



War Without End

The global war against terror from a British perspective

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The Israeli Origins of Bush II's War

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Author

Message

Alpha Posted: Tue Apr 26, 2005 8:08 pm Post subject: The Israeli Origins of Bush II's War



Joined: 06 Jan 2003
Posts: 45550

The Israeli Origins of Bush II's War

http://www.thornwalker.com/ditch/snieg_isrorgs.htm

Iran: The Next War (for Israel):

<http://www.itszone.co.uk/zone0/viewtopic.php?t=56761>

Coming War with Iran for Israel:

<http://www.warwithoutend.co.uk/zone0/viewtopic.php?t=66948>

Israel's Olmert Olmert Counting on Jewish Lobby to foil Baker-Hamilton

<http://www.itszone.co.uk/zone0/viewtopic.php?t=63541>

The Israel Lobby
John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt

http://www.lrb.co.uk/v28/n06/mear01_.html

More Evidence that Mearsheimer and Walt are Right (scroll down to Comments section as well):

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/eric-alterman/more-evidence-that-mearsh_b_36373.html

Additional about Mearsheimer/Walt paper at following URL:

<http://www.itszone.co.uk/zone0/viewtopic.php?t=49800>

A War for Israel?: Colin Powell Seems to Think So:

<http://www.warwithoutend.co.uk/zone0/viewtopic.php?t=61128>

JINSA/Israel lobby pushed for Iraq quagmire:

<http://www.robert-fisk.com/articles114.htm>

Here is the 'Men from JINSA and CSP' article (from 'The Nation') which Robert Fisk mentions in the above article:

<http://www.thenation.com/doc.mhtml?i=20020902&s=vest>

Whose War?:

http://www.amconmag.com/03_24_03/cover.html

Iraq War Conceived in Israel Author (Stephen Sniegoski) on Current Issues TV:

<http://www.itszone.co.uk/zone0/viewtopic.php?t=44249>

Zionist Censorship Rebuffed in South Africa:

<http://www.itszone.co.uk/zone0/viewtopic.php?t=60864>

JINSA Israel firsters: 'IRAQ DONE, IRAN LEFT TO GO':

<http://www.itszone.co.uk/zone0/viewtopic.php?t=32610>

Neoconservatism as a Jewish Movement:

<http://www.itszone.co.uk/zone0/viewtopic.php?t=32606>

Zelikow is mentioned in the Mearsheimer/Walt paper on the pro-Israel lobby as having said that the Iraq war was for Israel:

http://www.lrb.co.uk/v28/n06/mear01_.html

Scroll down to mention of Zelikow at following URL:

<http://representativepress.blogspot.com/2005/08/cindy-sheehan-mother-of-spc-casey.html>

Carter Says Mearsheimer and Walt are right:

<http://www.warwithoutend.co.uk/zone0/viewtopic.php?t=63875>

Syrian Ambassador to the USA mentions 'A Clean Break'/war for Israel agenda:

<http://www.itszone.co.uk/zone0/viewtopic.php?t=36041>

First Stop Syria; Next Stop Iran

<http://www.itszone.co.uk/zone0/viewtopic.php?t=38580>

Bush's Wrecking Crew: Breaking Iraq into Six Pieces

<http://kurtnimmo.com/blog/index.php?p=689>

<http://www.nowarforisrael.com>

<http://nomorewarforisrael.blogspot.com>

Complete timeline of the 2003 Invasion of Iraq: Motives :

http://www.cooperativeresearch.org/timeline.jsp?timeline=complete_timeline_of_the_2003_invasion_of_iraq&general_topic_areas=motivesBehindWar

Bush Opts for Civil War in Iraq

By PAUL CRAIG ROBERTS

<http://www.counterpunch.org/roberts05282005.html>

Exit strategy: Civil war :

http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Middle_East/GF10Ak03.html

Re: **Military Draft** (for more war for Israel):

