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Early Warning
By William M. Arkin

William M. Arkin on National and Homeland Security

U.S. Plans New Bases in the Middle East

The U.S. military has developed a ten-year plan for "deep storage" of munitions and equipment in at least six countries in the Middle East and Central Asia to prepare for regional war contingencies.

The plans, revealed in March 2006 contracting documents, call for the continued storage of everything from packaged meals ready to eat (MREs) to missiles in Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, and Oman, as well as the establishment of two new storage hubs, one in a classified Middle Eastern country "west" of Saudi Arabia ("Site 23") and the other in a yet to be decided "central Asian state."

Though President Bush [yesterday expressed the view](#) that U.S. forces would stay in Iraq past 2008, the plans to continue to "pre-position" war materiel in the Persian Gulf region leave ambiguous whether the U.S. military foresees the ability to establish a permanent present in Iraq in the long-term.

By 2016, the contracting documents show that the tonnage of air munitions stored at sites outside Iraq will double from current levels.

Central to the U.S. military presence in the Middle East to fight both the Afghanistan and Iraq wars has been the use of pre-positioned war materiel and the quick establishment of expeditionary bases. At the height of operations in both countries in 2003, the Air Force, for instance, operated from 36 bases in and around the region. That number has since shrunk to 14 today, including four main operating bases in Iraq.

The Department of Defense conducted a Global Posture Review in 2004-2005 focused on the realignment of forward-deployed forces in Europe and Asia in light of the military's predominant focus on the Middle East.

Under the Review, up to 70,000 troops will be relocated to the continental United States, primarily drawn from forces in Germany and Europe, and the Cold War presence in many parts of the world will end altogether (Washington just announced the withdrawal of all U.S. forces from Iceland, for instance.)

More central to the review though was the articulation of a basing strategy for those parts of the world - especially the Middle East - where no "permanent" combat forces are assigned. Here the strategy relies on a network of forward operating sites (FOS) capable of supporting rotational forces, as well as a set of more austere cooperative security locations (CSL) used for contingency purposes.

With the elimination of a permanent American presence that includes families and the typical Cold War accoutrements, the United States will not only have greater flexibility, but many political impediments will be eliminated as host countries will also be able to claim that there are no American "bases" on their soil.

Though the United States began to pre-position war materiel in the Middle East after President Jimmy Carter established the Rapid Deployment Force to operate against a Soviet attack on the Gulf, it was the build-up for the 1990 Gulf War that cemented many of the basing relationships today.

The U.S. withdrew most of its forces from the region in 1991 and

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directed from a virtual U.S. permanent base in Kuwait, and special operations were centered on Oman. New expeditionary bases were established in places like Pakistan and Uzbekistan (as well as new bases in places like Bulgaria and Romania), but it was the existing web of forward operating locations and contingency facilities that allowed the immediate deployment.

Another factor that began to influence U.S. basing in the Middle East during the 1990's was information technologies that allowed forward operations with reduced manpower. The concept is called "reachback," defined in the Air Force Glossary as "the process of obtaining products, services, and applications or forces, equipment, or material from Air Force organizations that are not forward deployed."

In English, reachback allows much of the support infrastructure of the U.S. military to be deployed outside the region, even in the United States. For example, forward deployed reconnaissance aircraft can transfer their take electronically to analysis center in the continental United States. Similarly, the proliferation of unmanned aerial vehicles such as the Predator has enabled a smaller forward footprint as even pilots and planners are centrally located outside the Middle East.

After the current Iraq war, whenever that is, the Defense Department plans to shift the future U.S. forward presence in the Middle East from the "ever present" posture to one characterized as "enduring access" and "episodic employment." Pre-positioned materiel and ready-to-use though largely unoccupied bases are central to this strategy. This allows the maintenance of military capabilities without a large or visible U.S. presence, and compensates for the loss of Saudi Arabian bases and infrastructure closed with the toppling of Saddam Hussein in 2003.

