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**The Voice of the White House**

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Washington, D.C., April 20, 2007: “As I predicted, the press is trying to beef up the silly story that a harmless chemical product is actually responsible for the pet food deaths. This time, the spin merchants claim, it’s “contaminated rice.” And, of course, the rabid anti-Communist Cheney people will claim that like the harmless “wheat gluten,” this rice came from China. Where is the duct tape now that we need it? And elements here want to claim that the waclo zipperhead who went on a school rampage was actually a secret member of al Qaeda! Next, we will learn that the utterly useless DHS is setting up an “Academic Security Bureau” that will cost the raped taxpayers more millions in looted money!

But the real story this week concerns the collapse of the BlackBerry system on a national level. This was the direct result of Israeli-owned US firms’ technological probings into American top-secret communications network. As direct result of these break-ins via inside plantings of trap-doored systems, the famous BlackBerry systems crashed for almost 10 hours. One of the targets was the system better known as CryptoBerry. The term CryptoBerry was a project name for the S/MIME BlackBerry product.( S/MIME: Secure/Multi-purpose Internet Mail Extension) Conventional BlackBerry uses TripleDES to encrypt all traffic between the device and the BES. It was originally produced by RSA Data Security, and developed for NSA (National Security Agency, ed) and, as developed was a more secure version of the BlackBerry e-mail client from Research in Motion Ltd. of Waterloo, Ontario, used by DoD officials and in the field in Iraq and Afghanistan. Initially very slow, NSA then improved its performance. The security implications of 'going through Canada' are virtually nil. All messages, be they conventional or S/MIME always pass through the RIM BlackBerry infrastructure in encrypted form, and RIM does not have access to the keys.

The S/MIME BlackBerry is meant for organizations already using S/MIME to completely secure their mail from sender to recipient, including from the eyes of their own network administrators

The expressed concerns of the DoD, which uses these systems, and the NSA who are involved heavily with their versions of it, are greatly concerned about a possible terrorist attack on the American secret communications network. If such an attack were coupled with an internet takedown, S/MIME would be completely useless and if a successful attack were launched on the RIM relay, everything would be shut down..

A joint report, highly classified, under date of March 30, 2007, by the FBI, the DoD and the NSA discuss in detail an extensive Israeli trechnical espionage operation working inside the United States to mine any and all information that might “be of ongoing importance to the state of Israel.”

It would be impossible to specifically quote from any of the documents or show copies of them but a digest of the information is appended at the end of this report.

What two hundred and ten pages tells the reader is that the Israeli government, through its Mossad or foreign intelligence, has been systematically spying on the one country that had unquestioningly supported it and by doing so, has drawn the wrath of many Muslim oriented terrorists upon its head. The conclusion of the report is that nothing can be done about this because the current Bush administration is so pro-Israel that any attempt to interdict its spying on American military, intelligence, financial institutions and any American they deem to be anti-Israeli is doomed from the start. Such actions would have to come from public pressure and not the outrage of American intelligence organs.

American terrorist investigators know that members of the Israeli Mossad, who were involved with the Muslim group that carried out the (/11 terrorist attacks had managed to stay ahead of them, by knowing who and when investigators are calling on the telephone. This is accomplished by obtaining and analyzing data that is generated every time someone in the U.S. makes a telephone call.

Here is how the system works. Most directory assistance calls, and *virtually all* call records and billing inside the U.S. are done for the telephone companies by *Amdocs* Ltd., an Israeli-based private telecommunications company.

*Amdocs* had contracts with the 25 biggest telephone companies in America, and even more worldwide. The White House and other secure government phone lines are protected, but it is virtually impossible for any American to make a call on any American phone without generating an *Amdocs* record of it.

In recent years, the FBI and other government agencies have investigated *Amdocs* more than once. The firm has repeatedly and adamantly denied any security breaches or wrongdoing. In 1999, the super secret National Security Agency, headquartered in Ft. George Meade in northern Maryland, issued what is called a Top Secret Sensitive Compartmentalized Information report, TS/SCI, warning that records of calls in the United States were getting into foreign hands – in Israel, in particular.

Investigators do not believe such calls are being listened to, but the data about who is calling whom and when is extremely valuable in itself. An internal *Amdocs* memo to senior company executives suggests just how *Amdocs* generated call records could be used. *“Widespread data mining techniques and algorithms...combining both the properties of the customer (e.g., credit rating) and properties of the specific behavior...”* Specific behavior, such as who the targeted customers are calling.

The *Amdocs* memo says the system should be public ally advertised as *“helping to prevent telephone fraud.”* However, U.S. counterintelligence analysts say it could, and unquestionably was, also be used to spy via the records of the American telephone system. The N.S.A has held numerous classified conferences to warn the F.B.I. and C.I.A. how *Amdocs* records could be used.