<http://www.itszone.co.uk/zone0/viewtopic.php?t=35640>

The War and the Israel-Zionist Hypothesis By James Petras

<http://www.itszone.co.uk/zone0/viewtopic.php?t=34928>

Jewish JINSA/PNAC Neocon (Richard Perle) Calls for the Bombing of Iran for Israel:

<http://gorillaintheroom.blogspot.com/2005/05/perle-calls-for-invasion-of-iran.html>

Perle's Pogrom

<http://xymphora.blogspot.com/2005/05/perles-pogrom.html>

'A Clean Break'/War for Israel (from James Bamford's 'A Pretext for War'):

<http://www.warwithoutend.co.uk/zone0/viewtopic.php?t=28769>

Eric Alterman: Can We Talk (about the Jewish Neocons)

<http://www.warwithoutend.co.uk/zone0/viewtopic.php?t=33428>

Jewish Neocons use 'democracy and freedom/liberty' propaganda to mask their long desired war for Israel agenda:

http://www.vdare.com/misc/macdonald_neoconservatism.htm

Neoconservatism is a Jewish Movement:

<http://www.itszone.co.uk/zone0/viewtopic.php?t=32606>

AI PAC Fifth Columnists Push US to Attack Iran for Israel Next:

<http://www.itszone.co.uk/zone0/viewtopic.php?t=34539>

Neocon Coalition for Democracy in Iran:

<http://www.itszone.co.uk/zone0/viewtopic.php?t=35484>

After the Downing Street Memo: Case for Impeachment Builds

<http://www.itszone.co.uk/zone0/viewtopic.php?t=35872>

<http://www.nowarforisrael.com>

<http://www.nogw.com/warforisrael.html>

<http://nomorewarforisrael.blogspot.com>

Last edited by Alpha on Sun Jan 28, 2007 8:44 pm; edited 32 times in total

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Alpha  Posted: Tue Apr 26, 2005 8:18 pm Post subject: Secret US Plans for Iraq's Oil

 [reply](#)


Joined: 06 Jan 2003
Posts: 45550

Secret US Plans for Iraq's Oil

<http://www.itszone.co.uk/zone0/viewtopic.php?t=31432>

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Alpha  Posted: Mon May 02, 2005 7:11 pm Post subject: A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm

 [reply](#)

Joined: 06 Jan 2003
Posts: 45550

Buy it now for immediate delivery online at:

<http://www.irmep.org/cbda.htm>

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A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm is a definitive Middle East policy strategy authored and implemented by operatives in the highest levels of the US government. There is just one problem. The plan was a strategy for Israel, not the United States of America.

The book Neocon Middle East Policy reviews strategies and consequences of the "Clean Break" plan authored by Richard Perle, David Wurmser, and Douglas Feith in 1996. It analyzes the core assumptions of the policy, cost of tactics that have already been implemented and discusses the likelihood others will be executed in the future.

Neocon Middle East Policy then turns to the most difficult questions of all, "Can a policy crafted for a foreign government and presented to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu serve as a blueprint for US regional policy? At what cost in credibility, blood, treasure and American integrity? At what cost to Israel?"

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What are Middle East Academics saying about Neocon Middle East Policy?

"I find that the book is incredibly dead on target and would be an eye-opener in a big way to the American public. The chapters#3, 6-9#are very strong and well argued. I find it a bit exasperating that the simple truth both about the Israeli stronghold on the representation of the Palestine conflict in the American (and to a lesser extent European) media and about the true rationale behind the American invasion in Iraq is so off any radar, much less TV screen, in the US. There is a nightmarish quality to the whole complex." - P. Schelde

"This book is a must read for anyone interested in the Middle East and US-MidEast relations. It offers an impressive range of views from experts and activists which is an unusual combination. It is highly informative and makes the reader think about the Middle East but also about the way in which networks create foreign policy on a transnational basis. It should be in every library and will be useful on reading lists for courses - I will offer for my library and it will appear as a reference on my Law and Policy in the Middle East graduate class." - J. Strawson


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'A Clean Break'/war for Israel (from James Bamford's 'A Pretext for War' book):