Despite impressive physical facilities in Saudi Arabia, freedom of action from Saudi bases had always been a sticking point between the United States and the Kingdom. Prior to 9/11, the U.S. was already in the process of moving capabilities to Qatar and Kuwait and Air Force aircraft operations shifted to Al Dhafra air base in the United Arab Emirates. Now bases in Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman, and the UAE constitute the permanent basing of the United States, no matter what the new fangled Pentagon labeling. Countries like Jordan, Egypt, and Yemen, and even Saudi Arabia, will continue to be pressured to support episodic operations and clandestine forces, just as they actually are doing today. The bases contract calls for the maintenance of at least a dozen equipment "sets" to establish quick air bases in these countries in the future.

As one looks at the U.S. military presence in the region today, the only real wild card is Iraq. Clearly, the pre-positioning contract indicates the plans of the United States to shift heavy material and supplies out of the country in the long-run. While planning for an Iran war doesn't hinge on Iraqi bases or access, clearly a friendly government to the United States and the prospects for "episodic" operations from Iraq changes the calculus of any war. It may also explain the "deterrent" or coercive effect accrued to the United States government in not making it clear what its long-term plans are in the country.

As the United States built up its forces in the region to fight the Afghanistan war, commanders and planners with the big picture saw Iraq in the future. The establishment of bases and headquarters and the communications infrastructure to support a modern military paved the way for the Iraq war. In fact, it can not be overstated the degree to which the forward deployment of U.S. military forces influenced the timing and seductiveness of a follow-on Iraq campaign. Who wanted to send everyone home and start all over with negotiations and access and networks when the capability to accommodate U.S. ground forces was in place and relatively "hot"?

If Iraq wasn't such a mess, the same thinking would be influencing the view of future war with Iran. But when Iraq is finished ... the U.S. military will already be ready. The sun never sets.

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history, history, history...

you don't need a war, to address the issue of being oil dependant...

you need to become oil independant...

there are multiple ways of doing this, that should be going on instead of an occupation that is being billed as a war

the Iraqi's know why the United States soldiers are there, it's the soldiers that don't know....they are unnecessarily polarized against the Iraqi people

the result being more bad press for the US, even though it's not the US that got us there it's Wolfowitz, greed, families of the affluent working for a new world order...called PNAC...

and the fact that we as a nation are so busy working we don't know what is going on around us.

Posted by: [Hey Greg...](#) | Mar 26, 2006 3:12:36 PM | [Permalink](#)

The Bush Administration is leading this country to bankruptcy. The Pentagon lost \$2 TRILLION dollars, and the debt ceiling is now \$9 TRILLION dollars. They invaded a sovereign nation and removed the only secular government in the region, and now civil war and Islamic rule is breaking out. The neo-cons want Armageddon, and they will get it if we don't stand up and stop them.

Posted by: [Eric H, San Diego](#) | Mar 25, 2006 9:28:20 PM | [Permalink](#)

The ONLY solution is to enforce The Plan against the traitorous N.W.O. Zion-Nazi mass-murder, inside-job perpetrators of OKC, 911, 7/7/2005 and the phoney War on Terror and reinstate God's Perfect Royal Laws of Liberty:- <http://i.am/jah/plan.htm>

Time is running out:- <http://i.am/jah/signs.htm>

Posted by: [Kalle](#) | Mar 25, 2006 7:08:48 PM | [Permalink](#)

Anyone familiar with the Criminal Ideologues at the helm will not be suprised in the least about these revelations. What does shock me, is that their arrogance is so great that they truly believe they will simply be allowed to continue with this Perpetual Expansionist War of Aggression for Profit.

It's all in their blueprint, "Rebuilding America's Defenses" - www.newamericancentury.org

The sad thing is that these Extremists were never even elected to the White House in the first place, and that the Amewrican People haven't ridden them out on a rail yet ...

Posted by: [Jordan](#) | Mar 25, 2006 5:16:59 PM | [Permalink](#)

what about djibout bases no one mentioned yet.

Posted by: [what about djibouti](#) | Mar 24, 2006 11:42:42 AM | [Permalink](#)

As to; Posted by: Greg E.

Quite a "love fest" going on here. Is there any reality in any of your thinking???

Posted by: Greg E. | Mar 23, 2006 3:56:43 PM | [Permalink](#)

Buy a Horse Greg because your going to need it.

The Nazi George W. Bush is attempting to take over the World.

And World War 3 is just beginning.

And that Nazi Bush is at fault.

