get called, word starts to get out and the machine starts working. The medics start drawing blood, the radiology techs arrive and start shooting pictures, the administrative personnel (yes we do have some!) start preparing the necessary paperwork, the anesthesia providers coming around like all of the other doctors, blood products from the blood bank starts to appear, and often the chaplain arrives. It really is beautiful to watch if you have a chance to sit back and really see what is going on.

Too often we don't see it because we are knees deep into the moment. We need to be reminded by those outside. Last month, the commander of one of the MP brigades asked to have a service for the OR/ER personnel that have meant so much to this unit over the duration of their deployment. This unit had been hit so hard week after week. Almost 40% of their members have been impacted by injuries. They had been such frequent fliers that we have become brothers in this struggle; the unit commander and sergeant major often join us in the operating room as we work on their men. This closeness and unity of purpose is not commonly seen between the medical corps (docs and the like) and the line units (real soldiers)...but in this setting we are brothers. These line units no longer see us as detached, primadonnas who sit in a luxury white hospital while they train in the mud and dirt. They see us in our environment and see the same faces when they come in on Monday morning as when they come in at midnight on Tuesday and again on Thursday night. They ask if we ever get any sleep and how we can keep going. My answer is always the same, "Sergeant, when you are on combat operations, when was the last time you slept and how do you keep going?"

When the unit Sergeant Major told me that they do it because they don't want to let down their buddy next to them because he is depending on that help and they do it because they know that if they get hurt, they feel sure that the medical machine will not let them down. I told him our answer was similar for how we can operate the way we do. I don't want to let down my neurosurgeon or my general surgeon who depend on me for helping with the eyes (a lot of the neurologic function in an unconscious patient comes from the eye exam and in a severely traumatized eye that can be difficult to assess even for an eye surgeon) and I don't want to let down that soldier who puts his life on the

line in part because he put his faith in our ability to put him together if he gets broken.

We work two sides of the same street but when we meet it is under the most difficult circumstances. When those young MPs roll in after having been torn up by IEDs (improvised explosive devices) and their lives are in the balance the family pulls together. The unit leaders come into the OR and the jobs are less defined, you just look for something that needs to be done and you do it. One young sergeant was badly broken and rushed to the OR. The IED had done its intended job and shredded this courageous American everywhere that wasn't covered by body armor. He was dying, but we weren't going to let him go without a fight. He had no immediate eye injury, so I just went to work getting the blood and hanging it on the infusers since those that usually do this were otherwise occupied. We kept pouring unit after unit into him but he was losing it as quickly as we were able to get it in. The trauma surgeon and the vascular surgeon cracked his chest and started going after his injuries to try to stop the hemorrhaging. His heart stopped a number of times. The trauma surgeon held his heart and kept squeezing to aid in circulation while the anesthesiologists were infusing the medications needed to restart the heart. The two unit commanders were right there voicing their support and praying as they were watching the team. Two major injuries were found in the carotid and subclavian artery but too much damage had been done too much blood had been lost, and too much time had passed before his injuries could be repaired. We went through 45 units of blood. His heart stopped 7 times and we were able to restart it 6 times. When it became clear that we would not win this battle and that this young sergeant had gone into that good night, we turned off the machines and monitors, the chaplain stepped forward, and the unit commanders, nurses and doctors closed into a circle and we asked for the Lord's mercy on his soul and for God's peace with the family that will soon find out what we already know. This hero paid the ultimate price while doing his country's bidding.

I walked out onto the hospital roof which has been my refuge after such cases. I usually stay closer to some cover because I don't want to give snipers any target practice but this time I went over to hang over the rail looking down into the parking lot/patient receiving area. This is where the men usually gather to wait for news on what happened to their buddies (we don't have a waiting room). I will never forget what I saw there. For the strength of the emotion but also because I have seen it now too many times.

About 30 soldiers hanging out in various groups, some talking, some joking, some smoking, some tossing a football, some catching a few winks, but just doing what waiting soldier do. LTC T (their commander) walked out to the group who immediately jumped up and gathered around the boss. I couldn't hear what was said from the roof, but I knew that commander had a difficult message to deliver. I didn't have to hear the words, these warriors' actions said it all. Some just there motionless, some grabbed their buddies and just let the tears run down their dirt-stained faces, others unable to contain their anger, went to find a wall and began hitting it. The commander and sergeant major moved through their guys, reaching out to each one with a hug or supportive arm. Sometimes I can put all the damage and suffering behind me; my years in medicine have introduced me to death and in some ways I can detach myself. But to see this effect on his brothers in arms, transformed my previously detached self and turned on my humanity. In the ER and the OR, I can be the professional doctor, but on the roof, I become a human again. Under the cover of darkness I feel the pain of what I've seen.

Once the sergeant's body was prepared, his fellow soldiers came through and paid their last respects. This will always be the hardest part of my time here, to see these rough men break down at the sight of their fallen comrade. These leaders and subordinates file past their brother, touching him and paying their respects, shedding their tears, hugging their surviving brothers. Then in a most amazing display of professionalism, they wipe their tears, put on their gear, and walk out of the hospital back to their unit and start their patrols all over again.

So the Sergeant Major asks how can we go without sleep and how can we operate for hours at a time. After seeing the heart of his soldiers, how can we not?."

Posted by HongPong at [05:49 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Iraq](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [War on Terror](#)

February 14, 2006

Spinstorms as military Information Operations; A Pixeldusted character; HongPong.com traffic ok; a call for more Operators

...I just dropped in to see what condition my condition was in...

My condition is: *Lots of Wisdom Tooth Vicodin + I hate Valentines Day.* I have been laying low and taking Vicodin after my wisdom teeth operation on Wednesday. That's five straight days of codeine, and my moods are kind of weird and raw by this point.

Introducing:

From the depths of the Intarweb comes a shadowy character known only as Pixeldusted. S/He works in the shadows, interacting with the most arcane and mysterious parts of a vast and sprawling industrial complex.

Well sort of. I'll leave it to Dusty to explain. Pixeldusted is not a fictional character, though of course, in the current climate of **Information Operations**, a reader cannot assume such things.

So currently our stable of contributors includes:

- Chairman Mao - providing esoteric artwork and statements of pining (yet currently fulfilled) love
- Mordred - a bristling rebuke of pretty much everything
- Pixeldusted - unknown factor
- HongPong - the caretaker of this strange and erratic endeavor.

And that's about it. Any of our regular visitors (and irregular confused lookers-on) are invited to contact me at NOdan.feidtSPAM@gmail.com if they would like to get an account here. I am trying to expand the operation a bit here. I have the inklings of long-term plan to design a better site. I would like to get friends contributing. There are no real hard and fast rules about it, because I don't really care that much. But I know a lot of smart people that could add some stuff.

So along with this polite general invitation to the visiting public, please keep *my heavy recent course of painkillers* in mind when reading the rest of this post.

Because yes, the structure of the site is antiquated and needs to be replaced. The HongWiki is probably not long for this world -- I look towards a better Content Management System setup like WordPress. In my day job,

I am designing a new site for [Politics in Minnesota's](#) campaign coverage. Once that is done, I will actually have a very useful template for a new HongPong.com. Sweet.

I looked at my web server logs for the first time in a while, and it turns out that well, things are going pretty well on the site. We are averaging **744 visits a day in February**, of which I would estimate that 30% are spammers and 30% are search engines, but that's a rough estimate.

Here are the most popular search phrases of the last 13 days: (hits, then percentages)

- good day commander 100 14.5 %
- helicopter video 23 3.3 %
- mohammad bombhead 13 1.8 %
- good day commander email 10 1.4 %
- good day commander spam 6 0.8 %
- mig for sale 4 0.5 %
- mohammed bombhead cartoon 3 0.4 %
- mohamed bombhead cartoon 3 0.4 %
- rice-army helicopter pilot 3 0.4 %
- the minnesota archives of the 1900 s 3 0.4 %
- muhammed bombhead 3 0.4 %
- mohammad bombhead cartoon 3 0.4 %
- just another freak in the freak kingdom 3 0.4 %
- apocalypto subliminal 3 0.4 %
- good day commander e-mail 3 0.4 %
- adalet funny sites 3 0.4 %
- bombhead mohammad 3 0.4 %
- insurgent videos 3 0.4 %
- helicopter kills video 2 0.2 %
- mohammad cartoon bombhead 2 0.2 %
- filetype ppt war iran iraq site mil 1 0.1 %
- bombhead cartoon pictures insult islam 1 0.1 %
- said silakhori 1 0.1 %
- cartoon bombhead mohammed islam 1 0.1 %
- matt norman macalester 1 0.1 %
- var partition destroyed gentoo 1 0.1 %
- world oil crisis gotcha 1 0.1 %
- riot weapons 1 0.1 %
- groupsex movie 1 0.1 %
- mamoon s falafel 1 0.1 %

And i don't even have the damn cartoons. Or a Mamoon falafel. Last month's search phrases were sort of funny:

- helicopter video 57 5.9 %

- jonathon sharkey 17 1.7 %
- insurgent videos 13 1.3 %
- insurgent video 10 1 %
- hippo eats dwarf 7 0.7 %
- dave chappelle conspiracy 7 0.7 %
- good day commander 7 0.7 %
- videos of people being killed 6 0.6 %
- photoshop spoofs 6 0.6 %
- hongpong thomas harens 6 0.6 %
- aethlos 5 0.5 %
- cytherea free 5 0.5 %
- mig for sale 5 0.5 %
- sherman.state.gov 5 0.5 %
- police photography 5 0.5 %
- apocalypto subliminal 4 0.4 %
- dead amendments 4 0.4 %
- jonathon the impaler sharkey 4 0.4 %
- cytherea 1 0.1 %
- mel gibson subliminal frame apocalypto 1 0.1 %
- gentoo 6100 1 0.1 %
- neo-cons 1 0.1 %
- spooks leptin report 1 0.1 %
- lineage 2 which composite armor recipe 1 0.1 %
- amadeus pegasus watchtower 1 0.1 %

"Amadeus Pegasus Watchtower" being the supposed three names of the CIA programs bringing cocaine into the United States, which [Ruppert claimed to uncover](#) (as we [noted earlier](#)). HongPong.com is now like #5 for that on Google.

[U.S. Concludes 'Cyber Storm' Mock Attacks](#) By TED BRIDIS
The Associated Press / Friday, February 10, 2006; 8:37 PM

WASHINGTON -- The government concluded its "Cyber Storm" wargame Friday, its biggest-ever exercise to test how it would respond to **devastating attacks over the Internet from anti-globalization activists, underground hackers and bloggers.**

Bloggers?

Participants confirmed parts of the worldwide simulation challenged government officials and industry executives to respond to **deliberate misinformation campaigns and activist calls** by Internet bloggers, online diarists whose "Web logs" include political rantings and musings about current events.[.....]

There was no impact on the real Internet during the weeklong exercise. Government officials from the United States, Canada, Australia and England and executives from **Microsoft, Cisco, Verisign** and others said they were careful to simulate attacks only using isolated computers, working from basement offices at the Secret Services headquarters in downtown Washington.

[.....]Homeland Security coordinated the exercise. More than 115 government agencies, companies and organizations participated. They included the **White House National Security Council, Justice Department, Defense Department, State Department, National Security Agency and CIA,**

which conducted its own cybersecurity exercise called "Silent Horizon" last May.

An earlier cyberterrorism exercise called "Livewire" for Homeland Security and other federal agencies concluded there were serious questions over government's role during a cyberattack depending on who was identified as the culprit _ terrorists, a foreign government or bored teenagers.

It also questioned whether the U.S. government would be able to detect the early stages of such an attack without significant help from **private technology companies**. [*I sense a Blackwater Offensive Hacking contract in the works -Dan*]

Please recall the "Fight the Net" Defense Department concept in the "[Information Operations Roadmap](#)" (PDF) from [earlier](#). Let's add a [bit from the BBC](#):

A newly declassified document gives a fascinating glimpse into the US military's plans for "information operations" - from psychological operations, to attacks on hostile computer networks.

Bloggers beware.

As the world turns networked, the Pentagon is calculating the military opportunities that computer networks, wireless technologies and the modern media offer. From influencing public opinion through new media to designing "computer network attack" weapons, the US military is learning to fight an electronic war.

[.....]

The operations described in the document include a surprising range of military activities: **public affairs officers who brief journalists, psychological operations troops who try to manipulate the thoughts and beliefs of an enemy, computer network attack specialists who seek to destroy enemy networks.**

All these are engaged in information operations.

Perhaps the most startling aspect of the roadmap is its acknowledgement that information put out as part of the military's **psychological operations, or Psyops, is finding its way onto the computer and television screens of ordinary Americans.**

"Information intended for foreign audiences, including public diplomacy and Psyops, is increasingly consumed by our domestic audience," it reads. "Psyops messages will often be replayed by the news media for much larger audiences, including the American public," it goes on.

The document's authors acknowledge that American news media should not unwittingly broadcast military propaganda. "Specific boundaries should be established," they write. But they don't seem to explain how.

"In this day and age it is impossible to prevent stories that are fed abroad as part of psychological operations propaganda from blowing back into the United States - even though they were directed abroad," says Kristin Adair of the National Security Archive.

**So your own [American] brain is a target of military spending.
Accidentally.
Tax dollars >> Military-engineered thoughts.**

Now *that's* what I call a feedback loop of sinister proportions. As for this site, well, it got 57 hits from the military just so far this month.



Jane Cat had surgery to repair his hematoma on the same day as my Wisdom Teeth, and the feline is now kinda tired, and pretty dusty. Tragic that a cat gets dusty when it can't groom its face.

Here, through my hydrocodone haze, Jane Cat is grabbing onto "[Crossing the Rubicon](#)" by Michael Ruppert, the conspiratorial work of parapolitical mega-non-fiction leading up to "Cheney did 9/11". I had pulled out this

weird book because an old high school friend randomly stopped by today, and we talked about the likelihood that [Wellstone was assassinated](#).

Could he have been Done In?



"People have been killed for less," I said. And Ruppert has an extended conspiracy theory about the subject, included in his book and [featured](#) on FromTheWilderness.com (and [a followup](#)). I tend to favor the [electromagnetic pulse weapon](#) theory – which explains the cell phone anomalies in northern Minnesota that day.

(My photo from a peace march in St. Paul on March 23, 2003)

The leading book on the Wellstone assassination theory, though, is apparently [American Assassination](#) by Don Jacobs and Jim Fetzer, a U of M professor. From a review:

Since becoming active in this issue, local residents have contacted Dr. Fetzer and related strange electronic interference in the area at the time of the crash. One experienced an odd cell-phone phenomenon with a form of noise unlike any he had heard before.

Its auditory pattern appears consistent with the use of "electro-magnetic" (EM) weapons developed by the Pentagon to take out computerized systems and wreak harm on human targets. It was part of the plan to bring down the plane using kinds of weapons of which most Americans are unaware.

These weapons can disable radio communications, stall warning systems, course deviation indicator, and electrical switches controlling the pitch of the props, causing substantial loss of control. They can render persons unconscious, incapable of muscle control, or even bring about their death.

In the wake of the crash, **69% of Minnesotans blamed a "GOP conspiracy" for Wellstone's death.**

I want to know where that statistic came from.

I got an oil change today and the mechanic noted my Wellstone bumper sticker. "We were just talking the other day about how great he was," she said. "It's always brought me good luck," I said. "Never been pulled over as long as its been on there."

And it is worth noting again that Wellstone was the only Democratic Senator to vote against the war who faced election that November. His political "survival" — assured in polls just before the election — posed a grave threat to the rationale for war - the rational public of Minnesota threatened to upset the spectacle.

And then there was all that damn bad weather (or not). Wellstone was afraid of planes, that's why he had the bus. And he was once [sprayed with coca defoliant](#) in Colombia. Tangle with the Establishment's cocaine friends in the Global South, who even knows what trouble you'd get into...

Amadeus, Pegasus, Watchtower. Information Operations.

The Vice President shoots a man, and they cover it up for 22 hours just for shits and giggles.

Time for another Vicodin. Official candy of Valentine's Day 2006.

Posted by HongPong at [01:04 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [HongPong-site](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Minnesota](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [War on Terror](#)

February 02, 2006

Lieberman Sucks the Donkeyballs; 'Why We Fight'; Public photography & reducing oil. Or Not.



A quick tour of goodies mostly from DailyKos. Via [here](#) and [here](#), we discover that Joe Lieberman was the [first person in the whole damn building](#) to jump to his feet and applaud Bush's comments on Iraq. **What the fuck?** (the comic is mine - I need to offer something to match Jon tonight)

Stick up for photography in public places, it's your right: Australian

[snappers to defy police ban - NEWS.com.au](#). Via [Slashdot](#).

Why we spend \$400,000,000,000 EVERY YEAR: [Raimondo checks](#) out '[Why We Fight](#)', a really sweet sounding documentary about the Military Industrial Complex, starring Richard Perle and Billy Kristol, Karen "Hey I saw the Office of Special Plans" Kwiatkowski, good ol' Chalmers Johnson, McCain, and other stars of the heady days of 2003-2004 spoofed intelligence wars. Also talks about the pro-war thinktank matrix and how the military industrial complex spreads cash around many congressional districts, to keep on Going and Going. Good [old Eisenhower](#):

"This conjunction of an **immense military establishment and a large arms industry** is new in the American experience. The **total influence – economic, political, even spiritual** – is felt in every city, every state house, every office of the federal government. We recognize the imperative need for this development. Yet we must not fail to comprehend its grave implications. Our toil, resources, and livelihood are all involved; so is the very structure of our society.

"In the councils of government, we must guard against the **acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex**. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist."

Because pressing 'Delete' is not really the best way to exonerate your SMTP-based crimes against America: Fitzgerald thinks someone is [tampering with the White House email logs](#) pertaining to the Valerie Plame scandal. Well done guys.

CNN Money: [Visions of Future Google](#). Bankrupt, or the entire media, or else God & consciousness in your DNA. Why not?

Easy Cowboy:

[Administration backs off Bush's vow to reduce Mideast oil imports](#)

By Kevin G. Hall

Knight Ridder Newspapers

WASHINGTON - One day after President Bush vowed to reduce America's dependence on Middle East oil by cutting imports from there 75 percent by 2025, his energy secretary and national economic adviser said Wednesday that the president **didn't mean it literally**.

(Via [DailyKos](#)) Also [from](#) the Kos, in TX-22, [Tom DeLay just can't pull cash](#) like he used to:

Rep. Tom DeLay has just \$150,000 more in the bank than challenger Democrat Nick Lampson, the most recent election filings show.

DeLay's campaign committee reported having \$1.44 million on hand and Lampson's campaign \$1.29 million, according to year-end reports that were filed late Tuesday with the Federal Election Commission. The reports include all funds received up to Dec. 30, 2005, and also include a swing-for-the-fences fundraising dinner in Houston for DeLay with Vice President Dick Cheney on Dec. 5. DeLay's office called the fundraiser "the most successful of the congressman's career."

"In one night alone, the congressman took in more than \$500,000," said campaign spokeswoman Shannon Flaherty. "It was a very strong fourth quarter."

Keith [Olbermann rips apart Bill O'Reilly](#). And [Chris Matthews is still telling absolute horseshit](#) about Domestic Spying.

Augh I am bored of this hack shit but maybe someone cares. Thank you DailyKos.

Posted by HongPong at [12:12 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Iraq](#) , [Media](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [The White House](#) , [War on Terror](#)

January 30, 2006

Gear it up: Canadian conspiracy in Haiti, Hamas claims 1967 borders for truce; Iran chills & ills; October Surprise revisited; Global Guerrillas decidedly at hand

This post is spilling all over the place. I want to get this stuff out there for this week, which will surely be an interesting one for me personally, and probably the rest of the world as well.

Misc bits: Alternet sets up [The Echo Chamber to track what's cracking on the Left](#). Their website is set up really well. [BillMonk](#) will do all these mysterious things to split restaurant tabs for you and keep track of cash that people owe other people socially.

Because Spin can stop global warming: NY Times: [Climate Expert Says NASA Tried to Silence Him](#).

Vote for the [2006 Bloggies awards](#).

Time to Drink like there's no tomorrow: Dear Leader will have to explain himself on Tuesday then. Probably the usual batch of veiled threats towards Muslims and promises of eschatology-based improvements for the everyday nuclear family. [China is building a Tokamak fusion reactor](#) apparently. I wish we would have the guts to try stuff like that these days.

An important [internet advisory not to shave your ass hair](#).

Improbable visit: A Canadian-based Iranian named Hossein Derakhshan, of [Hoder.com](#), is on his way to [go see what's happening in Israel](#), cutting through all these layers of intrigue. Good for him.

Hillary's war pandering is sickening. [Raimondo is right](#). Sy Hersh is saying there are American [covert ops going on in Iran](#). Via DefenseTech.org, a really hilarious [discussion of nuclear targeting technology](#) that would hypothetically be involved in an insane first strike.

A return to Global Guerrilla theory and fourth generation warfare. I am not going to elaborate some complete 21st Century Clausewitzian

doctrine. But I will say that current American military doctrine is pathetically outdated, poorly led, and really doesn't even recognize its own roots in the guerilla tactics of the Revolutionary War (and [KTCA's sweet portrayal in Liberty! lately have reminded me](#) of this).

I think that [Global Guerrillas](#) is a site full of useful information, even though its love of buzzwordery gets a little annoying. There is a glaring need for a less stupid jargon around this whole field, and GG is good stab at the problem. Certainly the connection between the 'Open Source' model of software development, and the curious 'bazaar' of violent action in Iraq is really interesting. Consider "[The Bazaar of violence in Iraq](#)," "[The Bazaar's Open Source Platform](#)," "[Target: The Fallujah TAZ](#) [Temporary Autonomous Zone]," "[A Shadow OPEC](#)," "[Guerrilla Entrepreneurs](#)" (**especially**), "[Weak, failed and collapsed states](#)," "[Iraq's security system meltdown](#)" featuring swarming tactics, the "[Loyalist Paramilitaries](#)" option (which sucks), based on "[Primary Loyalties](#)," "[Homemade Microwave weapons](#)." Also useful: "[SWARM: Fuel and Oil Disruption in Iraq](#)." And the [Open Source War](#).

One really interesting tie-in from T.E. Lawrence "of Arabia" about the value of "[Partial vs. Complete System Disruption](#)." The lesson: Throwing monkey wrenches into the system is a better way to weaken the enemy than outright destruction, because attempting to restore a damaged system (or complete an impossible goal, i.e. 'democratizing Iraq') really saps the energy of the occupier over the long term. Lawrence and the Arabs hassled the Turks to pin them down without forcing a retreat, because if the Turks retreated from Arabia they would go fight the British farther north. Far better to harass them, tie them up in the desert, and still get freedom of movement, as they are distracted by defending their rail lines. **Sweet.**

And by the way, thanks also for "[AL QAEDA'S GRAND STRATEGY: SUPERPOWER BAITING](#)". Correct, sir.

I am opposed to fanatical visions of militaristic conquering, installing 'rule sets' and expecting some kind of 'global sys-admin force' to come in and generate compliant countries. What the hell am I talking about? Thomas Barnett's vision of *The Pentagon's New Map*, which I read and it scared the shit out of me. William Lind, a paleoconservative expert of fourth-generation warfare, [explains why this is a hellish idea](#).

Yet I fear that the USAID/IRI/NED are the sort of evolving foreign policy complex that wants to do just this crazy kind of shit. What? Where? Look at Haiti to see Barnett's vision in action, I would say.

Suspicious actions in Haiti: I don't really know what the hell is happening in Haiti, but it seems shady, and it seems that sketchy international

organizations like the International Republican Institute, some bizarre shadow branch of the United Nations called the United Nations Office for Project Services, USAID and others are attempting to cement the rule of mean anglicized elites in Haiti right now.

According to Anthony Fenton, a Canadian independent journalist, on Democracy Now! [there was a conspiracy between the U.S., Canadian officials and others to depose Aristide](#). And apparently an Associated Press writer was on the take with the National Endowment for Democracy, a sketchy as hell organization. Check out that interview for some serious insanity.

Also check out [InTheNameofDemocracy.org](#) which is a new group monitoring the global shadow groups like NED, IRI and USAID's various tentacles.

There is a broad outline here of these huge organizations having funds channeled into them from the CIA, State Department and nasty corporations. Basically, it looks like a spinning sawblade of Washington-consensus foreign policy, managing the little countries under a new Monroe Doctrine. Right-wing Cubans are involved. There was a really complex yet [enlightening article in the NY Times Sunday about how the IRI is sort of a shadow government](#)-forming thing that essentially helped get Aristide deposed.



To analyze how far the Iranian Bomb is along, check out these posts at ArmsControlWonk.com, very good. [How Close is Iran? Part 2: The Missiles](#). Shorter: Don't Panic.

Lurking Koppel: Ted Koppel, of all people, pops up to make some [salient points about the horrible dynamics of TV news](#) in the NY

Times:

Most particularly on cable news, a calculated subjectivity has, indeed, displaced the old-fashioned goal of conveying the news dispassionately. But that, too, has less to do with partisan politics than simple capitalism. Thus, one cable network experiments with the subjectivity of tender engagement: "I care and therefore you should care." Another opts for chest-thumping certitude: "I know and therefore you should care."

Even Fox News's product has less to do with ideology and more to do with changing business models. Fox has succeeded financially because it tapped into a deep, rich vein of unfulfilled yearning among conservative American television viewers, but it created programming to satisfy the market, not the other way around. CNN, meanwhile, finds itself largely outmaneuvered, unwilling to accept the label of liberal alternative, experimenting instead with a form of journalism that stresses empathy over detachment.

It's worth looking back to January 20, 1980 for a moment, when the election of Ronald Reagan somehow transformed itself into the release of the

Iranian hostages. "You could see then that the fix was in, somehow," as someone older than me once put it. So was there an "October Surprise" arrangement that brought this about, a secret conspiracy between Reagan's political campaign, and the newly arrived radicals in Tehran? Well, Robert Perry says that there was a conspiracy, and he's been kicking around this one for a while. (*And guess what, I bet Iran will do something exciting this October, too*)

[The Imperium's Quarter Century](#) By Robert Parry. January 20, 2006

If there is a birth date for today's American Imperium, it would be Jan. 20, 1981, exactly a quarter century ago, when Ronald Reagan was sworn in as President and Iran released 52 American hostages under circumstances that remain a mystery to this day.

The freedom of the hostages, ending a 444-day crisis, **brought forth an outpouring of patriotism** that bathed the new President in an **aura of heroism as a leader** so feared by America's enemies that they scrambled to avoid angering him. It was viewed as a case study of how U.S. toughness could restore the proper international order.

That night, as fireworks lit the skies of Washington, the celebration was not only for a new President and for the freed hostages, but **for a new era in which American power would no longer be mocked**. That momentum continues today in George W. Bush's "preemptive" wars and the imperial boasts about a "New American Century."

.....What's now known about the Iranian hostage crisis suggests that the "coincidence" of the Reagan Inauguration and the Hostage Release was not a case of frightened Iranians cowering before a U.S. President who might just nuke Tehran.

The preponderance of evidence suggests that it was a prearranged deal between the Republicans and the Iranians. The Republicans got the hostages and the political bounce; Iran's Islamic fundamentalists got a secret supply of weapons and various other payoffs.

Though the full history remains a state secret – **in part because of an executive order signed by George W. Bush on his first day in office in 2001 – it appears Republicans did contact Iran's mullahs during the 1980 campaign; agreements were reached; and a clandestine flow of U.S. weapons followed the hostage release.**

Impending death of the Petrodollar: Nowadays [Iran is planning to open an oil exchange market priced in euros](#), not dollars. This is a really big deal that makes up a major undercurrent driving all the current hostilities. This Iranian 'bourse' would be a huge blow to the stability of the U.S. dollar. It will prove really hilarious to the Russians and others to sit back and watch as America flails around trying to defend the almighty Petrodollar. This is the kind of stuff that gives Dick Cheney the cold sweats. Really a big deal, and there's a lot more to be said on it.

Iran continues its strange and menacing manipulation of Holocaust symbols with new claims that "[Iran mission to UN: More study needed to prove Nazi Holocaust](#)". Meanwhile the neo-cons and alumni of Iran-Contra

today hail Ahmadinejad as a really great guy for them: [The Demagogue Neocons Love to Hate](#) By Jim Lobe:

"Let us state the obvious," wrote Reuel Marc Gerecht, the resident Gulf specialist at the neoconservative American Enterprise Institute in the Weekly Standard's feature article Monday. "**The new president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, is a godsend.**"

"Thank goodness for Mahmoud Ahmadinejad," wrote Ilan Berman, the neoconservative author of a hawkish new book, *Tehran Rising: Iran's Challenge to the United States*, in the National Review Online last week.

.....Ahmadinejad's declarations, which are seen by many experts here as related at least as much to his domestic political strategy as to his foreign policy worldview, have not only been manna from heaven for neoconservatives, who have long had Tehran in their gun sights.

.....That the administration, which promulgated and then implemented a doctrine of preventive war against presumed enemies allegedly bent on acquiring weapons of mass destruction, should come under attack from all these sources [AIPAC etc] for excessive passivity is ironic. But it is also testimony to the degree that it has been forced by its Iraq adventure to adopt what can only be described—to the disgust of the neoconservatives, in particular—as both a new humility and a new realism with regard to Tehran.

A nugget of wisdom from *The Agonist* about [how Iran works in Central Asia](#). We need to get off the crackhead rhythm of the 24-hour news cycle and look at this in terms of centuries.

Iranians making a play for their own back-yard? At least, that's what I take away from this [pretty good article in the Washington Post](#) about Central Asia. The author of the piece, Nick Schmidle writes:

[T]he Iranians hope that big-money investments in the region, coupled with a successful nuclear fuel cycle, will elevate their status in the Muslim world.

One thing you have to keep in mind about the history of Iran in Central Asia is this: since the 6th century BC [when Cyrus crossed the Oxus to subdue Queen Tomyris and the Massagetae](#) the Persians have been fixated on influencing and stabilizing the lands to their immediate north. Only twice in Persia's three millenia of history have they been overrun from the West (Alexander and the Arabs). All the others came from the East and North (Mongols, Hephthalites, Turks, Uzbeks, Russians).



Kadima & The Alon Plan vs. HAMAS & 1967 Borders??:

The Allon or 'Alon' Plan was the 1967 scheme to annex a big swath of the West Bank. The dimensions are roughly laid out in [this map from IsraeliPalestinianProCon.org](#). Now, apparently HAMAS is advocating the full 1967 borders as a basis for a truce. We will see how horrible the U.S. media makes such an

argument sound.

Ariel Sharon's basic strategy was to solidify the Allon Plan and make it palatable to the American public, or at least get Congress to swallow it.

Hamas hints at truce in return for '67 borders

By Arnon Regular, Haaretz Correspondent and Haaretz Service

A long-term truce (hudna) with Israel is possible if Israel retreats to its pre-1967 borders and releases Palestinian prisoners, Hamas leader Mahmoud Zahar told CNN on Monday.

"We can expect to establish our independent state on the area before '67 and we can give a long-term hudna," Zahar told CNN's Wolf Blitzer.

Zahar laid out a series of conditions that he said could lead to years of co-existence alongside Israel. He said that if Israel **"is ready to give us the national demand to withdraw from the occupied area [in] '67; to release our detainees; to stop their aggression; to make geographic link between Gaza Strip and West Bank,** at that time, with assurance from other sides, we are going to accept to establish our independent state at that time, and give us one or two, 10, 15 years time in order to see what is the real intention of Israel after that."

Asked about Hamas' call for Israel's destruction, Zahar would not say whether that remains the goal. "We are not speaking about the future, we are speaking now," he said. Zahar argued that **Israel has no true intention of accepting a Palestinian state,** despite international agreements including the Road Map for Middle East peace.

Until Israel says what its final borders will be, Hamas will not say whether it will ever recognize Israel, Zahar said. "If Israel is ready to tell the people what is the official border, after that we are going to answer this question." Asked whether Hamas would renounce terrorism, Zahar argued that **the definition of terrorism is unfair.**

Israel is "killing people and children and removing our agricultural system -- this is terrorism," he said. "When the Americans [are] attacking the Arabic and Islamic world whether in Afghanistan and Iraq and they are playing a dirty game in Lebanon, this is terrorism." He described Hamas as a "liberating movement."

.....Hamas will not oppose Palestinian Authority Chairman Mahmoud Abbas if the latter decides to negotiate with Israel, the deputy head of Hamas' political bureau, Musa Abu-Marzouk, said Sunday.

Ok then, those are promising signs from a shadowy group (a pretty [good history](#) from MidEastWeb) that is suddenly blinking in the limelight. Not sure what the hell it means, but I don't know if they do either.

Lots of things are happening. Former CIA dude [Pat Lang reacts to the election](#) with typical CIA sarcasm. [Hamas leader: 'Palestinian army' possible.](#) Haaretz: [Umm Mohammed talks politics](#) By Amira Hass, "[Hamas deputy says resistance to 'occupation' will continue](#)". "[Turning from Terror / A Green Dawn is on the rise.](#)" "[Hamas' next step / In search of a united force](#)".

The Observer | Focus | The Hamas revolution:

'East Jerusalem,' he intoned dryly from the podium, 'six seats.' And with each successful candidate he named, he listed their party. 'Change and Reform,' he read out first, the banner under which Hamas, an organisation better known for its dozens of suicide attacks against Israel, was standing. And again: 'Change and Reform'. And yet again. Four times out of six.

He turned to Hebron, a clean nine-seat sweep for Hamas. So he continued through Nablus, North Gaza, Tulkarm, Jenin and Gaza City. Even the largely Christian area of Bethlehem saw two of its four seats fall to Hamas. Among the Gaza winners was Um Nidal, also called Mariam Farah, a gun-toting woman known as the 'Mother of Martyrs' who ordered three of her sons to their deaths as suicide bombers.

As Hanna Nasser spoke, mentally the crowded room coloured in a map of Gaza and the West Bank, from the flat and crowded slums of Gaza's Khan Younis to the hilly cities of the West Bank, painting it in Hamas green. Only wild and dangerous Rafah at Gaza's southern tip voted unanimously for the old order.

With each result history was gyrating more wildly about the auditorium with its stone-faced electoral commission members sitting bleakly in a row. Everything had been transformed.

Observations from [Gilbert Achear on JuanCole.com](#):

4. The irresistible rise of Ariel Sharon to the helm of the Israeli state resulted from his September 2000 provocation that ignited the "Second Intifada" -- an uprising that because of its militarization lacked the most positive features of the popular dynamics of the first Intifada. A PA that, by its very nature, could definitely not rely on mass self-organization and chose the only way of struggle it was familiar with, fostered this militarization. Sharon's rise was also a product of the dead-end reached by the Oslo process: the clash between ***the Zionist interpretation of the Oslo frame -- an updated version of the 1967 "Alon Plan" by which Israel would relinquish the populated areas of the 1967 occupied territories to an Arab administration, while keeping colonized and militarized strategic chunks*** -- and the PA's minimal requirements of recovering all, or nearly all the territories occupied in 1967, without which it knew it would lose its remaining clout with the Palestinian population. The electoral victory of war criminal Ariel Sharon in February 2001 -- an event as much "shocking" as the electoral victory of Hamas, at the very least -- inevitably reinforced the Islamic fundamentalist movement, **his counterpart in terms of radicalization of stance against the backdrop of a still-born historic compromise.** All of this was greatly propelled, of course, by the (very resistible, but unresisted) accession to power of George W. Bush, and the unleashing of his wildest imperial ambitions thanks to the attacks on September 11, 2001.

5. Ariel Sharon played skillfully on the dialectics between himself and his Palestinian true opposite number, Hamas. His calculation was simple: in order to be able to carry through unilaterally his own hard-line version of the Zionist interpretation of a "settlement" with the Palestinians, he needed two conditions: a) to minimize international pressure upon him -- or rather U.S. pressure, the only one that really matters to Israel; and b) to demonstrate that there is no Palestinian leadership with which Israel could "do business." ***For this, he needed to emphasize the weakness and unreliability of the PA by fanning the expansion of the Islamic fundamentalist movement, knowing that the latter was anathema to the Western states.*** Thus every time there was some kind of truce, negotiated by the PA with the Islamic organizations, Sharon's government would resort to an "extrajudicial execution" -- in plain language, an assassination -- in order to provoke **these organizations into retaliation** by the means they specialized in: suicide attacks, their "F-16s" as they say. This had the double advantage of stressing the PA inability to control the Palestinian population, and enhancing Sharon's own popularity in Israel. The truth of the matter is that the **electoral victory of Hamas is the outcome that Sharon's strategy was very obviously seeking**, as many astute observers did not fail to point out.

Haaretz has lots to mull over. I think "hostile rabble" is a tad racist, but that's what appears to be on their minds right now. [Analysis: Wave of democracy pits Israel against 'Arab street'](#):

By Aluf Benn, Haaretz Correspondent

The Palestinian Authority election marks the beginning of a new period in the region that could be termed "the era of the masses." Henceforth Israel will have to factor into its foreign policy something it has always ignored - Arab public opinion.

Israel has always based its regional policy on arrangements and terror-balances with the Arab dictators. They understood force and Israel could do business with them. Their authority was seen as a barrier protecting Israel from the rage of the hostile rabble in the "Arab street." That was the basis of the peace agreements with Egypt and Jordan, Yasser Arafat and his heirs and the game rules vis-a-vis Syria and Lebanon.

But those days are over. **The democratization process that U.S. President George Bush has triggered and the open debate promoted by Arab satellite networks are causing the old frameworks to crumble. The mass demonstrations that led to the Syrians being driven from Lebanon, the elections in Iraq and those in the territories are merely the beginning. As far as Israel is concerned, the worst stage will come when the democratic wave washes over Jordan, its strategic ally;** Egypt with its modern army and F-16 squadrons, and Syria and its Scud and chemical warhead stores.

The mess continues. Shadowy times ahead.

Posted by HongPong at [12:19 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Iraq](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Security](#) , [War on Terror](#)
January 19, 2006

Osama bin Laden statement of January 19

The latest tape was released today. This would appear to cast pretty strong doubts on Michael Ledeen's [recent claim](#) that some wise and trustworthy Iranians [claimed he was dead](#). Wouldn't be the first time that some [Iranians manipulated a neocon for their own purposes](#) (such as overthrowing Saddam). But oh well. Here is Bin Laden's complete statement, as offered by the Associated Press.

It is instructive that on CNN they don't talk about bin Laden's comments about the American military industrial complex and its 'merchants of war', the 'patient' strategy against the Soviet Union, the polls that show wide American skepticism about the war, but of course, only highlighting threats on the American homeland if the occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq are not cancelled.

Bin Laden is surprisingly forthright about his general strategies, and this one is no exception. He is certainly an expert in the [paradigm of fourth-generation warfare](#); right now, the United States seeks tactical victories while defeating itself on the moral plane. Bin Laden is making moral arguments directly to the American public about how the subjugation of Muslims will ultimately prove self-defeating. And tellingly, as always, the media does not report or contextualize pretty much anything about this.

For all the big talk, it is amazing that no one really reads his full statements, which make much more clear the al Qaeda strategy. (Qaeda is Arabic for 'base,' by the way)

It should be noted that bin Laden uses a sort of antiquated dialect of Arabic, so surely there will be some dispute over the translation of key phrases. Nonetheless, bin Laden's many previous public pronouncements have proven to be rather direct and useful explanations of his general strategy.

Background:

- [Pre-election statement](#), nov. 1 2004.
- BBC: claiming credit for WTC attacks on [7 October 2001](#)
- [3 November 2001](#).
- [Text of Fatwah Urging Jihad Against Americans](#): Febuary 23, 1998.
- Here is an [index of many Bin Laden statements](#) from RobertFisk.com.
- More [al Qaeda primary sources](#) from the Federation of American Scientists.

No one should talk about Al Qaeda without understanding their concept of the [near enemy \(local apostate regimes of the mideast\) and the far enemy \(that props them up - the U.S.\)](#).

Associated Press: [Update 1: Full Text of Bin Laden Tape - at Forbes.com](#):

The following is the full text of a new audiotape from al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden. Parts of the tape were aired on Al-Jazeera television, which published the entire version on its Web site. The text was translated from the Arabic by The Associated Press.

Bin Laden appears to be addressing the American people:

My message to you is about the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and how to end them. I did not intend to speak to you about this because this issue has already been decided. Only metal breaks metal, and our situation, thank God, is only getting better and better, while your situation is the opposite of that.

But I plan to speak about the repeated errors your President Bush has committed in comments on the results of your polls that show an overwhelming majority of you want the withdrawal of American troops from Iraq. But he (Bush) has opposed this wish and said that withdrawing troops sends the wrong message to opponents, that it is better to fight them (bin Laden's followers) on their land than their fighting us (Americans) on our land.

I can reply to these errors by saying **that war in Iraq is raging with no let-up, and operations in Afghanistan are escalating in our favor**, thank God, and Pentagon figures show the number of your dead and wounded is increasing not to mention the massive material losses, the destruction of the soldiers' morale there and the rise in cases of suicide among them. So you can imagine the state of psychological breakdown that afflicts a soldier as he gathers the remains of his colleagues after they stepped on land mines that tore them apart. After this situation the soldier is caught between two hard options. He either refuses to leave his military camp on patrols and is therefore dogged by ruthless punishments enacted by the Vietnam Butcher (U.S. army) or he gets destroyed by the mines. **This puts him under psychological pressure, fear and humiliation while his nation is ignorant of that (what is going on)**. The soldier has no solution except to commit suicide. That is a

strong message to you, written by his soul, blood and pain, to save what can be saved from this hell. The solution is in your hands if you care about them (the soldiers).

The news of our brother mujahideen (holy warriors) is different from what the Pentagon publishes. They (the news of mujahideen) and what the media report is the truth of what is happening on the ground. And what deepens the doubt over the White House's information is the fact that **it targets the media reporting the truth from the ground**. And it has appeared lately, supported by documents, that **the butcher of freedom in the world (Bush) had decided to bomb the headquarters of the Al-Jazeera in Qatar after bombing its offices in Kabul and Baghdad**.

On another issue, jihad (holy war) is ongoing, thank God, despite all the oppressive measures adopted by the U.S Army and its agents (which is) to a point where there is no difference between this criminality and Saddam's criminality, as it has reached the degree of raping women and taking them as hostages instead of their husbands.

As for torturing men, they have used burning chemical acids and drills on their joints. And when they give up on (interrogating) them, they sometimes use the drills on their heads until they die. **Read, if you will, the reports of the horrors in Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo prisons**.

And I say that, despite all the barbaric methods, they have not broken the fierceness of the resistance. **The mujahideen, thank God, are increasing in number and strength - so much so that reports point to the ultimate failure and defeat of the unlucky quartet of Bush, Cheney, Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz. Declaring this defeat is just a matter of time, depending partly on how much the American people know of the size of this tragedy. The sensible people realize that Bush does not have a plan to make his alleged victory in Iraq come true.**

And if you compare the small number of dead on the day that Bush announced the end of major operations in that **fake, ridiculous show aboard the aircraft carrier** with the tenfold number of dead and wounded who were killed in the smaller operations, you would know the truth of what I say. **This is that Bush and his administration do not have the will or the ability to get out of Iraq for their own private, suspect reasons.**

And so to return to the issue, **I say that results of polls please those who are sensible, and Bush's opposition to them is a mistake**. The reality shows that the war against America and its allies has not been limited to Iraq as he (Bush) claims. **Iraq has become a point of attraction and restorer of (our) energies**. At the same time, the mujahideen (holy warriors), with God's grace, have managed repeatedly to penetrate all security measures adopted by the unjust allied countries. The proof of that is the explosions you have seen in the capitals of the European nations who are in this aggressive coalition. **The delay in similar operations happening in America has not been because of failure to break through your security measures**. The operations are under preparation and you will see them in your homes the minute they are through (with preparations), with God's permission.

Based on what has been said, this shows the errors of Bush's statement - the one that slipped from him - which is at the heart of polls calling for withdrawing the troops. **It is better that we (Americans) don't fight Muslims on their lands and that they don't fight us on ours**.

We don't mind offering you a long-term truce on fair conditions that we adhere to. We are a nation that God has forbidden to lie and cheat. **So both sides can enjoy security and stability under this truce so we can build Iraq and Afghanistan, which have been destroyed in this war. There is no shame in this solution, which prevents the wasting of billions of dollars that have gone to those with influence and merchants of war in America who have supported Bush's election campaign with billions of dollars** - which lets us understand the insistence by Bush and his gang to carry on with war. *[sounds like Eisenhower attacking the military industrial complex! -Dan]*

If you (Americans) are sincere in your desire for peace and security, we have answered you. And if Bush decides to carry on with his lies and oppression, then it would be useful for you to read the book "Rogue State," which states in its introduction: "If I were president, I would stop the attacks on the United States: First I would give an apology to all the widows and orphans and those who were tortured. Then I would announce that American interference in the nations of the world has ended once and for all."

Finally, I say that war will go either in our favor or yours. If it is the former, it means your loss and your shame forever, and it is headed in this course. If it is the latter, read history! We are people who do not stand for injustice and **we will seek revenge all our lives**. The nights and days will not pass without us taking vengeance like on Sept. 11, God permitting. **Your minds will be troubled and your lives embittered. As for us, we have nothing to lose. A swimmer in the ocean does not fear the rain. You have occupied our lands, offended our honor and dignity and let out our blood and stolen our money and destroyed our houses and played with our security and we will give you the same treatment.**

You have tried to prevent us from leading a dignified life, but you will not be able to prevent us from a dignified death. Failing to carry out jihad, which is called for in our religion, is a sin. **The best death to us is under the shadows of swords. Don't let your strength and modern arms fool you. They win a few battles but lose the war. Patience and steadfastness are much better. We were patient in fighting the Soviet Union with simple weapons for 10 years and we bled their economy and now they are nothing.**

In that there is a lesson for you.

Afghans also defeated the British Empire twice in the 1800s. Surprised he forgot to throw that in.

Posted by HongPong at 06:11 PM | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Afghanistan](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Security](#) , [War on Terror](#)

January 13, 2006

Secret LSD military projects; Why are conservatives so afraid? Agonist reflects on Iran



TheMemoryHole.org: [LSD Reports From the US Military](#), mostly from back in the 1950s. Totally for real. I was delighted to hear that [Albert Hofmann](#), the Swiss chemist who inadvertently [created Lysergic Acid Diethyl-Amide](#), celebrated his [100th birthday](#) this week. Thanks, Albert! You are cooler than all the Beat poets combined! (I just had this vision of a giant Allen Ginsberg robot stomping around Tokyo. I've got to lay off these magic droplets!)

We'll have lots more later today, but this batch of goodies should entertain until later.

[Why are conservatives so afraid?](#) by Kos. (But is [Kos a coward?](#)) [Damn right, Digby:](#)

This idea that we are living in a unique time that calls for special measures is **what they always say**. (And this current fantasy about the unique threat that proved our oceans couldn't protect us is

particularly rich considering they fearmongered a communist threat of total annihilation for decades.) Often cooler heads are able to quell the worst excesses (like the fervent belief that we needed to launch a tactical nuclear war against the commies) and satisfy **the right wing's other ongoing paranoid fantasy --- the left as a fifth column** --- with silly, wasteful surveillance of animal rights groups or Quakers or former Beatles (along with *pernicious surveillance of their partisan opponents*.)

They are rhinestone cowboys who are scared to death and don't know how to contain their fear. **So they lash out at their domestic political enemies, who they can bluster about and pretend to be tough**, while hiding behind the military uniforms of their Big Brother and Prezmit Daddy (which is a real stretch when it comes to Junior.)

The fact that they continue to win elections as being the tough guys perhaps says more about our puerile culture than anything else. They lash out like frightened children and too many people see that as courage or resolve.

Violent Islamic fundamentalism is a serious problem, not an existential threat. And it's a difficult problem that requires **adults who can keep their heads about them when the terrorists put on their scary show**, not big-for-their-age eight year olds staging a temper tantrum.

[War and Piece](#) rocks for your Washington 'defense' and neocon tidbits. Laura Rozen 'gets it.'

MediaMatters video: [Olbermann awards "Worst Person" honors to Gibson for his religious "intolerance"; Coulter named runner-up for "Nazi block watchers" comment.](#)

Parapolitics, from those calm people at PrisonPlanet: [Spooky AOL Ad Says Big Brother Is Watching the Internet](#). At this site, AOL is essentially trying to [scare people off the Internet](#)? A few other PP posts, some from other sources: Doug Thompson, Capitol Hill Blue: [A President at war with America](#). Local paper reports that Canadian [Army to occupy downtown Winnipeg](#) as part of a drill. [The Decline of the American Empire](#) and the ever-popular 9/11 intrigue thread, [Silverstein Answers WTC Building 7 Charges](#), are by PP writers. Around and around it goes.

From the similar SIANews.com, a division of LibertyThink, [MySpace.com: Rupert Murdoch's New Takeover/IP-invasion Project](#) and [Michael Berg Changes Story About Nick & Moussaoui](#). I think it is funny that this one dude, Michael P. Wright of Norman Oklahoma, is on a crusade to prove whatever the hell happened with Nick Berg - and the fact that Zacharias Moussaoui somehow had Berg's computer password is one of the weirdest 9/11 anomalies out there. Seriously, my best of luck to him, but whatever happened seems to have been covered up quite thoroughly.

The DeLay Babylon Project: WaPo: [The DeLay-Abramoff Money Trail. Case Bringing New Scrutiny To a System and a Profession. Think Progress » Abramoff: The House That Jack Built.](#)

Even [David Brooks rips GOP over Abramoff and sleaze](#). Oh Bobo, where's the love?

Followup on Sibel Edmonds: Edmonds has evidently told the blogger at 'Wot Is It Good 4' that he's brought together many Sibel-approved nuggets of info/conspiracy. So let's list: [sibel and feith and perle?](#), [Outing Plame? or Outing Brewster Jennings?](#) and of course [sibel edmonds, brewster jennings, edelman and grossman](#). I'll have some more on this later.

[Secret Pentagon Study: Armor Problems Have Killed Many](#). Sounds like whoever wrote that thing is about to get fired and find a horse head in their bed.

Some goodies from the Agonist: More on Iran [attack plans](#), [Iran and deterrence](#), and the [Persian difference](#). Stirling Newberry [comments on the GWOT for the Agonist](#). Makes a lot of sense:

...the creation of intelligence product has demonstrably been compromised, this is what Afterdowningstreet shows, what Daschle's comments on the information that Bush gave, and didn't on spygate shows, and what the constant flow of rosy scenario Iraq reconstruction reports show. Computer people have a phrase "GIGO" for "Garbage In, Garbage Out", but there is also the "filter effect", where a program or mathematical operation **yields the same result no matter what is put in**.

With a lumpenexecutive at the top, and a corruption of the synthesis process, all the high sounding organizational ideas are not worth anything. Further more, if there were a serious drive to integrate information, then people such as Crowley [*Rowley? -Hongpong*] - who wrote one of the two "gun shot residue" memos on the possibility of terrorists learning how to fly planes - would be promoted, not exiled, and the people who have overseen the failure to find the Anthrax attacker or forsee 9/11 would not have been promoted to the top of the counter-terrorism chain. **An agency run by screw ups, is going to screw up. An agency managed by kiss ups, is going to spend its time managing up, not down.**

Also he makes the point that the 'terror' organizations pursued by the FBI fail to include right-wing Christian groups. I feel that Newberry's basic theory of what constitutes 'terrorism' is really pretty accurate:

Thus, there is not only an ineffective executive, but an entire subculture whose functional **effectiveness is degraded by the realization that they work for a political, and not national, security apparatus**. There is a willing participation in the construction of an inaccurate paradigm, the construction of institutions designed to perpetuate and disseminate that inaccurate paradigm, the execution of plans based around that inaccurate paradigm, and the acceptance of the deaths of hundreds of Americans and thousands of civilians because of the **willfully inaccurate and criminally negligent handling of the global war on terrorism**. The trend line is not upwards for ourside, but flat. And that means that the next spectacular terrorist attack on our soil is a matter of when, not if.

The corruption of executive institution, the willing prostitution of the executive branch of government, and the politicization of hierarchy and research are the root causes for our failure to decapitate Al Qaeda and other terrorist organizations.

[.....]

Terrorism has two modes: that of asymmetrical warfare - where one side chooses not to oppose the military of the other side directly, but instead attacks civilians or prisoners. The **other is a mode of political control, where privileged** - economically or politically is immaterial - **actors act in arbitrary and capricious ways, often through proxies, to prevent the formation of political counter-consensus**. This second form of terrorism is far more common and pervasive. Its actions account for the bulk of deaths by terrorization. The use of terror and terrorization is an integral part of warfare and even governance, in that some agents will only be deterred by the possibility of disproportionate force. However, it only **becomes terrorism, when there is the attempt to terrorize the mean, not the extreme, of the body politic**. It also is terrorism when there is the discontinuity with the rule of law. The difference between repression and terrorism, is that terrorism strikes without legal justification or accountability. Crystalnacht was terrorism, Dachau was something far worse.

This paradigm makes it clear that the flip side of non-state terrorism, and revolutionary or anarchist terrorism, is state or hierarchical terrorism. **The two are co-dependent upon each other.**

All right. The State Dept straightens it out: ["Identifying Misinformation"](#) as summarized by FTW.

Liberal hawks piss me off because they seem to wholly lack integrity. Ugh.

[Liberal Hawks: Flying in Neocon Circles](#)

By Tom Barry

In the heat of Iraq the neoconservatives are seeing their visions of Pax Americana turn into nightmares and headaches. But they are not alone. Liberal hawks like Ivo Daalder, Robert Kerrey, and Will Marshall also find themselves discredited as the quagmire in Iraq swallows up all their arguments supporting the invasion and occupation.

Posted by HongPong at 01:23 PM | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Media](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Security](#) , [War on Terror](#)

January 12, 2006

James Risen: NSA rockstar

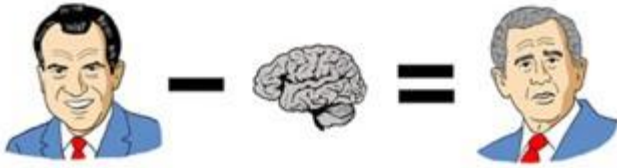
[CNN.com - Officials: Error tipped Iran to CIA agents - Jan 3, 2006](#)

WASHINGTON (CNN) -- Several U.S. agents in Iran were rounded up after the CIA mistakenly revealed clues to their identities to a covert source who turned out to be a double agent, according to a book that hit shelves Tuesday...

Risen's new book get megadittoes for revealing a great many dark things about Bush, the CIA and the NSA. Cryptome has a [useful chunk of the book](#). [Discussing it on Volokh.com](#) from the grouchy anti-libertarian wing.

Some other parts about the book: **Guardian: [George Bush insists that Iran must not be allowed to develop nuclear weapons. So why, six years ago, did the CIA give the Iranians blueprints to build a bomb?](#)** Amazing story: the CIA forks over slightly flawed bomb plans, to clever people who will probably find the tiny flaws.

Peter Dale Scott: [Cheney-Rumsfeld Surveillance Plans Date Back to 1980s](#). Scott is one of your paratypical parapolitical writers of the shadow conspiracy etc.



An equation for our times: via [ThisModernWorld](#).

[Heck of a Job, Hayden! - by Ray McGovern](#). Ray McGovern is an old hand at the CIA, a bit crusty, but

with key insights into the structural problems over there. This is the kind of perspective I support in Washington.

- [Stygius: NSA data-mining preceded 9/11](#) as well as [Law, liberty, security, etc.](#)
- [Tinker, Tailor, Miner, Spy - Why the NSA's snooping is unprecedented in scale and scope](#). By Shane Harris and Tim Naftali.
- [NSA Report to Congress on Legal Standards for Electronic Surveillance](#) (dead letters, currently).
- [newsrack blog](#): NSA background: the old Project Shamrock was a bit like this situation.

Has sparked some rather unusual speculations about the political consequences of domestic monitoring. Bill Richardson and Christiane Amanpour are the leading 'NSA political targets' of the moment.

[Albuquerque Tribune reports that Bill Richardson fears the NSA eavesdropped on him](#), in part due to a Wayne Madsen report.

Bizarre case that ricoched around the Internet and CNN over the last couple days. Sort of a paradigm-shaking omniscient big brother hullabaloo: [NBC changes official transcript of Andrea Mitchell interview, deletes reference to Bush possibly wiretapping CNN's Christiane Amanpour](#). AmericaBlog: [What it means to John Kerry, Wesley Clark, and Bill Clinton if Bush wiretapped CNN's Christiane Amanpour](#).

Steve [Clemons](#) advises cooling it with connecting Bolton's NSA intercept shenanigans with the current mess. Also talks about an NSA advertisement and its weird phrasing:

Rather than saying that you are looking for "intelligent and imaginative people" to "**protect U.S. information systems**", the line should be that you are looking for such people to protect the Constitution and Democratic government as well as the general welfare and liberty of the American people.

NY Times: Noah Feldman on the [situation with executive power](#) (via [DailyKos](#)):

Not since Watergate has the question of presidential power been as salient as it is today. The recent revelation that President George W. Bush ordered secret wiretaps in the United States without judicial approval has set off the latest round of arguments over what the president can and cannot do in the name of his office. Over the past few years, the war on terror has led to the use of executive orders to authorize renditions and the detention of enemy combatants without trial. . . . The limits of

presidential power will almost surely be a major topic of discussion during Samuel A. Alito Jr.'s Supreme Court confirmation hearings, which are scheduled to begin this week.

"[P]residentialism" . . . is not the system envisioned by the framers of the Constitution. The framers meant for the legislative branch to be the most important actor in the federal government: Congress was to make the laws and the president was empowered only to execute them. The very essence of a republic was that it would be governed through a deliberative legislature, composed carefully to reflect both popular will and elite limits on that will. The framers would no sooner have been governed by a democratically elected president than by a king who got his job through royal succession.

From the repressed homosexual Okie preacher department: [Tulsa Pastor Arrested In OKC On Lewdness Charge](#). Ha.

CNET: [Windows flaw spawns dozens of attacks](#). Huge security holes, terrible. Glad I have a Mac.

Posted by HongPong at [04:28 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Security](#) , [War on Terror](#)

January 07, 2006

The Shadows around Sibel Edmonds: Plame spied on neocons? Turkish agents, Special Plans teams, Afghan heroin, 9/11 intel & funding: is it for real?



Antiwar.com's blog returns to [the story of former FBI translator Sibel Edmonds](#), (her [official site](#)) a strange post-9/11 shadow case that Ashcroft helped gag. Her case involves, at the least, illegal cash getting moved around and Turkish spies. Edmonds, [trying to act as a whistleblower](#), still can't speak freely about what she wants to say; however, what she has said is bombshell, decidedly off-the-charts paranoid intrigue.

Maybe she's a disinformation agent, but more likely she's another random person dragged into a shadowy geopolitical nightmare. I've previously posted about her [here](#) and [here](#), wherein she alleged that [Dennis Hastert was getting secret cash from Turks](#).

So consider the post '[sibel edmonds, brewster jennings, edelman and grossman](#)' on the blog '[wot is it good 4](#)' that pulls together the rich-sounding threads of this tale. Take it as you will, with as many grains of salt as needed ([posted about on DailyKos](#)):

Sibel makes 2 specific related claims

a) Sibel claims that she has information which proves that **senior officials knew that there were plans to attack America months before 9/11.**

Specifically:

*"There was general information about **the time-frame**, about **methods to be used** but not specifically about how they would be used and about **people being in place** and who was ordering these sorts of terror attacks. There were other cities that were mentioned. Major cities with*

skyscrapers."

and

"President Bush said they had no specific information about 11 September and that is accurate but only because he said 11 September," she said. There was, however, **general information about the use of airplanes and that an attack was just months away.**"

b) Sibel claims that she has evidence of a global **multi-billion dollar smuggling/dealing network of weapons and drug which is hidden in plain view**. Of course, there is also the requisite money-laundering infrastructure. She claims that the network comprises senior American government officials, terrorists, and 'unsavoury regimes.'

and they merge, giving us:

"*drug trafficking, money laundering, foreign names and American names directly involved in the financing of the 9-11 attacks on WTC (World Trade Center) and the Pentagon.*"

But also consider this good caveat from [xymphora](#):

"Edmonds sometimes makes me a bit nervous as she seems **overly adept with the terms and arguments of conspiracy theory** for someone who is supposed to have been a lowly FBI translator (it's like she's been reading Peter [Dale Scott!](#)). **Is she part of the battle in Washington between the Bush Administration enablers involved in the drugs/arms business** who don't mind directly or indirectly supporting al Qaeda if it is good for business, and **those old-fashioned types who still consider that dealing with American enemies is treason?**"

And here is her [Grand Conspiracy of Everything](#), salacious!!

SIBEL: Essentially, **there is only one investigation – a very big one, an all-inclusive one**. Completely by chance, I, a lowly translator, stumbled over one piece of it.

But I can tell you there are a lot of people involved, **a lot of ranking officials**, and a lot of illegal activities that include **multi-billion-dollar drug-smuggling operations, black-market nuclear sales to terrorists and unsavory regimes**, you name it. And of course a lot of people from abroad are involved. It's massive. So to do this investigation, to really do it, they will have to look into everything.

CD: But you can start from anywhere –

SIBEL: That's the beauty of it. **You can start from the AIPAC angle. You can start from the Plame case**. You can start from my case. They all end up going to the same place, and **they revolve around the same nucleus of people**. There may be a lot of them, but it is one group. And **they are very dangerous** for all of us.

There is a lot more exciting stuff. I am assuming every American arms contractor and high-ranking person at State Department will have to be arrested. Marc Grossman and Eric Edelman are two guys the blog suggests have played a role in illegal activities in "the 'Stans" of Central Asia, WMD trafficking with Islamic militants, and anything else we could think of.

My intuition tells me that the scope of this tale perfectly fits a 'negative narrative,' i.e. the exact inverse of what we are 'supposed to believe', so it is designed to be an attractive view for anti-Bush folks. In other words, it has

the markers of a 'decoy conspiracy theory,' or one of those 'information operations' we've heard so much about.

On the other hand, it seems an *obvious geopolitical necessity* that all that heroin getting created by the Tajik and Uzbek 'Northern Alliance' warlords now running Afghanistan must be getting moved somewhere through the 'Stans of Central Asia & Pakistan, and probably *some very clever guys from the State Department have been dealing with it*. And in all probability, it was old hands that knew the major regional hustlers during Clinton's term -- such as **Marc Grossman and Eric Edelman**.



Edelman, for his part, has [now replaced Douglas Feith](#) as Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, a high honorary post for fucking maniacs. In a fine look at many of the background neo-cons, Chris Deliso noted in '[Lesser Neocons of L'Affaire Plame](#)',



Although Grossman "has not been as high profile in the press" [FBI whistleblower Sibel Edmonds](#) cryptically told me the other day, "don't overlook him – he is very important." She was not speaking about the Plame affair, though **Grossman did indeed have a key role there**, as we will see.

According to her, Grossman was one of three officials – the other two, she says, are **Richard Perle and Douglas Feith – who had been watched by both Valerie Plame's Brewster Jennings & Associates CIA team**, and by the major FBI

investigation of organized crime and governmental corruption on which she herself was working until being terminated in April 2002.

Marc Grossman has served in a number of interesting countries and positions over the past 29 years. **From 1976-1983, at a pivotal point in the Cold War, he was employed at the U.S. embassy in Pakistan** – America's key regional ally, through which millions of dollars in weapons and other "aid" were delivered by Pakistan's ISI intelligence service to the mujahedin following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979.

Yow!!! Talk about your heroin-connected State Department guys!! In a final twist for Grossman, he happened to [meet up](#) with Pakistani ISI director General Mahmoud Ahmed just before September 11 — and Ahmed has been [linked to sending cash to lead 9/11 hijacker Mohammed Atta](#). Wot is it good 4 adds a few more bits in a handy [bio](#):

Edelman left Libby's [employ] on June 6, 2003 "to begin language training in preparation for a posting as ambassador to Turkey." This is a week after 'Libby asks Bolton, and Grossman for information about news report about CIA's secret envoy to Africa in 2002"

According to Fitzgerald, 2 weeks later (June 19, 2003, before Wilson's NYT op-ed), Edelman "asked LIBBY whether information about Wilson's trip could be shared with the press to rebut the allegations that the VP had sent Wilson. LIBBY responded that there would be complications at the CIA in disclosing that information publicly, and that he could not discuss the matter on a non-secure phone line."

In Central Asia, Everything is Permissible: The plain truth is that, especially out in Central Asia, the concept of 'corruption' does not exist, and there is no real barrier between the legitimate economy and the 'shadow economy' of weapons, drugs and other contraband. Controlling your turf means controlling the passage of all goods, especially the really good goods. And that's how it's been for centuries.

So perhaps Edmonds represents a kind of domestic blowback against this staggering corruption of American institutions and secretive misuse of executive power. Although, maybe it is all purely symbolic. With a little luck, this weird case will finally get the top-level media attention it deserves, perhaps as Libby's court date approaches...

Douglas Feith: His Business is the Turks: [wot is it good 4](#) also informs that [Richard Perle used to consult for some shadowy Turkish concerns, and Douglas Feith](#), of all people, was a registered foreign agent of Turkey from 1989-1994!! This certainly adds a shade to the whole Turkey/neo-con model - and Grossman was recently ambassador to Turkey.

This seems to tie into the Valerie Plame matter, somehow: As long as we are fishing in these murky waters, Sibel Edmonds has implied that her case is [closely tied to the Plame affair](#) and the American Turkish Council. there has been some speculation that Valerie Plame was actually burned by Libby and the neo-cons **not** because of Wilson's Op-Ed, but because her CIA front company, Brewster Jennings, may have been getting 'too close' to exposing illegal WMD activities that someone like Libby might have been tied up in.

Perhaps even Libby's longtime former client, billionaire fugitive Marc Rich, is involved. [Rich's partner in intrigue](#), Russian mogul Boris Berezovsky, has been tied up in some [exotic deals](#), including nuclear [trafficking with the Chechens](#).

Secret Office of Special Plans units going around in Iraq to fabricate WMD?! On a parallel track, here is a story from Larisa Alexandrovna in RawStory which details apparent secret military units dispatched under the authority of Feith and the Office of Special Plans, with the apparent intent of coming up with some WMDs in Iraq, faking their origin if necessary. However it failed, if the story is to be believed. "[Secretive military unit sought to solve political WMD concerns prior to securing Iraq, intelligence sources say](#)":

Sources say the Office of Special Plans deployed several extra-legal and unapproved task force missions prior to and after combat operations began. Under the supervision of Doug Feith, Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, the OSP ran largely unsupervised and operated in secrecy. According to those familiar with the plans, the off-book missions were approved by Feith -- himself

currently [under investigation](#) by the FBI for allegations of **passing US secrets to Israel and Iran** -- Cambone and then-Deputy National Security Adviser Stephen Hadley.
[.....]

One intelligence source says the **Office of Special Plans' off-book team was using [missing US pilot] Speicher and WMD as a pretext for whatever their real objective** may have been.
[.....]

This smaller unnamed team was tasked with interviewing former Iraqi intelligence officers in hopes of securing help with a "political WMD" problem, a source close to the UN Security Council says.

During the summer of 2003 through the fall of 2003, the team, whose members who were not named by sources, is said to have interviewed many Iraqi intelligence and former intelligence officers. The UN source says that the political problem discussed had more to do with **solving the lack of WMD** than anything else.

Ok, then. Grains of salt etc.

Brewster Jennings and the Planted WMD: I will add one more bit to this mix of really quite paranoid stuff: Maverick/'highly untrustworthy' internet journalist Wayne Madsen raised the possibility that Brewster Jennings and Valerie Plame got burned because they intercepted a WMD that some in Turkey were trying to sneak into Iraq — but the twist is that neoconservatives were trying to get the weaponry into Iraq, because they wanted to stage its exciting discovery there, thus providing the casus belli to drive the American public into a belligerent, fearful frenzy. A fun theory...

Since we are really out on a kick here, why not add [what Madsen put out on Nov. 11](#) (again, many grains of lysergic acid salt recommended):

"According to U.S. intelligence sources, the White House exposure of Valerie Plame and her Brewster Jennings & Associates was intended to retaliate against the CIA's work in limiting the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. WMR has reported in the past on this aspect of the scandal. In addition to identifying the involvement of individuals in the White House who were close to key players in nuclear proliferation, the **CIA Counter-Proliferation Division prevented the shipment of binary VX nerve gas from Turkey into Iraq in November 2002. The Brewster Jennings network in Turkey was able to intercept this shipment which was intended to be hidden in Iraq and later used as evidence that Saddam Hussein was in possession** of weapons of mass destruction. U.S. intelligence sources revealed that this was a **major reason the Bush White House targeted Plame** and her network."

So, under possible motives to out Plame, we can tentatively consider that her CIA team wouldn't help stage WMD in Iraq to justify a war. Again, this sounds much too delicious to be true, but if it were true, it would help make some sense of Libby's motive. (Madsen also posted some other stuff about [Brewster Jennings going after Libby, nuke traffickers](#) and the Russian mob on Oct. 25 - again, many salt grains)

There's plenty of speculation here, and I don't want to make conclusions yet. Except for one: It's nobody's business but the Turks!!

Posted by HongPong at [05:03 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [International Politics](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [Security](#) , [The White House](#) , [War on Terror](#)
January 03, 2006

Tom Tancredo is scary; Booz Allen got its mitts in; Chomsky on conspiracies; IRC's Right Web helps track these cats

These days many of us (ok, me in particular) think about dark currents in the body politic which might rise up and topple whatever remains of this country's best traditions. And in the 21st century, xenophobia is hardly dead. While 'immigration reform' seems a benign label for a huge and messy set of issues, some quasi-mainstream politicians of the right-wing are cutting to the bone and forming coalitions among the far right, white supremacist and militia movements.

Tom Tancredo is one of these, evidently. The [International Relations Center](#) puts out material that I find often aligns with my concerns, and they do a good job of stressing how the left really needs to put together a focused policy before all these think-tank trolls eat us. IRC's [Right Web](#), in particular, puts out useful policy papers and excellent profile pages of many in the constellation of neo-cons and shady establishment operators who otherwise can't easily be pinned down. It also lists their many corporate and think-tank ties.



This helps make more sense of the conflicts of interest, of, for example, [James "World War IV" Woolsey](#), former CIA director, a leading war propagandist and neo-conservative of sorts who said about 345,000 times on network TV in 2002 that [Mohammed Atta had been spotted with an Iraqi agent in Prague](#) — thus unifying the perceived enemy images of the Baath government and the 9/11 conspirators. But Woolsey also is an executive at [Booz Allen Hamilton](#), which despite the crunked name, is a huge and shady defense contractor that makes millions whenever the U.S. gets tied up forcing its will somewhere. More wars == more cash for this niche industry, and without Right Web it's hard to decipher. ([Booz was contracted to get \\$62 million for helping designing the not-so-dead Total Information Awareness](#) program, according to DoD. Booz defense revenues *alone* totaled [\\$536,641,000 in 2004](#) - the #10 federal contractor! Yes, Virginia, war ==> cash.)



Without Right Web, no one would even know what David "[Clean Break](#)" [Wurmser](#), of [Office of Special Plans](#) fame looks like (high in the pantheon of defense bureaucrats who helped start the war with manipulated WMD intel). Right Web's explanation of the [Office of Special Plans](#) is really pretty good:

In the days after September 11 terrorist attacks, Paul Wolfowitz and Douglas Feith started cooking intelligence to meet the needs of the radically new foreign and military policy that included regime change in Iraq as its top priority.

To bolster the Iraq war party, they needed intelligence that would persuade the U.S. public and policymakers that Saddam Hussein's regime should be one of the first targets of the war on terrorism. **Convinced that the CIA, Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), and the State Department would not provide them with type of alarmist threat assessments necessary to justify a preventive war, they created their own tightly controlled intelligence operation at the top levels of the Pentagon bureaucracy.**

The day after the September 11 attacks Wolfowitz authorized the creation of an informal team focused on ferreting out damaging intelligence about Iraq. This loosely organized team soon became the Office of Special Plans (OSP) directed by Abram Shulsky, formerly of RAND and the National Strategy Information Center (NSIC). The objective of this closet intelligence team, according to Rumsfeld, was to "search for information on Iraq's hostile intentions or links to terrorists." **OSP's mission was to create intelligence that the Pentagon and vice president could use to press their case for an Iraq invasion with the president and Congress.**

The OSP played a key role in providing Rumsfeld, Cheney, and the president himself with the intelligence frequently cited to justify the March 2003 invasion. By late 2003 the OSP was closed down, having accomplished its mission of providing the strategic intelligence cited by the administration in the build-up to the invasion. OSP's staff and operations were folded back into the normal operations of the NESI and into its Office of Northern Gulf Affairs.

Like some sleazy Georgetown party, in the circles of power, [Frank Carlucci](#), [Ahmed Chalabi](#), [John Bolton](#), [Gary Bauer](#), [Natan Sharansky](#) are all lurking. All of these sorts of cats are better understood with Right Web.

I should add something classic that Noam Chomsky said about all these goofy committees and seemingly conspiratorial little foundations and groups. I think it's an excellent point. Chomsky:

"It's the same with the Trilateral Commission, the Council on Foreign Relations, all these other things the people are racing around searching for conspiracy theories about—they're 'nothing' organizations. Of course they're there, obviously rich people get together and talk to each other, and play golf with one another, and plan together—**that's not a big surprise. But these conspiracy theories people are putting their energies into have virtually nothing to do with the way the institutions actually function.**"

(Understanding Power, 348)

(This has infuriated [many conspiracy theorists](#)) The point is not tracking this or that secret committee, it's recognizing that many have a shared world-view we should oppose. I would add that they are trying to monopolize and privatize the defense and intelligence decision-making processes while getting rich.

But let's get back to xenophobic (and highly organized) reactionaries, who paint Mexican infiltration as the Clash of Civilizations. Essentially they project flaws outward. Now that the ever-malleable symbol of 'The Jew' is

not available as a rhetorical target, the General Other has gotten top billing from the latest demagogues.



[Tom Tancredo: Leader of the Anti-Immigrant Populist Revolt](#)

By Tom Barry | December 30, 2005

[IRC Right Web](#)

Rep. Tom Tancredo, who has represented Colorado's Sixth District since 1999, has in the last six years succeeded in rallying an anti-immigrant populist revolt that brings together the **nativists, religious right, cultural supremacists, militia movement, and anti-immigration policy institutes** with a new anti-

immigration wing of the Republican Party.

[.....]

Describing himself as a “devotee” of Samuel Huntington and the thesis of his Clash of Civilizations treatise, Tancredo like many on the right—from social conservatives to neoconservatives—base their restrictionism less on economic reasons than on cultural and racial ones. “I believe that what we are fighting here is not just a small group of people who have hijacked a religion, but it is a civilization bent on destroying us.”

[.....]

“The threat to the United States comes from two things: the act of immigration combined with the cult of multiculturalism,” argues Tancredo. **“We will never be able to win in the clash of civilizations if we don't know who we are. If Western civilization succumbs to the siren song of multiculturalism, I believe we are finished.”**

Like many other Republicans in the West, Tancredo takes a hard line toward China , and is a strong supporter of Taiwan. Linking China and immigration, Tancredo told a crowd of immigration restrictionists that **the Chinese government is “trying to export people” as a “way of extending their hegemony.”**

Concerning Iran, Tancredo advocates U.S. support for the Mujahedin-e Kalq (MEK), the armed wing of the National Council of Resistance. Although identified as a terrorist organization by the State Department, Tancredo says **“we should be aiding them, instead of restricting their activities.** We can use the MEK, they are in fact warriors. Where we need to use that kind of force, we can use them.”

Funny, I always believed that multiculturalism and the act of immigration were two fundamentally American gestures that once helped us become the strongest and richest country in the world. How naïve.

White cultural purity and Iranian zealots (more MEK [here](#) and [here](#)). Is this really conservatism?

Posted by HongPong at 04:03 PM | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Iraq](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [News](#) , [Security](#)

NSA talk on MPR

Right now there is a [sweet discussion](#) of the NSA wiretapping situation on [Talk of the Nation with Neal Conan](#). James Bamford is talking about it, and he said that the CIA is approximately half private contractors now - an ongoing integration of the private sector into the intelligence community.