At one classified NSA briefing, a diagram by the Argonne National Laboratory was used to show that if phone records are not completely secure, major security breaches are more than possible.

Another NSA briefing document said, *“It has become increasingly apparent that systems and networks are vulnerable...Such crimes always involve unauthorized persons, or persons who exceed their authorization...citing on exploitable vulnerabilities.”*

Those vulnerabilities are growing, because according to another briefing, the U.S. relies too much on foreign companies like *Amdocs* for high-tech equipment and software. *“Many factors have led to increased dependence on code developed overseas.... We buy rather than train or develop solutions.”*

U.S. intelligence does not *officially* believe the Israeli government is involved in a misuse of information, and *Amdocs* insists that its data is secure. What U.S. government officials are worried about, however, is the possibility that *Amdocs* data could get into the wrong hands, particularly organized crime. And that would not be the first time that such a thing has happened.

**Amdocs** is headquartered in St. Louis, Missouri but primarily based in Ra'anana, Israel, is a provider of software and services for billing and CRM systems. Its clients are primarily focused on the public sector and telecommunications, including such "Tier-1" players as Sprint-Nextel, Cingular, Vodafone, T-Mobile. The company was originally called "Aurec Group" (the Hebrew word for Artery ("עורק"), which in Hebrew is used to describe a communication channel) and dealt only with directory services, i.e. Yellow Pages. They now provide application suites for CRM, sales, and billing operations for telecommunication service providers. *Amdocs* still provides publishing software for creating print and online directories. The company also offers outsourced customer service and data center operations.

**Comverse Infosys** Comverse Infosys is one of the companies involved with *Amdocs* in its U.S. espionage activities through the telecommunication products it sells and systems it operates and services. Its products are widely used by the US telecommunications industry and government agencies.

**Telrad Communications.** Telrad Networks is one of Israel's leading developers of carrier grade telecommunications equipment. The company serves as an original design

manufacturer for leading global communications equipment providers and recently initiated the development of certain classified products in the metro optical networking . It is headquartered in Rosh Ha'ayin, Israel.

**Verint** This company was called Comverse-Infosys until 2002, but was quickly renamed when the FBI started several investigations against it and arrested some of its employees in the US on suspicion of espionage.

**NICE Systems** Headquartered in Ra'anana, Israel, NICE is a worldwide leader of multimedia digital recording solutions, applications and related professional services for business interaction management. NICE products and solutions are used in contact centres, trading floors, air traffic control (ATC) sites, CCTV security installations and Government markets. NICE's synergistic technology platform enables customers to capture, evaluate and analyse business interactions in order to improve business processes and gain competitive advantage. NICE's subsidiaries and local offices are based in the United States, Canada, Germany, United Kingdom and France. The company operates in more than 70 countries through a network of partners and distributors

**RSA Security Inc.** RSA was named for the RSA public key cryptography algorithm, which was in turn named for the initials of its co-inventors: Ron Rivest, Adi Shamir, and Len Adleman. They founded RSA. On June 29, 2006 it was announced that EMC Corporation will acquire RSA Security for \$2.1 billion. On September 14, 2006 RSA stockholders approved the acquisition of the company by EMC Corporation

### **Bereft of BlackBerrys, the Untethered Make Do**

April 19, 2007

by Brad Stone

New York Times

On Tuesday night at 8 p.m. Eastern time, technical problems cut off more than five million BlackBerry users in the United States from their cherished wireless e-mail. Service was restored 10 long, data-starved hours later.

The BlackBerry blackout was grueling to many — and revealed just how professionally and emotionally dependent so many people had become on their pocket-size electronic lifelines.

Stuart Gold was in Phoenix on a business trip when the service went down. Mr. Gold, the marketing director for Omniture, a software firm, noticed ominous red X's next to his outgoing e-mails.

He is not proud of what happened next.

"I started freaking out," he said. "I started taking it apart. Turning it off. Turning it on. I took the battery out and cleaned it on my shirt. I was running around my hotel like a freak. It's very sad. I love this thing."

At 6 a.m. Wednesday morning, full of anxiety about the prospect of spending a traveling day untethered, Mr. Gold awoke and made a beeline for his still motionless phone. At 7 a.m., it started vibrating with activity. "I breathed a sigh of relief," he said. "Life was good."

Many people thought they were suffering alone.

Lynn Moffat believed she had administered a fatal blow to her BlackBerry by dropping it early Tuesday in Grand Central Terminal. When Ms. Moffat, the managing director of the New York Theater Workshop, learned on the radio that the service disruption was widespread, "I was so relieved it wasn't just me, but all my BlackBerry brothers and sisters," she said.

Others cycled through complex waves of emotion, including a bit of paranoia. Zach Nelson, chief executive of NetSuite, a software firm, was entertaining his top sales representatives in Barbados when e-mail from his 600 other employees suddenly stopped arriving on his BlackBerry. "I started thinking people hadn't shown up for work as a revolt

for us going to the Caribbean,” he said.