Posted by: SOG | Mar 24, 2006 10:36:12 AM | [Permalink](#)

Another G.W. Bush hidden agenda rears its ugly head.

Bush wants to put bases in the Middle East and every where else just like his IDOL Adolph Hitler wanted to.

Sp4MP Army Veteran

Jackson, Michigan

Posted by: Sp4MP | Mar 24, 2006 10:29:03 AM | [Permalink](#)

You 51% that voted for those fools are getting the government that you deserve. Unfortunately the rest of us are along for the ride.

Posted by: DB | Mar 23, 2006 9:50:19 PM | [Permalink](#)

Quite a "love fest" going on here. Is there any reality in any of your thinking???

Can't believe the drivle - let's see, how much of our national wealth is endlessly flushed down the toilet of "social justice" and "universal" you name it versus that portion of the federal budget (or GDP if you prefer). Wanna cut the deficit - just stop federal spending increases for a couple of years!!

The cost of the war is trivial (unless you lost a loved one in which case the cost is the same as any war you choose) in comparison to the potential devastation to ALL of the left's socialistic intentions should we find ourselves in a position of a true oil embargo. Energy is the engine of today's world - the despotic and archaic Muslim world sits on much of these resources AND have demonstrated NO ABILITY to provide the world with ANYTHING other than a terrorist with yet another new atrocity to perpetrate on the world.

Don't like dependancy on oil - help build more coal and nuclear plants. Drill in our territorial lands and water. Give up the idiot dream of a world of green that lives in harmony with the "three-toed river rat ancilot".

Get a grip people - a festoring cesspool has been for ever altered - great numbers of jihadist who have flocked to the area are being killed at a pleasing rate.

Most of your poster child country - Iraq - continues to demonstrate a most admirable ability to generate commerce in the face of these idiot "freedom fighters".

Think everything is bad over there - ask someone who doesn't spend most of there time in a Bahgdad hotel. Sure the risks are high - you never know how things will evolve once you "pull the trigger". The entire venture could turn into a disaster - but it was pretty much headed that way before we started.

Don't like Haliburton - come up with an alternative. Quit talking dollars and look at the rate-of-return, you'll be amazed to find that it is not at all out of line with most industries(and considerably less than Hollywood glitterati).

The ONLY THREAT we must overcome is the desire to cut and run. It will always cost more than to stand and fight. HISTORY - HISTORY - HISTORY! Failure to take action in the face of a rising threat always leads to WIDESPREAD CONFLICT.

Posted by: Greg E. | Mar 23, 2006 3:56:43 PM | [Permalink](#)

Let's stop sitting back, watching and complaining, we voted this bunch into office, we have the power to vote them out.

Let's start demanding accountability of elected officials at all levels of goverment.

Remember the power of the vote!

Heads Need To Roll LLC

Posted by: hntadmin | Mar 23, 2006 1:42:51 PM | [Permalink](#)

I've been talking about this one for years - even before the War on Iraq - but everyone said I was paranoid.

It's a shame we taxpayers foot the bill for the insane dreams of those who shirk combat themeselves.

Posted by: Will in Seattle | Mar 23, 2006 11:22:10 AM | [Permalink](#)

The truth about, follow the money. Prepositioned munitions, from the first Gulf War needed to be replaced. Had to wait through 8yrs of Clinton. My bet is Carlucci's Carlyle Group made a killing.

Posted by: [Sam Ellison](#) | Mar 22, 2006 9:44:03 PM | [Permalink](#)

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www.wsws.org

Bush says US troops to remain in Iraq indefinitely

By Jerry White
22 March 2006

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At a White House press conference Tuesday morning President George W. Bush suggested that the US would continue the occupation of Iraq for years, if not decades, to come. Asked if there would be a day when there were no more American forces in that country, Bush replied that that would be "decided by future presidents and future governments of Iraq."

Bush suggested that US troops would remain long after the end of his administration in January 2009, making it clear that the country is to be reduced to the status of a semi-colonial protectorate. Refusing to give a "timetable" for complete withdrawal, the president repeated his oft-made statement that US military commanders would decide when force levels would be reduced.

The president's statement followed remarks made at a public appearance in Cleveland Monday and earlier on Tuesday in which he made clear that he would not bow to growing public demands for the withdrawal of US troops three years after the criminal invasion of Iraq. In his speech he reiterated his determination to go to war against Iran if it developed nuclear weapons or threatened Israel.