(Which seems to be something that Gillian Harding is moving towards -- how interesting. And now her name is going to be on my highly flagged website. :-D)

Posted by HongPong at [01:50 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Security](#) , [Technological Apparatus](#) , [War on Terror](#)

December 28, 2005

The Equation of Life; the Olive Branch is Quaint; 5% vote fraud rate in Iraq asserted as blogs propagandize?

Some scientists determined that apparently, across the scale from bacteria to whale, the basic unit of life is energy and metabolism -- not time. [A Master Equation for All Life Processes?](#) Check out the [10 little-known sweet science stories](#). A [Swedish bio-gas](#) (cow poo) train, pillows are laden with fungi, French scientists figured out how to [slow down & speed up light](#), (!!!) leading the way to future all-optical data routers (!!!!!), a [robot with square wheels](#), and of course they are training [honey bees to find land mines!](#) (also [50 greatest robots](#) ever - via [GM](#))



The Eagle faces the olive branch: Dear Leader recently [addressed the nation](#) about that war thing, and someone told me that it was interesting how the olive branch on the Great Seal of the United States is hidden.

(Bush has also [been pressuring newspaper editors a lot lately](#), including trying to [prevent the CIA European prison stories in the WaPo](#),

and the Times NSA story, by summoning the editors to the Oval Office in a vain effort to intoxicate with the fearful trappings of power)

I found out that on the Presidential Seal, the [eagle used to face the arrows](#) until 1945:

This one-time change has given rise to the myth that the eagle's head changes position to indicate wartime or peacetime, but that is obviously not true. The eagle faced right from 1880 to 1945, and has faced left ever since. It is nevertheless true that, when the change was made in 1945, the announcement referred to the symbolism of the eagle facing peace instead of war, and this symbolism has been alluded to many times since, although it was not the motivation for the change.

Make no mistake; when the Duke makes a televised address, every visual detail is carefully managed. The fascinating [Brian Springer film "Spin"](#), which was made primarily with intercepted satellite signals — open video feeds from the White House and other political and media operations. There's one funny part when they remove a photo from behind Poppa Bush's seat,

because it is thought to resemble a recent photo of when he passed out in Japan.

So make no mistake, the selection of the arrows was 100% intentional, in a White House as image-conscious as this one.

(evil witch Peggy Noonan observed Bush [talking about the way the eagle faces](#) pre-9/11)

Windy: Energy issues in MN. Apparently the vast [majority of windmills around Buffalo Ridge are not owned locally](#) according to an interesting Strib article. Let's think about the means of production here people!

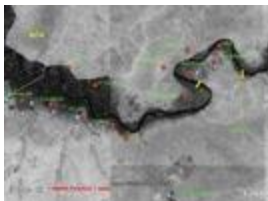
They don't like the vote: [Guardian: Religious parties deal blow to US hopes for Iraq](#). Apparently an official level of 5% vote fraud in Iraq has been accepted, [Juan Cole says](#):

The Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq admitted on Sunday that voting fraud occurred in approximately 5 percent of the ballots cast, but said that this level of fraud would not affect the overall outcome. Still, the IECI announcement will certainly fuel Sunni Arab anger and conviction that the election was stolen.

Bizarre. The Sunnis think that Shiites ganked their votes, and there have been [mass protests in Fallujah](#). KR: "[Iran now enemy No. 1, Sunnis say](#)". [Violence resumes apace as Sunni Arab student leader killed](#) in Mosul after protesting vote -- Shiite militias and Kurds accused of killing him.

AP reports that [US airstrikes are escalating](#), although of course it is hard to tell how many civilian casualties this generates, or whether they are the 'right targets,' or whether it is strategically useful at all. Such urban bombardments have not been seen in years, but due to 'perception management' techniques, the US public is blissfully unaware. A Steel Curtain for their bodies and our eyes, indeed.

[RJ Eskow: Voting Confirms: Iraq Is a Red state](#). We have generated a fundamentalist theocracy, aligned against Israel, towards Iran, while 45% of the country supports attacking US troops. Why was this such a brilliant fucking idea again? Robert Scheer cackles: [Iran's victory revealed in Iraq election](#).



Ethnic/sect structure of iraqi forces is doomed, man:

One of the measuring sticks of how propagandizing a perspective on the Iraq war is how the difference between Sunni & Shiite groups is framed. When Sunnis are "rat's nest terrorists" while the Shiites are "Free Iraqis come to

Battle for Freedom" in the northwest of the country, you are looking at some obfuscation.

Consider this first: SF Chronicle: [Various private armies still exist, threatening Iraq's national security](#):

Residents of Samarra, the scene of bloody clashes between U.S. soldiers and insurgents, said **they feared a Shiite militia being unleashed on the city**. Interviewed in their homes this week, they said they were unaware of a Mahdi Army presence, but claimed they had already suffered when commandos affiliated with al-Sadr's militia were dispatched to the city earlier this year.

Ibrahim Farraj, who lives in the Sikek district, said, "The Interior Ministry forces are very strong. **The insurgents are afraid of them, but they are corrupt and we cannot trust them. The last time the Interior Ministry was here, they were al-Sadr** -- people are scared of them and the Mahdi Army."

U.S. Army Capt. Ryan Wylie, of the 3rd Infantry Division serving in Samarra, said he had heard rumors that the Interior Ministry was conducting a private war, but had seen no evidence.

These bloggers that have been embedded with US troops in the northwest Euphrates river valley are all about exaggerating this difference. In particular, Bill Roggio at Threatswatch (where the [map above came from](#)) explains how Rats Nests are obliterated in [Steel Curtain Unmasked](#), and other interesting dehumanizing euphemisms. See if you can find the subtle twist of meaning [here](#):

Throughout the operation, the 1/1/1 of the Iraqi Army and the Desert Protection Force worked in conjunction with the U.S. Forces, and proved to be an instrumental part of the operation. The **Iraqi Army battalion participated in combat operations, and they and Desert Protectors were able to identify foreign fighters and local insurgents**.

I wonder if Roggio can wrap his head around the concept that 'identifying' is not a neutral act of observation, but a conscious change of political identity (by Shiite militia, no less) leading straight to violence.

Roggio is [not happy](#) about a Washington Post article that [characterized his role in Iraq as a military-supported Information Operation](#). He says that all the cash to get him there was raised independently, and that the military has not 'influenced' his writing. But his main sources are military personnel, and his perspective is deeply enmeshed with the same terminology and concepts that Pentagon spokespeople attempt to beat into our heads. Here's his core point:

Equating military information operations with al-Qaeda propaganda efforts is a form of moral equivalence of the worst sort. The U.S. military is conducting an **influence campaign to draw attention to the news which is missed by the media** on a daily basis. **Their belief (and one that I share) is the portrayal of events in Iraq do not reflect the actual situation** on the ground. While the articles may be viewed as "favorable" to the Coalition, the question is, **are they accurate and factual?** The Washington Post does not address this issue, nor does it provide evidence that the military is running a disinformation campaign.

Misrepresenting the source (such as the placed Iraqi newspaper stories) is a form of disinformation because it manipulates the perception of where it's coming from. The military's justification is that there is a metaphysical or ontological gap between (all?) portrayals and reality, according to him. Well isn't there always? How far can this go? Also consider this ironic statement:

al-Qaeda is running a sheer disinformation campaign which uses human beings as props in events such as beheadings and execution styled killings. It manufactures events, such as the faux uprising in Ramadi in the beginning of December. The truth is not relevant to al-Qaeda's propaganda operations, only results matter.

The administration has 'manufactured' all sorts of symbolic events and concepts, such as the [Statue Toppling](#), the mysteriously [Satanic Terrorist Singularity in Fallujah](#) that needed to be nuked after the 2004 Presidential election, etc. There have been plenty of symbolic constructions. Look at how Pat Tillman died -- that event was manufactured beyond the truth (it was a friendly fire fatality) to burnish the war narrative. Oh by the way, [here's what Tillman's dad said](#):

"They purposely interfered with the investigation, they covered it up," Patrick Tillman said. "I think they thought they could control it and they realized that their recruiting efforts were going to hell in a hand basket if the truth about his death got out."

Al Qaeda is not the only force at hand here seeking to '[sharpen the contradictions](#)' through symbolic action. What is Shock and Awe, if not a symbolic gesture? (Roggio also said that [lots of Sunnis voted for Allawi in Anbar](#). That's fucking ridiculous!)

But what can I say about a worldview with ideas like "[Samarra, a city once ripe for a Tal Afar styled assault](#)."

By the way, here's a [by-the-numbers orthodox propaganda tale about the Terrorists in Mosul](#). Of course it comes from the American Forces Press Service, part of the 'American Forces Information Service.' Use this to set your propaganda index, I guess.

[Sadr City has a good deal of reconstruction](#), after decades of neglect. A story in the rightwing UK Telegraph claims that Tal Afar is totally ballin' these days:

Their commander, Col H R McMaster, is a counter-insurgency specialist who wrote a book about the Vietnam War, in which he criticised the US military's failure to understand the enemy's culture.

Before deployment, his men were given extensive Arabic classes and intensive lessons on Iraqi history, customs and religion. Proper efforts were made to woo local tribal sheiks with banquets in which goats were slaughtered and concerns listened to.

"The enemy is really good at disinformation and propaganda. We have to win the battleground of perception," he said.

Big Brother & Crying Wolf: People are more willing to believe the right yarn at the right time these days. A student at Dartmouth claimed that [Homeland Security questioned him after he got Mao's Little Red Book](#) through inter-library loan. But apparently it was a hoax. This story shows that people are expecting to hear these kinds of things... so stay sharp, we can hit spin real fast here.

Scratch the Checks and/or Balances: How sad is it that [Sen. Rockefeller gets to jot secret handwritten notes of concern](#) to the White House like a high school sweetheart, and that is supposed to be his total constitutional role? WTF?

AIPAC says Jump! WaPo: "[Pro-Israel Group Criticizes White House Policy on Iran:](#)"

AIPAC, which describes itself as nonpartisan, has criticized nearly every administration's Middle East policies, often **speaking out when Israeli government officials express private frustration** with U.S. policies.

But the news releases mark the first major criticism of the Bush White House and come as the administration is focused on problems in Iraq and has no clear path on Iran.

[.....]

Ross said the criticisms, though serious, are **unlikely to lead to an all-out rift between AIPAC and the administration**. "At the end of the day, every administration does what it needs to do, but obviously they will have to pay attention to this," he said.

Which again suggests that AIPAC should be registered as an agent of a foreign power. Well, that, and some of their (former) personnel have been [indicted on espionage charges](#) (more [info here](#) via the New Yorker).

Biochemical roots of the Munchies: [Cannabinoid receptors around the hypothalamus](#).

In their studies, the researchers concentrated on the lateral hypothalamus (LH) of the brain, known to be a center of control of food intake. Their studies involved detailed electrophysiological measurements of the effects of specific neurons that they had identified in previous studies as being important in endocannabinoid signaling.

Their studies revealed that activation of CB1 receptors, as by endocannabinoid molecules, induced these neurons to be rendered more excitable by a mechanism called "depolarization-induced suppression of inhibition" (DSI).

What's more, they found that leptin inhibits DSI. However, they found that leptin did not interfere with the CB1 receptors themselves. Rather, leptin "short-circuits" the endocannabinoid effects by inhibiting pore-like channels in the neurons that regulate the flow of calcium into the neurons. Such calcium is necessary for the synthesis of endocannabinoids.

Posted by HongPong at [09:25 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Humor](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Media](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Technological Apparatus](#) , [Tracking election irregularities](#) , [War on Terror](#)

December 27, 2005

The Cosby Theory and a Meta-Conspiracy Theory — including the Platonic Forms and Iranian intelligence — because nothing's true, and here, everything's permitted



Call the Cave of Shadows the Cave already!

As we find ourselves [hip-deep in propaganda](#), it's hard to know where to turn. Such strange web conspiracy theories as the [Chappelle Theory](#) briefly [amuse us](#), but these are just the zeitgeist products of an insane time. The [Cosby Theory](#), a follow-on satire of Chappelle Theory, explains the terrible conspiracy of the Cosby Sweaters. (the guys who dreamed up the Chappelle Theory were [advised by their lawyers to let everyone know it's totally fake](#)).

Some guy mocked me in the comments, implying I believed that the Chappelle Theory was real. I said that "The site looks good, it tells an exciting tale. In other words it's ***another well-marketed conspiracy theory thing***," and I picked out a quote of Oprah ranting about her infinite power like a Bond villain. I thought it was a well-crafted example of that sort of site, but at no point did I claim it was real, although it prompted me to reflect that Chappelle might have been threatened somewhere along the way, and some of the 'Dark Crusaders' may have negatively reacted to Chappelle. (It was indeed well-marketed. They are now [selling Dark Crusaders t-shirts](#).)



These days, there is a pretty thick distance between what we're presented with, and the Objective Truth that I still suspect exists somewhere. This site has been unafraid to link to raving lunatics, angry Iraqis, neoconservative screeds and gibbering Freemason spotters. I'm not looking over their shoulder, so how can I trust them any differently than, say, Scott McClellan or the Associated Press?

As we learned from such works as [The Illuminatus! Trilogy](#), a conspiracy theory can offer a direct conjecture about a certain set of facts or circumstances, but it can also show an alternate style of linking events and people together.

A goofy conspiracy theory centered on pop culture is a kind of prism that reflects the basic weirdness of our times. When it's executed with style, I'll mention it because its logical form — apart from its literal content — can

help induce a bit of a mindfuck, a unit of [guerilla ontology](#) to the everyday grind, imploding assumptions.

For example, when I mentioned to my family this crazy Chappelle Theory, they immediately leapt to Oprah's defense. *How would Oprah ever threaten anyone?! She's a paragon of sassy afternoon virtue!!*"

Aha!" said I, tanked on a bit of Sierra Nevada Celebration Ale. "Why do you leap to praise her automatically? She's just some billionaire! This silly theory reveals that you have all sorts of biased, programmed instincts to defend the wealthy & powerful, etc etc..."

The point is that we live in an Disinformation Age, and a wobbly conspiracy theory can help show you why Conventional Wisdom is just as shaky. As I have detailed here, [we invaded Iraq partly because Iranian intelligence agents fed lurid stories](#) about nuclear weapons through Chalabi's Iraqi National Congress into the Pentagon and the Vice President's office. That's part of the history of our times, and it's pretty damned conspiratorial. It sets the bar for intrigue, I think it's fair to say.

The sources of supposedly 'clean & authoritative information' in our information economy utterly failed to figure this out in time, and they still haven't come clean about it.

I long ago decided that only by monitoring the widest possible spectrum of rhetoric and information can a rough sense or useful 'heuristic' of any given political theater be reached. So I can't be afraid to reflect on what anyone from Charles Krauthammer to [Wayne Madsen](#) to [DEBKAFfile](#) to Hezbollah's [Al Manar](#) is talking about. You can't achieve more intellectual accuracy by boycotting [Mother Jones](#).

When yet another slickly executed Conspiracy Theory tale comes along, as they always do, I'll often toss it up here because it shows that the Dominant Narrative and Tacit Assumptions are often just as ridiculous. The battle for perceptions runs deep these days; the war is between your ears and behind your eyes.



The issue of Information Warfare is going to be a hot one next year, but we ought to take it all with a sense of good humor and a [strong drug regimen to keep our minds limber](#), as the Dude put it.



toward To some extent, **all political rhetoric rests on gestures phantasmic workings, a secret esoteric logic** — either hidden actors, or Principles such as Freedom arranged by that mysterious

Other '[Calling from beyond the Stars](#)' for Dear Leader. As Ariel Sharon put it recently, "You see things from here [as PM] that you don't see from there [an outsider]." This is the '[appeal to authority](#)' argument, and the Authorities cash out the fallacy as far as they can.

Plato spelled out this basic political principle for us in the Allegory of the Caves, when he said that only the select can reach the World of True Forms, while the rest would just watch projections. He meant that a good leader better be able to dream up some fine-sounding esoteric Forms to tell the tribe at the campfire. An objectively false 'conspiracy' can still illustrate how these grand Authoritative and Legitimate Sources are just a couple notches up from the tribal shaman.

Botox is the new charmed skull on a stick, the Brookings Institution is nothing but the 21st century's beard-stroking witch doctor.

Of course, as an atheist I must consider all spiritual appeals as possibly having this basic political purpose at their core, even if part of the intention is self-deception, rather than purely manipulating the audience.

Again we must return to the words of Hasan i Sabah, the leader of the Assassins. "**Nothing is True, Everything is Permitted.**" Surely, Karl Rove is his truest disciple, and I'll set the ideological filters for my site's content accordingly.

Posted by HongPong at [09:14 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Media](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [News](#) , [Usual Nonsense](#) , [War on Terror](#)

December 14, 2005

Iraqi blogstorm; \$100 laptop developed for developing world; Iraqi bloggers vs the 'Iranian horde'; Diebold CEO quits under fire; Horatio Alger was a pedophile



The One Laptop Per Child nonprofit organization is supporting the distribution of a Linux-based \$100 laptop, which will soon go out to children in Brazil, Thailand, Egypt and Nigeria. It also has a hand-cranked power generator, which is a brilliant idea.

Forbes: [Intel's Barrett Dismisses \\$100 Laptop As 'Gadget'](#)

LONDON - It's a crank. Intel Chairman Craig Barrett has dismissed a WiFi-enabled, Linux-based, full-color, full-screen laptop aimed at bringing computers to developing economies as a "\$100 gadget". The lime-green devices run on electromotive energy from a wind-up mechanism--thus allowing the machines to be used in areas lacking a regular power supply.

Bit of a jackass, then. See also [PCWorld.com - Kids' Laptop Hits World Spotlight](#). Pic source from the oddly [negative article carried in Vermont Guardian](#).

By 2007, five to ten million of these laptops will have been shipped to developing countries. By the year after that, the number is expected to have grown ten-fold. What is not known is whether this project will mark a new phase in the spread of knowledge, or whether hundreds of millions of children will become slaves to their little green boxes instead of playing in the backyard.

The Man was Here: WaPo: "[CIA scours blogs for useful intelligence: Some 'secrets' can be found in plain view.](#)" Well at least I know the CIA has already been here a couple times. So it's not breaking news.



Ten stoner ideas for peace in Iraq: [Brilliant.](#) *Air conditioners, kind bud, Xbox 360s with extra controllers, Madden 2006, Marshmallows, kegs of Budweiser, acoustic guitars and whores.* Shrewd strategy. "I guarantee this much: Give a 16-year-old Sunni the choice between killing himself and spending his life playing videogame football, and he'll make the right choice every time." BSnews.org also features the "[Bush War Plan Clearly Written In Crayon.](#)"

[DeLay is hurting Republicans in vulnerable districts.](#) Ouch. Sweet.

The blogosphere may be [unreasonably carried away with Paul Hackett's chances in the Ohio](#) senate race, given his low name ID. Rep. Sherrod Brown seems to be leading in polls.

Polls in Iraq seem [oddly positive](#). I doubt their scientific value. "['Failure' Most Popular Term Sending Traffic From Google To US White House Site](#)".

Bite the patting hand: [Rightwingers are angry](#) when the NY Times Magazine carried a story titled "[Conservative Blogs are more Effective.](#)" Weird.

Elections in wars may not work: Haaretz/Reuters: [Gaza gunmen fire on PA security compound, storm election HQ.](#) "[The Wall of Hate](#)" is a film about the West Bank partition wall that Israel is constructing.

Iraq blogstorm and the 'Iranian occupation': Check out [Iraq Blog Count](#) for an index. A friend of mine was saying that all these blogs and Internet things complicate the situation, but I strongly disagree because I think we get a real good sense of the mentality and the situation of Iraqis, just by looking through a few of them. [Baghdad Burning by Riverbend](#) is of course well-known now, and excellent. The [Iranian Occupation bit](#) is interesting:

The agony of the long war with Iran is what makes the current situation in Iraq so difficult to bear—especially this last year. The occupation has ceased to be American. It is American in face, and militarily, but in essence it has metamorphosed slowly but surely into an Iranian one.

It began, of course, with Badir's Brigade and the several Iran-based political parties which followed behind the American tanks in April 2003. It continues today with a skewed referendum, and a constitution that will guarantee a southern Iraqi state modeled on the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Of course all this talk about the [US dropping chemical weapons](#) makes it more 'complicated.' Would the Baghdad Burning book -- now [on its way](#) -- seem more credible somehow? Truth-about-iraqis.blogspot.com has a [anguished rant](#) whose tone rings very true. And [this one too](#):

This is not Iraq. The only Iraq I can identify with is the Iraq that rages in the hearts of those who defend its honor, who die defending its honor, those who fight the Iranian horde, the US oppressor.

....In any case, everything is coming tumbling down. The war lies, the GOP, right wing radio, the illusionists, the nazis and their WASP allies, the zionist war machine, and the racist white-hood wearing commentators.

The Iraq lie is simply too heavy a burden.

Sow it buddy, then drink the rotten milk of human waste.

Nefarious is as nefarious will do.

I think it makes a major, positive, difference -- although the terrible experience of [Khaled Jarrar](#) when he was captured by the Interior Ministry, and his additional troubles because they found out about his blog, were an example of how it can hurt the writers. But we wouldn't know about what it's really like inside the New Security Organs of Iraq without people like him.

For more, consider [Aunt Najma's A Star from Mosul](#) (with many [relatives blogging](#) too), [Treasure of Baghdad](#), [Free Iraq](#) ("*The US's pre-emptive occupation of Iraq will see to it that the Lion of Babylon rises again*" sweet) and [Iraqi Rebel](#).

David Ignatius likes the eschatological-conspiracy angle in "[Breaking the Assassins](#)." Thanks for obfuscating reality with a bunch of grand gibberish. Can Rummy defeat the Cult of the Assassins? Sure!

Ethnically pure militias: Bloomberg service: [Bush's Strategy, Iraq's New Army Challenged by Ethnic Militias](#)

The Defense Department's intelligence agency says there are dozens of loosely organized Shiite armies in southern Iraq, Kurdish militias in the north that function like a regular army, and as many as 20,000 Sunni fighters who are part of the violent insurgency in Iraq's four central provinces.

.... ``The situation continues to deteriorate," said Anthony Cordesman of the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies. ``It's a matter of the militias, new political organizations, Shiite groups" and Iraqi security forces becoming ``forces for revenge or reprisal."

....Leslie Gelb, former assistant secretary of state and former president of the New York-based Council on Foreign Relations, said most of the militias pay first allegiance to their ethnic or tribal group. ``**It's**

not an Iraqi army," said Gelb, who visited Iraq for 10 days earlier this year. Kurds are loyal to Kurds, **Shiite militias resembling ``mafia operations" run the south,** ``the central region has the insurgency, and Baghdad is all mixed up," he said.

Patrick Lang, former chief analyst for the Middle East at the Defense Intelligence Agency, said Iraq's different ethnic groups ``will not serve together" in national army units. ``They tried it and it didn't work, and **now they're going back to ethnically pure units,"** he said, citing Defense Department officials he declined to identify. Lang, a retired colonel in the Army's Green Berets, is now president of Global Resources Group, a Washington-based consulting firm.

"Islamic leaders unveil action plan to rescue a 'nation in crisis'." [Baghdad Press Club investigated](#) as a central node of paid military propaganda.

Cheney visits Auschwitz and secret CIA Poland camp on same trip? Oy vey. FT: [Allegations of secret US jails in Europe are 'credible'](#). Guardian: [Investigator links Europe's spy agencies to CIA flights](#). Ireland On-Line ['Signs suggest US illegally held detainees in Europe'](#) especially Poland and Romania. Take it with a grain of salt, but [Wayne Madsen's report on Cheney visiting secret camps in Poland](#) (Dec. 13) around his visit to the Auschwitz-Birkenau Nazi extermination camp last January. Not sure if it's a true report, but if it is true, a very dark irony.

Iran talks a big game: But this Haaretz article makes it all too clear that their economic situation is excellent, and they can count on Russia and China to help them in the UN if things get hairy. [Ahmadinejad can continue to smile while the world argues](#). True.

The Horatio Alger NAMBLA chapter: Larry Beinhart's "[Fog Facts: Searching for Truth in the Land of Spin](#)" looks interesting. In particular, for example, he [establishes that Horatio Alger was a pedophile](#), and was a pedophilic minister before he got chased out of Brewster, Massachusetts, and admitted to it. That's established, then the spin dissection starts. Weird. And maybe that's more widely known, but I never heard of it. Also claims that the NYC chapter of NAMBLA is the Horatio Alger chapter. *Creepy*.

Vote Spoofing: The War at Home: [Diebold chief executive Wally O'Dell resigns](#), as more questions about company conduct and illegal trading have come up. There are lawsuits happening as people claim that Diebold failed to get its modified voting machine software correctly certified on some occasions. In North Carolina, [the EFF has filed a lawsuit](#). O'Dell was the guy who claimed he would help 'deliver' Ohio's electoral votes to Bush.

Posted by HongPong at [09:22 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Campaign 2006](#) , [Humor](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Tracking election irregularities](#) , [War on Terror](#)
December 08, 2005

Scandal breakfast: Speeding up the war; Duke scandal reaches into CIA; Diebold revelations; GOP war-dialing in New Hampshire; More mercenaries

I have plenty of scandals for you today. But I'll try to keep it concise.

Texas gerrymandering: [Justice Staff Saw Texas Districting As Illegal](#).

DIEBOLD insider speaks out on Vote Spoofing: One of my reliable spies sent this in. [Diebold insider alleges company plagued by technical woes, Diebold defends 'sterling' record](#). This talks a lot about how Diebold may have manipulated the Georgia 2002 Senate race, among other things. Basically it indicates that Diebold should not be trusted at all. And they are diabolical.

New probes in the prewar intel, but Those Italians mighta done the forgery! Spicy Meat-aball! So yah, Lewis Libby attacked Wilson because he called out the yellowcake uranium thing, which turned out to be a forgery. The hot rumor -- supported in the Italian media -- is that Michael Ledeen and some other neo-cons channeled the stuff into Washington. And now it seems like they might finally get nailed for it. [Congress Opens New Front In Iraq-War Probe. Treasongate: The Niger Forgeries v. the CIA Intel Reports - Preliminary Conclusion: An Italian Job](#). Consult [Raimondo for more. FBI Is Taking Another Look at Forged Prewar Intelligence](#). Marshall's [take on that](#), check it out.

[Marshall](#) adds that Scooter Libby's legal defense fund is being run by Mel Sembler, the US Ambassador to Italy "when all the secret meetings took place and when the forged uranium papers showed up at the US Embassy in October 2002." However he sees no evidence Sembler was involved.

New Hampshire scandal: via [Marshall](#), blogger [Betsy Devine](#) is covering the court case of NH Republicans phone hacking -- more like phreaking -- no, wardialing. Yeah, wardialing on election day is illegal.

Bomb Jazeera-Gate: [Clemons promises news from London on the Bush Bombing Al Jazeera](#) memo, so [check](#) that later.

SAVE XMAS: Oh great, [another holiday video](#) from the White House. And [holiday cards](#). Where is our Jesus??! Conservatives are really disappointed that Bush surrendered Christmas -- really!

SAVE BORAT FROM KAZAKHSTAN: [Kazakhstan shows the world tyranny is not dead](#). And not only that, they [threatened to sue Sasha Cohen for his fine Borat](#) portrayal on [MTV](#). Borat, for his part, "fully support my

government's decision to sue this Jew" immediately, in a response video on [his site](#).

SAVE NIXON: ['I Didn't Like Nixon Until Watergate': The Conservative Movement Now](#). Interesting reflections on a weird philosophy.

Meth for Iraqi insurgents: When you need to conduct a war, it is a good idea to get your forces sped up with pharmaceuticals, as we learned from the [Stim Packs](#) in Starcraft. The UK Mirror reports that [methamphetamine has been found in pills around Basra](#) -- and claims that Mahdi Army irregulars have used it fearlessly. However, it is also official [US government policy](#) to give [speed to pilots](#) sometimes -- which was blamed as a cause for the deaths of several Canadians in Afghanistan. Meth or [dextro](#) -- which is the ethical War Stimulant??

IRAQ: Why no army & how to get out: What? [Dems dont know a strategy?](#) James Fallows' recent bit on [Why Iraq Has No Army](#) from the Atlantic. Interesting column from E&P about [White Phosphorus and the media spin](#) that followed. Armando on the Kos suggests that [we need to stick with criticizing Bush](#), since theoretical Democratic plans (a [fuzzy mess nowadays](#)) don't really do as much as discrediting Dear Leader (which is something that Lieberman attempted to attack this week. [Fuck you, Lieberman!!](#) Why articulate when obscenities express it better?)

"[Donald Rumsfeld Is Mad As a Hatter](#)" Funny how that [victory strategy was written by some shady professor](#). US Rep. [Adam Smith \(D\) on the ground in Iraq](#).

Shrewd people are thinking about getting out. Via the [solid Steve Clemons](#), some good strategies. Politicians square off against each other. Republicans try a bizarre two-handed trick, claiming that the Dems are treasonous for demanding it more quickly, while still claiming that withdrawal is going to happen, sooner rather than later.

The Hard Nosed Realists are worth consulting. Lt. Gen. William Odom is one of these. He was merely director of the National Security Agency and was the Army's senior intelligence officer for a time. I am hardly such a damn fool as to not appreciate the kind of wisdom that only one of these old, battle-tested characters could give you. [Odom: Want stability in the Middle East? Get out of Iraq!](#)

On the flip side, journalist Nir Rosen has kicked around Iraq a lot, so he's got a pretty solid [view of why the hell we need to get out](#).

[The Insurgencies Are Winning](#) by Dreyfuss, always good. [Ten ways to argue about the war](#). Well at least [Sunnis and Shiites are praying together](#) a bit. ["Profusion of Rebel Groups Helps Them Survive in Iraq"](#).

Wes Clark, still Big Pimpin with war plans [here](#). [Clark-Mentum](#). [Drum is confused](#). There seems to be a lot of enthusiasm for Clark in the Democratic netroots, but I feel ambivalent.

Death squads instead! Billmon sighs about the execution squads now deemed to be Iraq's Last, Best Hope, characterized as [Salvadoran Option](#), Pt. II. And his bit about the [Lincoln Group and its organized efforts to propagandize for the military](#) in Iraq was interesting. More below...

Marketing the Dogs of War: Mercenaries are always interesting. So here is a pile o links. [Private Security Guards in Iraq Operate With Little Supervision](#). [American Security Firm Implicated in Iraq Killings](#). [Triple Canopy investigation](#). This [PDF](#) is interesting because it indicates that they kill Iraqis and lie about it. [Booman Tribune on the Aegis Security Corporation](#) and Tim Spicer. Also [more about Triple Canopy](#).

A [NY Times story](#) about these forces, with some random Nazi thing attached to it.

[PERU: Veteran Soldiers, Police Recruited for Iraq by U.S. Contractors](#). [Mercenaries Guard Baghdad Green Zone](#). [Green zone security switch increases risk](#).

[Sandline mercenaries: from Sierra Leone to Iraq](#).

CPI: Marketing the Dogs of War: [Making a Killing](#).

As earlier reported, ["Trophy Video" of Civilian Shootings By Contractors Emerges](#) and guess what folks, here is the [actual video](#). **Creepy**. [Crooks and Liars has more on Spicer](#).

I wrote a big paper for Wendy Weber about these private military firms and their role in geopolitical developments. Actually my view is not 100% negative, but I mostly worry that they are used to A) cover up covert foreign policy, like [DynCorp spraying herbicide in Colombia](#), and B) destroy the chain of command -- and in turn our adherence to international treaties, etc. More later.

Pentagon Propaganda Matrix. For some conspiracy stuff, see the [PropagandaMatrix](#). For a real Matrix of Propaganda, look at Iraq these days. In the so-called Serious Media:

[Williams: Bush administration has "right" to buy media coverage](#)

Appearing on the December 4 edition of CNN's Reliable Sources, NBC Nightly News anchor Brian

Williams told host Howard Kurtz that the Bush administration has "the right" to pay a columnist to tout its views in his column. Williams also condoned the "politiciz[ation]" of programming on the Public Broadcasting System (PBS).

Bastard. Let me just put in these DAMN links.

WaPo: [Pentagon Funds Diplomacy Efforts / Military Says It Paid Iraq Papers for News](#)

NYT: [U.S. Is Said to Pay to Plant Articles in Iraq Papers](#)

SourceWatch: [Burson-Marseller's BKSH Gets Piece of Pentagon Psy-ops Pie](#)

Forbes.com: [Military Explains News Propaganda in Iraq](#)

Freepaz: [U.S. propaganda effort described](#)

[KR Washington Bureau: U.S. military pays Iraqis for positive news stories on war](#)

LA Times: [Secret Program May Have Erred, Pentagon Says](#)

GovExec.com: [What's Lincoln Group?](#)

LA Times: [U.S. Military Covertly Pays to Run Stories in Iraqi Press](#)

[Military Says It Paid Iraq Papers for News](#)

DO YOU FEEL SAFER FROM TERROR YET? MUST BE THAT WARM AND FUZZY 'PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATION' FEELING!! (sorry that was tacky.

This pisses me off)

Bribery scandal has many tentacles! [Rep. Harris to donate contributions linked to Cunningham](#). Florida schemes? Of course! The [Cunningham bribery scandal extends into the area of Pentagon defense spending](#) -- and shadowy contributions leading to classified spending contracts (MZM gives cash to Duke, Duke hooks up open-ended contracts). Josh Marshall recently insinuated that people 'looked the other way' at what Cunningham was doing, while their own machinations around Defense sailed forth. Money quote:

The Pentagon's classified budget for buying goods and services has increased by nearly 48% since 9/11 — from \$18.2 billion in fiscal 2002 to \$26.9 billion this year — according to figures compiled by the non-partisan Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments.

.....Harold Relyea, who studies government secrecy at the Congressional Research Service, says even if lawmakers had the time to study classified programs, most are not inclined to question the pet projects of their colleagues. And within the defense industry, **"there is a coziness that sometimes builds up. You are familiar with the company and their people, it's easy to go back to them" for more work. "It's a new phase of what we used to call the military-industrial complex."**

Neither Congress nor the executive branch regularly produces reports on oversight of classified spending. ... "We don't have the manpower or time to look into this, so we take it on faith that all of the companies working the black world are basically honest."

One of Porter Goss' boys at the CIA is apparently implicated in the Cunningham scandal, and other guys at the CIA are talking to the media about it. (Goss brought in a bunch of nasty national security punks to push people around at the Agency, and perhaps it will backfire since they were

somewhat corrupt. Office politics from hell!) [Jason Vest reports on this for GovExec.com](#) about the details, including CIA executive director Kyle "Dusty" Foggo, who ought to go down on this.

[Josh Marshall's on it too](#), as well as [Laura Rozen](#). Marshall adds that legislative spending '[earmarks](#)' [have been used to provide patronage](#) / funding for favored companies, maintaining the Power Structure.

BIG RED: [China: Boom or Boomerang?](#)

CFR: Council of Frickin' IDIOTS: Bush speaks at the CFR yesterday, and they were [weak](#) about it. [Atrios mocks](#).

Psychological & economic damage of war: [Coping with Combat](#). "[Has 'War' become a leading brand for United States?](#) How Bush's imperial policies are being linked to economic woes and CEO angst in America".

Wiki bad! To spoof Wikipedia's latest problems, consider Uncyclopedia and its fine [CNN](#), [Nostradamus](#) and [German grammar](#) entries.

Misc file: Dems still [polling damn well](#). Haaretz says, [OK Sharon, what about the damn West Bank outposts!](#)? Guess I finally found the [vast right wing conspiracy](#). Pointers from Hunter on [how to write massively for the DailyKos](#). Ah, good stuff. Hunter is always pretty cool.

Spin Charting for Fun! Part of the new liberal institutions' priorities are to track the subtle points of spin. For example, ThinkProgress got [Bush Knew 10 Marines Had Died Prior To Rose Garden Remarks, Didn't Mention It](#) because he wanted to keep the happy spin going.

[Alito in trouble](#). Don't really care.

Torture vs the media: Project Censored presents [Hard Evidence of US Torturing Prisoners to Death Ignored by Corporate Media](#). Even the WaPo says [Rice offers a weak defense of torture](#).

[Skyscrapers and carbon sequestration schemes may cause earthquakes](#). The world's tallest tower in Taipei may have cracked open a fault line. Ouch.

Microsmish: [IE flaw lets intruders into Google Desktop](#). [Xbox 360 is lacking in some good features](#). SO much damn hype.

Persian Atom Smash: [Iran Plans to Build Two More Reactors](#). Look to Khuzestan for the potential "[FIRST FRONT IN THE WAR ON IRAN](#)."

Now we've got some mothafuckin' scandals. Have fun kids.

Posted by HongPong at [09:10 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Iraq](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Security](#) , [Tracking election irregularities](#)

December 07, 2005

Madsen: Discreet top political / intel torture meeting today in DC

[Posted at the DailyKos](#). I wonder if it will get any bounce, or just slide through the torrent of diaries...

Wayne Madsen (maverick/somewhat conspiratorial) DC journalist, [reports](#) that a major meeting of defense and intelligence personnel, including John McCain, are quietly meeting later today to come up with some kind of answer on the torture problem. This in turn has sparked investigation from the Pentagon, according to Madsen.

Retired generals and admirals subject to special investigation by Pentagon surveillance/ intelligence team. Retired top U.S. generals and admirals planning to attend a December 7 meeting at the Ritz Carlton Hotel in Pentagon City, an office and hotel complex next to the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia, have drawn the interest of a special investigation by special agents of the Department of Defense. According to informed sources, the meeting, described as a "retreat," is to be attended by a number of former members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, former heads of intelligence agencies, and key members of the U.S. Congress, including Sen. John McCain...

I offer this with some caveats, below....

The generic subject of the meeting is torture and detaining of prisoners. The meeting is strictly a "no media" event, according to individuals familiar with its planning. Pentagon agents have called individuals who have been invited to the meeting and inquired about details and the involvement of active duty officers. One agent, Special Agent Fred Shaw, said to be with Defense Department security and coordinating his activities with Pentagon Inspector General Steve Anthony, also made contact with local police departments asking for assistance in tracking the movements of some of the invited attendees. The Rumsfeld Pentagon is clearly interested in the meeting and the identities of the some 40 invited attendees.

Personally, I always take his stuff with a grain of salt, but I think this guy has kicked around long enough to come up with some weird and deep sources. He has been [around](#) for a while.

Supposedly, diaries involving Madsen stuff have been banned because they are unreasonably conspiratorial -- and he's [vented a bit at the DailyKos community](#). Is this true? What does this say about DailyKos faith in the 'marketplace of ideas'? Indeed, such pieces as "[Texas to Florida: White House-linked clandestine operation paid for 'vote switching' software](#)" are difficult for anyone to believe, but we live in really weird times.

I would say that when the Pentagon has totally been exposed attempting to run psychological operations against the Iraqi public, and in turn Americans, then at the least we ought to give a moment's more thought to the weird world of intelligence disinformation and info warfare. I'm genuinely

interested if anyone can tell me how to really prove that someone like Madsen is just not worth paying any attention to.

In this case, well someone should get digging and see if this secret meeting checks out -- and see if the Pentagon routinely spies on high officials.

Finally, I'll add that he's published a number of pieces about [hard-working Americans in the intelligence community that have been squashed](#) -- in a sense he is charting the slow purging of intelligence professionals by neo-cons and other nasty types; for example, the Porter Goss CIA purges. There is also an interesting story (Dec. 3) about how MZM (the Cunningham bribers) were tampering with databases at the NSA to exaggerate threats, including the famous Aluminum Tubes.

Even if he is fabricating a lot of stuff, I can't help but feel that the general direction of his reporting reflects something real. Can we please dig into this and find out?

Posted by HongPong at [12:54 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Iraq](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [Security](#) , [War on Terror](#)

December 05, 2005

Shootings at the Quest; Late Mpls rapper on MySpace; Lieberman to replace Rumsfeld? Yah, ok.

There is talk on local hiphop site [D. U. Nation](#) about [the shootings at the Quest the other night](#). Citypages staffer Peter Scholtes just posted an [interesting account of the concert & incident](#). Forum member Tanqueray_Loccsta adds the improbable MySpace + Gangsta fusion:

Man they aint gonna close the quest, they got Mark Webster back. He's gonna clean it up just like he had it when I was a bouncer there. I was gonna work there with him but I got my own drama, Anyway I only got time for my Muzic from now on.

But for those that dont Know this street shit is real it no movie or t.v shit its mufuccas out here like myself that really lived this shit or still are living it now. And most beef that happens aint about someones shoes getting stepped on, or getting bumped into.

Its about real shit that took place in the streets and then you so happen to see the mufucca that fucced you over and its on right there. aint no fuccin talkin just drama.

The only fucced up part about it is it makes it hard for niggaz like me to do shows cuz they be scared of the type of crowd that will come. so the only cats that get the good venues are backpack rappers. no offence to yall...

but the streets are real.. shit My big bro O.G K-Wood just got murdered july 31st 2005 over north. check out his muzic at

<http://www.myspace.com/murda4hire>

this shit is real man mufuccas is gangstas 4 real man...

and it aint all superficial like ppl think it aint about being cool or tuff only ppl think that is on the outside looking in.

Tanqueray Loccsta says he's performing on Dec 13 at Minnesota Snipe's CD release party. I'd never seen a MySpace site in memory of a slain guy from the North Side -- complete with some of his tracks. It seems like a good idea, to make sure there's a spot on the Internet where their loss is marked, with music that celebrates them.

DailyKos says today that there are rumors that [Bush has considered a jolt of Joementum to replace Rumsfeld](#). Yes, Joe Lieberman could run the Pentagon. It doesn't really seem plausible. I can't believe they would go Joe rather than find someone more tough-looking. Lieberman is horrible, and kos points out it would free Senate Democrats from his the grip of his nasty faux-centralism, but I don't know.

Given the circumstances I would really like a SecDef who was A) competent and experienced B) not murderously senile. I actually believe that the Republicans could come up with someone like that, but sadly they probably won't.

Speaking of the DKos, the [site went down for a while when the server was being moved in a van](#), and a dog sniffed an apparent bomb that was actually cologne or something. So the government got them down for a while on a false positive.

Everyone's on a hair trigger?

Posted by HongPong at [07:46 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Minnesota](#) , [Music](#) , [The White House](#) , [War on Terror](#)

November 30, 2005

Post-Holiday Situation: world's still jumbled, the cat is watching. "Nothing is true, everything is permitted."



This was an excellent holiday weekend for me, caught up with lots of people, found out who is far-flung and to where. I will not gossip about the details, but I feel like I'm properly in touch with most of my circles of friends nowadays, which makes me feel much more comfortable in my skin.

Drunk fun with the office copy machine -- [who has to fix it afterwards?](#)

[NATIONAL JOURNAL: Key Bush Intelligence Briefing Kept From Hill Panel](#)

Ten days after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, President Bush was told in a highly classified briefing that the U.S. intelligence community had **no evidence linking the Iraqi regime of Saddam Hussein to the attacks** and that there was scant credible evidence that Iraq had any significant collaborative ties with Al Qaeda, according to government records and current and former officials with firsthand knowledge of the matter.

The hit parade continues. More via [Booman Tribune](#) and [DKos](#). The details are ugly and incriminating.

[Tony Blair is going to pieces.](#)

Smokin in the coal mine: Peter Gartrell wrote a [story carried in quite a few papers about a program to get coal miners to quit smoking](#). Their lungs must be in terrible shape anyway...

Air Power in Iraq: Sudden talk that the US will withdraw ground forces and perhaps grant Iraqis the power to call in airstrikes, as [Sy Hersh put in the New Yorker](#) put it (as covered by [the Guardian](#), [Stygius](#), [DailyKos](#) - with terrifying bits from a CNN Hersh interview, and [as always Juan Cole](#)). Bush is having some messianic visions again, but hey, at least [Ahmadi-Nejad is too](#).

More headline chunks: [US says Iraq insurgents can be 'part of solution'](#): US 're-evaluates' its position after initially expressed dissatisfaction with Cairo meeting statement 'right of people to resistance'. Juan Cole talks about [what the insurgents told the CIA in Cairo](#).

In the broader context, [Bush really did want al-Jazeera gone](#) when he purportedly suggested bombing it. Crazy old neo-con [Frank Gaffney approves of bombing al Jazeera](#). And [Michael Jackson blames the Jews for his money woes](#).

Interesting site: [DefenseTech](#). With regards to the Syria thing, [UN chief: Arab leaders worried Syria could become the next Iraq](#). [19 different UAVs](#)

[operate in Iraq](#), but how many can solve the situation? On the plus side, a [UAV to deliver medical supplies has been invented](#).

Zarqawi-Goldstein, part 239: the great terrorist is a cartoon character. It was [doubted last year](#). And [Marshall puts a bit in on that](#). Less skeptical, [the Zarqawi dilemma](#).

The [Pentagon said that White Phosphorus was a chemical weapon](#), when Saddam was using it. How ironic. (this is the [declassified doc](#)) JawaReport on [Iraq Gun Porn: Which Guns Suck, Which Guns Rock](#). The [Rummy-Blitzer exchange is amazing](#).

This is sort of funny. The *Weekly Standard* is going to save the day and [prove that Saddam had WMDs and was in fact, Osama's boyfriend](#). Good work. Daou gives us [the ten major pro-war fallacies](#) in case we forgot.

For the obsessively detail oriented, [Lesser Neocons of L'Affaire Plame](#) (featuring our man 'Clean Break' Wurmser). Fortunately I merely skimmed it. Raimondo cackles about the [Feast of Scandal](#) for Thanksgiving.

[Raimondo also pokes around the waters of anti-Semitism](#) that apparently are now getting somehow spun towards Chris Matthews -- as an excuse for Scooter leaking him Valerie Plame's name. I am not sure this makes sense. However, Raimondo adds that Wilson once said the following:

"The real agenda in all of this of course, was to redraw the political map of the Middle East. Now that is code, whether you like it or not, but it is **code for putting into place the strategy memorandum that was done by Richard Perle** and his study group in the mid-90's which was called, '[A Clean Break: A New Strategy for the Realm](#).' And what it is – cut to the quick – **is if you take out some of these countries, some of these governments that are antagonistic to Israel then you provide the Israeli government with greater wherewithal to impose its terms and conditions upon the Palestinian people** – whatever those terms and conditions might be. In other words, the road to peace in the Middle East goes through Baghdad and Damascus. Maybe Tehran. And maybe Cairo and maybe Tripoli if these guys actually have their way. Rather than going through Jerusalem."

So the anti-Clean Break Conspiracy was also anti-Semitic, which legitimized leaking Plame's name?

Crazed Mercenaries and their video cameras: There is apparently some creepy video of Iraqi [civilian cars getting blown up by the good folks at Aegis Defence Services](#), a privatized military firm set up Lt Col Tim Spicer -- the former director of [Sandline International](#), a defunct company that used to sell arms to the guys in Sierra Leone, along the shadier side of geopolitics. [AegisIraq.co.uk](#) was the site the video was on. ([CSM on the story](#))

There is of course pretty much no congressional oversight of the vast mercenary army in Iraq. (more on [Aegis](#), [Sandline](#) and [Executive Outcomes](#) - here's [even more!](#)) The more one thinks about private armies, the more it seems like an amazingly self-reinforcing arrangement. Capitalism-squared, you might say.

[Kurt Vonnegut said that terrorist die for their own self-respect](#). That is fairly insightful, but of course [draws flack from much wiser keyboard commandos](#).

"What George Bush and his gang did not realise was that people fight back. Peace wasn't restored in Vietnam until we got kicked out. Everything's quiet there now."

There's a long pause before Vonnegut speaks again: "**It is sweet and noble - sweet and honourable I guess it is - to die for what you believe in.**"

....I ask one more question: "But terrorists believe in twisted religious things, don't they? So surely that can't be right?"

"Well, they're dying for their own self-respect," Vonnegut fires back. "It's a terrible thing to deprive someone of their self-respect. It's [like] your culture is nothing, your race is nothing, you're nothing."

There's another long pause and Vonnegut's eyes suggest his mind has wandered off somewhere. Then, suddenly, he turns back to me and says: "It must be an amazing high."

[The CIA wants Dr. Phil's tactics for Guantanamo](#). Well, maybe it's an improvement.

The UK Ministry of Defense complains that [farmers are shining lights at their Apache helicopters](#) around Dorset -- and they think this could cause a crash. Huh.

Iran Spring?? (Foreign Policy) [Realists Tighten Grip as Talks Open with Iran by Jim Lobe](#). Why bother getting into the gory details? But I will say that Lobe is really an excellent source on this stuff & the neo-cons. Basically the point is that the neo-cons have been discredited, and the 'realists' are getting the upper hand finally.

Washington's growing reliance on and support for regional diplomacy marks a serious setback to neo-conservatives who, long before the Iraq war, had championed the unilateral imposition of a Pax Americana in the Middle East that would put an end to what in their view constituted **the chief threats to Israel's security -- Arab nationalism and Iranian theocracy**.

Now, two and a half years after invading Iraq to put that peace into place, the **administration finds itself seeking the support of both forces**, just as the realists had warned.

Check out this [huge statement that Iran purchased](#) in the NY Times. In particular that they haven't started a war of aggression against their neighbors in 250 years. I think that the way that various parties have managed the ethnic groups on the periphery was not exactly polite over that time... either way the demonization will continue.

BBC: [Doubts grow over US Afghan strategy](#).

Internet hug transmission: [Scientists in Singapore are developing a way to 'transmit hugs' over the Internet through vibrating jackets.](#)

[The Drunkard's Guide to Poker.](#) [What if hackers ruled the world?](#) [New Firefox.](#) [Something in the ocean goes Boing.](#)

Big Bang in Israel: It's very big news that [Sharon has decided to quit the Likud Party](#) and go for elections. Alongside this, there is a younger leftist in charge of the Labor Party now, so suddenly the meanest part of the Israeli right-wing -- the faction that opposed even the Gaza pullout -- will likely find itself without any power in the next Israeli government.



Let me press all these Haaretz headlines together into one mush. [11 Israelis injured, at least 4 Hezbollah gunmen killed in failed kidnap attempt.](#) [Hezbollah releases video footage of \[last\] Monday's fighting.](#) [PM to offer PA independence for security.](#) [Eyeing Likud leadership, Mofaz, Shalom lambaste Netanyahu.](#) [Israel maintains its strategic advantage, says Jaffee Center.](#) [Poll: 25% of settlers east of fence prepared to leave homes.](#)



Oh Sharon: graphic from excellent Haaretz article. "[Sharon knows the Likud was not a done deal.](#)" [Palestinians hopeful after political volcano.](#) [Analysis / Where politics and security meet:](#) A very interesting bit about when Israeli internal politics and the Hezbollah thing collide in real-time. [Sharon aides: PM planning far-reaching diplomatic initiatives.](#) [Ariel Sharon's new faction is a one-term party.](#)

[Settlers throw stones at Palestinian homes in Hebron.](#) [Palestinians reported that settlers cut down 200 olive trees near Nablus.](#) Nothing quite like olive tree-based warfare.

In Israel, it's [the end of the Ashkenazi era](#)? Peretz is a Sephardi. But this I thought most interesting:

At the same time, will the end of the era of generals arrive, as well? Will the time come when the top political rank does not originate in the security forces? If the conflict with the Palestinians were to end, the entire agenda would change, and the relative advantage of the generals would be eliminated. Generals would no longer be able to move so easily between the highest echelons of the army, Mossad and Shin Bet, to the political leadership.

This is one of the reasons why the generals are in no rush to end the conflict. They know that one of the most powerful factors influencing the voters is fear. Which is why they try to frighten, to pump up the volume on threats, to brandish the Iranian missiles, to carry out targeted assassinations and to **always, but always, keep the finger close to the trigger.** Conversely, a

civilian leader does not view the other side through the gunsight, and his chances of resolving the conflict are therefore better.

[Private prisons are coming to Israel](#). What could go wrong? The article notes that private prisons are second only to America's high tech sector as a growth industry. A parallel thought:

"Private prisons are not the only reason for this increase, but there is no doubt that their **lobbying activity is one of the reasons for the increasing stringency of punishment and the increase in the number of prisoners**," says attorney Aviv Wasserman, the head of the human rights division at the Academic College of Law in Ramat Gan, whose petition to the High Court of Justice against the decision to establish a private prison here is still pending.

The UK's Foreign Office and the EU leaked a document harshly critical of expanding Jewish settlements in the Jerusalem area. The EU heads of mission around there believe that all these settlements could radicalize local Palestinians, and indeed likely cause more terrorism to occur. Yet another logical reason that settlements are totally insane. [Israel calls the Foreign Office 'unrelentingly pro-Palestinian.'](#) The [document, which reflects the views of many European diplomats](#), specifically bears a lot on the E1 Ma'ale Adumim settlement that I [detailed here a while ago](#).

Russian missiles: You have to love the Russians and their missiles. They have made a [new one that can change around in midflight and deploy decoys](#). Nice.

Wow, [Cunningham really knew how to take bribes with gusto](#). Lots of [spreading probes](#).

Banning foreigners that the Bush Administration doesn't like: Believe it or not, a huge proportion of America's most valuable inhabitants were not born here, nor did they march in an acceptably quiet lock-step with the Nixon, Ford or Reagan Administrations when they got here.

Indeed, a common theme of American history has been blaming foreigners for their weird and subversive politics poisoning our fair landscape, so now we must understand why it was a terrible idea to let the Jews, Italians and Irish in here in the first place.

Nowadays, the Muslims threaten to pray at weird times of day here, and lecture university students on ancient battles and esoteric organizations like the [Cult of the Assassins](#). THIS SHALL NOT STAND. And when the Irish, Hebrews, Muslims, Italians, Chinese and the Cajun French and the Koreans and the Mexicans are all finally gone, we will look around at a desolate land and wonder where all the good restaurants went.

So I heartily [approve that the US is banning academics and accusing them of supporting terrorism](#). If we do not maintain the purity of our precious bodily fluids, then the terrorists win.

(here's a link purporting an [Assassin-Al Qaeda conspiracy link](#), at Rotten.com of all places! Ha! Oh wait, the Assassins were Shi'a, so it's nonsense - but the [structure of the secret society is interesting](#). Nothing's True, everything is permitted :-))

Posted by HongPong at [12:00 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Iraq](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [The White House](#) , [Usual Nonsense](#)

November 29, 2005

Hersh: Covert War extends into Syria

Ah, for the longest time I have been speculating that they were going to let the war spill into Syria, under the ridiculous assertion that this would somehow improve the Situation. Finally Sy Hersh has said that we have gone in... Oh boy, what ever the fuck could go wrong? (and who approved of Attacking Syria, exactly? Congress??)

There is a lot of terrible stuff in here.

[UP IN THE AIR](#)
[by SEYMOUR M. HERSH](#)

Where is the Iraq war headed next?

...."The President is more determined than ever to stay the course," the former defense official said. "He doesn't feel any pain. Bush is a believer in the adage 'People may suffer and die, but the Church advances.' " He said that the President had become more detached, leaving more issues to Karl Rove and Vice-President Cheney. "**They keep him in the gray world of religious idealism, where he wants to be anyway,**" the former defense official said. Bush's public appearances, for example, are generally scheduled in front of friendly audiences, most often at military bases. Four decades ago, President Lyndon Johnson, who was also confronted with an increasingly unpopular war, was limited to similar public forums. "Johnson knew he was a prisoner in the White House," the former official said, "**but Bush has no idea.**"

.....

Meanwhile, as the debate over troop reductions continues, the covert war in Iraq has expanded in recent months to Syria. A composite American Special Forces team, known as an S.M.U., for "special-mission unit," has been ordered, under stringent cover, to **target suspected supporters of the Iraqi insurgency across the border**. (The Pentagon had no comment.) "It's a powder keg," the Pentagon consultant said of the tactic. "But, if we hit an insurgent network in Iraq without hitting the guys in Syria who are part of it, the guys in Syria would get away. When you're fighting an insurgency, **you have to strike everywhere—and at once.**"

Another part of the article points out the fears among many in the military if American air power is provided to the Iraqis, meaning the "Iraqi government" -- and whichever tinpot tribal leader is in control that Thursday

-- will be able to order American airstrikes on whichever 'terrorist' sect they choose.

So in both instances, force spiraling out of control. But what else is new?

Posted by HongPong at [01:42 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Iraq](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Security](#) , [War on Terror](#)

October 13, 2005

White House breakdown: psychological warfare gets ya in trouble; plus things always weird in Damascus

[Crony Jobs - Choice government careers for the taking. No experience necessary.](#)

[ABC News: Gore: I Don't Plan to Run for President](#)

Reuters: [Judy Miller testifies.](#)

AntiWar.com picked up a couple new columnists. Charles Peña starts up with "[A New York State of Mind](#)" pointing out the various fallacies in the GWOT these days.

Rove looking doomed: Is there some kind of rebellion or conflict between Bush's Chief of Staff Andy Card and Karl Rove, as [Howard Fineman was speculating](#) on Hardball? [Billmon reflects, after meeting Card quite a few times over the years](#), and finding him dense and basically a patsy, asks if that's not what he's going to be now.

How did we get to this point? [Fitzgerald got appointed when some Justice lawyers on the Plame case raised concerns that Rove wasn't being entirely truthful](#), and they pointed out that Ashcroft and Rove had an old history of helping each other out in politics. They managed to force Ashcroft to appoint Fitz, the special prosecutor. The investigation seems to be going wider into [WHIG - the White House Iraq Group](#), an organization I suppose I've ignored relative to the more attractive Office of Special Plans. Either way... [Libby withheld key info from investigators](#). Some rumors that [Fitzgerald is trying to get the Grand Jury extended](#). Wilson directly [accused the WHIG group](#) of being the center of the effort (via [Corrente](#)):

Wilson: [The White House Iraq Group] would be the natural group because they were constituted to spin the war, so they would be naturally the ones to try to deflect criticism. Now, some of those people would have very high security clearances.

Naturally word is caroming around the blog world that finally the circle on the war lies might be closed. Digby puts out [a timeline of exposures](#) (the late David Kelly in the UK, Wilson here) against the lies of the war's architects,

prompting their retaliation. Josh Marshall has done a lot on [exposing how the White House propped up the original Niger yellowcake forgeries themselves](#).

He's added links to ex-military analyst Sam Gardiner's "[Truth from These Podia: Summary of a Study of Strategic Influence, Perception Management, Strategic Information Warfare and Strategic Psychological Operations in Gulf II](#)," [PDF parts [1](#) [2](#) [3](#) [4](#) [5](#) [6](#)] essentially making the case that weapons of psychological warfare - information warfare, disinformation etc. - were turned on the American public for the first time in the leadup to this war. And the anthrax stories distorted to amplify fear. Well I think that it's a little bit far to say it was the first time - it seems to happen a lot. Gardiner says that the US and UK fabricated or distorted at least 50 identifiable stories about the war. Yeah. As Digby quotes:

According to Gardiner, "It was not bad intelligence" that led to the quagmire in Iraq, "It was an orchestrated effort [that] began before the war" that was designed to mislead the public and the world. Gardiner's research led him to conclude that the US and Britain had conspired at the highest levels to plant "stories of strategic influence" that were known to be false.

The Times of London described the \$200-million-plus US operation as a "meticulously planned strategy to persuade the public, the Congress, and the allies of the need to confront the threat from Saddam Hussein."

The multimillion-dollar propaganda campaign run out of the White House and Defense Department was, in Gardiner's final assessment "irresponsible in parts" and "might have been illegal."

"Washington and London did not trust the peoples of their democracies to come to the right decisions," Gardiner explains. Consequently, "Truth became a casualty. When truth is a casualty, democracy receives collateral damage." For the first time in US history, "we allowed strategic psychological operations to become part of public affairs... [W]hat has happened is that information warfare, strategic influence, [and] strategic psychological operations pushed their way into the important process of informing the peoples of our two democracies."

Meanwhile on CNN today, they were running the hell out of an [Amanpour interview with Bashar Assad](#), and I found that the excerpts selected from the whole thing were interesting... I had the TV on in the background much of the day, and they changed bits of the excerpts around, but it isn't surprising the stuff they focused on - the direct accusations about loose borders, the Hariri assassination, avoiding any talk about the Palestinians.

Bush keeps [threatening Syria over and over](#). Right after the interview the [Syrian interior minister turned up dead in his office](#) with a gunshot to the head. [SyriaComment.com](#) by academic Joshua Landis is very much worth looking at. [Was it suicide or murder?](#)

Was Ghazi Kanaan setting himself up to be Bashar's alternative? Could he have been the Alawite "Musharraf" that some American's and Volker Perthes suggested would take power from the House of Asad and bring Syria back into America's and the West's good graces. I have heard from several

people that "high ranking Syrians" have been complaining to people at the National Security Council and elsewhere that they are very distressed by the mistakes Bashar al-Asad has made and the terrible state of US-Syrian relations.

Could Ghazi have been setting himself up as the alternative to Bashar? Could the Syrian government believe he might have been? We don't know, but here goes the possible speculation. He is known to have had good relations with Washington, when he held the Lebanon portfolio. He visited DC. Two of his four sons went to George Washington University in DC.

Kanaan was reported to have been one of the "Old Guard" who spoke out against the extension of Emile Lahoud's presidency in Lebanon, which set the stage for Lebanon's Cedar revolution and the assassination of P.M. Rafiq Hariri. **He had been one of the Syrians responsible for cultivating Hariri and building up his position in Lebanon.** He was also accused of having significant business relations in Lebanon which tied him to Hariri. It is unlikely that he was involved in Hariri's murder, having been a Hariri and not Lahoud supporter.

His relations with Lahoud were strained, and Lahoud reportedly was one of the people who insisted that he be removed from the Lebanon file and replaced by Rustum Ghazali. (Told me by Nick Blanford of the Christian Science Monitor, who is writing a book on Hariri.)

Since the June Baath Party Conference, it has been rumored that Ghazi would lose his Cabinet position as Minister of Interior, where he had been causing quite a ruckus.

Kanaan was the most senior Alawi official left in government of the Hafiz's generation. He had served as an intelligence chief and minister of interior giving him influence over and knowledge of all branches of the security forces - intelligence and police. **If Washington were to turn to anyone to carry out a coup against Bashar, it would have to place Ghazi Kanaan on the top of its list.**

Also there is a very interesting "[note from a Syrian dissident](#)" about why a coup in Syria is unlikely. And [three interesting views](#) on what the Bush Administration might be plotting, including reports that the Pentagon is secretly planning to bomb Syrian villages along the Euphrates River.

Oil production in Iraq has [collapsed to 1.9 million barrels/day](#), down from 2.6 million before the war. Guess who profits?

Condi gets a GF? There was a weird thing on Fox News where an [anchor interviewing Condoleeza Rice encouraged her to check out another anchor](#) (another [story here](#)), Lauren Green, who used to be on Channel 5 here in Minnesota, as well as Miss Minnesota. There was a funny story in Radar about "[Bush's closet heterosexuals](#)." I didn't realize that Ken Mehlman refused to go on record saying that he liked women. It comes up in the context of California Rep. David Dreier, who was apparently pushed aside from the Republican leadership because people had the perception he was gay, which the major local media in California refuses to address. As the story concludes:

It would be the height of hypocrisy for a conservative to embrace her party's most extreme views while simultaneously embracing a member of the same sex. The GOP rank and file takes its values seriously. Just imagine the outrage were Rush Limbaugh revealed to be a drug addict, William Bennett

a compulsive gambler, Gary Bauer a philanderer, Strom Thurmond the father of a illegitimate black child, or George Bush a coke fiend. They'd never work in this town again.



Former Marine spokesman Josh Rushing, who is getting a reporter gig at the new English Al Jazeera, was labeled "TRAITOR?" by Fox on-screen. Hilarious. Thanks, MediaMatters.

Miss Universe contestants are full of national/ethnic contradictions reflecting our modern globalized world. Huzzah. What did world leaders look like as children (via IranDefence.net, oddly enough)? In your random Internet style humor JeffK's Brand New Hoempage!!! Thanks, SomethingAwful. Also The Onion tells us that 92 Percent of Souls in Hell There on Drug Charges.

Frank Rich: The Faith-Based President Defrocked. At least we can still get NY Times columnists through devious bastards like TruthOut.

TShirtHell announces that if you get kicked off a plane wearing one of their T-Shirts, they'll take care of transporting you! This in response to a woman that was kicked off a plane for wearing an anti-Bush shirt on Southwest Airlines in Reno.

Posted by HongPong at 01:46 AM | Comments (0) Relating to Humor , International Politics , Iraq , Military-Industrial Complex

October 03, 2005

The Dark Crest of Corruption Breaks: DeLay; Franklin/AIPAC GUILTY; "covert propaganda"; Libby nailed for Valerie Plame leak. Feeling Fat & Happy, moving to MPLS.



There have been so many scandals breaking this week that I've really got Intrigue Fatigue:

Frank Luntz, who helped develop the "Contract With America" message that swept Republicans to power in 1994, was on the Hill last week warning the party faithful that they could lose both the House and the Senate in next year's congressional elections.

Har har har... Blogs for Bush darkly rambles about Democrats wishing for civil

war. Fortunately, I scored a new apartment at the edge of downtown Minneapolis with Colin Kennedy. The apartment windows are just above the street signs in this photo. It's at Apartment 200, 32 Spruce Place, the "Haverhill Apartments", which is around the Laurel Village area. Basically to get there, you drive up Hennepin past the Minneapolis Community &

[Technical College](#) and take a left onto Harmon Place, then go a block. It is right there on the first corner in. Not bad!

First, the Covert Propaganda. Let's put that in bold. **Covert Propaganda.** It is not getting much bounce on the TV news because there is too much going on. But I like it. See [AFP](#) or [NY Times](#):

Federal auditors said on Friday that the Bush administration violated the law by buying favorable news coverage of President Bush's education policies, by making payments to the conservative commentator Armstrong Williams and by hiring a public relations company to analyze media perceptions of the Republican Party.

In a blistering report, the investigators, from the Government Accountability Office, said **the administration had disseminated "covert propaganda" in the United States**, in violation of a statutory ban.

Then, Valerie Plame and the War Propaganda. Meanwhile they started a war based on fabricated propaganda. I think I know which is worse. But they didn't like it when uppity ponks like Joe Wilson tried to deflate some of their more outlandish claims, so they smeared him by outing his wife as a CIA operative, which in their demented cocktail-party worldview somehow was thought to be a good idea. But who did this? Michael Ledeen? (well he [quite possibly involved with the Yellowcake forgeries](#) themselves, but...) Joe Wilson wasted no time in insinuating that Karl Rove and I. Lewis 'Scooter' Libby were involved, and I had this thing fairly well pegged back in 2003. Nearly two years ago, October 4, 2003, '[Everyone's National Disaster](#)' I said:

The leaker went after Wilson to intimidate anyone else who might attack the Bush folks falsification of war intelligence. **Let me offer a prediction about who was probably behind the leak: the Vice President's Chief of Staff, Scooter Libby.** There have been insiders saying that the bad guy works in the Executive Office Building, where Cheney's people are. If I'm right about this, I definitely win a cookie.

(although on [antiwar.com](#) they had it pegged back then too - that was certainly one of my sources) I will award myself a cookie now. A fine headline from the WaPo: "[Role of Rove, Libby in CIA Leak Case Clearer: Bush and Cheney Aides' Testimony Contradicts Earlier White House Statement](#)". And so now they are saying, let's [look at bringing in CONSPIRACY charges](#). Har har (via a [happy Billmon](#))!

A new theory about Fitzgerald's aim has emerged in recent weeks from two lawyers who have had extensive conversations with the prosecutor while representing witnesses in the case. They surmise that Fitzgerald is considering whether he can bring charges of a criminal conspiracy perpetrated by a group of senior Bush administration officials. Under this legal tactic, Fitzgerald would attempt to establish that at least two or more officials agreed to take affirmative steps to discredit and retaliate against Wilson and leak sensitive government information about his wife. To prove a criminal conspiracy, the actions need not have been criminal, but conspirators must have had a criminal purpose.

Naturally folks are drooling over the opportunity to see who in the White House could actually be indicted. Dkos writer [DC Poli Sci outlines how back in the Watergate days](#), the prosecutors wanted to avoid setting a precedent of indicting the President, so fortunately they had bi-partisan support for impeachment, an option not open these days. A very good place to start looking at the matter. An (actual) [psychoanalyst looks at Bush's general destructive tendencies](#) - and how he might lash out if Karl Rove et al. are threatened by Fitzgerald's CIA probe:

Why this matters now is the possible reaction of Bush to Fitzgerald's next serious move. My fear is that the inner emptiness in Bush will respond with absolute panic to the potential loss of Rove and his other pals. Panic in a sadist who believes in the apocalypse is something serious about which we all should be worried.

It would be funny if it weren't so obviously alarming. So would [Fitzgerald bring charges against Libby](#)? Froomkin in the WaPo has many bits about [Miller's Big Secret](#).

[Haaretz](#): **U.S. officials eye possible Assad successors in Syria:**

The sources added that senior American officials, in recent conversations with their Israeli counterparts, have expressed interest in Israel's assessments of Assad's possible successors, **asking who Israel thought could replace him and still maintain Syria's stability**. American officials said that their impression from these conversations was that Israel would prefer to have a weakened Assad, vulnerable to international pressure, remain in power, and is unenthusiastic about the possibility of a regime change in Syria.

The Israelis' impression was that America's main concern is the flow of terrorists into Iraq via Syria, rather than the threat posed by the Syrian-backed Hezbollah organization in Lebanon. But Washington, like Jerusalem, is eagerly awaiting the results of the Hariri investigation, and will not decide what to do about Syria until the findings have been published.

AIPAC Your ass, bitches!!! Funny stuff. Former Pentagon analyst (under [Douglas Feith](#) and the [Office of Special Plans](#), part of the time) [Larry Franklin is going to plead guilty to passing classified defense intelligence to AIPAC](#) staffers, who in turn passed it along to Israeli intelligence agents at the embassy in Washington. [AP story on it](#):

Rosen, a top lobbyist for Washington-based AIPAC for more than 20 years, and Weissman, the organization's top Iran expert, allegedly **disclosed sensitive information as far back as 1999 on a variety of topics**, including al-Qaida, terrorist activities in Central Asia, the bombing of Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia and U.S. policy in Iran, according to the indictment.

Presumably this means that he could really spill some beans on how AIPAC has operated as an agent of a foreign power (and probably as an espionage channel) while lobbying in DC. Justin Raimondo makes the 'maximalist' case that the Israeli government has, to some extent, been manipulating US policy. I think that "Israel's secret war on the US" goes a ways too far, but we are certainly looking at a serious Rabbit Hole of mysterious proportions.

Raimondo puts his favorite pieces together in "[AIPAC and Espionage: Guilty as Hell](#)":

The chief beneficiaries of the conquest of Iraq, and [subsequent](#) threats against both [Iran](#) and [Syria](#), have been, in descending order, [Israel](#), [Iran](#), and [Osama bin Laden](#). Al-Qaeda has used the invasion as a [recruiting tool](#) and [training ground](#) for its global jihad against the United States. Iran has [extended its influence](#) deep into southern Iraq and has [penetrated](#) the central government in Baghdad. In the long run, however, [Israel benefits the most](#), as a major Middle Eastern Arab country fragments into at least three pieces and the U.S. military is [ineluctably drawn](#) into neighboring countries.

While the U.S. imposes an occupation [eerily reminiscent](#) of Israel's longstanding occupation of Palestinian lands and prepares to deal with Israel's enemies in the region, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon makes [major incursions](#) into the West Bank, even while supposedly "[withdrawing](#)" from Gaza. In the meantime, the political and military bonds between the U.S. and Israel are strengthened, as the two allies present an indissoluble united front against the entire Muslim world.

Except the alliance is far from indissoluble, as the AIPAC spy scandal reveals. The U.S.-Israeli relationship, often described as "[special](#)," is rather more ambiguous than is generally recognized, both by Israel's staunchest friends and its most implacable enemies. This has come out in Israel's funneling American military technology [to China](#), and the threat of American [sanctions](#), but was also made manifest earlier by [indications](#) that **Israel was conducting extensive spying operations in the U.S. prior to 9/11** – suspicions that are considerably strengthened by the AIPAC spy brouhaha. Israel's secret war against America has so far been conducted in the dark, but the Rosen-Weissman trial will expose these night creatures to the light of day. Blinking and cursing, they'll be confronted with their treason, and, even as they whine that "everybody does it," the story of [how](#) and [why](#) a cabal of foreign agents came to exert so much influence on the shape of U.S. foreign policy will be told.

In the course of bending American policy to the Israelis' will, they had to compromise the national security of the United States – and that's what tripped them up, in the end.

Again, this is not my basic opinion about the situation, but it ought to be considered. On the flip side, [Juan Cole reacts to Raimondo by pointing out that in Washington, it is ALL interest group politics](#), but when there is no wealthy counter-interest group to given foreign countries (like pro-Likud groups or anti-Castro Cubans) then U.S. policy gets incredibly one-sided and stupid. With [the memorable headline "A Government of War Criminals, A Press of Agents Provocateurs, A Bureaucracy of Foreign Spies:"](#)

I wish the argument were more nuanced, and there are many things in it with which I disagree (David Satterfield is likely to have been a relatively innocent bystander in this train wreck, e.g.). But because Raimundo pulls no punches, he forces us to consider the degree to which Congressional foreign policy on the Middle East in particular has become virtually captive to the Zionist lobby (just as US policy toward Cuba is captive to the Cuban-American community and its lobby). He clearly goes too far, but how far should an analyst of this case go? [Billmon](#) is almost equally scathing.

One thing must be said, which is **that there is no sinister cabal, that all this is just single-interest politics**. The American system is one of checks and balances, and takes it for granted that there will be lobbies on both sides of an issue. But because there are no wealthy, organized, well-connected lobbies on the other side of AIPAC or the Cuban-American National Foundation (e.g.), **US government policy ends up being unbalanced and often irrational on those issues. And, AIPAC functions as a foreign agent in the US without having to register as such, and some of its major officers clearly have been deeply involved in espionage for Israel for years**. The last two points are uncontested. Is this really a situation that serves the American people? Franklin, the "go-to" man at the Pentagon for then Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, was trying to

get up a US war against Iran, and was soliciting AIPAC's help. We already know that Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon has tried as hard as he could to get the US into a war against Tehran. **Do the rest of us, who already have one military occupation of a Middle Eastern country we're not comfortable with, have any say at all in this?** Don't we need a PAC for Middle East Peace that could begin offsetting **AIPAC, the War PAC**? If the pro-Israeli lobby or the Israeli prime minister want wars in the Middle East, why don't they **fight them themselves**? By the way, AIPAC has for several years been attempting to get Congress to pass a law that would put it in charge of the Middle East professors, like myself, and in a position to punish our universities financially if any of us criticize it or Israeli policy. The most dangerous thing about key elements of the Zionist lobby is that they really do want to gut the US First Amendment when it comes to Israeli interests.

I hope everyone who reads this will consider writing their Congressional representatives and senators and asking them to work to see that AIPAC is made to register as the agent of a foreign power, given the repeated pattern whereby it acts as such.

So yeah, Billmon has had a [couple things](#) to say about the matter. I also liked this UPI bit "[Analysis: Netanyahu: US Opposes? So what?](#)" which talks about Netanyahu's campaign to capture some more settlements as part of his bid to take over the Likud Party. I won't quote it now, but if you want evidence of how an insane racial chauvinist campaigns in favor of territorial expansion, you've got it. On the flip side, [reflections about the peace movement in the broader Jewish community](#).

To hell with Des Moines: Finally the oh so productive 'retail politics' of Iowa and New Hampshire are finished as [Dems to Add Contests to 2008 Calendar](#) (via [the Kos](#)). So two more states will join IA and NH in the early set of primaries. I hope it's New York and California, or maybe Oregon and Montana. Or Mississippi and Kentucky. Whatever. Anything would be an improvement. [Montana governor Brian Schweitzer was named the nation's 2005 "Hot Governor"](#) by Rolling Stone but his story got axed. "'Since Hunter S. Thompson left, Rolling Stone hasn't been worth reading,' Schweitzer said," according to the article.