<http://www.itszone.co.uk/zone0/viewtopic.php?t=28769>

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Alpha  Posted: Mon May 02, 2005 7:45 pm Post subject: A Zionist War

 [reply](#)

Joined: 06 Jan 2003
Posts: 45550

A Zionist War:

<http://www.itszone.co.uk/zone0/viewtopic.php?t=33993>



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Alpha

Posted: Mon May 23, 2005 6:00 pm Post subject: JINSA Israel firsters: 'IRAQ DOWN, IRAN LEFT TO GO'



JINSA Israel firsters: 'IRAQ DOWN, IRAN LEFT TO GO'

<http://www.warwithoutend.co.uk/zone0/viewtopic.php?t=32610>



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Alpha

Posted: Tue May 31, 2005 7:38 am Post subject: IRAQ: The Resistance



CPTnet

30 May 2005

IRAQ: The Resistance

by Joe Carr

Recently, I met a man who told me he was a resistance fighter. I was surprised that he would trust me enough to tell me this, and he may have been lying, but what he said matched what the team has heard from many other Iraqis.

He said he was from Fallujah, and had fought the Americans during their first attack. He told me that American soldiers killed seven of his family members during that attack in April 2004, most of whom were civilians and not fighters. He said it was only Iraqi Fallujans defending their city, no foreign fighters.

I asked him if he wanted Saddam Hussein back, "We hated Saddam," he said, "and we did not fight the Americans when they came to overthrow him. But now the Americans are just as bad so we'll fight them until they leave".

I asked him where he got his military training, and he explained that almost all of Iraq's young men are trained. Hussein sent every high school boy to a three-month military training camp. Then after high school, around 80% were conscripted into Saddam's army and received more intense training. I asked him where the resistance got their weapons, and he said that just before the invasion, Hussein widely distributed AK47s and encouraged them to fight. "None of us fought for Saddam," he said, "but now we'll fight for our freedom from American occupation." After the invasion, he said a lot of Saddam's arsenal ended up on the black market, so heavy machine guns, rocket launchers, and even missiles are easily available to them.

I asked the fighter if he was afraid that civil war would break out if the American forces left. He said that there may be civil war, but the Sunnis would win (he's a Sunni) so he isn't concerned. He said the American troops aren't doing anything to prevent civil war; indeed they're only making matters worse. For instance, the U.S. has replaced all the high-level administration and military personnel (Sunni) with newly-trained Shi'a. Many Iraqis view the new Shiite dominated Iraqi Government as a U.S. puppet and thus Iraqis working for the government are facing attacks by highly-trained Sunni militias.

To sum up what this man told me--Iraqis are armed, trained, and angry at the Americans and what they perceive as the Americans' puppet Iraqi government. They're not Saddam loyalists, and they're not "foreign fighters." They love their families, and they plan to fight American occupation to the death.

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Alpha

Posted: Sun Jun 05, 2005 9:28 pm Post subject: Kiev conference against Zionism - Altay Unaltay



To: "readers" <shamireaders@yahoogroups.com>

From: "Israel Shamir" <ishamir@013.net.il>

Date: Sun, 05 Jun 2005 20:19:46 +0300

Subject: [shamireaders] Kiev conference - Altay Unaltay

Joined: 06 Jan 2003
Posts: 45550

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We had now a very interesting conference in Kiev on an unbelievable (elsewhere) topic Zionism is Danger to the World Peace. I shall write about it soon, but meanwhile please read this talk by our Turkish friend Altay Unaltay, the editor of Yarin Magazine.

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CONFERENCE PAPER AT KIEV

Ladies and Gentlemen,

My paper will mainly be on the current state and historic background of Turkish politics as well as a description of how my journal "Yarin" regards the Middle Eastern Affairs.

Right now, there are two opposing principles in action, in Turkey:

- One is the patriotic view supporting national sovereignty and coordination among equal democratic nation-states on Earth, which "Yarin", my journal, is part of.