Bush's brazenness is testimony to the fact that his administration confronts no serious opposition from the Democratic Party, which, in addition to its general cowardice, supports the geopolitical aim of establishing US control over the oil-rich regions of the Middle East and Central Asia. With no one in the political establishment or the media calling him to account, Bush has declared that US forces will not leave Iraq and that the country will be turned into a permanent military base for the launching of future adventures in the name of the so-called war on terror.

Expressing his contempt for popular opinion, Bush presented the increasing support for withdrawal of US troops as the product of a misguided response to "reports of killings and reprisals," which suggest that civil war had broken out in Iraq. The American people, he claimed, were being unduly influenced by the bloody images they saw each night on their television screens.

He blamed the media for being unwitting accomplices of the terrorists, who, he said, were just waiting for America "to lose its nerve" and withdraw its troops. Rejecting recent poll numbers indicating growing public opposition to the war, Bush said, his job was to tell the people what he thought, and that he was determined to "win the war on terrorism."

During the Cleveland speech Bush outlined his strategy of securing Iraq by pointing to the military operation by US and Iraqi forces to remove "insurgents" and "foreign terrorists" from Tal Afar, an oil-rich city of 200,000 near the Syrian border. In September 2005, 3,000 US troops and 5,000 Iraqi troops laid siege to Tal Afar, after ringing the city with an eight-foot high, 12-mile long dirt wall, forcibly relocating tens of thousands of inhabitants into makeshift housing outside of the city and raiding surrounding villages to cut off any support for anti-occupation forces.

During the days of bombing and block-by-block assaults of "Operation Restoring Rights," hundreds were killed and Tal Afar, cut off from electricity and water, was reduced, according to one report, into a "phantom city." Far from opposing sectarian conflicts during the operation, the US military command reportedly relied on Shiite and Kurdish forces to carry out the bloody repression against Sunni and Turkomen residents.

Such atrocities on the part of the US and its allies in Iraq are common occurrences. According to the New York Times, police investigators in Salahaddin Province have accused American troops of executing 11 civilians, including several children during a raid March 15 on a house in Ishaqi, about 60 miles north of Baghdad, an Interior Ministry official said Monday. According to the investigators, the American troops lined up the civilians and shot them, then killed livestock and destroyed the house, the official said. A local police commander in Ishaqi told Knight-Ridder Newspapers, that an autopsy had detected bullet wounds in all the victims' heads.

Marking the third anniversary of the war, Bush shamelessly repeated the lies used to justify the March 2003 invasion.

At Tuesday's press conference veteran reporter Helen Thomas, who after noting that the claims of weapons of mass destruction and Iraq-terrorist ties "had turned out not to be true," asked the president, "Why did you really go to war?" She noted that long before September 11 he and other administration officials had set their sights on Iraq, and have since denied that the invasion had anything to do with "the quest for oil."

Bush replied piously, "To assume I wanted war is just flat wrong.... No president

wants war. Everything that you have heard is that, but it's simply not true." He went on to claim that September 11 changed his "attitude about the defense of the country" and that "[o]ur foreign policy changed on that day"—both claims that have long been exposed as lies.

Confident that he would not face any further challenge from the rest of the press corps, Bush then rehashed the falsehoods that the war was waged to disarm Iraq and prevent it from being a safe-haven for future terrorist attacks against the US. After claiming that his efforts to find a peaceful resolution had failed, Bush said, "I had a difficult decision to make to remove [Saddam Hussein]. And we did. And the world is safer for it," he declared.

At a rare public appearance before a civilian—not military—audience at the City Club of Cleveland Monday, Bush was also challenged about the claims used to launch the war, as well as the massive cost of the war—\$251 billion or more than \$2,200 per US household—and his administration's illegal spying on US citizens.

The president replied nervously and, in many cases, incoherently to questions that expressed the mounting popular opposition to the war. Assured, however, that he will face no serious opposition from the Democrats, Bush declared that the US would remain in Iraq until "victory" and threatened to launch future wars against Iran and other countries in the name of the 'war on terror.'

