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# Rights group says U.S. troops used excessive force

Boston.com

By Jim Krane, Associated Press,  
6/18/2003 10:24

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) U.S. soldiers used excessive force when they shot and killed 20 protesters and wounded almost 90 others in the restive city of Fallujah, according to a report by a human rights group that calls for a U.S. investigation into the two April shootings.

The group, Human Rights Watch, said it found no concrete evidence to support U.S. assertions that troops returned precision fire on gunmen in the crowd who shot first.

Human Rights Watch investigators who examined the sites of the shootings said

they did not find conclusive evidence of bullet damage on buildings used as a base by U.S. troops. Despite detailed claims of shooting, there was little to suggest U.S. troops had been fired upon, according to the report, issued Tuesday.

By contrast, buildings facing the U.S. positions were pocked with more than 100 bullet holes. The damage was "wider and more sustained than would have been caused by 'precision fire.'"

The evidence suggested soldiers of the Army's 82nd Airborne Division's 2nd Brigade responded to a perceived threat with disproportionate force, according to the report.

The group called for a full U.S. investigation into the April 28 and April 30 shootings, asking that participants be held accountable for any violations of international humanitarian law.

A U.S. Central Command spokesman in Tampa, Fla., said Wednesday that military

officials were still considering whether to respond to the New York-based group's report.

Capt. John Morgan, a U.S. military spokesman in Baghdad, said the Army would "take appropriate measures" based on the results of its own investigation, which he said was under way.

Since the April shootings, Fallujah, about 35 miles west of Baghdad, has become synonymous with resistance to the U.S.-led occupation of Iraq. Subsequent ambushes of troops have killed four U.S. soldiers and wounded 21.

The conservative Sunni Muslim city of 300,000, which gave key support to Saddam Hussein's regime, has seen three separate U.S. Army occupation forces attempting to quell anti-American attacks with a mixture of combat raids and humanitarian aid.

The 82nd Airborne was replaced by the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment after the

shootings. When the attacks continued, a large portion of the 3rd Infantry Division was sent in weeks ago to quell the city and the surrounding area along the banks of the Euphrates River.

Human Rights Watch said the original order to police Fallujah with combat troops of the 82nd, a paratrooper unit whose soldiers had come straight from battle, was a "recipe for disaster."

The troops were unprepared and ill-equipped for the post-conflict job of dealing with hostile civilian crowds. They lacked translators, law enforcement training and non-lethal crowd control tools, the report states.

Interviews by the group's investigators with Iraqi witnesses and U.S. soldiers directly involved in the April 28 incident produced sharply differing accounts.

Although it was dark, soldiers said they returned fire for about 30 seconds with rifles and machine-guns after seeing men

shooting from behind a taxi and on rooftops and from four or five armed men mingling with a crowd of about 200 protesters.

Protesters said they were attacked without provocation by U.S. troops who fired automatic weapons for 10 minutes.

Iraqi witnesses denied shots had been fired at U.S. troops but said some protesters threw rocks at the soldiers and their vehicles.

The report says it is still possible that agents in the crowd fired at U.S. troops, despite the lack of witness accounts and ballistic evidence

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### **Commentary:**

Mistake or not it's impossible to tell, but there's one thing for sure. The military should NOT be doing the investigation.

They have a long and sordid history of covering up mistakes.

tc

**They impeach murderers, don't they?**

Japan Times

By TED RALL

Monday, June 16, 2003

NEW YORK -- U.S. President George W. Bush told us that Iraq and al-Qaeda were working together. They weren't. He repeatedly implied that Iraq had had something to do with 9/11. It hadn't. He claimed to have proof that former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein possessed banned weapons of mass destruction. He didn't. As our allies watched in horror and disgust, Bush conned us into a one-sided war of aggression that killed and maimed thousands of innocent people, destroyed billions of dollars in Iraqi infrastructure, cost tens of billions of dollars, cost the

lives of American soldiers, and transformed our international image as the world's shining beacon of freedom into that of a marauding police state. Presidents Richard Nixon and Bill Clinton rightly faced impeachment for comparatively trivial offenses; if we hope to restore our nation's honor, George W. Bush too must face a president's gravest political sanction.