- The other one is Turkish globalism, which is ready to sacrifice everything sacred, like religion or national identity, at the altar of Western integration, be it with the EU or by joining the US global club of "winners". I call it, sacrificing Muhammad and Kemal Ataturk at the altar of Jupiter, the Roman god. And as you see, this is not a unique Turkish phenomenon. Nowadays there are people in every country, who are ready to sacrifice the honorable memories of their national heroes for Jupiter. And, I fear, Jesus himself is no exception for them.

Coming back to Turkish politics, the rift line between the two principles goes through every niche of Turkish political life, like Kemalists, leftists, nationalists, conservatives and Islamists.

Because Turkish media is largely under control of Turkish big money (as is the case in every country), which favors globalism, globalist political literature seems to be more voicy, or more noisy, if I may say it, in Turkey.

The patriotic movement favoring preservation of national independence and democratic sovereignty has many supporters among government circles, intellectuals, labor and petit bourgeoisie, as well as among associations of small and medium size enterprises.

-o-o-o-

After this introduction, how do we, the Yarin team, regard the events in the Middle East?

First of all, some words on the Greater Middle East Project: We don't believe that there is any Middle East Project offering solutions, right or wrong, to Middle Eastern ills. This term is a camouflage for the attempt to destabilize Middle East and destroy nation state entities, so as to take back history to the tribal age. Small communities, based on ethnic and religious differences are wanted to be in endemic hostilities and clashes against each other. Once this established, the US and its allies will go in as mediators and peace makers. This is the "divide and rule" politics Britain once perpetrated in India via its East India Co. Britain, then, pushed the Raja princedoms in wars against each other. And siding with this or that party she made herself the indispensable ally for every political entity in India. Finally, power fell in British hands like a "ripe fruit", we say in Turkish.

I think, the British, with all these experiences, will help the US a lot in this neo-colonization process in the Middle East. Iraq was the first experiment for this, because Iraq was the most advanced nation of the Middle East proper, on the verge of becoming a modern nation-state. I remember with sorrow, that after a long struggle for education, Baghdadi people are now speaking "Arabi Faseeh" (the Arabic counterpart of Oxford English), a dialect of scholars, in which the Quran, the Holy Book of Moslems, was revealed. So, Iraq made a basic step, forming a national language, in its way to nation-statehood. And now it is fallen down.

Why is it so important to set the Middle East again in turmoil? It is also widely claimed, that here many regimes are more supported by Anglo-US imperialism than by their own people. For this we have to go in the imbedded ills of global capitalism, as Lyndon LaRouche pointed many times before.

At year 2000, all hopes faded, concerning the so called high-tech economy in the West. Companies, mainly operating on Internet, software & related areas, massively went bankrupt. The American motto "don't look at Dow-Jones, look at Nasdaq" was abandoned, because Nasdaq was worse than Dow-Jones. Before that, the spectacular Bill Gates proclaimed the era of "friction free capitalism"; which means modern high-tech communication systems would feed the supplier and the consumer with fast and adequate information, so the best options in sales and purchases get realized, as it was once claimed by the theoretical fathers of free market capitalism. But then, it turned out, that the modern market, though having light speed communication means, was not "friction free". Claims, that the modern, high-tech, virtual economy will override capitalism's periodic crises, were all

trashed. It was again realized, that classical economy prevails, and, that classical industry as basis for classical economy is indispensable. Now the economies will turn away from the "postindustrial society" myth, and will have to stop industrial deconstruction.

On the other hand, under conditions of a "global market competition" or "global dog-eat-dog system", leading economies will need cheap energy to compete, so it is not surprising, that the Bush administration turns back to "direct colonization – direct confiscation" methods of the 19th century for oil. That times this colonization was done under the banner of "mission Civilisatrice", now it's done as "mission democratrice", or the "democratic imperialism". Not surprisingly, as people, who go from physician to physician to find a cure for their lethal illness, at the end turn to quacks and magicians for a final hope, modern capitalist economies abandoning every hope with "postindustrial" and "high-tech" society schemes, at the end turn to a 19th century style colonization. But the illness of this system is incurable, quacks and magicians are no answer, as 19th century colonization isn't.