See Also:

Posted by: che | Mar 22, 2006 4:50:54 PM | [Permalink](#)

"If A is success in life, then A equals x plus y plus z. Work is x; y is play; and z is keeping your mouth shut."
-Albert Einstein

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Posted by: che | Mar 22, 2006 4:46:16 PM | [Permalink](#)

What was that national debt again? \$9,000,000,000,000 and growing exponentially? Health Care? You jest. All children left behind? You got it. Hurricanes backing up in the Atlantic? Good luck. That bridge swaying in the wind? Well, stupid, don't stand under it. Going to take the kids to Yellowstone for vacation? Better plan on paying the admission price in rials. Isn't this why Rome fell?

Posted by: felicity smith | Mar 22, 2006 4:00:25 PM | [Permalink](#)

While some deployment in the smaller Gulf States makes some sense with regard to Afghanistan, Iraq will never be a "safe" base for U.S. Forces. The Insurgency in Iraq feeds off the U.S. occupation, and our presence there will be a recruiting tool for al-Qaida there and in the rest of the world.

The Bush Administration's "Clean Break" plan for the Middle East will not work, because of the resulting insurgencies, and because they are too interested in tax breaks to fund empire building. Empire building is also expensive in lives and treasure. They will instigate, cause turmoil, and be forced to leave. These people can't screw in a light bulb without help. We need to get our troops out of Iraq, before the Bush Administraton pushes the casualty rate higher.

Posted by: P. J. Casey | Mar 22, 2006 3:46:14 PM | [Permalink](#)

...saw and read an article in either the nyt or wapo over last few days about the ongoing airstrip/ramp buildup in iraq by usa...then bush2 comes out the other day with the 2009 and beyond comment about the lenght of usa stay in iraq...
...it would appear that the undisclosed thinking present from the getgo of going into iraq back in 2002 is coming out more and more...
...likely what this will lead to is the put-in of an american backed "iraq leader" and government with the longterm game based on oil access,oil control and ramping up pressure on iran to kowtow to american desires...
...needless to say the last 3 years in iraq pointedly do not augur well for such thinking...
...the british empire was able to insert

itself into the middle east during the early 20th century on the cheap...the region was in many ways still much like it was a century or more before...floating a few battleships off the coasts of this region comprised empire and imperial edict well enough...communication,transport and organization of local politics was at best a sketchy setup...and relative small money was needed to buy off or subvert the local powers and gamers...after ww1 empire and its trappings stumbled onto the oil rush and the british empire did what it could to prevail...looking at a map of the middle east reveals typical linedrawing intended to control coastal zones,ports and known or yet unknown oil resources...the crucial states...iraq..jordan all being creations of empire to service empire needs and goals ...the british navy initially benefited from the switch from coalfired to oilfired ships...and as the century proceeded the growth in national economies of auto making and use brought on steeper oil needs as did a newly born and developing synthetics and manmade fabrics industry...so it was about wealth and oil always...still is ...after ww2 the british empire was unable to pick up prewar levels of activity...it was plain spent out in human and economic resources...the usa during the 1950's was more and more able to fill in where prewar british empire had once prevailed... ..fifty five years later here the usa is spending itself ever deeper into a fiscal nightmare of hollow currency and military quaqmire...it is still about the money and oil is still center stage...bush2 and more so those who have led him into this part of the world are gaming some very wild odds...the winnings could be big...the losses staggering...it is a part of the world with thousands of years of ferment within its peoples and ways...and where the getting in becomes mirage like... the getting out certainly is more like passing back thru the gates of hell...

Posted by: an american in siam... | Mar 22, 2006 3:16:48 PM | [Permalink](#)

WOW..This is great. I'm sure we need to store multi-billion dollar weapon systems in the Middle East. Afterall look how great our technology is working routing the 'Insurgents'. (Is that what they are called this week..can't keep up with our naming conventions created by our proud "c" student president.) I mean we need billion dollar weapons to get Ahab The Arab in his Toyota p/u. Hope China is watching..hey guys you can beat us like we beat the Soviets. Just let us spend ourselves to oblivion. By the way did you guys see that multi-million dollar jet take out that 20 year old ford in Bagdad. MAN ARE WE COST EFFECTIVE!