Research in Motion, the Canadian company that makes the BlackBerry devices, shed little light yesterday on what went wrong, releasing a statement that said the “root cause is currently under review.”

Part of the problem, though, could be the service’s rapid growth: R.I.M. says it has added three million subscribers in the last 12 months, for a total of eight million, in part because of the popularity of its superslim BlackBerry Pearl.

BlackBerry users have had scares before. Last June, technical problems twice interrupted service, though both failures lasted only a few hours and were confined to specific wireless carriers that sell the devices.

A patent dispute also threatened to shut the BlackBerry service altogether more than a year ago. Though R.I.M. denied any patent violations, it avoided a crisis by settling for \$612.5 million. At the time, the BlackBerry faithful could only speculate what deprivation might feel like.

Now they know. Symptoms include feelings of isolation, a strong temptation to lash out at company I.T. workers, and severe longing, not unlike drug withdrawal.

Elaine Del Rossi, chief sales officer for HTH Worldwide, an insurance company, reacted to the severed electronic leash with several panicked calls to her office in the belief that the company e-mail system was down.

“I quit smoking 28 years ago,” she said, “and that was easier than being without my BlackBerry.”

Even at the White House, officials complained that the blackout had badly disrupted their morning routines, and a spokesman, Tony Fratto, pleaded with reporters to be patient with him.

“We’ve already started a 12-step program,” he said, then joked that the White House counsel, Fred Fielding, had ordered the stoppage— a reference to the dispute over missing e-mail messages concerning the controversial firing of several United States attorneys.

Rob Whitehouse, vice president for communication of University Hospitals in Cleveland, was brought face to face with his powerful addiction at 11 p.m. on Tuesday night, when he realized he was “jonesing” for a message on his inexplicably silent device.

“I have reached the point where I get phantom vibrations, even when I’m not carrying the thing,” he said. “That sure doesn’t sound too healthy, does it?”

But some BlackBerry users looked at this week’s episode differently, treating the silence as a reprieve. Barry Frey, a senior vice president at Cablevision, stepped off an airplane on Tuesday night to find that his in-flight e-mail exile had been extended.

His reaction was BlackBerry blasphemy. “I took a deep breath and finally enjoyed the feeling,” he said.

The less frenetic world he describes may not only be saner, but safer. Peter Crist, an executive recruiter in Chicago, admits to occasionally steering his car with his knees while he thumbs his BlackBerry. Tuesday night, he put both hands on the wheel and said he had a quiet, uninterrupted dinner with his wife and son — for a change.

Other BlackBerry users were also forced to reconsider some bad habits. At the annual meeting of the National Venture Capital Association in Washington, venture capitalists said that the interruption meant one less distraction, allowing them to pay closer attention to the presentations.

In offices, employees had to speak with colleagues over the phone and in actual face-to-face conversations.

The BlackBerry blackout, just like the power failures of yore, could have even

helped in the romance department — if couples could actually connect. Robert Friedman, president of the media and entertainment division of @radical.media, a production company, said the disruption gave him “a lot of free time on my hands to spend with my wife, although I couldn’t find her since her BlackBerry was off.”

When service was restored yesterday morning, most BlackBerry users were happy to dive back in and start sending e-mail. R.I.M. was under pressure to make sure the failure would not happen again. BlackBerry e-mail is more costly than alternative services offered by Motorola and Microsoft, but in the past R.I.M. had justified the premium by claiming it had a more reliable service with a higher level of security.

Stuart Gold, the software executive, speculated that the blackout would create opportunities for other wireless e-mail companies, a view shared by others.

If one of R.I.M.’s rivals were able to guarantee its service, he said, he would want his company to explore switching.

Others took the inconvenience more in stride, including David Plouffe, the campaign manager for Senator Barack Obama.

Mr. Plouffe said his eerily empty in-box brought back a time in politics when there were no such things as mobile phones, thumb-typing and a never-ending flood of e-mail.

Yet, “everything seemed to work O.K.,” he said. “Quite frankly people have to talk more in that situation. That’s probably a good thing.”

*Ian Austen, Matt Richtel, Louise Story, Joan Raymond, Jeff Bailey, Adam Nagourney and Jim Rutenberg contributed reporting.*

Note: The plotting against Putin, both in Britain and the United States, was covered in detail in the Voice of the White House on April 16. Ed

## **Diplomatic rift as Russia says: give us Berezovsky**

### ***Fresh warrant issued and new inquiry into remarks about overthrow of Putin***

April 19, 2007

by Terry Macalister, Ian Cobain and Simon Tisdall

The Guardian

Relations between London and Moscow threatened to plummet to a post-cold war low yesterday amid renewed Russian demands for action against Boris Berezovsky over the tycoon's claim that he is plotting to overthrow Vladimir Putin.