Can Anglo-US imperialism succeed in perpetrating this turmoil, or in other words, in perpetrating this Dark Age. Regarding the "postmodern mental confusion" the whole world suffers, it is not easy to say, it cannot.

Even in my country many Muslim scholars are recruited for the so called "Greater Middle East Project", to make research on, how to modernize Islam. I think, despite many deficiencies, the Turkish Republic was and is the right answer for modern Islam. I don't say everything is fine in my country, as this is not the case in any country throughout the world today.

-o-o-o-

There are claims in Turkey, on the one extreme, that the Turkish-Islamic civilization ended with the breakup of the Ottoman Empire. What follows is total Western barbarism. So we have to work to bring back the empire and the caliphate.

There are also other claims in Turkey, which are on the other extreme, that civilization has newly started in my country with the advent of the republic. According to these, what was before, was a pre-civilization era of backwardness.

We say, neither this nor that. The republic is a normal and logical consequence of what happened in the Ottoman era. The Ottoman Empire disintegrated, because it had to. And the new republic is in many aspects, a continuation of the Ottoman civilization adapted to Modern Age's standards.

Ottoman Empire was based on Islam, though there were many non-Muslims among her subjects. The Ottoman Sultan was also the caliph of all Muslims. Since Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror, Ottoman Sultans also adorned themselves with the title, Emperor of the Orthodox, thereby granting equal status to the Orthodox Patriarch with the SheikhuIslam, head of the Muslim Ulama, or scholars, in official protocols. But, because the majority of subjects and the Ottoman ruling elite were Muslims, Islam was the foundation of Ottoman power.

But despite this fact, and contrary to theocratic practices in contemporary Europe of those times, power was in the hands of a secular ruler, and not in the hands of a certain theocracy. Contrary to the practices initiated by the theory of "The Two Swords" of imperium and sacerdotium, so that medieval European history was torn in quarrels between state power and church power, Ottomans were unaware of this sort of conflict. The church or the mosque was part of the state apparatus, and clergy was subordinate to a supreme ruler of state and religion. Adopted from the Byzantine Empire, this practice is called "Caesaropapism". And it also was the practice in the Orthodox Czarist Russia. And it had its long lasting effects in both countries.

Neither in Czarist Russian, nor in Ottoman Turkish history, there is any independent field of social action, which is outside the state power. Everything is supposed to be controlled centrally, (though things may sometimes differ in practice) and this political tradition over centuries created a different socio-political atmosphere, which was difficult for Westerners to grasp, so they preferred to brand it as "Oriental Despotism".

Please note, that in explaining this, I don't say, it is something good or something bad, but I say, it is something different.

Orthodox Slav and Sunni Turkish nations and states are shaped by this historic tradition, and in this sense they are both different from the Western counterparts.

A logical outcome of this tradition is, that our social life is monolithic. There are no separate and independent spheres in our social life, so every social affair gets political from its very beginning. In my country, businessman search for ways to solve the Kurdish problem, whereas the military has a say in religious affairs; politicians from left and right alike visit shrines of Sufi saints, with different shrines of saints preserved for different political orientation; leftist Sufi saints and rightist Sufi saints, if I may say.

All this are in contrast with the Shiite Iran. Though religion also have been in the social center in Iran, the rift between the Ulama or mullahs, and secular powers have always been apparent.

For a long time Iranian Ulama kept themselves outside the state apparatus, because there was also some sort of "The Two Swords". Shiite theory says, all earthly powers are categorically illegal until the advent of the Mahdi, or the Muslim Messiah. But any power, as long as it serves the Muslims with justice and preserves security, may be tolerated. And the Ulama should keep watch on it, which means up and down they interfere in political affairs. Iranian history is branded by quarrels and tensions between imperium and sacerdotium, the Muslim style. So it was very normal to expect

Iranian Ulama to seize power from the secular state one day, and form some sort of theocracy, as was the case in the medieval West. But, this also means, that Iran, one day will turn in a Western style society, much earlier than Russia or Turkey. If this analysis is much amazing for you, I should remember, that theocracy is a Western innovation, never seen in the East before. This analysis also reveals, why there was an Islamic revolution in Iran, and why it can't be in Turkey, though I can't say my country is "less Islamic" or "less religious".