As the Bush administration sold Congress and the public on the "threat" posed by Hussein last winter, White House spokesman Ari Fleischer assured the American people: "The president of the United States and the secretary of defense would not assert as plainly and vocally as they have that Iraq has weapons of mass destruction if it was not true and if they did not have a solid basis for saying it."

That's unambiguous rhetoric. But since allied occupation forces have failed to find WMDs, Bush is backtracking: "I am absolutely convinced with time we'll find

out that they did have a weapons program," he now says.

What's next? Claiming that Hussein had WMDs because, you know, you could just feel it?

A ferocious power struggle is taking place between the intelligence community and the White House. "It's hard to tell if there was a breakdown in intelligence or a breakdown in the way intelligence was used," says Michele Flournoy of the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

No it's not. Career analysts at the Central and Defense Intelligence Agencies, furious at Bush for sticking them with the blame for the weapons scandal, are leaking prewar memoranda that indicate that the administration covered up the spooks' assessments, making the case for war with a pile of lies constructed on a bedrock of oil-fueled greed.

A September 2002 DIA study said there

was "no reliable information on whether Iraq is producing and stockpiling chemical weapons," but Bush ignored the report -- and told us the exact opposite. After Bush used the discovery of two alleged mobile weapons labs to claim "we found the weapons of mass destruction," CIA "dissenters" shot back that Bush had lied about their reports and that they "doubted the trailers were used to make germ agents, not[ing] that the plants lacked gear for steam sterilization, which is typically necessary for making bioweapons."

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld parried: "Any indication or allegation that the intelligence was in any way politicized, of course, is just false on its face . . . We haven't found Saddam Hussein either, but no one's doubting that he was there."

Rummy also floated the CIA-debunked tale of an Iraq-al Qaeda link.

Both factions are missing the point.

Calling for a full Congressional

investigation, Sen. Carl Levin, a Michigan Democrat of the Armed Services Committee, says: "I think that the nation's credibility is on the line, as well as Bush's."

But not even the discovery of a vast WMD arsenal should save Bush now. Assuming that one accepts preemption as a legitimate cause for war -- and one ought not -- you must possess airtight substantiation that a nation poses an imminent and significant threat before you drop bombs on its cities. Evidence that falls short of 100-percent proof, presented in advance, doesn't pass the pre-empt test.

Bush claimed to have that proof. He said Iraq could deploy its biological and chemical weapons with just 45 minutes notice. He painted gruesome pictures of American cities in ruins, their debris irradiated by an Iraqi "dirty bomb." It was all a bald-faced lie, and lying presidents get impeached.

Bush, like Nixon, "endeavor(ed) to misuse the Central Intelligence Agency." Bush, like Nixon, "(made) or caus(ed) to be made false or misleading public statements for the purpose of deceiving the people of the United States." (The legalese comes from the first Article of Impeachment against Nixon, passed by the House Judiciary Committee on July 27, 1974. Faced with certain impeachment in the House and conviction in the Senate, Nixon resigned two weeks later.)

In the words of Clinton's 1998 impeachment, Bush "has undermined the integrity of his office, has brought disrepute on the Presidency, has betrayed his trust as President, and has acted in a manner subversive of the rule of law and justice, to the manifest injury of the people of the United States."

Nixon and Clinton escaped criminal prosecution for burglary, perjury and obstruction of justice. Bush, however, stands accused as the greatest mass

murderer in American history. The Lexington Institute estimates that the U.S. killed between 15,000 and 20,000 Iraqi troops during the fraudulently justified invasion of Iraq, plus 10,000 to 15,000 wounded. More than 150 U.S. soldiers were killed, plus more than 500 injured.

A new Associated Press study of Iraqi civilian casualties confirms at least 3,240 deaths. Although Bush, Rumsfeld, Secretary of State Colin Powell and National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice denied such legal niceties to the concentration-camp inmates captured in their illegal invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan, these high-ranking administration henchmen should be quickly turned over -- after impeachment proceedings for what might properly be called "Slaughtergate" -- to an international tribunal for prosecution of war crimes.