The Russian ambassador to the UK warned that bilateral relations would inevitably suffer if prompt action was not taken against the Britain-based multi-millionaire, who told the Guardian that he was fomenting a revolution to topple Mr Putin by force.

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Yesterday it also emerged that British authorities have begun a second inquiry into Mr Berezovsky's comments, with the Home Office's border and immigration agency investigating whether they could undermine his refugee status. Scotland Yard's counter-terrorism command is already assessing whether he breached anti-terrorism laws by inciting a coup.

But it was the remarks of the Russian ambassador, Yury Fedotov, that will have alarmed Downing Street at a time when ministers and senior officials are increasingly concerned about Russia's assertiveness on the international stage.

Speaking at the embassy in west London, Mr Fedotov said he had sent a letter on Wednesday to John Reid, the home secretary, underlining the seriousness with which the issue was viewed in Moscow. He also enclosed a copy of a warrant for the arrest of Mr Berezovsky signed by Yury Chaika, the Russian prosecutor general.

"A speedy resolution would help to improve, to develop, our relations even further," he said. "But absence of a reaction would have some impact on bilateral relations" and create a "new situation".

The dispute could have a serious impact on bilateral relations, analysts said yesterday. Moscow is at odds with Britain on many issues, including how best to curb Iran's suspect nuclear programme and plans to grant Kosovo independence.

Tensions also surround British-backed western efforts to promote democratic institutions in countries of the post-Soviet "near abroad" such as Georgia and Ukraine, US-led plans for European missile defence, and Nato's eastward expansion. "The Russians are already causing trouble across the board. This could just make them behave even worse," one former official said.

But David Clark, a former Foreign Office adviser, said it would be a mistake to concentrate on possible Kremlin retaliation. "The government is very worried about the impact of this dispute on bilateral relations - excessively so," said Mr Clark. "It would be a mistake to try to mollify the Kremlin instead of being honest and clear about the reasons why no British court is likely to support the extradition of its political opponents. The reason is that there is, in current circumstances, little possibility of a fair trial."

At the Home Office, sources confirmed yesterday that immigration officials were investigating whether Mr Berezovsky's comments had broken UK laws and regulations and altered his refugee status.

Immigration law experts agreed that the Home Office may struggle to strip Mr Berezovsky of asylum status, granted under the 1951 UN refugee convention, unless they establish that he is "guilty of acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the UN", as laid down by the convention. Ministers believe they may be able to review his status if they consider his presence here is no longer conducive to the public good.

Although Mr Putin has said he would stand down when his second elected term comes to an end next year, as required by the constitution, Mr Berezovsky told the Guardian he believed the Russian president could be removed only by force.

"We need to use force to change this regime," he said, in comments which appeared calculated to infuriate the Kremlin. "It isn't possible to change this regime through democratic means. There can be no change without force, pressure."

He claimed to be in contact with like-minded people in the country's ruling elite, offering financial assistance as well as "my understanding of how it could be done". When asked whether he was fomenting a revolution, he said: "You are absolutely correct."

Mr Berezovsky added that he was confident his refugee status could not be revoked, and that his position was even stronger since the poisoning of his former employee Alexander Litvinenko. He has consistently denied the charges laid against him in Russia and says they are politically motivated. The 61-year-old billionaire was in Israel last night, where he said he travelled on business. He said he planned to return to the UK today, and had no comment on the diplomatic furore.

Mr Berezovsky made his estimated £850m fortune during Russia's 1990s rush to privatise, by capturing state assets at knockdown prices. Two previous attempts to extradite him failed. He was granted asylum in 2003 after claims by Litvinenko, a former Russian intelligence agent, that the Kremlin had ordered the tycoon's murder.

## The Inexplicable Enrichment of Bush Cronies: The Iraq Money Trail

April 17, 2007

by Evelyn Pringle

ICH

It's time for Americans to face the cold hard truth that nothing will be accomplished by allowing the daily carnage in Iraq to continue, and if Bush has his way, our young people will be dying in this war profiteering scheme until hell freezes over. Congress needs to authorize funding to pull our troops out of that deathtrap and not one dime more.

It appears that Bush is a madman who will listen to no one. After Bush's speech on January 10, 2007, about the plan to send more troops, retired Army Col Doug McGreggor, a former advisor to Don Rumsfeld in 2003, said in a broadcast interview, "There seems to be a complete failure to understand that we have been trying to suppress a rebellion against our occupation."

"As long as we are there," he warned, "we are the number one public enemy for the Muslim-Arab world."

"We were after all," he points out, "a Christian army occupying a Muslim Arab country, something which in the Middle East, is essentially a disaster."

This decorated combat veteran says Bush's strategy will never work. "We did not go to Iraq originally," he explains, "to dismantle the state, dismantle the army, the police, and the government, to occupy the place with the object of changing the people that lived there into something they did not want to become."