Able/Danger mystery continues: Newsday writes that the [Pentagon had some sorts of leads on lead 9/11 hijacker Mohammed Atta before the attack, but the defense intelligence program Able/Danger was shut down](#) and huge amounts of data got deleted. I've got an exciting conspiracy linked below about this, naturally!

Shaffer explained in a telephone interview that although Able/Danger never had knowledge of Atta's whereabouts, it had linked him and several other Al Qaeda suspects to an Egyptian terrorist, Sheik Omar Abdel-Rahman, who had been linked to the 1993 World Trade Center bombing and later was convicted for conspiring to attack the U.S. Atta arrived in the U.S. some seven years after that bombing. But Shaffer and his attorney, Mark Zaid, emphasize that Able/Danger never knew where Atta was, only that he was connected to Abdel-Rahman and Al Qaeda.

"Not to say they were physically here, but the data led us to believe there was some activity related to the original World Trade Center bombing that these guys were somehow affiliated with," Shaffer said.

...[Senator] **Specter sharply criticized the Pentagon for refusing to allow Shaffer, Phillpott, Smith and others who recall seeing the chart to appear and answer the committee's questions.** "It looks to me as if it could be obstruction of the committee's activities," the senator said. Specter added that he was especially "dismayed and frustrated" by the committee's inability to hear from Shaffer and Phillpott, whom he described as "two brave military officers [who] have risked their careers to come forward and tell America the truth."

Pentagon to permit testimony: Following the hearing, Specter announced that the Pentagon had agreed to allow Shaffer, Phillpott and three other witnesses to testify in public next month, though a Specter aide said Tuesday that the Pentagon now insisted the hearings be closed.

....Able/Danger was an experiment in a new kind of warfare, known as "information warfare" or "information dominance." One of the program's missions was to see whether Al Qaeda cells around the world could be identified by sifting huge quantities of publicly available data, a relatively new technique called "data mining."

The data miners used complex software programs, with names like Spire, Parentage and Starlight, that mimic the thought patterns in the human brain while parsing countless bits of information from every available source to find relationships and patterns that otherwise would be invisible.

Weird. Anyway the article also features some classic pre-9/11 bits such as the [Phoenix memo](#) and the arrest of [Zacharias Mussaoui](#) (so on the day of 9/11, the Minneapolis FBI had [Nicholas Berg's email password inside Mussaoui's laptop](#). Random but interesting.....)

War Porn: A very disturbing site called [nowthatsfuckedup.com](#) features images sent in by U.S. soldiers of dead people, blown to bits and so forth, from overseas, and this has been characterized as "[the new pornography of war](#)" (also [The Porn of War](#) at The Nation). Like any incredibly shady site, it's hosted in the Netherlands, so it's unlikely that lawyers can really get to them. It is *very* disturbing.

It seems like this is part of a very disturbing glorification of violence, using the aesthetic of death to provide meaning -- in other words, a surface manifestation of the inner emotional state that drives wars and murder. In contrast are the (**warning: very graphic links**) [other photo galleries](#) that can be found [online](#) that are intended to illustrate the horrors of Iraq, *in order to encourage an end to the conflict*. And there are those photos of [flag-draped coffins coming into Dover Air Force Base](#) in the United States that Bush was always [obsessed with hiding](#) from us. ([thememoryblog](#), by the way, is excellent for more news on censored and concealed news like this)

Zargawi-Goldstein update: I found another [story about the ghost-like, eerie quality of how the Abu Musab al Zarqawi figure continues to generate media reports](#), while everyday Jordanians doubt he's still alive at all. This was by Dahr Jamail, who also has the [Iraq casualty photo galleries](#) linked above.

IRAQ MESS - time to grab our marbles and book it: Reuters: "[Reuters says US troops obstruct reporting of Iraq.](#)" Now they are saying [there is ONE fully functional Iraqi battalion.](#) Great. Time to produce some kind of really important strategic benefit by [blowing the hell out of some town \(Sadah\) eight miles from the Syrian border.](#) I'm sure this will produce the same fine effects as the fourth time that the U.S. captured Samarra. [Classified documents are talking about withdrawal strategies.](#) "[US Generals Now See Virtues of a Smaller Troop Presence in Iraq.](#)" as in:

"the generals said the presence of U.S. forces was fueling the insurgency, fostering an undesirable dependency on American troops among the nascent Iraqi armed forces and energizing terrorists across the Middle East."

The WaPo says that well, [Bush is under pressure because Iraq is dissolving, and the Saudis are getting more vocal](#) about noting this in public, which is not their usual style at all:

For all the public confidence, however, the Bush administration in private is nervous about this sensitive last stage, which will establish whether Iraq's disparate religious and ethnic factions can stay together in a single nation — and whether civil war can be avoided, according to U.S. officials and experts on Iraq.

The administration has come under growing pressure at home and abroad over the past two weeks, with dire warnings from Arab allies and a prominent international group about the looming disintegration of Iraq. In an unusual public rebuke of U.S. policy, Saudi Arabia's foreign minister called a news conference in Washington last week to predict Iraq's dissolution. He said there is no leadership or momentum to pull Iraq's Shiites, Sunnis and Kurds back together and prevent a civil war. Other countries have expressed similar concerns in private, according to U.S. and Arab diplomats.

IRAQ Withdrawal Options Summary: Retired Lt. General William Odom adds that the Iraq war was "[greatest strategic disaster in United States history](#)". I mentioned [Odom's analysis of What's really wrong with 'cutting and running' earlier.](#) Michael Schwartz had a widely read reflection on why [immediate withdrawal would be the better option now.](#) [Juan Cole's list of ten war demands for Congress,](#) [Billmon's sullen yet wise perspective](#) and [Robert Dreyfuss' view](#) represent an excellent cross-section of thinking about the options for getting the U.S. away from this sorry vortex. Billmon's [view of the War Porn site finally pushed him over the edge](#) about the war, giving him the mental picture of growing, incipient Fascist tendencies in this country:

So I've been promising myself for a while now that I would break cover and at least admit that I'm not sure withdrawing from Iraq is the morally right thing to do, and have deep doubts about the arguments in favor of it.

But something happened on my way to a confession: I came across the Nation [article](#) on [nonwhatsfuckedup.com](#), which meant I had to take a good, hard look at the psychopathic side of the American spirit, and consider its implications not just for the war on terrorism and the occupation of Iraq, but **its role in the emergence of an authentically fascist movement in American politics, one which feeds on violence and the glorification of violence**, and which has found an audience not just in the U.S. military (where I think -- or at least hope -- it's still a relatively small fringe) but in

the culture as a whole.

I don't have time at the moment to explain fully why and how this peek at the banality of evil changed my thinking, although I'll try to cover it in a future post. Suffice it to say that my visit to nowthatsfuckedup.com was a reminder of the genocidal skeletons hanging in the American closet. It left me with the conviction -- or at least an intuitive premonition -- that an open-ended war in Iraq (or in the broader Islamic world) will bring nothing but misery and death to them, and creeping (or galloping) authoritarianism to us.

Jim Lobe had an excellent article about whether "[Can the US Military Presence Avert Civil War?](#)" This article is required reading. (Also it's worth recalling that Niall Ferguson was at my table when [I had lunch with Michael Ledeen](#)):

The growing spectre of a full-scale civil war in Iraq -- and the likelihood that such a conflict will draw in neighbouring states -- has intensified a summer-long debate here over whether and how to withdraw U.S. troops. Some analysts believe that an immediate U.S. withdrawal would make an all-out conflict less likely, while others insist that the U.S. military presence at this point is virtually all there is to prevent the current violence from blowing sky-high, destabilising the region, and sending oil prices into the stratosphere.

The Bush administration continues to insist it will "stay the course" until Iraqi security forces can by themselves contain, if not crush, the ongoing insurgency. But an increasing number of analysts, including some who favoured the 2003 invasion, believe Washington will begin drawing down its 140,000 troops beginning in the first half of next year, if for no other reason than the Republican Party needs to show voters a "light at the end of the tunnel" before the November 2006 elections.

.....In fact, some of these analysts believe that ***a civil war -- pitting Sunnis against the Kurdish and Shia populations -- has already begun.*** "A year ago, it was possible to write about the potential for civil war in Iraq," wrote Iraq-war booster Niall Ferguson in the Los Angeles Times. "Today that civil war is well underway," he asserted. While that remains a minority view, the **likelihood and imminence of civil war in Iraq is no longer questioned by analysts outside the administration.**

Ferguson blames the situation on Washington's failure to deploy a sufficient number of troops in Iraq to crush any insurgency. But a report released Monday by the International Crisis Group (ICG) pointed the finger at the U.S.-sponsored constitutional process, which will culminate in a national plebiscite Oct. 15, as having further alienated Sunnis from the two other major sectarian groups. **Barring a major U.S. intervention to ensure that Sunni interests are addressed, according to the report, "Unmaking Iraq: A Constitutional Process Gone Awry", "Iraq is likely to slide toward full-scale civil war and the break-up of the country."**

....."We created the civil war when we invaded (Iraq); we can't prevent a civil war by staying," Odom wrote last month in an essay entitled "What's Wrong with Cutting and Running?" He and Bacevich both argued that, instead of creating a vacuum in Iraq that would draw in neighbouring powers, **Washington's withdrawal would force neighbours and other great powers -- who have been relegated to the sidelines by the Bush administration's high-handedness -- to form a coalition** to ensure a conflict would not get out of hand.

Some of the administration's critics, however, argue that an immediate withdrawal will indeed make things far worse, particularly for Iraqis. "I just cannot understand this sort of argument," wrote University of Michigan Middle East expert Juan Cole on his much-read blog (www.juancole.com). "The U.S. military is killing a lot of Iraqis, but whether it is killing more than would die in a civil war would depend on how many died in a civil war," he wrote. **"A million or two could die in a civil war, and that's if the war stays limited to Iraq, which is unlikely."**

"A U.S. withdrawal would not cause the Sunnis suddenly to want to give up their major demands; indeed, they might well be emboldened to hit the Shiites harder," wrote Cole, who favours both the withdrawal of most U.S. ground troops and, in the absence of NATO or U.N. peacekeepers, **the maintenance of Special Forces and U.S. airpower in the region precisely to prevent sectarian forces from escalating the conflict into a conventional civil war**, as in Afghanistan.

[Bing West reporting from Fallujah for Slate.com](#) talks about the Emerging Iraqi Army and life in Fallujah in a series of articles. He was a Pentagon official, so the tone is towards "Rah-Rah!!" but it's still well-done. Ah, the Berg/Zarqawi story pops up here too. Anyway. 'C', an anonymous officer who served in Afghanistan and Iraq, related to Human Rights Watch [how he couldn't get those in the chain of command to do anything about widespread torture practices](#). This quote says it all:

[At FOB Mercury] they said that they had pictures that were similar to what happened at Abu Ghraib, and because they were so similar to what happened at Abu Ghraib, the soldiers destroyed the pictures. They burned them. The exact quote was, "They [the soldiers at Abu Ghraib] were getting in trouble for the same things **we were told to do**, so we destroyed the pictures."
....My company commander said, "I see how you can take it that way, but..." he said something like, "remember the honor of the unit is at stake" or something to that effect and "Don't expect me to go to bat for you on this issue if you take this up," something to that effect.

["Officials Fear Chaos if Iraqis Vote Down the Constitution"](#). The suspicious sentiment of the moment:

"Nobody will be surprised to lose Anbar, and maybe one other province," one Pentagon official said. "We're not going to lose three."

[Juan Cole reflects on the recent war protests](#) and spineless Democrats. Fred Kaplan in Slate writes that [the damned Constitution coming down the line in Iraq will be a disaster](#), and he hopes it's defeated:

The basic fact about Iraqi geography is that the Kurdish north and Shiite south have lots of oil, while the Sunni center does not. Read in this context, the basic fact about the Iraqi Constitution is that it strengthens the north and south, lets them form semiautonomous regions and expand them into super-regions—in short, it lets them dominate the country's politics and economics—while leaving the Sunnis with nearly nothing. It leaves the very faction that needs to be assimilated, if Iraq is to be a secure and viable nation, unassimilated.

[Former Iraqi Army officers sat around and discussed why they wished that the old Army was still in existence](#), by Patrick Cockburn:

It was meant to be a moment of reconciliation between the old regime and the new, a gathering of nearly 1,000 former Iraqi army officers and tribal leaders in Baghdad to voice their concerns over today's Iraq. But it did not go as planned. General after general rose to his feet and raised his voice to shout at the way Iraq was being run and to express his fear of escalating war. **"They were fools to break up our great army and form an army of thieves and criminals,"** said one senior officer. "They are traitors," added another.The meeting, in a heavily guarded hall close to the Tigris, was called by General Wafiq al-Sammarai, a former head of Iraqi military intelligence under Saddam who fled Baghdad in 1994 to join

the opposition. He is now military adviser to President Jalal Talabani.

His eloquent call for support for the government in his fight against terrorism did not go down well. He sought to reassure his audience that no attack was planned on the Sunni Arab cities of central Iraq such as Baquba, Samarra and Ramadi, as the Iraqi Defence minister had threatened. He said people had been fleeing the cities but "there will be no attack on you, no use of aircraft, no bombardment by the Americans". The audience was having none of it.

.....The meeting was important because **the officer corps of the old Iraqi army consider themselves as keeper of the flame of Iraqi nationalism**.

One of them asked General Sammarai to stop using the American word "general" and use the Arabic word lewa'a instead.

In conversation, the officers made clear that **they considered armed resistance to the occupation legitimate**. General Sammarai told The Independent that he drew a distinction between terrorists blowing up civilians and nationalist militants fighting US troops.

One of the Senior Fuck-Ups, Joint Chiefs Chairman [Richard Myers, is finally retiring to somewhere else](#) that he can pointlessly bomb. Alex Cockburn and Jeffrey St. Clair bitterly lament the spinelessness of Democrats as they "[Sink Deeper into the Ooze](#)." A final bit about the AIPAC == War Party meme today:

For those interested in some of the reasons for this incredible abdication [of Democrats avoiding the recent war protest], we can cite former National Security Agency staffer and muckraker Wayne Madsen who reported two days after the rally that "according to Democratic insiders on Capitol Hill AIPAC put out the word that any member of Congress who appeared at the protest, where some speakers were to represent pro-Palestinian views, would face their political wrath."

Madsen wrote that three members of Congress had been scheduled to speak at the rally McKinney, Woolsey and John Conyers. "Word is that AIPAC will direct its massive campaign to Wolsey's neo-con and pro-Iraq war primary challenger, California state assemblyman Joe Nation, who has strong connections to the RAND corporation."

USS Cole-Wayne Madsen conspiracy time: Meanwhile [Wayne Madsen has a new really exciting conspiracy theory involving the famous Israeli art students, John O'Neill, September 11](#), Douglas Feith and Marc Zell, Able/Danger, Islamic militants in Bosnia, Plame's Brewster Jennings front company, Sibel Edmonds, Michael Chertoff, the *USS Cole* bombing (actually an Israeli missile, according to Madsen's unnamed CIA source) and the rest. Not worth betting the lunch money on, but a very entertaining counter-narrative about the ideologies and paranoia of our times. Time for Deep Politics, Comrade. But Madsen takes heart with all the breaking scandals, as I do on his site:

After almost five years of incessant outrages by the Bush regime, I have never been more optimistic that the tide may be beginning to turn.

UK Times: "[Iraq's Relentless March of Death](#)." Via [lies.com](#) (love the banner pic) we get a bit about Statements from the Leaders ([via Kevin Drum](#)):

Asked whether the insurgency has worsened, Casey said it has not expanded geographically or numerically, "to the extent we can know that." But he noted that current "levels of violence are above norms," exceeding 500 attacks a week. "I'll tell you that levels of violence are a lagging indicator of success," he added.

So he is having trouble fully vaulting into lie territory, unlike Rummy. Lies.com also [notes](#) that surprisingly, [adept liars' brains are built differently](#) - with more white matter and less neurons in the prefrontal cortex.



Boeing and Bell Helicopter have apologized for running [an advertisement for the V-22 Osprey aircraft](#) that features **soldiers invading a mosque**. "It descends from the heavens. Ironically it unleashes hell... Consider it a gift from above." That's pretty fucked up. Apparently the building in the image says "Muhammed Mosque" in Arabic. Wow. Almost as ill-conceived as the [boondoggle Osprey](#) itself.

Abu Ghraib Photo Bomb: We are set for another [batch of Abu Ghraib media to be released](#), much to the chagrin of the Pentagon leadership, who prefer to frame the issue as destabilizing and pointlessly inflammatory media. However, it is also excellent evidence for the American people that the Pentagon leadership does not deserve to keep their jobs, which is obviously the most important thing in the fucking world.

Former CIA dude [Ray McGovern notes that the chain of command is constantly ducking responsibility](#) for torturing people and all that. Stories of the 'New Boss' Iraqi security agencies are really scary, such as [the story from Khalid Jarrar's](#) detainment that I mentioned a while ago. You can almost taste the insanity and paranoia now generating inside those new Iraqi government agency buildings (actually, like Abu Ghraib, they're the same buildings as Saddam's day).

Paul Craig Roberts summarizes your [basic reasons that Bush is stirring up some more wars with Iran and North Korea](#).

The Misc File: ["India loses political credibility in anti-Iran vote"](#) (IPS):

India, a country that aspires to be a superpower in Asia, lost its political credibility among the world's developing nations last week when it voted against Iran at a meeting of the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in Vienna. The headline in a leading Indian national newspaper said it all: "India's shameful vote against Iran." The criticism kept snowballing, as the media, academics and mainstream and left-wing politicians in New Delhi crucified the government of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh for abandoning one of its longtime political and economic allies in Asia.

Well that's enough fun for today. With a little luck, let this post stand as this website's high water mark of charting the World's Sordid Affairs, the sinister inverse point, the final crest of the high and terrible wave we've been on. The opposite of this:

And that, I think, was the handle - that sense of inevitable victory over the forces of Old and Evil. Not in any mean or military sense; we didn't need that. Our energy would simply prevail. There was no point in fighting--on our side or theirs. We had all the momentum; we were riding the crest of a high and beautiful wave.

So now, less than five years later, you can go up on a steep hill in Las Vegas and look West, and with the right sort of eyes you can almost see the high-water mark--that place where the wave finally broke and rolled back.

Time is on our side. I'm moving to Minneapolis.

Posted by HongPong at [01:13 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Iraq](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Media](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Minnesota](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [The White House](#) , [Usual Nonsense](#)

September 20, 2005

ON TO SYRIA; Talking Points; Dems kick ass in polls; post-mortem on blogs & Kerry

HuffyPost:

US AMBASSADOR TO IRAQ PREDICTS US WILL GO INTO SYRIA...

[Worth the huge type:](#)

Dr. Zalmay Khalilzad, the US Ambassador to Iraq, made the off the record prediction that the US will go into Syria to combat insurgents that have been using the country as a staging ground for terrorist activity in Iraq.

Ambassador Khalilzad's comments were made at businessman Teddy Forstmann's annual off the record gathering in Aspen, Colorado this weekend.

In attendance at the conference, among others were: Harvey Weinstein, Brad Grey, Michael Eisner, Les Moonves, Tom Freston, Tom Friedman, Bob Novak, Barry Diller, Martha Stewart, Margaret Carlson, Alan Greenspan, Andrea Mitchell, Norman Pearlstein and Walter Isaacson.

[Zakaria is real pissed off:](#)

Today's Republicans believe in pork, but they don't believe in government. So we have the largest government in history but one that is weak and dysfunctional. Public spending is a cynical game of buying votes or campaign contributions, an utterly corrupt process run by lobbyists and special interests with no concern for the national interest.

Arch-conspiracy theorist [Wayne Madsen](#) has a really entertaining one up at his website: "[The Demise of Global Communications Security: The Neo-Cons' Unfettered Access to America's Secrets.](#)" There is some interesting stuff about the National Security Agency, backdoors in Swiss Crypto AG machines, Jonathan Pollard, billionaire fugitive Marc Rich and his lawyer Scooter Libby, Canadian peacekeepers in the Golan Heights, Larry Franklin,

Martin Indyk, John Bolton, the suspicious Israeli moving company (Urban Moving Systems) that some have alleged was linked to 9/11, and late FBI agent John O'Neill. And also the True reason Daniel Pearl was killed in Pakistan.

Not that I believe such a story. However, I would love to write a movie script that sounded like this. And I did agree with the statement at the end: "U.S. intelligence sources report that the one Israeli who is considered an extreme threat to U.S. national security is former Prime Minister and current Prime Minister hopeful Binyamin Netanyahu." A fine work, Madsen, can we get you into screenwriting?

Raimondo kicks around a little with the [old Anthrax Attacks of 2001](#). They sure were helpful in driving the country into a frenzy of fear... A frame up? etc etc... WaPo says [little progress in FBI work](#).

Reuters: "[Psychopaths could be best financial traders](#)." [Who makes the most cash?](#) Sure they're all sane.

Apparently White House Chief of Staff Andrew Card may end up secretary of the Treasury. Weird. [As Kevin Drum says](#):

Has it really gotten to the point where it's impossible for Bush to find solid, conservative appointees for these positions who have actual experience in the relevant fields? Aren't there any left who are still willing to work for him? Or does he feel **so besieged by life that he literally feels he can't trust anyone with a big job unless they've spent a couple of years working within a few feet of him?**

Check out the [AliveInTruth New Orleans oral history project](#). Best blog title I've heard lately: "[Clusterfuck Nation](#)" by Jim Kunstler. There's trouble a brewing... and [he thinks life is on the edge in this Long Emergency of ours](#):

The new assumption will be that when shit happens you are on your own. In this remarkable three weeks since New Orleans was shredded, no Democrat has stepped into the vacuum of leadership, either, with a different vision of what we might do now, and who we might become. This is the kind of medium that political maniacs spawn in. Something is out there right now, feeding on the astonishment and grievance of a whipsawed middle class, and it will have a lot more nourishment in the months ahead.

As always, [bagNewsNotes](#) is excellent.

BAD TIMES: [They](#) are charging for me to read my [Krugman](#) and Dowd. No good. So we will have to turn to [places like this for Krugman](#). Dammit!!

Polls Baby: [Bush's speech didn't do anything good for his poll numbers](#). Speaking of poll numbers, Hot Damn, [the Democrats are polling really damn well these days!](#) w0000!!! Independents favor Donkeys right now **55 to 27!!!** MyDD also says that "[the progressive blogosphere is a larger source of news for younger Americans than all of the cable news networks combined](#)".

So Good news. Peter Daou reflects on "[limits of blog power](#)" in Salon. He was basically the Kerry Campaign-blog connection, which must have been dicey. Interesting. Much wisdom, but this nails it:

"Rightwing bloggers will do everything in their power to prevent another Katrina triangle, where the confluence of blogs, media, and Democratic leadership exposes the real Bush and shatters the conventional wisdom about his ability to lead. For the progressive netroots, the past half-decade has been a Sisyphean loop of scandal after scandal melting away as the media and party establishment remain disengaged."

There's some kind of video blog interview thing going on at something called [EvolveTV](#). Apparently [Kos will interview Juan Cole](#). Sounds good to me. ([more on it](#))

How are [Talking Points drilled into the heads of the pundits?](#)

When John G. Roberts is approved as chief justice of the United States, as expected, he can thank President Bush 's "Friends & Allies" program, which went to work on him immediately after he was nominated. The project, started by the Republican National Committee in the 2004 re-election campaign, is simple and effective: Give opinion makers, media friends, and even cocktail party hosts insider info on the topic of the day. How? Through **E-mailed talking points, called D.C. Talkers, and conference calls**. For Roberts, it worked this way: **A daily conference call to about 80 pundits**, GOP-leaning radio and TV hosts, and newsmakers was made around 9 a.m. On the other end were the main Roberts gunslingers like Steve Schmidt at the White House and Ken Mehlman and Brian Jones at the RNC. D.C. Talkers would then be distributed to an even larger list filled with positive info about Roberts and lines of attack on his critics. "The idea," said one of those involved, "**is to feed them information and have them invested in us.**" **It has even created addicts**, he added. "Now they come to us before going on TV."

Not really that clever. But interesting.

IRAQification: The Score. What happened to that \$1 billion? [Patrick Cockburn in Baghdad is on it](#). The part about 28-year old Soviet helicopters and phony Egyptian-made MP5 knockoffs is kind of funny. TIME has "[The Secret History of How the US Misjudged the Enemy in Iraq](#) (condensed)." (also [this full article](#)) And the WMD hunt fucked up early efforts that might have reduced the strength of the insurgency. The article indicates that once Tommy Franks moved his HQ to Florida from Qatar, the force in Iraq was basically run by colonels, with **less than 30 intelligence officers left in Iraq**. Amazing. And then they dissolved the Iraqi army and civil service. A great moment. [Needs to be read](#). It ends:

"We have never taken this operation seriously enough," says a retired senior military official with experience in Iraq. "We have never provided enough troops. We have never provided enough equipment, or the right kind of equipment. We have never worked the intelligence part of the war in a serious, sustained fashion. We have failed the Iraqi people, and we have failed our troops."

On the other hand, Condi says [it's about coffee](#). So [what would an actual Civil War look like?](#) Meanwhile in Central Asia, the [Great Game Reloaded](#).

[Juan Cole had a fine look at the Egyptian elections](#): "A people who figured out how to get rid of Napoleon Bonaparte within a year is hardly flummoxed by a mere Texas poseur." "[Church of England offers to meet Muslim leaders to apologize for Iraq war](#)." I was talking earlier about the Zargawi-Goldstein symbolic connection. Well also, someone named Ritt Goldstein had a [good story about anomalies in the Berg video](#) last year from Asia Times Online.

Right Wing Echo Chamber invents missiles: Apparently for some reason the right wing blogosphere is [inventing stories about missiles getting shot at a flight](#) last Thursday. I have no special insight here, except that it shows a fertile fantasy life... Speaking of fantasies, [Pandagon mocks PowerLine's PowerLies](#). But the more I think about people like that, the less free time I have. A funny interview about [Creationism and Flying Spaghetti Monsterism](#), the Faith of Our Times. Haven't you heard that the [leftists are trying to destroy America](#)? That's new!

Someone is still keeping [score on the Valerie Plame affair](#). Hopefully that will come roaring back again. Arianna had a [bit on it](#).

Posted by HongPong at [03:08 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Campaign 2004](#) , [International Politics](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#)

September 19, 2005

MiG for Sale; Martial Law scares me; Queen Elizabeth I: "We have quite forgot the fart"; Rove: "there is no real anti-war movement"

One of the side effects of looking at Fark is that you come away with a bunch of links that seem like they should be passed along to everyone. You can get a ["mint" condition Mig 21 aircraft for a mere \\$225,000 on eBay](#). It would appear this seller has all kinds of weird military hardware, and no, foreigners can't buy. No bids yet.

They are putting [USB connections into Volkswagens](#). What could go wrong? Could I drive by mouse? [PC World offers 20 tidbits about tech that manufacturers don't really want you to know](#) about. Overclocking, bad warranties, sucking the Windows registration number out of your computer, hacking cell phones and game consoles, worthless product specs made up for marketing.



Some author is getting rich writing about [straight girls going for lesbian hookups](#). Surely everyone will find this fascinating. Apparently the title alone, "The Straight Girl's Guide to Sleeping with Chicks", was good enough that she got a mountain of cash from Simon & Schuster without having to write a word. Nothing like [Insane Homophobes protesting at Rehnquist's funeral](#) (via [Dailykos](#)).

Martial Law seems to be in the air. Bush called for expanding the role of the military in disaster situations. William Arkin in the WaPo says [that this is Real Bad](#):

I for one don't want to live in a society where "a moment's notice" justifies military action that either preempts or usurps civil authority.

What is more, nothing about what happened in New Orleans justifies such a radical move to give the military what bureaucrats call "a lead role" in responding to emergencies.

In the wake of Katrina, the military was standing by awaiting orders, as it should be. The White House and the federal government were for their part either on vacation or out to lunch. The problem wasn't the lack of resources available. It was leadership, decisiveness, foresight. The problem was commanding and mobilizing the resources, civil and military.

Yeah. For more try this really excellent bit on [Social Militarization](#), characterizing it as a "fascist move." Yeah. So this leads to a unnerving discussion of how Liberal Democracy is not good enough to confront the State of Exception (such as catastrophic disasters), and Social Militarization is offered as a kind of illusory panacea. I need to quote [this](#):

The charismatic leader is indeed historically necessary for successful, final-stage fascist movements (i.e. movements that actually lay claim to political power). But there remains a more fundamental and contemporary pressing fascist concern, an earlier stage in which the rhetorical structure of fascism is laid by celebrating (Robert Paxton's recent *Anatomy of Fascism* is quite good on this point) **the necessary failures of liberal democracy to respond to the exigencies of the present day**. For four years we have been told that a new type of war must be waged, that new types of laws must be passed (even if those laws short-circuit the freedoms they ostensibly protect), that the old conventions by which we fight illegalities and terrorism must be scrapped in favor of more proactive solutions. In effect, ***we have been told that the liberal democratic state was simply ill-prepared to handle the threat of terrorism, and so something else, something new, defined by a Bush doctrine and a rethinking of our constitutional protections, would be needed.***

Now we are told that the liberal state can no longer handle the constant challenges of nature, and that now, again, something new is needed: social militarization.

For the fascist movements that eventually came to power in Italy and Germany, and that also surfaced in Spain, Poland, and the majority of countries, the supposed failure of liberal democracy became apparent with the ravages and duration of World War I, the Great War. Its intensity seemed so unfitting civilized society, so anathema to the vision of evolved, Enlightened, European culture. For the fascists, it was evidence that the liberal state was weak, that it lacked the necessary will to power to do right by its citizenry. I fear that history is repeating itself.

Josh Marshall:

You don't repair disorganized or incompetent government by granting it more power. You fix it by making it more organized and more competent. If conservatism can't grasp that point, what is it good for?

As for the military, same difference. The Army clearly has an important role to play in major domestic disasters. And they've been playing it in this case. But what broader role was required exactly?

As I've been saying, repressive governments mix administrative clumsiness and inefficiency with authoritarian tendencies. That's almost always the pattern. The direction the president wants to go in is one in which, in emergencies, the federal government will have trouble moving water into or enabling transportation out of the disaster zone but will be well-equipped to declare martial law on a moment's notice.

Rozen makes a small [note on Martial Law](#) and [The Agonist as well](#). For the Pissed Off Old CIA Dude perspective on the [insurgency](#) and [Katrina](#), try Larry Johnson and Pat Lang at [No Quarter](#). [Katrina cleanup volunteers got routed to a casino](#). An [on the scene report](#) via [AmericaBlog](#). Bush's poll numbers are [tanked like hell](#) these days (atrios):

President Bush's vow to rebuild the Gulf Coast did little to help his standing with the public, only 40 percent of whom now approve of his performance in office, according to a CNN/USA Today/Gallup poll released Monday.

Just 41 percent of the 818 adults polled between Friday and Monday said they approved of Bush's handling of the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, while 57 percent disapproved.

And support for his management of the war in Iraq has dropped to 32 percent, with 67 percent telling pollsters they disapproved of how Bush is prosecuting the conflict.

[Frank Rich memorably puts it](#), "the administration's priority of image over substance is embedded like a cancer in the Katrina relief process." A very good column. Bush might be [Losing it altogether](#) and it seems like his inner circle is more tightly sealed than ever before. A DailyKos followup on how [Katrina refugees that were previously photographed have fared](#).

And so Maybe they're [feeling Doomed?! \(via Americablog\)](#) The American Spectator says:

But at this stage of the game, barring some imaginative political moves that bear some resemblance to the Bush Administration circa 2002, Republicans on Capitol Hill and even some longtime Bush team members in various Cabinet level departments say this Administration is done for.

"You run down the list of things we thought we could accomplish and you have to wonder what we thought we were thinking," says a Bush Administration member who joined on in 2001. "You get the impression that we're more than listless. We're sunk."...

Congressional committee sources on both sides of Capitol Hill predict tough slogging on anything of policy consequence. "Social Security is dead as far as my chairman is concerned. So are the tax cuts," says a Ways and Means staffer of Chairman Bill Thomas.

Before hurricane season wreaked havoc on the Gulf Coast and in Washington, the thinking was that Thomas was poised to take up a major tax bill that might feature several critical components of the Bush Administration's Social Security reform. Now those plans appear to have dimmed considerably.

Josh Marshall points out that we can [Expect Corruption in the Gulf](#).

If there's nothing else this decade has taught us it is that there was never and never could have been any Iraq War separated from the goals and intentions of those with their foot on the accelerator. Anything else is just a sad delusion. That's why the whole mess is as it is now: fruit of the poison tree.

Same here.

Maybe you want to spend \$200 billion on rebuilding the Delta region too. Fine. Something like that will

probably be necessary. But don't fool yourself into thinking that what's coming is just a matter of a different chef making the same meal. This will be Iraq all over again, with the same fetid mix of graft, zeal and hubris. Cronyism like you wouldn't believe. Money blown on [ideological fantasies and half-baked test-cases](#).

You could come up with a hundred reasons why that's true. But at root intentions drive all. You'll never separate this operation or its results from the fact that the people in charge see it as a political operation. The use of this money for political purposes, for what amounts to a political campaign, tells you everything you need to know about what's coming.



The Register reports that [Google Earth is getting in trouble with governments that don't like to have their military installations](#) available to the everyday web surfer. Lots of fun imagery. Also you can see the Great **Area 51** itself in this article. Not bad. [Edwards Air Force Base](#) has all kinds of sweet freakin stuff sitting around. (see also [Microsoft cloaks area 51](#) - hah!)



For the serious visitor, consider some [classic internet marijuana imagery](#) via i-am-bored.com and fresh99.com. Also [weird Japanese condom wrappers](#).

PottyGate: In a followup to Bush's UN bathroom break, The UK Times offers a roundup of famous bathroom breaks and undiplomatic flatulence.

[From emptying of the diplomatic bag to breaking wind before Virgin Queen](#)

By Michael Binyon

THE need to relieve oneself diplomatically has on occasion determined the fate of nations.

The most notorious practitioner of "bladder diplomacy" was the late President Assad, the hardline Syrian President for more than 25 years. Western statesmen visiting his palace were offered juice, water and bountiful cups of coffee while the President lectured them for hours on end. Eventually the visitors cut a deal simply to escape to the lavatory.

Enoch Powell, the late Conservative politician and noted orator, said that politicians should speak with

their bladders half full, as it gave a sense of urgency to their speeches. On the other hand, Morarji Desai, Prime Minister of India from 1977 to 1979, drank a pint of his own urine every day. He lived to the age of 99.

.....In the 1960s, President Johnson used to adjourn conversations when the need arose and ask his interlocutors to accompany him to the men's room. Their embarrassment was a source of great amusement to him. He often recounted a story about "one of the delicate Kennedyites who came into the bathroom with me and then found it utterly impossible to look at me while I sat there on the toilet".

Court etiquette grew stricter over the centuries. Famously, Edward de Vere, the Earl of Oxford, was so embarrassed at having broken wind in the presence of Queen Elizabeth I that he voluntarily exiled himself from court for seven years. When he returned, her first words to him were: "**We have quite forgot the fart.**"

Some RawStory bits: Condoleezza Rice took time out of her busy schedule to threaten Syria and compared Islamic fundamentalists to Marxists. Meanwhile, real intelligence experts say that we are repeating "every mistake we made in Vietnam", adding that the WMD fantasy chase precluded early efforts that might have blunted the strength of the various militant movements in Iraq. And another bit offers a guide to the Roberts nomination and his nomenclature. Framers' intent, activist judges, what do these things *really* mean?



In Iraq, lots of stuff from the new Iraqi Defense Ministry of Doom has been skimmed off for anti-Sunni hit teams and rambunctious Kurds preparing to seize and probably ethnically cleanse the Kirkuk area. Juan Cole has more about \$1,000,000,000 or \$2,000,000,000 getting stolen. Something insane happened in the Basra area as undercover British agents got mobbed or something. But either way, Reuters/Yahoo provides a photo of what appears to be a British soldier, consumed by fire, falling off a tank. Juan Cole reports that at least five Baghdad neighborhoods have become controlled by militants:

"The situation has deteriorated in Baghdad dramatically today. Five neighborhoods (hay) in Baghdad are controlled by insurgents, and they are Amiraya, Ghazilya, Shurta, Yarmouk and Doura. It is very bad. My guys there report that cars have come into these neighborhoods and blocked off the streets. **Masked gunmen with AKs and other weapons are roaming these areas, announcing that people should stay home. One of my drivers in Amiraya reports that his neighborhood is**

shut down totally, and even those who need food or provisions are warned not to go out.

The government will respond feebly. It will go into a contested neighborhood, and then just like Fallujah, Ramadi, Tel Afar, the insurgents will flee to take over another area on another day. Bit by bit they are taking over the main parts of Baghdad. The only place we are sure they cannot control is Sadr City, unless of course they want to take on Jaish Mahdy [Muqtada al-Sadr's Mahdi Army], and that would be bloody.

Rove, His Remarks and His Memos: A [memo to Karl Rove about immigration policy from Lamar Smith of Texas](#), which accidentally got sent to Democrats, says various creepy things. [Rove said a bunch of hilarious things](#) to a retreat when he thought he was really Off the Record, according to the Huffypost:

Karl Rove, President Bush's top political advisor and deputy White House chief of staff, spoke at businessman Teddy Forstmann's annual off the record gathering in Aspen, Colorado this weekend. Here is what Rove had to say that the press wasn't allowed to report on. On Katrina: The only mistake we made with Katrina was not overriding the local government... On The Anti-War Movement: Cindy Sheehan is a clown. There is no real anti-war movement. No serious politician, with anything to do with anything, would show his face at an anti-war rally... On Bush's Low Poll Numbers: We have not been good at explaining the success in Iraq. Polls go up and down and don't mean anything... On Iraq: There has been a big difference in the region. Iraq will transform the Middle East... On Judy Miller And Plamegate: Judy Miller is in jail for reasons I don't really understand... On Joe Wilson: Joe Wilson and I attend the same church but Joe goes to the wacky mass...

In attendance at the conference, among others were: Harvey Weinstein, Brad Grey, Michael Eisner, Les Moonves, Tom Freston, Tom Friedman, Bob Novak, Barry Diller, Martha Stewart, Margaret Carlson, Alan Greenspan, Andrea Mitchell, Norman Pearlstein and Walter Isaacson.

[Via Defamer](#) and [BB](#), you too can indicate your insane insecurity and adherence to the last throes of the authoritarian gas guzzling bourgeoisie by purchasing a [Hummer brand ugly laptop](#).

Guess what, Congressional Democrats [tried to get Downing Street Memo-related documents](#) out of the White House, and they got shot down. I am shocked, just shocked! [John Conyers is on it](#).

Who thought that [9/11 was an enormous opportunity](#)? I try not to get tangled up with Gibberish from Fukuyama about neoconservatism and his weird End of History nonsense. But if you are interested in how [Mr. NeoLiberalism is faring these days](#)...

*That's all for now..... **Wake me up when September Ends.....***

Posted by HongPong at [08:34 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Humor](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Technological Apparatus](#) , [Usual Nonsense](#)

September 18, 2005

Macalester teaches Billy Joe Armstrong to differ from the hollow lies; Zarqawi == Emmanuel Goldstein

I missed the [Green Day concert in St. Paul on Friday](#). It sounded like a hell of a good time, made particularly special by Billy Joe Armstrong's connections to the area: his wife is from New Brighton, and I have heard on reasonably good authority that he purchased a house on Summit Avenue. Star Tribune reported Saturday:

St. Paul was where he wrote some of the songs for the politically charged "American Idiot," the Grammy-winning album that is the best-selling nonrap CD of the past year, with more than 4 million copies sold. In the summer of 2003, **he had walked around the track at Macalester College in St. Paul, writing the songs in his head.**

This also tracks with what I've heard, that Armstrong was spotted a few times around the track - a more interesting celebrity sighting than that time Josh Hartnett came into the SuperAmerica and Grand and Cleveland when Alison was working. It would also explain why much of the album has a perfect rhythm for running. This song always made a lot of sense to me - it must have been because I was living down the street when he wrote it! :-)

So what's my real point today? The image of Senior Demon Abu Musab al-Zarqawi is an essential element of the Bush Administration's strategy to manage perceptions of their disastrous war - diverting blame and creating an attractive 'negative image'. Zarqawi is one of the principle Hollow Lies of the war.

Say, Hey!

Hear the sound of the falling rain / Coming down like an Armageddon flame / The shame / The ones who died without a name

Hear the dogs howling out of key / To a hymn called "Faith and Misery" / And bleed / [The company lost the war today](#)

[I beg to dream and differ from the hollow lies](#) / This is the dawning of the rest of our lives / On Holiday

Hear the drum pounding out of time / Another protester has crossed the line / To find / The money's on the other side

Can I get another Amen? / [There's a flag wrapped around the score of men / A gag / A plastic bag on a monument](#)

[I beg to dream and differ from the hollow lies](#) / This is the dawning of the rest of our lives / On holiday

Meanwhile, in the Information Age of Hysteria, we have perhaps the underlying principle of our government in a nutshell, as [Ron Suskind put it](#) before the election:

The [White House] aide said that guys like me were "in what we call the reality-based community," which he defined as people who "believe that solutions emerge from your judicious study of discernible reality." I nodded and murmured something about enlightenment principles and empiricism. He cut me off. **"That's not the way the world really works anymore," he continued. "We're an empire now, and when we act, we create our own reality. And while you're studying that reality - judiciously, as you will - we'll act again, creating other new realities, which you can study too, and that's how things will sort out. We're history's actors . . . and you, all of you, will be left to just study what we do."**



Enter **the Demon of our Times.**

Let me offer a theory: Abu Musab al-Zarqawi may actually exist, but his "existence" in the media is an essential element of the Bush Administration's Public Relations strategy to manage perception of the war. He is a personification of malevolent intent: if he wasn't around, we are told to believe, things would sort themselves out, so our motive has to be to crush **him** instead of confronting the Pentagon's essentially racist, disastrous policies. The Star Tribune carried a Washington Post/AP story on Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's latest pledge to

kill all the Shiites. Consider the following:

[More bombings push Baghdad deaths near 200](#): Ellen Knickmeyer, Washington Post

BAGHDAD -- Insurgents believed to be allied with Al-Qaida in Iraq kept up bombings in the capital on Thursday, launching strikes that brought the two-day death toll close to 200.

The chief U.S. military spokesman in Iraq, Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch, said the surge in bombings represented the kind of occasional spikes in attacks that the military has been expecting "around certain critical events that highlight the progress of democracy."

In this case, an Oct. 15 referendum on Iraq's new constitution is only a month away.

"Remember, democracy equals failure for the insurgency," Lynch said. "So there has to be heightened awareness now as we work our way toward the referendum."

Police targeted

In the violence Thursday, suicide bombers killed at least 31 people in two attacks about a minute apart that targeted Iraqi police and Interior Ministry commandos, officials said. Insurgents also managed to land a single mortar round inside the Green Zone, the base for U.S. officials and Iraq's government. There were no casualties and only minimal damage, U.S. officials said.

A day earlier, at least 14 car bombs across Baghdad killed 167 people, the majority of them Shiite Muslim civilians -- the highest one-day toll of the war inflicted by insurgent attacks in the capital. Seven of the victims died overnight of their wounds.

An audiotape released on a website linked to Al-Qaida in Iraq after Wednesday's attacks said Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's group had opened "all-out war" on Iraq's Shiite majority.

Attacks linked to Al-Qaida also hit the city of Ramadi, capital of the western province of Anbar, a stronghold of foreign-led fighters. Witnesses said Al-Qaida-allied fighters rocketed and shelled two U.S. military installations at Ramadi and traded fire with U.S. patrols in the city. The U.S. military reported one Marine killed and said a would-be car bomber also died. Iraqi emergency medical workers said Marine snipers killed six Al-Qaida fighters.

The two-day barrage of attacks attributed to Al-Qaida in Iraq, and the increasing control of towns in the west along the Euphrates River being asserted by foreign-led insurgents, intensified the U.S. military's focus on Al-Zarqawi.

U.S. commanders often have publicly denigrated his role in the insurgency to little more than that of a media-fostered figurehead. On Thursday, however, Lynch discussed Al-Zarqawi in some of the sharpest terms yet, calling him the Americans' main target and saying the United States was winning the fight against him.

"We believe we are experiencing great success against the most crucial element of the insurgency, which is the terrorists and the foreign fighters. The face of that is Zarqawi and Al-Qaida in Iraq," Lynch said.

"We've got great intelligence which tells us where he's moving to and where he's trying to establish safe havens. As soon as *we see him* trying to establish a safe haven, we will **conduct operations," such as the one underway against northwestern insurgent strongholds in Tal Afar, Lynch said. "We're using all assets under our control in conjunction with the Iraqi security forces to find him and kill him."**

Now let us refer to a little bit from Orwell's 1984... As [Wikipedia summarizes the teachings of Emmanuel Goldstein](#):

...the state of war creates a mentality that suits the Party well. **A Party member should be "a credulous and ignorant fanatic whose prevailing moods are fear, hatred, adulation and orgiastic triumph.** In other words it is necessary that he should have the mentality appropriate to a state of war." Though **"the entire war is spurious...and waged for purposes quite other than**

the declared ones", even Inner Party members who potentially could know better passionately believe that the war is real and will "end victoriously, with Oceania the undisputed master of the entire world". There can never be any large-scale invasion of enemy territory, so that citizens of one superstate would come face to face with citizens of another and discover that conditions there are very much the same as in their own superstate: Even the prevailing ideologies are almost identical. **To maintain the image of the enemy as a monster whose ideology is a barbarous outrage on common sense, all sides realize that "the main frontiers must never be crossed by anything except bombs"!**

Since **the war is a sham** and each superstate is unconquerable, the ongoing "conflict" has no sobering effect on the oligarchies ruling the three superstates: "The rulers of such a state are absolute, as the Pharaohs or the Caesars could not be. They are obliged to prevent their followers from starving to death in numbers large enough to be inconvenient, and they are obliged to remain at the same low level of military technique as their rivals; but once that minimum is achieved, they can **twist reality into whatever shape they chose.**" [**Paging Mr Suskind...**]

Thus, the war is actually "waged by each ruling group against its own subjects, and the object of the war is not to make or prevent conquests of territory, but to keep the structure of society intact". **As far as the lack of any genuine outside threat is concerned, the superstates might just as well agree to live in permanent peace; then they would still be "freed for ever from the sobering influence of external danger"** (the kind of danger that might force the rulers to behave somewhat responsibly). This, according to the author, "is the inner meaning of the Party slogan: **War is Peace.**"

While I quietly [alluded to this earlier](#), other [people have been making this point for a while](#), but damn it, even the newspaper admits this "media figurehead" phenomenon is partly true. There's probably a real Zarqawi figure out there, but basically, these days I generally believe he is a media construction designed to provide a narrative that Joe Six Pack can understand. The exciting Zarqawi Chase (with, say, [captured laptops](#) and [narrow escapes](#)) is the kind of story that the NASCAR dad *needs* to stave off cognitive dissonance. The insurgency is not a failure of policy, it's not Rummy's and Myers' fuck-ups, it's this damn Zarqawi always trying to throw monkey wrenches in the system AKA "building democracy". Some might say it's a [Leo Straussian Noble Lie](#) to provide succor for the Bronze Masses. Let me throw in [a Billmon post on this matter](#) from a year ago:

The problem here is not with the Fallujans, the problem here is not with the coalition. The problem here is with **foreign fighters, international terrorists, people like Zarqawi, who we believe to be in Fallujah** or nearby.

Coalition spokesman Dan Senor: [Press Briefing](#) April 13, 2004

The security situation in Fallujah, Iraq, remains stable, and coalition forces there are engaged in a "robust hunt" for al Qaeda leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, believed to be in or near the city, coalition officials said today.

American Forces Information Service: ['Robust' Manhunt for Zarqawi Under Way](#) April 13, 2004

Former regime elements can be former Ba'athists, they can be Iraqi extremists, they can be outside jihadists, they can be **Zarqawi network folks as well.**

Gen. Dick Myers: [Press Briefing](#) April 7, 2004

The terrorists, assassins are threatened by the Iraqi's people's progress toward self-government, because they know that they will have no future in a free Iraq. **They know, as al Qaeda associate Abu Musaab al-Zarqawi put it in his letter recently, that we intercepted: "Democracy is coming"...**

Donald Rumsfeld: [Press Briefing](#) April 7, 2004

A statement circulating in Iraq and signed by anti-U.S. groups last month **claimed al-Zarqawi was killed earlier by American bombs** in northern Iraq. A senior U.S. official denied the report of al-Zarqawi's death.

Associated Press: [Al Qaeda tape takes credit for Iraq attacks](#) April 6, 2004

The programmes of the Two Minutes Hate varied from day to day, but there was none in which Goldstein was not the principal figure. He was the primal traitor, the earliest defiler of the Party's purity. All subsequent crimes against the Party, all treacheries, acts of sabotage, heresies, deviations, sprang directly out of his teaching. **Somewhere or other he was still alive and hatching his conspiracies: perhaps somewhere beyond the sea, under the protection of his foreign paymasters,** perhaps even -- so it was occasionally rumoured -- in some hiding-place in Oceania itself.

George Orwell: [1984](#)



And let us not forget Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's entry into the universe of the News Cycle came with the notorious [Nick Berg decapitation video](#). This video had [a number of strange anomalies in it](#), and I have suspected for quite a while that [it was fake](#). My favorite alternate explanation was that the video was actually shot by US personnel inside Abu Ghraib prison (aside from the "[Lawn Chair from Hell](#)" connection) to distract attention from the exploding torture scandal.

Too conspiratorial? Such a video could never be fake? Then why does the great Zarqawi appear to have [Two Legs, not One](#)? Try the Wikipedia [Nick Berg conspiracy theories page](#) for even more! This Wikipedia paragraph [essentially sums up my point](#):

There are rumors that Zarqawi is dead because no sightings of him have been confirmed since [2001](#). In one report, the conservative British newspaper [Daily Telegraph](#) described as [myth](#) the claim that

Zarqawi was the head of the "terrorist network" in Iraq. According to a U.S. military intelligence source, **the Zarqawi myth resulted from faulty intelligence obtained by the payment of substantial sums of money to unreliable and dishonest sources. The faulty intelligence was accepted, however, because it suited US government political goals**, according to an unnamed intelligence officer. [14] The Zarqawi myth has also been purported to be the **product of U.S. war propaganda designed to promote the image of a demonic enemy figure to help justify continued U.S. military operations in Iraq** [15], perhaps with the tacit support of terrorist elements wishing to use him as a propaganda tool (a sort of Al-Qaeda [Ronald McDonald](#)).

I'm just going to wrap this up with a chunk from iconoclastic researcher Michel Chossudovsky, who wrote "[Who is Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi?](#)" at the Centre for Research on Globalisation:

The US intelligence apparatus has created its own terrorist organizations. And at the same time, it creates its own terrorist warnings concerning the terrorist organizations which it has itself created. In turn, it has developed a cohesive multibillion dollar counterterrorism program "to go after" these terrorist organizations. Counterterrorism and war propaganda are intertwined. The propaganda apparatus feeds disinformation into the news chain. The terror warnings must appear to be "genuine". The objective is to present the terror groups as "enemies of America."

The underlying objective is to galvanize public opinion in support of America's war agenda. The "war on terrorism" requires a humanitarian mandate. The war on terrorism is presented as a "Just War", which is to be fought on moral grounds "to redress a wrong suffered." The Just War theory defines "good" and "evil." **It concretely portrays and personifies the terrorist leaders as "evil individuals".**

To reach its foreign policy objectives, the images of terrorism must remain vivid in the minds of the citizens, who are constantly reminded of the terrorist threat. The propaganda campaign presents the portraits of the leaders behind the terror network. In other words, at the level of what constitutes an "advertising" campaign, "it gives a face to terror." **The "war on terrorism" rests on the creation of one or more evil bogeymen, the terror leaders, Osama bin Laden, Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi, et al, whose names and photos are presented ad nauseam in daily news reports.**

.....Al Zarqawi is often described as an "Osama associate", the bogymen, allegedly responsible for numerous terrorist attacks in several countries. In other reports, often emanating from the same sources, it is stated that he has no links to Al Qaeda and operates quite independently. He is often presented as an individual who is challenging the leadership of bin Laden. His name crops up on numerous occasions in press reports and official statements. Since early 2004, he is in the news almost on a daily basis.

Osama belongs to the powerful bin Laden family, which historically had business ties to the Bushes and prominent members of the Texas oil establishment. Bin Laden was recruited by the CIA during the Soviet-Afghan war and fought as a Mujahideen. **In other words, there is a longstanding documented history of bin Laden-CIA and bin Laden-Bush family links, which are an obvious source of embarrassment to the US government.**

In contrast to bin Laden, Al-Zarqawi has no family history. He comes from an impoverished Palestinian family in Jordan. His parents are dead. He emerges out of the blue. He is described by CNN as "a lone wolf" who is said to act quite independently of the Al Qaeda network. Yet surprisingly, this lone wolf is present in several countries, in Iraq, which is now his base, but also in Western Europe. He is also suspected of preparing a terrorist attack on American soil.

.....**In Iraq, he is said to be determined to "ignite a civil war between Sunnis and Shiites". But is that not precisely what US intelligence is aiming at ("divide and rule") as confirmed by several analysts of the US led war?** Pitting one group against the other with a view to weakening the resistance movement. (See Michel Collon [\[1\]](#), See also [\[2\]](#))

.....What is the role of this new mastermind in the Pentagon's disinformation campaign, in which CNN

seems to be playing a central role? In previous propaganda ploys, **the CIA hired PR firms to organize core disinformation campaigns, including the Rendon Group.** The latter worked closely with its British partner Hill and Knowlton, which was responsible for the 1990 Kuwaiti incubator media scam, where Kuwaiti babies were allegedly removed from incubators in a totally fabricated news story, which was then used to get Congressional approval for the 1991 Gulf War.

What is the pattern?

Almost immediately in the wake of a terrorist event or warning, CNN announces (in substance): we think this mysterious individual Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi is behind it, invariably without supporting evidence and prior to the conduct of an investigation by the relevant police and intelligence authorities.

In some cases, **upon the immediate occurrence of the terrorist event, there is an initial report which mentions Al-Zarqawi as the possible mastermind.** The report will often say (in substance): yes we think he did it, but it is not yet confirmed and there is some doubt on the identity of those behind the attack. One or two days later, CNN may come up with a definitive statement, quoting official police, military and/or intelligence sources.

Often the CNN report is based on information published on an Islamic website or a mysterious Video or Audio tape. **The authenticity of the website and/or the tapes is not the object of discussion or detailed investigation.**

Bear in mind that the news reports never mention that Al Qaeda is a creation of the CIA and that Al Zarqawi had been recruited to fight in the Soviet-Afghan war (This is in fact confirmed by Sec. Colin Powell in his presentation to the UN Security Council on 5 February 2003) (see details below). Both Osama bin Laden and Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi are creations of the US intelligence apparatus. The recruitment of foreign fighters was under the auspices of the CIA.

.....

Colin Powell's Address to the UN Security Council

In the months leading up to the war on Iraq, Al Zarqawi's name reemerges, this time almost on daily basis, with reports focusing on his sinister relationship to Saddam Hussein. A major turning point in the propaganda campaign occurs on February 5, 2003. Al-Zarqawi was in the spotlight following Colin Powell's flopped WMD report to the UN Security Council. Powell's speech presented "documentation" on the ties between Saddam Hussein and Al Qaeda, while focusing on the central role of Al-Zarqawi: (emphasis added):

Our concern is not just about these illicit weapons; it's the way that these illicit weapons can be connected to terrorists and terrorist organizations...

*But what I want to bring to your attention today is the potentially much more **sinister nexus between Iraq and the Al Qaeda terrorist network, a nexus that combines classic terrorist organizations and modern methods of murder. Iraq today harbors a deadly terrorist network, headed by Abu Musaab al-Zarqawi, an associate and collaborator of Osama bin Laden and his Al Qaeda lieutenants.***

Zarqawi, a Palestinian born in Jordan, fought in the Afghan War more than a decade ago. Returning to Afghanistan in 2000, he oversaw a terrorist training camp. One of his specialties and one of the specialties of this camp is poisons.

When our coalition ousted the Taliban, the Zarqawi network helped establish another poison and explosive training center camp, and this camp is located in Northeastern Iraq.

*You see a picture of this camp. Graphic, above. **[there were no WMDs at this camp according to ABC report, see below]***

The network is teaching its operative how to produce ricin and other poisons.... Those helping to run this camp are Zarqawi lieutenants operating in northern Kurdish areas outside Saddam Hussein's controlled Iraq, but Baghdad has an agent in the most senior levels of the radical organization Ansar al-Islam, that controls this corner of Iraq. In 2000, this agent offered Al Qaeda safe haven in the region. After we swept Al Qaeda from Afghanistan, some of its members accepted this safe haven. They remain there today.

.....

The Nicholas Berg Video

Barely a couple of weeks later (11 May 2004), Al Zarqawi is reported as being the mastermind behind the execution of Nicholas Berg on May 11, 2004. **Again perfect timing! The report coincided with calls by US Senators for Defense Sec Donald Rumsfeld to resign over the Abu Ghraib prison scandal.** It occurs a few days after President Bush's "apology" for the Abu Ghraib prison "abuses" on May 6. **The Nicholas Berg video served to create "a useful wave of indignation"** which served to distract and soften up public opinion, following the release of the pictures of torture of Iraqi

prisoners. (See the intelligence assumptions underlying Operation Northwoods, a secret Joint Chiefs of Staff plan to kill civilians in the Cuban community in Florida, and blame it on Fidel Castro. (More: [\[3\]](#)))

.....

Extending the War on Terrorism

Are "we winning or losing" the war on terrorism. These statements are used to justify enhanced military operations against this illusive individual, who is confronting US military might, all over the World. Al Zaraqawi is used profusely in Bush's press conferences and speeches in an obvious public relations ploy.

*You know, I hate to predict violence, but I just understand the nature of the killers. **This guy, Zaraqawi, an al Qaeda associate -- who was in Baghdad, by the way, prior to the removal of Saddam Hussein -- is still at large in Iraq.** And as you might remember, part of his operational plan was to sow violence and discord amongst the various groups in Iraq by cold-blooded killing. **And we need to help find Zaraqawi so that the people of Iraq can have a more bright -- bright future.*** (Press Conference, 1 June 2004, emphasis added)

War is a Force that Gives Us Meaning, but the Chase keeps it Interesting.

Hedges:

We become the embodiment of light and goodness. We become the defenders of civilization, of all that is decent. We are more noble than others. We are braver than others. We are kinder and more compassionate than others -- that the enemy at our gate is perfidious, dark, somewhat inhuman. We turn them into two-dimensional figures. I think that's part of the process of linguistically dehumanizing them. And in wartime, we always turn the other into an object, and often, quite literally, in the form of a corpse.

Posted by HongPong at [06:17 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [International Politics](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Macalester College](#) , [Media](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Music](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [Security](#) , [The White House](#) , [War on Terror](#)

September 10, 2005

"Bureaucracy has committed murder;" The Big Spinstorm; a little more on Israeli spies shadowing hijackers before 9/11

BROUSSARD [of Jefferson Parish]: We have been abandoned by our own country. Hurricane Katrina will go down in history as one of the worst storms ever to hit an American coast. But the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina will go down as one of the worst abandonments of Americans on American soil ever in U.S. history. ... Whoever is at the top of this totem pole, that totem pole needs to be chainsawed off and we've got to start with some new leadership. It's not just Katrina that caused all these deaths in New Orleans here. **Bureaucracy has committed murder here in the greater New Orleans area and bureaucracy has to stand trial before Congress now.**

As [featured at ThinkProgress](#).

Yeah, I don't know if I can put the big picture of the storm together. Nonetheless here are some stories.

Someone told [Cheney to go fuck himself](#) on live television. Tomgram: [Iraq in America: At the Front of Nowhere at All: The Perfect Storm and the Feral City](#) By Tom Engelhardt really puts it into perspective, and all the nasty

parallels and feedback effects from the Iraq war making things worse, the sudden and shocking evidence that the Public Sector in this country has been stripped to the bone, etc. A lot of [blame is getting spun around](#), [Brit Hume even claimed that Bush "pleaded" that the mayor of New Orleans would evacuate](#).

Also this [White House photo of Bush in a video teleconference](#) before it hit just illustrates how they shouldn't have dropped the damn ball. Check out [the official note from FEMA's Brown](#) (PDF), five damn hours after it hit, putting DHS and FEMA into action in the "near catastrophic event". [Via TPM](#).

The Red Tape and bizarre bureaucratic moves included having [firefighters hand out fliers](#) apparently. The pathology of our government:

...as specific orders began arriving to the firefighters in Atlanta, a team of 50 Monday morning quickly was ushered onto a flight headed for Louisiana. The crew's first assignment: **to stand beside President Bush as he tours devastated areas**.

Image before life. Also [Barbara Bush said that "This is working out very well for them"](#) in their tortured refugee status because they were "underprivileged anyway." There are some [horrible reports about totally staged relief events](#) - entire sites that appeared to hand out supplies, then collapsed as soon as Bush and the less observant American media moved off. The Germans of ZDF were more observant. But wait, maybe that [was not accurate at all](#). Here are some [translations of the media in question](#).

It would appear that Blackwater USA - the same private military firm/mercenary org that's done such a fine job in Mesopotamia - has [sent at least 150 people into the New Orleans area](#). They are patrolling with M-16s. Yeah. A [blogger on the ground](#) appears to have broken this story.

The practice of putting political apparatchiks into FEMA makes more sense if we consider what might have happened if it had hit a swing state in an election year, such as the 2004 hit on Florida, where FEMA rolled in and [basically showered people with cash](#) well outside the damage zone, resulting in a nice bounce of several points for Bush. [Was Michael Brown basically perpetrating fraud in Florida 2004](#) (PDF)? [Salon: The Politics of Hurricane Relief](#). ThinkProgress [Katrina Timeline](#) attempts to counter the spin. [Billmon](#) is doing a damn good job these days, as always.

True Blue Conspiracy Theorist **Wayne Madsen** said that someone, probably the government, was [jamming radio transmissions around New Orleans](#). What the hell? I don't get it. Well, now there is an update that is is coming from some kind of pirate radio station in the Caribbean. Ok, whatever. Here is how you can [defeat radio jamming signals](#). Apparently. Also, he has a grand conspiracy already going into place about depopulating the poor black

population of the city. I liked the bit about "secret hereditary societies." So take this with [many grains of salt](#):

September 9, 2005 -- Dallas meeting plans reconstruction of New Orleans without poor African Americans. According to well-informed New Orleans sources, New Orleans' wealthiest families, including those who are direct descendants of the French who settled New Orleans (not the Acadians [Cajuns] who were poor refugees from British tyranny in Nova Scotia) are meeting in Dallas today with Bush administration officials, New Orleans city officials, wealthy Texas oilmen, and bankers to plan for the reconstruction of New Orleans. These wealthy New Orleans residents live in the gated community of Audobon Place, a section of the city near the Garden District replete with personal helipads that still has running water and sewage and was only slightly affected by hurricane Katrina. **It is now reportedly being patrolled by private Israeli security forces.** Yesterday's Wall Street Journal ran a piece with more details on this story.

Rep. Richard Baker (R-LA): "**We finally cleaned up public housing in New Orleans. We couldn't do it, but God did.**"

The Dallas meeting focused on rebuilding and re-zoning New Orleans without the "criminal element," a code word for the city's poor African American community.

These New Orleans residents have been scattered across the United States and are now under the control of FEMA. There is an understanding by the wealthy New Orleans elite that the poor will never be able to return. The Journal reported that the person who chaired the Dallas meeting was Jimmy Riess, one of the wealthy New Orleans elite who also served as Mayor Ray Nagin's Chairman of the Regional Transit Authority, which is in charge of the city's buses, trolleys, and trains. New Orleans sources report that **public transportation was purposely not used to evacuate the poor New Orleans residents as a means to depopulate the poorer and more flood-prone sections of the city. [hongpong: wtf?!! let me get my tinfoil hat right away!]** In fact, after the properties in New Orleans poorer communities are razed many of the **deed records** of the poor and middle class contained in government offices and title companies of Orleans Parish and neighboring Jefferson Parish may end up being casualties of the flood. As one New Orleans source put it, "people will not have proof they ever owned anything." **As for renters and residents of public housing, they will be prevented from returning to their native city,** according to New Orleans sources. Louisiana's Republican House member Richard Baker, a strong Bush ally, may have tipped his hand about the future plans for New Orleans when he told a group of lobbyists, "We finally cleaned up public housing in New Orleans. We couldn't do it, but God did."

Guess Who Is Planning the Rebuilding of New Orleans?

The French-American elite of New Orleans are among the city's "rich and famous." They run the Mardi Gras "crews" (Krews) or clubs, **secret hereditary societies that sponsor the annual pre-Lenten festival.** Many also run large oil companies and are long time supporters of the Bush family and their associated oil and gas cartels.

Meanwhile, the wars: There was the conference about terrorism and security called [America's Purpose](#), which you can see video about, and some [stuff on CSPAN](#). Washington dude [Steve Clemons](#) was involved. In terms of the war, Juan Cole offered an [excellent dissection of how Christopher Hitchens is still trying to defend it](#).

The "sovereign" [Iraqi government wants to get those private mercenary / privatized military / security firms under control](#) somehow, including a central registry. Also [this news](#) from the Telegraph.



For more than two years such contractors have roamed with impunity. But now the interior ministry has imposed rules requiring all their firms to be registered and weapons to be carried only by guards holding an official licence.

If any of the companies is considered to be a threat or if it angers a government official its official permit could be revoked and the business ordered to depart.

About 25,000 security contractors, many of them British, American and South African ex-servicemen, lured to Iraq by wages of up to £750 a day, are estimated to be in the country providing protection for official buildings, supply convoys or visiting businessmen.

They are highly unpopular with locals. Convoys of contractors have become a common sight on a journey through Baghdad since the March 2003 US-led invasion.

Adorned in sunglasses and bullet-proof vests, they travel in white four-wheel-drive vehicles with gun barrels protruding from the windows. **Many refuse to obey road signs and consider traffic jams a security risk so barge through the lines of vehicles** which are often forced to pull over rapidly on to pavements.

Their lack of official status has long been a concern and those **operating on US department of defence contracts are free from risk of legal penalty under the Iraqi judicial system if they killed anyone** in a firefight.

But under the new rules confirmed yesterday all such firms will be brought under the authority of the Baghdad government. All companies will have to provide details of their number of employees, jobs undertaken and office addresses.

Most significantly their employees will no longer be allowed to possess a weapon without approval. Many of the firms have considerable firepower. As well as AK-47s and assault rifles some have heavy machineguns and anti-tank rocket launchers. One company, Blackwater, even has its own fleet of helicopters which criss-cross Baghdad with machine guns poking out from the side.

The surging private military industry is a fascinating subject for me. If you want a really entertaining video shot from the [Blackwater guys' helicopters, check out MilitaryVideos.net](#). The latest video, from August, is [Blackwater in Najaf 2](#) (BitTorrent wmv - legal). Sounds exciting. [Index of some of these companies, Global Guerrillas on PMFs, the Guardian on it. Soldiers of Good Fortune by Barry Yeoman in Mother Jones](#) is a really excellent primer. And of course [Wikipedia on it](#).

OS X + Windows Video Tech Tip: For some horrible reason, Windows Media Player for Mac OS X is a very stubborn piece of crap that hates to play lots of WMV files. However, if you retittle the file's type from .wmv to **.asf** , then lots of them will work. Incredibly stupid, but it works on most of the videos from MilitaryVideos.net.

Juan Cole offers us the following tidbit about how Rummy thinks that we can do a Top Notch job in New Orleans, Iraq AND the Global War on Terror.

The US Pentagon is sending hundreds of members of the Louisiana National Guard home from Iraq. Some of them have lost homes in New Orleans. Internet gossip had earlier suggested substantial discontent in the ranks over being stuck in Iraq while Louisiana faced its biggest crisis in modern history.

The Iraqi Interior ministry said 9 Iraqis were killed, among them a high-ranking official in the ministry of the interior. Another 20, at least, were injured.

US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld maintains that the US government can both take care of New Orleans and pursue the "global war on terror."

Uh, Donald, let's look at this situation. First, much of New Orleans is under water. **You stole money that should have been spent on its levees for the Iraq War, and you stole state national guards from Louisiana to fight in Iraq.** (The state national guards hadn't signed up to fight foreign wars and were surprised when you kidnapped them, sometimes for a whole year at a time.) So you haven't actually done a good job with the effects of Katrina in New Orleans. In fact, the job has been so bad that some wags are saying they can't believe you personally were not in charge of the recovery effort.

Then let's consider the war against al-Qaeda. You may have noticed that Ayman al-Zawahiri issued a videotape late last week. It was bundled with the farewell suicide tape of Muhammad Siddique Khan, the mastermind of the 7/7 bombers in London. It now appears that **your inability to capture al-Zawahiri has allowed him to intrigue with Pakistani jihadi groups to recruit British subjects to bomb their own country.** Bin Laden and Zawahiri are at large and free men, which is your failure.

Then there is the war in Iraq. **I don't need to tell you that that isn't going very well. In fact, what in hell are you doing in the godforsaken Turkmen city of Tal Afar? Is it really a big threat to the United States? Is it likely to be friendly to us if you drop 500 pound bombs on its residential districts?**

You left out **the fourth war Bush is fighting, on the US poor.** The average wage of the average American work fell last quarter, amidst rising corporate profits. Bush cut billions in taxes on the rich, and then gave \$300 checks to some poor people, who didn't seem to realize that by taking it they were giving up all sorts of government services and maybe even their social security payments.

So, Donald, maybe it is true that you can save New Orleans, occupy Iraq and fight a global war on terror all at the same time. But you, at least, cannot actually do these things successfully. Which is why you should have resigned a long time ago.

Projects in Iraq are running out of cash. This would include water and power projects. Also, the US is obsessed with gaining control of the town of Tal Afar near Syria, and has been bombing the bridges over the Euphrates River in an effort to prevent militants from circulating. Of course, some people might suggest that such an action is pretty much the Direct Method for "dividing a country", but how could I suggest such a thing? Also the city of Qaim, on the edge of Syria, has been a site of dramatic violence and such... As usual it is all being blamed on Goldstein. I mean Zarqawi. A complex report about the struggle in Iraq over its economic organization. Of course, the US has been

crushing the wishes of the more socialist-oriented Iraqis, who realize their country has a good chance of getting ahead with export-led industrial development and a heavily subsidized public sector backed up with oil wealth. Oh well. That is Not Suitable to our Fantasy Vision, dammit!

Israel is wrapping up the Gaza occupation, and the little slice of land between Gaza and Egypt will finally return to Arab hands. This is called the Philadelphi Corridor or Philadelphi Route, which [this Fikret Ertan dude reflects on](#). The matter of border customs stations, overseen by an international team, has not been fully resolved yet. It seems that [Bush is intervening with the Europeans](#), asking them not to pressure Sharon so that he's more likely to win against Netanyahu. However, as writer Gideon Samet points out, they are being lazy and unhelpful, making the wrong moves with the "Israeli hurricane" as well. [Israel is sealing the Rafah crossing in Gaza to prep it](#). The notoriously goofy [Rabbi Ovaida Yosef said that Hurricane Katrina was God's punishment for Bush's support](#) for leaving Gaza.

"It was God's retribution. God does not shortchange anyone," Yosef said during his weekly sermon on Tuesday. His comments were broadcast on Channel 10 TV on Wednesday.

Yosef also said recent natural disasters were the result of a lack of Torah study and that Katrina's victims suffered "because they have no God," singling out black people.....Yosef singled out black victims, saying "they don't study Torah." He used the word "Kushim," which in the Bible refers to an ancient African people but in vernacular Hebrew is considered derogatory.

Our last Israel tidbit comes from Amira Hass, on "[Gun Envy](#)." Life for a tiny child in the Gaza slums:

In another year or two, he will learn to distinguish between an armed Jew and an armed Palestinian. Instead of fear, maybe he will be filled with pride and excitement. In another three years, he will know how to distinguish between armed men from Hamas and armed men from the Palestinian Authority/Fatah, and will already decide which is his favorite team. Thus, without his parent's wanting it, without realizing it, without his similarly excited friends realizing it - he will be infected with the common malady whose scientific name is "gun envy."

The minor variety of this illness is sympathy (for one organization or another) and emulation (with toy guns). The serious variety is to join an organization. The most common symptom of this illness is reflected in the billboards and posters that constantly crowd one's field of vision: men armed with rifles and mortars, in every pose imaginable, and with each organization competing over whose is bigger. Another symptom is expressed in the public military ceremonies that elicit ecstatic reactions from the crowd.

She astutely points out that the Palestinians are in fact developing mirror images of the main force all around them, the IDF.

Was Israel Keeping Tabs on some of the 9/11 hijackers?

What an interesting question!! What do you say,

I am no fan of Allan Bloom style neoconservative browbeating of the "Liberal Academia", but this [review in NYTimes about the effect of his classic "Closing of the American Mind: How Higher Education Has Failed Democracy and Stolen My Maple Syrup"](#) was sort of interesting. I think the interesting point was that Bloom would be appalled how the rightwing is attempting to ideologically straitjacket academia in the same sorts of ways that Bloom thought the Big Scary Left did back in the day.



Misc bits: [freewayblogger.com](#) chronicles signs posted on overpasses and stuff against Bush and the War. This is very old news, but the British graffiti artist [Banksy bombed the wall constructed by the Israeli government](#) inside the Palestinian Territories. I can't believe he did something so detailed in the high-security area. Badass.

That's all for today, folks.

Posted by HongPong at [04:30 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [International Politics](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [News](#) , [Technological Apparatus](#) , [War on Terror](#)

August 20, 2005

A Return to Normalcy

I just feel like putting this picture up. I just restored a whole bunch of sweet old collections of photos and such to the site. Therefore, it's like we're kicking some ass and winning!!!

That is all.

Posted by HongPong at [02:58 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Iraq](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [The White House](#)

August 19, 2005

What is so bad about 'cutting and running'? plus Sharon "The settlement blocs will remain" in West Bank

Betrayed in Gaza:

On television, the tumult in the Gaza Strip looks like **nothing less than a pogrom -- soldiers dragging Jews out** of their homes and synagogues for immediate, involuntary, permanent relocation. Does it matter that the soldiers are Jewish, too? Not to the Jews being hauled away. Does it matter that some of the most vociferous protesters don't even live in Gaza and are just there to make a point? Not if you remember all the Freedom Riders of the civil rights era who came from Massachusetts or Michigan, not Mississippi.

What's happening in Gaza is geopolitically and historically correct, and when seen from the proper altitude -- high enough that individuals blur into groups -- it's morally correct as well.

[.....]A friend once observed that for African Americans and Jews, the word "paranoid" has no meaning. That's because history proves that it's not our imagination: They are out to get us.

So can I recognize the necessity, the inevitability of the autopogrom in Gaza without cheering its execution? I guess I don't have a choice, since that's what I feel. I'm sorry for those people, long misguided and now betrayed. ***Some may be religious fanatics and others political extremists, but their sugar-plum-fairy visions of Greater Israel didn't just pop into their heads. Their political and religious leaders put them there. And now, as those leaders do what they must, they should feel the deepest sorrow and shame.***

'Goodbye to all that:' IDF plans to complete evacuating Gaza by **Tuesday**. Not bad! Haaretz writers put disengagement in perspective. A Defining Moment. Who will rule Gaza now?

IDF digs trench to keep Palestinians out of Gush Katif

By Nir Hasson and Amos Harel, Haaretz Correspondents

Israel Defense Forces on Friday began digging eight-meter-deep trenches around the evacuated Gush Katif settlements in the Gaza Strip in a bid to prevent Palestinians from reaching the settlement bloc prior to its complete evacuation. Troops will renew operations on Sunday as activity was halted for the Sabbath. By Tuesday, the IDF intends to complete the evacuation of all settlements in the Gaza Strip. **Troops will then focus their efforts on the northern West Bank settlements of Homesh and Sa-Nur. Hundreds of radical settler youths have moved into the latter settlement in recent weeks.**

So we will get a bit of a Round Two from those damn Yesha teenagers.

Israel's Gaza Operation Sets Precedent (AP)

With its lightning operation in Gaza — nearly all Jewish settlers evacuated in just 55 hours — Israel has shown the world that it can dismantle such enclaves with relative ease, despite the settlers' tears, anguish and occasional violence.