Anything less would be anti-American.

Ted Rall is the author of "Gas War: The Truth Behind the American Occupation of Afghanistan."

The Japan Times: June 16, 2003

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### **Commentary:**

It's needless to say Bush had no evidence to go to war. Had he had proof of WMD before going to war he would have given it to the UN inspectors.

But even if you're naive enough to think Bush had bad intelligence, then how is it that we had WMD experts on the ground in Iraq before the war started and they too couldn't find any WMD? When Bush, Cheney, Rumsfeld, Rice and Blair were telling us they had absolute proof of WMD, our forces on the ground couldn't verify those statements. Neither could the UN.

Blaming intelligence is nonsensical and

only fools continue to believe the administration.

tc

## **US slaps 44.7% import duty on Hynix chips**

Channelnewsasia

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Despite last-minute diplomatic efforts, the United States has imposed a 44.7 percent import duty on chips made by South Korea's Hynix Semiconductor, the Commerce Department has said.

This was for alleged subsidies that the financially troubled chipmaker received from the South Korean government.

Hynix could still escape the duties if the

International Trade Commission determines that the US petitioner for the action, Micron Technology, has not been hurt by subsidised competition from South Korea.

The ITC is expected to issue its decision in late July or early August.

The Department concluded South Korea had unfairly subsidised memory chips imported to the United States in 2001 and the first half of 2002.

Hynix has condemned the decision.

A Micron spokesman said the duty collected from Hynix will be placed in an escrow account until the ITC makes a final determination.

If it favours Micron, Micron would then receive those funds, he said.

Hynix also faces a preliminary duty of 33 percent on its DRAM chip exports to the European Union.

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## Original Text

### **Commentary:**

Whatever happened to all the free-traders? It seems they left government when the Clinton Administration ended. The US hasn't seen this kind of protective tariffs since the Reagan years.

The US government subsidies almost every drug created in the US. Does the rest of the world put tariffs on our drugs? This is silly knee-jerk, feel-good economics.

tc

## **U.S. forces killed five Iraqi civilians**

USA Today

Posted 6/14/2003 10:41 AM

Updated 6/14/2003 10:19 PM

ELHEER, Iraq (AP) — Gathered in tents, Iraqi villagers wailed and recited Islamic verses Saturday to mourn a 70-year-old

farmer, three of his sons and another relative — civilians they say U.S. forces mistakenly killed in their hunt for Saddam Hussein loyalists.

Though the military gave no comment on the civilian deaths, the shootings fueled growing anger over what Iraqis describe as insensitive American behavior, from soldiers not removing their shoes before entering homes to search for weapons to the intrusion of low-flying helicopters and roaring tanks.

Early Sunday, U.S. Army units moved in force to seal off the conservative town of Fallujah, west of Baghdad, in an operation to raid the homes of suspected militia leaders and search for illegal weapons.

The soldiers from the 3rd Infantry Division's 2nd Brigade met no resistance in their initial thrust against the city 37 miles from the capital, but Iraqis sounded sirens and flashed their porch lights in apparent warning to each other that

American troops were coming. The operation was called "Spartan Scorpion."

Saad Hashem, an elder in the village of Elheer, about 30 miles north of Baghdad, said U.S. occupiers were turning people against them.

"Before the toppling of Saddam's regime, the Americans said they were coming to liberate Iraq," Harem said. "We welcomed them. Many innocent people were killed by the Iraqi regime. Now the Americans are killing innocent people."

He and other villagers say American soldiers shot Ali Jassem and his family early Friday as the men worked in their wheat fields to extinguish fires set by U.S. flares.

Soldiers of the 4th Infantry Division had been chasing Iraqi militants after a midnight Thursday ambush of a U.S. tank column on a country road about a mile from Jassem's field. The ambush in the rural Balud region was the latest in a rising

number of guerrilla and sniping attacks that have killed dozens of American soldiers since the war ended May 1.

Sheltered from the searing heat, about 40 mourners gathered in tents outside the Jassem family's mud-brick house.

International television footage showed grieving women, dressed in long black robes and head scarves, weeping and clutching white handkerchiefs to their mouths.