After Bush's speech, military families also spoke out publicly against the decision to send more troops. "I don't have words for it," said Nancy Lessin, of Military Families Speak Out, a group of 3,100 families, including 100 who have lost a loved one in the war.

"This is a war," she said, "that should never have happened, that has wreaked so much havoc on our loved ones, Iraqi children, women and men, and now to be facing, almost four years into it, this news of an escalation of the war, is just unbearable."

An Associated Press-Ipsos poll showed that 70% of Americans opposed sending more troops, but Bush went right ahead and did it anyways. And then to make matters worse, this month he announces the plan to extend the 12-month tours to 15-months to allow his 30,000-troop buildup in Baghdad to stay for another year.

This war is going to bankrupt the US. A January 2007 study by Columbia University economist Joseph Stiglitz, who won a Nobel Prize in economics in 2001, and Harvard lecturer Linda Bilmes, estimated that the total costs of the Iraq war could be more than \$2 trillion when the long-term medical costs for the soldiers injured so far are factored in.

The only people who are benefiting from Bush's war on terror are members of the Military Industrial Complex. Since 9/11, the pay for the CEOs of the top 34 defense contractors in the US has doubled, according to the August 2006 report, "Executive Excess 2006," by the Institute for Policy Studies, and the United for a Fair Economy.

The bill is rising so fast because the level of war profiteering is unprecedented. The Excess Report lists George David, CEO of United Technologies, as the top earner, making more than \$200 million since 9/11, despite investigations into the poor quality of the firm's Black Hawk helicopters.

Halliburton CEO David Lesar made \$26.6 million in 2005, and nearly \$50 million since 9/11, an amount that even beats the \$24 million that Dick Cheney received in exchange for the guarantee that Halliburton would be the number one military contractor during the Bush administration.

Cheney himself is also taking in war profits, contrary to what he told Tim Russert on "Meet the Press" in 2003, when he denied making any money off his former employer. "Since I left Halliburton to become George Bush's vice president," he said, "I've severed all my ties with the company, gotten rid of all my financial interest."

"I have no financial interest in Halliburton," Cheney told Tim, "of any kind and haven't had, now, for over three years."

Those statements were proven false when financial disclosure forms showed that Cheney had received a deferred salary from Halliburton of \$205,298 in 2001, \$262,392 in 2002, \$278,437 in 2003, and \$294,852 in 2004.

In 2005, an analysis released by Senator Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ), reported that Cheney continued to hold over 300,000 Halliburton stock options and said their value had risen 3,281% over the previous year, from \$241,498 to more than \$8 million.

"It is unseemly for the Vice President to continue to benefit from this company at the same time his Administration funnels billions of dollars to it," Senator Lautenberg said.

Cheney may be the most visible profiteer to those who find it difficult to follow the war on terror money trail, but many other members of the administration with insider knowledge set themselves up to profit early on as well.

For instance, there was the Undersecretary of Defense, Doug Feith, largely credited for fabricating the tales that got the US into the war to begin with, along with his fellow neocons and best buddy, Ahmed Chalabi.

Feith was a partner with Marc Zell, in the Feith & Zell, DC law firm before joining the administration. After he left for the White House, Zell renamed the firm, Zell, Goldberg & Co, and teamed up with Salem Chalabi, Ahmed nephew, to solicit contracts for clients in Iraq. This scam operated under the name, "Iraqi International Law Group."

At the time, the National Journal quoted Salem as saying that Marc Zell was the firm's "marketing consultant" and had been contacting law firms in Washington and New York to ask if they had clients interested in doing business in Iraq.

According to its web site back then, the IILG was made up of lawyers and businessmen who "dared to take the lead in bringing private sector investment and experience" to the war-torn country and offered to "be your Professional Gateway to the New Iraq."

"The simple fact is," the site stated, "you cannot adequately advise about Iraq unless you are here day in and day out, working closely with officials at the CPA, the newly constituted governing council and the few functioning civilian ministries oil, labor and social welfare, etc."

It is highly likely that the preceding statement was absolutely true when made because Feith helped set up the Coalition Provisional Authority in May 2003, with its leader Paul Bremer, and Feith's office and the CPA were in charge of awarding reconstruction contracts with Iraqi money.

For his part, Salem was a legal adviser to Iraq's governing council, of which his Uncle was a member, and Bremer even tried to appoint him to lead the tribunal that would try Saddam.

Uncle Chabali footprints in the profiteering racket can be traced back to September 2003, when the CPA awarded an \$80 million contract to Nour USA, a company with ties to Winston Partners, which is a whole other story in itself because Winston Partners is headed by none other than Marvin Bush, the brother to the president.