Having set this precedent, Israel will likely come under increasingly **intense pressure to do the same in the West Bank** — though Israeli officials insist it could be years before settlements there even come up for discussion.

On the Palestinian side, leader Mahmoud Abbas' success in preventing deadly attacks by militants during the pullout has boosted his image as a peace partner and given new weight to his demand that Israel resume negotiations.

Sheehan stuff: It was a good episode for the antiwar movement, few can doubt. A [spearhead](#) of the peace movement? has it touched off some kind of national nerve? Yeah. A good [roundup from Froomkin at the WaPo](#). Too bad [she's gone](#). NewsFromBabylon is a sweet site, and they posted a big NY Times story about "[The Other Army](#)," namely all those private military firms, or "private security companies" as the softies wish you'd call them. "[US Spy satellites under scrutiny](#):"

One of the systems under scrutiny by Negroponte is a classified program to build the next generation of stealth satellites, whose estimated costs have nearly doubled to \$9.5 billion in recent years, according to sources.

The program has been severely criticized in closed session by members of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, who have objected to the rising costs and who argue that it is ineffective against modern adversaries such as terrorist networks. The Senate panel has tried to kill the program in the past, sources said, but it has been supported by House and Senate appropriations committees and the House intelligence panel.

Because of their small size, these satellites -- early generations had been code-named Misty -- would be almost invisible among existing space debris to enemy radars. But those same small dimensions would also limit some of their collection capabilities, according to John Pike, an expert in space vehicles with GlobalSecurity.org.

The other futuristic spy satellite program that Negroponte has focused on is the new generation of non-stealth space vehicles -- using optical, radar, listening and infrared-red capabilities -- known collectively as the Future Imagery Architecture (FIA). Development of these satellites, which has been going on since the late 1990s, has also had major cost increases, now estimated at more than \$25 billion over the next decade. As a result, the House intelligence panel voted sharp reductions in its version of the fiscal 2006 intelligence authorization bill.

The Sign That Knows You: [Look at this graphic](#) as it looks back at you.

GAZA: Haaretz: STATUS: [Disengagement - Day Five Diary. Analysis: Resistance to the disengagement has been futile.](#)

[You have to read Sharon's speech:](#)

Sharon did not use his speech to joyfully declare that he has no intention of withdrawing from even one millimeter of Judea and Samaria. In fact, he opened the door to a continuation of the process: "The world is awaiting the Palestinian response, a hand toward peace or the fire of terrorism. We will respond to the outstretched hand with an olive leaf, but we will respond to fire with stronger fire than ever before."

Herein lies a hint that the Gaza prototype, with requisite corrections, would be applied in areas to the east. In an interview appearing in last Friday's Yedioth Ahronoth, Sharon provided a few more details about his plans for the West Bank: "**Not everything will remain; the settlement blocs will remain.**"

Toward of the end of the speech, Sharon offered another, surprising, diagnosis: "**The disengagement will give us a chance to look inside ourselves. The agenda will change. Economic policy will find the time to address closing the social gaps and a real war on poverty.**"

You could hardly believe your ears. For this is the exact argument of the left: that the settlements were built at the expense of the development towns, investment in infrastructures, in roads, in education and vocational training, and are **therefore the major cause of social and economic gaps and poverty.**

Sharon slams 'grave' Jewish terror attack on Palestinians. Man who killed 4 Palestinians: I hope someone kills Sharon:

Asher Weissgan, a 38-year-old resident of the West Bank settlement Shvut Rahel, on Wednesday shot to death four Palestinians with whom he worked and wounded two others, one of them seriously. [Prime Minister Ariel Sharon](#) condemned the attack as an "exceptionally grave Jewish act of terror," Israel Radio reported, and instructed the security establishment to deal harshly with all attempts to harm innocent people. "I'm not sorry for what I did," said Weissgan before entering a remand hearing at the Petah Tikvah Magistrate's Court. "I hope someone also kills Sharon."

Earlier Thursday, security forces prepared for possible riots in Palestinian areas in the territories in reaction to the shooting. ***Hamas has threatened to avenge the shooting, which was the second Jewish terror attack in two weeks. Sources in Hamas told Haaretz on Wednesday night that it was still committed to the current cease-fire, but that they would not be able to continue restraint in the face of repeated Jewish terror attacks.*** "We are in favor of quiet and continue to be committed to it but will not permit it to be unilateral," said Sheikh Hassan Yusef, a senior Hamas official in the West Bank. But Sami Abu Zohari, a Hamas spokesman in the Gaza Strip, warned that retaliation would follow. The victims have been identified as Mohammed Mansour, 48, and Bassam Tauase, 30, both from the Nablus region; Halil Salah, 42, from Qalqilyah; and Osama Moussa Tawafsha, 33, from the village of Sanjil, not far from the West Bank town of Ramallah.

Palestinians fire mortar shells towards Gaza settlement of Gadid. IDF says thwarted terror attack by Palestinians during pullout. Children caught in middle of settlers' struggle to make gains on TV (not to mention caught in the settlements themselves). They never had to cut off the power & water. Palestinian After Party by Amira Hass. Op: Territory for Israel. I thought this argument about how settler rabbis sanctify random objects to theologically justify their activities was fascinating. Analysis / Settler leaders: Riding the tiger: Who would have thought that people who even see the state of Israel as an enemy wouldn't obey their leaders?

Rabbi Shlomo Aviner, a leading settler rabbi, who was cursed as a heretic this week after trying to restrain a group of angry teenagers, has perhaps learned the lesson that his colleagues should have learned from countless incidents in Jewish history: He who nurtures a tiger will not always be able to control it. If you wish to retain control, your ranks must be confined to those willing to accept your authority.

It is almost ironic: Those who refused to accept the authority of the state's decisions have now discovered that they cannot impose their authority on their own forces. Except that this is no laughing matter.

AIPAC bits and PR for the West Bank settlements. I found today I have a good Google ranking for 'AIPAC intel.' So why not add a story from about a year ago, "[Israel has long spied on U.S., say officials.](#)" in the LA Times via w3ar.com. Even [Billmon is talking about the latest bits of the AIPAC scandal.](#) This site also has exciting keywords like [Intelligence:Espionage:Israeli](#)

Espionage. Meanwhile, we are getting some trial balloons for the coming PR offensive to help Israel retain West Bank settlements. Note the trickier rhetorical devices, which I will set in subtle HTML:

Mother Knows Best By ZEV CHAFETS

This diplomatic success was possible only because Mr. Bush won Ariel Sharon's trust. Previous administrations tried to bribe or pressure Israel into making territorial concessions. The president used different tools - **common sense** and credibility.

As a master politician, Mr. Bush realized that there were political limits on what Mr. Sharon could do. Neither Mr. Sharon nor any conceivable Israeli prime minister would **ever evict the hundreds of thousands of Israelis who now live in East Jerusalem and the major settlement blocs of the West Bank**. Asking for that would be an automatic deal-breaker. Same for the Palestinian demand that millions of Arab refugees and their descendants be "returned" to Israel. And Israel would never relinquish its option to respond militarily to armed **aggression**.



Mr. Bush acknowledged these **Israeli truths** in an official letter he sent to Mr. Sharon in April of 2004. In exchange for that recognition, however, the president asked for - and got - Mr. Sharon's agreement to do what he could do. Evacuating Gaza was one of those things. The American vision for Middle East peace sees exit from Gaza as a first step. Next comes an Israeli withdrawal from those **settlements in the West Bank that aren't already de facto parts of Israel**, and then the creation of an independent Palestinian state.

You PONK ASS BITCH. LOOK AT THIS DAMN MAP AND TELL ME WHICH ONES. Ariel? Kiryat Arba? sorry folks that was crude. But I find this kind of shady language most antagonizing.

Cut and Run? That is a very good question which is hardly asked with the kind of objective rigor that it deserves. It's converse, "Staying the course," always has struck me as a weird and flimsy oxymoron, since the course has been wobbly and improvised quite badly. For example, *what is the difference between "Cutting and Running" from the Kurds, and "Staying the Course" with the Kurds?* "Kurdish Autonomy Moves Evoke Bloody Repression [in Iran]- Regional Crisis Growing." Fortunately a retired military theorist, William Odom, brings home the main points in a clear way:

What's wrong with cutting and running?

If I were a journalist, I would list all the arguments that you hear against pulling U.S. troops out of Iraq, the horrible things that people say would happen, and then ask: Aren't they happening already? Would a pullout really make things worse? Maybe it would make things better.

Here are some of the arguments against pulling out:

- 1) **We would leave behind a civil war.**
- 2) **We would lose credibility on the world stage.**
- 3) **It would embolden the insurgency and cripple the move toward democracy.**
- 4) **Iraq would become a haven for terrorists.**
- 5) **Iranian influence in Iraq would increase.**
- 6) **Unrest might spread in the region and/or draw in Iraq's neighbors.**
- 7) **Shiite-Sunni clashes would worsen.**
- 8) **We haven't fully trained the Iraqi military and police forces yet.**

9) Talk of deadlines would undercut the morale of our troops.

But consider this:

1) **On civil war.** Iraqis are already fighting Iraqis. Insurgents have killed far more Iraqis than Americans. That's civil war. We created the civil war when we invaded; we can't prevent a civil war by staying.

[.....]

6) **On Iraq's neighbors.** The civil war we leave behind may well draw in Syria, Turkey and Iran. But already today each of those states is deeply involved in support for or opposition to factions in the ongoing Iraqi civil war. The very act of invading Iraq almost insured that violence would involve the larger region. And so it has and will continue, with, or without, US forces in Iraq.

7) **On Shiite-Sunni conflict.** The US presence is not preventing Shiite-Sunni conflict; it merely delays it. Iran is preventing it today, and it will probably encourage it once the Shiites dominate the new government, an outcome US policy virtually ensures.

8) **On training the Iraq military and police.** The insurgents are fighting very effectively without US or European military advisors to train them. Why don't the soldiers and police in the present Iraqi regime's service do their duty as well? **Because they are uncertain about committing their lives to this regime. They are being asked to take a political stand,** just as the insurgents are. Political consolidation, not military-technical consolidation, is the issue.

The issue is not military training; **it is institutional loyalty.** We trained the Vietnamese military effectively. Its generals took power and proved to be lousy politicians and poor fighters in the final showdown. In many battles over a decade or more, South Vietnamese military units fought very well, defeating VC and NVA units. But South Vietnam's political leaders lost the war.

Even if we were able to successfully train an Iraqi military and police force, the likely result, after all that, would be another military dictatorship. Experience around the world teaches us that military dictatorships arise when the military's institutional modernization gets ahead of political consolidation.

[.....]

The US invasion of Iraq only serves the interest of:

1) **Osama bin Laden** (it made Iraq safe for al Qaeda, positioned US military personnel in places where al Qaeda operatives can kill them occasionally, helps radicalize youth throughout the Arab and Muslim world, alienates America's most important and strongest allies – the Europeans – and squanders US military resources that otherwise might be finishing off al Qaeda in Pakistan.);

2) **The Iranians** (who were invaded by Saddam and who suffered massive casualties in an eight year war with Iraq.);

3) **And the extremists in both Palestinian and Israeli political circles** (who don't really want a peace settlement without the utter destruction of the other side, and probably believe that bogging the United States down in a war in Iraq that will surely become a war between the United States and most of the rest of Arab world gives them the time and cover to wipe out the other side.)

The wisest course for journalists might be to begin sustained investigations of why leading Democrats have failed so miserably to challenge the US occupation of Iraq. **The first step, of course, is to establish as conventional wisdom the fact that the war was never in the US interest and has not become so. It is such an obvious case to make that I find it difficult to believe many pundits and political leaders have not already made it repeatedly.**

So in other words there is little to be salvaged. The potential negatives aren't so bad, relatively, if they are happening already. All right, that's enough. I should go have fun and act like a reasonable person now.

Posted by HongPong at [10:10 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Iraq](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [War on Terror](#)

August 11, 2005

Iraqi blogger gets beat up by the Mukhabarat; Iranian nuclear neural networks

Ok so Andrew has me doing a couple websites now - the front end of a party supply company site, and more complex sort of social services type site. So there's a lot to do for the next few days. Also Arthur Cheng is going off to China tomorrow, so we have to kick it before he returns to the Great Red Middle Kingdom. So I need to clear out these links to free the RAM for web stuff... Enjoy.

Outer Space. Real sweet [M8/Lagoon Nebula photograph](#). From NASA. Congrats to the shuttle folks on patching their stuff and using the International Space Station. Even though the recent affair looked like a mess, they'll learn quite a bit about how to do space patching missions in the future. "*How to hack yr craft in space*" is something the human race will have to figure out sooner or later. It's a pity, I used to take such an interest in Out There, until this ball suddenly seemed like a much larger problem.

The Next War. "[War Plans Drafted to Counter Terror Attacks in U.S.](#)" "[No Sympathy for the Neocons](#)" by Raimondo, good stuff. Again, here's that creepy report about [Cheney requesting nuclear war plans to nuke Iran](#) after a random terror attack, committed by someone, anyone. I recommend this Federation of American Scientists site with [all kinds of cool docs about Iran's nuclear program](#), including the [COOLEST BIBLIOGRAPHY EVER](#):

Journal of Science of the University of Tehran, 1998, Vol. 3, p21-37, A. Pazirandeh
Research Reactor Fuel Element Leak Testing Using Delayed Neutron Counting

Annals of Nuclear Energy, 1999, Vol. 26, p1601-10, H. Khalafi
Calculational Tools to Conduct Experimental Optimization in Tehran Research Reactor

Nuclear Science Journal, 1999, Vol. 36, p42-50, M.Roshan Zamir
Design of the Tehran Research Reactor Spent Fuel Storage

Annals of Nuclear Energy, 2002, Vol. 29, p1591-96, M. Zaker
Effective Delayed Neutron Fraction and Prompt Neutron Lifetime of Tehran Research Reactor

Annals of Nuclear Energy, 2002, Vol. 29, p1989-2000, M.B. Ghofrani and S.A. Damghani
Determination of the Safety Importance of Systems of the Tehran Research Reactor Using a PSA Method

Annals of Nuclear Energy, 2003, Vol. 30, p63-80, M. Boroushaki, M.B. Ghofrani, C. Lucas and M.J.

Yazdanpanah

An Intelligent Reactor Core Controller for Load Following Operations, Using Recurrent Neural Networks and Fuzzy Systems

Iranian Journal of Physics Research, 2004, Vol. 4, p13-31, R.I. Najafabadi, R.K. Faegh and H. Afrideh
Measurement and Calculation of High Energy Neutron Flux in Aluminum, Graphite, Water and Paraffin Assembly

Annals of Nuclear Energy, 2005, Vol. 32, p588-605, H. Arab-Alibek and S. Setayeshi
Adaptive Control of a PWR Core Power Using Neural Networks

Scientific Bulletin of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, 1998, Vol. 18, p9-17, A.A. Hosseini, H. Mansuri and R. Mahmudi
Casting and Irradiation Studies of 8001 Series of Aluminum Alloys for Nuclear Research Reactor Structural Applications

Progress in Nuclear Energy, 2004, Vol. 44, p331-45, P. Parvin, B. Sajad, K. Silakhori, M. Hooshvar and Z. Zamanipour
Molecular Laser Isotope Separation versus Atomic Vapor Laser Isotope Separation

I think we harbor the fantasy that all these people have no right to do their research, but hopefully something as prosaic as these journal articles helps illustrate that they are well integrated with the global nuclear research community and it can't be wished away. Come on, wouldn't it be Totally Badass to design neural networks to manage an Iranian nuclear power plant?

Ledeem and his uncle Izzy: A lot of neocons were Trotskyists, dontcha know?

Think Tankery: "Rich Liberals Vow to Fund Think Tanks." Also "Bear 'expert' devoured by bears." roughly the same stuff. "Britney 'oblivious' to shooting."

Iraq. I am really appalled that Bush is taking a FIVE WEEK VACATION while everything is going to hell. Fortunately, the appearance of pissed off mom of a deceased soldier Casey Sheehan threatens to turn the entire vacation into a PR disaster for Bush. She has every right to do this, she's giving out dozens of interviews and reframing the whole situation. Top Notch. A whole little tent city of angry veterans families might materialize, and wouldn't that be excellent? Spending August on Caesar's Doorstep, not bad at all.

A weird sort of coup dislodged the US-appointed mayor of Baghdad with a SCIRI guy. how many insurgents?

Going to court yesterday made this report from Raed Jarrar's brother, Khalid, about getting arrested by the New Mukhabarat (Iraqi secret police) all the more vivid. Khalid basically got picked up after surfing a couple websites at a university Internet cafe, and got tossed in the dungeons of the

Interior Ministry, now of the refurbished Mean Shiite sort, and his family didn't know where he was for several days. All sorts of guys, mostly Sunnis, are sitting around, getting tortured, accused of having terrorist infrastructures, while in reality they don't know what the hell is going on.
Harsh.

They started by asking me: "What's the connection between you and the London Bombs?" !!!
And I was like: "haaaaa???!". I said: "London Bombs???! Nothing!"
BANG!!

A heavy hand landed on my neck, my brain was too busy to feel the pain, I felt my neck numbing for a while.

"SPEAAAK" he shouted.

"Turn around" he yelled.

I turned, facing the room now, but not seeing anything other than my nose and the shoes of the person who was interrogating me, standing so close.

"Why do you have a beard?" he asked.

"Because the prophet..." (I was trying to tell him that prophet Mohammad had one, and that I have one because I love to look like him...)

BANG

He slapped me on the face. It made a loud noise that the room became dead-silent for some seconds....

"May the prophet curse you" he shouted.

Again, my brain didn't respond to the pain signals, I didn't feel it.

For the next few hours, they asked me questions like "who are the other members of our terrorist cell, where does your fund come from? What operations did you have?"

"What do you have against Shia?"

I said: "nothing, my mother is Shia!"

He said" what do you have against Kurds? Why don't you go blow yourself up and kill Kurds?"

I said: "Because God says in Quran..." (I was trying to tell him a part of Quran where God orders us not to kill any innocent soul) he interrupted me shouting, "We know Quran better than you".

"My best friend is Kurdish!" I said.

"Of course he is, so that you can get information about Kurds from him, right?" he answered.

Nothing I said seemed to make sense to them. And nothing they said makes sense to anyone in the world.

Then finally I understood why I was there, after few hours. Security guards at the university had printed out all the websites I was reading while I was online there. They were accusing me of "reading terrorism sites" and "having communications with foreign terrorists".

"Do you know what these pages are?"

I looked at them and figured out they were the comment section of Raed in the Middle!!

[.....]

I was so lucky that I was taken to the Mokhabarat directly. Usually you have to go through a police station or a center of the national guards to get there, where the **standard procedure of torturing is hanging people upside down and beating them with cables for hours, pinching their bodies with electrical drills, burning them with hot water, ripping out their finger nails, breaking bones, using acids on the wounds after whipping them, the dead bodies that are found in the dumpsters in Baghdad even had their eyes taken out of them, and a lot of these things happened with people that I know, or with people that were detained with the people that were with me in this jail**, before they were brought here, and the list of torturing techniques is long, and you don't want to hear them or know about them if you want to sleep at night.

In one of the floors in the same building, there is another prison, a bigger one called "The Palace of

Hospitality" (doesn't this remind you of 1984? The ministry of love and stuff?) Where recently a father and his son were arrested, and the son died at night because his ribs were broken after they beat him, and then they spelled hot water on his body, he kept moaning of pain for the whole night, said Abo Ayid, who slept right beside him, and then he died. I'll tell you more about Abu Ayid in the end.

The one thing in common between all the people that were there is that almost all of them were Sunnis. Interrogators told one of the prisoners during an interrogation session "you Sunnis are all terrorists" and during my interrogation, I heard a lot of racist remarks and questions. The Shia Iraqis who were there were mostly accused of non-terrorism crimes, like stealing, carjacking, etc...

It goes on and on, very intense. Glad he's ok, but it's hard to hear about the security apparatus shearing the state into pieces.

Also [Riverbend](#) from Baghdad hasn't had any entries since July 15. There are often big gaps in Riverbend's blog, but you always wonder if something horrible hasn't happened, as it regularly does. I would recommend spending awhile both [Khalid Jarrar's 'secrets in Baghdad'](#) and [Riverbend's 'Baghdad Burning'](#). I don't have the words to describe the depth of the writing...

[Juan Cole](#) on the [problems](#) of the [Japanese mission](#) in Iraq, where it would appear that the Sadr supporters in their bit of the south are pissed off with the SCIRI/Badr Corps people. Also [Hakim of SCIRI officially wants a 'Sumer' super-province](#) in the south, which would negotiate as a bloc with the central government, keeping a lot of the revenue from the southern oil fields, and as a regional counterweight to 'Kurdistan.' This would appear to be a formal manifestation of the fracturing of the country. The question is, can we get a catchy title for Sunni Anbar and other bits? How about "Arabian Texas"?

The great Bush Vacation Conspiracy and the 1999 Russian

Apartment building bombings: nathan x over at [911fraud.blogspot.com](#) suggests that whenever [Bush takes his August vacations, terror attacks are likely](#) to follow. But he believes that there was a 9/11 coverup and so forth, roughly along the lines of the [9/11 conspiracy theory laid out by the Prison Planet](#) people. I think it's more likely that Bush just doesn't feel like reading goddamn memos like "[Bin Ladin Determined to Strike in U.S.](#)" because he needs to [Cut the Brush!!](#) nathan also some other [tales/stories/whatever](#) label you want about governments performing terror strikes to manipulate the political situation. One particular site, [terror99.ru](#), chronicles the very suspicious [1999 Russian apartment building bombings](#) and the [strange investigation](#) that followed. I think that particular case is especially weird.

However I will take a moment to clarify that I don't believe there was a Grand 9/11 coverup/'false flag' conspiracy (although [50% of New Yorkers are kinda suspicious](#) about it), nor do I think that the [London bombing was like that](#), despite what the [conspiracy folks](#) (let's say *tinfoilhatvolken*) are [saying now](#). On the other hand, very often governments generate terrorist-

paramilitary style organizations for various ends, such as the [international Islamic front in late 1970s Afghanistan](#), [Israel's bastard child, Hamas](#), as well as fortifying more concrete organizations like the [heroin-laden Kosovo Liberation Army](#). Would [Russia's FSB blow up some stuff to galvanize](#) the withering Russian public to support crushing separatists at Russia's crumbling edges? (I'm still curious about the [9/11 insider trading](#), but who knows?)

I just don't know. (and far be it from me to risk antagonizing the New KGB, the New Mukhabarat, and the Chinese People's Liberation Army in one mere post). But I'll always enjoy a good yarn. I always try to pass things like this through by John Le Carre/'[Absolute Friends](#)' filter before I consider them as Truth. Anyway, there is far too much crazy stuff in the Mundane World to require me to dwell on the more Grand Esoteric Plots.

The 9/11 Israeli Art Student mystery: Speaking of Grand Plots, the weirdly conspiratorial journalist [Wayne Madsen](#) has a really enormous story about the strange tale of the [Israelis arrested selling art around secure installations](#) in the U.S. and Canada, possibly acting as Mossad agents and shadowing the 9/11 hijackers in several cities. I have trouble judging Madsen's credibility, considering stories like his exciting claims that [secret Saudi funds](#) and [BCCI-linked offshore cash financed fixing the vote in Ohio](#) last year. Real hard to believe. But still, at the least people like Madsen offer a different kind of prism to evaluate the world. But I was kind of surprised to see a more mainstream guy like [James Wolcott announced](#) that he added Madsen's site to his blogroll. So maybe he's a little more credible. Madsen has lots about the AIPAC thing, and definitely accuses Michael Ledeen of being involved.

AIPAC Fun! So now we may add Mossad to the list of intel agencies that should be annoyed today. Perhaps they would like to read [Dreyfuss' report on the AIPAC scandal](#) as well. [Naughty, everyone's talking](#) about it. [Corn says it's Bad News for Rove](#).

Likud ready to split? With Netanyahu out, former Jerusalem Mayor and Sharon loyalist Ehud Olmert is relatively more important, and has said that [Israel is not trying to trade Gaza in order to keep West Bank settlements](#). I don't know how far that will stick, but it is pretty much the opposite of what Netanyahu says all the time. "[Gaza Pullout threatens to split Israel's ruling party](#)."

Interesting stuff from Norman Solomon: [War Made Easy](#), methods of propaganda, etc. Also a [Solomon bit about a jailed soldier, Kevin Benderman](#), who refused to go to Iraq. Although I can't say if this sentiment is legal in such a day and age, (especially in Britannia) I also believe that it

is very legitimate for a soldier to fight hard to stay home, if for no other justification than that we invaded that country because of knowingly fabricated intelligence, and those implicated in the Pentagon are still in charge of setting the disastrous policies that the military's Benders would have to carry out.

Random: Also check out [inside Bush's weird Global Democracy movement](#). [Coldtype.net](#) had a lot of sweet essays about the war and such from Chomsky, Tariq Ali, Solomon, Jim Lobe and others. The [Lobe one, in particular, outlines the neocon intelligence fabricating](#) (PDF) with excellent detail.

Safari Crashed so I am dumping in the headlines I wanted to put: "[Abu Mazen quietly plans a revolution: He wants to be president, too.](#)" The [bus shooter case is now a lynching](#), says Haaretz, and a [TV station showed footage of it](#). And so it's a nasty situation. Talk of the connections between [Palestinian security forces, corrupt officials, the Israelis and militants/terrorists](#), in other words the Robin Hoods of Gaza. Netanyahu is [plotting something](#). So would [leaving Gaza truly equal the End of the Occupation?](#) what does that say about efforts to make the West Bank arrangement seem "Normal"?

And that is all.

Posted by HongPong at 06:14 PM | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Afghanistan](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Media](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#)

August 09, 2005

Sibel Edmonds case: Dennis Hastert was getting secret cash from Turks, she discovered?!

So apparently former FBI translator Sibel Edmonds processed some wiretaps that indicated House Speaker Dennis Hastert was getting huge sums of money from shadowy Turks to implement pro-Turkish policies. That's not the sort of thing that simplifies your day, assuming it's true. There's a big story in Vanity Fair about it, and a summarization via Corporate Crime Reporter. It seems exciting but I don't have any way to know if it's truly going to pan out.

[Corporate Crime Reporter: "Vanity Fair: Turks Boasted of Payments to Hastert:"](#)

Turkish officials boasted of giving "tens of thousands of dollars in surreptitious payments" to House Speaker Dennis Hastert (R-Illinois) in exchange for political favors.

That allegation is contained a profile of Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) whistleblower Sibel Edmonds in the current issue of Vanity Fair magazine.

The article, "An Inconvenient Patriot," by British writer David Rose, reports that Edmonds was asked to listen to wiretaps as part of what appeared to be an **FBI public corruption probe into bribes paid to members of Congress** – both Democrat and Republican.

Rose, citing "some of the wiretaps," reports that "the FBI's targets had arranged for **tens of thousands of dollars to be paid to Hastert's campaign funds in small checks.**"

The article notes that under Federal Election Commission rules, "donations of less than \$200 are not required to be itemized in public filings."

The article reports that Edmonds has given confidential testimony on several occasions – to congressional staffers, to the Inspector General, and to staff from the 9/11 commission.

"Edmonds reportedly added that the recordings also contained repeated references to Hastert's flip-flop, in the fall of 2000" to "the continuing campaign to have Congress designate the killings of Armenians in Turkey between 1915 and 1923 as genocide."

Worth following. The ACLU, who has been helping Edmonds out, point out that this [case has major ramifications for people trying to blow the whistle](#) on crappy government practices and general nastiness (crimes?), and urges the Supreme Court to look at it:

Edmonds' case is not an isolated incident," said ACLU Associate Legal Director Ann Beeson. "The federal government is routinely retaliating against government employees who uncover weaknesses in our ability to prevent terrorist attacks or protect public safety."

[...]The ACLU is also asking the Supreme Court to reverse the D.C. appeals court's decision to exclude the press and public from the court hearing of Edmonds' case in April. The appeals court closed the hearing at the eleventh hour without any specific findings that secrecy was necessary. In fact, the government had agreed to argue the case in public. A media consortium that included The New York Times , The Washington Post , and CNN intervened in the case to object to the closure. Edmonds, a former Middle Eastern language specialist hired by the FBI shortly after 9/11, was fired in 2002 and filed a lawsuit later that year challenging the retaliatory dismissal.

Her ordeal is highlighted in a 10-page article about whistleblowers in the September 2005 issue of Vanity Fair which links Edmonds' allegations and the subsequent **retaliation to possible "illicit activity involving Turkish nationals" and a high-level member of Congress**. The ACLU said the article, titled "An Inconvenient Patriot," further undercuts the government's claim that the case can't be litigated because certain information is secret.

In addition, a report by the Inspector General, made public in January 2005, contains a tremendous amount of detail about Edmonds' job, the structure of the FBI translation unit , and the substance of her allegations. The report concluded that **Edmonds' whistleblower allegations were "the most significant factor" in the FBI's decision to terminate her**.

The outcome in Edmonds' case could significantly impact the government's ability to rely on secrecy to avoid accountability in future cases, the ACLU said, including one pending case charging the government with "rendering" detainees to be tortured.

(more [ACLU stuff about the course of the case](#) here)

Posted by HongPong at 09:49 AM | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [The White House](#) , [War on Terror](#)

August 06, 2005

A murderous settler, Chinese earthquake machines

Another blast from the past came today as Peter Gartrell materialized in town, on his way to a cub reporter gig at a newspaper in Gillette, Wyoming, covering the natural gas industry. I've got to run over & say Hi in a sec...

So then, the Gaza withdrawal is less than two weeks away. A 19-year-old AWOL Israeli soldier-turned-settler got on a bus and shot four Israeli Arabs, wounded more, and was in turn killed by those he hadn't shot. He spent a while in the settlement of Tapuah, which is dominated by Kach followers or Kahanists, one of the most dangerous radical Jewish groups, which believes in the widespread ethnic cleansing of Arabs from both the West Bank and Israel.

Such groups are now pitted against the Israeli government, the courts, law enforcement and the military as the Gaza action gets underway. Of course, Sharon is wary of such radical groups, seeing as how a very similar assassin to the bus assailant killed Yitzak Rabin those years ago.

I don't have time to toss in the links now. Damn **Home Front:** (not that I am fond of such terms) "[Mass casualties push war sentiments back to forefront](#)".

As I noted earlier, the Pentagon is trying to forestall releasing even more horrible Abu Ghraib photos. [Military lawyers argued against harsher interrogation](#) methods in early 2003 (NYT).

[Iran has the upper hand](#) perpetually, it seems.

China: It's never too late to gear up some more enemies. Max Neocon Max Boot has the latest paranoia about China's research into *Earthquake Weapons* to make us quiver...

[Max Boot: China's Challenge](#)

In 1998, an official People's Liberation Army publishing house brought out a treatise called *Unrestricted Warfare*, written by two senior army colonels, Qiao Liang and Wang Xiangsui. This book, which is available in English translation, is well known to the U.S. national-security establishment but remains practically unheard of among the public.

Unrestricted Warfare recognizes that it is practically impossible to challenge the U.S. on its own terms. No one else can afford to build mega-expensive weapons systems such as the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, which will cost more than \$200 billion to develop. "The way to extricate oneself from this predicament," the authors write, "is to develop a different approach."

Their different approaches include financial warfare (subverting banking systems and stock markets), drug warfare (attacking the fabric of society by flooding it with illicit drugs), psychological and media warfare (manipulating perceptions to break down enemy will), international-law warfare (blocking enemy actions using multinational organizations), resource warfare (seizing control of vital natural resources), even **ecological warfare (creating man-made earthquakes** or other natural disasters).

The two write approvingly of al-Qaeda, Colombian drug lords and computer hackers who operate outside the "bandwidths understood by the American military." They envision a scenario in which a "network attack against the enemy" would be carried out "so that the civilian electricity network, traffic dispatching network, financial transaction network, telephone communications network and

mass media network are completely paralyzed." Only then would conventional military force be deployed "until the enemy is forced to sign a dishonorable peace treaty."

Who are these 21st Century acolytes of Sun Tzu? I'm sure they have interesting lives deep in the Chinese military. This [review said](#) "Colonel Qiao Liang, for instance, received his B.A. degree in Chinese literature, and has published several notable novels. He is employed in the Creative Writing Department of the Air Force..." If you wish to read "CHAOXIANZHAN" or "Unrestricted Warfare" it may be found in [HTML \(via Cryptome\)](#) or [PDF \(via Terrorism.com\)](#). It's around 200 pages so get ready for fun.

Well that's all I've got time for tonight. Time to kick it with Peter, and also Will Rothschild, who is leaving town Real Soon Like.

Posted by HongPong at 08:12 PM | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Security](#) , [War on Terror](#)

July 29, 2005

No ordinary Friday; I've got a bike, you can ride it if you like

Nevermind. The cat is observing matters from the kitchen, we are waiting for the weekend to start. Crushinglly ordinary.

On the plus side I accomplished some useful PHP coding after 2 AM, which as usual is the most insightful time for these sorts of things. Right now I am trying to get a news aggregator type program put together, which will take posts from other blogs & news sources, and recombine them in order by date, so I can put together specialized subject news pages. It seems to work so far: <http://wp.hongpong.com/agg-test.php>.

I succeeded in importing all the stories from this HongPong site into the new one, but there are still some anomalies to be worked out (and I want to get rid of another 50% of the comment spam), so it's not quite ready yet.

I am trying to determine the best way to organize the new operation, and I have settled on making a few top-level categories, while stuffing the usual things - Iraq, Israel-Palestine, War on Terror - into subcategories, so that these posts don't wash out everything on the front page. Here is the topic layout so far:

Topics

• [Uncategorized](#) (36)

• [geo](#) (3)

• [Iraq](#) (168)

• [Israel-Palestine](#) (93)

- [Afghanistan](#) (20)
- [Iran](#) (1)
- [War on Terror](#) (114)

• [politics](#) (1)

- [Military-Industrial Complex](#) (57)
- [Minnesota](#) (37)
- [Tracking Election Irregularities](#) (21)
- [Campaign 2004](#) (66)
- [News](#) (62)

• [tech](#) (3)

- [hongpong-meta](#) (1)
- [Open Source](#) (9)

• [words](#) (1)

- [Books](#) (6)
- [Quotes](#) (13)
- [Mac Weekly](#) (16)
- [Usual Nonsense](#) (29)
- [tidbits](#) (1)

• [kulturny](#) (1)

- [Music](#) (14)
- [Macalester College](#) (31)
- [Movies](#) (11)
- [Media](#) (44)

- [photo](#) (2)
- [humor](#) (22)

Another CIA guy, Pat Lang, started a blog, [Sic Semper Tyrannis](#), and he even put up [some novel he wrote](#). Good for him.

Disturbing [stuff about that "Over There" series](#) on FX. Ok that's all for now. It's a really nice day, I want to go ride my bike. [Syd Barrett knew it well](#). (Album: Piper at the Gates of Dawn, 1967):

I've got a bike, you can ride it if you like.
It's got a basket, a bell that rings
And things to make it look good.
I'd give it to you if I could, but I borrowed it.

You're the kind of girl that fits in with my world.
I'll give you anything, everything if you want things.

I've got a cloak it's a bit of a joke.
There's a tear up the front. It's red and black.
I've had it for months.
If you think it could look good, then I guess it should.

...

I know a mouse, and he hasn't got a house.
I don't know why I call him Gerald.
He's getting rather old, but he's a good mouse.

...

I've got a clan of gingerbread men.
Here a man, there a man, lots of gingerbread men.
Take a couple if you wish. They're on the dish.

You're the kind of girl that fits in with my world.
I'll give you anything, everything if you want things.

I know a room full of musical tunes.
Some rhyme, some ching, most of them are clockwork.
Let's go into the other room and make them work.

Posted by HongPong at [02:40 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [HongPong-site](#) , [Media](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Usual Nonsense](#)

July 20, 2005

FBI Monitored Web Sites for 2004 Protests: Groups Criticize Agency's Surveillance for Terror Unit

[Washington Post, July 18:](#)

FBI agents monitored Web sites calling for protests against the 2004 political conventions in New York and Boston on behalf of the bureau's counterterrorism unit, according to FBI documents released under the Freedom of Information Act.

The American Civil Liberties Union pointed to the documents as evidence that the Bush administration has reacted to the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States by blurring the distinction between terrorism and political protest. FBI officials defended the involvement of counterterrorism agents in providing security for the Republican and Democratic conventions as an administrative convenience.

The documents were released by the FBI in response to a lawsuit filed by a coalition of civil rights, animal rights and environmental groups that say they have been subjected to scrutiny by task forces set up to combat terrorism. The FBI has denied targeting the groups because of their political views. "It's increasingly clear that **the government is involved in political surveillance of organizations** that are involved in nothing more than lawful First Amendment activities," said Anthony Romero, executive director of the ACLU. "It raises very serious questions about whether the FBI is back to its old tricks."

A Sept. 4, 2003, document addressed to the FBI counterterrorism unit described plans by a group calling itself RNC Not Welcome to "disrupt" the 2004 Republican National Convention in New York. It also described Internet postings from an umbrella organization known as United for Peace and Justice, which was coordinating worldwide protests against the convention.

"It's one thing to monitor protests and protest organizers, but quite another thing to refer them to your counterterrorism unit," said Leslie Cagan, national coordinator for United for Peace and Justice. Another document, addressed to the Joint Terrorism Task Force, which coordinates anti-terrorist activities by the FBI and local police forces, described threats to disrupt the Democratic National Convention in Boston.

Responding to the lawsuit filed in May in U.S. District Court in Washington, the FBI said it had identified 1,173 pages of records relating to the ACLU and 2,383 pages relating to Greenpeace. The content of the records, which were generated since 2001, is not known.

I feel safer already.

Posted by HongPong at [12:59 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Ground Zero or Bust](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Security](#) , [War on Terror](#)

July 17, 2005

A very cautious note on London bombings and perpetual hunts for the Grassy Knoll

What a weird summer for news.

I would like to take a sec to note the various wingy conspiracy theories cropping up around the London bombing. Not because I find them readily credible, but because they are sort of an instant folk mythology that gets generated these days through the Internet. Also if any bits of it pan out, well you can say that you heard about them around here.

I'm just throwing these out there, to illustrate the kinds of counter-narratives that pop up around all sorts of major events. It's the [X-Files mentality](#), the Grassy Knoll syndrome of American politics. The [CIA killed JFK, some said even then](#). There are always people attracted to some weird explanation, (say the [Flight 800 missile](#) story) where the Council on Foreign Relations, the VFW post and the Taxpayers' League collude in some great scheme to take over the world and get free cable while [fluoridating the water](#).

Anyway, the main nut of [the conspiracy theory right now](#), "[Blair Knew](#)" in a nutshell, (via the very paranoid sites [Propaganda Matrix](#) and [PrisonPlanet](#)) is that some dude named Peter Power, (not to be confused with Austin) who used to be a key anti-terrorism law enforcement officer in London, and now runs some private security consulting agency, said on the BBC right after the bombing that there were [anti-terror drills](#) involving like 1000 people, practicing dealing with bombs on the London Underground at virtually the same locations that the bombs actually went off. (and perhaps [stations were closed before the bombings](#)) "[How the Government staged the London bombings in Ten Easy Steps](#)."

As this [Webster Tarpley guy put it](#),

Last week's London explosions carry the characteristic features of a state-sponsored, false flag, synthetic terror provocation by networks within the British intelligence services MI-5, MI-6, the Home Office, and the Metropolitan Police Special Branch who are favorable to a wider Anglo-American aggressive war in the Middle East, featuring especially an early pre-emptive attack on Iran, with a separate option on North Korea also included.

Wheeee!!!! You have to admit, politics is more interesting when everything's frickin crazy!!!

Other people have [similar theories](#). So the conspiracy goes that [some covert ops group, with Powers as an auxiliary, triggered the bombings and set up](#)

[some typical Pakistanis](#) to take the fall for it. Also, they point out that the numerous [cameras on the exploded bus](#) just happened to be turned off on July 7, therefore conspiracy! (And of course they say that [Madrid was a coverup too](#))

A top Iranian cleric alleges that [the UK could have bombed itself](#). And there was some strange tie between [Web claims of responsibility and a Saudi dissident](#).

Conspiracy theorists love to say that security drills are the best opportunity for Evil Illuminati to fake terrorist events because it circumvents the usual security measures and provides cover for incriminating activity, and some are saying that [London reprises the alleged 9/11 drills](#). [September 11 conspiracists](#) / "investigators" such as [Michael Ruppert](#) argue that the military was doing some kind of operation called "[Vigilant Warrior](#)" and/or "[Vigilant Guardian](#)" on the morning of September 11, where agents [posing as terrorists were performing airline hijackings](#). And also, there were supposedly fake "blips" put into air traffic control systems to simulate these planes, thusly permitting the real hijackings to go through and smash the WTC. [Massive list of conspiracy stories](#). The [National Reconnaissance Office had scheduled a plane crash drill](#) on 9/11, the AP reported.

Of course, many conspiracy types complain that the flight that hit the Pentagon clearly isn't there, the wreckage just isn't there, it must have been a missile or something. A surprising number of people I've talked with find this plausible. Someone from [911citizenswatch talked about these drills](#). And so this is claimed to fit into [why NORAD did such a bad job](#) on September 11. (there's plenty of silly websites about [9/11 Mystery images](#), as well.

On a totally different (and much more well-documented) tack, the London bombing has been tied to a strange [Bush Administration leak about a captured Al Qaeda agent](#) last fall, which [may have led in part to the London bombing](#). Last year, people alleged that during the 2004 campaign, the [Bush Administration blew the cover of Naeem Noor Khan, a recently turned Al Qaeda double agent](#) that the British and Pakistanis were using to smoke out more militants. That is, the law caught this guy, he was sending out more emails to militants in England, someone in Washington dropped his name to some papers, and then the British authorities had to swoop prematurely, to prevent the militants from getting away. This compromised the operation, and perhaps let people get away to attack subways later, as [plans on Khan's computer indicated](#).

So, the wilder theory suggests that "they" did it, while the more well-documented story indicates that they merely screwed up a British

investigation last year that might have caught the bombers, in order to win the White House.

These days, at least the Rove/Plame story has finally stuck at the top level of the news, and perhaps that should be the basic yardstick for measuring deception nowadays. Like it or not, something [nasty happened with forged documents](#) about uranium. Cryptome.org has [the actual Niger documents](#), for yr viewin' pleasure. The Bush Administration, and Karl personally, went through a lot of hoops to propagate disinformation about Iraq and crush anyone like Wilson that tarnished their fantasy.

As Frank Rich put it this morning in "[Follow the Uranium](#)":

[Attacks on Wilson], too, are red herrings. Let me reiterate: This case is not about Joseph Wilson. He is, in Alfred Hitchcock's parlance, a MacGuffin, which, to quote the Oxford English Dictionary, is "a particular event, object, factor, etc., initially presented as being of great significance to the story, but often having little actual importance for the plot as it develops." Mr. Wilson, his mission to Niger to check out Saddam's supposed attempts to secure uranium that might be used in nuclear weapons and even his wife's outing have as much to do with the real story here as Janet Leigh's theft of office cash has to do with the mayhem that ensues at the Bates Motel in "Psycho."

This case is about Iraq, not Niger. The real victims are the American people, not the Wilsons. The real culprit - the big enchilada, to borrow a 1973 John Ehrlichman phrase from the Nixon tapes - is not Mr. Rove but the gang that sent American sons and daughters to war on trumped-up grounds and in so doing diverted finite resources, human and otherwise, from fighting the terrorists who attacked us on 9/11. That's why the stakes are so high: **this scandal is about the unmasking of an ill-conceived war**, not the unmasking of a C.I.A. operative who posed for Vanity Fair.

And let's not forget that this whole thing happened because of a damned [New York Times editorial](#). Rich's "[We're Not in Watergate Anymore](#)" is also interesting.

Posted by HongPong at [10:21 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Security](#) , [War on Terror](#)

July 14, 2005

Hawks clamor for escalation, stuff about Syria, Neo-con accuses BBC of antisemitism

It's hard to know where the motives of defense people begin or end... Another memo leaked out from that sieve of a British government, which said that they are looking for a way to withdraw troops. We've got a little bit about Syria, as well.

BAGnewsNotes is usually interesting photo analysis, including this pic of an [Iraqi soldier in some house](#), as well as [photos of Bashar Assad](#) and the memorably titled "[Move Over Zargawi: The New Iranian President And The 1979 Embassy Take-Over](#)."

[Brad at Bradblog interviews Joe Wilson.](#)

I would recommend looking at [Syria Comment](#), which is down at the moment but quite good. Josh Landis has a lot of interesting stuff, including a [really good story translated from French press](#) about Syria's history and political development. A huge [feature on Syria & Assad](#) by lead NY Times reporter James Bennet is really quite good.

Prof. Juan Cole talks about [increased sectarian violence in Iraq](#), as well as the fact that apparently his [site is being censored by some military computer administrators](#) in Iraq itself--the soldiers are cut off. (via [Dkos](#)) As he says:

I have a lot of .mil readers, and know for a fact that the blog is valued by many intelligence professionals in DC, so it is a shame if it is not available at some bases.

Good stuff from Billmon at [Whiskey Bar: The Devil's Flypaper](#). I didn't know that Bush's nasty new counterterror specialist, Fran [Townsend, had quite likely pressured Abu Ghraib personnel to give detainees](#) that special care. Evidently she's still upholding the flypaper theory. As Billmon put it,

"I don't know how you would even begin to de-program someone capable of believing, with fanatical certainty, two completely contradictory statements: i.e., that because there are terrorists in Iraq, they can't be in London blowing up the subways -- even though they're in London, blowing up the subways."

There's a good column by [Dionne](#) about this in WaPo:

Appearing on "Fox News Sunday," Fran Townsend, the president's homeland security adviser, said that the war in Iraq attracts terrorists "where we have a fighting military and a **coalition that can take them on and not have the sort of civilian casualties** that you saw in London." Huh? If British troops fighting in Iraq did not stop the terrorists from striking London, then what is the logic for believing that American troops fighting in Iraq will stop terrorists from striking our country again? Intelligence reports -- and Townsend's own words -- suggest that Iraq has become a terrorist breeding ground since the American invasion. How, exactly, has that made us safer?

This is also a weirdly racist or at least dehumanizing argument: Townsend is stating that there aren't massive civilian casualties in Iraq? Can we actually be sure she believes Iraqis are real human beings?

This was a good article in The American Conservative about how the phenomenon of [suicide terrorism is most closely linked to foreign military occupation](#) -- or the perception of foreign military occupation. Oh good, one of [Bush's top intelligence advisors is lobbying to help China buy UNOCAL](#).

I feel like throwing in a true classic: [Judith Miller's famous NY Times article about Saddam purchasing those damn aluminum tubes.](#)

Arch-neocon [Michael Ledeen is accusing a wide set of the British public, including the BBC, of sweeping, deeply rooted antisemitism...](#) and who better to exemplify this than Ahmed Chalabi?!?

The final component of British blindness on the subject of the Middle East is one we are not supposed to talk about in good company: the Jews. Yet I don't know any country this side of the Levant in which there has been so much anti-Semitism, so many complaints that "Zionists," "Likudniks," "Jewish hawks," and — the single epithet that sums up all of the above — **"neocons" had manipulated America and its poodle Blair into the ghastly blunder of Iraq. The BBC has devoted hours of radio and television to slanderous misrepresentations of places like the American Enterprise Institute, where I sit, and of such Jewish luminaries as Richard Perle, Douglas Feith, William Kristol, and Paul Wolfowitz.** Sometimes it seemed one was reading translations from the Saudi or Egyptian or Iranian press, **so total was the hatred of the Jews.**

This fit nicely with the desire of the British establishment to carry on their special relationship with some Arab leaders, and many British elites often seemed a micro-step away from saying that the world would be a better place if only Israel weren't there. The Middle East would be so much easier, you know. And when London was bombed, you can be sure — indeed you can read it — **many of these people blamed Israel and the Jews**, both those in the Middle East and those in New York and Washington. Indeed, within minutes of the attack, a story appeared according to which the Israelis had advance notice, and had instructed Finance Minister Netanyahu to stay put, instead of going to give a speech. The story was as false as the one according to which Israelis had stayed away from the World Trade Center on 9/11, but **they both reflected a state of mind. An anti-Semitic mind.**

All too many Brits (as some Americans, albeit far fewer) would prefer to devote their national energies to the elimination or "taming" of Israel, and, as they see it, the silencing of their own Jews, rather than fighting Islamic terrorism. Combined with the desire to keep Arab money in London and special access for British businessmen and diplomats and scholars in the Arab world, it explains why HMG gave sanctuary and indeed benevolent assistance to the jihadis in their HMG midst.

IRAQIS — THE NEW JEWS?

And so Israel was not on the prime minister's list [of damaged countries]. What about Iraq?

The Iraqis are viewed much the same way, and are at some risk of becoming the new Jews of the Middle East. In the enormous hate literature directed against the neocons, **Ahmed Chalabi is part and parcel of the anti-Semites' hateful vision.** No matter that he is a Shiite, and no matter that he was rudely dismissed by the Israeli government before Operation Iraqi Freedom. **He was in cahoots with the Jewish cabal, and was therefore "one of them." And as Chalabi, so the rest of the lot.** When is the last time you read anything, anywhere (with all too few exceptions — [like Arthur Chrenkoff's "good news" beat](#)), celebrating these rare qualities of spirit? And this question goes hand in hand with its twin: When is the last time you read anything about the incredible performance of the State of Israel, similarly under siege and similarly stressed by the crisis that surrounds it?

[.....]

This sickness is certainly not limited to Great Britain; we find it here as well, in such personages as Pat Buchanan and Juan Cole, along with their acolytes.

It is a bit depressing to hear Ledeen resort to tarring the BBC with the Nazi brush. Where does Macalester prof. Emily Rosenberg, for example, fit into his rubric of Jew haters? In a fine moment during the International Roundtable conference last year, she took him to task for his shady prescriptions of global Trotskyist-inspired revolution, the war and all the rest. Naturally Ledeen also calls for [attacking Iran after the London bombings](#) ([via Prospect.org](#)).

It's also a little weird to hear him claim that the AP story about Israel getting tipped off by Scotland Yard was basically the product of an antisemitic mind. It was just an AP story, not 21st Century Goebbels. The antisemitism gun is pretty much the first refuge of a scoundrel, the rhetorical fog deployed to cover for a handful of nasty bureaucrats in Washington - Christians, Jews, Muslims, Moonies and their newspapers. (note: Among Holocaust researchers it is accepted to spell "antisemitic" as such, or as "anti-semitic" - "Semitic" doesn't need to be capitalized because the term was first developed by bigots anyway)

More about post-London [hawks randomly calling for overthrowing Tehran](#) without [really explaining](#) how, or why the hell it would even be feasible, helpful, good, etc...

[Kos bans some people who have been posting raving conspiracy theories](#) in the diaries, as well as those recommending said diaries. This seems like a decidedly hazardous step for DailyKos, as one of the [people on the huge reaction thread put it:](#)

Or maybe my definition of a conspiracy theory is different. Definitions are important, because a large portion of "acceptable" diaries on this site could be defined as conspiratorial in nature, by right wing ideologues or even average joe types. Check the recommended list, Congressman Conyers diary asks for a timeline of Bush Administration actions up to the war, specifically looking for evidence of fixed intelligence. The President lies and it ends up in the death of close to 2000 military personnel, thousands badly injured, and billions of tax payer dollars sunk into the sand and the pockets of corporations linked to administration officials. Sound like a wacked out conspiracy theory?

But [this response](#) makes some damn good sense:

The point is (so far as I can tell) not to ban all discussion of conspiracies at all.

Markos believes in several conspiracies, at least.

The point is that if you are speculating about a conspiracy, or promoting others who do, you have an obligation to either:

a) cite some documented facts that lend credence to your assertions

or

b) recognize that you are engaging in rank speculation and that therefore

b-sub1) especially if it is inflammatory and not backed up by any real

investigation - b-sub2) and most especially if you are nasty to those who

challenge you to back up your claims - b-sub3) people here will come down on you

True enough... but the question about the barrier between conspiracy and plain political speculation's a tough one... Eh whatever...

Posted by [HongPong](#) at [10:19 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Iraq](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [The White House](#) , [War on Terror](#)

June 27, 2005

Oil prices at record high, Sibel Edmonds is talking. Let's roll, baby.

Wouldn't you know it, my over-laden browser finally crashed, taking with it a couple dozen interesting sites that I opened up, which have already slid off the browser's history page. However, I managed to get through most of them before it halted.

["The Deal," about a sleazy oil executive](#), Christian Slater, who gets tangled up in some kind of deal to traffic illegal oil, looks really sweet and I wish it was playing in town. Because we're going north of \$60 a barrel, baby, and it ain't comin back down...

It looks like [John Bolton may refuse to accept a recess appointment](#), perhaps because it would be Quite Silly to have a UN ambassador that never got approved by the Senate. But sillier things have happened. [The Washington Note](#) is still the place to look for news on it.

Iran's election happened. There's a real good user, [alimostofi, posting every day about Iran](#) on the Agonist, as well as the unwieldy nickname [vsredthoughtseconedition](#) at DailyKos. The Lebanese [Daily Star has a piece making fun](#) of the Western media. Gordon Robison, the author of that piece, has a new site, [mideastanalysis.com](#). But can it meet [the Juan Cole](#) standard?

(Cole's [analysis of what makes a last "throe"](#) is hilarious, as well as [Ahmadinejad's usage of Bush-style political tactics](#). And Afghanistan's "[neo-Taliban](#)" forces are regrouping for another round.)

[AmericaSedition or America's Edition](#)? Karl Rove says there's not much difference these days. Also check out [news of the apocalypse at The Boom Shelter](#). "[What happens in Gitmo stays in Gitmo](#)." Thanks, Rush.

The [Supreme Court is less beloved than ever](#), by both left and right, polls show.

There were bombings in Iranian Khuzestan, which [Iran blamed on the People's Mujahedin](#), which I believe is the same as the [neo-cons' beloved MEK](#) or Mujahedin-el-Khalq:

"It's unbelievable," one State Department official said. "It's a pretty cushy arrangement for a terrorist organization. But the Pentagon continues to see them as useful, and they seem to be playing a waiting game until the policy toward the MEK changes."

Guardian: [WMD claims were 'totally implausible'](#):

A key Foreign Office diplomat responsible for liaising with UN inspectors says today that claims the government made about Iraq's weapons programme were "totally implausible".

He tells the Guardian: "I'd read the intelligence on WMD for four and a half years, and there's no way that it could sustain the case that the government was presenting. All of my colleagues knew that, too".

Carne Ross, who was a member of the British mission to the UN in New York during the run-up to the invasion, resigned from the FO last year, after giving evidence to the Butler inquiry...

[Poor Senator Durbin](#). Fell yet again to the Republican strategy of bitching about how someone is bitching in order to avoid talking about what's so bitch-worthy in the first place. Now we all know about how you shouldn't compare your opponent to Nazis, it's worth considering how spooky absolute power is being implemented in our system of government. This guy

complains that [it's the startup chime of fascism](#). Actually he didn't phrase it that way. I did...

The [Red States got their own mega community blog](#). Good for them. I hope they can reach a better level than littlegreenfootballs.

Agonist: [Toxic waste containers wash up in Somalia](#). This story about [Bird Flu drugs being rendered useless by wide use in China](#) is depressing.

The [Downing Street reporter reflects on the nine months since he got the first Downing Street Memo](#). This focuses more attention on the "secret, illegal air war without the backing of Congress" as he terms it.

Also on the Agonist, Sean-Paul is cackling a bit about how he was already covering the airstrikes against Iraq before the War Proper started... he notes the monopoly media "in the run up to their wargasm they missed several very important stories that were sitting in their faces" Wargasm. I like it. This is in response to a big [feature at RawStory about the massive pre-war Iraq bombing campaign](#) that some people are now pondering as illegal. I am sorry I used the inherently false phrase "massive pre-war Iraq bombing campaign." As RawStory explains:

"It was no big secret at the time," [GlobalSecurity.org](#) director John Pike told RAW STORY. "It was apparent to us at the time that they were doing it and why they were doing it, and that was part of the reason why we were convinced that a decision to go to war had already been made, because the war had already started."

I just want to throw in this [op-ed by Sibel Edmonds](#), the [mysterious FBI whistleblower](#).

Over four years ago, more than four months prior to the September 11 terrorist attacks, during April 2001, a long-term FBI informant/asset who had been providing the bureau with information since 1990, provided two FBI agents and a translator with **specific information regarding a terrorist attack being planned by Osama Bin Laden**.

This asset/informant was previously a high-level intelligence officer in Iran in charge of intelligence from Afghanistan. Through his contacts in Afghanistan he received information that:

1. Osama Bin Laden was planning a major terrorist attack in the United States targeting 4-5 major cities;
2. The attack was going to involve airplanes;
3. Some of the individuals in charge of carrying out this attack were already in place in the United States;
4. The attack was going to be carried out soon, in a few months.

The agents who received this information reported it to their superior, Special Agent in Charge of Counterterrorism, Thomas Fields, at the FBI Washington Field Office, by filing "302" forms, and the

translator, **Mr. Behrooz Sarshar**, translated and documented this information. No action was taken by the Special Agent in Charge, Thomas Frields, and after 9/11 the agents and **the translators were told to 'keep quiet' regarding this issue**. The translator who was present during the session with the FBI informant, Mr. Behrooz Sarshar, reported this incident to Director Mueller in writing, and later to the Department of Justice Inspector General.

The press reported this incident, and in fact the report in the Chicago Tribune on July 21, 2004 stated that FBI officials had confirmed that this information was received in April 2001, and further, the Chicago Tribune quoted an aide to Director Mueller that he **(Mueller) was surprised that the Commission never raised this particular issue** with him during the hearing (Refer to Chicago Tribune article, dated July 21, 2004).

Mr. Sarshar reported this issue to the 9/11 Commission on February 12, 2004, and provided them with **specific dates, location, witness names, and the contact information for that particular Iranian asset and the two special agents who received the information. I provided the 9/11 Commission with a detailed and specific account of this issue, the names of other witnesses, and documents I had seen**. Mr. Sarshar also provided the Department of Justice Inspector General with specific information regarding this case.

For almost four years since September 11, officials refused to admit to having specific information regarding the terrorists' plans to attack the United States. The Phoenix Memo, received months prior to the 9/11 attacks, specifically warned FBI HQ of pilot training and their possible link to terrorist activities against the United States. Four months prior to the terrorist attacks **the Iranian asset provided the FBI with specific information regarding the 'use of airplanes', 'major US cities as targets', and 'Osama Bin Laden issuing the order.'** Coleen Rowley likewise reported that **specific information had been provided to FBI HQ**. All this information went to the same place: FBI Headquarters in Washington, DC, and the FBI Washington Field Office, in Washington DC.

In October 2001, approximately one month after the September 11 attack, an agent from (city name omitted) field office, re-sent a certain document to the FBI Washington Field Office, so that it could be re-translated. This Special Agent, in light of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, rightfully believed that, considering his target of investigation (the suspect under surveillance), and the issues involved, the original translation might have missed certain information that could prove to be valuable in the investigation of terrorist activities. After this document was received by the FBI Washington Field Office and retranslated verbatim, **the field agent's hunch appeared to be correct. The new translation revealed certain information regarding blueprints, pictures, and building material for skyscrapers being sent overseas (country name omitted). It also revealed certain illegal activities in obtaining visas from certain embassies in the Middle East, through network contacts and bribery**. However, after the re-translation was completed and the new significant information was revealed, the unit supervisor in charge of certain Middle Eastern languages, **Mike Feghali, decided NOT to send the re-translated information** to the Special Agent who had requested it.

I found another story about Edmonds at TomFlocco.com. However, Tom Flocco seems like he might be crazy. Consider this: "[Campaign coffers profit from 911, coke and courts: FBI linguist won't deny intelligence intercepts tied 911 drug money to U.S. election campaigns](#)":

"It's so simple," Edmonds told TomFlocco.com. "Nobody is looking at the Department of Defense aspect of the whole 911 cover-up. The FBI is citing two reasons for my gag order: to protect 'sensitive' diplomatic relations and to protect foreign U.S. business relationships."

In attempting to let the American people how close the 911 cover-up comes to home, Edmonds told

us, "I will say this: the FBI is only a mouthpiece for the State Department. The State Department is the main reason for the cover-up. It has to do with foreign business relationships and who they are...Pakistan, Turkey...espionage in the State Department...preventing an investigation." The former FBI translator has implicated everything "from drugs to money laundering to arms sales. And yes, there are certain convergences with all these activities and international terrorism," adding "they don't deal with 1 or 5 million dollars, but with hundreds of millions."

[.....]

While only a subpoena, testimony and questioning by non-political, career prosecutors will properly answer the insider trading question, we asked Sibel Edmonds the big question anyway--given the above FBI track record implicating espionage:

Do you deny that the FBI intercepts you translated indicated that financial arrangements were in place well before the 911 attacks to both fund and profit from the World Trade Center and Pentagon "terrorism" while also facilitating the laundering of drug money into recent congressional and presidential campaigns? "I cannot comment on that, Tom. You know I'm under a gag order," she said.

Hilarious! But kind of cheesy journalism. She could deny any crazy question. On the other hand, this [Tom Flocco story about a brainwashing sex ring operating at the highest levels of government](#) is hands-down the funniest "news" I've read in a long time.

[National Security Whistleblowers Coalition](#). I hope that works. Lots of [solid people are members](#).

Even more important: Mean [gossip about Jared Fogle](#).

Was [GHW Bush linked to JFK's shooting](#)? Sure, why not?

Posted by HongPong at 06:36 PM | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Afghanistan](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [Security](#) , [The White House](#) , [War on Terror](#)

June 23, 2005

Military builds teen database, intelligence agencies to watch blogs, and those liberal freaks go toooo farr....

This just rolled in: "[Supreme Court Rules Cities May Seize Homes](#)" for the purposes of profitable eminent domain, in this case a constructing huge friggin Pfizer research plant that locals objected to. So Pfizer has more rights than Joe pink Flamingo ranch house owner. Really quite awful. But that's just the beginning!

I forget who said: you're not paranoid if they *really are out to get you*.

Fortunately this circle will apparently widen to include all 16 to 18-year olds, whose [private data will be added to a privately owned database administered on behalf of the Pentagon](#). Adding lots of personal information, including GPAs, Social Security numbers, and ethnicity, for the primary purpose of more closely targeting students to recruit into the military. I'd

almost forgotten that the No Child Left Behind Act requires high schools to give the DoD information:

The Defense Department began working yesterday with a private marketing firm to create a database of high school students ages 16 to 18 and all college students to help the military identify potential recruits in a time of dwindling enlistment in some branches.

The program is provoking a furor among privacy advocates. The new database will include personal information including birth dates, Social Security numbers, e-mail addresses, grade-point averages, ethnicity and what subjects the students are studying.

[.....]

According to the Federal Register notice, the data will be open to "those who require the records in the performance of their official duties." It said the data would be protected by passwords.

The system also ***gives the Pentagon the right, without notifying citizens, to share the data for numerous uses outside the military, including with law enforcement, state tax authorities and Congress.***

Some see the program as part of a growing encroachment of government into private lives, particularly since the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

"It's just typical of how voracious government is when it comes to personal information," said James W. Harper, a privacy expert with the Cato Institute, a libertarian think tank. "Defense is an area where government has a legitimate responsibility . . . but there are a lot of data fields they don't need and shouldn't be keeping. Ethnicity strikes me as particularly inappropriate."

Yesterday, the New York Times reported that the Social Security Administration relaxed its privacy policies and provided data on citizens to the FBI in connection with terrorism investigations.

Oddly enough, an AP story from last year entitled "Blog-Tracking May Gain Ground Among U.S. Intelligence Officials" has since vanished from Yahoo! News. However a [Google search on the matter](#) shows that many around the Internet found the story interesting enough to post in full. As the [Maritime Homeland Security and Force Protection Blog](#) posted it:

[Yahoo! News - Blog-Tracking May Gain Ground Among U.S. Intelligence Officials](#)

Tue Apr 27, 8:53 AM ET

By Doug Tsuruoka

People in black trench coats might soon be chasing blogs.

Blogs, short for Web logs, are personal online journals. Individuals post them on Web sites to report or comment on news especially, but also on their personal lives or most any subject.

Some blogs are whimsical and deal with "soft" subjects. Others, though, are cutting edge in delivering information and opinion.

As a result, some analysts say U.S. intelligence and law enforcement officials might be starting to **track blogs for important bits of information**. This interest is a sign of how far Web media such as blogs have come in reshaping the data-collection habits of intelligence professionals and others, even with the knowledge that the accuracy of what's reported in some blogs is questionable.

Still, a panel of folks who work in the U.S. intelligence field - some of them spies or former spies - discussed this month at a conference in Washington the idea of tracking blogs.

"News and intelligence is about listening with a critical ear, and blogs are just another conversation to listen to and evaluate. They also are closer to (some situations) and may serve as early alerts," said

Jock Gill, a former adviser on Internet media to President Clinton (news - web sites), in a later phone interview, after he spoke on the panel.

If they had read [my stuff a while ago they might have learned more clearly that the neocons are dangerous liars and so is Ahmed Chalabi](#). But tragically that circle never got completed.

Well I am not terribly surprised. I have already gotten 95 hits from US military computers this month, 170 in May. More military computers than Israelis or French end up here for whatever reason. And of course the Central Intelligence Agency paid a visit last November, shortly after the election. hm, it doesn't seem that I wrote a post about that. [The CIA also came to Hongpong earlier on a search](#) for "tower bridge terrorism" and why not, the Department of Homeland Security came looking for "unedited iraqi prison photos and videos". And of course CENTCOM.mil, the US Central Command, downloaded the whole Iraq category page. The everyday military guys love searching for the [helicopter kill video](#). (my post is lacking in details about the incident: apparently [the dead Iraqis were farmers or something](#))

If you want to see more military video excitement, check out [militaryvideos.net](#), with files via bittorrent. It was really quite shocking, although I couldn't play a lot of the WMVs on my infidel Macintosh.

If you have certain keywords sitting around, then it's not a huge surprise that your site might come up on a few Google searches. Once the CIA starts getting [your RSS feed](#), then you must really be important... I recently noticed that I've also got the top result for "[Pipelines balkans](#)" purely because I laid out the sources for a paper on the [Pipelines:Balkans hongwiki](#) page, purely for my own use. Google found its way in there, and the rest is history...

Let's not forget,

[there's a lot of flag burners who have got too much freedom and I want to make it legal for policemen to beat em', because there's limits to our liberty!](#)

For the fifth time the US House addressed the serious problems facing our troubled nation and [passed a Constitutional amendment barring the torching of the American flag](#). I suppose this will become a justification to bomb Iran. Thune speaks for the mythical fascists of the plains:

Among the new votes for the amendment is Sen. John Thune (R-S.D.), who pushed the issue in his campaign and helped recruit co-sponsors. "Out in the country, at the grass-roots level, it's seen as a common man's practical patriotism," Thune said.

Not surprisingly, John Kline voted for it, Betty! against, and unfortunately Collin Peterson (D-Rural MN) supported it, as well. Now that's settled, we

just have to ignore the budget, steal the Arabs' oil, fund some Israeli settlements, design nuclear bunker-buster bombs and sit back and wait for the apocalypse. While the Pentagon tracks my little brother's GPA.

Posted by HongPong at [02:34 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [HongPong-site](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [Security](#) , [Technological Apparatus](#) , [War on Terror](#)
June 22, 2005

More on the Downing Street Memos: a confetti of leaks! And Republicans go anti-war???

It seems that there are a lot of sources now leaking memos out of the British government, which help reveal a more complete picture of the mentality of the hawks early on... [ThinkProgress.org has the full text of five different British government papers](#). Of course, on June 12, the Times of London released another Cabinet Office paper, "[Conditions for Military Action](#)," which talked about the need to fabricate a legal pretext to invade the country.

So here are your new and tasty leaked docs: The [British Iraq Options Paper](#), the [Manning Paper](#), the [Meyer Paper](#), the [Ricketts Paper](#), the [Straw Paper](#) and the [British Legal Background Paper](#).

I haven't dug around to determine the veracity of these memos... However they all contain information that discredits the Bush administration's drive for war. As [thinkprogress cites](#):

British Knew Iraqi WMD Were Not a Threat: "There is no greater threat now that [Saddam] will use WMD than there has been in recent years, so continuing containment is an option." [[Iraq: Options Paper](#)]

Evidence Did Not Show Much Advance In Iraq's Weapons Programs: "Even the best survey of Iraq's WMD programmes will not show much advance in recent years on [the] nuclear, missile or CW/BW fronts: the programmes are extremely worrying but have not, as far as we know, been stepped up." [[Ricketts Paper](#), 3/22/02]

Evidence Was Thin on Iraq/Al Qaeda Ties: "US is scrambling to establish a link between Iraq and Al [Qaida] is so far frankly unconvincing." [[Ricketts Paper](#), 3/22/02]

"No Credible Evidence" On Iraq/Al Qaeda Link: "There has been no credible evidence to link Iraq with UBL and Al Qaida." [[Straw Paper](#), 3/25/02]

Wolfowitz Knew Supposed Iraq/Al Qaeda Link Was Weak: Wolfowitz said that "there might be doubt about the alleged meeting in Prague between Mohammed Atta, the lead hijacker on 9/11, and Iraqi intelligence (did we, he asked, know anything more about this meeting?)." [[Meyer Paper](#), 3/18/02]

As [Justin Raimondo bitterly noted](#), the Meyer paper says that Wolfowitz wanted to dwell on Saddam's atrocities. As Meyer put it, "Wolfowitz thought that this would go a long way to destroying any notion of moral equivalence

between Iraq and Israel." This struck me as an interesting element of the structure of the American-Israeli moral hegemony complex. It sort of suggests that the war itself was designed to alter the moral geography between Israel and Iraq, to prove that Israel is on some sort of higher plane of geopolitics, and in turn, is more morally suited to dominate the region. Of course, this tracks with the worldview seen in such classic hits as the [Clean Break](#) document.

In the WaPo, EJ Dionne [offered](#):

"The notion that the president led the country into war through indirection or dishonesty is not the most damaging criticism of the administration. The worst possibility is that the president and his advisers believed their own propaganda."

In another column Raimondo cites [the unexpected antiwar swing of a "Freedom Fries" Republican Representative Walter Jones](#) of North Carolina. He has no love for the neo-cons these days:

"When I look at the number of men and women who have been killed – it's almost 1,700 now, in addition to close to 12,000 have been severely wounded – and I just feel that the reason of going in for weapons of mass destruction, the ability of the Iraqis to make a nuclear weapon, that's all been proven that it was never there"

Interviewer George Stephanopoulos asked him who is to blame: Rumsfeld? The president? Jones answered:

"I think it's primarily the neoconservatives who were advisers in key positions in both the Department of Defense and I think that they gave bad advice."

He "felt deceived when he was told that so-called 'neoconservatives' in the Pentagon had wanted to invade Iraq long before Sept. 11," and he recalls how he got "'very, very upset' when he learned there were no weapons of mass destruction 'and that information was manipulated to justify the invasion.'"

Sweet. So someone Red Gets it. How many more on the way?

Dude from the London Times offers a basic [explanation of the Syrian-foreign fighter route](#) into Iraq. There is [staggering corruption](#). Porter Goss' recent comment about knowing where Bin Laden is provoked [some waves in Pakistan and Afganistan](#). So maybe Goss doesn't want to go in and get OBL in Pakistan because it might cause an Islamist coup. Juan Cole has some interesting [thoughts about what they feel in Pakistan](#) now.

Posted by HongPong at [03:14 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Iraq](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#)

June 12, 2005

You can't really spin 1700 dead Americans

With four GIs killed in a day, the official [death toll of American personnel reached 1,700](#) on Sunday.

Oil production remains sporadic, and a story reports that various northern tribes currently paid to [defend Iraqi pipelines may in fact be attacking](#) those lines, in order to provide the appearance of more demand for their services. On the other hand, maybe Kurds are being awarded these security jobs at the expense of Arabs. Haaretz ponders "[Why isn't Iraq getting on its feet?](#)"

Does Bush [believe his own propaganda](#)? And is [persuasion dead](#)?

[Pirates raid the oil tankers](#) at Basra. The [persistence of the insurgency](#). Pointed out that suicide tactic-using [groups generally direct their fire](#) against foreign occupiers. A rare [interview with Muqtada al-Sadr](#). Oh great, [Zalmay Khalilzad is ready to provide Iraq](#) with his special golden touch as our new ambassador. [Stories about the "Bunkers reveal well-equipped, sophisticated insurgency:"](#)

an Islamic mufti, or spiritual leader, living near Fallujah offered a different take: He said the bunkers were proof that the insurgency is unbowed.

"This shows the failure of the Marines. It was close to their base and they could not see it," said the mufti, who formerly sat on the council that directed insurgents in Fallujah. He spoke by phone Saturday evening on the condition of anonymity. "The Americans think they know everything. But when they came to Iraq they thought the people would receive them with flowers. Instead of flowers they found these bunkers."

Haitham al-Dulaimi, who works at a garage in Ramadi, had a similar reaction.

"Are you sure they found it near Fallujah?" he asked, laughing. "It shows you how much the Iraqi resistance has insulted the Americans."

Our Man Bolton is in some more trouble as news comes out that [he monkeyed with WMD bureaucrats](#) at the UN, basically in order to prevent the further erosion of Bush's WMD war rationale. And of course more from a [DailyKos diarist](#).

"[The Left Must learn from 2004](#)" an interview addressing the antiwar movement etc. [Blumenthal on the Gulag](#).

Freedom House is one of the sketchiest things in the world. Consider press releases about the [evil of Kazakhstan](#), the [major cash](#) they have running it... more on this later.

Did I already mention [Karen Kwiatkowski](#)? Yeah.

We heard about a recent video that purportedly showed the Srebrenica massacres. but was it all sort of a [spun-up justification for "Imperial intervention in the Balkans"](#)? Why not?

Latin America [doesn't fancy](#) the Democracy Monitoring thing.

Newsweek's Baghdad Bureau Chief is leaving the place after two years, and he sounds [sad and embittered](#).

Frontline has a bunch of sweet [Middle East stories](#) including the stuff in [Lebanon](#), [Iraq](#) etc.

Daniel 'Pentagon Papers' Ellsberg reflects on the need to [call for withdrawal from Iraq](#). Rep. Lynn Woolsey has offered a [proposal](#) in the House about finding withdrawal policies. Sort of a symbolic gesture but worthwhile.

"[Long-exiled general battles warlord in Lebanon voting](#)." Ah the sublime ironies of Lebanese politics.

"[Iran from the Inside](#)."

Interesting BBC documentary called the Power of Nightmares, which I linked to a while ago, now has a fairly astute [review of it](#) via PressTrust.com.

Reflecting on [Deep Throat week](#) in Washington. I watched "All the President's Men" the other day. Hell yeah. "[It's not about the big break; it's about doing the job well](#)." The best kind of [anon source](#). Larry David is [hilarious](#).

A [German city is building 'sex huts'](#) for prostitutes at the World Cup. Now that's servicing a crowd...

WaPo opines that the recent court [ruling](#) wasn't [really about pot](#). Another victory for the industrial-drug-law-enforcement complex. People at [smokedot](#) are sad.

Interesting looking website: "[Defense and the National Interest](#)" @ defense-and-society.org. Haven't examined it too closely but they have a very interesting feature pages about [fourth generation warfare](#), [Col. Boyd and military strategy](#), as well as various essays from such folks as William Lind (Rummy's [Wreck it and Run](#) management, [striking back at the empire](#), the [Century of the Believers](#)), and also the "[Werther Report - fourth generation warfare and riddles of culture](#)." I don't agree with all this stuff but i find it interesting.

Also a SFTT story about how the [military pursues deserters](#). Certainly has its own viewpoint on the matter... I tend to believe that people bailing on the armed forces have the right to do so, considering the top management is quite crazy and the war is incredibly bad.