Posted by: Rufus Bee | Mar 22, 2006 3:03:40 PM | [Permalink](#)

Did any of you notice that the Soviet Union robbed Peter to Pay Paul and ended up bankrupt, with nothing by warehouses full of bombs, weapons, tanks

as their people sank into chaos, as a neglected principle of society...

strong economy, vested citizens, truth.

try it, it'll take about 11 weeks to do.

.

Posted by: Isn't this regimes current strategy what destroyed the Soviet Union? | Mar 22, 2006 1:38:24 PM | [Permalink](#)

Projecting military might is okay, but it requires economic muscle. Right now this administration's reach is beginning to exceed its grasp. Who will be paying for the \$2.5 billion nuclear sub or \$200 million for a single fighter plane. I very much doubt the Chinese will be buying US bonds to fund this activity!

This administration needs to get it's economic house in order or it will take us down the road of Britain. At one time "Britannia did rule the waves", but poor economic

management eventually put that to rest.

Posted by: Oscar Mayer | Mar 22, 2006 1:32:33 PM | [Permalink](#)

Why, Arkin, does the US gov't, as presently configured, assume time will stand still? That the mid east will be easier to colonize than it's been in the last 200 years? In ten years things will have changed dramatically...who can see the Chinese, Russians, Japan and Korea sitting still for US projection? They won't. And have you not seen nor read of the surge on campuses here and abroad to stop Israel from running US foreign policy? And there's Latin America. The world is no longer America's dummy...they're producing engineers while we produce arms for burying...

Posted by: leenalee | Mar 22, 2006 12:50:42 PM | [Permalink](#)

I don't normally like to cut and paste off-topic, but since this Iraq story apparently isn't in the Washington Post, but is being covered by foreign newspapers around the world, I thought I'd stick it in here.

US troops investigated over Iraqi massacres

By Patrick Cockburn in Arbil

Published: 22 March 2006

The Independent

http://news.independent.co.uk/world/middle_east/article352819.ece

The US military is investigating two incidents in which American soldiers killed at least 26 Iraqi civilians and then claimed that they were either guerrillas or had died in cross fire.

The growing evidence of retaliatory killings of unarmed Iraqi families, often including children, by US soldiers seemingly bent on punishing Iraqis after an attack, will spark comparisons with the massacre of Vietnamese villagers at My Lai in 1968.

US troops have been notorious among Iraqis for their willingness to shoot any Iraqi they see in the aftermath of an insurgent attack. But it is only now that convincing and detailed information is becoming available about the killings.

In the most recent incident, in the town of Ishaqi north of Baghdad last week, Iraqi police said that US troops had shot 11 people, including five children, in their home. The local police chief, Colonel Farouq Hussein, said that all the dead had been shot in the head, according to autopsies. "It's a clear and perfect crime," he said. In an incident in the town of Haditha in western Iraq on 19 November last year, US soldiers went on a rampage in a village after a bomb attack and killed at least 15 civilians, according to witnesses and local officials cited by Time magazine in an investigation.

The US military first claimed a roadside bomb had killed a US Marine, Miguel Tarrazas, along with 15 Iraqi civilians caught in the blast. Later, a military statement said "gunmen attacked the convoy with small-arms fire" and in returning fire the Marines killed eight insurgents.

But after Time presented the US military with what Iraqis said had happened, an official investigation found that 15 of the civilians had been deliberately killed by US soldiers.

The bomb attack on the US Humvee took place at 7.15am. Eman Waleed, a nine-year-old child, lived in a house 150 yards from the explosion. "We heard a big noise that woke us all up," she recalled later. "Then we did what we always do when there's an explosion: my father goes in to his room with the Koran and prays the family will be spared harm."

The Marines claim they heard shots coming from the direction of Waleed's house. They burst in to the house and Eman heard shots from her father's room. They then entered the living room, where the rest of the family was gathered. She said: "I couldn't see their faces very well - only their guns sticking in to the doorway. I watched them shoot my grandfather, first in the chest and then in the head. Then they killed my granny."

The US soldiers started shooting in to the corner of the room where Eman and her eight-year-old brother, Abdul Rahman, were cowering. The other adults in the room tried to protect the two children with their bodies and were all shot dead. Eman and her brother were both wounded.