Elheer is a Shiite village set in an area north and west of Baghdad known as the Sunni triangle, where Saddam — himself a Sunni Muslim — drew most of his support. The area has been the focus of the U.S. military sweep for remnants of Saddam's ousted regime and other anti-American fighters.

A neighbor, Jaafer Obeid, told The Associated Press that the Jassem and his relatives had gone "to put out the fire and save the sheep and cattle ... The Americans

started to open fire on them because they thought they were attackers."

Aggressive U.S. action was likely to escalate after the midnight Saturday expiration of an amnesty for Iraqis who turn in weapons. Lt. Gen. David McKiernan, commander of the coalition ground forces, told reporters to expect a dramatic increase in weapons seizures and other actions against those who refuse to disarm.

The U.S. military said it killed about 100 pro-Saddam holdouts and foreign volunteers in two separate battles this week, including what officials said were 27 attackers who ambushed the two-tank patrol in Balud.

But that version was in dispute, with officers at the scene saying the death toll was lower, perhaps five or seven.

This week's casualties also included about 70 fighters killed in a combined air and ground assault at what the Central

Command called a "terrorist training camp" near the Syrian border. Pentagon officials said many of the dead were foreign volunteers, including fighters from Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Jordan.

A U.S. statement on the tank ambush did not mention civilian casualties. Spokesmen for the Central Command and for Sustainer Army Airfield, the base from which the tank patrol originated, refused to respond to allegations of civilian deaths.

In its account, the U.S. Central Command said forces killed four assailants after militants ambushed the tank column with rocket-propelled grenades. Bradley fighting vehicles and Apache helicopters joined the pursuit of the fleeing attackers, hunting down and killing another 23.

Asked about the discrepancy in death tolls, Lt. Col. Greg Julian, a U.S. military spokesman, would not confirm civilian casualties but said: "If they're wearing civilian clothing and shooting weapons at

you, they are not classified as civilians."

In Elheer, villagers also complained about the U.S. soldiers' decision to take the bodies away. Hashem, the elder, said troops threatened not to return the bodies unless villagers identified the bodies of two others, apparently guerrillas, also shot in the fighting.

"We pleaded with them. We said we don't know who they are," he said. "Eventually, they relented and gave the bodies back."

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### **Commentary:**

The war has been over for months and there's no excuse for US soldiers killing anyone. They should arrest those they suspect of wrong-doing, press charges against them and do it the good old

fashioned way. When police (or the military) are judges, juries and executioners there's bound to be trouble. The US would get far more mileage out of occupation if it used law instead of brute force.

tc

## **Iraq: 101 Civilians Killed in 2 Days, US Accused**

[PakNews.com/InformationTimes.com](http://PakNews.com/InformationTimes.com)

Syed Adeeb

Updated on 2003-06-14 19:06:09

RAWAH, Iraq, 14 June 2003

(IslamOnline.net) -- American troops slaughtered more than one hundred Iraqi civilians, most of them killed while asleep inside their homes, at the small hours of Friday, June 13, 2003, eyewitnesses told IslamOnline.net (IOL).

The U.S. forces deliberately opened fire from tanks and helicopter gunships at the houses of Iraqi civilians in Rawah, 400

kilometer to the north-west of Baghdad, killing tens of people, they charged.

The town residents rushed out of their homes which came under heavy American bombardment.

Some of them emerged with their light arms and battled the occupation forces, killing and injuring an unspecified number of American troops, eyewitnesses told IOL correspondent.

"The bodies of 12 of your boys were found tied with ropes, each with a bullet in the head. The Americans detained them and immediately executed them in this horrible way," charged Abu Saadoun, one of the town tribal leaders.

"Now we have to avenge not only the occupation of our country but also the slaughtering of our boys. We will open the gates of hell on the Americans," he pledged in exclusive statements to IOL.

Tired and exhausted Abu Khaled told IOL

he spent three hours in the desert at the outskirts of Rawah digging a mass grave for the victims of the American massacre.

"We buried more than 80 of our sons but are still puzzled what pushed the Americans to massacre our people. We are far away from Baghdad and no fighting has been reported here. We have no training camps as alleged by the occupation forces. No Baathists. No nothing. The people of Rawah all reserved Sunnis," lamented Abu Khaled.