Here's the full text of the British Cabinet Office paper "[Conditions for Military Action](#)." I just like to read these paragraphs:

1. The US Government's military planning for action against Iraq is proceeding apace. But, as yet, it lacks a political framework. In particular, little thought has been given to creating the political conditions for military action, or the aftermath and how to shape it.
2. When the Prime Minister discussed Iraq with President Bush at Crawford in April he said that the UK would support military action to bring about regime change, provided that certain conditions were met: efforts had been made to construct a coalition/shape public opinion, the Israel-Palestine Crisis was quiescent, and the options for action to eliminate Iraq's WMD through the UN weapons inspectors had been exhausted.
3. We need now to reinforce this message and to encourage the US Government to place its military planning within a political framework, partly to forestall the risk that military action is precipitated in an unplanned way by, for example, an incident in the No Fly Zones. This is particularly important for the UK because it is necessary to create the conditions in which we could legally support military action. Otherwise we face the real danger that the US will commit themselves to a course of action which we would find very difficult to support.

Posted by HongPong at [11:17 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) [Relating to Humor](#) , [International Politics](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [The White House](#) , [War on Terror](#)
June 03, 2005

American Hajji, the Sumer state of Iraq, GoreTV and messianic militarism

A few sites to look at: [American Hajji](#) is apparently the blog of a soldier who just got dumped into Mosul, fresh from the U.S. He also has posted a lot under "[nameless soldier](#)" on [DailyKos.com](#).

Always look at [the Agonist](#), a sort of open-source-model news aggregator that I've been looking to since the war started. They [posted my submission of the AIPAC story](#) a few days ago. A statement about [Chinese currency manipulation](#) from a Rep. Tim Ryan (D-OH), direct to their site. Also a rather overwrought bit about [dirty money in the global economy](#) by UK journalist Nick Kochan.

When to start a bombing? Congressman John Conyers has a sweet blog entry @ DailyKos (pretty good user range, ya?) about how the recent British memo that got released about the intelligence being "fixed around the policy" is helpful, but [Conyers adds that the Americans were bombing Iraq in 2002 with the specific intention of antagonizing Saddam Hussein into retaliating](#). This early bombing, preparing the "battle space" as they called, was a particularly illegal action intended to provide a legal pretext, which ultimately failed to work. So they had to dream up the niger-uranium type stuff instead....

GoreTV: Al Gore's rumored cable news station has finally resurfaced as... drum roll... [Current](#) (not to be confused with our new MPR operation). As [Business2.0 reported](#):

Gore took the wraps off his long-awaited foray into media moguldom, Current, a cross between video blogging and the early days of MSNBC. Starting Aug. 1, hipster hosts will introduce streams of blip-length clips, created by the viewers themselves, focused on music and other suitably hip subjects. The channel's first call for entries offered a tempting \$3,000, three-segment "studio development deal" as

a prize for the best submissions. The East Coast liberal elite expecting DNC-TV or endless reruns of Charlie Rose and Topic A With Tina Brown were left scratching their heads.

Meanwhile, Google's Larry Page sent reporters scurrying when he offhandedly mentioned during a panel that the company would begin accepting amateur video search submissions "in the next few days." Sure enough, Google's video service is now accepting files for upload and review, although the company is offering few details on when and how someone might ultimately be able to watch them, not to mention how much Google might someday charge viewers for the privilege. Ignoring the stated restrictions on what could be uploaded, the wits at Slashdot immediately saw right through what Page described as an "experiment in video blogging": This was Google's back door into the porn business. Amateur video indeed.

Then Google and Gore announced a deal with each other. Google's "Zeitgeist" feature, which compiles the top 10 most searched terms at any moment, will become the organizing principle of Current's news programming.

They have [jobs available](#).

[BagNewsNotes](#) digests news imagery and the various methods of political spin contained therein. For example, the [recent cover of Mother Jones](#), a [crappy Schwartzenegger ad](#), a [disturbing photo of a soldier writing](#) on an Iraqi's head, or [Queer Eye for the Pregnant Guy](#). [NewsCorpse.com](#) has an amusing name altho it seems pretentious.

Censorship: A batshit Poli Sci professor in Hawaii thinks that [censoring the media is a fabulous idea](#). I don't feel like dragging myself through the details of the recent Amnesty report about our shiny new gulag system, but good ol' Sidney Blumenthal has something about the [great international secret torture conspiracy](#)®©.

Ukraine's [New Boss is about the same as the Old Boss](#). They are going right back to old-school socialism under the new patronage of the United States, in Raimondo's view.

[Fahd hospitalized](#)? When this duffer of the desert finally goes, it'll be a mess fo sho.

The Avian Flu is coming!!! AUGH!! This horrible post from the DailyKos [construes a future America](#) laden with refugee camps and pandemic. Awful. [More about it](#).

Libertarians: Check out [LewRockwell.com](#), libertarian blogging and so forth. With interesting stuff from (non-libertarian) reporter [Jim Lobe about the messy state of the US military](#), and another article about that [disturbing Housing Bubble](#) we've heard about.

I always say [read Juan Cole](#) (not to be confused with [John Cole](#)) and these days it's no different. In this case, thoughts about a recent [suicide bombing](#)

against Iraqi Sufis. Also, uhm, some southern Iraqis want to reorganize the provinces into a super-province of Sumer, in reference to the very ancient civilization once sited there:

Al-Hayat says that its sources in Iraq describe an ongoing dispute between the Kurds, who want an Iraqi federalism that gives "states' rights" only to Kurdistan but not to other provinces, and the Shiites, who want a federalism that would apply geographically throughout the country. The Shiites want to create a southern super-province to serve as a counter weight to Kurdistan. Shiite leaders are planning a congress that can establish the instrumentalities for creating the region of "Sumer" in the south, which will consist of 3 consolidated provinces.

[....]

The plan is opposed by Iyad al-Samarra'i of the Sunni Iraqi Islamic Party, who said that the IIP is willing to recognize a Kurdistan but that otherwise the present provincial boundaries should be kept. He said that if the Kurds and Shiites did go ahead with their schemes for large federal regions, the Sunni Arabs would be forced to consider creating one for themselves, as well.

The Shiites' use of "Sumer" as the name of the southern confederation is a reference to the earliest civilization in Mesopotamia, based in the south near the Gulf, who had writing as early as 3500. It is always a bad sign when people revive ancient place names, since it points to a romantic nationalism, the most virulent, false and ugly kind. (The people of southern Iraq didn't even know about Sumer two centuries ago-- modern archeologists recovered that part of history. It was perhaps the one success of Saddam's educational system that he instilled a craze for ancient Iraqi civilization in the students, as part of his nationalist agenda).

Apparently the Brits want to hand over security in their sector within a few months — de facto security control has mostly been in the hands of various Sadrists, the Dawa Party militia and other Shiite characters for quite a while.

A subject I always find alarming: the idea that God is acting to drive the gears of miscellaneous things that happen in the war, an essential element in the messianic narrative of our days. Good old Oliver North put together a book about "A Greater Freedom: Stories of Faith from Operation Iraqi Freedom." Another book, "The Faith of the American Soldier" by Stephen Mansfield, has a seemingly more rational description of itself on Amazon:

Since men and women in battle not only face the prospect of their own deaths but also must fashion a moral rationale for killing, the battlefield is often a place of tremendous religious transformation.

Do men and women at war revert to the faith of their youth or do they gravitate to the spirituality around them? Do they lose all faith in the face of horror, or do they piece together an informal faith that simply gets them through the fight? Are they better warriors and do they experience less post-traumatic stress if they believe their war is righteous and that they are agents of good?

Posted by HongPong at [06:21 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Iraq](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [War on Terror](#)

June 01, 2005

Memorial Day and a dissolving social sphere

So I have been settling into this new apartment. It's a cool spot to be at, and everyone likes the front porch's lofty perch above Selby Avenue. However, the relaxation of summer has been disrupted by the departures of so many of my best friends from school... Peter, Tim and Chris took off over the last couple days, and it really stings to realize I won't see those guys for a long time.

On the plus side Adam Gerber and Arthur Cheng are back in town for a while... And of course there are still plenty of people around town until at least the end of the summer.

With the ridiculous charges against me still to be resolved (obstruction of legal process with force), it adds some little bit of tension to my whole situation. I have to call into my Conditional Release officer every week, or else face Something Bad Happening. Until the charges go away, getting nailed any little thing, probably even jaywalking, could send me right back to jail. That's a horrible feeling, but at least it adds... zest, I guess.

And hey, I've got a new computer now, a fine graduation gift. A G5 tower with dual processors @ 2.4 GHz should keep me occupied for quite a while. You wouldn't believe how many friggin browser windows I can have open. Top Notch.

Ok ok... so I suppose everyone would like some interesting stuff to look at. I have been piling up the links for a few days, so I think these chunks of info will have to go into a few posts.

Memorial Day: It started oddly, as I finished packing my stuff from the house at 1834 Grand Avenue, as plumes of carpet fibers and decades of dust mite feces plumed around me. My former landlord Scott, in his infinite wisdom, decided that the fetid, ancient carpets of the living room and bedrooms needed to be ripped out Right Away. I couldn't pack my stuff with all the dust, as he chopped them up with a razor blade. I left for about 45

minutes and when I returned, he had shut and locked all the windows, locking in all the trillions of particles of dust and shit. Looking back, I'm pretty sure that those old carpets (pre-1995, I learned) were responsible in part for my sniffles and nasty coughs over the last 24 months.

And I spent a while in the final embrace of Cable, sweet sweet cable. I packed all night long in the dust, and as the sun on Memorial Day rose, I watched the patriotic programming fire up. Very early, Saint Paul Network News carried a [Democracy Now! special feature on "Preventive Warriors,"](#) which was really pretty damn good. Then they played ironic music to footage of American bombers cruising over Southeast Asia. The program ended with "THE EXCEPTION TO THE RULERS" on the credits, and SPNN clicked back on to bombastic music over the usual slideshow. (speaking of DN, here's a fun bit with Seymour Hersh about [Israeli agents in Iran Iraq and Syria](#))

A few hours later the plug was pulled for good. Brit Hume is a fading memory.

So then, what about the nameless soldiers, the ones who get wiped out by an IED or friendly fire or disease or the heat or a suicide or a RPG or a helicopter crash. State Rep. [Becky Lourey's son met his end only a few days ago](#). The war touches lots of people, it takes them away. That is the essential moral framework of the issue. The Hiawatha light rail cruises past the National Cemetery before it reaches the Mall of America. How excellent that people should be reminded of the many who left this world in the name of serving the calling for their nation, before they enter that edifice of materialism and sheer idolatry.

I curse the anti-war folks for somehow not making the connection with the rest of the country, to help them understand that we value the people of our military the most highly when we protect them from having to go to these places, before we force them to make terrible decisions and compromise their morals. To respect their sacrifice is to reduce the amount of sacrificing that the leaders deem necessary.

The argument of our time is that "he/she did what they had to do," be they the insurgent, the soldier, the settler, the terrorist, the drug smuggler, the lobbyist, the PR flack, the factory laborer. Politics and ethics these days are situational — there is no good platform to stand on anymore. To protect and respect our soldiers, we should have kept them out of the Casbah in Ramadi and Fallujah, the teeming slums that we couldn't begin to really understand. We should never have put these young folks in the irrational position of having to decide these matters of life and death, always without the adequate information, guidance and leadership from the top needed to make sane decisions.

I've met quite a few people in the active service, the reserves, veterans and the recently discharged. They're of all sorts, came in misfits and down on their luck, looking for some sort of money and some sort of structure. They got worldly whether they wanted to or not. Haiti, Somalia, parachute missions into North Korea, the base complexes of Europe. Cogs in a vast machine, [leveraging its power over the whole world](#).

As an atheist, the tragedies that pile up, [one after another](#), becoming all the more bitter as I realize that their souls don't get some kind of automatic nice ride to somewhere sweet — isn't that a common thread binding the true Islamic fundamentalists and their monotheistic brethren?

I want to toast those many fallen Americans and their counterparts in the living world. They are trying to do what they have to do with some kind of morality, and some kind of a goal in mind, even if it is bitterly impossible to reach. I wish their top leadership wasn't totally crazy, and I wish that they hadn't gotten snagged in Iraq, fighting ghosts. We should redouble our efforts to get them out of this mess, and rip the lunatics away from the ability to give these folks orders.

Posted by HongPong at [03:30 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Afghanistan](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [Security](#) , [War on Terror](#)

May 25, 2005

The Syrian Attractor

I would start with Juan Cole re our situation: "[Sometimes you are just screwed](#)." Bad things afoot towards the Syrian border, on the road to Damascus if you will. "[Insurgents plotted in Syria, U.S. says](#)." I love how our threat construction these days works a bit like the Kremlinology of old. There is [civil war breaking out \(Sunni v. Shiite\) at Tal Afar](#), on said Damascene road.

What are those moustache-twirlers up to?? Reuters yesterday reported that [Syria has officially broken off intelligence work with the CIA](#) and other agencies. Of course this is a true pity, since Syria originally offered such help against Al Qaeda earlier. (The Syrian government is in a bit of a deathmatch with Al Qaeda--it hates secular governments.

Our hawks are officially fantasizing about insane Lebanon-like solutions on television. Let that alarm bell go off... I was stunned to watch this [exchange about Syria on CNN](#) the other night:

DOBBS: And the U.S. counterterrorism, counterinsurgency forces that are in Iraq working with the population there, the intelligence is obviously still woeful and is still not adequate to forestall what are now rising, not diminishing, bomb attacks against Iraqis and Americans.

GRANGE: Rising because right now it's having a tremendous effect on the morale and attitude of the units, the attitude of the people to support the government, to support the insurgency. And when you have, let's say, if it's true, the reports are true, that you have meetings going on in Syria to plan new offensive actions and car bombings, or improvised explosive devices along roads, a surge of these things, you have to nip it in the bud somewhere. Maybe in Syria. But they are coming from someplace.

DOBBS: The United States military already hard-pressed. Is it a fact within the region, whether one is talking about Syrian leaders or Iranian, that they are watching the drain on both the U.S. forces and the will of the U.S. government, at least in their own projections and assessment, that we have come up with a situation where we are limited in what we can actually -- in the ways in which we can actually extend the United States political will in that region?

GRANGE: Well, it's going to be tough for the political will, because it's a long -- it's going to take a long time to solve -- solve the situation. Counterinsurgencies last a long time. And that's hard to swallow when you want to get in there and get out.

But if the other forces aren't trained to standard yet, then the U.S. or someone has to do that. And you sure don't want to quit now. You want to win this thing. And if some things are happening, let's say supported by Syria, **personally, I wouldn't let Syria get away with it.**

DOBBS: What would you do?

GRANGE: Well, I would put more pressure on Syria than we have now.

DOBBS: Militarily?

GRANGE: ***I would use a lot of pressure. There's some behind-the-scenes pressure, but maybe you need a zone of separation that's partly into the country of Syria to stop some of this movement. Maybe 10 kilometers or so deep.***

DOBBS: General David Grange, thanks for being with us.

GRANGE: My pleasure.

What an excellent justification to get Cable out of my life. [CSM Article ponders the possibilities of a Colombia-like bleeding disaster](#) or the eventual stabilization of other Central American countries. Hey, it's the [End of Secularism](#). A [depressing note from Riverbend](#) in Baghdad. The Iraqi police forces still [not measured](#) as cohering very well. "[U.S. generals issue grim outlook on Iraq](#)".

Justin Raimondo is saying exciting things about "[The Franklin Affair: A Spreading Treason](#)." Catchy headline:

Rozen, a perceptive reporter who has been [following this story](#) from the start, gives us the essential context of the Franklin affair by showing that he was very much a part of a small, tightly-knit network inside the Pentagon dedicated to provoking war not only with Iraq but also igniting a regional conflict including Iran, Syria, Lebanon, and beyond. She does a very good job, in her piece, of showing how Franklin was at the center of this group's covert machinations: he had a penchant, as she puts it, for "showing up at critical and murky junctures of recent history":

"He was part of the Pentagon's Office of Special Plans, which provided much-disputed intelligence on Iraq; he courted controversial Iraqi exile politician Ahmad Chalabi, who contributed much of that

hyped and misleading Iraq intelligence; and he participated with a Pentagon colleague and former Iran/contra arms dealer Manucher Ghorbanifar in a controversial December 2001 meeting in Rome – which, in a clear [violation of US government protocol](#), was kept secret from the CIA and the State Department."

"In all these endeavors," Rozen writes, "Franklin ... was hardly acting as a lone wolf." These rogue operations were projects of the [neoconservative matrix](#) in Washington, which reaches not only into the bowels of the Pentagon but also seems to have [gained access](#) to the higher echelons of this administration, and [virtually](#) taken over the Vice President's office lock, stock, and barrel. [Douglas Feith](#), Franklin's boss, [is close to](#) Israel's Likud party, and in 1996, he and [Richard Perle](#), [James Colbert](#), [Charles Fairbanks, Jr](#), [Robert Loewenberg](#), [David Wurmser](#), and [Meyrav Wurmser](#) prepared a position paper for then-Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, "[A Clean Break](#)," that outlined a strategy for extracting Israel from its strategic dilemma: the invasion of Iraq, followed by the elimination of Syria, and the neutralization of Iran, topped their agenda. What they didn't say in the policy paper was that the United States would be doing their dirty work for them, but in retrospect we can see plainly enough that utilizing American military power figured prominently in their plan.

And so on and so forth. Worth looking at. So this British memo has caused some things to come up about whether Bush intended to [topple Iraq way back in 2000](#). A fine story by [Juan Cole in Salon](#) outlines the charges. A classic Guardian link from 2003 states that "[Blair 'dissuaded Bush from attack after 9/11'](#)" ...

[Galloway kicked Norm Coleman's ass](#), ([CNN](#) link) and we are better for it. Of course, Norm is trying to peddle goods that he seems to have gotten from Chalabi and the Neo-cons, so we know it must be reliable stuff. [More on Galloway](#). The Newsweek flap has receded a little now but it's still a small matter when [compared](#) with how crazy our government is.

[The military is having trouble hanging onto young officers](#), especially Lieutenants and Captains, people who want to find some stability, not to keep getting churned in the system. Of course, they are also getting swooped up by Privatized Military Firms.

"At no time before has the Army had LTs [lieutenants] who have made decisions like that on a daily basis," he said. As he sees it, the military now has an entire generation of young officers who are battle-hardened and knowledgeable about battling insurgencies.

Even in Iraq, he said, senior commanders were keenly aware of those officers who might be considering leaving the military and applied various degrees of pressure to persuade them to remain in uniform.

....

Yet Tuohey, who was promoted to captain upon returning to Ft. Hood, said he was not sure whether he would stay in the Army when his commitment ended next year. He said he was tempted to work on Wall Street.

It's not the money he's after. It's the fact that an Army that was gutted after the Cold War was promising him a future of perpetual deployments fighting a war that could last for decades. That is not a future he is sure he can commit to. "What's the end point?" he asked. "When do you declare victory?"

A little more on the [stuff in Uzbekistan](#) altho of course Raimondo has [something](#) on that too. Check out [Registan.net](#) for ongoing news on that matter.

Posted by HongPong at [12:43 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Iraq](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [War on Terror](#)

May 24, 2005

Elvis Presley, Nazis, (dis)information freedom and whatnot

Vanity, disinformation and rumors get picked up and passed around and our BS filters get sidestepped by the sourcing of the information. Take this Elvis Presley = Nazi idea that circulated lately. Another example of the perils of the information age:

Almost 28 years after his death, fans of the King of Rock, Elvis Presley, can now see their icon in a radically different light; that as a Nazi.

The legend is seen wearing a Nazi cap and giving a Nazi salute in some pictures taken from a grainy half-hour home cine film.

The pictures, believed to be from the sixties, were taken during a boat trip with friends and have surfaced at the same time as Presley's ex-wife Priscilla released his home movies.

"I was given it ages ago, I think when I used to own a bar. But I had never watched it. It wasn't until I found it in the loft that I decided to. When I did I was shocked," Mark Vernon, who owns the tape, was quoted as saying.

The story still appears on [News.com.au](#), an Australian site, [FemaleFirst.co.uk](#), [ContactMusic.com](#). Originally the British tabloid Sun propagated the story but of course [the Sun's Elvis page](#) has expired. The counter-story comes from [Elvis-express.com](#), which is filing a complaint with the UK's Press Complaints Commission.

The other horror would be [blogebrit.com](#), an agglomeration of big shots or something like that. So when I first visit I get the [bloviating post](#):

While the majority of the emails we've received have been something along the lines of:

I love it....this is so much fun; I'm glad somebody finally did this, etc.

There have been a few of these:

You suck. Your list sucks and you suck and people should ONLY talk about blogs in the way I WANT THEM TO. Shame on you. Oh....and you didn't put me on your list. You suck and I hate you.

Just a clue to the haters--your whining is more transparent than a glob of used Neutrogena. But please, do keep it up....your sour grapes are like a glass of Opus One to us.

Speaking of which, I do think it's time for an eye-opener.

So right off the bat they are indulging their own egos in the mailbox. This one's destined to be a classic. On the other hand this site declared that [blogging has finally passed a critical peak](#), from which it will roll downhill:

Bloggng Jumps Shark, Becomes Trucker Hat

Following the recent whirlwind of blog hype including Nick Denton's love affair with the New York Times, his pie to the face at the Radar Magazine party, the launch of Blogebriety, Jason Calacanis' three million micro-blogs, a sudden explosion of branded character blogs and "all marketers should blog" blog conferences, it's now official. Rick Bruner and I, today, declare blogging to have gone the way of the trucker hat. In celebration of this sacred event, May 20, 2005, you can pick up your memorial, Nick Denton Trucker Hat over at Cafe Press.

That is too bad. HongPong.dyndns.org ran on a hacked-together Mac Linux server in the fall of 2000, when "blog" had not yet become soggy label to spill from the mouths of those grinning chicks on CNN... Before Hugh Hewitt and Scott Johnson appropriated something thought up by far more clever people.

So it is sorely tempting to pull the plug on HongPong.com now that the living situation is changing. Either that or some sort of drastic redesign, something overwrought and bombastic, like a John Williams score.

Elvis might be a Nazi but Jim Morrison is alive, according to [rodeoswest.com](#). Why the hell not? I guess it reinforces my point that there is very little truth to latch onto. "[FlashNews](#)" [tells us something](#):

Filmmaker Claims Jim Morrison Is Alive In Oregon

NEW YORK (Wireless Flash) – Here's news that will light the fire of Jim Morrison fans: A filmmaker claims The Doors' frontman is alive and raising horses on a ranch in southern Oregon. Rodeo photographer Gerald Pitts insists Morrison didn't die in July of 1971 and he has current photographs and film footage of the rocker to prove it.

Pitts, who met Morrison in 1998, says the rocker staged his death because of a French conspiracy to kill him, Janis Joplin and Jimi Hendrix with narcotics because they were all Vietnam war protestors. These days, Morrison isn't the drug user he once was, although Pitts says when he goes over to Jim's house he'll "maybe have an occasional beer."

Now Pitts claims that Morrison is announcing he's alive, in part, to promote his recent agreement to star in a rodeo shoot-out movie based on events that actually happened to Pitts.

Yet another reason to leave this country, as Arun would put it.

In other random news an online tool called [Tor provides anonymity in Internet use](#), and was originally developed by the Navy. It is becoming popular among government and other such types... Mysterious. But the [EFF supports it](#), so it must be good. Sort of similar to this sourceforge project called [ANts](#), [Freenet](#), ([Freenet-china.org](#) looks interesting) and [MUTE](#) are all anonymizing systems--that is, they shield a user's IP number and data using layers of encryption. A major problem, for say, your software pirate or

Chinese dissident, is making sure the IP can't be traced to you as you engage in things. Centralized servers are another weak point, and other technologies such as our beloved BitTorrent are getting "[distributed tracker](#)" [features](#) put into their [clients](#). Tor sounds promising, then:

The [Naval Research Lab](#) began developing the system in 1996 but handed the code over to Roger Dingledine and Nick Mathewson, two Boston-based programmers, in 2002. The system was designed as part of a program called onion routing, in which data is passed randomly through a distributed network of servers three times, with layers of security protecting the data, like an onion. Dingledine and Mathewson rewrote the code to make it easier to use and developed a client program so that users could send data from their desktops.

"It's been really obscure until now and hard to use," said Chris Palmer, EFF's technology manager. "(Before) it was just a research prototype for geeks. But now the onion routing idea is finally ready for prime time."

Dingledine and Mathewson made the code open source so that users could examine it to find bugs and to make certain that the system did only what it was supposed to do and nothing more.

The two programmers wanted to guard against a problem that arose in 2003 when users of another open-source anonymizer system -- called JAP, for Java Anonymous Proxy -- discovered that its German developers had placed a backdoor in the system to record traffic to one server. The developers... said they were [forced to install](#) a "crime detection function" by court order.

Law enforcement authorities have long had an uneasy and ambivalent relationship with anonymizer services. On the one hand, such services allow law enforcement and intelligence agencies to hide their own identity while conducting investigations and gathering intelligence. But they also make it harder for authorities to track the activities and correspondence of criminals and terrorists.

Anonymizer services can help protect whistleblowers and political activists from exposure. They can help users circumvent surfing restrictions placed on students and workers by school administrators and employers. And they can prevent websites from tracking users and knowing where they're located. The downside is that anonymizer services can aid with corporate espionage.

....Tor builds an incremental encrypted connection that involves three separate keys through three servers on the network. The connection is built one server at a time so that each server knows only the identity of the server that preceded it and the server that follows it. None of the servers knows the entire path the data took.

So I guess my ultimate point is that technology is offering solutions for freedom, as well as coercion. Disinformation, however, is something that only our brains seem capable of swatting away, and it's an uphill battle.

Misc:

Look at this sweet

[Robot Hand](#). More [Koran desecration rumors](#). "[60 Minutes Wednesday](#)" [gets cancelled](#), y'all can't keep telling us about insane prisons....

[Television newsmagazines in general](#) have been suffering in the ratings. There was some speculation that one of ABC's newsmagazines might be canceled, but both "20/20" and "Primetime Live" were included on the schedule announced Tuesday.

"The mood in the country right now tends to favor escape," Heyward said. "There's a lot of grim news out there. In prime time, when people are looking to be entertained as well as informed, a drama or a reality show is tough competition. The thing about reality shows is they offer the same appeal of

ordinary people caught up in extraordinary circumstances, but it's all a game. There's a happy ending."

Tech: [Microsoft used Apple G5's to demo their Xbox games](#) at the recent E3 conference. That's right, Apples run the Xbox software somehow... Check out [ImageSavant.com](#): this is what [the Apple spinning ball should look like](#).

Posted by HongPong at [11:52 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Humor](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Media](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [News](#) , [Technological Apparatus](#) , [Usual Nonsense](#)

April 20, 2005

John Bolton is fux0red

Read this: "[Is John Bolton Going Down?](#) An amazing afternoon at the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. By Fred Kaplan"

you can [download the most unlikely video of the committee](#) hearing that halted Bolton's march. [NY Times reports](#). [Reuters](#). Agonist.org [Bolton Watch thread](#).

Wow, yesterday was an [unexpected political victory](#) for the "reality-based community" as somehow Republican Senator Voinovich from Ohio (something of [a maverick](#)) said he wouldn't vote to get John Bolton out of his nominating committee. This came out of the blue and apparently surprised everyone. Now there are three more weeks to accumulate nasty information about Bolton and his radical duplicitousness, and I'd say he's probably toast.

This is without a doubt the first major public setback the neoconservative clique has had since the election. Aside from the harm to Bolton's reputation, his little trial is causing all sorts of well-cemented lies about the war (and WMD lies, in particular the Niger case) to slide apart. This could go very far, and there is quite a bit of energy suddenly floating around. It seems possible that moderate Republicans see a need to push back against DeLay-Bolton-style embarassingly corrupt petulance and bullying, let alone their many crimes and pathological lying.

The long-awaited Return of the Establishment Conservatives may be at hand, and the Great Battle of RightWing ThinkTankery may yet unfold. Perhaps Lewis Libby will go to jail after an opportune leak about the Valerie Plame CIA case, perhaps Cheney will have to resign. As the Republicans seem to be agitated like a tank of hungry piranhas, and the Lame Duck air that Bush reeked of back in 2001 has returned with force.

Washington Post: "[Bolton often blocked information, officials say](#)", somewhat related "[The Neocons' Unabashed Reversal](#)" by Michael Kinsley. A tidbit about [Bolton lying about Cuba](#).

I have bumped into some nice blogs about the subject, some new, some not. [Democracy Arsenal](#), [Washington Note](#) is totally essential, [Obsidian Wings](#), [War and Piece](#), [Arms Control Wonk](#), [Stygius](#), [Mattie Yglesias](#), [Juan Cole](#), hey why not [CounterPunch](#)?

Slate on some [specific allegations](#):

The allegations were made by at least seven officials who have been interviewed by the committee staff (and leaked or otherwise provided to the press) as well as, in a public hearing, by Carl Ford, a conservative Republican and career intelligence official who, until recently, was assistant secretary of state for intelligence and research. They boil down to these: On at least five occasions, Bolton intimidated and tried to get fired intelligence analysts at the State Department and the CIA who disagreed with his views. A former official with the U.S. Agency for International Development wrote a letter to the committee stating that during one run-in with Bolton, while she was working on projects in Kyrgyzstan, he harassed her in a Moscow hotel lobby, banged on her door, then went to Kyrgyzstan and spread lies about her—saying she was being investigated for absconding with government funds—that nearly derailed her work. Several officials have claimed, though anonymously for now, that Bolton blocked official documents about Iran from moving up the chain of command to Colin Powell.

During his hearings, Bolton was asked about some of these matters. He said that he'd asked for the reassignment of one intelligence analyst not because of a dispute over substance but because the analyst had gone behind his back. This claim has been thoroughly rebutted by several witnesses, who affirm that the dispute was over substantive intelligence analysis. A small but telling lie: When Biden asked Bolton whether he personally drove out to CIA headquarters to pressure one high-ranking official to fire the national intelligence officer for Latin American affairs, Bolton said that he'd gone there mainly to ask about intelligence procedures and that he drove there on his way home from work—it was no special trip. Biden said today that he'd since received Bolton's logs for that day. It turned out he made the trip in the morning, then came back to the State Department for a full day's work.

On a totally unrelated note, the [George W. Bush conspiracy generator](#) is awesome. It gave me "**George W. Bush lowered taxes so that big corporations could oppress transgendered people.**"

Other stuff: More about [oil-for-food](#), the real deal. That weird fake [hostage thing shows sectarian tension](#) growing. FT: [Sunni Arabs face dilemma](#). [Shiite bloc plans purge](#) of Saddam-era officials. BBC: "[Iraq militias 'could beat rebels'](#)". [A Hole in Bush's Exit Strategy](#) (interesting stuff about Privatized Military Firms SAIC etc) Cockburn: "[Iraqi Peace in Tatters](#)". Is [God taking sides in Iraq](#)?

[Fear and loathing with Republicans](#).

Israel's [Military "Justice" system](#) in occupied territories.

What the fuck are these Minutemen, really?

Posted by HongPong at 01:56 PM | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [International Politics](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [Security](#) , [The White House](#) , [War on Terror](#)

April 04, 2005

Shifting the brackets

Our hazy theme today is how rhetoric and threat language are used to shift around the perceived morality of Acting Against The Evil Ones.

Sometimes we should reflect on how the government views internal enemies. The inclusion or exclusion of various groups from heightened law enforcement scrutiny tells us a lot about how that government perceives its *own* identity.

So I have some stuff about Natan Sharansky, whose supposed ideology about the spread of freedom has totally infatuated Bush, but is itself the slanted product of a hardcore Likud supporter, shifting the definition of Arabs to suit his own purposes, influencing both Israeli and American government identities.

First thing is [a report of a leaked memo from the Department of Homeland Security](#) which indicates DHS will institutionally become more fixated on left-wing groups, those Real Dangerous Earth Liberation Front types, apparently placing less emphasis on right-wing militia and white supremacist groups. Great:

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) does not list right-wing domestic terrorists and terrorist groups on a document that appears to be an internal list of threats to the nation's security.

According to the list — part of a draft planning document obtained by CQ Homeland Security — between now and 2011 DHS expects to contend primarily with adversaries such as al Qaeda and other foreign entities affiliated with the Islamic Jihad movement, as well as domestic radical Islamist groups.

It also lists left-wing domestic groups, such as the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) and the Earth Liberation Front (ELF), as terrorist threats, but it does not mention anti-government groups, white supremacists and other radical right-wing movements, which have staged numerous terrorist attacks that have killed scores of Americans. Recent attacks on **cars, businesses and property** in Virginia, Oregon and California have been attributed to ELF.

On the flip side is Bush's Democratic Revolution Loverboy, Israeli Minister of Jerusalem Affairs/Olde Time Soviet Dissident Natan Sharansky. Sharansky wrote some book about the global democracy movement, but this all seems to be slick packaging within which lies a typical Likud hawk. Perhaps I'm not being fair; he did truly spend the better part of a decade in the Soviet gulag.

However, as a piece in [the American Conservative, a paleo-con periodical](#) put it...

The one-time Soviet prisoner, now an Israeli cabinet minister, became the personal embodiment of the link that neoconservative intellectuals had long asserted in print between the Cold War and "World War IV"—a long twilight struggle against totalitarianism morphing seamlessly into the War on Terror. Sharansky could claim authoritatively that the battles against Soviet despotism and Islamic terrorists were essentially part of the same fight, the free against the unfree. As a result of his personal struggle, Sharansky embodied, to use a favorite catchword of the administration's ideologists, "moral clarity."

But in real political life, moral clarity between liberty and despotism is not so easy to come by—and perhaps nowhere is that clearer than in Sharansky's own path since he entered Israeli politics. For there his career has been marked not by moral clarity but rather by moral ambiguity and inconsistency in his advocacy of democracy and human rights, particularly in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. [...]Over the course of Sharansky's political career, he has steadily morphed from avatar of universal human rights into a pillar of Israel's nationalist camp.

Soon after Sharansky's arrival on Israel's political scene, international human rights advocates and members of the Israeli peace movement began to suspect that he adopted a double standard in dealing with the Palestinians. After a long and exasperating exchange with Sharansky in 1997, an Arab reporter for Al-Sharq al-Awsat threw up his hands and exclaimed, "What you are in effect saying is that everything that the Israeli Government does today is right, that the whole world is wrong to criticize Israel, and that there is no possibility of making any changes in Israel's policies?" Sharansky blithely responded, "I would not put it quite so strongly."

[....]

In a particularly cynical move, Sharansky and Sharon's other opponents sought to twist Israel's democratic process to hobble even this very tentative step toward peace [the Gaza withdrawal]. As a recent Ha'aretz editorial characterizes this ploy: **"The referendum campaign being waged by Sharon's ministers, his buddies in the Likud, the settlers and fanatics of every stripe, is a threat to the democratic-parliamentary structure of the state, no matter how you look at it." In a recent cabinet vote on Sharon's Gaza withdrawal plan, Sharansky cast one of five nays.**

[...]

....the nature of Sharansky's political constituency in Israel drove him to the nationalist extreme. His original party started out narrowly focused on advancing the ethnic interests of Russian Jews and was fairly moderate on most other issues. But Avigdor Lieberman, another Russian Jew, saw the potential for a political party based on the growing Russian Jewish community and better understood that this community was very hawkish, particularly on the issues of Islam (which for Russians was clearly identified with the Chechen War) and the Arabs. **Subsequently, Sharansky and Lieberman formed the National Unity Block, which came to represent the most nationalistic edge of the Israeli political spectrum. Like their former countrymen back in the old motherland, Russian Jews in Israel are, in the words of Eduard Kuznetsov, editor of the Israeli Russian-language paper Vesti, "the descendants of an imperial attitude. Land is sacred. And though only 1 percent of them live in the occupied territories, they have an instinctive hatred of Arabs and see no reason to make any concessions."**

Well, "instinctive hatred" is more of a blanket term than I really like, but then again this is a Russian newspaper editor talking. The following [interview in Mother Jones](#) illustrates the Likud-nationalist ideology behind the flowery democracy talk:

MJ: Another criticism of you is that as Housing Minister in Ariel Sharon's first government, **you participated in the expansion of Jewish settlements in the West Bank**. And many people say: "Well, how can one promote a democratic Palestinian state while at the same time supporting settlements which Palestinians see as an impediment to that state?"

NS: Well, look, Palestinians see the strengthening of Jewish settlements as an impediment, and some Israelis see the strengthening of the Palestinian Authority as an impediment. But the truth is that if you really want to live in peace, with two democratic societies—Palestinian and Israeli—these must be societies where people can live without fear. And here's something that's strange. The whole world **expects that Arabs should be able to live peacefully in Israeli territory—and as you know 17 percent of Israeli citizens are Arabs. At the same time, the world also expects that Jews should leave the territories controlled by the Palestinian Authority, because those Jews will be killed there.** That, from the beginning, shows that the world expects very different things from these two types of societies.

I never saw the legitimate strengthening of the Jewish community in the territories under discussion as an obstacle to peace. Israel has showed many times that, as soon as there is any hope for peace, we will make all sorts of concessions. The last example of this was Ehud Barak. But if we're making these concessions, I want to make sure that we have a reliable partner first, a partner who is also ready to take those concessions, for the sake of peace.

MJ: Israel has peace treaties with Egypt and Jordan, which have held, even though neither state is a democracy, why wouldn't the same be true for an undemocratic Palestinian state?

NS: First of all, we want to have peace with everybody, whether they are a democracy or not. But the difference is that with democracy you can have peace that you can rely on. **For leaders of democratic states, war is always the last option, but when you have peace with a non-democracy, you have to rely on the strength of your military to enforce it.** So we have peace with Egypt backed by a treaty, but also peace with Syria without a treaty. In both cases, it's because we can rely on the strength of our army. Peace with the Palestinians, however, will not come with their state safely behind the Sinai. The new state will be in the suburbs of Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. In this case, it's much more difficult for Israel to rely on the strength of its army to enforce peace, so we need a partner we can trust and rely on, a democratic partner.

One more word about Egypt. What's interesting about our agreement with Egypt is that Egypt got a lot out of it: the territories, financial support, weapons from Americans, and so on. But it lost something very important to the government: It lost Israel as enemy. **And for a dictatorial regime, an outside enemy is something that helps the regime survive.** So they lost us as a political enemy, but then in the last twenty years they emerged as the new anti-Semitic center in the world. The country prints more anti-Semitic literature, like the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, than any other Arab country, and that's a direct result of the fact that Egypt is not a democracy. **When they lost us as a political enemy, they still needed us as a national enemy, so now they're becoming the center of anti-Semitism.**

A whole array here of Likud bits. The "rely on the strength of your military to enforce [peace]" option == Revisionist Zionism's [Iron Wall](#) philosophy. The "I never saw the *legitimate* strengthening of the Jewish community in the territories under discussion as an obstacle to peace" bit was pure Land Grabbery and Hegemonic Discourse, and lazy hegemonifying at that. *Of course it's legitimate, that's why it wasn't an obstacle to peace!* Now *that* is a tautology worth putting clusters of zealots on the West Bank for. And we can see the ideological continuity with [the Clean Break neocon folks](#) as well.

On the other hand, he is right that the outside enemy helps the regime survive. USSR and the Capitalist Cigar smokers, Nazi Germany and International Jewry, the New Pentagon and Shibboleth O Evil Zaraqawi, these are handy things. [War is a Force that Gives Us Meaning](#). To hate at least rhetorically delays the pressures of reform, but doubly so in a democracy where vast sections of the population have been brainwashed.

To make the American people intolerant of imaginary WMDs held by an inflated enemy image, that was the genius of Wolfowitz, and his Cold War predecessors like Wohlstetter. To run intelligence puffing-up using totally [fake Empirical Evidence, like the old Team B venture](#), was recognized as the best political strategy to making doves look foolhardy. In those days, it was the nukes, [whereas nowadays](#) it was the Curveball-based intel, Yellowcake Uranium and Aluminum Tubes.

I have to go to bed now. More later. Augh, I always say that.

Posted by HongPong at [03:18 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Iraq](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Security](#) , [War on Terror](#)

March 15, 2005

I'm gone, bubba!

Hey, whatever. I'm going to Florida. Hell Yeah. There's things I could post about, but now I'm done. Oh yes.

Posted by HongPong at [12:12 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Military-Industrial Complex](#)

March 14, 2005

Something about civil war in Israel, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Iran

All right, Major Things have to Happen today and I've got to set about doing them real quick-like, in preparation for the trip. Have to write midterm exam all day...

Civil war stuff further down. Turns out that the Bush Administration [makes up more shit than any other presidency, ever](#). They use fake news broadcasts with fake reporters, distributed to TV stations, to help provide the public with a fuzzy background of "a caring get-it-done Administration". The Congressional Budget Office has considered some of this stuff potentially "covert propaganda". [The NY Times had a major feature on it](#) Sunday.

"Thank you, Bush. Thank you, U.S.A.," a jubilant Iraqi-American told a camera crew in Kansas City for a segment about reaction to the fall of Baghdad. A second report told of "another success" in the Bush administration's "drive to strengthen aviation security"; the reporter called it "one of the most remarkable campaigns in aviation history." A third segment, broadcast in January, described the administration's determination to open markets for American farmers.

To a viewer, each report looked like any other 90-second segment on the local news. In fact, the federal government produced all three. The report from Kansas City was made by the State Department. The "reporter" covering airport safety was actually a public relations professional working under a false name for the Transportation Security Administration. The farming segment was done by the Agriculture Department's office of communications.

Under the Bush administration, the federal government has aggressively used a well-established tool of public relations: the prepackaged, ready-to-serve news report that major corporations have long distributed to TV stations to pitch everything from headache remedies to auto insurance. In all, at least 20 federal agencies, including the Defense Department and the Census Bureau, have made and distributed hundreds of television news segments in the past four years, records and interviews show. **Many were subsequently broadcast on local stations across the country without any acknowledgement of the government's role in their production.**

This winter, Washington has been roiled by revelations that a handful of columnists wrote in support of administration policies without disclosing they had accepted payments from the government. But the administration's efforts to generate positive news coverage have been considerably more pervasive than previously known. At the same time, records and interviews suggest widespread complicity or negligence by television stations, given industry ethics standards that discourage the broadcast of prepackaged news segments from any outside group without revealing the source.

Federal agencies are forthright with broadcasters about the origin of the news segments they distribute. The reports themselves, though, are designed to fit seamlessly into the typical local news broadcast. In most cases, the "reporters" are careful not to state in the segment that they work for the government. Their reports generally avoid overt ideological appeals. **Instead, the government's news-making apparatus has produced a quiet drumbeat of broadcasts describing a vigilant and compassionate administration.**

Some reports were produced to support the administration's most cherished policy objectives, like regime change in Iraq or Medicare reform. Others focused on less prominent matters, like the administration's efforts to offer free after-school tutoring, its campaign to curb childhood obesity, its initiatives to preserve forests and wetlands, its plans to fight computer viruses, even its attempts to fight holiday drunken driving. They often feature "interviews" with senior administration officials in which questions are scripted and answers rehearsed. Critics, though, are excluded, as are any hints of mismanagement, waste or controversy.

Some of the segments were broadcast in some of nation's largest television markets, including New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Dallas and Atlanta.

All right other stuff, quickly. [Stratfor says that John Bolton is not such a horror](#) for the UN post, and of course I disagree because he is A) batshit crazy B) antagonizes people purely for symbolic value C) incredibly dishonest and dangerous.

In fact, there is some extremely deep diplomacy going on here. Bolton belongs to the "put-up-or-shut-up" branch of American neocons, believing that the United Nation's original charter prescribed a much more activist organization -- where resolutions would be strengthened by possible consequences if violated, often including the use of force. In Bolton's mind, the Korean War is precisely the type of military action the United Nations was designed to authorize and carry out.

This is, needless to say, very different from the circumstances surrounding the **Iraq war of 2003 -- in which the Bush administration, we believe, hoped that the United Nations would not go**

along with U.S. requests. The whole point of the war was not to oust Saddam Hussein but to intimidate Syria, Iran and Saudi Arabia into acting against al Qaeda on Washington's behalf. Bush wanted to scare regimes that supported or enabled al Qaeda by placing uninvited, unsanctioned American armored divisions -- not a sea of polite blue helmets -- in the sands of Iraq.

[.....]

Had the administration simply wanted to destroy the United Nations, it would have appointed someone far less controversial and independent-minded who would simply rubber-veto U.N. Security Council resolutions ad nauseam. As Bush pointed out during his first term, the United Nations is relevant only if it takes steps to enforce its own dictates.

Bolton feels the same way. He believes the U.N. system is not necessarily irredeemable, but simply discredited. Rather conveniently, he has two ready-made test cases waiting: North Korea has withdrawn from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty while Iran is, at best, attempting to skirt the IAEA on technical grounds. In effect, both states have -- in the eyes of the United Nations -- placed themselves outside of the system, and are therefore squarely in what Bolton and his neocon circle feel are the United Nations' crosshairs. Bolton's task will be to get the United Nations to act against them - not for American interests, but to prevent the United Nations from sliding into total irrelevance.

In the four years to come, the United Nations is likely to have several "legitimate" targets, from the neocons' point of view. In his second term, Bush seems committed to finishing the work not just of his first administration, but of the Reagan and Bush Sr. administrations as well. **The White House has made no secret of goals that include not only tying up the final loose ends of the Cold War and completing the rollback of Russian power, but also of extending that geopolitical effort to Communist East Asia and the Middle East.**

I don't buy it. Ok. Also a former US soldier, Nadim Abou Rabeih, [claims that the U.S. faked the news of Saddam's capture](#) on Dec. 13, 2003, and he was actually captured by Rabeih and others somewhere totally different on Dec. 12. Justin Raimondo [speculates on whether this is true](#), and the upcoming demonization of Bashar Assad as the next-worst-thing-to-Hitler. He also has a bit about how the [Neo-cons have been chased out](#) of one of their periodical redoubts, National Journal.

The pro-Syrian govt in Lebanon is [back in the saddle](#). Experts warn that the [War on Terror \(TM\) is going to make more](#) terrorists. Apparently the U.S. is finally ready to acknowledge that [Hezbollah has a key role to play in Lebanon](#). We just don't have the traction to play the stupid demonization card anymore.

Speaking of liars around Bush, a bit by David Corn about [the bad old days of massacres in El Salvador, and Elliot Abrams lying to Congress](#) to cover it up. These days are going to be here again, with people like him and Negroponte running around. Dowd points out that these ['security-minded' bastards are not really that competent](#) at security.

Oh yeah, here's some batty stuff. David Horowitz made up a site, [discoverthenetwork.org](#), that purports to connect, say, the editors of The

Nation with Zacharias Moussau. It also shines light on the [evil conspiracy that is Counterpunch.org](#). Nuts.

Ok finally, something about that civil war stuff. Uri Averny, an old-school Israeli peacenik, has a ton of [good thoughts about what kind of mess we are getting drawn into with Lebanon](#) and elsewhere.

Many years ago, I read a book called *The Quiet American* by Graham Greene. Its central character is a high-minded, naive young American operative in Vietnam. He has no idea about the complexities of that country but is determined to right its wrongs and create order. The results are disastrous.

I have the feeling that this is happening now in Lebanon. The Americans are not so high-minded and not so naive. Far from it. But they are quite prepared to go into a foreign country, disregard its complexities, and use force to impose on it order, democracy, and freedom.

[....]

Exactly 50 years ago, a secret, heated debate took place among the leaders of Israel. David Ben-Gurion (then minister of defense) and Moshe Dayan (the army chief-of-staff) had a brilliant idea: to invade Lebanon, impose on it a "Christian major" as dictator, and turn it into an Israeli protectorate. Moshe Sharett, then prime minister, attacked this idea fervently. In a lengthy, closely argued letter, which has been preserved for history, he ridiculed the total ignorance of the proponents of this idea in face of the incredibly fragile complexity of the Lebanese social structure. **Any adventure, he warned, would end in disaster.**

At the time, Sharett won. **But 27 years later, Menachem Begin and Ariel Sharon did exactly what Ben-Gurion and Dayan had proposed. The result was exactly as foreseen by Sharett.**

[....]

In Lebanon, all the diverse communities are in action. Each for its own interest, each plotting to outfox the others, perhaps to attack them at a given opportunity. Some of the leaders are connected with Syria, some with Israel, all are trying to use the Americans for their ends. **The jolly pictures of young demonstrators, so prominent in the media, have no meaning if one does not know the community that stands behind them.**

[...]

It took us 18 years to get out of that morass. Our only achievement was to turn the Shi'ites into a dominant force. When we entered Lebanon, the Shi'ites received us with showers of rice and candies, hoping that we would throw out the Palestinians, who had been lording it over them. A few months later, when they realized that we did not intend to leave, they started to shoot at us. Sharon is the midwife of Hezbollah.

[....]

If a civil war breaks out in Lebanon, it will not be the only one in the region. In Iraq, such a war – if almost secret – is already in full swing.

The only effective military forces in Iraq, apart from the occupation army, are the Kurdish peshmerga ("those who face death"). The Americans use them whenever they are fighting the Sunnis. They played an important role in the battle of Fallujah, a big town that was totally destroyed, its inhabitants killed or driven out.

Now the Kurdish forces are waging a war against the Sunnis and Turkmens in the north of the country, in order to take hold of the oil-rich areas and the town of Kirkuk, and also to drive out the Sunni settlers who were implanted there by Saddam Hussein.

How can such a war be practically ignored by the media? Simple: everything is swept under the carpet of the "war against terrorism."

But this small war is nothing compared to what may happen in Iraq, once the time comes for deciding the future of the country. The Kurds want complete autonomy, or independence by another name. The Sunnis would not dream of accepting the rule of the Shi'ite majority, which they despise, even if it came about in the name of "democracy." The outbreak of a full-fledged civil war may only be a question of time.

[....]

If the Americans succeed, with Israel's discreet help, in breaking the ruling Syrian dictatorship, there is no assurance at all that it will be replaced by "freedom" and "democracy."

Syria is almost as splintered as Lebanon. There is a strong Druze community in the south, a rebellious Kurdish community in the north, an Alawite community (to which the Assad family belongs) in the west. The Sunni majority is traditionally divided between Damascus in the south and Aleppo in the north. ***The people have resigned themselves to the Assad dictatorship out of fear of what may happen if the regime collapses.***

It is not likely that a full-scale civil war will break out there. But a prolonged situation of total chaos is quite likely. Sharon would be happy, though I am not sure that it would be good for Israel.

[....]

Israel is now openly threatening to bomb the Iranian nuclear installations. Every few days we see on our TV screens the digitally blurred faces of pilots boasting of their readiness to do this at a moment's notice.

The religious fervor of the ayatollahs has been flagging lately, as happens with every victorious revolution after some time. **But a military attack by the "Big Satan" (the U.S.) or the "Little Satan" (us) may set fire to the whole Shi'ite crescent: Iran, south Iraq, and south Lebanon.**

[....]

And here, too. **Israel, too, has recently witnessed a tiny civil war.**

In the Galilean village Marrar, where a Druze and an Arab Christian community have been living side by side for generations, a bloody incident suddenly erupted. ***It was a full-fledged pogrom: the Druze fell upon the Christians, attacking, burning, and destroying.*** By a miracle, nobody was killed. The Christians say that the Israeli police (many of whose members are Druze) stood aside. The immediate reason for the outbreak: some doctored nude pictures on the Internet.

Here are a couple other writings by Avernoy. This [one is interesting](#) but in particular please read "[Israel's coming civil war](#)," it is scary as hell. It was written back in October but it is highly relevant.

Everybody in Israel is talking about the Next War. The most popular TV channel is running a whole series about it. Not another war with the Arabs. Not the nuclear threat from Iran. Not the ongoing bloody confrontation with the Palestinians.

The talk is about the coming civil war.

[....]

The seeds of the civil war were sown when the first settlement was put up in the occupied territories. ***At the time, I told the prime minister in the Knesset: "You are laying a land mine. Some day you will have to dismantle it. As a former soldier, let me warn you that the dismantling of land mines is a very unpleasant job."***

[...]

Many settlers do not yet say so openly and pretend to be insulted when such attitudes are attributed to them, but in fact they are dragged along by the hard core that has already thrown off all the masks. **They challenge not only the policy of the government, but Israeli democracy as such. They declare openly that their aim is to overthrow the State of Law and put in its place the**

State of the Halakha.

A State of Law is subject to the will of the majority, which enacts the laws and amends them as necessary. The State of the Halakha is subject to the Torah, revealed once and for all on Mount Sinai and unchangeable. Only a very small number of eminent rabbis have the authority to interpret the Halakha. ***That is, of course, the opposite of democracy. In any other country, these people would be called fascists. The religious coloration makes no difference.***

The religious-rightist rebels are powerfully motivated. Many of them believe in the Kabbala – not Madonna's fashionable Kabbala, but the real one, which says that today's secular Jews are really Amalekites who succeeded in infiltrating the People of Israel at the time of the exodus from Egypt. God Himself has commanded, as everyone knows, the eradication of Amalek from the face of the earth. **Can there be a more perfect ideological basis for civil war?**

In preparation for the Great Rebellion, the settlers have unveiled their potential. The most eminent rabbis of the "Religious Zionist movement" have declared that the evacuation of a settlement is a sin against God and have called upon the soldiers to refuse orders. Hundreds of rabbis, including the rabbis of the settlements and the rabbis of the religious units in the army, have joined the call.

The voice of the few opponents is being drowned out. They quote the Talmudic saying "the law of the kingdom is law," meaning that every government has to be obeyed, much as Christians are required to render unto Caesar what is Caesar's, etc. But who listens to these "moderate rabbis" now?

The conquest of the army from the inside began long ago. The "arrangement" with the yeshivot (religious schools) that serve in the army as separate units has allowed the entry of a huge Trojan horse. In any confrontation between their rabbis and their army commanders, the soldiers of the "arrangement yeshivot" will obey the rabbis. Worse: for years now, the settlers have systematically penetrated the ranks of the officers' corps, where they now constitute an even more dangerous Trojan horse.

[....]

Altogether, the settlers, together with their close allies in Israel including the yeshivot students, may amount to something like half a million people – a mighty phalanx for rebellion.

Well that's a pretty serious blog post. I don't think I'll have time to add anything else. I didn't really even have time for this, but it is really important stuff to note. Everyone have a great spring break, and hopefully Mordred will offer something to us over that time....

Posted by HongPong at [10:40 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [International Politics](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Media](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [Security](#) , [The White House](#) , [War on Terror](#)

March 03, 2005

What now, Syria?

[Bush orders Syria out of Lebanon](#)

United States President George W. Bush on Wednesday pointedly ordered Syria out of Lebanon, saying the free world is in agreement that Damascus' authority over the political affairs of its neighbor must end now.

He applauded the strong message sent to Syria when Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and French

Foreign Minister Michel Barnier held a joint news conference in London on Tuesday.

"Both of them stood up and said loud and clear to Syria, 'You get your troops and your secret services out of Lebanon so that good democracy has a chance to flourish,'" Bush said at a event on his job training programs at a community college in nearby Maryland.

Also Wednesday, Lebanon's opposition demanded the full withdrawal of Syrian military and intelligence services and the resignation of Lebanese Syrian-backed security chiefs.

I am highly suspicious of this stuff about Syria causing the assassination of this Hariri cat, and I fail to see how people can leap to such conclusions so quickly. Either way it is not a surprise that many Lebanese are tired of the Syrians, but then again Syria is perched in a quiet state of war with Israel, recently interrupted by an Israeli bombing of what they called an Islamic Jihad base, and of course the recent accusations that Devious Syrians were instrumental in the recent suicide bombing. And of course the Iraq thing. So where does Syria go? What are they really doing right now? Why is Lebanon any of our god damn business?

I'll note at this point that Hongpong.com has in fact gotten hits from the Paris of the Middle East... I forget what the ISP was called but it was kind of funny.

News links: Here I have a bunch of links mostly from Lebanon's Daily Star. I would like this set to illustrate the fact that Lebanon has quite an excellent degree of press freedom... not infinite but hey it's there.

[Two weeks of turmoil](#) summarized by the Daily Star. ["People power" brings down cabinet.](#) [History in the making. A good thing?](#) Let's [look at this great Lebanese model](#) or so they say. [Fragile Syria must withdraw.](#) [Electrified youth hope for new beginning.](#) [Saudis demand Syrian withdrawal.](#) [Cheers in Beirut](#) (which you have to admit doesn't happen often).

Thoughtful second [thoughts on Lebanon from Matt Yglesias](#). Keep reading [Juan Cole](#), its good for you.

Some people are highly cynical: [The Cedar Revolution is hollow](#) by Justin Raimondo:

George W. Bush's journalistic sock-puppets are hailing their own hallucinations: what's sweeping the Middle East is not a wave of capital-"D" Democracy, but a tsunami of nationalistic and religious fervor that can only redound against us.

Lebanon's "Cedar Revolution" is a case in point, one that illustrates the entirely illusory nature of the media hype – which is, unsurprisingly, identical to the U.S. government's official line. The official story is that the long-suffering peoples of Lebanon have had enough, and – drunk with the mere promise of the magical elixir of Democracy – are at last rising up, seizing their liberty, and throwing off their Syrian oppressors. It's a pretty story, albeit a bit simple-minded and hackneyed, but there's just one problem: it isn't true.

The reality is that Lebanon has had democracy for quite some time: or, at least, more so than any other Middle Eastern Arab nation. But instead of being a panacea for the country's problems, this relative excess of democracy has merely exacerbated them. Divided into a bewildering array of ethno-religious and political fiefdoms, Lebanon has managed to survive the foibles of majority rule largely by avoiding centralization and devolving power back to the various clans, parties, and religious groups that constitute, in effect, a collection of mini-states.

[.....]

The sudden and quite unexpected resignation of the pro-Syrian Lebanese government – which would have won any vote of confidence in the parliament – is being portrayed as a necessary concession to a rising populist movement patterned after Ukraine's "orange revolution" – but it seems to me it was a very clever ploy. The so-called "opposition" is united by nothing but a common hatred of Syria and a willingness to act on behalf of foreign interests. Once the government is out, however, and the Syrians withdraw to the Bekaa valley, they will be left to fight among themselves – and who can doubt that the communal grudge matches that have afflicted Lebanon for most of her history will reassert themselves in the absence of a stabilizing force?

So that's a few points on the matter. I really can't say what's what about this whole thing. It reeks of manipulation, and as jolly as it might look on TV, we are set for all kinds of problems to unfold...

also of random interest: [sex lies and jeff gannon](#) by justin raimondo...

Posted by HongPong at [08:30 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Iraq](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Security](#) , [The White House](#) , [War on Terror](#)

January 17, 2005

Crushing Babylon and the new intelligence wars: the rise of Black Reconnaissance

A brief break from writing profiles of Minnesota state House and Senate members for the book. I bring you a bit of the past and future wreckage of the Bush3 Administration... Also I have been sort of out of the loop on my usual things this week. Dan Schwartz sent me the Sy Hersh story that I totally missed, and for that I thank him.

If you ever wanted evidence that the Pentagon is a pathologically destructive force bent on destroying the past, present and future of the planet simultaneously, here you go. From the Beginning:

US-led troops using the ancient Iraqi city of Babylon as a base have [damaged and contaminated artifacts dating back thousands of years in one of the most important archeological sites in the world](#), the British Museum said yesterday.

Military vehicles crushed a 2,600-year-old brick pavement, for example, and archeological fragments, including broken bricks stamped by King Nebuchadnezzar II around the same time, were scattered across the site, a museum report said.

The dragons at the Ishtar Gate were marred by cracks and gaps where someone tried to remove their decorative bricks, the paper said.

John Curtis, keeper of the British Museum's Near East department, who was invited by Iraqis to study the site, also found that **large quantities of sand mixed with archeological fragments have been taken from the site to fill military sandbags.**

"This is tantamount to establishing a military camp around the Great Pyramid in Egypt or around Stonehenge in Britain," Curtis said in the report.

In an interview yesterday with Associated Press Television News, Iraq's minister of culture, Mufeed al-Jazairi, said coalition troops in Babylon had used "armored vehicles and helicopters that land and take off freely. In addition to that, the forces also set up other facilities and changes."

He added, "I expect that the archeological city of Babylon has sustained damage, but I don't know exactly the size of such damage."

[...]

In the report, Curtis acknowledged that at first the US presence had helped to protect the site from looters.

But subsequent work, including the decision to cover large areas of the site with gravel brought in from elsewhere to provide parking lots and heliports, was damaging, he said.

Lord Redesdale, an archeologist who heads a parliamentary archeology committee, described the report's findings as "just dreadful."

"Not only is what the American forces are doing damaging the archeology of Iraq, it's actually damaging the cultural heritage of the whole world," he said.

For more than 1,000 years, Babylon was one of the world's premier cities, where King Nebuchadnezzar II built the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, one of the Seven Wonders of the World.

Meanwhile [Seymour Hersh has a whole barrel of info for us about the planned unleashing of the Pentagon to 'prepare the battle space' around Iran](#). "Prepare the battle space" was one of my favorite creepy euphemisms for the strategic bombing campaigns they undertook just before the invasion of Iraq.

Ah yes, the weapons of mass destruction were never found. So why did Fallujah become an all-important social engineering project by force? Was the intent of this circus to demonstrate national will rather than secure the U.S. from actually dangerous materials? Yeah, of course it was. But it had something to do with Iran too. Before the war we were [apparently going to use Iran against Saudi Arabia \(yes, that seems to be why we marched into the Mesopotamian mousetrap\)](#) but now it's all gone to hell, and yet another brilliant scheme is At Hand.

Anyhow [back to Hersh](#): the Bush Administration intends to attack the Iranian nuclear project complexes, and in fact has been running covert operations within Iran for quite a while. Also Defense Undersecretary of Batshit Madness Douglas Feith (not to be confused with [Undersecretary of Fanatical Crusaderism William Boykin](#)) is closely coordinating with the Israeli military to figure out which things to try and blow up.

Clearly this is yet another scheme which will unfold perfectly and only involve propaganda that isn't designed to mislead the American public. These are serious people here....

I thought that I would have some more stories for you today but I feel that this stuff is big enough to justify its own post. Yes, the national security state we all know and love is reconstituting itself in a new and more uncontrolled form. This is an exceedingly dangerous problem for those of us living Inside the Asylum.

I also saw some stories about how the Pentagon is going to conduct its own preemptive intelligence covert wars, operations, whatever the hell you call it these days. In this article it is called 'black reconnaissance' as a way of distancing it from the beloved old CIA label of 'covert operations.' Read Mr. Hersh... Sy, I'm sorry I quoted like half your story, but this one is too important not to enter into the record:

The President and his national-security advisers have consolidated control over the military and intelligence communities' strategic analyses and covert operations to a degree unmatched since the rise of the post-Second World War national-security state. Bush has an aggressive and ambitious agenda for using that control—against the mullahs in Iran and against targets in the ongoing war on terrorism—during his second term. The C.I.A. will continue to be downgraded, and the agency will increasingly serve, as one government consultant with close ties to the Pentagon put it, as “facilitators” of policy emanating from President Bush and Vice-President Dick Cheney. This process is well under way.

[....]

“This is a war against terrorism, and Iraq is just one campaign. The Bush Administration is looking at this as a huge war zone,” the former high-level intelligence official told me. “Next, we’re going to have the Iranian campaign. We’ve declared war and the bad guys, wherever they are, are the enemy. This is the last hurrah—we’ve got four years, and want to come out of this saying we won the war on terrorism.”

[....]

Rumsfeld will become even more important during the second term. In interviews with past and present intelligence and military officials, I was told that the agenda had been determined before the Presidential election, and much of it would be Rumsfeld’s responsibility. The war on terrorism would be expanded, and effectively placed under the Pentagon’s control. The President has signed a series of findings and executive orders authorizing secret commando groups and other Special Forces units to conduct covert operations against suspected terrorist targets in as many as ten nations in the Middle East and South Asia.

The President’s decision enables Rumsfeld to run the operations off the books—free from legal restrictions imposed on the C.I.A. Under current law, all C.I.A. covert activities overseas must be authorized by a Presidential finding and reported to the Senate and House intelligence committees. (The laws were enacted after a series of scandals in the nineteen-seventies involving C.I.A. domestic spying and attempted assassinations of foreign leaders.) **“The Pentagon doesn’t feel obligated to report any of this to Congress,” the former high-level intelligence official said. “They don’t even call it ‘covert ops’—it’s too close to the C.I.A. phrase. In their view, it’s ‘black reconnaissance.’** They’re not even going to tell the cincs”—the regional American military commanders-in-chief.

[....]

In my interviews, I was repeatedly told **that the next strategic target was Iran.** “Everyone is

saying, 'You can't be serious about targeting Iran. Look at Iraq,'" the former intelligence official told me. "But they say, 'We've got some lessons learned—not militarily, but how we did it politically. We're not going to rely on agency pissants.' No loose ends, and that's why the C.I.A. is out of there." [.....]

There are many military and diplomatic experts who dispute the notion that military action, on whatever scale, is the right approach. Shahram Chubin, an Iranian scholar who is the director of research at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy, told me, "It's a fantasy to think that there's a good American or Israeli military option in Iran." He went on, "The Israeli view is that this is an international problem. 'You do it,' they say to the West. 'Otherwise, our Air Force will take care of it.'" In 1981, the Israeli Air Force destroyed Iraq's Osirak reactor, setting its nuclear program back several years. But the situation now is both more complex and more dangerous, Chubin said. The Osirak bombing "drove the Iranian nuclear-weapons program underground, to hardened, dispersed sites," he said. "You can't be sure after an attack that you'll get away with it. The U.S. and Israel would not be certain whether all the sites had been hit, or how quickly they'd be rebuilt. Meanwhile, they'd be waiting for an Iranian counter-attack that could be military or terrorist or diplomatic. Iran has long-range missiles and ties to Hezbollah, which has drones—you can't begin to think of what they'd do in response."

[...]

The Administration has been conducting secret reconnaissance missions inside Iran at least since last summer. Much of the focus is on the accumulation of intelligence and targeting information on Iranian nuclear, chemical, and missile sites both declared and suspected. The goal is to identify and isolate three dozen, and perhaps more, such targets that could be destroyed by precision strikes and short-term commando raids. "The civilians in the Pentagon want to go into Iran and destroy as much of the military infrastructure as possible," the government consultant with close ties to the Pentagon told me. [....] The American task force, aided by the information from Pakistan, has been penetrating eastern Iran from Afghanistan in a hunt for underground installations. The task-force members, or their locally recruited agents, secreted remote detection devices—known as sniffers—capable of sampling the atmosphere for radioactive emissions and other evidence of nuclear-enrichment programs.

[....]

There has also been close, and largely unacknowledged, cooperation with Israel. The government consultant with ties to the Pentagon said that the Defense Department civilians, under the leadership of Douglas Feith, have been working with Israeli planners and consultants to develop and refine potential nuclear, chemical-weapons, and missile targets inside Iran. (After Osirak, Iran situated many of its nuclear sites in remote areas of the east, in an attempt to keep them out of striking range of other countries, especially Israel. Distance no longer lends such protection, however: Israel has acquired three submarines capable of launching cruise missiles and has equipped some of its aircraft with additional fuel tanks, putting Israeli F-16I fighters within the range of most Iranian targets.)

"They believe that about three-quarters of the potential targets can be destroyed from the air, and a quarter are too close to population centers, or buried too deep, to be targeted," the consultant said. Inevitably, he added, **some suspicious sites need to be checked out by American or Israeli commando teams**—in on-the-ground surveillance—before being targeted.

The Pentagon's contingency plans for a broader invasion of Iran are also being updated. Strategists at the headquarters of the U.S. Central Command, in Tampa, Florida, have been asked to revise the military's war plan, providing for a maximum ground and air invasion of Iran. Updating the plan makes sense, whether or not the Administration intends to act, because the geopolitics of the region have changed dramatically in the last three years. Previously, an American invasion force would have had to enter Iran by sea, by way of the Persian Gulf or the Gulf of Oman; now troops could move in on the ground, from Afghanistan or Iraq. Commando units and other assets could be introduced through new bases in the Central Asian republics.

[....]

The immediate goals of the attacks would be to destroy, or at least temporarily derail, Iran's ability to go nuclear. **But there are other, equally purposeful, motives at work. The government consultant told me that the hawks in the Pentagon, in private discussions, have been urging a limited attack on Iran because they believe it could lead to a toppling of the religious leadership.** "Within the soul of Iran there is a struggle between secular nationalists and reformers, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the fundamentalist Islamic movement," the consultant told me. "The minute the aura of invincibility which the mullahs enjoy is shattered, and with it the ability to hoodwink the West, the Iranian regime will collapse"—like the former Communist regimes in Romania, East Germany, and the Soviet Union. Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz share that belief, he said.

"The idea that an American attack on Iran's nuclear facilities would produce a popular uprising is extremely illinformed," said Flynt Leverett, a Middle East scholar who worked on the National Security Council in the Bush Administration. "You have to understand that the nuclear ambition in Iran is supported across the political spectrum, and Iranians will perceive attacks on these sites as attacks on their ambitions to be a major regional player and a modern nation that's technologically sophisticated." Leverett, who is now a senior fellow at the Saban Center for Middle East Policy, at the Brookings Institution, warned that an American attack, if it takes place, "will produce an Iranian backlash against the United States and a rallying around the regime."

[.....]

Two former C.I.A. clandestine officers, Vince Cannistraro and Philip Giraldi, who publish *Intelligence Brief*, a newsletter for their business clients, reported last month on the existence of a broad counter-terrorism Presidential finding that permitted the Pentagon "to operate unilaterally in a number of countries where there is a perception of a clear and evident terrorist threat. . . . A number of the countries are friendly to the U.S. and are major trading partners. Most have been cooperating in the war on terrorism." The two former officers listed some of the countries—Algeria, Sudan, Yemen, Syria, and Malaysia. (I was subsequently told by the former high-level intelligence official that Tunisia is also on the list.)

Giraldi, who served three years in military intelligence before joining the C.I.A., said that he was troubled by the military's expanded covert assignment. **"I don't think they can handle the cover," he told me. "They've got to have a different mind-set.** They've got to handle new roles and get into foreign cultures and learn how other people think. If you're going into a village and shooting people, it doesn't matter," Giraldi added. "But if you're running operations that involve finesse and sensitivity, the military can't do it. Which is why these kind of operations were always run out of the agency." I was told that many Special Operations officers also have serious misgivings.

Rumsfeld and two of his key deputies, **Stephen Cambone, the Under-secretary of Defense for Intelligence, and Army Lieutenant General William G. (Jerry) Boykin, will be part of the chain of command for the new commando operations. [and they're fucking crazy -- Dan]**

[.....]

"I'm conflicted about the idea of operating without congressional oversight," the Pentagon adviser said. "But I've been told that there will be oversight down to the specific operation." A second Pentagon adviser agreed, with a significant caveat. "There are reporting requirements," he said. "But to execute the finding we don't have to go back and say, 'We're going here and there.' No nitty-gritty detail and no micromanagement."

The legal questions about the Pentagon's right to conduct covert operations without informing Congress have not been resolved. "It's a very, very gray area," said Jeffrey H. Smith, a West Point graduate who served as the C.I.A.'s general counsel in the mid-nineteen-nineties. "Congress believes it voted to include all such covert activities carried out by the armed forces. The military says, 'No, the things we're doing are not intelligence actions under the statute but necessary military steps authorized by the President, as Commander-in-Chief, to **prepare the battlefield.**'" Referring to his days at the C.I.A., Smith added, "We were always careful not to use the armed forces

in a covert action without a Presidential finding. The Bush Administration has taken a much more aggressive stance."

[....]

In some cases, according to the Pentagon advisers, local citizens could be recruited and asked to join up with guerrillas or terrorists. This could potentially involve **organizing and carrying out combat operations, or even terrorist activities.**

[....]

The new rules will enable the Special Forces community to set up what it calls "action teams" in the target countries overseas which can be used to find and eliminate terrorist organizations. **"Do you remember the right-wing execution squads in El Salvador?" the former high-level intelligence official asked me, referring to the military-led gangs that committed atrocities in the early nineteen-eighties. "We founded them and we financed them," he said. "The objective now is to recruit locals in any area we want. And we aren't going to tell Congress about it."** A former military officer, who has knowledge of the Pentagon's commando capabilities, said, "We're going to be riding with the bad boys."

[....]

There was pressure from the White House, too. A former C.I.A. clandestine-services officer told me that, in the months after the resignation of the agency's director George Tenet, in June, 2004, the White House began "coming down critically" on analysts in the C.I.A.'s Directorate of Intelligence (D.I.) and **demanding "to see more support for the Administration's political position."** Porter Goss, Tenet's successor, engaged in what the recently retired C.I.A. official described as a **"political purge" in the D.I. Among the targets were a few senior analysts who were known to write dissenting papers that had been forwarded to the White House. The recently retired C.I.A. official said, "The White House carefully reviewed the political analyses of the D.I. so they could sort out the apostates from the true believers."** Some senior analysts in the D.I. have turned in their resignations—quietly, and without revealing the extent of the disarray.

[....]

"Rummy's plan was to get a compromise in the bill in which the Pentagon keeps its marbles and the C.I.A. loses theirs," the former high-level intelligence official told me. "Then all the pieces of the puzzle fall in place. He gets authority for covert action that is not attributable, the ability to directly task national-intelligence assets"—including the many intelligence satellites that constantly orbit the world.

"Rumsfeld will no longer have to refer anything through the government's intelligence wringer," the former official went on. "The intelligence system was designed to put competing agencies in competition. What's missing will be the dynamic tension that insures everyone's priorities—in the C.I.A., the D.O.D., the F.B.I., and even the Department of Homeland Security—are discussed. **The most insidious implication of the new system is that Rumsfeld no longer has to tell people what he's doing so they can ask, 'Why are you doing this?' or 'What are your priorities?' Now he can keep all of the mattress mice out of it."**

Posted by HongPong at [02:18 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Afghanistan](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [Security](#) , [The White House](#) , [War on Terror](#)

December 31, 2004

All in one year

It is finally the end of 2004 and things look set for another strange year ahead of us. I have not had much time or impulse to write on the site for the last few days. I am doing some more web work for Andrew at Computer Zone Consulting. Andrew is himself Sri Lankan, and I saw him for the first time in a few weeks on Monday as the news rolled in from the tsunami disaster zone.

It's a hard thing to figure out the scale of this thing, to put it in a relative view that you can even comprehend. All those videos they've been playing on the cable news constantly—people washing and twirling away—is so incredibly unnerving and weird.

So anyhow, I'm trying not to get down about this whole mess, because the world is a messy place and we all end up muddling along no matter what. Of course, things are going weirdly in other places. By the end of January we'll have a sense of whether or not the situation in Iraq is going to screech off and out of control, or else fizzle down. Meanwhile in Washington they are getting hunkered down for another round of the Amazing Bush Administration and its Circus of Follies.

So it's a season of change for everyone now. I'm looking back at the things I have done and seen this year, and I think overall I did pretty well, but I still don't know what I ought to do when I graduate. It's kind of amazing that it's already time to get out of college. I have enjoyed the experience, but I do regret not studying abroad somewhere, as I think it would have given me a clean slate and fresh approach instead of those pointless months here... specifically the difficult experience of the Dupre Single days.

This year was a good one, though. I learned a lot of things about how the world worked, I talked with a lot of strange people. When I look back, I think that this was very much a breakthrough year in terms of just being willing to go out in the world and see what happens, for an often skittish person like myself.

January 2004 was pointless, so I guess we should skip to February. Back then, I advanced the story of the war, as I see it, in a worthwhile way, when [I asked John Kerry during his visit to Macalester](#) if the intelligence distortions (meaning the fake WMD and al Qaeda stories, mainly) should be considered a criminal matter akin to Iran-Contra. Kerry gave me one of those classic two-paragraph answers, but I would say, looking back almost a year on it, that he probably gave me the wrong answer.

My view of the matter is that Ahmed Chalabi and the neo-cons consciously knew they were providing bad information about Iraq, and hence deceived everyone in the government, and in particular our elected representatives in Congress. Kerry said that he had 'no evidence' that it was illegal, but he never really pursued the issue as a campaign matter, I suppose in particular because his campaign acted self-consciously 'tainted' by his position on the war early on.