"We were lying there, bleeding and it hurt so much. Afterwards some Iraqi soldiers came. They carried us in their arms. I was crying, shouting, 'why did you do this to our family?' And one Iraqi soldier tells me, 'we didn't do it. The Americans did it'..."

Posted by: OD | Mar 22, 2006 12:21:24 PM | [Permalink](#)

First off, this should not come as a surprise to anyone, as the US has always been proactive in using its power to protect its interests. Secondly, this type of foreign projection actually becomes quite mutually beneficial, case in point Western Europe, which now exists in a post-modern fantasia, due to US military protection for the last 60 yrs. The Middle East will, if they lets us, soon begin to fall under this umbrella and will benefit from it greatly (read benefit, not just profit). My main worry is that this bubble will provide a greenhouse environment for Islamsim or perhaps it will have the pacifying effect that it has had in Western Europe. The two places are not

equivalent so the Western European model may not apply here, or it may be the case that the model may simply have to be altered a bit. Regardless, this re-deploying of American power reflects the changing interests in this country, and not just the economic ones, since oil will eventually be replaced, hopefully before it is used up and truly hopefully AFTER, the new infrastructure is present in the Middle East, since they will suffer the most from oil's obsolescence.

Posted by: Archimedes | Mar 22, 2006 12:06:21 PM | [Permalink](#)

Mr. Arkin- You should check out an article in this week's Boston Globe. Their reporter got to sit in on the "Friday Night Fights" - where the colonels in Iraq argue over whose RFF's get priority, and who gets to beg for resources before the generals in the Pentagon. It uncovers that despite all the money heading that way, there's not enough going to the people being shot at.

Posted by: John D | Mar 22, 2006 11:39:31 AM | [Permalink](#)

Mr. Arkin - I would like to urge you to post, soon, a review of the condition of U.S. ground forces. Last year there were some comments by retired military such as Gen. McCafferty, and there was the U.S. Army War College study, and more recently the independent study commissioned by DoD, warning that U.S. forces were near the "breaking point." Also, to what extent is Bush's announcement of a withdrawal driven by the inability of U.S. forces to maintain the current level of deployment? All of which begs the larger strategic question: If U.S. ground forces have been "wrecked" in Afghanistan and Iraq, how severely circumscribed have U.S. options become in regards to responding to Iran, North Korean, and other threats?

Posted by: Anthony Wikrent | Mar 22, 2006 10:35:18 AM | [Permalink](#)

As a GW1 veteran my boss attended meetings immediately after the liberation of Kuwait that focused on future bases. A bunch of locations, to include an island in the middle of the Persian Gulf (not sure which one they were talking about, but it wasn't Bahrain).

It was apparent from those meetings that GW1 had given us an incredible opportunity to realize a long term strategic goal, the establishment of bases in the Gulf. Their purpose was to ensure our access to oil.

9/11 provided another opportunity to build more bases, but the difference is in Iraq we don't have to get the host's permission to do what we want.

What this will do long term is debatable, but given the history of the region (700 years of occupation by the Ottomans followed by the Europeans) I opine our long term presence will create resentment and increase rather than decrease the number of jihadists.

Posted by: Robert | Mar 22, 2006 10:27:18 AM | [Permalink](#)

Congress *works* 97 days a year - less than 20 weeks.

Nice work (\$150k a year + free travel, staff, etc.) if you can get it...

Posted by: congress | Mar 22, 2006 10:09:46 AM | [Permalink](#)

Another poor attempt to characterize misleading facts in a positive light.

Actually, Arkin, what you failed to mention is the 'real' reason for re-distribution of resources: The US is on the verge of bankruptcy.

The countries that hold the debt will feel less pressured to 'call' the loans if the US is spending every last dime in their region, not withstanding the development of strategic recourses overseas, as will be forthcoming and public in the very near future. What this equates to in 'real' terms is that the US is being sold-out, piece by piece to the highest bidders by the power hungry and corrupt US government.

It is also time that We The People take responsibility for the corruption and remove those in government, who threaten our children's future and our way of life. Take to the streets, debate, enforce your opinions with the almighty boycott, but whatever the case; Do not resign yourself to complacency.

Arkin, it's time to quit regurgitating the talking points..... Or get off the line.....

Posted by: Mike T. | Mar 22, 2006 9:35:53 AM | [Permalink](#)

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