In May 2003, Nour was founded by, Abul Huda Farouki, whose financial ties to Ahmed Chalabi date back to 1989, when Chalabi was CEO of the Petra Bank, and helped Farouqi finance projects around the world.

Nour's website at the time described the firm as an "international investment and development company" with more than 100 employees based in Iraq, and listed expertise in telecommunications, agribusiness, internet development, recruitment, construction materials, oil and power services, pharmaceuticals and fashion apparel.

In January 2004, Nour picked up another contract to equip the Iraqi armed forces and police worth \$327 million. However, shortly thereafter, Nour came under fire when a shady deal surfaced involving the first \$80 million contract and Ahmed Chalabi.

Newsday reported that Chalabi had received \$2 million for helping to arrange the contract, but as it turned out, the contract was actually awarded to Erinys International, a firm set up in Iraq immediately after the invasion. The problem arose, Newsday said, because within days of receiving the contract, Erinys became a joint venture operation with Nour.

Next, the \$327 million contract was in jeopardy after it was revealed that Nour had no experience providing military equipment and Nour claimed that it planned to subcontract its weapons procurement to Ostrowski Arms. However, the army soon learned that Ostrowski had no license to export weapons.

The contract was finally axed in March 2004, after six of the 17 firms that bid on it complained that Nour's winning bid was impossibly low.

Following the money trail on this insider deal turned up the names of a few more suspects. According to the National Journal, a Nour executive said the Cohen Group "introduced us to people in the U.S. government who were involved in oil-industry security."

Former Republican Congressman and Secretary of Defense under President Clinton, William Cohen, sits at the helm of the Cohen Group, and according to a report by David Hilzenrath in the Washington Post on May 28, 2006, when he left office in January 2001, Cohen was saddled with debt and his final financial disclosure form, "listed tens of thousands of dollars of charge-account debts at interest rates as high as about 25 percent."

However, within a matter of weeks Cohen and his wife were residing in a \$3.5 million mansion. It seems Cohen had wanted this house but was still in office and had no way to finance the purchase, so Frank Zarb, then chairman of the Nasdaq Stock Market, sold the house to Michael Ansari, chairman and CEO of defense contractor MIC Industries, in October 2000, and the Cohen took up residence in January or February of 2001, according to the Post.

From there, Cohen went on to join the board and audit committee of the Nasdaq Stock Market, and 11 days after he left office, MIC announced Cohen's appointment as chairman of its board of advisers in a press release.

In no time at all the Cohen Group was raking in mega-bucks. In applying for one contract, that earned the Group \$490,000 over seven months, the firm bragged that it had helped Lockheed win a \$3.6 billion contract for the sale of F-16 fighter jets to Poland, financed by the US government.

The Group's proposal said its efforts for the Lockheed deal included "advocacy with key decision-makers in the White House, Office of the Vice President, National Security Council, Department of Defense and the State Department during an 18-month campaign," according to the Post.

In regard to helping Nour get contracts in Iraq, according to the Post, where the government disclosure form for Nour asks the firm to identify "Specific lobbying issues," the Group's filings say: "Exploring overseas business opportunities."

When it comes to war profiteering, members of the Bush administration have given a whole new meaning to the "revolving door." A whole gang of thugs has been robbing us blind in Iraq since day one and nobody seems to be able to stop it.

Congress knows what's going on. Back on September 30, 2003, during the Senate debate over the first Iraq spending bill, Senator John Edwards said he refused to funnel the

\$87 billion to Cheney and other Bush cronies after learning that Bush's former campaign manager, Joe Allbaugh, who was later appointed to head FEMA, had quit his job 3 weeks before the bombs began to fall in Iraq to start the consulting firm, New Bridge Strategies, for clients seeking contracts in Iraq.

"First, Vice President Cheney's Halliburton receives more than \$2 billion in Iraq reconstruction contracts," he said, "and now this."

He called it outrageous and disrespectful to the young people serving in Iraq. "President Bush should start addressing this credibility gap by calling on Joe Allbaugh and his friends to stop using their influence to secure government contracts in Iraq," he said.

Senator Edwards said there used to be talk about money for Iraq being a blank check but we now "know the president is writing it out to Joe Allbaugh and Halliburton and it's all endorsed by Vice President Cheney," he said.

In hindsight, Edwards should have expressed outrage at a few more people because the profiteering team at New Bridges was stacked with Republicans. The company's address was the same as a lobbying firm run by Haley Barbour, a former chairman of the Republican National Committee that went under the name of Barbour Griffith & Rogers.

And as luck would have it, Lanny Griffith was the CEO of New Bridge, and Ed Rogers was the vice president.

The firm's initial web site told potential clients, "the opportunities evolving in Iraq today are of such an unprecedented nature and scope that no other existing firm has the necessary skills and experience to be effective both in Washington, D.C., and on the ground in Iraq."