But that's the key thing about it: Kerry could have weaseled out of responsibility for the war vote by saying that 'we wuz lied to!!' and provided

the American public an entertaining tale about Chalabi and the rest of them, which would have drawn more attention to the malevolent incompetents running the Pentagon, forcing the frame of debate back to Bush's systematic deception and the war's managerial disasters. By the end of the campaign, Kerry was alleging that they were 'playing games' with intelligence, but that doesn't really mean anything to Joe Sixpack. They should have given us the spy story. It would have been cool.

Afterwards, in March [I went to London for a week](#) and stayed on the floor of Nick Petersen's flat. This came just a couple days after the Madrid bombings, and I thought that security would be escalated all over the place. It was my first trip to Europe and I made the most of it. I didn't obsess with seeing tourist attractions, and instead tried to wander all through town, a project assisted by Nick's encyclopedic knowledge of London architecture. On the first night, Victoria came back from her apparently horrible school in Wales. Vic's mom and siblings had also come to London for break, and they had a fabulous suite at the County Hall (Hotel?). The room had a little balcony high above the river Thames, and from there I could look right across the river at Parliament and the clock tower, as that huge Ferris wheel thing turned overhead. I saw the House of Commons meet, I went to the Prime Meridian and some museums...

Then I hopped the Eurostar (?) train to Paris, and wandered around there for a day, eating a Royale with Cheese on the banks of the Seine, and I even went in and saw the Mona Lisa and other places in the Louvre. Emi showed me all over town, and it was just a damn awesome place to be, like something out of a movie of someone else's life (this sense was helped along when I watched that recent Jack Nicholson movie, which ends in Paris, on the flight back to Chicago).

The summer was an interesting venture. I took an electronic art and journalism law classes at the University of Minnesota. Made some friends, picked up some useful information and put together a sweet DVD of many of my better photographs and videos.

After that stuff ended, [I went to the site of the Republican National Convention](#) with Dan Schned and Peter Gartrell. It was at times the most overwhelming experience I've ever had. When the police officer pulled his hat off to show us the photos of his friend who died at the WTC, or when the girl from Iowa showed us a video of anarchists setting the dragon on fire right next to her, or when we stood on a corner as AIPAC delegates to the convention streamed past, happily celebrating the renewal of the Likud-Republican political alliance that I so loathe. Or when we tracked down the bar where Dick Cheney was drinking, or when we chanted in the streets in an unlicensed march....

So, then, was it worth it? Was it worth the hassle, the arrests, the gasoline expended, just to go out there and watch people wave some signs around? You know, I think it was. I think that it helped me to ground some of the symbols that they manipulate in our minds—the WTC site, for one. These things become easier to understand once you see them, stripped of the media frames, the pretexts and moral arguments. Just to stand there and smoke a cigarette, then another cigarette, in the great important Negative Space in south Manhattan, helps to assert some control over the symbols they wield. It helped me settle the issue somehow.

After that we went down into the WTC subway stop. I walked over to one of the support beams and rubbed my finger on a bolt encrusted with sparkling reddish-brown dust. I rubbed the dust between my fingers and smelled it, a certain, dusty, burned smell, the torched synthetic substances from the offices, mixed with window and beam particles, had plunged down, and puffed into the tunnels under the city where no amount of cleaning could ever eradicate the traces.

I saw Bush himself a few days before the trip, as he made a campaign appearance in Hudson, Wisconsin. I saw him get off the bus and shake people's hands, and I could finally see what is so difficult to discern from home: that man is just the front face for a whole vast system of domination and control. It's a much larger problem than just that man. It's the administrative deception, the suppression of agencies like the EPA. We make the mistake of projecting perceived personality traits into understanding the political problems we have, without understanding how much of the issue is organizational.

School went pretty well this semester. I actually did something that I thought might not happen: I had a [conversation with a really quite devious neoconservative](#) that came to Macalester. For quite a while I wondered what might happen if I encountered Michael Ledeen at the Roundtable, but when I suddenly did, it was a surprise because he hadn't even given his speech yet. I ended up talking with the odd character over lunch, a bizarre twist. I gamely tried to suggest to him that the Iranians weren't determined to nuke Jerusalem the moment they developed the Bomb, but Ledeen would have none of it. A quixotic sort of notion to try convincing this guy that we shouldn't lose our cool about Iran, but of course he would never change his mind.

I learned a key thing about the people that run things from this encounter: They are very moody people. They are not well-adjusted low-key technocratic sorts of people. They are grim and weird. Ledeen himself admitted a manic depressive condition, and I think that whole kind of thing

is what drives them to make their crazy decisions as much as any kind of Evil Agenda we might try to fathom from their actions.

And then the election. In some ways I barely want to hear about it, to hear about how such a vast section of the American public wholeheartedly embraced absurd lies about the situation, and how despite a sense that we were careening out of control, we were still destined to end up with these ridiculous cats for another four years.

I guess a sense of needing to refute that 'destiny' led me to place a shred of hope in the election-challenge folks, although of course it offends my sense of what it means to live in a democracy when I hear of a single vote damaged, lost, vanished or even *potentially* manipulated by our crappy system. At this point, we are hearing some [interesting stuff out of Florida about Congressman Feeney](#) and the usual Florida corruption, but it seems like we will never hear much of an articulation of how evil it was in Ohio when election supervisors implemented a strategy to [direct voting machines away from heavily Democratic precincts](#) into the suburbs. Is that really what we can accept as an element of a 'legitimate' election?

To round out this year end ramble, I would say that I am still much the same sort of person as when I began this year, but I think that I managed to advance my view of the world by talking straight to some of the important people, going into hazardous places like New York, and trying to express my own views of the world via this website, the campus paper, and just talking with people. I think I've tried to criss-cross some interesting slices of Americana this year and listen to what people have told me. As time has gone past, it seems more clear to me than ever that I still have a very long ways to go before things make sense to me.

The good thing is that right now I feel less like giving up than before. I don't have a sense that my energy is evaporating, but with the end of school coming around I have to try to pull together a new plan. Not easy for anyone... There is still a world of opportunities out there. I will have to spend a while poking around...

So here's to 2004. A year I got through by taking some chances and going new places. As for 2005, that's the year when things really better start clicking.

Posted by HongPong at [08:34 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) [Relating to Campaign 2004](#) , [From Abroad](#) , [Ground Zero or Bust](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Mac Weekly](#) , [Macalester College](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [The White House](#) , [Tracking election irregularities](#) , [War on Terror](#)

December 10, 2004

Murder at Florida motel, an Iran-Contra arms merchant, illegal aliens at NASA, a prototype vote rigging machine and other Exciting Tales

Its the middle of finals time, and I was delayed in putting this post together for the better part of the week. Here it is, hodgepodgy and overgrown with intrigue...

Now, kiddos, it's back to tinfoil hat land for another installment of Tracking Election Irregularities, and we've got some great tales tonight. Sit back and hear of the prototype vote hacking machine that a Florida congressman allegedly ordered built, and hear more about offshore banking—and how the CIA may be so angry about Bush's purges that they're revealing some of the parapolitical financial arrangements used to finance their schemes.

(A quick note: breaking the programmer story caused **the BradBlog site to get overwhelmed with internet traffic, so it got bumped over to BradBlogtoo.blogspot.com** for now. more below...)

Do not assume these stories are credible. First, take them as examples of the kinds of ways the world might work. Then look at it as audacious journalism. Then, and only then, should you start on the **what-ifs**. and there are a lot of what-ifs tonight. Smoke the pipe of conspiracy, and get high on its strands of intrigue... Damn it, I'm feeling pretentious tonight.

First item for the hodgepodge: A contributing writer, Larisa Alexandrovna, at a site called RAW STORY (reposted by BlueLemur) found [a couple news story references to 21 voting machines in good old Broward County, Florida](#) getting rolled out of polling sites—after several days of voting—and possibly back to some local voting administration center. Apparently these machines may have been recalled because they showed the wrong votes for buttons touched. (story via [DailyKos diary](#))

The RAW STORY writer's catch is that there ought to be some kind of chain of custody for these machines, and we ought to be able to find out what their serial numbers were, if they did exist. How many votes might be recovered from such machines? Were they wildly statistically skewed for Bush, as many other errors have been?

Who knows? Either way, she tried to pester the AP wire journalist that wrote the original story, who said they were "moving on." The *Miami Herald* doesn't seem to care much either. In the end, she had to post this story, incomplete, [another frustrated path](#) on the quest to find out what happened within the Black Boxes.

"Twenty-one touch-screen voting machines in Broward County were replaced because of technical problems, said Gisela Salas, the county's deputy supervisor of elections. At least one of the machines

had shown votes cast for the wrong candidates.”

This striking sentence in the fourteenth paragraph of a Nov. 4 AP wire story was merely the accidental starting point for [RAW STORY](#) research into voting irregularities in Broward County, Florida.

I came across Ms. Salas’ statement by sheer accident while researching another story. Twenty-one voting machines being removed and replaced on Election Day would seem to merit more than a four sentence description. I wondered as to the process by which these machines were taken and replaced. Who supervised this process?

This brief mention in the AP was all I could immediately find. Documented in an article entitled “State lauds performance of touch-screen machines; critics uncertain,” other voting irregularities were briefly mentioned with the same terse detail. These references are delivered as a matter of fact, as if most of us should know that large-scale voting glitches occur and are corrected instantaneously.

How then are we to correct these issues for future elections? I wondered.

After some thought, I contacted an Associated Press editor not involved with the Nov. 4 article, who quickly dismissed me as “paranoid,” though I neither discussed the outcome of the election or commented on anything other than the 21 machines allegedly removed in Broward County.

NOW let's throw in some more colorful tales about these very sorts of tech specialists. This story is caroming around the Internet because, well, it's a darn good one. If, hypothetically, you were spoofing an election, you would need to pay off a lot of technical specialists, and for that matter, you would need source code designed to be compiled into voting machines that could manipulate the numbers. ([Daily Kos :: Sworn affidavit: vote-rigging prototype developed for FLA congressman](#))

Fortunately, some programmer dude has surfaced claiming that a Florida Republican congressman paid him to make this code back in 2000, and now he's pissed about it. This story stretches off into all kinds of bizarre directions. The programmer has a website, [JustAFlyOnTheWall.com](#).

Another election held and another election stolen. In 2000 Bush stole the election by restricting the ability to vote by those people most likely to vote against him. The abuses were wide spread and the Democrats and other groups that believe in each individuals right to vote put together an impressive attempt to make sure that every individual that wanted to vote would not be turned away. Everywhere you went there was booths where new voters could register. Celebrities in commercials were urging voters to get out and vote. Poll watchers were placed in polling stations across the country to guarantee that every voter would not be turned away on any technicality.

What these well meaning groups failed to account for was that they were defending the 2000 election fixing plan and not taking into account that this election would be decided not by voters but by the rise of technology. **Every one might be allowed to vote but their vote, and your vote made no difference at all. The programmers had already decided who would win and by how much.**

Prior to this election I personally sent out information to the media which should have been provided to the electorate. It was not. The biggest turnout in history had no chance to win this election or any other unless the programmers of the voting machine allowed it. I believe they will allow it less and less as the machines control the elections and the Republicans control the machines.

This is not speculation. It is not a rant designed to make the losers feel better. I speak from first hand information and unless people stand up and act, democracy in this country is ended.

While employed at Wong Enterprises, Congressman Feeney had requested if Wong could write a voting program that could alter the vote and be undetectable. As the technology advisor, I explained that as long as the source code was provided and complied under supervision, code which altered the vote and was undetectable could not be built. Another problem would be that no one would trust a program that provided for no paper trail to substantiate its accuracy. When the vote was flipped the paper trail could easily detect the fraud.

This request was early in my exposure to Congressman Feeney, so I was not familiar with what a total piece of crap he truly was. My assumption was that he was worried that the other side (the Democrats) would introduce voting machines which could manipulate the vote. Mrs. Wong volunteered that we (meaning me) could put together a quick prototype that he could view and show others.

I have recreated that prototype and posted it at <http://www.justaflyonthewall.com/votefraudprogram.htm>. It is essentially the same code that I built for the vote fraud demo for Congressman Feeney. You will notice that by clicking on the correct hidden spots on the screen, the vote will flip so that the Republican candidate will receive fifty one percent of the vote. The hot spots make it possible to flip the vote as often as necessary yet it will never fire accidentally so as to avoid detection. My prototype was actually very simplistic. The actual sequence to flip the vote could be as complex as the programmer wished or even to operate automatically. In cases when the Republican is already leading, the vote is left as is. I built the program to demonstrate that with proper supervision that the election machines would be safe. The code would not be able to be hidden.

The next day I complete the prototype and presented it to Mrs. Wong. I stressed how the tampering could be detected. She quickly set me straight as the to true intention. Her exact words were "If we can't hide the manipulation, we won't get the contract the program is needed to control the south Florida vote." Another confirmation of why I needed to get a different job. I would not build something that would defraud every voter in this country. Even better, I knew that as long as the election supervisors used proper computer procedures, no one else would or could either.

What I did not anticipate was that this country would allow the placement of voting machines where the source code was not provided. The programs were pre-compiled (you have no idea what is in them or what hidden triggers exist), and where no paper trail would be required to check their accuracy. Any moron could build a voting program that could flip the vote under those circumstances and no amount of testing could discover the deception.

The [plausibility of the idea of this vote hacking software has been basically confirmed](#).

There are two main branches to the story. [BradBlog has a more circumscribed look at it](#), having interviewed the dude in question a couple times, and offering a PDF version of his sworn affidavit that Congressman Feeley paid him to write the software.

Then, on the other hand, mysterious investigator [Wayne Madsen writing on OnlineJournal.com has asserted that this is just an element of a complex scheme](#) involving offshore banks tied to Iran-Contra schemer and [Richard Perle's dinner friend \(as Sy Hersh reported\)](#) Adnan Khashoggi. Madsen's

exciting claim is that the CIA is really pissed off that the Bushites are trying to purge their agency, so CIA partisans have deliberately chosen to reveal part of their sketchy shadow finance network in an effort to smoke the Bushes. And they're showing this network to.... taa-daa, Wayne Madsen.

In other words, let me restate. I am not asserting that the above two paragraphs are true. In fact, Madsen's writings, the last round which I posted earlier, seem to fit like puzzle pieces into a classic paranoid conspiracy tale, like an Iran-Contra projected forward into our present context. It all sounds a little too slick to me so far. Nevertheless, I always enjoy a good baroque conspiracy yarn, and [this one doesn't disappoint](#).

The manipulation of computer voting machines in the recent presidential election and the funding of programmers who were involved in the operation are tied to an intricate web of shady off-shore financial trusts and companies, shady espionage operatives, Republican Party politicians close to the Bush family, and National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) contract vehicles.

An exhaustive investigation has turned up a link between current Florida Republican Representative Tom Feeney, a customized Windows-based program to suppress Democratic votes on touch screen voting machines, a Florida computer services company with whom Feeney worked as a general counsel and registered lobbyist while he was Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives, and top level officials of the Bush administration.

According to a notarized affidavit signed by Clint Curtis, while he was employed by the NASA Kennedy Space Center contractor, Yang Enterprises, Inc., during 2000, Feeney solicited him to write a program to "control the vote." At the time, Curtis was of the opinion that the program was to be used for preventing fraud in the in the 2002 election in Palm Beach County, Florida. His mind was changed, however, when the true intentions of Feeney became clear: the computer program was going to be used to suppress the Democratic vote in counties with large Democratic registrations.

According to Curtis, Feeney and other top brass at Yang Enterprises, a company located in a three-story building in Oviedo, Florida, wanted the prototype written in Visual Basic 5 (VB.5) in Microsoft Windows and the end-product designed to be portable across different Unix-based vote tabulation systems and to be "undetectable" to voters and election supervisors.

Yang, an engineering and computer services company subcontracted to NASA prime contractors like Lockheed Martin, was founded in 1986 by Dr. Tyng-Lin (Tim) Yang. Granted minority-owned "Section 8A" and woman-owned preferential status by the U.S. government, Yang's clients also include the Florida Department of Transportation (DOT). Yang's President, Li-Woan (Lee) Yang, is Tim Yang's wife. Feeney was the registered agent for another Yang company, Y & H Greens, Inc., a company that was dissolved in 1988 and operated from the Yangs' residence on Merritt Island. The Yangs also serve as co-trustees for an entity called Yang of Merritt Island, Ltd., founded on January 31, 2000, and also run from their residence.

In the autumn of 1999, Curtis, who served as a sort of technology adviser for Yang, first became aware of Feeney's interest in election rigging. Curtis said at one meeting, Feeney "bragged that he could reduce the minority vote and deliver the election to 'George.'" At the same meeting, according to Curtis, Feeney said he had "implemented a list that would eliminate thousands of voters that would vote for Democratic candidates" and that "a proper placement of police patrols could further reduce the black vote by as much as 25 percent."

[CANNONFIRE: Exposed: Funding vote fraud -- a "five star" investigation](#)
Digests the Wayne Madsen story. Don't know who [Cannonfire is](#), but they are following along further.

[OffshoreBusiness.com](#) has got interesting stuff on the shadow financing.

More from [Bob Fittrakis in Ohio](#). [Suppression: STEALING VOTES IN OHIO URBAN AREAS](#). what happened in Columbus, Ohio?

Minor details for the obsessed Data tables from Ohio precincts, reflecting on the changes in registered voters etc. [RICHARD HAYES PHILLIPS : uncounted votes](#). comment from [John Allen paulos](#). Also [we got Warren County registration stuff here as well](#). Onward....

Posted by HongPong at [09:45 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [The White House](#) , [Tracking election irregularities](#)

December 06, 2004

Stratfor chief provides key links to Chalabi/fake WMD intelligence/Office of Special Plans story: Iran, indeed!

I got several books from Amazon this weekend that distracted me from the much-belated homework that is increasing before finals time. I started reading [George Friedman's "America's Secret War,"](#) an unparalleled tome of wisdom about the late great War on Terror, intelligence agencies and what I'd like to talk about today: *how the Bush administration knowingly sold false intelligence, mainly provided by Ahmed Chalabi, mostly about WMD, to the American public.*

Now you might say, "That's old news" or "What? Chalabi lied?!" but this particular book is different, because Friedman is one of the founders of [STRATFOR](#), an amazing organization kind of like a 'private CIA' that sells intelligence (strategic forecasting) to businesses and whoever else. They [provide a free page of information every week](#), and it is always interesting. (Right now it's all about the Ukraine stuff)

Anyhow, Friedman's book turns a lot of things inside out for a more rational view of what exactly has propelled the U.S. to invade Iraq. It stresses how the *points of view of various intelligence agencies* are very important to understanding how events unfold. Fortunately, they've got a lot of the inside dirt on this.

The book's jacket claims to address "the real reasons behind George W. Bush's invasion of Iraq, and how WMD became the cover for a much deeper game." I have been one of those folks who believed that the WMD stuff was so overtly fake that someone should go to prison about it, but Friedman lays

out how the guys in the Pentagon's Office of Special Plans basically knew this stuff was baloney, but sold it anyway.

The real reason we invaded, according to the book, was to cajole the Saudi government into cracking down on the Al Qaeda movement thoroughly in its midst. However, this had to be covered up because the American public wouldn't support that. Blockquoth Friedman (p 250-1):

Iran wanted the United States to invade Iraq. It did everything to induce the United States to do so. Its strategy was to provide the United States with intelligence that would persuade the United States that the invasion was both practical and necessary. There were many intelligence channels operating between Teheran and the United States, but the single most important was Ahmed Chalabi, the Defense Department's candidate for President of Iraq. Chalabi... was the head of the Iraqi National Council, which provided key intelligence to the United states on Iraq, including on WMD. **But what it did not provide the U.S. was most important: intelligence on Iranian operations in Iraq or on Iraqi preparations for a guerrilla war. Chalabi made it look easy. That's what the Iranians wanted.**

The primary vector for Chalabi's information was not the CIA, but the [Pentagon's Office of Special Plans] under Abe Shulsky. OSP could not have missed Chalabi's Iranian ties, nor could they have believed the positive intelligence he was giving them. But OSP and Shulsky were playing a deeper game. These were old Cold Warriors. For them, the key to the collapse of the Soviet Union was the American alliance with China. Splitting the enemy was the way to go, and the fault line in the Islamic world was the Sunni-Shiite split. The United States, from their point of view, was not playing the fool by accommodating Iran's wishes on Iraq. Apart from all of its other virtues, they felt that the invasion would create a confluence of interests between the U.S. and Iran, which would have enormously more value in the long run than any problems posed by the Iraqi invasion. **From the standpoint of OSP—and therefore of Wolfowitz and Rumsfeld—Chalabi's intelligence or lack of it was immaterial. The key was alignment with Iran as another lever against Saudi Arabia.** And there were more immediate effects as well...

You can judge for yourself whether [Dr. Khalidi's statements to me about Chalabi, the Office of Special Plans and the faked intelligence](#) in an interview last October fit into this framework or not. I think the interview still holds up real well. Friedman adds that "the entire point of the WMD rationale was to put France in a position where it could not reasonably object to the undertaking [i.e. the war]. (p 272)" There's more to how they actually argued the case to the American public—an interesting thing for any rhetorician to look at—but for now this is what I feel like typing in.

Well, that's really more of a metal helmet than a tinfoil hat theory. Coming up in a sec, we will return to Votergate. In the meantime, now you finally know a key underpinning of the war's rationale. Not bad, eh? I'll talk more on this book later, to be sure!

Posted by [HongPong](#) at [09:44 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Iraq](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [Security](#) , [War on Terror](#)

November 28, 2004

Blarg...Sunday homework time for pipelines

Sorry to disappoint but I can't really post anything today, except maybe late at night. The radio station is closed down for the weekend, so I don't have a show this evening. That's really a good thing because I don't have the time right now.

Today I am working on a paper about pipelines and pipeline politics. As an experiment I put together a few [Wiki pages about pipelines](#). I have no idea if you might find these interesting, but energy politics is a real big deal so it might be worth looking at. There is some interesting stuff about the Caspian Sea, an [article by Seymour Hersh about Mobil oil](#) doing shady things in Kazakhstan, etc. I should say that this paper is a lit review about the subject, so I'm not vouching for the accuracy of any of these materials. They are intended to provide different perspectives etc.

Also I have some stuff about [pipeline plots in Afghanistan](#) and the new deals between those old bugbears [Iran and China](#). And [The Balkans](#).

I am sorry I haven't updated the ['Tracking election irregularities' HongWiki page](#) lately... It's on the list!

Posted by HongPong at [02:37 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [International Politics](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [War on Terror](#)

November 25, 2004

Pentagon report about "an agenda hidden within the official rubric of a War on Terrorism"

Here is some more stuff from Dan Schwartz about the new Defense Science Board report which basically assaults what the Pentagon and White House are trying to claim about the "War on terror" etc, plus the Ukraine story and how Wal-Mart alienates the labor of Chinese people... Mr. Schwartz:

First, an unexpected bit of good sense from the Pentagon: the Defense Science Board, an advisory panel within the military, [issued a report admonishing the US government for a failure to communicate effectively with the Muslim world](#) AND warning that even if we communicate our policies and intentions clearly, there is no P.R. remedy for bad policies. (it hasn't been released to the public, so all I know is what the NYT has reported)

"In stark contrast to the cold war, the United States today is not seeking to contain a threatening state empire, but rather **seeking to convert a broad movement within Islamic civilization to accept the value structure of Western Modernity - an agenda hidden within the official rubric of a 'War on Terrorism,'**" the report states. "Today we reflexively compare Muslim 'masses' to those oppressed under Soviet rule," the report adds. "This is a strategic mistake. There is no yearning-to-be-liberated-by-the-U.S. groundswell among Muslim societies - except to be liberated perhaps from what they see as apostate tyrannies that the U.S. so determinedly promotes and defends."

I would add, obviously, that those yearning to be free of such tyrannies are unlikely to wish our assistance in casting of their yokes; as the report notes, we often support the dictators. "Muslims do

not 'hate our freedom,' but rather they hate our policies," adding that "**when American public diplomacy talks about bringing democracy to Islamic societies, this is seen as no more than self-serving hypocrisy.**"

Further, "The critical problem in American public diplomacy directed toward the Muslim world is not one of 'dissemination of information' or even one of crafting and delivering the 'right' message. Rather it is a fundamental problem of credibility. **Simply, there is none - the United States today is without a working channel of communication to the world of Muslims and of Islam.**"

I'm incredulous that a government agency of any striping, let alone the DOD, would say things like this. Questioning American altruism? Denying American credibility on the world stage? Betraying the rhetoric of the War on Terror? Ladies and gentlemen, this is HERESY. let's see if anything comes of it...

"The United States is deeply disturbed by extensive and credible indications of fraud committed in the ... presidential election. We strongly support efforts to review the conduct of the election and urge ... authorities not to certify results until investigations of organized fraud are resolved. We call on the Government ... to respect the will of the ... people, and we urge all ... to resolve the situation through peaceful means. The Government bears a special responsibility not to use or incite violence, and to allow free media to report accurately on the situation without intimidation or coercion. The United States stands with the ... people in this difficult time."

So goes the White House press release concerning the recent US elections. Just kidding. Everything was FINE here, but the Ukraine, it would seem, just doesn't meet international standards for electoral legitimacy, so we'll probably need a recount or maybe even a new election. The press has been all over this one; I've seen more coverage, closer to the front page, from more sources in the last 3 days alone than there has been in the 22 since our own election.

Here's a [nice roundup of some Ukraine coverage via Metafilter](#).

Speaking of double standards, [Wal-Mart has conceded to allow store associates in its Chinese retail locations to form unions](#). The company has fought tooth and nail over the years to prevent such perversity among its employees here in the states, but I guess even unionized Chinese workers won't ask much in the way of decent pay or dignified working conditions. The All China Federation of Trade Unions is relatively weak—not much more than an extension of the national party bureaucracy—so hey! if that's the price we pay for expanding to this enormous new market, so be it.

Happy Turkey Day!

Posted by HongPong at [01:12 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Iraq](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [The White House](#)

CIA & Bushies knew Chavez coup was coming. That's what I call democratic leadership!

I just got a few things from Dan Schwartz that I deemed interesting for a Turkey Day Spy Spectacular. Ok, not that spectacular. More of a Tryptophan National Security Adventure. First, it now seems that the Bush administration did in fact have forewarning of the coup attempt against Venezuela's Hugo Chavez in April 2002. This means that they lied about it coming out of the blue. Also, as most people don't know, the Bush administration was among very few governments to recognize the coup

leaders as legitimate, until they were trapped in the Miraflores palace and deposed by Chavez's people a couple days later.

This made the Bush administration embarrassingly appear to support military coups, and it discredited them in Latin & South America. I'm sorry, Rummy and Cheney, it's not the Gerald Ford days anymore, and South American leaders you don't like can't just be hacked down. [Newsday reports that a FOIA request got the info out of the CIA:](#)

The U.S. government knew of an imminent plot to oust Venezuela's leftist president, Hugo Chávez, in the weeks prior to a 2002 military coup that briefly unseated him, newly released CIA documents show, despite White House claims to the contrary a week after the putsch.

Yet the United States, which depends on Venezuela for nearly one-sixth of its oil, never warned the Chávez government, Venezuelan officials said.

The Bush administration has denied it was involved in the coup or knew one was being planned. At a White House briefing on April 17, 2002, just days after the 47-hour coup, a senior administration official who did not want to be named said, "The United States did not know that there was going to be an attempt of this kind to overthrow - or to get Chávez out of power."

Yet based on the newly released CIA briefs, an analyst said yesterday that did not appear to be the case.

"This is substantive evidence that the CIA knew in advance about the coup, and it is clear that this intelligence was distributed to dozens of members of the Bush administration, giving them knowledge of coup plotting," said Peter Kornbluh, a senior analyst at the National Security Archive in Washington.

However, Kornbluh said that while the documents show U.S. officials knew a coup was coming, perhaps implying tacit approval, they do not constitute proof the United States was involved in ousting Chávez, Venezuela's elected leader. That is partly because the briefs are from the intelligence side of the CIA, not the operational side.

[....]

Chávez was traveling in Spain yesterday and could not be reached for comment, although his information minister, Andres Izarra, said through a representative that his government had not yet taken a position on the documents. Tarek William Saab, a state governor and member of the president's inner circle, said the documents showed "that the United States was implicated in this coup and did nothing to stop it."

The Bush administration and Chávez, a fiery former paratrooper, have clashed repeatedly, with Chávez accusing the United States of backing the coup against him and U.S. officials denouncing his leadership as authoritarian. The United States was one of the few nations to embrace the coup initially, though it later reversed its position.

The documents were obtained through Freedom of Information Act requests submitted by Eva Golinger, a Long Island attorney and pro-Chávez activist who also is investigating U.S. funding of groups opposed to the Venezuelan leader. Golinger said she was outraged by the documents. "If they knew that a democratic government was going to be overthrown, why wouldn't they send signals to it or at least explain what was going to happen?"

The documents - called Senior Executive Security Briefs - are one level below the highest-level Presidential Daily Briefs and are circulated among about 200 top-level U.S. officials, Kornbluh said.

Chávez was arrested and overthrown on April 12, 2002, after military dissidents blamed him for violence at an opposition protest march that left 19 people dead and 300 wounded. He was returned to power two days later.

All the CIA documents were heavily censored before being released. One, dated April 6, 2002, states that "dissident military factions, including some disgruntled senior officers and a group of radical junior officers, are stepping up efforts to organize a coup against President Chávez, possibly as early as this month."

[....]

Julia Sweig, deputy director of Latin American studies at the Council on Foreign Relations, a think tank in Washington, said: "The fact that we didn't call Chávez and say, 'This is brewing,' reflects the incredible antipathy toward Chávez at that time" on the part of the Bush administration.

Posted by HongPong at [01:04 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [International Politics](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Security](#) , [The White House](#)

November 21, 2004

Purging the CIA; neocons want to start World War IV against 'Islamofascists'

I'm not sure if I can round this up into a coherent point. It looks like the Bush administration is determined to wipe out those sections of the intelligence services that tried to discredit the lies necessary to trick the American people into the march on Iraq.

Now, there will come more incompetent political appointees like Porter Goss, partisan Republican hitmen determined to crush all opposition—not just political opposition, but all 'reality-based' opposition as well. That is, bureaucrats inside the State Department and CIA who thought that "A) this WMD evidence isn't good; B) We should have written a post-invasion plan; C) Ahmed Chalabi is a dangerous liar who can't be trusted to run Iraq," are now going to get thrashed right out of the bureaucracy.

It's a shame, and it upsets me... not least because these are the people who actually have the operational knowledge to protect us from terrorist attacks. Not that the targets of the Stalinist Election Purge are "good liberals" or "progressives." I don't think most of them are; in fact they are as likely as anyone to be adherents to the old 'Washington Consensus' neo-liberal school. Unfortunately, these guys have been the best institutional brake we've had against the imperial schemes of neoconservatives. I hope as many of them as possible survive inside the CIA, and I hope that the ones who get slashed out of the program actually manage to get their story out to the public. Michael Scheuer, you're not the only articulate one...

Some stuff about the CIA purging: [Justin Raimondo says it's one hell of a victory for the neo-cons](#). Here's a nifty source: [schema-root has lots more news about neoconservatives](#), updated constantly.

On a somewhat related note, Dr. Rashid Khalidi has an excellent piece in In These Times about the history of Fallujah, "[Fallujah 101: A history lesson](#)

about the town we are currently destroying." Thanks for the historical context we never get!

The ideas that came out of the eastern part of Saudi Arabia in the late 18th Century, which today we call Wahhabi ideas—those of a man named Muhammad Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab—took root in this city more than 200 years ago. In other words, it is a place where what we would call fundamentalist salafi, or **Wahhabi ideas, have been well implanted for 10 generations.** This town also is the place where in the spring of 1920 ... the British discerned civil unrest.

The British sent a renowned explorer and a senior colonial officer who had quelled unrest in the corners of their empire, Lt. Col. Gerald Leachman, to master this unruly corner of Iraq. Leachman was killed in an altercation with a local leader named Shaykh Dhari. His death sparked a war that ended up costing the lives of 10,000 Iraqis and more than 1,000 British and Indian troops. To restore Iraq to their control, **the British used massive air power, bombing indiscriminately. That city is now called Fallujah.**

Shaykh Dhari's grandson, today a prominent Iraqi cleric, helped to broker the end of the U.S. Marine siege of Fallujah in April of this year. Fallujah thus embodies the interrelated tribal, religious and national aspects of Iraq's history.

The Bush administration is not creating the world anew in the Middle East. It is waging a war in a place where history really matters.

[....]

The United States is perceived as stepping into the boots of Western colonial occupiers, still bitterly remembered from Morocco to Iran. The Bush administration marched into Iraq proclaiming the very best of intentions while stubbornly refusing to understand that in the eyes of most Iraqis and most others in the Middle East it is actions, not proclaimed intentions, that count. It does not matter what you say you are doing in Fallujah, where U.S. troops just launched an attack after weeks of bombing. What matters is what you are doing in Fallujah—and what people see that you are doing.

[....]

Most Middle East experts in the United States, both inside and outside the government, have drawn on their knowledge of the cultures, languages, history, politics of the Middle East—and on their experience—to conclude that **most Bush administration Middle East policies, whether in Iraq or Palestine, are harmful to the interests of the United States and the peoples of this region.** A few of these experts have had the temerity to say so, to the outrage of the Bush administration and its supporters, who are committed to what I would call a fact-free, faith-based approach to Middle East policymaking.

...and it is precisely those annoying voices that shall be purged, purged from the leaner meaner Bush2 government. A little more about Fallujah: a writer on the Egyptian periodical Al Ahram says Fallujah is "a crucible of discontent" that heightens friction between Sunnis and Shiites. The shocking video of the Marine blasting the wounded insurgent dominated the Arab media, surprise surprise. Pressure grows to delay voting, even though they've set the deadline for the end of January. Mosul has apparently spun out of control, as the Sunnis are essentially rebelling against the Kurds, with the U.S. supporting the Kurds. There are rumors of Kurds ethnically cleansing the area of Sunnis, something I find quite believable these days.

From a more unorthodox source, the World Socialist Web Site: Behind State Department, CIA shake-up: Bush-Cheney regime prepares a second term of

all-out militarism. Yes, this comes from "The Socialists" rambling about "American imperialism," but look, even the Reds can refer to Knight Ridder news service as a source!

Throughout the first four years of the Bush administration, Powell and the State Department have been viewed with suspicion or outright hostility by right-wing neo-conservative elements entrenched in the civilian leadership of the Pentagon and in Vice President Cheney's office. Neither Powell nor his chief deputy, Richard Armitage, opposed the Bush administration's wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, but they were regarded as too closely aligned to the traditional foreign policy methods of American imperialism favored by career State Department and CIA officials, based on utilizing alliance structures like NATO and international institutions like the UN.

[....]

The purge of top officials in the CIA is an even more glaring case of suppressing any potential source of internal criticism or restraint on Bush administration foreign policy. On November 12, deputy CIA director John McLaughlin resigned, to be followed three days later by the deputy director for operations, Stephen Kappes, and his top deputy, Michael Slusick. This brings to nine the number of top-ranking CIA officials to depart since former director George Tenet was replaced by Porter Goss, a Republican congressman and head of the House Intelligence Committee. Only two of Tenet's top aides still remain.

[....]

Sections of the CIA officialdom were effectively aligned with the Democratic campaign, providing a series of leaks to the press demonstrating that the White House had lied about prewar planning for postwar Iraq and debunking various Bush lies about the "war on terror." The agency even authorized one top CIA official, Michael Scheuer, former head of the bin Laden unit, to publish a book—under the pseudonym "anonymous"—denouncing the White House for failing to take the threat of bin Laden seriously before the 9/11 attacks. Scheuer also quit the agency, on November 11.

Goss has brought with him into the **CIA four top aides from the House Intelligence Committee, all far-right Republican Party activists** determined to remove any political opponents from the agency's leadership.

The right-wing press, spearheaded by the editorial page of the *Wall Street Journal*, has demanded such a purge of both the CIA and the State Department. At the time the pre-election leaks, the *Journal* published an editorial denouncing the CIA for "declaring war" on the Bush White House. The newspaper greeted Powell's resignation with an editorial demanding that Bush stamp out similar opposition in the diplomatic corps.

In both the State Department and the CIA, it should go without saying, the opposition to Bush is within the framework of the defense of imperialist interests. Both agencies are staffed by battle-hardened defenders of American imperialism who have participated in countless crimes against working people on every continent. Their opposition to Bush arises largely from the debacle produced in Iraq by a policy that deliberately ignored the complex politics of the country and the Middle East as a whole, in favor of a crude doctrine that the United States could have its way by force alone.

The result of the bureaucratic infighting is that the Bush White House is moving to concentrate power in fewer and fewer hands, riding roughshod over the established institutions of American imperialism. As the Knight-Ridder news service observed: **"by agreeing to Powell's departure and approving an apparent purge by new CIA chief Porter Goss, Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney appear to be eliminating the few independent centers of power in the US national security apparatus and cementing the system under their personal control."**

More about [Powell: a UPI analysis](#) sums it up pretty well:

For as it turned out, Powell's moderate, cautious internationalist approach to U.S. foreign policy, impeccably in line as it was with the broad policy strategies of Republican Presidents Dwight D. Eisenhower, Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford, Ronald Reagan and George Herbert Walker Bush would have fitted well with Clinton's own approach and preferences. But it proved totally out of touch with the Republican president he actually served.

At first, it did not seem to be that way. In the first eight months of the first Bush administration Powell, as had been widely expected, fought many bruising policy battles with the confident and energetic neo-conservatives who had Vice President Dick Cheney's ear and that of Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. But he won a few battles too.

In those days, Powell appeared to be Bush's "go to" guy. It was he the president turned to in order to defuse tensions with China after a U.S. EP-3 electronic surveillance aircraft made a forced landing on Hainan Island after colliding with a Chinese fighter buzzing it in international air space. And in early September 2001, he appeared to have won a major policy victory by convincing the president to approve a major U.S. diplomatic initiative to establish a fully independent Palestinian state.

[...]

As Bob Woodward wrote in "Bush at War", the secretary of state often did not even meet face to face with the president he served for weeks at a time. In a Washington where personal access to the Chief Executive is the gold standard of clout and influence that probably hurt his standing more than anything.

Powell's writ did not even run within key areas of his own State Department. Under Secretary of State John Bolton, now widely tipped to be the next deputy secretary of state repeatedly made end-runs around him especially on Middle East policy issues with the aid of his neo-con allies in the Pentagon.

But Powell would not resign and the president would not fire him. He was determined to complete a full term of office as the first black secretary of state in U.S. history. And he was convinced his moderating presence was still essential at the top table to try and keep things on an even keel.

So what is going into the neo-con agenda in the second term? Veteran snooper Jim Lobe at Asia Times Online writes [about leading neo-con Frank Gaffney's newest plans](#) as laid out in a National Review article (via interesting site '[The Experiment](#)'). Gaffney is one of the more batshit, institutional neo-cons who's always rambling about "Islamofascists" and World War IV. He didn't let us down this time.

The list, which begins with the destruction of Fallujah in Iraq and ends with the development of "appropriate strategies" for dealing with threats posed by China, Russia and "the emergence of a number of aggressively anti-American regimes in Latin America", also calls for "regime change" in Iran and North Korea.

The list's author, Frank Gaffney, the founder and president of the Center for Security Policy (CSP), also warns that Bush should resist any pressure arising from the (then) anticipated demise of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat to resume peace talks that could result in Israel giving up "defensible boundaries".

[...]

Yet its importance as a roadmap of where neo-conservatives - who, with the critical help of Vice President Dick Cheney and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, dominated Bush's foreign policy after the September 11, 2001, attacks on New York and the Pentagon - want US policy to go was underlined by Gaffney's listing of the names of his friends in the administration who he said **"helped the president imprint moral values on American security policy** in a way and to an extent not seen since Ronald Reagan's first term".

In addition to Cheney and Rumsfeld, he cited the most clearly identified - and controversial - neo-conservatives serving in the administration: Cheney's chief of staff, I Lewis "Scooter" Libby; his top Middle East advisers, John Hannah and David Wurmser; weapons-proliferation specialist Robert Joseph; and top Mideast aide Elliott Abrams, on the National Security Council.

Also on the roster are: Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz; Under Secretary for Policy Douglas Feith; Feith's top Mideast aide William Luti, in the Pentagon; Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security John Bolton; and for global issues, Paula Dobriansky at the State Department.

Virtually all of the same individuals have been cited by critics of the Iraq war, including Democratic lawmakers and retired senior foreign-service and military officials, as responsible for hijacking the policy and intelligence process that led to the US invasion of Iraq in March 2003.

[.....]

As Perle's longtime protege and associate, **Gaffney sits at the center of a network of interlocking think-tanks, foundations, lobby groups, arms manufacturers and individuals that constitute the coalition of neo-conservatives, aggressive nationalists such as Cheney and Rumsfeld and Christian Right activists responsible for the unilateralist trajectory of US foreign policy since September 11.**

Included among CSP's board of advisers over the years have been Rumsfeld, Perle, Feith, Christian moralist William Bennett, Abrams, Joseph, former United Nations ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick, former navy under secretary John Lehman and former Central Intelligence Agency director James Woolsey.

Woolsey also co-chairs the new Committee on the Present Danger (CPD), another prominent neo-conservative-led lobby group that argues Washington is now engaged in "World War IV" against "Islamofascism".

Also serving on its advisory council are executives from some of the country's largest military contractors, which - along with **wealthy individuals sympathetic to Israel's governing Likud Party**, such as prominent New York investor Lawrence Kadish and California casino king Irving Moskowitz, and right-wing bodies, such as the Bradley, Sarah Scaife and Olin Foundations - finance CSP's work.

Gaffney, a ubiquitous "talking head" on TV in the run-up to the war in Iraq, sits on the boards of CPD's parent organizations, the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies and Americans for Victory Over Terrorism. He was a charter associate, with Cheney, Rumsfeld, Perle, Wolfowitz and Abrams, of the Project for the New American Century, another prominent neo-conservative-led group that offered up a similar checklist of what Bush should do in the "war on terrorism" just nine days after the September 11 attacks.

[.....]

"The reality is that **the same moral principles that underpinned the Bush appeal on 'values' issues like gay marriage, stem-cell research and the right to life were central to his vision of US war aims** and foreign policy," according to Gaffney. "Indeed, the president laid claim squarely to the ultimate **moral value - freedom - as the cornerstone of his strategy for defeating our Islamofascist enemies and their state sponsors**, for whom that concept is utterly [sic] anathema."

To be true to that commitment, policy in the second administration must be directed toward seven priorities, according to Gaffney, beginning with the "reduction in detail of Fallujah and other safe havens utilized by freedom's enemies in Iraq"; followed by "regime change - one way or another - in Iran and North Korea, the only hope for preventing these remaining 'axis of evil' states from fully realizing their terrorist and nuclear ambitions".

Third, the administration must provide "the substantially increased resources needed to re-equip a transforming military and rebuild human-intelligence capabilities (minus, if at all possible, the sorts of intelligence 'reforms' contemplated pre-election that would make matters worse on this and other scores) **while we fight World War IV, followed by enhancing protection of our homeland, including deploying effective missile defenses at sea and in space**, as well as ashore".

Fifth, Washington must keep "faith with Israel, whose destruction remains a priority for the same people who want to destroy us (and ... for our **shared 'moral values'**) especially in the face of Yasser Arafat's demise and the inevitable, post-election pressure to 'solve' the Middle East problem by **forcing the Israelis to abandon defensible boundaries**".

Sixth, the administration must deal with France and Germany and the dynamic that made them "so problematic in the first term: namely, their willingness to make **common cause with our enemies for profit** and their desire to employ a united Europe and its new constitution - as well as other international institutions and mechanisms - to thwart the expansion and application of American power where deemed necessary by Washington".

Finally, writes Gaffney, Bush must adapt "appropriate strategies for contending with **China's increasingly fascist trade and military policies**, [Russian President] Vladimir Putin's accelerating authoritarianism at home and aggressiveness toward the former Soviet republics, the worldwide spread of Islamofascism, and the emergence of a number of aggressively anti-American regimes in Latin America", which he does not identify.

Posted by HongPong at [04:36 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Iraq](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [War on Terror](#)

November 15, 2004

Something to chew on

Well, first off, a little in memoriam:

RIP Russell Jones a/k/a "Ol' Dirty Bastard" a/k/a "Osiris" a/k/a "Big Baby Jesus" a/k/a "Dirt McGirt". As you may have heard, the dirty passed away this weekend, dropping dead in a recording studio at the age of 35. While his death was obviously due to a breathtaking history of drug consumption, it is sad nonetheless. No one captured the kind of brainless senseless FEEL for Hip-Hop that rappers need in order to bring something that isn't cliché and effete into their rapping style. ODB had the kind of unglued loopy energy that all great rappers (do you hear me Slug?) possess in some quantity, be it the irreverent wordplay of Jay-Z, the ludicrous political screeds of Nas or the sheer, well, ODB-like loopiness of early Eminem. Legend has it that Russell once ran out of a recording studio to help a 4 year old girl pinned under a car. May this good deed and others never witnessed weigh heavily enough against the much-publicized bad that Russell committed in his lifetime to ensure him a place on the 'good' list.

Another RIP follows: [Ted Rall](#) and Gary "Doonesbury" Trudeau have been removed from the Washington Post's stable of editorial cartoonists. Perhaps in the wake of another Bush win the lefties are being culled from major media outlets in an effort to "centralize" themselves politically and not

jeopardize their access to those in power or alienate themselves and lose ad revenue. This would seem more true for Rall than Trudeau—I assume Doonesbury was dropped because it is probably expensive to carry and anyone can look at it free on the internet or in their local paper. Rall may very well have gotten the axe over his caricature of the Bush administration. I would argue that it is hardly even a caricature, but there you have it. RIP freedom of speech, inch by agonizing inch. We here at Hongpong use the Internet, as we are taking back what is rightfully ours. I hope you all do the same.

Next: This will not be a link-laden entry, with source material not included, or perhaps not even existing. I would link this next article, however, but it isn't available online anymore. Reading the New Yorker this morning on the bus, I ran into an article that explains an economic theory that I find both fascinating and staggeringly obvious, the kind of intellectual posit that is difficult to properly phrase but so obvious that it hardly needs explanation, the kind of bread-and-butter duh that keeps half of the faculty of American universities in the money.

The theory of the principal-agent problem is simple: in an era of increasing specificity in expertise, large corporations, government agencies and any institution of significant size undoubtedly employs "agents," experts in a field, to negotiate for and advise on matters relating to institutional business. Insurance brokers, defense corporation lobbyists, and even buyers for department stores would all be considered agents. The problem, as outlined by economists, is that these agents oftentimes have a vested interest in the outcome the dissemination of their expertise has on the bottom line of their company, their future job prospects or their immediate financial gain.

For example, a real-estate agent looks for a quick turnaround on a home owned by a client, but will wait and get the highest possible price by using all the tools at his/her disposal to sell their own home. Likewise, a stock analyst for a major financial house like [Bear Stearns or the like may give a more favorable analysis](#) of a certain corporation's stock on the basis of that corporation's relationship to his house, as evidenced with Enron and their high ratings in major financial houses that had significant investments in the company.

This notion is an important even politically; military officials may be bullish on particular weapons systems because of [hopes of employment in the manufacturing corporation](#) upon retirement or because of its political expediency (i.e. Dick Cheney's reference to specific weapons systems that John Kerry voted against as being "instrumental in [winning](#) the Cold War") and their corresponding pull with politicians on The Hill.

Conflicts of interests are complicated, but when a middle man is involved, it could be for the very simple reason that the directness of said conflict is diffused when it is complicated. The loser, almost everytime, is the consumer, as the costs are almost always born by those consuming the product or being affected by the policy in question. I am filing this one under [Military-Industrial Complex](#), but it really applied to any business.

All for now, stay cool.

UPDATE: Continuing on the matter of disappearing voices, William Safire will be stepping down as an opinion columnist at the NYTimes in January. I love Safire—not because I agree with him, but because I think he's a smart motherfucker. He will be missed. Perhaps the Times knew about this ahead of time, though, well ahead of time. It would seem Brooks is the replacement conservative voice. A [poor](#) replacement, says I, and a little douchebag, says Leroy. At least it's not [Novak](#), I guess, or Will. I never really considered Safire a true conservative, more of a [Likud Libertarian](#). Ah well, he's preparing to write his memoirs, I would imagine. I'll buy it.

Posted by Mordred at [10:04 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Media](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Music](#)

November 13, 2004

Now we've got their bulldozers too: "U.S. Officers at Fallujah trained in Israeli urban warfare tactics"

More news from the ongoing Israeli-American hegemon project. According to this rightwing news story, it sounds like Israel gave the U.S. some of their trusty Evil Israeli Bulldozers to git those Ayrabs... To restate the major problem with this type of thing, the U.S. military is so disadvantaged in the situation that we are dependent on the Israelis to provide operationally useful tactics (and bulldozers).

Unfortunately, traveling down this dark road will make us rise to ever worse methods of torture and suppression, while merging our perceived national identity with Israel's. The Israelis will happily provide the means (and the personnel?) as long as it takes. Operationally useful tactics probably can't rescue us from strategic disaster, and when the Arab TV networks get a good look at these bulldozers, it will make our strategic position that much worse.

I should add that I don't know much about WorldTribune.com so this article could be nonsense, but there is nothing in it too surprising. WorldTribune looks like a right-wing rag, as they have a link to the Drudge Report at the very top.

Is it really true that we have run out of armor plates so badly that we are buying the damn things from the Israelis? How much are we paying their military-industrial complex, then?

[SPECIAL TO WORLD TRIBUNE.COM](http://SPECIAL.TO.WORLD.TRIBUNE.COM)

Wednesday, November 10, 2004

BAGHDAD – The U.S. military has employed Israeli urban warfare tactics during the current invasion of the Iraqi city of Fallujah.

U.S. officials acknowledged that **hundreds of officers have trained in Israel** over the last two years in urban warfare and counter-insurgency. In September, scores of U.S. officers trained at the Adam urban warfare school northeast of Tel Aviv, a facility that contains a mock Arab village.

The U.S. officers trained in Israel relayed their expertise to the U.S. Army's Joint Readiness Training Center in Fort Polk, La. Over the last two years, the army center has increased the number of mock Arab villages from four to 18 and employed Arab speakers for urban warfare exercises.

A key Israeli lesson adopted by the U.S. military was the need to maintain surprise during an infantry advance in an Arab urban environment.

Officials said **the Army and Marine Corps have employed tactics developed during the Israeli military invasion of West Bank cities in 2002.**

They said the Israeli methods helped save soldiers and accelerate the advance through Fallujah.

"We have learned a lot regarding urban warfare tactics in the Middle East from our allies," an official said. "Yes, this includes Israel."

In the Fallujah operation, **U.S. troops broke through walls of Iraqi homes** to avoid exposure in the city's narrow alleys, believed to have been mined by insurgents.

Another Israeli lesson was the use of air platforms to target enemy combatants during street battles. In Fallujah, the United States has employed AC-130 gunships to target insurgents in downtown Fallujah. In the Gaza Strip, Israel has used the Apache AH-64A attack helicopter to strike insurgents and their vehicles.

On Wednesday, the U.S. military said it has captured 70 percent of Fallujah and killed about 80 insurgents. The military, reporting light casualties, said most of the fighting was taking place in the center of the city.

"The enemy is fighting hard but not to the death," Lt. Gen. Thomas Metz, the multinational ground force commander in Iraq, said in a Pentagon videoconference broadcast from Iraq. "There is not a sense that he is staying in particular places. He is continuing to fall back or he dies in those positions. I think we're looking at several more days of tough urban fighting."

Another Israeli tactic developed by the U.S. military in Fallujah was the use of a multi-pronged advance on insurgency strongholds in an urban area. Officials said the technique was employed in the Israeli ground offensive on the northern West Bank city of Nablus in April 2002. The U.S. force has also employed armored D-9 bulldozers to clear roads. ***Israel has provided the United States with 14 armored D-9 bulldozers for the war in Iraq.***

Officials said Israel has also provided armor for Bradley infantry fighting vehicles, many of which have been deployed in Fallujah. They said Rafael, **Israel Armament Development Authority has sold**

the reactive armor plates to the U.S. Army.

In Fallujah, the U.S. military also employed an Israeli method of clearing mines. The method called for a tank to fire a barrel of more than a ton of explosives and attached to a 200-meter cord.

The barrel explodes and sets off mines planted in either a field or street.

Posted by HongPong at [09:58 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Iraq](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [War on Terror](#)

November 10, 2004

Tanks whiz by Los Angeles Protests--mysterious situation

Mysterious stuff from San Andreas... I mean Los Angeles. Apparently some tanks showed up at an anti-war protest. We were sent an opinion piece with a link to some video of the tank hosted on LA IndyMedia, but it doesn't work. However, [LA Indymedia still has something of the story](#), which is where I ripped off this strange picture from.

[UPDATE Nov. 12] The vehicles are marine Armored Personal Carriers (APCs), not tanks. I thought the barrel of the turret looked a little small. The [video of what happened](#) is now available.

Not sure what to think of this. The LA site has stuff rambling about the [Posse Comitatus Act](#), as if that will protect us from the threat of domestic militarization. This policy [paper about domestic militarization](#) from the libertarian Cato Institute looks like it opposes such nastiness.

Posted by HongPong at [07:52 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Iraq](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Security](#)

October 20, 2004

CIA, Homeland Security visit HongPong.com — the big eye makes modem blink

Why have I been silent for a while here? It is not that I'm being lazy out in the Real World. Between four classes, a radio show, editing the newspaper and all the election stuff, it's really hard for me to get onto here and give you all something new to look at.

In no small part because I had a conversation with Michael Ledeen on Friday during Macalester's International Roundtable conference. I feel like my unbalanced little moral universe has totally spun off its bearings. Yet I now understand the neoconservative mindset much better than before. This is not comforting nor relaxing information to find out about. So I haven't been sure what to say about it yet. We will have something in the Mac Weekly about it later this week.

Still, the website gets hits from all over, and the nature of these global information networks still amazes me. And yet again, the government and the military are all over my shit.

I finally got around to looking at the HongPong.com access log, and I found that traffic is quite high right now, higher than my sputtering efforts here probably deserve.

So I have not looked at the site's traffic patterns for awhile. In the last week, there have been an average 356 requests for pages a day. That's not too bad. Traffic has tapered off a bit during September, but there is a lot of variability any given day, from 200 to 500 hits.

Somewhere among these visits came the [Central Intelligence Agency](#), although apparently they were on a Google search for '[tower bridge terrorism](#).' I just ran this search and found [an old post about my London trip](#) up on the [third results page](#), above [MSNBC](#) and [National Review](#) stories.

I wonder if the CIA's visit was just a spider logging information about terrorism. That wouldn't surprise me any more than [CENTCOM's visit to my Iraq page](#) this summer.

The **Department of Homeland Security** came by looking for "unedited iraqi prison photos and videos." I don't have those. But I feel safer already.

Someone from the State Department came in on Google via searching for "Dan Senor CPA Israel neo-con" and I didn't [disappoint them](#)! (that's the second time I've gotten a search critical of neoconservatives from the State Department!)

There also seems to be an uptick in the number of visitors from Israel, including the [Tel Aviv University](#) and [Weizmann Institute of Science](#), as well as the mysterious [barak.net.il](#).

A Palestinian newspaper searching for information about radio transmitters found something totally irrelevant here. This would mark the first connection to my site from the West Bank that I've detected. So the site projects some sort of minute, momentary effect on the situation. That's pretty sweet.

Other strange visitors include **mail3**.[JohnKerry.com](#), a Russian dating site called [your-ideal.com](#), a couple hits from Brandeis and Stanford. There are quite a few folks from the Netherlands and Pakistan this time, as well. I won't get into the country list now.

I got a couple hits from Army computers who came in on Google searched for "[helicopter video kills](#)" and "[video of riot control](#)," both of which

connected with old stories. The Air Force and Navy have also been visiting on similar Google searches.

Another hit came over something called [nipr.mil, described as](#)

*Nipr.mil is not a single domain a but a hush-hush web proxy that acts as a gateway for hundreds of U.S. military domains in order to hide their identities. It was established by the Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA) in response to a memorandum (CM-5 1099, INFOCOM) issued in March 1999 by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, calling for "actions to be taken to increase the readiness posture for **Information Warfare**." "Uncontrolled Internet connections," the document says, "pose a significant and unacceptable threat to all Department of Defense information systems and operations.*

Ok, good the information warfare people are here. Nice. Another Army hit came from a Google search for '[tactical humint team team leader](#)' where surprisingly enough, I am on the first results page due to a blockquote in a [story about Army deserters](#). Great, now some computer thinks my site has sympathy for deserters. I wonder how many bad juju points I get for that.

The prize for funniest scary government computer name goes to:
moses.radium.ncsc.mil

More interested government agencies these days include:

- Dept of Treasury: Customs computers (searching for info about 9/11 tapes?!!)
- The General Services Administration: I think they handle ordering the pens
- U.S. Postal Service
- The Denver Bureau of Land Management returns!
- NASA Gerf, whatever that is.
- The [Brazilian Administrative Agency](#).
- The [Chicago office of the Department of Energy](#)

I just found this list that someone made about [Big Brother computers watching them](#). It's roughly like that around here! Hurray Tech!!

Posted by HongPong at [03:06 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [HongPong-site](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [Technological Apparatus](#) , [War on Terror](#)
October 03, 2004

Sunday funny: take the Armageddon poll

Well well. Newsweek reported yesterday that Bush's commanding lead in their national poll, around 11 points, has completely evaporated, and now Kerry enjoys about a 2 or 3 point lead. I had a feeling going into the debate that it would shift ten points, one way or the other. Fortunately, Kerry had some damn wits about him! Talking about the [now-famous Bush scowl complex](#). The [Dems made a video of it!](#)

Take the Armageddon Books poll immediately: [Armageddon Books Prophecy Poll](#):

Will the Illuminati be the force that brings about Antichrist's one-world government and religion?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

I've got a ton of homework and a radio show in two hours so I've got to lay this out quickly.

Keep reading [Josh Marshall and the TPM](#). Lots of interesting stuff coming thru there. Can you believe that we've only fully trained about 8,000 Iraqi police?! [Juan Cole always crucial](#).

The officials in Washington -- CIA, State, Defense -- [have rapidly worsening opinions](#) about the situation. Interesting information from a [Wall Street Journal reporter, Farnaz Fassihi, who wrote a really hellish email of life in Iraq \(also posted here\)](#):

It's hard to pinpoint when the 'turning point' exactly began. Was it April when the Fallujah fell out of the grasp of the Americans? Was it when Moqtada and Jish Mahdi declared war on the U.S. military? Was it when Sadr City, home to ten percent of Iraq's population, became a nightly battlefield for the Americans? Or was it when the insurgency began spreading from isolated pockets in the Sunni triangle to include most of Iraq? Despite President Bush's rosy assessments, Iraq remains a disaster. If under Saddam it was a 'potential' threat, under the Americans it has been transformed to 'imminent and active threat,' a foreign policy failure bound to haunt the United States for decades to come.

Iraqis like to call this mess 'the situation.' When asked 'how are thing?' they reply: 'the situation is very bad.'

What they mean by situation is this: the Iraqi government doesn't control most Iraqi cities, there are several car bombs going off each day around the country killing and injuring scores of innocent people, the country's roads are becoming impassable and littered by hundreds of landmines and explosive devices aimed to kill American soldiers, there are assassinations, kidnappings and beheadings. The situation, basically, means a raging barbaric guerilla war. In four days, 110 people died and over 300 got injured in Baghdad alone. The numbers are so shocking that the ministry of health -- which was attempting an exercise of public transparency by releasing the numbers -- has now stopped disclosing them.

Insurgents now attack Americans 87 times a day.

[Good Danziger cartoon](#).

Have to love a good military-industrial conspiracy! "[Ex-Pentagon official gets 9 months for conspiring to favor Boeing](#)" in an arms deal. Haha talk about the tip of the iceberg!

["International Observers predict trouble in US vote."](#) ...Alarm bells....

Pentagon Paperer Daniel Ellsberg says "[Where are the leakers of the Iraq war?](#)" As in, why aren't more horrible facts coming forward right now?

WaPo says that the government is starting a [PR campaign to paper over the hellish disintegration of Iraq](#).

Interesting issue: [Google News frequently gives these links to hard rightwing sites](#) when it seems that more balanced news sources should appear instead. Why is this happening?

Humor: [Bush and the yawning boy](#) via Wonkette. [Bush vs Jesus political advertising](#) via Atrios. Thanks to Alison on the link.

Random right wing opinion: [classic anti-Islamic fear mongering from Daniel Pipes](#): "The Islamic States of America?" Of course they're trying to Subvert our Way of Life, those Damn Commies IslamoFascists!!!

So these are just a few of the random things I've got for you today... Gotta go!

Posted by HongPong at [04:25 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Campaign 2004](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#)

August 21, 2004

Flip sides

Ok, ok, ok, I have to post some things around the ideological spectrum. Starting around the right-wing anti-war libertarian pole, Antiwar.com's Justin Raimondo had three interesting pieces, but as always I take him with a grain of salt. First, the Democrats may have flipped around, and become the [more militarily interventionist party](#). Is this too hard to believe?

[Chalmers] Johnson cuts right to the essential issue, which is not just the plethora of bases, but certain recently-established military installations:

"At the same time, they don't say anything about 14 permanent bases being built in Iraq. Four are already built: Tallil Air Base, Baghdad, the one in the north near Mosul and the one over on the border with Syria. They don't say anything about the bases in Jabuti, in the Saharan Desert, in Mali and places like that."

Neither Kerry nor Bush wants to talk about those particular bases, or what they imply. Whatever their disagreements over particular nuances, both "major" party candidates support the concept of a semi-permanent American military presence in Iraq.

Beyond that, this mutual nonaggression pact underscores the role of the two parties as twin pillars of a foreign policy based on hubris, and rooted in the grating, militant self-righteousness of our ruling elites that has – rightly – made us the objects of worldwide opprobrium.

The idea of permanent military bases in Iraq is simply ghastly, as most Americans can intuit by this point. Every permanent base there, established and maintained in such a bloody fashion, would irresistably attract every militant in the middle east.

"Good!" they say. "Bring the Terrorists out to fight!!! Bring em on, hash it out over there, stay on offense!"

Yeah. That's working out smoothly. Such a strategy is BASED on abusing and disrespecting the occupied nation, because then the *goal* is to turn into a bloody wasteland, you cannot but reach disaster.

Next story: [the improbable tale of Israeli counterterror expert and sexual harrassment victim Golan Cipel](#). Now, some might say that it's a little odd to have an Israeli citizen acting as the main counter-terror czar in a crucial place like New Jersey. But wait, there's more! Evidently Cipel—or someone else named Golan Cipel—worked at the Israeli Consulate General in New York City, handling the public relations side of government activities. Raimondo's column has all sorts of interesting links to Internet search archives, such as the Google [USENET archives that include a ton of the "Israel Line" government press releases](#) that Cipel helped write. And, according to Raimondo, he's made a few interesting statements about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict here and there.

Also, Raimondo cites one hell of an odd [posting from the right-wing FreeRepublic.com news site from November 2002](#) that says:

NJ has within its borders a scandal which makes the Clinton/Lewinsky matter a walk in the park. The press has danced around the real issue. It will be revealed that what has occurred in the Garden State is a scandal of the greatest importance. It will lead to the resignation of its current Governor James McGreevey due to his abuse of office and the NJ tax payers to prop up Golan Cipel. The nature of their real relationship is on the verge of breaking into the spotlight. This will be earth shattering.

To: depthroatnjj

I know what it is. **That Isreali friend of McGreevy's who was on the payroll is really his gay lover.**

2 posted on 11/03/2002 2:26:41 PM PST by Rodney King

Perfect accuracy nearly two years ago, filched away on this madcap right-wing site. I find that rather stunning... In any case, Cipel sounds like he was fairly close to the Israeli intelligence services. Oh well.... besides this [the neo-cons are lining up to sneak into the opposition](#). Check the door for sweaty, militant old bureaucrats, please. In a column about the late libertarian Mike Mayakis he referred to an old piece about [how Superman was anti-war](#)...and Captain America saw Nixon hang himself? Meanwhile this [cheesy piece asserts that comics suddenly got political](#) out of nowhere. Right.

There are [some sweet political ads that Errol Morris is making for MoveOn.org](#). Seemingly modeled on the Apple Switch ads, that Morris also made, these are pretty sweet, and remind me of Fog of War because of the "Interrotron," a teleprompter-based interview device that Morris put together to really extract a directness from people. [See the ads on this delightful PAC donation page](#).

Christopher Hitchens is such an idiot, [I can't believe he got suckered into defending Ahmed Chalabi](#). What the hell?

I will summarize a few nice bits from Billmon, who has gone fishin' for a while. On the [Valerie Plame/Get Scooter front, the prosecution zeroes in](#), but will Libby defend himself by claiming that other reporters already knew Plame was an agent? An older story asks [if it will end at the Supreme Court](#).

To flip to the right, we have some columns from [SoldiersForTheTruth.com](#), a really interesting source for perspectives on the strange mush of tortured politics of today's U.S. military. John Lehman from the 9/11 Commission says, [damn right we are after the Islamic fundamentalists, so where's the leadership?](#) The editor of DefenseWatch, Ed Offley, says we need to get more alert about Muslim soldiers as ["the enemy within" acting for Al-Qaeda](#). I liked the bit by the site's main editor, [David Hackworth, about a nation, divided again](#):

...Kerry's campaign push on how he Ramboed his way through the war – for four months – rubs a lot of vets the wrong way. And it does take its toll on those of us who prefer our heroes to be modest, unassuming types like Alvin York – who stayed the course until it was "Over, over there."

But politics and style aside, Kerry did serve with distinction in Vietnam when he easily could have avoided that killing field. His service to his country shouldn't be diminished by the same despicable, politically motivated tactics visited upon Sens. John McCain in South Carolina and Max Cleland in Georgia, also Viet vets. This kind of gutter-bashing doesn't belong in American politics, and vets shouldn't allow themselves to be used as ammo for cheap shots at one of their own.

The stalwart Brown Water Navy warriors who fought at Kerry's side say he was A-OK, which is good enough for me. The muckrakers such as John O'Neill and his Swiftboat snipers – who didn't sail on his boat but served anywhere from 100 meters to 300 miles away – are now coming off like eyewitnesses when in fact not one of their testimonies would hold up in a court of law. A judge would call these men liars and disallow their biased statements.

I've been in a fair number of battles in my lifetime, first fighting for my country in several hot wars, then covering a dozen conflicts as a correspondent. And I've learned that if you can't see the fight right up close, smell it, hear it and touch it, you can't possibly bear witness.

[.....]

[John] O'Neill and his chorus of haters are still in their get-Kerry mode. I suspect the decades-long fury is still fueled by Kerry's high-profile anti-war stance when he returned home. That was a position that was taken by hundreds of thousands of other Viet vets, including myself in 1971 – which, according to Joe Califano's recent book, *Inside: A Public Life*, almost cost me my life.

There's been a huge flareup around Georgia/Russia/the illustrious fragments of Ossetia in the Caucasus, where of course nothing makes sense at first glance. [SFTI has a guest column about what could be a war on terror tar baby against the Russians](#). And why not freak out? The world's longest natural gas line, under construction, is only a few miles away.

Not just [Ted Kennedy, but hundreds of people are being screwed](#) by airline watch lists. Ught.

Posted by HongPong at [07:33 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Campaign 2004](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [War on Terror](#)
August 19, 2004

Last call

Ok, this is the last round of stories to throw up before I clean up the computer for some hard-core graphics stuff, so....

Chalmers Johnson, the author of Sorrows of Empire and an all-around interesting analyst, says that [the troop realignment is a weird gesture](#), but then again, nothing that the Bush Administration does makes any sense.

In Iraq, [Sadr wants to talk](#). Or not. He is so damn twitchy, it's ridiculous. The [8-day battle grinds to a stalemate](#). So is Sadr actually a unifying factor? [This Pepe Escobar piece says it is...](#) Pepe is one of those anti-Bush folks who always has something interesting going on, but I'm not sure if I find it as credible, as, say, Robert Fisk or Jim Lobe, two other journalists in funky territory.

Meanwhile arms inspector [David Kay faults the pre-war intelligence](#).

[Some atoms flew in formation](#). Wow. I don't get the science involved, but hey, why not?

Posted by HongPong at [02:40 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Campaign 2004](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Technological Apparatus](#)
July 26, 2004

"Hijacking Catastrophe" flick has more integrity than F9/11

I got the documentary "Hijacking Catastrophe: 9/11, Fear and the Selling of American Empire" a couple weeks ago, and I've watched it several times over with various people. Here's a [review from the SF Gate](#) and [Variety](#). This short documentary might be the "Fahrenheit 9/11 for the rational mind" that we've been missing. It's [a direct, stripped down kind of documentary](#), outlining the Wolfowitz doctrine of global domination by force from its origins

in the 1993 Defense Planning Guidance document, through to the Project for a New American Century's work and the famous "catalyzing event...like a new Pearl Harbor" license for action. Noam Chomsky makes a few brief, very down-to-earth statements, Norman Mailer makes a few cracks, Chalmers Johnson illustrates the Sorrows of Empire, and such characters as Lt. Col. Karen Kwiatkoski, Stan Goff and weapons inspector Scott Ritter each have fascinating 30 minute interviews available on the DVD. (Pentagon Papers star Daniel Ellsberg and Canadian neocon attacker Shadia Drury have DVD interviews too). Medea Benjamin, Tariq Ali, Norman Solomon and William Hartung from the World Policy Institute all get some time that's been so carefully denied them by the mainstream media.

Narrated by NAACP honcho Julian Bond, this documentary even covers the origins of the "Shock and Awe" doctrine as the Wolfowitz doctrine of domination operationalized. The quotes from Harman Ullmann's original Shock and Awe study are juxtaposed with war casualty photos. In its "Sorrows of Empire" section, the documentary masterfully outlines the true fiscal cost of the new imperial project. As Chalmers Johnson says, (paraphrasing), "The first and sixth amendments of the Constitution are dead letters, habeas corpus has been suspended, etc. but these are political problems. They don't spell the end of the United States. Financial bankruptcy does." An incredible pivot.

I would criticize this movie for not linking the neocons more closely with Israel, particularly since in their interviews, Goff, Ellsberg, and Kwiatkowski all articulate information about ties to the Israeli right, and Kwiatkowski's digestion of the Clean Break is probably the best I've seen on video. Too bad it wasn't in the final documentary. Dicey territory that Moore bailed from altogether.

This documentary articulates the connections that remain sadly unaddressed in Fahrenheit 9/11. If you see Moore's flick, this documentary and Control Room, that visual triangle should be enough to put anyone on a firmly informed, critical footing. Everyone who's seen this has really enjoyed it, and I strongly recommend that y'all check it out.

I found this film a very cathartic visual explanation of the many accumulated facts and horrors that I've read about for so long, and finally the video appearance of central people like Kwiatkowski makes a huge impact. Thank you Media Education Foundation!!!

Posted by [HongPong](#) at [06:51 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Iraq](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Movies](#)

July 20, 2004

CENTCOM meets HongPong.com, rabbit blogs

Heh, I just ran my server logs for the first time in ages. Seems that my May-June logs went down the memory hole somewhere, which is too bad... The results for the past few weeks have been spectacular, despite my incredible laziness in keeping the site up.

Military surfers took their fiercest interest yet, as I got hits from korea.army.mil, as well as nipr.mil, a mysterious firewall developed by the DoD, as [detailed in this blog](#). andrews.af.mil and eglin.af.mil, maxwell.af.mil, Andrews, Eglin and Maxwell Air Force bases I would presume, also stopped by. gate5-sandiego.nmci.navy.mil, the [Navy Marine Corps Intranet](#), also came thru to the site. blackhawk.goodfellow.af.mil is the most badass sounding. Multiple mach blog surfing??

It looks like all three branches of the federal government, the Australian defense department and several bits of the military think that HongPong.com is just fantastic!! Considering I'm so lazy, that's one hell of an impact.

From further afield in the .mil we get even more interesting entries:

walker-cache.korea.army.mil

gateway5.osd.mil - Office of Secretary of Defense??!?!?

iern.disa.mil [Defense Intelligence Services Agency](#)

And the granddaddy hit of hits:

cache1.iraq.centcom.mil

Ladies and gentlemen, CENTCOM was here. Thank you.

denver-254.blm.gov - Bureau of Land Management?!

gov.calgary.ab.ca - Government of Calgary

housegate4.house.gov - The House is in the house.

gk-central-100.usps.gov - Post Office too. What agency isn't hanging out here?!?

gtwy.uscourts.gov - Ahh, the federal courts.

defence.gov.au - And the fine Australian defense department.

nhtsa.dot.gov - The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (they are watching my driving!)

ssa.gov - Social Security Administration
sherman.state.gov - State Department!!

I would like to pull a couple lines from my server logs.... evidence of a technological victory, if not a moral one. The entire contents of my Iraq page was downloaded by the CENTCOM Iraq computer...

[IP deleted] - - [15/Jul/2004:18:16:34 -0500] "GET /hp-archives/topics/iraq/index.html HTTP/1.1" 200 688128 "http://www.hongpong.com/" "Mozilla/4.0 (compatible; MSIE 5.01; Windows NT 5.0)"

Meanwhile, we determine that the person at the State Department ran a search for "Chalabi" and "Zell" back in April!

*[IP deleted] - - [23/Apr/2004:14:25:19 -0500] "GET /hp-archives/000104.html HTTP/1.0" 200 11699 "http://www.google.com/search?q=**chalabi+zell**&hl=en&lr=&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&c2coff=1&start=10&sa=N" "Mozilla/4.0 (compatible; MSIE 6.0; Windows NT 5.1)"*

This is quite surprising, and I'm not sure how to feel about it. On the whole, I feel I've been brutally as honest as I could have been. I am glad that they got the page and looked at it... or didn't. Who knows? I have removed the IP numbers, despite their public nature, as I wouldn't want to anger the ECHELON system too much today.

As long as everyone is paying attention, I should quickly point out that [Kat has an ethereal nightvision picture](#) on the apparently rabbit-run blog fury & frost, itself a side project of Kat's sister at [Glucose](#) who helped develop the weather popup menu WeatherPop.

Here's to my growing community of national security readers!! Huzzah! If I'm not a particle in the grand conspiracy yet, at least I may influence some other particles...

Posted by HongPong at [02:31 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [HongPong-site](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Technological Apparatus](#)

May 16, 2004

Civilization by the fingernails

On Saturday afternoon, I wandered around by the river, followed some of the paths on the hillsides between the Mississippi and the east River Road. There is a waterfall in a steep limestone valley, where the road bends around, between Marshall and Summit avenues. The whole area is covered

with trails up and down the hills, with outcroppings, micro canyons with cracked mud. Across, on the Minneapolis side, dudes were fishing. I walked up the River Road, past Marshall and into Minneapolis.

The crowd changes and everyone is wearing shaggier clothes, mysterious winos climb out of the park that has a boardwalk placed atop the river shore. I go further, towards the Melrose four-point megalithic student apartment complex. At least it complements the industrial plastic packaging facility next door, which has its own railroad car full of raw polymer goo—or whatever it was.

There are a lot of students moving things around today, and so it is yet again the time for comings and goings. I didn't go to graduation today because I felt stressed out about dealing with all the people, after all the weird stuff going on, and the various rifts that have formed around people at Macalester and the world as a whole. It is a shitty thing for my friends who are graduating, but I needed to get away for a little while and not hear anyone else's voice.

I have not written much here in a while, for the most part since finals started, and this last week of saying my seasonal goodbyes to friends that are winging it out of the Twin Cities for the summer. For some incalculable reason, Andy Tweeten has elected to ride out the national elections in Montana—until November—a sacrifice which only a hearty denizen of Big Sky like A. Henry could possibly handle. Apparently it is still snowing around there. Tell us when spring starts!! Then drink a six pack just in time to put your parka back on.

Arun Muthiah has also winged it to colder climes. He is in Australia somewhere, and might end up working at a swank hotel on the Gold Coast. This is much more pleasant in June and July than Oman. And yet will another country of white people really solve anything?

One of my professors is returning to Afghanistan this summer, and this is pretty exciting but ever so slightly alarming, because we all know how smoothly things work out over there.