-o-o-o-

In 1924 Turkey became a secular republic, and Islam as foundation of power was replaced by the nation as foundation of power. "Sovereignty unconditionally belongs to the nation" is what it writes on the front wall of Turkish Grand National Assembly. We have a secular nation-state now.

But if we look carefully at it, we see some features, which are more in common with the Ottoman past, than with any ideal model of secular state. As I said before, the Ottoman mosque and madrassa, or Islamic temples and high education system, was part of the state apparatus. And the SheikhuIslam was head of it. If we look at the appointment procedure of the SheikhuIslam, we see, that he was appointed by Sultan's edict on proposal of the Grand Vizier, or the Sadrazam. Now we have a certain official body of the Religious Affairs Office in the Turkish state apparatus. This body controls all the mosques and religious education. The Head of Religious Affairs is appointed by Presidential decree on proposal of the Prime Minister. This is just to name one similarity.

Religion in Turkey is too much state controlled, and we think, it is time now to really separate state affairs and religious affairs, thereby granting religious institutions independent status in form of foundations. This for the "secular" aspect of our secular-nation state.

Now coming to the "national" aspect of the Turkish nation state, first we see Kemal Ataturk, the founder of the Republic, say "Happy is the one who says, I'm Turk" - "The people of Turkey, who founded the Republic are called the Turkish nation" is also quoted from him. Both statements testify, that, what is called the Turkish nation, is not an ethnically homogenous entity, and that the founders of the Republic were aware of it.

After the disintegration of the Ottoman empire in 1918, the last Ottoman Parliament summit passed a resolution, known as "Misak-i Milli" or the "National Oath". The National Oath meant, that after Ottoman disintegration, all the people, who wished to stay together to share a common destiny and commit themselves to a common self determination, form the "nation", and the lands, these people were living on, formed the "homeland".

This "patriotism" based on a social contract, or "the National Oath", to stand united, and face united the difficulties of forming the Republican Phoenix from Ottoman ashes, was the very foundation of the new republic. Turkish patriotism was based on a Turkish homeland, suggesting equal rights among countries and everlasting peace on acknowledgement of mutual sovereignties. "Peace at home, and peace abroad" said Kemal Ataturk.

But later, after Ataturk's death, this Turkish patriotism gradually degenerated in a Turkish nationalism, exalting only one ethnic background as the legal basis of the Turkish nation. The existence of other ethnicities were denied for a long time.

Now we say, it is time to come back to the "patriotic" spirit of the Turkish nation-state, abandoning the "nationalist" one. This means, grasp the entity, which is called Turkey, from its aspect of the homeland, "motherland" is what we say in Turkish, and not grasp it from its aspect of ethnicity, which is not one, but many.

Ladies and gentleman, I tried to open you up a window to Turkey, my homeland, from a different perspective, the "Yarin" Journal's perspective. I thank you for your attention.

diöer adreslerim/alternate emails: altayu@kultursanat.org

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Posted: Mon Jun 06, 2005 7:02 pm Post subject: George Washington's Farewell Address: Passionate Attachment



"So, likewise, a passionate attachment of one nation for another produces a variety of evils. Sympathy for the favorite nation, facilitating the illusion of an imaginary common interest in cases where no real common interest exists, and infusing into one the enmities of the other, betrays the former into a participation in the quarrels and wars of the latter without adequate inducement or justification. It leads also to concessions to the favorite nation of privileges denied to others, which is apt doubly to injure the nation making the concessions by unnecessarily parting with what ought to have been retained, and by exciting jealousy, ill will, and a disposition to

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Alpha

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retaliate in the parties from whom equal privileges are withheld . . .

"Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence (I conjure you to believe me, fellow-citizens) the jealousy of a free people ought to be constantly awake, since history and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of republican government . . . Excessive partiality for one foreign nation and excessive dislike of another cause those whom they actuate to see danger only on one side, and serve to veil and even second the arts of influence on the other. Real patriots who may resist the intrigues of the favorite are liable to become suspected and odious, while its tools and dupes usurp the applause and confidence of the people to surrender their interests.

" . . . nothing is more essential than that permanent, inveterate antipathies against particular nations and passionate attachments for others should be excluded, and that in place of them just and amicable feelings toward all should be cultivated. The nation which indulges toward another an habitual hatred or an habitual fondness is in some degree a slave. It is a slave to its animosity or to its affection, either of which is sufficient to lead it astray from its duty and its interest."

-- President George Washington
Farewell Address
September 26, 1796

Today's Holy Wars News:
<http://www.antiwar.com>

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Alpha

Posted: Mon Jun 06, 2005 9:53 pm Post subject: After the Downing Street Memo: Case for Impeachment Builds



After the Downing Street Memo: Case for Impeachment Builds

<http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article9066.htm>

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Alpha

Posted: Tue Jun 07, 2005 11:24 am Post subject: 'Pretext for War'



http://www.signonsandiego.com/uniontrib/20040801/news_lz1v1pretext.html

'Pretext for War'

... finds a slew of flaws and abuses

Reviewed by Michiko Kakutani
August 1, 2004

In the walk-up and wake of the Iraq war, it's no secret that one of the most bitter battles in Washington has been between the CIA and the State Department on one side, and neoconservative hawks in the Pentagon and White House on the other.

Intelligence and State Department officials have characterized the neocons as hawkish ideologues who entered office before 9/11 with an agenda to depose Saddam Hussein. They have accused the hard-liners of cherry-picking and hyping intelligence in order to sell the war against Iraq.

The hawks have characterized the CIA as a bunch of risk-averse, bean-counting bureaucrats, hobbled by what Richard Perle has called "ideologically liberal assumptions." They have accused the agency of continuing intelligence failures, from the overthrow of the shah's government in Iran in 1979 to the terrorist attacks of 9/11.

As James Bamford, the author of two respected books on American intelligence, tells it, there is plenty of blame to go around. His new book, "A Pretext for War," draws a damning portrait of the country's intelligence agencies as woefully ill-equipped to deal with the threats of terrorism and a post-Cold War world. It also draws a scathing picture of ideologues in the Bush administration, manipulating dubious evidence about links between al-Qaeda and Saddam and flawed information about weapons of mass destruction in the push toward war.

In addition, Bamford suggests that the CIA caved to pressure from administration hard-liners. He quotes a CIA case officer who says that in January 2003, one of the agency's higher-ups called a meeting and said, "You know what – if Bush wants to go to war, it's your job to give him a reason to do so." And he writes that the CIA chief George Tenet said of the provocative intelligence about Iraq that Secretary of State Colin Powell presented to the United Nations in February 2003: "I'm standing behind it 100 percent," even though much of that intelligence later turned out to be flawed, and Tenet stated this year that his agency "never said there was an 'imminent' threat" from Saddam.

Much of the information and many of the theories in Bamford's book will be familiar to readers from earlier magazine and newspaper articles, and other books: most notably, Bob Woodward's "Bush at War" and "Plan of Attack"; "Ghost Wars," Steve Coll's exhaustive history of the CIA, Osama bin Laden and Afghanistan; the former counterterrorism czar Richard A. Clarke's best-selling expose of the war on terror, "Against All Enemies"; and "Inside 9-11," a detailed chronicle of the terrorist attacks of 2001 by Der Spiegel journalists.

But Bamford unearths new details about everything from the identity of one of the undisclosed locations used by Vice President Dick Cheney after 9/11 (Site R, a secret military command post on the Maryland-Pennsylvania border) to the failures of a special CIA unit charged with tracking bin Laden, and he connects the many dots, both old and new, to create a vivid, unsettling narrative.