And these greedy thugs were so shameless that they didn't even try to hide their elation over all the money they planned to make in Iraq. "Getting the rights to distribute Procter & Gamble products can be a gold mine," one of the firm's partners told Naomi Klein, quoted in an article in Harper's Magazine in September 2004.

"One well-stocked 7-Eleven," the partner said, "could knock out thirty Iraqi stores; a Wal-Mart could take over the country."

There were rumors that a McDonald's might open, a Starwood hotel was mentioned, and General Motors was said to be planning a factory and according to Ms Klein, Citigroup was preparing to offer loans guaranteed against future sales of Iraqi oil.

However since the war never did end, in 2004, Joe Allbaugh abandoned the quest for reconstruction gold mine in Iraq and started a consulting firm with the former director of Cheney's secret energy task force, Andrew Lundquist, and their first client was Lockheed Martin.

The marriage between the ex-campaign manager, Cheney's buddy, and Lockheed apparently worked out much better than the plan to build 7-Elevens in Iraq, because Lockheed stock value has doubled since 2001, and according to the Excess Report, the firm's CEO has made \$50 million since 9/11.

It may well have been that Joe's new firm was simply an outgrowth from the many other firms set up by this same gang because Haley Barbour had already worked as a lobbyist for a Lockheed.

On thing is certain, Lockheed was not lacking for administration insiders when Allbaugh came knocking. For instance, before Cheney took over as VP, his wife, Lynne served on the board of Lockheed, receiving deferred compensation to the tune of half a million dollars in stock and fees, according to a January 16, 2007 report by Richard Cummings.

Cummings notes that Cheney's "2004 financial disclosure statement lists Lockheed stock options and \$50,000 in Lockheed stock."

In addition, Cheney's son-in-law, Philip Perry, Cummings says, was appointed to

serve as general counsel to the Department of Homeland Security, and he had been a registered lobbyist for Lockheed who had worked for a law firm representing Lockheed with the Department of Homeland Security.

According to Cummings, less than a month after 9/11, in October of 2001, the Pentagon announced a \$20 billion contract for Lockheed for the development of the Joint Strike Fighter, called the F-35. At the time, Edward Aldridge was Undersecretary of Defense for acquisitions, technology and logistics, which was responsible for the approval of the contract. Aldridge left his government post in 2003, and he now just happens to serve on Lockheed's board of directors.

However, the most stunning revelation in the Cummings report, is that in November 2002, Stephen Hadley, deputy national security advisor at the time, called Lockheed employee, Bruce Jackson, to a meeting at the White House and told him that the US was definitely going to war in Iraq but there was one small hitch, the administration could not decide what reason to use to justify it.

So Jackson formed the "Committee for the Liberation of Iraq," and its mission statement said it was "formed to promote regional peace, political freedom and international security by replacing the Saddam Hussein regime with a democratic government that respects the rights of the Iraqi people and ceases to threaten the community of nations."

According to Cummings, the "pressure group began pushing for regime change - that is, military action to remove Hussein - in the usual Washington ways, lobbying members of congress, working with the media and throwing money around."

Jackson told Cummings that he did not see the point of going on about WMDs or an Al Queda link because he thought the human rights issue was enough to justify the war.

However, Hadley did not agree. "The committee's pitch," Cummings says, "or rationale as Hadley would call it, was that Saddam was a monster — routinely violating human rights — and a general menace in the Middle East."

Jackson said he closed down the Committee in June 2003 because its human rights rationale had been abandoned. "We were cut out," he told Cummings, "after the whole thing went to Rumsfeld," and Hadley explained that "terrorism and WMDs" were now the rationale for the war, not human rights.

However, Cummings reports that members of the war sales team that served with Jackson have done well for themselves. The president of the Committee, Randy Scheunemann, became the president of the Mercury Group, and lobbied for Lockheed and others, and then set up the firms, Scheunemann and Associates, and Orion Strategies, which, among other things, consults with companies and countries looking to do business in Iraq.

In November 2003, another Committee member, Rend Al-Rahim Francke, was appointed Iraqi ambassador to the US.

Meanwhile back in Iraq goldmine, the Iraqis have nothing to show for all the torture that they have endured for the past 4 years. On average, Iraqis still get only about two hours of electricity a day, and the situation won't be improving anytime soon because the US has not built a single major power plant.

And despite the \$22 billion funneled to the war profiteers for reconstruction, a US official recently said, Baghdad may not have continuous 24-hour electricity until the year 2013.

For the people drawn to Iraq to fight against the occupation, this is not a war against Americans; it's a war against Bush. He tore this country apart for no reason and then just as the Iraqis predicted, the greedy gang of thugs swooped in and ripped everybody off.

And there is no reason to believe that the thievery has ended or the situation in Iraq will get better because an audit released on January 31, 2007, by Inspector General, Stuart Bowen, reported that the \$300 billion war and reconstruction effort continues to be

plagued with waste and corruption, and yet Bush now wants us to hand over another \$100 billion to be funneled through Iraq to the exact same gangsters.