There are a lot of people that are cycling home for a few weeks, until June, then coming around again, more than last year. That should be lots of fun.

In other news a couple friends are thinking of new ideas for websites and such. I am uncertain what might come of it, but I am happy to have a little time for such new ideas, if they can be prevented from sinking in that thick, crushing July haze, which this year promises to be thicker than usual...

What I'm trying to address is that the whole symbolic logic of the world is swinging around right in front of us now.

It's a heart of darkness revealed and a grandiose, expanding theater of horror, where one obscene image after another chases grainy beheadings through a rippling poppy field of raving militant ex-officers who want to crush everything.

The lunatics have their hands on all the levers of power and words don't fit together like they used to. In the summer, it is hard to keep thinking along the same lines as before.

After a huge thunderstorm blew through this week, I darted off to drive around with Arun and look at how the whole river valley, and all the buildings, were bathed in a golden light. There were only a handful of cars, and the sky roiled with soft, rippling clouds arcing behind the storm, dark and receding on the eastern horizon. The sun sliced golden through heavy, roiled evening air. I dodged around the fallen trees, tossed branches and garbage bins strewn the roads.

As we came around to the northwest side of downtown Minneapolis, the glass towers glinted as if made of shining limestone under the dark sky. We drove into downtown, then along the Lake of the Isles as the sun finally came down. Minneapolitans were impressed, taking pictures. (I had no camera).

Finally, after the sun set, a chocolate ice cream cone at Sebastian Joe's, where I used to go when I was very little, living in Minneapolis. As we stood outside a man talked with his inaudible friend in a green compact.

"How are can we say we're liberating the people when we're killing them? Sixty percent of the people in that prison were innocent. How is that freedom?"

All my cynicism has been repaid a thousandfold, but is it gratifying?

Hahaaa, the war is a shameful disaster, as I suspected! What a bunch of cretins, now they've been laid low!!! Moral superiority r00t3d!! [Dance on ashes]

What a horrible idea. This turn of events does not bring me much gratification. Rumsfeld is an evil man, plain to see for all, now. At least things like that have been made clear.

So make no mistake, please. I am filled with anger and confusion about these turns of events. I am shamed that all the little kids in this country have to face these pictures of sexual humiliation, where my generation got the cracking of Berlin Wall, and those in between just had the dirty Clinton stuff.

This whole field of torture, this surreal complex of shame and sadomasochism was supposedly carried out by a half-dozen mountain hayseeds. No, As [Sy Hersh peels back a third layer on the Onion of Hell](#), he says that a special operation was tasked with coercing War on Terror targets with a number of techniques, including sexual humiliation (and perhaps blackmail tied to the photos).

I had my suspicions. When [I posted a link to this report](#) on the suspicious deaths of Afghan prisoners from the Guardian last March, it felt oddly out of place with the narrative they gave us. Now it looks like one of the first icebergs spotted.

This whole stream has set off a 'logik bomb' in American identity, while already parts of Washington are trying to steam along again, and the rest of the world looks on with puzzlement and fear.

I went wandering around because the symbolic logic that underpins American 'moral authority,' hegemony, soft power, whatever you want to call the attractive force that binds together a system of rule, all of it has been supercharged by the flipping images and dozens of deaths—of poor Iraqi Shiites, a huge chunk of the population—spilling out, hitting holy sites, setting one Iraqi against another.

It seems that the environment of torture spilled out of the norms created by the Bush administration's War on Terror policies, as desperation and a failure of intelligence last year led the army to start abusing Iraqi they picked up for intelligence tidbits. The confusion of ends and goals spirals ever further, eroding our very ability to deal with reality.

Fortunately, everyone wants to get plastic surgery now, as the television commands!

What we claimed as The Order is vanishing, but life rolls on, albeit at higher gasoline prices. I rode the bus back along University on a Saturday

afternoon, and people still existed, they haven't been wiped away by the confusion that spreads every day.

Apparently, that was the 'reality check' I was looking for. It is too damn easy to be a college student and get swallowed up in the bubble world of Macalester, something that the seniors always like to observe... and I am a senior now. Where did normality go?? Was it on the bus?

It's the damn summer. Grit your teeth. Get serious. Either the collapse is coming, or it isn't. Either Bush's administration bends and crumbles, or it whiplashes all over, civil war, Arabs, Christians, Jews, Pashtuns, Chechens, nukes, oil, heroin. Goddesses of greed and avarice in the sky. Merchants of war fill the cracks. Profits for the madmen of all sides...

Oh, I forgot. On my birthday they declared sanctions on Syria. Brilliant.

Posted by HongPong at [01:32 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Afghanistan](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Minnesota](#) , [Usual Nonsense](#)

April 26, 2004

Iraqi reconstruction or deconstruction

I am really getting into term paper time here, so it's quite difficult to write a whole lot. However, I would suggest that you spend a while looking at [Raed in the Middle](#). He has some great ideas about how to drive Iraqi reconstruction, but as a Palestinian living in Iraq he has a peculiar sense of how horrible things are becoming in Iraq and Palestine. His friend [also went to Fallujah and wrote about it](#).

In class today some students proposed an Iraqi confederation and wouldn't you know it, [here's a proposal to do just that](#).

Here is an old article that Raed's brother [wrote about Chalabi's militia](#), the supposed "Free Iraqi Forces."

This is kind of cool: "[Another day in the Empire: Life in Neoconservative America](#)" by Kurt Nimmo.

[Empire Notes is back in Austin, TX](#), rounding up what happened to him in Iraq.

[Alliances are shifting dramatically](#). Is soft power evaporating?

Check out this [sweet satirical Halliburton poster](#).

For the mercenary file a slightly hyperbolic piece on "[the rising corporate military monster](#)" from CounterPunch. That is what I have to go read about right now, thank you very much.

One presentation due Wednesday, one term paper draft due Friday, two papers due Monday. Here we go!

Posted by HongPong at [08:30 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Iraq](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#)

April 24, 2004

Remind us

There's been a hella lotta news over the past couple days. However, Saturday is Springfest, and I fully intend to immerse myself in the music, because I haven't been *keeping tabs* on pop culture as well as I should be. I don't want to think about all the damn news for a little while. So let this summary suffice for Saturday; there's plenty of interesting things to look at, radical and more conservative.

[Remind us why the war happened](#). This animation has some rather jarring imagery but nonetheless it's worth looking at. A tacky style or propaganda of the 21st century?

UN Iraq man [Lakhdar Brahimi condemns Israel's policies](#), generating conflict with the Israelis and surely making the Pentagon a happy bunch of fellas, reports BBC.

The United Nations envoy to Iraq has sparked a row after describing Israeli policy towards the Palestinians as "the big poison in the region". **Lakhdar Brahimi told French radio there was a link between Israeli actions and the recent upsurge of violence in Iraq. He said that the handover of power in Iraq was being complicated by Israel's policies in the West Bank and Gaza.**

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan's spokesman has reportedly described the comments as "unacceptable".

....

Mr Brahimi said his job was made more difficult by Israel's "violent and repressive security policy" and its "determination to occupy more and more Palestinian territory". He added that people's perception in the region was of the "injustice" of Israeli policy compounded by the "thoughtless support" of the US.

The UN secretary general's spokesman, Fred Eckhard, told Israeli radio it was not acceptable for senior UN officials to make such comments about a member nation.

[CS Monitor reporter on the deterioration in Iraq](#) and how it has made journalists increasingly unable to wander about the country:

In essence, I feel we've become boiled frogs. Toss the frog into boiling water, and he jumps right out again, or at least tries. But put him in lukewarm water and slowly turns up the heat and he barely

notices until he's cooked. Rather than overestimate the problems (a common journalistic temptation), I've begun to wonder if we're not understating them, notwithstanding the letters from readers who accuse our paper, and many others, of being Chicken Littles.

To be sure, in a wartime environment like Iraq's there is rarely a constant arc of progress, or descent into chaos. Violence ebbs and flows, incidents flare and then almost inexplicably, vanish. This froggy is leaving on a reporting trip outside Baghdad today - the first trip out of the city in more than a week. It feels safer again.

Phil Carter of [Intel Dump](#) has an insightful article on Slate about [how the Iraq invasion has basically paralyzed the ability of the US military](#) to respond to things elsewhere, crunching logistics and all that. He's a more conservative guy but he knows his stuff really well.

I wanted to throw in some things from CounterPunch: this April 10 piece by Robert Fisk describing how the [Bush administration attacks its critics](#) on Iraq, this jolly rambling report on '[Pseudoconservatives](#)' by an anonymous defense analyst. Rahul Mahajan is a very intrepid journalist that I've mentioned recently, having written this piece [on a visit to Fallujah](#) and also writing the very interesting [Empire Notes from Baghdad](#). Also Tariq Ali weighs in with his New Leftist sort of thing on "[The Iraqi Resistance: a new phase](#)." What seems to be his key point:

Its no use for Westerners to shed hypocritical tears for Iraq or to complain that the Iraqi resistance does not meet the high stands of Western liberalism. Which resistance ever does?

When an Occupation is ugly, the resistance cannot be beautiful, except in a Hollywood movie or an Italian comedy.

Then there is Fisk again on the Bush-Sharon plan, "[Bush Legitimizes Terrorism](#)." The piece is a tad overwrought, but I can only imagine how bitter someone like him would be having seen the middle east burn itself to bits for decades, never even thinking that it would come to this today. On the front page today is a humorous "[Glossary of the Iraqi Occupation](#)" by Paul de Rooij.

Here are the now-famous [photos of deceased American soldiers returning to Dover Air Force Base](#) (on a fast mirror). These pictures are the rather explicit negation of a finely tuned, decade long Cheney policy to remove critical images of the reality of American warfare from the array of visual images that the public can actually see. In other words, their strategy was to prevent you from seeing these pictures. Now you can and should look at them to understand more fully the situation.

Mr Marshall is following a couple interesting developments. Firstly he says that [plans to invade the southern Iraqi oilfields were ordered at the same time in the same document](#) as the plans to invade Afghanistan in late 2001. Hot damn, cause and effect! He is also following the upcoming changes in

the Iraqi government, and the apparent [distancing of Ahmed Chalabi from the reins of power](#), both within Iraq and the ludicrous perks accorded to him by the U.S., such as his enormous personal stash of incriminating Baathist documents that by all rights should belong to the Iraqi people, not a lying, intel spoofing embezzler.

The topic is the new Iraqi government now being planned and organized jointly by the US and the UN and the fact that the decision has been made to toss overboard most if not all of the folks we put on the Interim Governing Council. **At the top of the list of those to get the heave-ho is Ahmed Chalabi.**

According to the article, the administration is seriously considering cutting off the amazingly ill-conceived \$340,000 a month subsidy we still give Chalabi. Meanwhile, his role as head of the de-Baathification committee has just been publicly criticized by Paul Bremer.

David Corn has some reactions on the [administration shifting Afghanistan money](#) getting to possibly illegal Iraq war preparations.

The Hawkington Times says that "[US sees Syria 'facilitating' insurgents](#)." Oh well.

One conservative columnist in the Chicago Tribune flames Bush to a crisp over the war. I strongly think this is worth checking out, as it is not the new leftist claptrap of Counterpunch! :) Since no one wants to register for the Tribune, why not [read it on the Agonist message boards](#)?

They repeatedly tell us, in only slightly different ways, that this leadership group--or, better said, "court"--is one of "irregulars." At every opportunity, they went around our official government, around our institutions, and likely enough around the law. Across their history from the 1970s until today, this Bush neo-conservative group, backed by elements of the radical right and American supporters of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, created alternate power centers to bypass traditional American ones. In short, they are true radicals. Think "Robespierre."

Bob Woodward writes in "Plan of Attack," for instance, how Douglas Feith, one of the most radical of the Bush-Rumsfeld courtiers, lobbied for the special intelligence planning board within the Pentagon to bypass traditional intelligence that warned against going to war in Iraq. This fact is widely known, but Woodward importantly explains: "It was a different way of doing things, first because the planners would be the implementers"--they would become the "expeditionary force" within Iraq after the war. Definitely not kosher!

There is a huge feature on the public radio series [Marketplace about the Spoils of War](#), the reconstruction cash money millionaires and all that. You can listen online, and it will certainly go in the Mercenary File as well. Speaking of mercenaries here is a [feature on them from earlier](#) in the month.

Posted by HongPong at [02:06 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Iraq](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Macalester College](#) , [Media](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#)
April 15, 2004

Struck Dumb

Wednesday was a very strange one. I am not sure what to make of all that's happened.

What does it mean to have a man at the helm who knows he's made mistakes, but can't recall what they are?

Where do we go from here? How will the world react to [Bush and Sharon's joint declaration](#)?

If it's now US policy to support these things, are the settlers and the White House coordinating? How is Washington-- the Pentagon and the White House, I suppose-- gauging the 'realities on the ground?' Who gets free reign to manipulate the realities?

"[Bush rips up the road map](#)" reports the Guardian today. On Tuesday, "[Sharon vows to keep control of major West Bank settlements](#)" they reported.

The rumors are getting around now that the horrible [John Negroponte will be appointed to succeed Paul Bremer](#) in the Sovereign Iraq. That man's hands are bloody from Central America, the horror of this man ruling American policy in Iraq with all these mercenaries around is too much...

[Haaretz analysis on Bush's statements](#).

I respect Rabbi Michael Lerner writing in the Nation (and online) about [the terrible synchronicities of both occupations](#). Lerner is among the Jewish peace movement struggling to challenge the occupation of Palestinian land. This piece is a little more [radical dissention from Zionism](#), also the Nation.

"[Saravejo on the Euphrates](#)." Another Nation article about the wreckage of Fallujah.

I think everyone should read what [Billmon wrote on the Bush-Sharon agreement](#) today. It is a dead on expression on what we've thrown away, and what terrible risks are being gained by the moment.

[Cheney's paycheck from Halliburton](#) in 2003 was only \$20,000 less than his White House paycheck.

[Rep. Waxman watching the reconstruction contracts](#) in Iraq. Good info here...

Fareed Zakaria in Newsweek: "[Our Last Real Chance](#)" featuring "The Politics of Rage: Why do They Hate Us?"

More about [the devious Ahmed Chalabi](#) from the Agonist.

What weakness, what confusion...

Posted by HongPong at [02:40 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Iraq](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [The White House](#) , [War on Terror](#)

April 14, 2004

Enter power

Drawing later on a line he often slips into his campaign speeches, he reminded a global audience that "freedom is the Almighty's gift to every man and woman in this world. And as the greatest power on the face of the Earth, we have an obligation to help the spread of freedom."

New York Times -- April 14, 2003

Posted by HongPong at [01:40 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [International Politics](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [The White House](#) , [War on Terror](#)

April 13, 2004

Bush-Sharon declaration approaches: Fundamentalism at the gates?

He said to them, "Not yours is it to know times or eras which the Father placed in His own jurisdiction.

But you shall be obtaining power at the coming of the holy spirit on you, and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in entire Judea and Samaria, as far as the limits of the earth."

--So Spake [The Jesus, Acts 1:7-8](#) (Concordant Bible).

[Bush is set to meet with Ariel Sharon at the White House tomorrow](#) during a very climactic moment. It is encouraging, I suppose, that he's offering to withdraw from the Gaza Strip, much to the fury of the settlers and Israeli right-wing parties within the government. It's nice to actually see settlers forced to protest. ([The Guardian adds the context](#) so ominously lacking in American media)

We can't underestimate the importance of the effect of Sharon's Gaza gambit on the West Bank's future. Sharon seeks nothing less than leveraging America's power to *permanently* secure the vast majority of the settlements, along with the seized and fenced land around them, representing somewhere between 40 to 60% of the West Bank.

On this topic, President Bush's motives have always seemed very shadowy. In his time, Poppa Bush strongly believed in checking Israel's land grab,

leading to quite a bit of friction between him and the Israelis. No doubt this stemmed from his realpolitik outlook, as well as an oil-man's firm goal of maintaining decent relations with the Arab world.

So is Bush just another Christian fundamentalist, blithely unconcerned, or even pleased, that Jewish settlers are displacing Arabs and slicing up the land? I tend not to think so. In his addled life, Bush has been treated to a spectacular spiritual education from Billy Graham and the other southern Christians, but I think that Graham does not teach the sons of rulers the same sort of pap his media empire propagates. To control fundamentalists and secure their loyalty, you can't think along the same lines they do. All along Graham whispers to Bush the key slogans needed to bring them into line while the outward operation levels their minds.

I saw Graham's creepy daughter [Anne Graham Lotz pimping her new fundie book, "Why?"](#) on [Hannity & Colmes](#) and other Fox outlets for the Easter season. Besides her disturbing wrenched-facelift appearance, I was struck by her final statement that the Sept. 11 hijacking plot was essentially birthed in hell, and furthermore that those causing all the trouble in the streets of Iraq that day didn't worship the same God "as us." Both of these statements strike me as heretical and dangerous to the Christian faith, because they elevate Sept. 11 from the mundane to the spiritual or eschatological plane of existence. They reinforce Bush's false and anti-Christian notions of ultimate good, accessible at the Pentagon, pitted against ultimate evil lurking in the Arab shadows. These ideas are designed to compel Christians to throw everything away and march mindlessly to the end of the world and the All-Consuming Battle of Good and Evil.

Ultimately Lotz's declarations are heretical for the very reason that Jesus laid out: **Not yours is it to know times or eras which the Father placed in His own jurisdiction.** Planes flying into buildings are not the ultimate harbingers of spiritual collapse, *unless we permit them to be.*

If Bush has been huddled this whole Easter vacation praying at the ranch as Iraq goes up in flames, that would concern me more. And I suspect he probably has.

What kind of God resides in the infinite space between his two temples? What loosed fears and imagined demons nip at his eye sockets when he stumbles through another unnerving press conference?

The wild theories about how [Leo Strauss encouraged his followers to strike a pose of prophetic piety](#) while cynically claiming divine inspiration come to mind when consider the attitude taken by the Moralizing Mega Leaders

around him. The idea that the nihilistic real leaders would lead along the naïve religious "gentlemen" of society fits over today's situation *too* well. But it's paranoid. Is Bush the top gentleman or the nihilist leading the other gentlemen?

Why have Israel and the West Bank become so crucial? Why does Bush go through all these hoops to protect, extend and underwrite Israel's policies? It still doesn't add up, and it probably won't until the dust settles. And the dust won't settle until the "final status agreement," so in the meantime young and confused people like me speculate endlessly.

I will add the obvious facts: support for the Israeli settlement project is close to a political freebie for right-wingers scooping up fundamentalist Christians. It's also highly profitable for the military-industrial engine, once the unchallengable priority of continuous annexation is locked into place. These are some of the prime movers, but it fails to explain why Bush thinks as he does.

In what seems like a thousand years ago, I reached the conclusion that the morality of Palestinian violence could only be judged alongside the fact that Israel's multi-party government incorporates several parties that openly advocate the ethnic cleansing of Arabs. I felt that those parties' Jewish supporters in the West Bank enjoyed a political shield and even encouragement of their aggressive activities. The Likud, as the umbrella right-wing party, is hardly innocent of prodding Israeli Jews to invest in seizing more land.

I first ran across the little Scripture quote above in some fundie literature that was of course devoted to helping the Jews settle Judea and Samaria, to ultimately bring about the end of the world and the collapse of the Jewish people, a suppressed logic bomb in the Likud-fundamentalist alliance. I've heard other fundies talk about how we should witness Judea and Samaria, and pay attention to what the (white) Christians who've been there report.

But unfortunately, I am all too aware that it in great part it is *the Palestinian Christian population* that bears the crushing pressure of this horrible, profitable war. Especially in Bethlehem, they are the ones squeezed between Fatah and Hamas on one side, and the expanding "suburbs" of Jerusalem upon their farmland. Hence, with what means they still have, many have chosen to leave the Holy Land for Jordan and points elsewhere.

So, in my cheeky atheist way, I took that verse of the Bible to signify that Jesus would want good people to *witness all transpiring in the ancient land*. Seeing past the unpredictable violence of Islamic militants, Jesus would be more than a little upset that those ancient communities are getting rolled

aside for another bypass highway, another self-defeating expanse of red-roofed homes. Jesus would want us to understand that a sturdy peace, not annexing a bloc of settlements on Holy land, is the only goal that a good Christian would work towards.

If in fact the U.S. acts to secure these settlements, who can predict what the reaction will be across the Arab world? Who knows what the Iraqis will do, now that they've determined how to kill and injure the U.S. military at an unprecedented rate?

Hear Ye! The time is nigh to [visit Armageddon Books](#). :)

The ongoing news and some opinions: As always, some of the most clear and incisive views come from within Israel. "[Caving in to terror, back to 242](#)" by Amir Oren:

It took a mere eight companies - paratroopers, Golani and Border Police. They secured the open, fragile borders of Israel in Gaza and Sinai, in the Arava and along the length of the West Bank, in the Galilee and in the Amakim region, right up to the May 1967 alert and the subsequent Six-Day War. That was the entire ground force the Israel Defense Forces was asked to commit to maintaining security along the confrontation lines with Jordan, Egypt, Syria and Lebanon. There was no fenced, electronic obstacle line covered by air power.

....

Ninety-two is more than eleven times eight - and 92 companies is the force the army needed after the Six-Day War to guard the new lines and patrol the territories. That was before the number of commands was inflated, and the numbers increased even further with the intifada of the 1980s and then again with the fighting under way since September 2000.

.....

In a new study of the IDF from 1967-1973, recently completed by Maj. Gen. (res.) Haim Nadel, Sharon is quoted at telling a general staff meeting around the time Eshkol and Johnson were meeting: **"We generals have all the full right not only to express ourselves, but to influence matters. A lot will be dictated to Israel by the IDF's position. These borders are not only borders for peace, they are borders to prevent war, borders to prevent the danger of eradication ... We are now in an ideal situation; there won't be normalcy for decades to come ... the borders to keep are the current ones, without any retreats, without any arrangement that doesn't guarantee absolutely our military control over the territory. And that means maintaining the current situation."**

The recent [holiday proved that Israelis don't really want to spend time in the West Bank](#), despite the wishes of Tourism Minister Benny Elon of the Moledet Party, who lives in a West Bank settlement, according to Avirama Golan:

It would be interesting to know how Tourism Minister Binyamin Elon felt this morning. I mean, there hasn't been a Pesach like this one in years: More than a million people thronged to the countryside, hiking, picking cultivated buttercups, visiting the parks, touring archaeological sites and filling every possible hotel and guest house. Even the Negev knew joy.

...

But from the perspective of the tourism minister, who wakes up in the morning in [West Bank settlement] Beit El, the rush to nature is somewhat one-sided. The vast majority of the hiking and traveling takes place inside the Green Line. There are a few specific sites in Yesha (the Hebrew acronym of Judea and Samaria) that are blessed with physical beauty and historical significance (national significance, too, in the eyes of many)...

....

In the Negev, Galilee and center of the country, in the parks and forests, everyone holidayed - religious and secular, hawks and doves. With their feet and tires, they marked out the Green Line.

That was the strongest proof of the Israeli aspiration for normalcy. If the settlers' claim that the terrorism wiped out the Green Line were correct, and that there is no difference between Afula and Ofra, why did most families prefer to spread their blankets out in Horshat Tal, barbecue on the banks of the Yarkon River, pick cotton on a kibbutz, sunbathe along the shores of Lake Kinneret and put up tents in Eilat? **Maybe because it's that small, old, crowded Israel, blossoming in a cornucopia of colors and the fragrances of flowers is in the hearts, and the land of messianic salvation is the one that failed?**

Here is an article from Salon about [Tourism Minister Elon and his connections with American fundamentalists](#).

The [Palestinian Prime Minister Qureia is infuriated that this plan will help clear the way for annexation](#), and naturally it's Finance Minister Benjamin Netanyahu leading the charge to demand that the Likud Party annex:

Sharon expects guarantees from Bush in support for the disengagement plan, assurances that no other plan will replace the road map, backing in the fight against terror emanating from territories from which Israel has withdrawn, and a declaration that Israel will not be required to return to the 1967 borders.

Meanwhile, Palestinian Prime Minister Ahmed Qureia said Tuesday that Sharon's plan to retain and expand five large West Bank settlement blocs destroys any chance for peace. Qureia said the plan "may destroy the whole peace process."

"These tactics destroy any hope for peace," he said. "We will not accept any settlement blocs. And we will not accept any decisions unless the Palestinian Authority is a part of the decision-making process."

....

Hours before leaving the country at around 2 A.M. Tuesday, Sharon said the West Bank settlement of Ma'aleh Adumim would be included in the "Jerusalem envelope" section of the West Bank separation fence. The prime minister also specified five other West Bank settlement areas that would remain under Israeli rule.

....

Sharon wants the American letter to contain declarations regarding the future permanent status, which can be taken as support for the annexation of large blocs of settlement in the West Bank and the elimination of the Palestinian refugees' right of return to Israel. Sources said a final agreement may not be reached until Wednesday's meeting with Bush.

Sources in Jerusalem also said the exchange of letters will not be public, but that the Americans will not be averse to Israel's publication of the letters.

PM names settlements to remain under Israeli rule: Speaking at the start of the traditional Moroccan post-Passover Mimouna festivities in Ma'aleh Adumim, Sharon said the settlement - which is adjacent to Jerusalem - was one of six areas in the West Bank that would remain under Israeli control.

"Ma'aleh Adumim will remain part of the state of Israel forever and ever," Sharon said about the largest settlement in the West Bank. "It will be included in the envelope fence around Jerusalem in order to avoid terror attacks on it and in its environs."

The prime minister also said the Gush Etzion settlement bloc, Givat Ze'ev, Ariel, Kiryat Arba, and enclaves in the West Bank city of Hebron would all remain under Israeli sovereignty. This was the first time Sharon has detailed the settlements Israel wants to keep.

"Ariel, the Etzion Bloc, Giv'at Zeev will remain in Israeli hands and will continue to develop," Sharon said. "Hebron and Kiryat Arba will be strong. Only an Israeli initiative will keep us from being dragged into dangerous initiatives like the Geneva and Saudi initiatives."

On the other hand Yoel Marcus is more optimistic that the Gaza move will finally bring about an end to the occupation. Keep in mind that Benjamin Netanyahu is leading the efforts to build as much fence around settlements as possible:

Netanyahu has no intention of supporting the disengagement plan until Sharon builds a **fence around the Ariel, Gush Etzion, Maale Adumim** and other enclaves.... "At the moment", Netanyahu told his followers, "not a meter of that security barrier is being built in the direction of those enclaves. **Sharon is building the fence on the Green Line, or next to it, without anybody noticing. I suggest he start taking me seriously.** Only when the barrier is built, and I mean by that the route approved by the government, only after that will I get behind him. I will force him to fulfill that condition. And I'm not just saying that, not threatening. This is for real".

Tonight comes the long-belated press conference. I wonder what demons will peer out from his eye sockets this time.

Posted by HongPong at [05:25 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [The White House](#)

April 11, 2004

"I like to fight barefoot" vs. "Expect snipers on all minarets"

[Anti-U.S. Outrage Unites a Growing Iraqi Resistance](#) (NY Times, April 11) BAGHDAD, Iraq, April 10 — Moneer Munthir is ready to kill Americans.

For months, he has been struggling to control an explosion of miserable feelings: humiliation, fear, anger, depression.

"But in the last two weeks, these feelings blow up inside me," said Mr. Munthir, a 35-year-old laborer. "The Americans are attacking Shiite and Sunni at the same time. They have crossed a line. I had to get a gun."

Ahmed, a 29-year-old man with elegant fingers and honey-colored eyes, has been **planting bombs inside dead dogs and leaving them on the highway**. He and a team of helpers have been especially busy recently.

"We start work after 11 p.m.," Ahmed said. **"Our group is small, just friends, and we don't even have a name."**

.....

The other day, when trouble broke out in the predominantly Shiite neighborhood of Khadamiya, he dashed home from work, grabbed a clip for his Kalashnikov and took it out front.

"If the Americans come this way, we will fight them," Mr. Muhammad said. "I'm going to defend my house, my street, my land, my religion."

He stood on the sidewalk in sweat pants, without shoes.

"I like to fight barefoot," he said.

Mr. Muhammad said he recently joined the Mahdi Army. And while some of his neighbors watched him admiringly as he strapped on an ammunition belt and gulped down a glass of water before a battle started, others scowled.

.....

A few days after the contractors were killed, United States marines invaded Falluja, 35 miles west of

Baghdad, in a major offensive to wipe out the insurgents behind the attack. So far, more than 300 people have been killed.

Before the fall of Saddam Hussein a year ago, young men in this city were told they were the vanguard, the elite, top prospects for top jobs because of their tribal connections and Sunni alliances. Now, they are adrift, **subject to the most aggressive American tactics and the full brunt of occupation.**

Like the angry youth of the West Bank and Gaza, Iraqi children are increasingly surrounded by music, images, leaflets and praise for fighters. "The men of Falluja are men for hard tasks," sings Sabah al-Jenabi, a popular Iraqi performer, in a song that made the rounds even before the killing of the contractors. "They paralyzed America with rocket-propelled grenades. The men of Islam will fight the Americans like leaderless soldiers. We'll drag Bush's corpse through the dirt."

Abdul Razak al-Muaimy, a 32-year-old laborer, said: "I train my son to kill Americans. That is one reason I am grateful to Saddam Hussein. All Iraqis know how to use weapons."

Fighting barefoot strikes me as the ultimate signature of life and death in the Global South. This is everything we could ever fear, replicated across the country.

It goes without saying that such groups are literally impossible for the U.S. to infiltrate, so the only strategy available is collective punishment, which merely reflects the West Bank. Our leaders believe that this "Mahdi" thing is a concrete object with membership lists and annual tea parties. Is it so hard to believe that *they're just plain pissed?*

Already, "[We think we have taken away a significant capability](#)," Brig. Gen. Mark Kimmitt, deputy director for operations of the military's task force in Iraq, said in a telephone interview. "It no longer is an offensive threat; but it still remains a threat." General Kimmitt said the order had gone out "**to destroy the Sadr militia — deliberately, precisely and powerfully.**"

But now the militiamen who took control, to varying degrees, in Kut, Kufa, Najaf and a section of Baghdad called Sadr City have broken into small groups, with some already seeming ready to melt away to fight another day. "We believe that many who were wearing the Mahdi Army uniform last Saturday have tucked it under the bed and put their AK's back in the closet," one senior military officer said.

That means detailed intelligence will be required to identify the militia's leadership and important fighters, a factor noted by Mr. Bush in his radio address, which carried a warning of the "struggle and testing" that lay ahead. In Falluja, he said, the Americans "are taking control of the city, **block by block.**" In the south, he said, "they have taken the initiative from al-Sadr's militia."

"**Prisoners are being taken, and intelligence is being gathered,**" Mr. Bush said. "Our decisive actions will continue until these enemies of democracy are dealt with."

Enter *Evil Galactic Emperor Palpatine*:

DO YOU FEEL THE HATE FLOWING THROUGH YOU?!? YEESSS..... GOOD....

[The Iraqi army refuses to fight other Iraqis](#), and of course they have been dissolving all over the place.

[British officers in their sector of southern Iraq believe that U.S. troops are just plain brutal.](#) This is further disturbing evidence of the impact that the hi-ranking Pentagon planners have had on America's policy towards Iraqis.

Speaking from his base in southern Iraq, the officer said: "My view and the view of the British chain of command is that the Americans' use of violence is not proportionate and is over-responsive to the threat they are facing. They don't see the Iraqi people the way we see them. **They view them as Untermenschen.** They are not concerned about the Iraqi loss of life in the way the British are. Their attitude towards the Iraqis is tragic, it's awful.

"The US troops view things in very simplistic terms. It seems hard for them to reconcile subtleties between who supports what and who doesn't in Iraq. It's easier for their soldiers to group all Iraqis as the bad guys. As far as they are concerned Iraq is bandit country and everybody is out to kill them."

.....

The officer explained that, under British military rules of war, British troops would never be given clearance to carry out attacks similar to those being conducted by the US military, in which helicopter gunships have been used to fire on targets in urban areas.

British rules of engagement only allow troops to open fire when attacked, using the minimum force necessary and only at identified targets. The American approach was markedly different: **"When US troops are attacked with mortars in Baghdad, they use mortar-locating radar to find the firing point and then attack the general area with artillery, even though the area they are attacking may be in the middle of a densely populated residential area.**

"They may well kill the terrorists in the barrage but they will also kill and maim innocent civilians. That has been their response on a number of occasions. It is trite, but American troops do shoot first and ask questions later. They are very concerned about taking casualties and have even trained their guns on British troops, which has led to some confrontations between soldiers.

I can't believe they just use the computers to fire back into the general area of mortars--that's appalling and may be a war crime. "[Expect Snipers on All Minarets.](#)"

[Exiles are coming back to fight.](#) This story is reported by Hannah Allam, who as a young female American Muslim, has put herself at great personal risk to report from Iraq, including a daring story I remember from months ago where she went deep into the Sunni Triangle to interview insurgents. This particular story was reported from the dusty back alleys of Amman, Jordan.

These [via TPM](#): Even [CIA arch-enemy Novak is taking shots at Bush?!](#) "the generals are silent -- in public. Many confide that they will not cast their normal Republican votes on Nov. 2." Wowza... This [Aug. 6 memo zap](#) comes from a disenchanted former Republican bigshot. Disorder up and down their ranks!!!

[Judge the Pundits!](#) (via Agonist) [Support Erodes. Anger throughout the mideast,](#) as always.

[Billmon makes the case that Iraq is now FUBAR](#) to end all Rs. In that thread magurakurin said that

These people in Fallujah are fighting for their homes, they have nowhere to go. It all reminds of a scene in Casablanca When Colonel Strausser asks Rick how he will feel when the Germans march into New York and Bogart replies with something to the effect of "Well, there are some parts of New York that I would advise you not to invade."

How is Iraq any different? Do you think three battalions of any Marines would be able to control Jersey City? How about the Bronx? South Central LA? It's over, we lost.

The troop shortage is a great deal of the problem now. The U.S. literally can't allocate many more marines to crush Fallujah, it's just too big. The whole country is too big.

Patrick Cockburn reports on [Apocalypse now? Part 1](#) in The Independent.

the disasters of the past week, the worst in political terms since President Bush decided to invade Iraq, are in large measure self-inflicted. The US suddenly found itself fighting a two-front war because it over-reacted to pressure, political and military, from important minority groups in the Sunni and Shia communities.

In Vietnam a US commander once said of a village: "We had to destroy it in order to save it." In Iraq the same might apply to Fallujah. It is true that since the war Fallujah has been the most militant and anti-American city in Iraq, but it is not entirely typical. Sunni by religion and highly tribal, it has a well-earned reputation among Iraqis as being a bastion for bandits. Iraqis in Baghdad, even those sympathetic to the resistance, spoke of people in Fallujah pursuing their own private feud with the US.

Yet the US responded to the killing of the four US contractors in Fallujah by sending in 1,200 Marines to launch a medieval siege, one in which they initially refused to allow ambulances in or out. If the Americans really believed they were being attacked by a tiny minority, Iraqis asked, why were they attacking a city of 300,000 people? The result has been to turn Fallujah into a nationalist and religious symbol for all Iraqis.

.....

[Sadr]'s black-clad militiamen, known as the Army of the Mahdi, number perhaps 5,000 men. But as soon as they went on the offensive, they exposed the fragility of US support among the Iraqi police and US-trained paramilitary units, such as the Iraqi Civil Defence Corps, which were expected to assume an increasing share of security duties.

About 200,000 Iraqis belong to these forces. However, confronted by the Army of the Mahdi the police faded away, often handing over their weapons to Mr Sadr's men. As soon as the Army of the Mahdi moved on the city of Kut, on the Tigris south of Baghdad, the police disappeared and the Ukrainian soldiers in the city withdrew.

.....

By dissolving the Iraqi state and dealing only with Iraqis long in exile, the US began to alienate Iraqis as a whole. Mr Bremer and the CPA confined themselves to Saddam's old palaces, and when they visited other cities they were cocooned from the reality of Iraqi life around them, most notably the growing anger at the lack of economic opportunities.

Even now there are only limited signs that Washington and the CPA understand the extent of the political defeat that they have suffered. If they are not prepared to hold Iraq with a large military garrison, they need Iraqi Arab allies - and of these today they have almost none.

[The Sharonizing of America:](#) you have to read this, because only an Israeli can understand the synchronicity:

the Americans have supplanted us in the headlines. Their air force carried out targeted assassinations, letting the chips of civilian casualties fly where they may as they lop off the arm of terror. In a confusion of historic images, the Iraqi quagmire was dipped into the Lebanese quicksand with a touch of Vietnam jungle.

.....

The jubilee of Dien Bien Phu: The struggle between the occupation forces and powerful national currents hasn't changed - not in Nablus and not in Baghdad.

....

However, the peak of the coordination between the two countries is the current situation, in which for the last few years we have been witnessing a kind of Israelization - or Sharonization - of America: in its attitude toward the threats of terrorism, America is

talking and behaving in Iraq like the last of the hawks on the Israeli General Staff. Instead of giving Jerusalem an example of political daring, *Washington has become a huge version of the Israeli army's "we'll show them" approach.* Sharon's visit there next week will look almost like the hosting of the aged mentor by his slightly maladroit disciple.

Daily sites to check (yes, Gerber, this is my belated note to you) would mainly include [the Agonist](#), [Juan Cole](#), [Billmon](#), [WarInContext](#), [Dkos](#), [BackToIraq](#) and Josh Marshall's [TPM](#), with a side of [TomPaine](#), [Alternet](#), [ZNet](#), [Counterpunch](#) and [CommonDreams](#).

[Jesus' General](#) featuring [Republican Jesus](#), is just damn great. [RealClearPolitics](#) got a good mention as a well-done conservative blog on Dkos yesterday. Steve Gillard is on point yet again about their "[CEO accountability avoidance](#)." [Blogging of the President](#) is a nice liberal blog by Jay Rosen (including [something about Kurds](#)). [INTEL DUMP](#) isn't bad, but fairly aggressive/conservative (to engage in pigeonholing). [Mark Kleiman](#) also is a top notch blogger. [Tapped is another nice weblog](#) from The American Prospect Online. [Counterspin](#) mm mm good. [OpenSourcePolitics](#) is kewl.

[Empire Notes](#) is posting straight from Baghdad. This is excellent: [Turning Tables](#), a soldier who blogged when he was in Iraq, and has just started up again after returning to civilian life, but of course things have taken their turn:

i'm so torn now...it's hard for me to make an unbiased decision...how do i feel...
revolution is coming...i hope it's averted...but i know it won't be...how do you quench the fire of fanaticism...there is no central command capable of surrender...a million militants/freedom fighters/insurgents...a million roque groups who don't agree with each other...A million places to hide in and fight from...one giant can of shit worms...
Not to be confused with [e-rocky-confidential](#) and [Iraq Now](#), other soldiers writing in Iraq.

In the Military-Industrial Feedbag department, consider [whereisthemoney.org](#), charting how many trillions of Pentagon dollars fly out of the Treasury somewhere into CorporateSpace. Compare with [CostOfWar.com](#) or its [scholarship page](#).

Some paranoid things I'm throwing in, as long as we are talking about those who were Determined to Strike Inside U.S.: [Emperor's Clothes Articles on 9-11](#). Something paranoid about [Kerry and the DLC](#).

My God, [David Brooks is still the most wretched thing to see](#). Strained cognitive dissonance and silly sources (Lieberman AND a Yale lecturer?! Huzzah!) of the worst sort:

Most important, leadership in the U.S. is for once cool and resolved. This week I spoke with leading Democrats and Republicans and found a virtual consensus. We're going to keep the June 30 handover deadline. We're going to raise troop levels if necessary. We're going to wait for the holy period to end

and crush Sadr. As Joe Lieberman put it, a military offensive will alienate Iraqis, but "the greater risk is [Sadr] will grow into something malevolent." As Charles Hill, the legendary foreign service officer who now teaches at Yale, observed, "I've been pleasantly surprised by the boldness and resolve."

Nonetheless, yesterday's defections from the Iraqi Governing Council show that populist pressure on the good guys is getting intense. Maybe it is time to pause, to let passions cool, to let the democrats marshal their forces. If people like Sistani are forced to declare war on the U.S., the gates of hell will open up.

Over the long run, though, the task is unavoidable. Sadr is an enemy of civilization. The terrorists are enemies of civilization. They must be defeated.

Under **the mercenary file** we should add this NY Times [story about how Blackwater was lured](#) into the now-legendary Fallujah ambush. Also consider that the [MilCorps are grouping together now](#): "*Each private firm amounts to an individual battalion,*" said one U.S. government official familiar with the developments. "*Now they are all coming together to build the largest security organization in the world.*" Sounds like SkyNet. A further [comment on the condotierri](#). Of course without sufficient troops they [saved the day in Najf](#) before. [Hired Guns by Tucker Carlson](#). Is it Crossfire Tucky Tuck? I can't imagine he'd muss his bowtie.

[Texans pray for oil in Israel](#). Why the hell not?

Posted by HongPong at [10:23 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Iraq](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#)

April 10, 2004

Soldiers seek asylum in Canada; military nearing exhaustion; they fight back via Internet

Incredibly, Minnesota lost three soldiers in this week alone, the bloodiest week that our state has yet suffered from the war.

[Cpl. Levi Angell](#) of Cloquet, 20 years old, same age as me, was killed when his Humvee was hit by an RPG. [Pfc. Moises Langhorst](#), 19, of Moose Lake was killed earlier somewhere in Al Anbar province on April 5. [Cpl. Tyler R. Fey](#), 22, of Eden Prairie was killed in Al Anbar the day before.

Mark Shields made an excellent point on Lehrer News Hour about the Coalition veterans who should be getting rotated out of Iraq now but have been trapped by the new unrest and Pentagon orders: *they are effectively the first round of draftees, conscripted to fight the battle.*

While snooping at [Steve Gillard's blog](#) (Steve is one of the original DKos people) I found a number of stories, including [one](#) about [two soldiers who drove to Canada](#) to avoid shipping to Iraq.

Army private Brandon Hughey got in his silver Mustang around midnight on March 2, rolled past the gates at Fort Hood in Texas, and headed northeast. All he had to guide him was a deepening dread

and principled objection to the war in Iraq and a promise of help from a complete stranger he'd found on the Internet. His unit was deploying to the Middle East the next morning and, as Hughey, 18, wrote in a February 29 e-mail to the stranger, an anti-war activist, "I do not want to be a pawn in the government's war for oil, and have told my superiors that I want out of the military. They are not willing to chapter me out and tell me that I have no choice but to pack my bags and get ready to go to Iraq. This has led me to feel hopeless and I have thought about suicide several times."

In contrast to Hughey, Hinzman engaged a lengthy process of pleading from within his unit for non-combat duty as a conscientious objector (C.O.). After his request was denied, Hinzman faced orders for Iraq. He and his wife crammed what they could into their Chevy Prizm and headed north, with their son, from Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

Hinzman, 25, understood what he was risking: if he wins his case, never being able to visit the U.S. again; if he loses, being deported, going directly to jail with a harsh sentence. Desertion during wartime is a capital offense; though the last execution for a runaway soldier was in 1945, Hinzman worries that the penalty could be revived. "The Bush administration has done so many unprecedented things," he notes.

The first soldier to request Canadian asylum, [Jeremy Hinzman, has started a website to deliver news](#) and updates on his situation. The second soldier, [Brandon Hughley has also started a website](#) to detail his story: **"Do not allow Canada to Send an 18-year-old to prison for refusing to kill or to be killed in an illegal, unjust war."**

Steve also wrote a [really excellent response](#) to the horrible Fox show The Swan, where entrants get plastic surgery and enter a beauty contest. I find the concept very disturbing, and reflective of where Fox's real values lie. A good summary from Gillard of [how the White House is treating the events](#) there:

There is this arrogant idea that all the US has to do is kill enough people and the resistance will end. Dan Barlett, the White House spokesman making the rounds of the morning shows, said "we're fighting evil".

When I heard that, my mouth fell open. Hasn't anyone in the White House noticed most Iraqis are on the fence, and many more have decided to oppose the occupation. They are not supporting us. They are not taking our side, except when we pay them. There isn't one pro-american group native to Iraq. No one cares about Chalabi's henchmen.

I heard a Lt. Col say "we're winning every firefight." So? Why are you in firefights? Why are people killing your Marines? Doesn't that speak of a massive policy failure. Now, I know he has to win a battle, but the idea that we're fighting in Iraq is insane. We were supposed to liberate these people, not have them turn on us.

Sistani is trying to split the difference and stop the killing. Well, that isn't going to work. Sadr is not the only Shia in arms. Iraqis are telling western reporters that they are sick of the incompetence and mishandling of Iraq. Iraqis have the most educated populace of the middle east, 130K engineers and architects, but the country is being rebuilt by Halliburton. Unemployment is 60-70 percent and not going down, the streets are unsafe.

This is a very interesting site: [Soldiers for the Truth](#), run by soldiers who are prepared to criticize how badly the armed services are treated by the Bush

administration. One of the group's writers weighs in on [cheating National Guard soldiers into paying for services the government is supposed to provide](#):

It has been more than two years since Charlie Co. of the 2nd Battalion, 20th Special Forces Group received mobilization orders for active duty in the wake of the 9/11 attacks. It has been 16 months since the National Guard unit returned to the United States from assignment in Kosovo and demobilized.

But for 72 Army Guardsmen from that unit, their active-duty stint turned into a financial nightmare that continues to this day. Most of the soldiers were forced to pay thousands of dollars out of their own pockets for on-base meals even though DoD regulations state that they are entitled either to per diem allowances or access to base dining facilities at no cost. Their efforts to obtain reimbursement from the Army have produced "frustration and disgust," as one soldier described it – but no justice.

.....

The GAO report identified a number of major structural flaws in the system, including nonintegrated databases in hundreds of Guard and active Army units, insufficient resources Armywide to manage the influx of nearly 100,000 mobilized reservists and Guardsmen, and poorly trained payroll personnel. It said nothing short of a total re-engineering of the Army's payroll system could halt the widespread problems.

But the men of Charlie Co. already knew that.

For seven months between the day they arrived at Fort Carson, Colo., for mobilization training in early January 2002 until their departure for Europe that August, the soldiers were forced to pay for their own meals at the dining facility used by the active-duty 10th Special Forces Group. Never mind the fact that under Operation Noble Eagle/Enduring Freedom – the post-9/11 operations to secure the continental United States and eject the Taliban from Afghanistan – mobilized Guardsmen and reservists were entitled to per diem for meals and lodging; the dysfunctional and haphazard Army personnel system was not going to budge.

Another piece, [The US Military is in Real Trouble](#):

Our 30-year old all-volunteer Army is crucially close to being broken.

Never in the history of the post-Vietnam volunteer Army has such a beaten up and over-tasked force had to sustain itself in the face of ever-expanding requirements and constantly accelerating deployment tempos that we see today.

The quality of our force is suffering. Anybody who denies that fact is either blind or ignorant. If the military is not bolstered, very soon, with an infusion of smart, well-trained, and highly-motivated volunteers, the force will suffer even more.

.....

The cumulative effect of this deterioration on troopers' morale cannot be underestimated.

Following a recent survey of U.S. soldiers in Iraq by the military newspaper Stars & Stripes, some analysts have concluded that the Bush administration's approach to Iraq risks doing to the All-Volunteer Force what Vietnam did to the draft.

The survey, which polled thousands of troops, found that 40 percent of recipients said their missions in Iraq had little or nothing to do with what they had trained for. Perhaps even more foreboding, half the soldiers who were surveyed indicated that they will not reenlist when their tours end or when the Pentagon lifts the stop-loss order currently in effect that has prevented over 24,000 active duty soldiers and over 16,000 reservists from leaving the service.

This week I spoke over twenty Army NCOs, all recently returned from Iraq and Afghanistan duty. Ranging in rank from corporal to sergeant 1st class, all but two said they intend to leave active service once they get the opportunity to do so. The majority added that they wish to completely sever their military ties and will not join reserve units to continue their service.

Two general officers, who have asked that they remain nameless, have both told me that it is their firm belief; that **if it were not for the stop-loss policy then the total force would already be in critically severe jeopardy and it clearly could not complete its missions.** Meanwhile, U.S. Army Reserve officials are pondering why they have missed their reenlistment goals for 2003.

Also they are [following the depleted uranium issue](#), and its effect on US soldiers. I looked at the site after Gillard noted the story of [intel agent David DeBatto, a veteran of our failing Iraq policies, whom the Pentagon is trying to discredit](#):

The Army has launched what I can only describe as a smear campaign against me by trying to destroy my credibility. They are claiming, among other things, that I am trying to present my self as an official Army or Pentagon spokesman (God forbid!) and that I have been trying to set national policy (I never realized I had that much authority). They are, of course, trying to minimize my experience and expertise by saying, in effect; I don't know what I am talking about. Pretty standard stuff for a large agency trying to muzzle someone who is speaking the truth about them.

Mind you, these accusations are being made primarily by men (I use the term loosely here) that either never served a day in Iraq or Afghanistan or spent their time in-theater in a nice, air-conditioned office with Internet and e-mail connections 24/7, showers, latrines, good food and never went over the wire except to re-deploy. This was done when soldiers like myself were going out, over the wire, on 3-4 mission a day, seven days a week and getting about 3-4 hours of sleep a day, if we were lucky.

We took incoming from RPG's, AK-47's, and 60 and 80 mm mortars every day and night. We were also exposed to the very real danger of attack from the enormous crowds that circled us every time we would stop and dismount in a town or village. As for my team, a THT (Tactical HUMINT Team) for which I was the team leader, we were responsible for some of the biggest and most significant intelligence collection efforts in the central Sunni Triangle area in which we operated. I am very proud of my team and what they accomplished, usually under very difficult conditions; **conditions made all the more difficult because of poor leadership at the 0-4 and 0-5 levels, some of the very same people now leveling baseless allegations against me.**

Too many these days would deem it impossible, but my solidarity lies with those who would choose to flee this country than fight the war, those who are trying to do their duty but bleed and die in the sands over there, and the young Arabs who see no further option but to pick up the gun.

The moral fault lies not with those who fight or flee, but with those who designed this war, and have by their malicious incompetence utterly failed to pacify and stabilize the country.

Posted by HongPong at [01:44 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Afghanistan](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Security](#)

April 07, 2004

TioDan operations commence

In the nick of time TioDan, i.e. the kosher slingin' guerilla Dan Schwartz, has started a El Blog de Tio at Blogspot, <http://tiodan.blogspot.com> . It is nice to see more friends undertaking such projects. He is also [most interested in those dang mercenaries!](#)

What is the key to successful blogging? That is a good question that I don't think about too much... The standard policy seems to be 'winging it.'

Posted by HongPong at [01:28 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [News](#) , [Technological Apparatus](#)

April 06, 2004

Blame the complex

There's been a lot of things on the news today. Why did the CPA suddenly choose to shut down Sadr's newspaper? Perhaps it had something to do with this AP report that [Sadr was declaring allegiance with Hamas and Hezbollah](#) last Friday. Did this provide an opportunity for the Middle Eastern altruists in the Pentagon to, say, merge the threats between Israel and the U.S.? *That's wild speculation!! Can't be true!*

Prof. [Juan Cole continues to describe things](#) with the most clarity. He actually sounds [almost as paranoid as I do](#) sometimes:

The civilians in the Department of Defense only know how to blow things up. Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz and Feith staffed the CPA with Neoconservatives, most of whom had no administrative experience, no Arabic, and no respect for Muslim culture (or knowledge about it). They actively excluded State Department Iraq hands like Tom Warrick. (Only recently have a few experienced State Department Arabists been allowed in to try to begin mopping up the mess.) **The Neocons in the CPA have all sorts of ulterior motives and social experiments they want to impose on the Iraqi people, including Polish-style economic shock therapy, some sort of sweetheart deal for Israel, and maybe even breaking the country up into three parts.**

He informed me of people called "[Palestinian-Salvadorans](#)," quite a shock. **Polls:** An opinion poll taken in late February showed that 10 % of Iraq's Shiites say attacks on US troops are "acceptable." But 30% of Sunni Arabs say such attacks are acceptable, and fully 70% of Anbar province approves of attacking Americans. (Anbar is where Ramadi, Fallujah, Hadithah and Habbaniyah are, with a population of 1.25 million or 5% of Iraq--those who approve of attacks are 875,000).

But simple statistics don't tell the story. If there are 25 million Iraqis and Shiites comprise 65%, that is about 16 million persons. Ten percent of them is 1.6 million, which is a lot of people who hate Americans enough to approve of attacks on them. If Sunni Arabs comprise about 16% of the population, there are 4 million of them. If 30% approve of attacks, that is 1.2 million. That is, the poll actually shows that in absolute numbers, **there are more Shiites who approve of attacks on Americans than there are Sunni Arabs.** The numbers bring into question the official line that there are no problems in the South, only in the Sunni Arab heartland.

Sadr's volatile movement has seized control of the [Holy Shrine of Imam Ali](#), one of Shiism's holiest sites. ([All we need now is a\(nother\) Temple Mount incident](#))

[Will the US attack the Kurds?](#) What? This latent Kurdish nationalism seems to be emerging. It is, as they say, troublesome.

As well as an interesting report about [crime and disorder thriving in Baghdad](#), [Al Jazeera has some late breaking news, in their own unique style, from Falluja](#). (this city has somewhere called the "Golan District?!" Hell) Also there is a lack of food.

"We also visited the Golan district where clashes took place earlier today between fighters from Falluja and US forces," Ali said. "We saw signs of fierce confrontation. US forces have bombed the district. We saw several destroyed houses.

"Golan inhabitants say US forces used cluster bombs and missiles against them," he said. **"Citizens of the city are completely enraged - but not afraid - waiting for the coming events," the correspondent said.**

.....

The leaflets outlaw demonstrations and the possession of firearms and impose a 7pm to 6am daily curfew. Residents are advised that in the event of a raid by US forces, all family members should gather in a single room in the house. **"This indicates that door-to-door operations will be launched by US forces," the correspondent said.**

Aljazeera has also received a statement issued by a group in al-Anbar province calling itself the Jihad Brigades, urging followers of the Shia leader al-Sadr to continue resisting.

"Even Falluja's main hospital is inaccessible because it is located out of the city across the Euphrates river, and the bridge is closed. Today I saw an ambulance driver negotiating with US soldiers to let him cross the bridge. They let him through after a long and tiresome argument."

"Shops are closed and life in the town is paralysed. I am standing among dozens of angry Falluja people. They say they are not afraid of the US forces, they are ready to fight. The crowd was chanting 'There is no God but Allah'."

The President teaches us all something about how causality works in the war on terror. It's not about culture, or politics, or building a society, or even having a plan. Reality flows from deadlines. (thanks to [Josh Marshall for posting transcripts](#): only they can reveal the disturbing logic)

THE PREZ: No, the intention is to make sure the deadline remains the same. I believe we can transfer authority by June 30th. We're working toward that day. We're, obviously, constantly in touch with Jerry Bremer on the transfer of sovereignty. The United Nations is over there now. **The United Nations representative is there now to work on the -- on a -- on to whom we transfer sovereignty. I mean, in other words, it's one thing to decide to transfer. We're now in the process of deciding what the entity will look like to whom we will transfer sovereignty. But, no, the date remains firm.**

Along with an old link to Rice's naïve neocon assistant [Steven Hadley's proclaimed post-war plan](#), today Marshall also gives us [some excerpts of the uber-insider Nelson Report](#):

Gloom...has been building over Iraq. Increasingly, the Wise Heads are forecasting disaster. Wise Heads say they see no realistic plan, hear no serious concept to get ahead of the situation. Money, training, jobs...all lagging, all reinforce downward spiral highlighted by sickening violence. There seems to be no real "if", just when, and how badly it will hurt U.S. interests. Define "disaster"? Consensus prediction: if Bush insists on June 30/July 1 turnover, a rapid descent into civil war. May happen anyway, if the young al-Sadr faction really breaks off from its parents. CSIS Anthony Cordesman's latest blast at Administration ineptitude says in public what Senior Observers say in private...the situation may still be salvaged, but then you have to factor in Sharon's increasing desperation, and the regional impact.

WaPo says it "[Marks a New Front in War.](#)" Also "[Spread of Bin Laden Ideology Cited.](#)" Al Qaeda == "The Base," don't we get it yet?

I liked the NY Times story about [the life of the mercenary](#). [Google News searches for mercenaries](#) are fruitful right now.

Here's a [fun article about how religious people are turning away from the Enlightenment](#) from the Secular Humanists.

[Guardian writer grumbles about America's emerging cultural war.](#) Is it really that polarized? I don't know if I buy it.

More [paranoid things about the energy markets](#). I'm certainly not buying all of this one.

A few bits about Israel: Increasing anti-Semitism really concerns me, as it will likely cause the social fabric in a lot of already marginal places to fray, as well as scare the hell out of many people. [Haaretz investigates something well worth reflecting on](#). [Sharon says his hands are clean of bribes](#), yet no matter how much he washes, the spots, damn spots, won't come out, he says. " Less than [a man of his word](#), [Sharon's Passover Legends.](#)" Not surprisingly [the Palestinian peace movement is having trouble getting traction](#) right now. [Why aren't settlers protesting more?](#)

Christian Science Monitor says that Iraqis and Palestinians see their [sufferings as a form of globalization](#) (via Prof. Cole):

The focus on Jews and Israel reflects a wider belief among Arab Iraqis, Sunni and Shiite alike, that the US and Israeli occupations are twin Golems of a globalization that they can not resist or control, one that is causing the disintegration of the very fabric of their cultures and economies even as it offers prosperity and freedom to a fortunate few.

It may be hard for Americans to understand the occupation of Iraq in the context of globalization. **But Iraq today is clearly the epicenter of that trend.** Here, military force was used to seize control of the world's most important commodity - oil. And corporations allied with the occupying power literally scrounge the country for profits, privatizing everything from health care to prisons, while Iraqi engineers, contractors, doctors, and educators are shunted aside.

Like economic globalization in so many other countries of the developing world, this model in Iraq is an unmitigated disaster. My visits to hospitals, schools, think tanks, political party headquarters, art galleries, and refugee camps reveal conditions clearly as bad, and often worse, than on the eve of the US invasion.

....

Iraq is sliding toward chaos; a state that many Iraqis increasingly believe is exactly where the US wants them to be. A prominent Iraqi psychiatrist who has worked with the CPA and the US military explained to me that "there is no way the United States can be this incompetent. The chaos here has to be at least partly deliberate." The main question on most people's minds is not if his assertion is true, but why?

For example, many here see last week's carnage of Americans in Fallujah as suspicious. To send foreign contractors into Fallujah in late-model SUVs with armed escorts - down a traffic-clogged street

on which they'd be literal sitting ducks - can be interpreted as a deliberate US instigation of violence to be used as a pretext for "punishment" by the US military.

I like [last December's special Washington Monthly report](#) on the glorious synchronicity between powerful Republican families in the U.S. and those who are somehow plucked to serve in Iraq.

When the history of the occupation of Iraq is written, there will be many factors to point to when explaining the post-conquest descent into chaos and disorder, from the melting away of Saddam's army to the Pentagon's failure to make adequate plans for the occupation. But historians will also consider the lack of experience and abundant political connections of the hundreds of American bureaucrats sent to Baghdad to run Iraq through the Coalition Provisional Authority.

Wandering around I found a piece by Manuel Valenzuela on a rather far-left site, featuring things by the "Worker's World" and others... (they are reprinting the as-yet-unconfirmed [Zelikow-Israel](#) thing, again via Cole) More than a little bloated with cliches but interesting nonetheless: "[The War of Error:](#)"

It is in the MIC's interest to prolong this most ambiguous and marketable war for as long as possible. When the citizenry has been successfully turned to submissive sheep, ignorant as to its role as a massive pawn, primordial emotions dictating logic and common sense, the MIC is assured of ever-increasing power, control and wealth. From cradle to the grave, we are but slaves to the military-industrial complex, nothing more than puppets whose strings are attached to the massive claws of the omnipotent masters tearing us to shreds as they amuse themselves with the games of disquieting existence and rapacious divisiveness they thrust upon our oblivious selves.

Greed-mongers, fear-mongers, warmongers and profiteers, the Bush administration, the Corporate Leviathan and the MIC together are annihilating our future. When greed intermingles with the almighty dollar, profit is placed above people, we become statistics in cost-benefit analysis, we are shamelessly exploited and we all become open wounds waiting to become collateral damage.

Posted by HongPong at [02:42 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Campaign 2004](#) , [International Politics](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [News](#) , [Security](#) , [The White House](#) , [War on Terror](#)

April 01, 2004

April war news Blitz

I am supposed to write a proposal for my final paper in International Security class tonight. But given what's been happening the last few weeks, what can I address that isn't tearing apart like wet toilet paper? Where can I stand when the sands are shifting so? Is it possible to research and write on security in this snake pit? I'm hoping you guys might have suggestions!

This deserves to go first: a report from Haaretz that [America plans to make 'implied' recognition of the illegal Israeli settlements](#). Holy land, gotta gotta get it!

U.S. assures Israel no retreat to 1967 line

The U.S. will assure Israel that it will not have to withdraw to the Green Line in a future permanent settlement with the Palestinians.

The promise appears in a letter of guarantees drafted by the American administration in exchange for Sharon's disengagement plan.

The U.S. rejected Israel's request to recognize the future annexation of the large settlement blocs in Ma'ale Adumim, Ariel and Etzion. Instead of referring explicitly to the settlements, the Americans propose a vaguely worded letter, which Israel would be able to present as implied recognition of the settlement blocs.

Below is my round-up on the Iraq and the Fallujah-mercenary issue, Pakistan, military-industrial corruption, the Uzbekistan aftermath, ClarkeStorm 2004 and further Israel-Palestine tidbits. ([crossposted on DKOS diary](#))

My special thanks go to those following the best of mainstream and alternative media every day at [WarInContext](#). [The Agonist](#) is a news blitz all day long--they are making a full-time go at it. New frontiers of journalism or just obsessed people?

Fallujadishu?

Our hands were numb, recording all this, so swiftly did General Kimmitt take us through the little uptick [in violence].

A marine vehicle blown off the road near Fallujah, a marine killed, a second attack with small-arms fire on the same troops, an attack on an Iraqi paramilitary recruiting station on the 14th July Road, a soldier killed near Ramadi, two Britons hurt in Basra violence, a suicide bombing against the home of the Hillah police chief, an Iraqi shot at a checkpoint, US soldiers wounded in Mosul ... All this was just 17 hours before Fallujah civilians dragged the cremated remains of a Westerner through the streets of their city.

.....

But there was an interesting twist - horribly ironic in the face of yesterday's butchery - in General Kimmitt's narrative. Why, I asked him, did he refer sometimes to "terrorists" and at other times to "insurgents"? Surely if you could leap from being a terrorist to being an insurgent, then with the next little hop, skip and jump, you become a "freedom-fighter". Mr Senor gave the general one of his fearful looks. He needn't have bothered. General Kimmitt is a much smoother operator than his civilian counterpart. There were, the general explained, the Fallujah version who were insurgents, and then the al-Qa'ida version who attack mosques, hotels, religious festivals and who were terrorists.

So, it seems, there are now in Iraq good terrorists and bad terrorists, there are common-or-garden insurgents and supremely awful terrorists, the kind against which President George Bush took us to war in Iraq when there weren't any terrorists actually here, though there are now. And therein lies the problem. **From inside the Green Zone on the banks of the Tigris, you can believe anything.** How far can the occupying powers take war-spin before the world stops believing anything they say? That's [Robert Fisk reporting "Things are getting much worse in Iraq"](#) today, a brutally honest British reporter who has given a totally different slant to the war, but then again he said it would be a quagmire from the very beginning. [Juan Cole is an expert who just plain gets it:](#)

What would drive the crowd to this barbaric behavior? It is not that they are pro-Saddam any more, or that they hate "freedom." They are using a theater of the macabre to protest their occupation and humiliation by foreign armies. They were engaging in a role reversal, with the American cadavers in the position of the "helpless" and the "humiliated," and with themselves playing the role of the powerful monster that inscribes its will on these bodies.

This degree of hatred for the new order among ordinary people is very bad news. It helps explain why so few of the Sunni Arab guerrillas have been caught, since the locals hide and help them. It also seems a little unlikely that further US military action can do anything practical to put down this insurgency; most actions it could take would simply inflame the public against them all the more.

I was disturbed by the 'frenzy of violence' in Iraq, as the Star Tribune headline put it, although perhaps I see the frenzy occurring over a longer timeframe. The images they printed had [a distinct Mogadishu overtone](#), it's hard to deny.

It's raising a lot of questions about American dependence on armed ex-Mil mercenaries. [Mother Jones has the background you need](#) and [Altnet also has more about Blackwater](#).

[Britain's secret army in Iraq: thousands of armed security men who answer to nobody](#).

[Even Tacitus is upset](#) about US dependence on mercenaries!!! Hooray!

[Billmon points out racism past and present](#) in this country, citing [this horror as an example](#). But damn, Billmon, did you have to cite DULUTH MINNESOTA as an example of American mob violence? (its a very apt example, so it makes sad either way, given my Up North heritage)

The company which lost the security personnel is called Blackwater. Many people in [the town they're based in are furious](#) with Bush. Fortunately [BLACKWATER IS HIRING!! YES!](#) (and look at that graphic!) I want a glitzy feature [STARRING Lead Sniper Steve Babylon](#) and Susan McFarlin. Can you see the dramatic movie potential here? Jerry Bruckheimer would be the man to shoot this one.

[Special Forces are quitting the regular armed service to become mercenaries](#). Hey Rummy, thanks for underpaying the Special Forces so your private friends could grow stronger!

([today's Altnet log](#) on the Fallujah incident)

Military Industrial Corruption: What? Never!

[Air Force allowed Boeing to rewrite terms of tanker contract, documents show](#).

What would the Frankfurt School tell us about this?

Campaign 2004

[DLC advises soundbites for Kerry](#). Hurrrah!

Political book reviews

NY Times book Review looks at a book exploring Bush's weird father-son relationship, and guess what, he turns out to be crazy! [Father, Son, Freud and Oedipus](#). Must read!!! Also a piece on Chalmers Johnson and his new book, [the Sorrows of Empire](#). Am I a disquieted American?

Clarkestorm 2004

I like the fact that WaPo's editorialists are finally pouncing over the way Bush is evading Clarke. They are the ones who really bear a lot of responsibility for the whole damn mess. [Bush's Secret Storm](#) by E. J. Dionne (Mar 29). [David Sanger in NYT](#) ruminates on how nasty it is for them to flip-flop on Condi's testimony (Mar 31).

[Clarke outsourced terror intel collection to someone else](#) when he was in the White House? How interesting!

As recounted by Clarke in his book, and confirmed by documents provided to NEWSWEEK, Emerson and his former associate Rita Katz regularly provided the White House with a stream of information about possible Al Qaeda activity inside the United States that appears to have been largely unknown to the FBI prior to the September 11 terror attacks.

In confidential memos and briefings that were sometimes conducted on a near weekly basis, Emerson and Katz furnished Clarke and his staff with the names of Islamic radical Web sites, the identities of possible terrorist front groups and the phone numbers and addresses of possible terror suspects—data they were unable to get from elsewhere in the government.

More War On Terror

[Terrorists Don't Need States](#) by Fareed Zakaria from Newsweek, the April 5 issue. The Guardian: [What exactly does al-Qaeda want?](#)

Uzbekistan: the Tashkent mystery

The Uzbekistan bombings led me to some new Internet sources, but their credibility is unknown. I know that Uzbekistan is a horrible, repressive sort of Soviet holdover state, but killing people won't exactly cure that. Since they attacked the police, rather than civilians, people are seeing this as directed against the state apparatus, but to what end? Some sources:

["Uzbek unrest shows Islamist rise"](#) from Christian Science Monitor today. Too alarmist?

Experts say the bloodshed could signal the resurgence of the regional Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), which has revitalized itself in the lawless Pakistan-Afghan border area, under the leadership of Tohir Yuldashev. Or it could point to a violent offshoot of the local, moderate Hizb-ut-Tahrir, fed up with years of brutal crackdowns by Uzbek President Islam Karimov on Islamic believers of all types. This Yuldashev character is being called the new "Al Qaeda leader" of the moment. Is he really internationally evil??

[The Argus](#) did [a good job following news as it developed](#). A textbook example of blogging as a new form of reporting breaking news.

[Ferghana.Ru](#) is an extremely interesting news site on Central Asia. Check [this letter against the Uzbek government](#).

Older updates on the fighting. ([March 30](#)). Many reports turned out not to be true. ([March 29](#))

[Rubber Hose](#). Who is this guy?

What's happening with Pakistan?

[They claim Al Qaeda on the run?](#)

[Pakistan to play a pivotal role](#) from Today's Asia Times Online. This is probably the

best article to read about it today. There is more about Yuldashev here: apparently he is a big star on videos circulating in Pakistan, in which he speaks out against US policies, citing Chechnya and Palestine as examples.

Israel-Palestine:

Palestinian children: [Middle East: 'A child who lives in hell will die for a chance of paradise'](#)

[Christians Must Challenge American Messianic Nationalism: A Call to the Churches.](#)

Must check out what good Christians do!

[The DLC weighs in on Anti-Semitism.](#)

[Palestine is now part of an arc of Muslim resistance:](#) Across the Middle East, western-backed occupations are fuelling terror.

Well, that's about the most comprehensive war mosaic I can put together today.

So what the hell do I do about my final paper?

Posted by HongPong at [06:46 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Afghanistan](#) , [Campaign 2004](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Minnesota](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [News](#) , [Security](#) , [The White House](#) , [War on Terror](#)

March 28, 2004

Homework

Again, anyone can understand that war and conquest without and the encroachments of despotism within give each other mutual support; that money and men are habitually taken at pleasure from a people of slaves to bring others beneath the same yoke; and that conversely war furnishes a pretext for exactions of money and another, no less plausible, for keeping large armies constantly on foot, to hold people at awe. In a word, anyone can see that aggressive princes wage war at least as much on their subjects as on their enemies, and that the conquering nation is left no better off than the conquered.

--Rousseau

(from *New & Old Wars* by Mary Kaldor, p. 19)

Posted by HongPong at [11:05 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Quotes](#) , [Security](#)

March 23, 2004

Reporting Near the Gates of Hell

There are some days when you wish that they would just put out the real damn story for a change. But now, let's go to the Laci Petersen case. You can always tell when the narrative is dissolving, because somehow Scott

Petersen's symbolic crucifixion becomes the hottest thing in American cable news. *CLICK*

While the Bush administration visibly flakes into a dozen pieces on TV under fire from the [Clarke Battleship](#), we have a whole menu of items from the post-9/11 bloodsphere. From the furthest 'Bled al-Siba' ([Lands of Insolence](#)), we learn that the wicked Governor of Herat in western Afghanistan has regained control of his city, after [someone killed the Aviation Minister](#) and everyone ran a little amuck. Roughly 50 to 100 factional warlord fighters were killed fighting each other over this historic ([formerly besieged](#)) gateway to Persia. See it fall again next Thursday on live satellite!!

The problem with Afghanistan is that it's more an aggregate of ethnically jarred city-states than a coherently governed nation. The U.S. plan pretty much hyper-Balkanized it by installing worthless factional warlords with no oversight in every major city, kind of a government glued together like toothpicks. Wildly xenophobic, tribal toothpicks.

Meanwhile the hi-value baddies got away and [Pakistan's military took quite a toll \(roundup\)](#) in the mountain campaign. Strong [counterattacks from guerillas](#), and it seems [Muslim leaders there are quite angry](#), reports the Asia Times:

Flames of war loom large The present offensive in South Waziristan is not merely a hunt for a few fugitive guerrilla fighters (including Osama bin Laden and his number two, Ayman al-Zawahri). It is a fight to control their bases in the whole eastern tribal belt that borders Afghanistan. Any ceasefire, therefore, assuming even that it holds, will be temporary at best, and a prelude to the next battle.

On Sunday, 70 of the country's most popular religious clerics, in a religious ruling issued from the federal capital Islamabad, called the Wana operation (Wana is the headquarters of South Waziristan agency) an "unjustified war" by the Pakistan army on their Muslim brothers. The clerics said that since the war had been unleashed on the mujahideen in support of the US cause in the region, anyone who died resisting the Pakistani forces would be a martyr, and any Pakistani soldiers killed would die "Motul Haram" - in other words, they would go to hell. The ruling also prohibits funeral prayers for soldiers killed in the conflict.

The ruling is a major setback for the Pakistani ruling class, and even information minister Sheikh Rasheed, who is famous for his outspoken nature, has refused to comment.

What began, therefore, as an operation to force al-Qaeda and the Afghan resistance from their base in Shawal - a no man's land is rapidly escalating into a major crisis for the whole country.

Meanwhile in Iraq, it is interesting that despite all the professed technocratic skill of the new administration, somehow [they cannot supply the military and police equipment necessary to police and defend Iraq from hostile forces](#) and secure the Syrian border. Among the missing items include "[Life Saving Body Armor](#)" of [talking points fame](#), guns, radios, etc.

I find it incomprehensible that in today's titanic military-industrial complex, with its many satellites and airplanes and assorted schemers, it cannot fill in a few thousand police stations and medium-level military divisions with some kind of expediency. If this were the Roman days, you would just shoot a few pokey arms traffickers and things would move along.

[14 British soldiers in Basra, Iraq were injured](#) when 'petrol bombs,' as they call them, were launched during a protest over jobs, although some protesters supported the late Sheik Yassin or Saddam Hussein, as well. The Guardian says, "One soldier was seen with his head and shoulders covered in flames." The British forces, having a modicum of rigour about their techniques, claim to have fired only baton rounds but not live ammo or tear gas.

Among the wake of the Madrid bombings, the 9/11 commission's tidbits, the Afghans riding every which-way, and an expanding inquiry into Ariel Sharon's shady finances, Israel somehow saw the time was right to wipe out HAMAS' Sheik Yassin. Why not round out this curious March with a good heap of civil disorder moving into an April of profound anarchy in the Holy Land?

[The latest spot reports from a constantly updating page](#) at the Israeli paper Haaretz, which unlike other Israeli media tends not to become totally anesthetized when Israel launches major operations. It is 11 AM there now, but today will surely hold more news.

Five Palestinians, including a 13-year-old boy, were killed and dozens injured, Palestinian sources said, in riots that broke out in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip...

Also Monday, Palestinians fired a series of mortar shells and rockets at Gaza Strip settlements and the Negev. Four Qassam rockets fell in the Negev Monday evening. Palestinians also fired several home-made rockets at an IDF checkpoint in Gaza, two mortar shells at a settlement in the Gush Katif settlement bloc, and an anti-tank rocket at an IDF outpost near Rafah in the south of the Strip, close to the Egyptian border. Two apartments in the Gaza settlement of Neveh Dekalim were damaged due to rocket attacks earlier in the day.

IDF tanks moved into northern Gaza late Monday, Israeli security officials said. Palestinian security officials said the tanks were moving toward the northern Gaza town of Beit Hanoun.

In the Khan Yunis refugee camp in southern Gaza, IDF soldiers shot and killed three Palestinians, including a 13-year-old boy, during clashes with hundreds of angry protesters. The demonstrators flocked to a roadblock west of the refugee camp, near [Jewish settlement] Neveh Dekalim, and threw stones at the soldiers guarding it. Witnesses said the soldiers fired live ammunition at the crowd, which consisted mostly of schoolchildren.

In the West Bank refugee camp of Balata in Nablus, hospital officials said soldiers shot dead a Palestinian journalist. They said Mohammed Abu Khalimi, a 22-year-old reporter for Al Najah University radio, had just broadcast a report about the army entering the camp when he was shot. They said he was standing near a group of stone-throwing youths.

Some 15,000 people, including more than 40 armed men, gathered in the center of Nablus. About 15 armed men, wearing masks and Hamas headbands, fired shots into the air.

"Dozens of people came to us this morning volunteering to be suicide bombers," said one masked militant. "We will send them in the right time."

A Palestinian man was shot and wounded in the West Bank city of Bethlehem after throwing firebombs at IDF troops, Army Radio reported.

In Jenin, another militant stronghold in the West Bank, more than 10,000 people demonstrated. Several dozen armed men from the Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades joined the crowd.

"Dozens of people came to us this morning volunteering to be suicide bombers," said one masked militant. "We will send them in the right time."