Discursive in organization, "A Pretext for War" provides selective context for the failure to prevent the attacks of 9/11 and the Bush administration's path to war. Bamford is highly persuasive in recounting the many ways in which American intelligence agencies failed to adapt to the end of the Cold War: They lacked specialists in many key Middle Eastern languages and a sufficient number of analysts to grapple with an avalanche of cyber-age data, and even though Americans like John Walker Lindh had been secretly joining al-Qaeda, operatives appear to have made little effort to penetrate terrorist organizations, preferring the decorous, low-risk tack of trying to recruit foreign embassy officials at cocktail parties.

Bamford does not address the broader question of how Cold War paradigms shaped the thinking of key Bush administration members such as national security adviser Condoleezza Rice and Cheney. And unlike James Mann in "Rise of the Vulcans," he does not delve into many of the larger factors shaping the hawks' thinking – from their experiences in dealing with the Soviet Union to their appropriation of the Wilsonian idea of exporting democracy.

What he does focus on is the role that Israel has played in shaping American policy. Bamford contends that "the blueprint for the new Bush policy" on the Middle East "had actually been drawn up five years earlier by three of his top national security advisers" (Richard Perle, Douglas Feith and David Wurmser) for the Israeli prime minister at the time, Benjamin Netanyahu (who rejected the plan), and that when they entered office in January 2001, all these hawks needed was "a pretext" for war against Iraq. Citing a report from the British newspaper The Guardian, Bamford adds that the Office of Special Plans, a Pentagon unit set up by Feith, "forged close ties to a parallel, ad hoc intelligence unit within Ariel Sharon's office in Israel," which "was designed to go around the country's own intelligence organization, Mossad."

In recounting the failures of intelligence before 9/11, Bamford points to missed clues about the hijackers and the poisonous rivalry (not to mention fatal lack of communication) between the CIA and FBI. He also writes that a special unit of the CIA named Alec Station, which was set up in 1996 "with the sole mission of collecting intelligence" on bin Laden and "disrupting his network," had an abysmal record. He notes that "after four years and hundreds of millions of dollars," it failed "to recruit a single source within bin Laden's growing Afghanistan operation." He adds: "It was George Tenet's biggest secret. Not only was al-Qaeda never penetrated, neither the Counterterrorism Center nor Alec Station ever picked up a single piece of usable intelligence on bin Laden or his organization, the country's greatest threat."

Bamford is equally scorching on the subject of an alternative intelligence gathering operation (called the Policy Counterterrorism Evaluation Group) set up at the Pentagon by Feith and Wurmser, arguing that it "was little more than a pro-war propaganda cell" designed "to produce evidence to support the pretexts for attacking Iraq."

He also denounces the Pentagon's heavy reliance on intelligence acquired through Ahmed Chalabi, the head of the Iraqi National Congress and a longtime friend of many prominent administration hawks. Though much of the information from Chalabi's sources about weapons of mass destruction later turned out to be incorrect or fabricated, Bamford writes, it was funneled to the White House and to the press – most notably, The New York Times – to help sell the "war to the American public."

Both President Bill Clinton and President George W. Bush are taken to task in these pages as well. In describing the country's vulnerability in the face of terrorism, Bamford repeatedly notes that budget cutbacks during the Clinton administration weakened the country's intelligence agencies, and he writes that the now famous Aug. 6, 2001, President's Daily Brief – titled "Bin Laden Determined to Strike in U.S." – seemed "to have made little impression" on Bush.

He observes that when Tenet, the head of the CIA during both administrations, declared war on terrorism – in the wake of the 1998 embassy bombings in Africa – it was so low-key that senior officials at the Pentagon and the FBI had not heard of it. And he points out that Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld, who actually controls a large portion of America's spy world, was "far more concerned with downsizing the Pentagon than reorganizing and reinvigorating the intelligence community" when he entered office.

In the end Bamford's conclusions are alarming, if not unfamiliar ones: that incompetence, timidity and a lack of readiness contributed to the failure to prevent the terrorist attacks of 9/11, and that misinformation, ideological agendas and poor intelligence led to the decision to go to war against Iraq.

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A Pretext for War
9/11, Iraq, and the Abuse of America's Intelligence Agencies
James Bamford
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