"Rawah has a majority of Ph.D. and university certificates holders," he asserted.

He uncovered to IOL that a number of Arab fighters, who flocked to Iraq during the days leading to the Anglo-American occupation to join arms in defending the Arab country, occasionally came to the town, also inhabited by a number of Iraqi Army officers.

"But, they are not Baathist officers. They

opposed Saddam regime but they more strongly oppose the American occupation of their country," Abu Khaled said of the Iraqi Army officers.

He asserted that the resistance of the American occupation has not yet gained its full momentum and is just at the very beginning. American armored vehicles and tanks are heavily deployed along Baghdad-Rawah highway but none of the Americans agreed to deliver statements to IOL team other than that they were hunting down loyalists to Saddam and his Baath party.

Asked why they target the north and northwest of Iraq, areas of Sunni majority, an American major who declined to put his name said they do not care if the areas belong to Sunnis [Shias, Kurds] or others, claiming there was "terrorist" activities there.

[Original Text](#)

**Commentary:**

If the following sentence is true the US military is engaged in war crimes; "The U.S. forces deliberately opened fire from tanks and helicopter gunships at the houses of Iraqi civilians in Rawah, 400 kilometer to the north-west of Baghdad, killing tens of people..."

The US would get more mileage out of occupation if it arrested and tried in courts those it assumes are guilty of crimes instead of simply killing them.

How long will it take for the military to understand it is not at war anymore? They are peacekeepers.

tc

## **Iraq's lethal peace**

The Guardian

Monday June 16, 2003

In the latest US ground strikes against Iraqi "militants" such as yesterday's raid on Falluja, the local people have used signalling systems - including lights and

coloured flares - when the American forces approach. These signals, says the US command, are evidence of civilian collusion with "Ba'athist fighters" in their midst, further proof that tough action is justified. The citizens of Falluja and elsewhere have a simpler explanation: they need to warn their neighbours to take cover from an invader who, in the words of its commander Lt Gen David McKiernan, will "strike hard and with lethal force" whenever it thinks fit.

These ambiguities are familiar in any situation when an occupying army is confronted by resistance on the ground. Some of those targeted over the last few days in the Sunni strongholds north of Baghdad may indeed be "Saddam loyalists". Others will be ordinary people shot because they were misidentified or in the wrong place, whose tragedies quickly become a footnote in last week's wire stories. Operation Peninsula Strike has left more than 100 dead and taken 400 prisoners, of whom 60 were later released as being "of no use to American officials". How many of the dead would also have been "of no use"?

The grim story reported by our correspondent today from a village north of Baghdad, where a family of shepherds were shot by US tanks, is just one of many. In another incident last week, a family were killed as they "worked in their wheat field to extinguish fires set by US flares".

The US commanders themselves acknowledge that their occupation has met growing resistance and that they are engaged in what Gen McKiernan calls "a cycle of action, reaction and counter-action." Significantly, this realisation is reaching deep into the US heartland. Newspapers from Cleveland, Tallahassee, Charlotte and Salt Lake City carried headlines this weekend such as "Losing the peace", "Iraq war still hot, commanders say", "Civilian deaths intensify anti-US ire" and "The war is over, but US soldiers keep dying".

Almost unnoticed outside Iraq, the senior US administrator in Iraq, Paul Bremer, has issued a proclamation outlawing any "gatherings, pronouncements or publications" that call for the return of the Ba'ath party - or for opposition to the US occupation. Mr Bremer has tried to reassure by saying that the armed attacks on US forces are only "five or six or maybe 10 (fighters), no evidence of central command and control". If opposition is so small-scale, what is the need for such a blanket proclamation?

It also puts into dubious perspective Mr Bremer's insistence that the Iraqi people are free to decide their future for themselves (even if they "choose socialism", he told journalists last week). In reality, the US applauds demonstrators who protest against the religious regime in Iran, but bans those who object to the occupying regime in Iraq.