Ten Palestinians were injured in the West Bank city of Hebron in clashes with IDF troops. Soldiers fired tear gas and rubber bullets at protesters. Twelve demonstrators were injured in Bethlehem during clashes with IDF forces near the Tomb of Rachel near the city.

Calls for revenge emanated from mosque loudspeakers. One Hamas activist said that a new phase in the Israeli-Palestinian fighting had begun.

Shopkeepers called a one-day strike throughout the West Bank, closing virtually all stores. Palestinian schools were closed.

Jerusalem Post analyst simply says "[Assassination will increase anarchy.](#)"

[The settlers have an ethical code.](#) Yay. Thanks, guys.

[Hezbollah attacked Israeli positions from Lebanon.](#)

[Now Hamas could align with Al-Qaida.](#)

[Israel is barring journalists with Israeli citizenship from the Gaza Strip.](#)

I am on a few odd Israeli e-mail lists, but one of the most interesting is surely GAMLA, a settler newswire featuring the insights of DEBKAFfile. There's a [certain direct style in today's analysis](#):

Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon has fired the Israel-Palestinian war up to a new plane. The targeted assassination of Hamas founder, leader and moving spirit, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, Monday, March 22, was the prime minister's thunderous reply to the critics who argue that his disengagement strategy would hand the Gaza Strip over to Hamas control. It signals his determination to purge Gaza of Islamic fundamentalist terrorists ahead its evacuation. Yassin's death is but the precursor to liquidating the violent movement he founded in 1987 to "cleanse" Middle East of Jewish sovereignty and replace it with an Islamic republic.

This cleanout of Hamas strength will take time. Until it is done, Israel cannot pull out of the Gaza Strip or even begin the process of disengagement.

Nothing else is quite [as wretched today as David Brooks](#): "Understanding what the phrase 'one nation under God' might mean -- that's the important thing. That's not proselytizing; it's citizenship."

You wanted a Global War on Terror, Mr President.

You got one.

Posted by HongPong at [02:28 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Afghanistan](#) , [International Politics](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [News](#) , [Security](#) , [The White House](#) , [War on Terror](#)

March 11, 2004

Hurrah!! Server goes down & gets put together as Neo-Con castle crumbles!!

Everything got pretty risky there for a little while, and many bits of the system were fouled up, including important Perl files. I decided to install OS X fresh on the machine, and in turn rebuild all the site's MySQL hookups, Perl modules and everything. Fortunately it somehow only took about 90 minutes to do all this. Is it flawless? I'm not sure, but it should work.

On Friday I am flying off to England. How sweet.

There has been a ton of news lately about the spoofed Iraq intelligence I love so dearly. Finally, [Lt Col Karen Kwiatkowski \(Ret\) has written her definitive expose on what she witnessed in the Pentagon](#) and around the Office of Special Plans. Everything here reinforced [what I have been saying all along](#). I am really happy that the Kwiatkowski is living up to the exacting standards of personal integrity that all armed services people should strive for, and not enough have in this time of lies.

I have heard about her story for quite some time, and [she has been referred to](#) in a [few stories I've linked to](#). A key passage from "The Lie Factory" which [Senator Kennedy recently repeated on the Senate floor](#):

"It wasn't intelligence-it was propaganda," Kwiatkowski says. "They'd take a little bit of intelligence, cherry-pick it, make it sound much more exciting, usually by taking it out of context, often by juxtaposition of two pieces of information that don't belong together." It was by turning such bogus intelligence into talking points for U.S. officials-including ominous lines in speeches by President Bush and Vice President Cheney, along with Secretary of State Colin Powell's testimony at the U.N. Security Council last February-that the administration pushed American public opinion into supporting an unnecessary war.

She is the real deal. We're lucky.

Posted by HongPong at [03:27 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [HongPong-site](#) , [International Politics](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [News](#) , [The White House](#) , [War on Terror](#)

February 22, 2004

Iraqi civil war talk; Syria and Iran involved in Iraq violence?; The CIA can't see

I have to find some birthday presents for the Chunkies this afternoon, and I'm still struggling to get HongPong.com's photo album software I want. The Edwards slideshow is coming along nicely so far, though. Hopefully later today, and I'll send out some notifications to all who might be interested...

One of the big questions around the war is whether or not the "terror states" of Iran and Syria might be impelled to help Iraqis strike US forces, thusly proving QED for the neo-cons that they are all EvilDoers Waiting to Strike Against Us. TIME reports that it's [really a locally-based thing](#), not foreigners pulling strings. But now comes a [Guardian report that Syria and Iran have been helping some groups](#). (WiC again)

Senior Iraqi intelligence officers believe an Islamic militant group which has claimed responsibility for two suicide bombings in Irbil and a spate of deadly attacks in Baghdad, Falluja and Mosul is receiving significant help from Syria and Iran.

The officers, who have been tracking the activities of domestic and foreign jihadists in northern Iraq, claim that members of Jaish Ansar al-Sunna (the army of the supporters of the sayings of the prophet) have been "given shelter by Syrian and Iranian security agencies and have been able to enter Iraq with ease".

The group is suspected of training suicide bombers and deploying them against US forces in Iraq and Iraqis considered to be collaborating with the US-led authorities.

Meanwhile [the magic words "CIVIL WAR" are drifting around](#).

For Iraqis already in, or thinking about joining, one of the Iraqi security forces -- such as the Iraqi Civil Defence Corp (ICDC), the border guards or the police -- the dangers were made all too clear last week. Instead of being viewed by insurgents as people protecting their country, or simply needing a job, Iraqi police or corps members are simply labelled "collaborators", aiding and abetting the US occupation. Over 100 people were killed in Iskanderiya and Baghdad in two car bombings over two days, both targeting Iraqis signing up to join security forces.

.....

Standard operating procedures for troops stationed in Iraq have changed in such a way as to avoid lethal engagements. US soldiers in Iraq have told Al-Ahram Weekly that, for example, **if a patrol comes under fire, the usual response is to leave the area rather than counterattack**, unless absolutely necessary. As the US makes plans to pull troops out of cities to bases on the edges of urban centres, Iraqi security forces are being trained and deployed at a break-neck pace, often without proper vehicles or communications and security equipment. The goal is to hand over all security positions to the Iraqis, and damn the consequences.

Existing resistance activities, like the prison raid in Fallujah, could be an example of the chaos that may erupt this summer. **Take the already volatile tensions between the Sunni, Shi'ites and Kurds, and the fact that some of these groups have their own militias** -- like the Kurdish peshmergas or the Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq's Badr Brigade and Muqtada Al-Sadr's Mahdi Army -- then add some foreign fighters intent on inflaming those tensions and an elections showdown sure to make either Shi'ites or Sunnis very upset: **we have the perfect ingredients for a civil war**. If that happens, the US seems to be the only force in the country with the capability to keep the peace, but ironically they have not accomplished that even without widespread sectarian violence.

Evidently [the CIA is having problems managing intelligence](#) in both Afghanistan and Iraq. It is pretty damned alarming that this grand intelligence service is apparently choking on the pressures of the War on Terra.

Confronting problems on critical fronts, the CIA recently removed its top officer in Baghdad because of questions about his ability to lead the massive station there, and has closed a number of satellite bases in Afghanistan amid concerns about that country's deteriorating security situation, according to U.S. intelligence sources.

The previously undisclosed moves underscore the problems affecting the agency's clandestine service at a time when it is confronting insurgencies and the U.S.-declared war on terrorism, current and former CIA officers say. They said a series of stumbles and operational constraints have hampered the agency's ability to penetrate the insurgency in Iraq, find Osama bin Laden and gain traction against terrorism in the Middle East.

One former officer who maintains close ties to the agency said it was stretched to the limit. "With Afghanistan, the war on terrorism, with Iraq, I think they're just sucking wind," he said.

But the officers also said the latest problems point to a deeper problem with the CIA leadership and culture. Some lamented that an agency once vaunted for its daring and reach now finds itself overstretched and hunkered down in secure zones.

....

Since Sept. 11, 2001, the agency has brought back hundreds of retirees, dubbed "green-badgers" for the color of the identification cards issued to those who return to the fold under contract. The agency has also turned to young officers without any overseas experience.

New agency recruits with military backgrounds are being sent to Iraq as soon as they emerge from the CIA training academy in Virginia, said one former agency official. "They don't speak the language, don't know how to recruit," the official said. "It's on-the-job training."

...

The problems [with turnover] also extend to Afghanistan, sources said. One CIA veteran said he recently spoke with an officer who had served as a base chief in Kandahar for 60 days, an unusually brief tenure for such an important assignment.

The base in Kandahar is one of five or six the CIA established in Afghanistan after the U.S. invaded the country in 2001, all reporting to the agency's primary station in Kabul, the capital. But a number of those remote bases have been closed in recent months, according to current and former CIA officials.

...

The CIA has struggled to fill high-ranking posts in other countries, sources said. Four former CIA officers with close ties to headquarters said in separate interviews that the agency struggled to fill its top post in Pakistan last year, that at least five candidates turned down the job of station chief in Islamabad before the agency found an officer willing to take it.

The always creative Naomi Klein reports on [the war as therapy](#).

It was Mary Vargas, a 44-year-old engineer in Renton, Wash., who carried U.S. therapy culture to its new zenith. Explaining why the war in Iraq was no longer her top election issue, she told the Internet magazine Salon that, "**when they didn't find the weapons of mass destruction, I felt I could also focus on other things. I got validated.**"

Yes, that's right: war opposition as self-help. The end goal is not to seek justice for the victims, or punishment for the aggressors, but rather "validation" for the war's critics. Once validated, it is of

course time to reach for the talisman of self-help: "closure." In this mindscape, **Howard Dean's wild scream was not so much a gaffe as the second of the five stages of grieving: anger.** The scream was a moment of uncontrolled release, a catharsis, allowing U.S. liberals to externalize their rage and then move on, transferring their affections to more appropriate candidates.

That's hilarious!

[What does terrorism mean?](#) I kind of like the IHT's writers. They are more often based in sanity than the stuff on cable these days.

Oh good: [we are hiring evil white guys who used to beat down the black population](#) in South Africa to beat down Iraqis.

Digby says that [such a grand strategic blunder as this one can only encourage wily generals](#) and naughty states to cause trouble, since it proves the U.S. is not as omnipotent and intelligent as Generally Believed. (last two [via Eschaton](#))

Posted by HongPong at [03:14 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Campaign 2004](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [Security](#) , [War on Terror](#)

Halliburton a liability for Bush?!

BusinessWeek is carrying a story detailing [how much credibility Halliburton has earned](#) this year with all its displays of integrity and good military-industrial citizenship. Oh, wait:

Questions about Halliburton are piling up rapidly -- and they won't go away soon. The Pentagon Inspector General has asked the Defense Criminal Investigative Service to probe allegations by Representatives Henry Waxman (D-Calif.) and John Dingell (D-Mich.) that the outfit inflated the price of fuel it supplied in war-torn Iraq.

Also under scrutiny: Allegations that Halliburton overcharged for meals at a base in Kuwait and might have wildly overstated estimated costs for food services in Iraq. On Feb. 16, Halliburton announced that it was holding on to subcontractors' bills totaling \$174.5 million until the amounts it should bill Uncle Sam are resolved. "We did this to take the issue off the table from a political standpoint," says Wendy Hall, Halliburton's director of public relations in an e-mail.

Separately, Halliburton has acknowledged that employees took \$6.3 million in kickbacks from a Kuwaiti subcontractor. And the Justice Dept., Securities & Exchange Commission, and French authorities are probing accusations that a Halliburton joint venture paid \$180 million in bribes in connection with a Nigerian natural gas plant in the 1990s -- while Cheney was Halliburton's CEO.

AVOIDING COMPETITIVE BIDS. There's plenty more to come. The General Accounting Office is studying Iraq reconstruction contracts and troop-support services -- two reports in which Halliburton should figure prominently. The first is due out in March. Democrats also want a thorough review of the Pentagon's plan to award monopoly, cost-plus contracts for services in Iraq.

....

Halliburton is feeling the heat from all this and is defending its Iraq activities, which accounted for 40% of its \$5.5 billion in fourth-quarter revenue and 30% of its \$146 million income. It has denied wrongdoing in its Iraq contracting and has hired outside lawyers, whom it won't identify, to probe the Nigerian payments.

(via [Warincontext](#))

Posted by HongPong at [02:47 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Military-Industrial Complex](#)
February 20, 2004

Shocking helicopter video of killing people

([crossposted to the Kos](#))

The following is totally beyond normal tastes and unsuitable for kids to see. Yet it reveals something about the reality of war.

I bumped [into this immediately](#) when I happened to [snoop around the Freepers' site](#)-something I rarely do, I assure you. From the wacky [San Antonio Lightning Newspaper](#) comes the big question:

"How Effective Are US Forces? A Unique Look At US Department Of Defense Capabilities"

The [video is an MPEG](#) (and [crappy realplayer](#)) in which you can see the crosshairs drifting around and hear the pilots trying to spot people on what I assume is an infrared night-vision camera on the lens. Who are these people? Why are they being killed? I don't know but it sure looks real. their point, it seems, is to illustrate how great technology is for keeping our personnel safe.

i also find it really funny that the site is packed with advertisements for local Republican candidates--the militant rightwing mirror of [DailyKos](#). Is it legal to steal helicopter footage and advertise for Republicans???

WARNING: Here, SAL links you to EXTREME video of US kills on hostile forces. We warn you--this is actual DoD video of human kills. We offer this video only as a demonstration of US military superiority--and to illustrate why we should prefer to spend money on technology rather than risk our men and women in uniform. This footage is recorded using FLIR technology. **(video without permission)**

Posted by [HongPong](#) at [08:09 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Military-Industrial Complex](#)

December 15, 2003

Shocks and aftershocks

I am making some progress on this new website idea but it has been slow going with finals. Fortunately that ends Wednesday. Unfortunately I have a TERM PAPER about THE WAR that has been rather disrupted. And it's also due Wednesday.

Here is a screenshot chunk of what I've put together for [HongPong.com](#) so far. This information will be strung together and turned into nice chunks of HTML information. I just found out how to import the WHOLE old

HongPong.com right into it, but it will be tricky. These notes haven't been filled in for the most part, but pieces are getting added as I come across them. Think of it as sort of a topical filing cabinet with links and groups. Or something... It hasn't totally come together, that's for sure. And hurray, the Neo-cons will all be bright red!

As for the big news yesterday, that about does it for Jihadist Saddam. At the very least, we've got a great super-villain going now. Finally, a bitter and uncertain chapter in this story has closed, and the Baath Party is really finished, as a concentric ring system which made every bit of Iraqi society work backwards, a network of fear and domination which made the nation a house propped up to implode.

For me, the key question is still what happened to those Iraqi buildings, the libraries and the huge government ministries which ran the largest bureaucracy in the middle east. It feels like the loss of all these records was a disaster which not only obliterated so much history, but also rendered almost impossible the process of reconciling the society. (We've focused on bureaucracy, as a system, in contemporary political theory class, which sparks my interest in the day-to-day administration of occupied Iraq).

Unilateral reporter Robert Fisk, April 15, [Library books, letters and priceless documents are set ablaze in final chapter of the sacking of Baghdad:](#)

So yesterday was the burning of books. First came the looters, then the arsonists. It was the final chapter in the sacking of Baghdad. The National Library and Archives – a priceless treasure of Ottoman historical documents, including the old royal archives of Iraq – were turned to ashes in 3,000 degrees of heat. Then the library of Korans at the Ministry of Religious Endowment were set ablaze.

Amid the ashes of Iraqi history, I found a file blowing in the wind outside: pages of handwritten letters between the court of Sharif Hussein of Mecca, who started the Arab revolt against the Turks for Lawrence of Arabia, and the Ottoman rulers of Baghdad. And the Americans did nothing.... I was holding in my hands the last Baghdad vestiges of Iraq's written history.

But for Iraq, this is Year Zero; with the destruction of the antiquities in the Museum of Archaeology on Saturday and the burning of the National Archives and then the Koranic library, the cultural identity of Iraq is being erased. Why? Who set these fires? For what insane purpose is this heritage being destroyed?

When I caught sight of the Koranic library burning – there were flames 100 feet high bursting from the windows – I raced to the offices of the occupying power, the US Marines' Civil Affairs Bureau. An officer shouted to a colleague that "this guy says some biblical [sic] library is on fire". I gave the map location, the precise name – in Arabic and English – I said the smoke could be seen from three miles away and it would take only five minutes to drive there. Half an hour later, there wasn't an American at the scene – and the flames were shooting 200 feet into the air.

It's a moment in time we sort of chalked off from our understanding of the situation, and this extends down to the daily pattern of life in the country now.

But what is the next move for Saddam? Even in a cell the man still has a power, in no small part the ability, and the will, to tell all about how the Reagan administration helped him with all those well-demonized episodes of genocide and mayhem. There is that. But there is also Osama bin Laden about, and he's no bit player right now. As they cheered everywhere from FOX News to the foxholes to the streets of Iraq, I posted this comment about everyone's favorite evildoer. Yes, Saddam's capture helps things come together, perhaps. But who else benefits?

Posted by HongPong at [04:28 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [HongPong-site](#) , [International Politics](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Macalester College](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [News](#) , [The White House](#) , [Usual Nonsense](#) , [War on Terror](#)

October 19, 2003

Midterms strike; an exclusive interview with Middle East expert

Right now I've just sat down to write this major midterm paper for International Politics class, but I thought I ought to update the site quickly before I dive in. Fall break is coming right up, fortunately, and we are going to see Atmosphere at First Ave. this Friday, which should be excellent.

A significant event: Atmosphere makes a music video! You can [see it here on Quicktime](#) or via links on their [site](#).

The big deal for me this week has been my Mac Weekly interview with Middle East expert, Columbia history professor and occasional Palestinian diplomat Rashid Khalidi, who presented his paper "The Past and Future of Democracy in the Middle East" at this year's Macalester Roundtable. I thought that he was an excellent and informed speaker, and it rather made my day when he spoke at length about the significance of that neo-con document, "[A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm](#)," and how for him, it described a "template" for American-Israeli hegemony over the Middle East. This is decidedly a minority viewpoint today but I strongly believe it. When the history of the neo-con parlor game which produced the Iraq war is written, Khalidi's angle will be profoundly valuable. He also told me that Ahmed Chalabi is trying to purge Sunnis in Iraq and provoke a civil

war. Also he told me that the Revisionist Zionist leader Vladimir Jabotinsky provides much of the philosophical basis of neoconservatism. Want more?

Please look at [my interview with Khalidi](#) and [the Roundtable story](#), which due to space had to be too short to provide details on his talk.

Also look at this [collection of Iraqi children's drawings](#), which I found profoundly moving. (link Schwartz :)

Additionally there is [Josh Marshall's review of "America Unbound,"](#) with an extensive critique of the neoconservative foreign policy experience, online now.

Soo now it's back to work. Damn midterms.

Posted by HongPong at [07:36 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) [Relating to Afghanistan](#) , [International Politics](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Mac Weekly](#) , [Macalester College](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Minnesota](#) , [Music](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [News](#) , [Security](#) , [The White House](#) , [War on Terror](#)

October 15, 2003

Bolivia rebellion?

New poll!! To hell with California!

There has been a lot of unrest in Bolivia directed towards their president, because he has taken pro-US policies in trade and drug control, as well as attempted to build a natural gas pipeline. So now the capital is under siege as protesters (a great part of whom are indigenous farmers and coca growers) swarm around. About 50 have been killed in violence. It's interesting how South American politics works: where it's so poor, the coca growers have a real slice of the economic activity (as they have for centuries) and they just don't accept U.S. dominance over their culture. On the other hand, maybe they are just immoral narcotrafficantes. [Latest Reuters:](#)

LA PAZ, Bolivia, Oct 15 (Reuters) - Bolivia's army fought to stop columns of protesters from streaming into the food-starved capital on Wednesday as a popular uprising against the president spread.

Catholic Church officials reported that two miners were killed and six other protesters injured 50 miles (110 km) outside of La Paz. Protests also raged in the eastern city of Cochabamba, where marchers threw rocks at police and Molotov cocktails at a government palace.

Analysts predict President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada, whose coalition is crumbling, will have to make concessions to protesters to prevent more violence from toppling his administration. The monthlong revolt against his U.S.-backed policies have left at least 53 people dead.

The government in South America's poorest nation, where six out of 10 people live on less than \$2 a day, is under attack for a host of grievances ranging from its U.S.-led eradication of coca to a plan to export natural gas to the United States.

A more [radical interpretation via ZNet](#) says that

Once again, this time ironically, Bolivian President Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada has summed up the situation succinctly: a tiny minority is trying to divide the country. Sánchez de Lozada whose approval rating stands at 8%--and his inner circle have dug in their heels, raised their voices in contempt, and adopted bellicose postures. The US Embassy, the media, and the upper layers of the military and police are the only remaining supports of the regime. The opposition sectors insist on the resignation of Sánchez de Lozada and his draconian ministers, Carlos Sánchez Berzaín and Yerko Kukoc, as well as a change in the law regulating petroleum multinationals.

It remains to be seen whether the opposition movements, led by the highland Aymara, will succeed in overthrowing Sánchez de Lozada, implementing a Constituent Assembly, and forging a new Bolivia, or whether rightwing authoritarianism a la Uribe will be imposed with the aid of the US Embassy. The situation is unfolding with such rapidity that predictions are of marginal utility, but one thing is certain: the Aymara working class and peasantry of the western highlands; the coca growers of the eastern lowlands; the Quechua-speaking Indian peasantry of the southern highlands and valleys; the working class of La Paz and Cochabamba; in other words, the people who produce Bolivia's wealth are demanding an end to 511 years of looting, exploitation, and political domination. They insist on becoming the beneficiaries of their labor, on taking the political decisions that affect their lives and exercising sovereignty over natural resources.

Here is [another ZNet article](#).

Posted by HongPong at [02:46 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [International Politics](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [News](#)

September 08, 2003

Another year of slurping up collegiate wisdom

The first week at Macalester has been going off pretty well. I am in a couple very good politics classes, a computer hardware class and urban geography. It should be challenging this year but enlightening. One of my politics classes focuses on the field known as 'critical theory' as put forth by the Frankfurt School, Herbert Marcuse, etc. Kind of psycho-social neo-Marxism, it could be described as. That's interesting... Besides that everything is excellent here at the house on Grand, despite the occasional weird incidents like the raving drunk who came up to us on the porch at 3 AM last night.

The word of the weekend I say goes to [Maureen Dowd who suggested](#) that

Does Mr. Bush ever wonder if the neocons duped him and hijacked his foreign policy? Some Middle East experts think some of the neocons painted a rosy picture for the president of Arab states blossoming with democracy when they really knew this could not be accomplished so easily; they may have cynically suspected that it was far more likely that the Middle East would fall into chaos and end up back in its pre-Ottoman Empire state, Balkanized into a tapestry of rival fiefs -- based on tribal and ethnic identities, with no central government -- **so busy fighting each other that they would be no threat to us, or Israel.**

The administration is worried now about Jordan and Saudi Arabia in the face of roiling radicalism.

Some veterans of Bush 41 think that the neocons packaged their "inverted Trotskyism," as the writer John Judis dubbed their rabid desire to export their "idealistic concept of internationalism," so that it appealed to Bush 43's born-again sense of divine mission and to the desire of Mr. Bush, Rummy and Mr. Cheney to achieve immortality by transforming the Middle East and the military.

Also check out a [disturbing report in the Observer UK](#) about how Iraqis randomly killed by the US are barely noted officially.

What is perhaps most shocking about their deaths is that the coalition troops who killed them did not even bother to record details of the raid with the coalition military press office. The killings were that unremarkable. What happened in Mahmudiya last week should not be forgotten, for the story of this raid is also the story of the dark side of the US-led occupation of Iraq, of the violent and sometimes lethal raids carried out apparently beyond any accountability.

Everyone should look at this [really amazing interview with Jason Burke](#), someone who has examined Islamic militancy closely. (Link via [Altercation](#)) For those of you who believe that al-Qaeda is a self-contained, concrete organization rather than a loose network of militants, consider:

There's an understanding among the Western public that Al-Qaeda is a coherent, organized terrorist network with a hierarchy, a command and control structure, a degree of commission and execution of terrorist acts by a few individuals.

That simply isn't the case. The biggest myth is that all the various incidents that we are seeing are linked to some kind of central organization. One of the reasons the myth is so prevalent is that it's a very comforting one.

Because if you clearly get rid of that central organization, if you get rid off, particularly bin Laden and a few score, a few hundred people around him then the problem would apparently be solved. Unfortunately, that idea is indeed a myth and bears very little resemblance to what's happening on the ground.

There was a pretty [wild story in the Washington Post on Sunday](#) about al-Qaeda setting up a front in Iraq (which of course it didn't have before) to cause havoc etc. The article also has a lot of speculations about Al-Qaeda leaders hiding in Iran after the Afghanistan war, and plotting the recent Riyadh bombings. This article in turn [sparked a lot of disagreement](#) in part because it was written by somewhat discredited WaPo reporter Sue Schmidt, who might be more ready to jump on Iran with unproven allegations drawn from the Iranian exiles who hate their government. That site, [Talking Points Memo](#), points to a [good blog kept by a middle east studies professor](#) who also [debunks aspects of the story](#).

Talking Points Memo is written by Josh Micah Marshall, who writes on Salon, the Washington Monthly and a Washington newsletter The Hill. I really like his writings on various topics around Washington, such as this new piece detailing [how the Bush administration hates experts](#) who they see as controlled by a 'namby-pamby' liberal ideology, and hence disregards real facts:

By disregarding the advice of experts, by shunting aside the cadres of career professionals with on-the-ground experience in these various countries, the administration's hawks cut themselves off from the practical know-how which would have given them some chance of implementing their plans successfully. In a real sense, they cut themselves off from reality. When they went into Iraq they were essentially flying blind, having disengaged from almost everyone who had real-world experience in how effective occupation, reconstruction and nation-building was done. And much the same can be said of the administration's take on economic policy, environmental policy, and in almost every sort of policy question involving science. Muzzling the experts helped the White House muscle its revisionist plans through.

In August 2002, Marshall wrote a fascinating piece in Salon about how [a schism exists in the Rumsfeld Pentagon](#) between the brass and the top civilians (i.e. the Neocons):

The Bush administration's most right-leaning political appointees are concentrated at the Pentagon. And nowhere is that tilt more evident than in its Middle East policies. The Bush appointees have not just ignored recommendations from military advisors and civil servants but have often ousted or sidelined those who have had the temerity to offer any policy advice. Over the last 18 months, there has been an exodus of career civil servants leaving the Pentagon policy shop for stints on Capitol Hill or with other Defense Department-affiliated institutions, according to a half-dozen such departees who spoke to Salon -- far more than is normally the case when administrations change from one party to the other. Many of those slots have been filled by ideologues and think-tank denizens who can be relied on to serve up the right kind of advice to their superiors.

When most people think of neo-conservatives at the Pentagon, they think of men like Wolfowitz, the deputy secretary, and Richard Perle, the chairman of the Defense Policy Board. **But the second tier of civilian appointees at the Pentagon is stacked with Wolfowitz and Perle proteges who are in many ways even more conservative in their views than their mentors** and -- as the Rhode incident shows -- a good deal more hotheaded...

In the minds of these second-tier appointees, taking out Saddam Hussein is only part of a larger puzzle. Their grand vision of the Middle East goes something like this: Stage 1: Iraq becomes democratic. Stage 2: Reformers take over in Iran. That would leave the three powerhouses of the Middle East -- Turkey, Iraq and Iran -- democratic and pro-Western. Suddenly the Saudis wouldn't be just one more corrupt, authoritarian Arab regime slouching toward bin Ladenism. They'd be surrounded by democratic states that would undermine Saudi rule both militarily and ideologically.

As a plan to pursue in the real world, most of the career military and the civilian employees at the Pentagon -- indeed most establishment foreign policy experts -- see this vision as little short of insane. But to Bush's hawkish Pentagon appointees the real prize isn't Baghdad, it's Riyadh. And the Saudis know it.

He also wrote a great article in the January Washington Monthly about how [terrible Dick Cheney is at making decisions](#).

As far as the resignation of the Palestinian Prime Minister is concerned, that was unfortunate but really it was the poor man's only card to play. What, precisely, was he supposed to do? Buy off a few armed gangs and make them sit tight as Israel failed to relax the occupation (as well as cease constructing settlements as the Road Map demanded)? It should be remembered that he only could have moved against that 'terrorist infrastructure' in the cities where he controlled Palestinian security forces (he only controlled a few of these groups anyway). It was a pointless venture because Israel and the U.S. never gave him any slack. Israel didn't even stop trying to kill Hamas members. Well, that's one way to do a cease-fire. Finally, [Ariel Sharon is safe from peace](#), as one Israeli put it. Israel, by the way, did bomb Lebanon a little bit this week, but that's how it goes these days. And a panel found that the [Israeli police treated Israeli Arabs as 'the enemy'](#) in a riot just after the beginning of this Intifada.

Naturally Bush didn't address the dramatic Palestinian peace plan failure, or the economy, in his barrage of platitudes this evening. His polls are falling

and this whole conflagration is such a marvelous. \$87 billion, money well spent. [Mr Marshall says this evening](#):

We went into Iraq to eliminate Saddam's stock of weapons of mass destruction, to depose a reckless strongman at the heart of a vital region, and to overawe unfriendly regimes on the country's borders. Agree or not, those were the prime stated reasons. Now we've got a deteriorating security situation and a palpably botched plan for reconstruction. And our effort to recover from our ill-conceived and poorly-executed policy is now the 'central front' in the war on terror, which is among other things extremely convenient.

The president has turned 9/11 into a sort of foreign policy perpetual motion machine in which the problems ginned up by policy failures become the rationale for intensifying those policies. The consequences of screw-ups become examples of the power of 'the terrorists'.

We're not on the offensive. We're on the defensive. A bunch of mumbo-jumbo and flim-flam doesn't change that.

Posted by HongPong at [01:11 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Iraq](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [News](#) , [Security](#) , [The White House](#) , [War on Terror](#)
June 24, 2003

It's not the end of the world

ut *This War Had a Much Deeper Significance than Reported!* according to a marvelous book I received on Friday. Beyond Iraq: The Next Move, is selling well on [Amazon](#) and [Barnes and Noble](#), where it is listed under the '[non-fiction](#)' and '[biblical prophecy](#)' categories. I got my copy the only honest way, through [Armageddon Books](#) (order form: "Thanks again for selecting Armageddon Books as your supplier of end-time materials"). Evans' key points:

- Saddam Hussein and his demon-possessed sons are the current representation of the spirit of Babylon, which is prophesied to battle Jerusalem at the end of the Christian world.
- Islam is dangerous and probably wicked.
- Settling Jews in the West Bank is the will of God.
- The Israeli Likud party is righteous and believes in God, while Labor is made of liberal unbelievers.
- The problem is the "t" word, terror, not the "o" word, occupied territories.
- The present 'road map' is only bad for Israel because it means land for terror.

Introduction:

As I stood and shook Mayor Giuliani's hand, all I could see in my mind's eye were the two 189-ton bombs in the form of fully fueled Boeing 767s hitting the World Trade Towers just as my friend [Mossad director] had foretold. No one could have known that on that Tuesday, the 11th of September 2001, the first war of the 21st century would begin--a war against terror that may well draw the line in the sand, , forever dividing light from darkness, proclaiming like a trumpet a spiritual battle of monumental proportions. Who would have wondered at the time, that the epicenters of this battle would center on ancient Babylon (biblical Iraq) -- the spiritual center of darkness -- and Jerusalem --

the spiritual center of Light... Iraq will become the US base from which the war on terrorism is fought. From there it will only be a short reach to the throat of Syria and Iran and the terrorist networks. Ahh, sweet sweet Christian evangelistic eschatology. It's the end of time and we have front row seats for the showdown of good and evil. What actually egged me to put down \$11 on this book is *how much it's getting promoted*, at least on MSNBC. On Hardball the other day, the host (a sub for Mathews) introduced Evans without putting him into the context of his evangelical beliefs. He just rambled on (the host asked him if he was drunk, after blurting "Sugarcoating Sinai") about the "t" word, terror, being the issue. The issue of *the end of the world* never entered the discussion, and suddenly the discourse in the book becomes *normal*. Who is reading up on stuff this way, who sees the world through this lens? What do *they* believe about Palestinians?

Posted by HongPong at [02:34 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [Afghanistan](#) , [Books](#) , [International Politics](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [Security](#) , [War on Terror](#)

June 11, 2003

Chalabi: Wise on Saddam or NeoConPawn? US battles Shadowy Enemies and meddles with Tehran?

Ahmed Chalabi, the chairman of the Iraqi National Congress, is [claiming that Saddam is hiding out](#), paying bounties for killing American soldiers, and with him are the answers about weapons.

Chalabi, 58, the leader of the Pentagon-backed Iraqi National Congress, insisted that U.S. authorities would find the former Iraqi government's hidden weapons once they locate Hussein. Chalabi maintained that Hussein is still alive and directing attacks against U.S. soldiers...

The role of Chalabi and other former Iraqi exiles in helping to build the U.S. case for war has been scrutinized recently in Washington, particularly since U.S. inspectors have not provided substantial evidence of Iraqi chemical, biological and nuclear weapons....

Chalabi is a longtime favorite of Pentagon hawks, and he traveled on a U.S. military transport plane with the U.S.-trained 700-member Iraqi Free Forces to southern Iraq during the war. But he has criticized the U.S. military for not anticipating the extent of chaos after the fall of Hussein's government. He said he had repeatedly pleaded with U.S. officials to train a force of Iraqi military police to "go in with the American force" and halt the "looting" and the "acts of disorder."

Chalabi said that the capture of Hussein and his younger son, Qusay, could still hold the key to discovering Iraq's banned weapons: "The weapons and Saddam are one and the same thing."

So who is this marvellous Chalabi? He is derided as a "[hapless strutting tool of US imperialism](#)", as Edward Said put it. An old friend of Wolfowitz and generally someone who has taken their paychecks from the CIA. Consider this article "[Tinker, Banker, NeoCon, Spy](#)" from last November:

If T.E. Lawrence ("of Arabia") had been a 21st-century neoconservative operative instead of a British imperial spy, he'd be Ahmed Chalabi's best friend. Chalabi, the London-based leader of the Iraqi National Congress (INC), is front man for the latest incarnation of a long-time neoconservative strategy to redraw the map of the oil-rich Middle East, put American troops -- and American oil companies -- in full control of the Persian Gulf's reserves and use the Gulf as a fulcrum for enhancing

America's global strategic hegemony. Just as Lawrence's escapades in World War I-era Arabia helped Britain remake the disintegrating Ottoman Empire, the U.S. sponsors of Chalabi's INC hope to do their own nation building....

In Washington, Team Chalabi is led by Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz and Richard Perle, the neoconservative strategist who heads the Pentagon's Defense Policy Board. Chalabi's partisans run the gamut from far right to extremely far right, with key supporters in most of the Pentagon's Middle-East policy offices -- such as Peter Rodman, Douglas Feith, David Wurmser and Michael Rubin. Also included are key staffers in Vice President Dick Cheney's office, not to mention Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and former CIA Director Jim Woolsey.

The Washington partisans who want to install Chalabi in Arab Iraq are also those associated with the staunchest backers of Israel, particularly those aligned with the hard-right faction of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Chalabi's cheerleaders include the Washington Institute for Near East Policy (WINEP) and the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs (JINSA). "Chalabi is the one that we know the best," says Shoshana Bryen, director of special projects for JINSA, where Chalabi has been a frequent guest at board meetings, symposia and other events since 1997. "He could be Iraq's national leader," says Patrick Clawson, deputy director of WINEP, whose board of advisers includes pro-Israeli luminaries such as Perle, Wolfowitz and Martin Peretz of The New Republic.

There is absolutely *no food for thought* whatsoever in that article. None.

There is a frightening level of general violence in many central Iraqi cities, as skilled guerillas probe coalition defenses. In Fallujah, there have been frequent attacks.

The hostility to U.S. forces appears to be most intense in a region west and north of Baghdad dominated by Sunni Muslims who were at the core of the Baath Party and Hussein's government. Cities such as Baqubah, Samarra, Habaniyah, Khaldiya, Fallujah and Tikrit, Saddam Hussein's home town, have been particularly dangerous for U.S. troops.

"These are military-type attacks," said Capt. John Ives, of the 3rd Infantry Division's 2nd Brigade in Fallujah, 35 miles west of Baghdad. "It could get worse before it gets better. It's a matter that some people want us dead. We're just going to have to take them out." The division was recently dispatched from Baghdad to reinforce the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment in west central Iraq.

In Fallujah, there are also signs of increasing organization and tactical efficiency of resisters, U.S. officers said. Some groups have begun to give themselves names -- things as simple as "The Fighters," according to graffiti on the walls in the town. Gunmen are using spotters placed along the roads or in mosques to signal the arrival of U.S. troops, Capt. Ives said. Once, someone cut electricity to a neighborhood as U.S. forces were approaching....

In Fallujah early today, a convoy of seven U.S. Humvees was attacked as the vehicles moved down Old Cinema Street, a main commercial thoroughfare. The vehicles were ambushed by rifle fire from four sides. The Americans fired at buildings on both sides of the street, chipping concrete off the facades. No one on either side was injured.

There have been attacks on U.S. forces every night in Fallujah since Wednesday, when Iraqis fired a rocket-propelled grenade at a group of soldiers positioned at a ruined police station, killing one. The assailants escaped. Fallujah has been embittered since U.S. forces killed 17 Iraqis during two separate protests in April. U.S. authorities said the soldiers fired in self-defense.

"We've got to be on our toes all the time. Eyes open, scanning the buildings. It's not tanks and infantry we're fighting anymore. It's something more hidden," said Staff Sgt. Fred Frisbie, a military policeman.

So here's the question: is this going to get better or worse? Easier or more dangerous? Will a pattern emerge in these guerilla attacks, or would the Bush administration prefer for now that you believe this is random flak from an unstable nation? The Times also reports on this tale of terror, "[G.I.'s in Iraqi City Are Stalked by Faceless Enemies at Night](#)":

Since the American command quadrupled its military presence here last week, not a day has gone by without troops weathering an ambush, a rocket-propelled grenade attack, an assault with automatic weapons or a mine blast.

American forces seem to be battling a small but determined foe who has a primitive but effective command-and-control system that uses red, blue and white flares to signal the advance of American troops. The risk does not come from random potshots. The American forces are facing organized resistance that comes alive at night...

Specialist William Fernandez experienced the enemy tactics firsthand while on patrol on Sunday night. Fernandez, a computer engineer in civilian life, was operating the radio.

When he saw a red flare he sensed his patrol was about to be attacked. Suddenly, a grenade exploded directly behind the column of six Humvees, a move he believed was intended to encourage the Americans to drive forward into the kill zone.

Automatic-weapons fire erupted from several rooftops. The Americans fired at the muzzle flashes and left the scene after several minutes. Most of the Humvees had bullet holes, but the soldiers somehow escaped injury.

"It is a miniwar," Specialist Fernandez said.

Much ado about Iran

Yet another NYT story, "[On the Road to Falluja](#)" actually details the relations between the U.S. forces and the Mujahideen Kalq, a militant (terrorist?) organization mostly funded by Iranian exiles, based in Iraq. The group is committed to overthrowing the Iranian government. *Note the casual attitude to looting.*

I hit the road with the troops the next day. The Spartan Brigade was like a band of nomads. They took the furniture, light fixtures, anything to make their stay in Falluja more bearable. Some soldiers even took the toilets and sinks from a bombed-out palace. They figured that the palace was a total loss and that the items could be put to better use in their new quarters, which seemed to me an eminently sensible calculation.

But what were the new quarters? As the brigade arrived, it turned out that it would be setting up camp in a compound built by the Mujahadeen Khalq, an Iranian resistance group that the Clinton administration put on its terrorist list but that asserts it does not support terror attacks against the United States and **wants to make common cause against the Iranian government...**

The resistance movement assumed that it could stay on the sidelines during the American-led attack on Iraq and had sent a letter to Secretary of State Colin L. Powell indicating that it had no intention of opposing the American invasion. The United States bombed their bases anyway.

After the war, the United States concluded an agreement with the group, which resulted in the handing over of its tanks, artillery and other weapons. They are stored at a camp under American supervision. Thousands of the group's fighters and supporters live at a camp at Ashraf, north of Baghdad.

But at the sprawling compound here, where the Spartan Brigade was setting up Camp, the American military presence was their immediate concern. The compound was the resistance movement's rear logistics base and includes a 100-bed hospital for women, including female fighters, that had been stripped bare by looters after the war. It also has an underground bunker system that is outfitted with a filtration system, a precaution that they say is against an Iranian missile attack.

The movement says it spent \$15 million building the complex, using funds donated by Iranian businesspeople within Iran and in exile. The compound was abandoned after the Americans bombed part of it during the war to topple Mr. Hussein, but now the Iranians want to move hundreds of its women here.

Can we say 'freedom fighters'? Can we call this crew those magic words: a P-R-O-X-Y F-O-R-C-E against Iran? [A press release of the Iranian government news agency](#) is quite annoyed with the Bush administration for threatening to interfere with Iranian politics. These are useful to look at because they indicate Iran's basic public claims. (link: [Agonist](#))

"If the United States desires friendship with Iran, it would naturally be expected not to interfere in Iranian domestic affairs and show respect for the decisions of the Iranian people and their values," Kharrazi said in response to Powell's statement that the US is not an enemy of Iran.

He said that Washington should be familiarized with Iranian history which proves that the people become even more united whenever the country is exposed to foreign interference. Kharrazi noted that the US secretary of state was aware as gathered from his message that the Iranians will not accept foreign interference in the affairs of their country.

The Iranian foreign minister blasted Powell for calling on Iranians to stand up against their government officials and interact freely with the outside world. Powell's latest statement hints at a desire on the part of Washington to resume friendship with Iran, but ironically not a single day passes without a new conspiracy emerging to tarnish the image of the Islamic Republic before the international community.

Moreover, since the victory of the Islamic Revolution in Iran the United States has spared no effort at blocking Iran's economic progress on various pretexts.

So is the United States after Iran? That's the question in the Senate right now. [The Senate Foreign Relations Committee is addressing this](#), and there seems to be great confusion and 'no debate' according to Condi, simultaneously. There hasn't been that much debate lately... (Link: [Agonist](#))

Judging by several interviews of committee members from both parties, a consensus seems to have emerged that President Bush has yet to formulate a clear-cut policy toward Iran, which has been seen as a hostile power since the 1979 takeover of the U.S. Embassy compound in Tehran....

"I don't think they have a policy," said Sen. Joe Biden (D-Del.), ranking member of the foreign-relations panel, last week. Biden was reacting to unconfirmed intelligence reports that suggested al Qaeda operatives in the Islamic republic had helped plan the May 12 suicide bombings in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

"I think it's kind of loose talk to be talking about fomenting a revolution in Iran because I think it undercuts the very people in Iran that we should be giving support to ? that is the moderates, who are not necessarily pro-Western, pro-American, but they are democrats with a small d," Biden said...

White House spokesman Ari Fleischer described Iran's efforts [to stop developing nuclear tech] so far as insufficient, while one administration official questioned why a country with state-owned oil would need nuclear energy. "Why would they need to develop nuclear fuel for a reactor?" he asked.

Meanwhile, National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice has said that the administration has no intention of debating the future of U.S. policy in Iran. **"There really isn't a debate on this issue,"** she told Reuters.

[Thousands of students protested in Tehran yesterday](#), getting angry about their government. The demonstrators were dispersed by riot police. (Link: Agonist)

To round out a lot of good news, [Bush is going to cause the biggest budget deficit in the history of the United States](#). A liberal complaint is all I have, a criticism, if you will, of the 'conservative' party and their proven fiscal agility. Do they really always have to run the tab up so much every time they get into the White House? This red ink is not just an abstraction, it's a burden of debt that *my generation* will have to manage. When will they start to tack it down? 2008?

Posted by HongPong at [02:56 AM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [International Politics](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Israel-Palestine](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [News](#) , [Security](#) , [The White House](#) , [War on Terror](#)

March 26, 2003

The battle for Mesopotamia: surrender not likely

?The problem is that the good Lord didn't see fit to always put oil and gas resources where there are democratically elected regimes friendly to the United States. Occasionally we have to operate in places where, all things considered, one would not normally choose to go. But, we go where the business is." ?[Dick Cheney the Experienced Liberator](#), 1996. (Quote from the excellent collection of war-related documents and evidence, [cooperativeresearch.org](#). Thx to Schwartz)

The war plows on as Americans are forced away from every major Iraqi city. Lacking the popular favor to safely attack ancient Arab cities, they have been forced into waiting and firing blind missiles and bombs... You can say they are smart and that they minimize civilian casualties. ONLY PEACE minimizes civilian casualties.

So how can we perceive what is going on? Media chickens ride along with the American troops, unable to describe the random tactics of the Anglo-Saxon "coalition." They cannot directly expose the flip side, the lives of people who are actually getting the life bombed out of them by American planes. The media plays elusive games, obsessing over rumors of Saddam's duplication while ignoring what he has to say. With all these reporters driving around the desert in humvees, there have often been vast stretches of time where human interest stories flood out everything else. Because Iraq is not turning over like the neocon 'idealists' predicted. So what do you do to get the real story? One excellent site is [The Agonist](#), with constant news updates from all sides. Want to know how smart YOU are? [Take the Iraq quiz](#). Thx again to Schwartz!

Un-embedded and longtime war reporter Robert Fisk covers Baghdad, outside the walls of media censorship. From the scene of [at least 20 dead innocent Arabs in Baghdad](#):

It was an outrage, an obscenity. The severed hand on the metal door, the swamp of blood and mud across the road, the human brains inside a garage, the incinerated, skeletal remains of an Iraqi mother and her three small children in their still smoldering car. Two missiles from a single American jet killed them all ? more than 20 Iraqi civilians, torn to pieces before they could be ?liberated? by the nation which destroyed their lives.

Who dares, I ask myself, to call this ?collateral damage?? Abu Taleb Street was packed with pedestrians and motorists when the American pilot approached through the dense sandstorm that covered northern Baghdad in a cloak of red and yellow dust and rain yesterday morning. It?s a dirt poor neighborhood ? of mostly Shiite Muslims, the same people whom Messers Bush and Blair still fondly hope will rise up against Saddam ? a place of oil-sodden car repair shops, overcrowded apartments and cheap cafes.

It is all too likely that we have stumbled badly in managing the political climate of the Middle East prior to engaging Saddam. [Robert Fisk reported yesterday from outside Baghdad](#):

A senior Iraqi business executive wanted to explain how slender was the victory the Americans were claiming. "Throughout history, Iraq has been called Mesopotamia," he said. "This means 'the land between the two rivers'. So unless you are between the two rivers, this means you are not in Iraq. General Franks should know this." Alas for the businessman, the US Marines were, as we spoke, crossing the Euphrates under fire at Nasiriyah yesterday as hundreds of women and children fled their homes between the bridges. But still, by yesterday evening, only 50 or so American tanks had made it to the eastern shore, into "Mesopotamia". It didn't spoil the man's enthusiasm.

"Can you imagine the effect on the Arabs if Iraq gets out of this war intact?" he asked. "It took just five days for all the Arabs to be defeated by Israel in the 1967 war. And already we Iraqis have been fighting the all-powerful Americans for five days and still we have held on to all of our cities and will not surrender. And imagine what would happen if Iraq surrendered. What chance would the Syrian leadership have against the demands of Israel? What chance would the Palestinians have of negotiating a fair deal with the Israelis? The Americans don't care about giving the Palestinians a fair deal. So why should they want to give the Iraqis a fair deal?"

This was no member of the Baath Party speaking. This was a man with degrees from universities in Manchester and Birmingham. A colleague had an even more cogent point to make. "Our soldiers know they will not get a fair deal from the Americans," he said. "It's important that they know this. We may not like our regime. But we fight for our country. The Russians did not like Stalin but they fought under him against the German invaders. We have a long history of fighting the colonial powers, especially you British. You claim you are coming to 'liberate' us. But you don't understand. What is happening now is we are starting a war of liberation against the Americans and the British."

Fisk also had [an excellent interview with Democracy Now](#) on March 25th. How experienced do TV reporters sound, really? How much do they bother considering a history that is longer than 12 years?

....As the Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz said a few hours ago, I was listening to him in person, the Americans expected to be greeted with roses and music- and they were greeted with bullets. I think you see what has happened is that -- and as he pointed out -- the American administration and the US press lectured everybody about how the country would break apart where Shiites hated Sunnis and Sunnis hated Turkmen and Turkmen hated Kurds, and so on. And yet, most of the soldiers fighting in southern Iraq are actually Shiite. They're not Sunnis, they're not Tikritis, they're not from Saddam's home city. Saddam did not get knocked off his perch straight away, and I think that, to a considerable

degree, the American administration allowed that little cabal of advisors around Bush- I'm talking about Perle, Wolfowitz, and these other people?people who have never been to war, never served their country, never put on a uniform- nor, indeed, has Mr. Bush ever served his country- they persuaded themselves of this Hollywood scenario of GIs driving through the streets of Iraqi cities being showered with roses by a relieved populace who desperately want this offer of democracy that Mr. Bush has put on offer-as reality.

And the truth of the matter is that Iraq has a very, very strong political tradition of strong anti-colonial struggle. It doesn't matter whether that's carried out under the guise of kings or under the guise of the Arab Socialist Ba'ath party, or under the guise of a total dictator. There are many people in this country who would love to get rid of Saddam Hussein, I'm sure, but they don't want to live under American occupation...

...Very soon, the Americans are going to need the United Nations as desperately as they wanted to get rid of them. Because if this turns into the tragedy that it is turning into at the moment, if the Americans end up, by besieging Baghdad day after day after day, they'll be looking for a way out, and the only way out is going to be the United Nations at which point, believe me, the French and the Russians are going to make sure that George Bush passes through some element of humiliation to do that. But that's some way away. Remember what I said early on to you. The Americans can do it- they have the firepower. They may need more than 250,000 troops, but if they're willing to sacrifice lives of their own men, as well as lives of the Iraqis, they can take Baghdad; they can come in.

But, you know, I look down from my balcony here next to the Tigris River- does that mean we're going to have an American tank on every intersection in Baghdad? What are they there for- to occupy? To repress? To run an occupation force against the wishes of Iraqis? Or are they liberators? It's very interesting how the reporting has swung from one side to another. Are these liberating forces or occupying forces? Every time I hear a journalist say "liberation", I know he means "occupation". We come back to the same point again which Mr. (Richard) Perle will not acknowledge; because this war does not have a UN sanction behind it?I mean not in the sense of sanctions but that it doesn't have permission behind it, it is a war without international legitimacy, and the longer it goes on, the more it hurts Bush and the less it hurts Saddam. And we're now into one week, and there isn't even a single American soldier who has even approached the city of Baghdad yet. And the strange thing, looking at it from here in Baghdad, is the ad hoc way in which this war appears to be carried out.

In a critical development, an [Iraqi Shi'ite leader declared that the United States must leave the country immediately](#) after Hussein is toppled, or they will soon face armed resistance. The leader of the Iraqi Shiite Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq, Ayatollah Mohammad-Baqer Hakim, declared that "The world does not approve of any colonialism or occupation, and we will take peaceful measures in this respect at the beginning but we will use force later." So much for those multi-year Halliburton contracts that have already been signed.

You need to read this: [**Thank God for the Death of the United Nations by Richard Perle:**](#)

...For Lady Williams (and many others), the thumb on the scale of judgment about this war is the idea that only the UN security council can legitimise the use of force. It matters not if troops are used only to enforce the UN's own demands. A willing coalition of liberal democracies isn't good enough. If any institution or coalition other than the UN security council uses force, even as a last resort, "anarchy", rather than international law, would prevail, destroying any hope for world order.

This is a dangerously wrong idea that leads inexorably to handing great moral and even existential politico-military decisions, to the likes of Syria, Cameroon, Angola, Russia, China and France. When challenged with the argument that if a policy is right with the approbation of the security council, how

can it be wrong just because communist China or Russia or France or a gaggle of minor dictatorships withhold their assent, she fell back on the primacy of "order" versus "anarchy"....

This new century now challenges the hopes for a new world order in new ways. We will not defeat or even contain fanatical terror unless we can carry the war to the territories from which it is launched. This will sometimes require that we use force against states that harbour terrorists, as we did in destroying the Taliban regime in Afghanistan.

The most dangerous of these states are those that also possess weapons of mass destruction. Iraq is one, but there are others. Whatever hope there is that they can be persuaded to withdraw support or sanctuary from terrorists rests on the certainty and effectiveness with which they are confronted. The chronic failure of the security council to enforce its own resolutions is unmistakable: it is simply not up to the task. We are left with coalitions of the willing. Far from disparaging them as a threat to a new world order, we should recognise that they are, by default, the best hope for that order, and the true alternative to the anarchy of the abject failure of the UN.

Yes, if you believe that 3 of 5 permanent members of the Security Council will never agree to your aggression and advocacy of military hegemony, then the UN has little value. But is Perle after Israel's regional hegemony, or America's? Is there a difference these days?

Posted by HongPong at [09:19 PM](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) Relating to [International Politics](#) , [Iraq](#) , [Media](#) , [Military-Industrial Complex](#) , [Neo-Cons](#) , [News](#) , [War on Terror](#)

http://www.hongpong.com/hp-archives/topics/militaryindustrial_complex/

IRAN CONTRA LIVES: Censored FOIA CIA documents on Mena Arkansas cocaine trafficking: Barry Seal's ghost sez: Silence speaks louder than words!!

Submitted by HongPong on Thu, 2007-04-05 05:48

on this issue in 1994 and had discovered no responsive information. CIA noted parenthetically that the operational activities of the private benefactors were mainly conducted from southern Florida.



Lookie here! Barry Seal surfaces in CIA documents with suspicious questions all around: Methinks this is a pretty good find in the CIA FOIA archives: Let's find out what Iowa Rep. James Leach wanted the NSA and CIA to tell him about Barry Seal, Iran-Contra and Mena operations. Our source for this heavily redacted file is the CIA Freedom of Information Act stash of documents. I did a search for Barry Seal and I felt pretty pleased that a chestnut like this popped right up.

This document really takes a cross-section right across the Reagan-era Mena Arkansas drug-trafficking allegations, and that alone makes it interesting. Anyone trying to debunk the Barry Seal Planet of conspiracies should have to face this CIA document as hard evidence that the bizarre connections were there for all to see. And its subsequent release by the CIA indicates they consider it all "blown" at this late date anyway.

I'm going to repost most pages of it, except for a tiny "these things are attached" type of sheet. Basically this is one of those cool primary sources that indicates Serious People Asking Tinfoil Questions and Getting Heavily Redacted Answers. I mean, who doesn't love a government document like this?

Q: Is NSA or CIA aware of an account, number b-142AB2, at the Banca Della Svizzera Italiano in Chiasso, said to have belonged to [the late] Vincent Foster?

A: NSA, CIA, no.

Q: Does the CIA or NSA know of any secret Swiss bank account that used to belong jointly to Vincent Foster and others that supposedly contained contributions to the Clinton presidential campaign?

A: CIA, no. NSA,

Q: Is the CIA or NSA aware of a fund known variously as the Medders or Meeders or Meadows or Meadors or Meaders Trust or Estate? The fund was allegedly first deposited at Pittsburgh's Mellon Bank some 50 years ago and is now reportedly worth billions. The allegation is that a legally ungoverned trust is under de facto control of a bank or group of banks under prospective legal challenges from alleged heirs and that income is so large that it is used as a secret source of funds by banks and high-ranking officials for sensitive political and economic purposes. The money and its movements, it is alleged, are hidden in a complex web of electronic transactions among the banks in the group.

You're goddamn right!! And who doesn't love this one?

C. Narcotics Smuggling

Q: Did the CIA or NSA have any knowledge of or involvement in illicit narcotics trafficking, possibly by rogue operatives, in or near Mena, Arkansas? As you know, there have been allegations that on their return flights from Central America, pilots smuggled more than 20 tons of cocaine into Mena.

A: NSA, CIA no. noted that CIA had also checked with its counter-narcotics center, which reported no responsive information available.

D. Money Laundering

Q: Did the CIA or NSA have any indication that

local businesses and Arkansas

A: NSA, CIA, no.

Q: Does the CIA or NSA have any indication that Barry Seal or his associates attempted to

A: NSA, CIA, no.

Q: Does the CIA or NSA have any indication that the proceeds from illicit narcotics trafficking might have been laundered through the Arkansas Development Finance Authority (ADFA)?

A: NSA, CIA, no.

Or more succinctly:

Q: Has the CIA or NSA received any indication that proceeds from the sale of PROMIS or similar software were used to finance arms shipments to the Contras?

A: CIA, no. NSA,

That box is just the badass Spy Way to say "No," I'm sure!

To get to the file [go to the CIA's stash here](#) and do a search for Barry Seal and hit the link named below:

Title: BRIEFING FOR REPRESENTATIVE JAMES LEACH (R-IA) REGARDING MONEY LAUNDERING IN ARKANSAS

Abstract:

Pages: 0013

Pub Date: 8/16/1995

Release Date: 8/4/2002

Keywords: MONEY LAUNDERING

Case Number: F-1997-01423

Copyright: 0

Release Decision: RIPPUB

Classification: U [Unclassified]

So first here's the intro letter about what it's about. Note that the stuff about Arkansas banks is redacted.

~~SECRET~~

OCA 95-2274
16 August 1995

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Briefing for Representative James Leach (R-IA)
Regarding [redacted] in Arkansas in the
Late 1980s with NSA - 21 July 1995

(b)(1)
(b)(3)
(b)(6)

1. On 21 July 1995, at 1000 hours, in room 2186 Rayburn House Office Building, Chairman James Leach (R-IA), Committee on Banking and Financial Services, and staffer Jamie McCormick, received a briefing, at Leach's written request to the DCI, on allegations of [redacted] in Arkansas in the late 1980s. Agency participants were: [redacted] Investigative Staff, Office of Inspector General; [redacted] Chief, Legislation Group, Office of Congressional Affairs; and the undersigned. NSA participants were: Frank Newton, Inspector General, and [redacted] Congressional Affairs. [redacted]

2. Representative Leach began the briefing by saying that he was not interested in opening a new probe of U.S. Contra-policy or suggesting wrongdoing by either Agency, especially since he served on the October Surprise Task Force, where he was convinced that the Marcos' walked away with billion of dollars. Leach, however, did say he based his request for the briefing on reports that have appeared in the press that refer to secret foreign bank accounts held by prominent people in Mena, Arkansas, [redacted] and an Arkansas-centered network of banks formed to [redacted] (see attached incoming letter). Leach also said that over a period of time he had talked to a lot of people regarding this issue. He said that most of the allegations contained within the articles were probably false, but he felt an obligation to look into Whitewater related allegations on behalf of the Banking Committee. That said, some allegations may be credible, some totally unbelievable, but as information goes out to the American public in non-traditional ways, it becomes more believable. [redacted]

3. [redacted] along with Frank Newton, responded to Leach's questions regarding each Agency's current knowledge on involvement with any of the alleged allegations contained in his letter. Newton responded [redacted] to all of the questions posed in the incoming letter, but did, however, provide a brief broadbrush

OCA - COMPT
S
LOGGED
ISC

I-102J
H Leach

APPROVED FOR RELEASE
DATE: JUL 2002

~~SECRET~~

[redacted]

8

Here's an old school Iran-contra multipack! Barry Seal and PROMIS! The DEA! All righty:

~~SECRET~~

SUBJECT: Briefing for Representative James Leach
(R-IA) Regarding [redacted] in
Arkansas in the Late 1980s - 21 July 1995

background briefing on how NSA conducts its normal daily activities [redacted] said that the capability of the IG to conduct its function depends in part on cooperation by others with CIA and thus far the IG had not look into any of these allegations. However, [redacted] said as he understood the current issue, a thorough search had been conducted by CIA regarding PROMIS/Inslaw issues relating to Systematics, Inc., Mena, and Hadron, during a much earlier timeframe. Also, he understood that thus far very little information had been found to be responsive to the exact allegations contained in the current letter. [redacted] however, did say that the Agency had perhaps made some connections within the larger picture of things. The Agency was aware of Barry Seal, but had no relationship with him nor any records regarding his activities in Mena. Seal's association with the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) was widely publicized, [redacted]

[redacted] As for PROMIS, that issue had been looked at in-depth by the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence (SSCI) and the House Judiciary Committee in 1991 and 1993. The conclusion then and still is that the Agency never purchased any INSLAW/PROMIS software. [redacted]

[redacted] Chairman Leach was also informed that we had not found any records related to Systematics of Arkansas, a banking software firm, [redacted]

4. [redacted]

2
~~SECRET~~

This stuff pertains to how Barry Seal's cargo plane got shot down in Nicaragua. I have no idea what park-o-meter is but must be up to something cool:

SUBJECT: Briefing for Representative James Leach
(R-IA) Regarding [redacted] in
Arkansas in the Late 1960s - 21 July 1995

5. [redacted]

6. Leach, after listening to the responses to his earlier questions, proceeded to ask approximately 45 other questions regarding the issue, basically repeating many of the issues already addressed. For those questions and responses, please see attached pages from a draft memorandum provided by staffer Jamie McCormick and checked against the personal notes of the undersigned. The responses in the draft memorandum correspond correctly to the personal notes of the undersigned.

7. Leach concluded by once again saying he has an obligation to look into the matter on behalf of the Committee, and asked us to inform the DCI and DIRNSA that he may hold hearings on these allegations in the fall. (U)

8. The briefing lasted approximately 90 minutes. Leach was informed that the Agency would continue to check its records, especially on questions relating to: 1) Park-o-Meter; 2) CIA's relationship, if any, with Terry Reed; and 3) whether the CIA had any connection to Seal's cargo plane (serial number 54-0679).

[redacted]
CIA Liaison Group
Office of Congressional Affairs

This one's pretty awesome and refers to the secretive PROMIS program. SSCI is Senate Select Committee on Intelligence.

~~SECRET~~

Follow Up Actions: Provide McCormick with a copy of SSCI letter regarding PROMIS.

[redacted] OCA/LiaisonGrp [redacted]

Let's get right into it: **who were the "private benefactors" organized by Richard Secord to train pilots and move weapons to the Contras?**

Responses to Chairman Leach's Prepared Questions of 7/21

Q: Have any of you or anyone else at either the CIA or NSA discussed this inquiry from us with anyone at the White House, the Department of Justice, or any other governmental organization?

A: No, not in response to Chairman Leach's letters requesting a briefing.

Q: Does the CIA or NSA have knowledge of or any involvement in clandestine activity by the U.S. Government or any private parties in or near Mena, Arkansas, in the 1980s?

A: CIA's knowledge [redacted]

[redacted] NSA [redacted]

Q: Have any reports on activities in and around Mena been prepared for the DCI, specifically, for former Director Woolsey?

A: No. The only reports the CIA has were prepared in conjunction with the Chairman's requested briefing.

A. Gun Smuggling

Q: Did the CIA or NSA have any involvement in, or knowledge of, any operation by the U.S. government or the so-called "private benefactors" (led by retired Gen. Richard Secord) to train pilots and/or ship arms from the Rich inter-mountain regional airport at Mena to the Nicaraguan Contras?

A: NSA, [redacted] CIA representatives replied that they "did not think so." CIA noted that the IG had checked back records on this issue in 1994 and had discovered no responsive information. CIA noted parenthetically that the operational activities of the private benefactors were mainly conducted from southern Florida.

Q: (Skipped) If so, did any such activities take place with the knowledge or approval of other Federal officials?

Q: (Skipped) Did any such activities take place with the knowledge or approval of Arkansas state government officials?

Q: (Skipped) Did the CIA contract with any Arkansas manufacturers to build automatic weapons for the Nicaraguan Contras?

Q: Does the CIA or NSA have any contractual or other relationship with, or knowledge of, an Arkansas company called Park-o-Meter, also known as POM? Do you have any reason to believe that POM produced disposable fuel tanks for use by Barry Seal and possibly others in connection with supplying arms to the Contras?

All right: the next one has good material. Note all the small redactions on NSA responses. Looks like about the width of the word "Yes." But that's just me. I don't know what other kind of answer would be both censored and that size. It pops up all over the place, that's why I'm saying **Silence Speaks Louder than Words!**

A: NSA CIA had no knowledge, but would check and get back to the Chairman.

B. Barry Seal and Associates

Q: (Skipped) Did the CIA or NSA have any contractual or other relationship with the late Adler Barriman "Barry" Seal (Seal was murdered, allegedly at the direction of Columbian drug lords, in Feb. 1986)?

Q: To your knowledge, did any other government agency (such as the DEA or DIA) have any contractual or other relationship with Barry Seal?

A: NSA, CIA had no confirmation from any other USG agency, including DEA, that Seal had any government contracts

Q: Is the CIA or NSA aware of any IRS determination that money earned by Seal between 1984 and 1986 was not illegal because of his alleged CIA-DEA employment?

A: NSA, CIA, no.

Q: Did the CIA have any involvement in, or knowledge of, the installation of cameras on Seal's C-123K transport plane for use in a 1984 "sting" operation against the Sandinista official Federico Vaughan?

A: CIA, no.

Q: Was Seal's C-123K cargo plane, christened Fat Lady (serial number 54-0679), sold by Seal to the CIA or any other U.S.-government related entity? Was this the plane later shot down over Nicaragua with a load of arms destined for the Contras?

A: CIA, no records suggested it was.

Q: Did the CIA have any contractual or other relationship with Terry Reed, a former Air Force intelligence officer (who claims he had a relationship with the CIA in the 1980s) and author of Compromised: Clinton, Bush and the CIA?

A: CIA had no knowledge, but would check further.

Q: Did the CIA ever have dealings with former Arkansas State Trooper L.D. Brown?

A: CIA no, not beyond as stated earlier in their presentation.

More of those suspiciously small redactions. Clearly the CIA's negative answers are different than the NSA's, but what oh what could the NSA be saying?

Q: Is the CIA or NSA aware of any attempts by federal or state officials to interfere with or terminate any investigation [by] the IRS, Justice Department, Arkansas State Police or any other law-enforcement authorities into Mena-related criminal conduct?

A: CIA, no. NSA,

C. Narcotics Smuggling

Q: Did the CIA or NSA have any knowledge of or involvement in illicit narcotics trafficking, possibly by rogue operatives, in or near Mena, Arkansas? As you know, there have been allegations that on their return flights from Central America, pilots smuggled more than 20 tons of cocaine into Mena.

A: NSA, CIA no. noted that CIA had also checked with its counter-narcotics center, which reported no responsive information available.

D. Money Laundering

Q: Did the CIA or NSA have any indication that local businesses and Arkansas

A: NSA, CIA, no.

Q: Does the CIA or NSA have any indication that Barry Seal or his associates attempted to

A: NSA, CIA, no.

Q: Does the CIA or NSA have any indication that the proceeds from illicit narcotics trafficking might have been laundered through the Arkansas Development Finance Authority (ADFA)?

A: NSA, CIA, no.

E.

Q: Does the CIA or NSA know of any secret or more ever held by U.S. citizens domiciled in Arkansas at anytime between 1988 and now?

A: NSA

CIA representatives stated

This one is pretty mysterious but the last part is funny.

that, to the best of their knowledge, CIA maintained the same policy. CIA also stated that any records it might have had would have been [redacted]

Q: (Not directly asked, referenced indirectly in the eighth question in this section) Is the CIA or NSA aware, directly or indirectly, of any efforts by [redacted]

Q: Does the CIA or NSA have the capability of [redacted]

A: [redacted]

[redacted] CIA representatives had no specific knowledge with respect any such agency capability, [redacted]

Q: [redacted] does CIA and/or NSA have the capability, directly or through another party, of [redacted]

A: Newton stated NSA has [redacted]

Q: (Skipped) Does CIA or NSA have the authority to [redacted]

Q: (Skipped) Has CIA or NSA ever [redacted]

Q: Does the CIA maintain a team of skilled computer hackers who routinely break into the electronic data systems of foreign banks? According to one source, this group is informally known as the Fifth Column. Correct?

A fun answer from the NSA about selling PROMIS to finance Contras. Or no answer.... at all.

A: [redacted]

Q: (Skipped) Does NSA [redacted]

Q: Does the CIA or NSA know of or has either agency participated in, directly or indirectly, efforts to sell software -- notably versions of a program in use at the Justice Department called PROMIS -- or other devices to foreign banks for the purpose of facilitating [redacted] of their electronic data systems?

A: NSA, [redacted] CIA, [redacted]

Q: (Skipped) Does the CIA or NSA know of customers to whom this software has been sold? [redacted]

Q: Is the CIA or NSA aware of any attempts by [redacted]

A: NSA, [redacted] CIA, no.

Q: Does CIA or NSA know of any efforts by [redacted]

A: NSA, [redacted] CIA, no.

Q: Has the CIA or NSA received any indication that proceeds from the sale of PROMIS or similar software were used to finance arms shipments to the Contras?

A: CIA, no. NSA, [redacted]

Q: (Skipped) Are there any indications of cooperation by [redacted]

Some mysterious stuff about the Meadows Trust at Mellon Bank and Vince Foster. This really gave the whole transcript a nice 1995-era Washington DC Conspiracy Vibe:

Q: (Skipped) Is the CIA or NSA aware of any unauthorized efforts, possibly in the margin of legitimate intelligence operations, [redacted]

Q: Does CIA or NSA know of a Charles Hayes, who was born on 4/27/35, whose social security number is [redacted] and now resides in Nancy, Kentucky?

A: CIA, no. NSA, [redacted]

Q: If so, has Hayes ever had any ties to the CIA or NSA or any other U.S. government agency? Have these ties been severed?

A: CIA, no. NSA, [redacted]

Q: Hayes claims to be able to break into the electronic data systems of foreign banks. Has CIA [redacted]

A: [redacted]

Q: Is NSA or CIA aware of an account, number b-142AB2, at the Banca Della Svizzera Italiano in Chiasso, said to have belonged to [the late] Vincent Foster?

A: NSA, [redacted] CIA, no. [redacted]

Q: Does the CIA or NSA know of any secret Swiss bank account that used to belong jointly to Vincent Foster and others that supposedly contained contributions to the Clinton presidential campaign?

A: CIA, no. NSA, [redacted]

Q: Is the CIA or NSA aware of a fund known variously as the Medders or Meeders or Meadows or Meadors or Meaders Trust or Estate? The fund was allegedly first deposited at Pittsburgh's Mellon Bank some 50 years ago and is now reportedly worth billions. The allegation is that a legally ungoverned trust is under de facto control of a bank or group of banks under prospective legal challenges from alleged heirs and that income is so large that it is used as a secret source of funds by banks and high-ranking officials for sensitive political and economic purposes. The money and its movements, it is alleged, are hidden in a complex web of electronic transactions among the banks in the group.

If you don't love the answers to the next one, well hey, you're not wearing enough tinfoil!!!

A: CIA, no. NSA,

Q: Is it possible, and does CIA have any information that might suggest, that alleged Mena-related activities stemmed from private Nicaraguan assistance groups, perhaps under the supervision, or at least knowledge of, Colonel North?

A: NSA, CIA was not aware of any such activity in or around Mena.

Q: Did either NSA or CIA ever request that any government organization cooperate or not interfere with aircraft operating out [of] Mena?

A: CIA, no. NSA,

Q: Is either the NSA or the CIA aware of any foreign governments who might have provided arms, money or any assistance to any group operating out of Mena?

A: NSA, CIA, no.

All right folks, thanks for cruising through to the end. If one wants to leap to conclusions, you can imagine all the little boxes are "Yes" and that means everyone helped move the drugs. But that isn't what it says, so don't leap to conclusions!!

Here's the big point to take away: this is *really* what they were talking about, apparently as an extension of the Republican Leach's interest in Whitewater. A discussion about Mena and Barry Seal's drug smuggling with all the attendant weirdness *did in fact take place* on this day in 1995. For whatever reason the CIA was comfortable releasing this to the public in 2002, so they must have figured it didn't really matter anymore.

And that perhaps is the kernel of the story. After Iran-contra sprawled from past covert frauds like the JFK assassination and Watergate, the Whitewater non-scandal got trumped up by GOPers like Leach who wanted to nail Clinton without inadvertently exposing Mena. Whatever Whitewater was, it was very very close to Mena, but both political parties, and the CIA and NSA, needed to protect the secrecy of Mena, not spill it.

Effectively, this meeting probably helped the CIA and NSA illustrate to Leach how far he could go into shady Arkansas Lore without blowing everything about the blow. If that's true, it's a fascinating act of kryptocracy (secrecy-oriented power bureaucracies): They define the borders of an attempted scandal so that everyone protects the franchise of power (and the foolish public's trust in regulating narcotics!).

Bonus points for everyone!! Thanks to [Peter Dale Scott for the framework of kryptocracies!](#)

- [aviation](#)
- [CIA](#)
- [Conspiratoria](#)
- [Drugs](#)
- [evidence](#)
- [Honduras](#)

- [Information operations](#)
- [Iran](#)
- [Iran-Contra](#)
- [Oliver North](#)
- [scandal](#)
- [Security](#)
- [Suspicious Activities](#)
- [The Establishment](#)

Similar

- [Conspiracy Pixels! The ultimate wall of links to the big Conspiracy!!](#)
- [DailyKos audience don't want to hear about Hillary Iran Contra documents! Still, these damn CIA planes keep crashing with coke in Mexico!](#)
- [Barry Seal: Hongpong.com's American Hero: Best CIA Drug pilot ever, a hero for Contra Freedom and enormous sunglasses](#)
- [CIA Aircraft Shell Companies; FAA notices 119,000 unregistered aircraft for epic drugflight lols; Afghan drug informant/patsy blamed; Evergreen Dispersant Chemtrails; DEA rents plane from drug traffickers for total win in Fake War on Drugs](#)
- [New Atmosphere album; Twine.com helps me analyze CIA Iran-Contra narcotics conspiracy networks!](#)

**Tags for IRAN CONTRA LIVES: Censored FOIA CIA documents on Mena
Arkansas cocaine trafficking: Barry Seal's ghost sez: Silence speaks louder
than words!!**

Tags

- [aviation](#)
- [CIA](#)
- [Conspiratoria](#)
- [Drugs](#)
- [evidence](#)
- [Honduras](#)
- [Information operations](#)
- [Iran](#)
- [Iran-Contra](#)
- [Oliver North](#)
- [scandal](#)
- [Security](#)
- [Suspicious Activities](#)

- [The Establishment](#)

Newest & changed content

(Modified & new content)

- [New Docs: For MN cellphone location data, police & attorneys submit administrative subpoenas; law enforcement spins vs warrant bill](#) 17
- [Keystone XL Spirit Camp coming up near Ideal South Dakota; St Paul Enbridge Tarsands hearing April 3rd; MazaCoin!](#) 5
- [Oh noes: Epic FBI white supremacist troll Hal Turner gets 2nd federal hung jury over provocateur'd threats to judges; Spillin' teh beans on secret Newark FBI JTTF exposure of AIPAC/ADL moles & 9/11 coverups via racist trolling?! WTF indeed...](#) 13
- [Soviet Psychotronic lit review since 1911, interesting warp drive scalar energy patents & papers from Deep Oddness & Moar](#) 22
- [weil es auf jeden Fall season da ist](#) 3
- [NSA Boundless Informant explicated - for moar efficient flat databases of all yr phone records](#) 8

Queue 'Featured stuff'

- [First Amendment issue of our Time; Google & Verizon deal putting Net Neutrality & my industry on the chopping block. Franken, Ellison, Klobuchar: What's going on?](#)
- [Heads Up to Quigley's Apex: Bank of International Settlements \(Former Nazi Bank\) developing Gold/SDR global fractional reserve currency with IMF, Federal Reserve](#)
- [More on Sibel Edmonds: "Turkey and America: the Corridors of Intelligence and Geopolitics" aka "Turkey's Con Game: US Officials](#)
- [Negative Return on Investment Economy: Catherine Austin Fitts and the fake war on drugs](#)
- [Wine swilling illuminati types think we're doomed!](#)

[more](#)

http://www.hongpong.com/archives/2007/04/05/iran_contra_lives_censored_foia_cia_documents_mena_arkansas_cocaine_trafficking_barry_seals_ghost_sez_silenc