We will never win in Iraq no matter how long we stay because the other side will always have more people willing to die for the cause, and it doesn't take a genius to figure out that if the number of daily attacks continues to escalate as they have for the last 4 years, the US will run out of troops before they do.

*Evelyn Pringle is a columnist for OpEd News and an investigative journalist focused on exposing corruption in government and corporate America*

<http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article17547.htm>

"Security has returned to Baghdad." George W. Bush

### **Car bomb avalanche slaughters 190 in Baghdad**

April 19, 2007

AFP

An avalanche of car bomb attacks on Shiite districts of Baghdad slaughtered 190 people on Wednesday and delivered a savage blow to the credibility of a two-month-old US security plan.

The series of blasts was the deadliest in the Iraqi capital since the launch of the massive crackdown; the single most devastating blast alone killed 140 people, mainly civilian commuters and shoppers.

The bombings ripped through five districts of the sprawling capital, where 80,000 Iraqi and US troops are straining to enforce order and contain the daily violence terrorising Baghdad's five million residents.

In the bloodiest attack, a parked car exploded on a principal intersection and in a busy market area in the downtown district of Al-Sadriyah, scattering charred corpses among a row of burnt-out buses.

After a deafening blast that sent a dense cloud of putrid black smoke spewing into the sky, a fire incinerated human flesh, cars and vehicles as rescue workers rushed to the scene.

Firefighters doused nearby cars and buses, as dozens of ambulances and pick-up trucks ferried wounded to hospital and volunteers wrapped charred bodies in carpets for transport to the city's overflowing mortuaries.

Angry Iraqis who lost loved ones lashed out at Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, blaming his beleaguered government for failing to bring law and order to the streets of the capital, nearly a year after it took office.

"Down with Maliki! Where is the security plan? We are not protected by this plan," they shouted, as an angry mob pelted stones at Iraqi and American soldiers who scrambled to the scene.

A security official put the Sadriyah blast death toll at 140.

The US military put Wednesday's combined death toll at 131 with 164 wounded in four car bomb attacks, several dozens lower than Iraqi security officials.

US Defence Secretary Robert Gates vowed that Washington would persevere with the security plan, saying a spike in violence was to be expected.

"We have anticipated from the very beginning... that the insurgency and others would increase the violence to make the people of Iraq believe the plan is a failure," Gates said in Tel Aviv.

"We intend to persist to show that it is not."

On February 3, a truck bomb in the same Baghdad market -- a mixed Kurdish and Shiite area -- killed at least 130 people in the final days before the official launch of the crackdown on February 14.

Iraq's Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki blamed the attack on infidels and "Takfiri vampires" -- a reference to Sunni extremists -- and demanded that politicians from both sides of the sectarian divide condemn it.

He also said that the Iraqi army regimental commander responsible for the area had been detained and would be investigated over "the weakness of the measures taken to protect civilians".

"This monstrous attack today did not distinguish between the old and young, between men and women. It targeted the population in a way that reminds us of the massacres and genocide committed by the former dictatorship," he said.

Markets are favourite targets for bomb attacks, the trademark tactic of Sunni extremists bent on slaughtering Shiites, the majority community in Iraq that today heads the government and dominates the security forces.

US military spokesman Rear Admiral Mark Fox admitted commanders were frustrated at their inability to prevent such car bombings, but insisted Iraq was not witnessing any further escalation of sectarian violence.

"It is very clear that it is a violent response from people who want the Baghdad security plan to fail. The pattern suggests the attacks are by Sunni extremists," he told AFP by telephone.

"There is frustration of not being ahead of what happened today. But we are not seeing a degradation... tit-for-tat sectarian attacks."

Another car bomb killed 28 people and wounded 44 after ripping through civilians near an Iraqi army checkpoint in east Baghdad's main Shiite district of Sadr City.

The neighbourhood is a bastion of Shiite militia faithful to radical cleric Moqtada al-Sadr and has frequently been targeted by car bombings blamed on Sunni extremists.

At least 11 civilians were killed and 12 wounded, including women and children, when a car bomb exploded on a main road near a private hospital in the central Karrada district, formerly upmarket but fallen on hard times.

Eleven other people, including four policemen, were killed in separate car bombings elsewhere in the capital.

On top of the Baghdad carnage, five people were killed elsewhere in Iraq and police found more than two dozen corpses, security officials said.

Wednesday's bloodshed overshadowed a ceremony in southern Iraq that saw government forces assume security control of the oil-rich Maysan province from British forces as part of plans in London to draw down troops.

Reading greetings from Maliki, national security adviser Mowaffaq al-Rubaie expressed the hope that Iraq would take full charge of all 18 provinces before the end of the year.