The latest military offensives, with their ambiguous bodycounts and dodgy

"terrorist" identifications, began to recall the US "search and destroy" operations in Vietnam over 30 years ago. So does the talk of a "counter-insurgency" campaign though as yet on a smaller scale. One crucial difference is that US public opinion has continued to support the president. According to Gallup, 70% say that things are going well for the US, even if there are more doubts about the "WMD threat". Yet the longer that US troops remain at war - whatever it is called - in Iraq, the more that public support will be tested.

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### **Commentary:**

The world is watching and if the US thinks it's winning the public relations war it's not. Most of the US press is too docile to report daily on the atrocities committed by US forces. If they did, we can bet support for the peacekeeping mission in Iraq

would end.

The US says it supports free speech, but then shuts down radio stations that air anti-American statements. The US says it supports free elections, then it bans political parties that it opposes. (Can you imagine if the former USSR banned the communist party.) What we say we believe in and what we really believe in are seldom the same thing.

tc

## **Krugman on DeLay: 'Some Crazy Guy'**

New York Times/Common  
Dreams

by Paul Krugman

Published on Friday, June 13,  
2003

Last year I tried to illustrate just how far to the right America's ruling party has moved by quoting some of Representative Tom

DeLay's past remarks. I got some puzzling responses. "Who cares what some crazy guy in Congress says?" wrote one liberal economist, chiding me for being alarmist.

Some crazy guy? Public images are funny things. Newt Gingrich became a famous symbol of Republican radicalism. By contrast, most people know little about Mr. DeLay, the House majority leader. Yet Mr. DeLay is more radical — and more powerful — than Mr. Gingrich ever was.

Maybe Mr. DeLay's public profile will be raised by his success yesterday in sabotaging tax credits for 12 million children. Those tax credits would cost only \$3.5 billion. But Mr. DeLay has embedded the credits in an \$82 billion tax cut package. That is, he wants to extort \$22 in tax cuts (in the face of record budget deficits) for every dollar given to poor children.

But the really important stories about Mr. DeLay, a central figure in the

impeachment of Bill Clinton, involve his continuing drive to give his party a permanent lock on power.

Consider the case of Westar Energy, whose chief executive was indicted for fraud. The subsequent investigation turned up e-mail in which executives described being solicited by Republican politicians for donations to groups linked to Mr. DeLay, in return for a legislative "seat at the table." The provision Westar wanted was duly inserted into an energy bill. (Republican leaders deny that there was any quid pro quo.)

There's every reason to believe that the Westar case is unusual only in the fact that the transaction came to light. Under Mr. DeLay's leadership, Republicans have established a huge fund-raising advantage, based not just on promises — special interests have always been able to buy favorable policies, but never so brazenly — but also on threats. Mr. DeLay pioneered the "K Street strategy," which

— in a radical break with tradition — punishes lobbying firms that try to maintain good relations with both parties.

Then there's the Texas redistricting story.

Normally states redraw Congressional districts once a decade: Texas redistricted after the 2000 census. But under Mr. DeLay's leadership, Texas Republicans are trying to increase their advantage in seats with a second redistricting. This in itself is an unprecedented power grab.

But it gets worse. Texas Democrats responded with a parliamentary maneuver, walking out to deprive the state Legislature of a quorum. In response, hundreds of state law enforcement officers were diverted from crime-fighting to search for the missing Democrats — assisted, yes, by the Department of Homeland Security.

A telling anecdote: When an employee tried to stop Mr. DeLay from smoking a cigar on government property, the majority

leader shouted, "I am the federal government." Not quite, not yet, but he's getting there.

So what will Mr. DeLay and his associates do with their lock on power, once it is firmly established? They will push through a radical right-wing agenda. For example, expect to see much less environmental protection: Mr. DeLay has described the Environmental Protection Agency as "the Gestapo."

Above all, expect to see the wall between church and state come tumbling down. Mr. DeLay has said that he went into politics to promote a "biblical worldview," and that he pursued President Clinton because he didn't share that view. Where would this worldview be put into effect? How about the schools: after the Columbine school shootings, Mr. DeLay called a press conference in which he attributed the tragedy to the fact that students are taught the theory of evolution.

There's no point in getting mad at Mr. DeLay and his clique: they are what they are. I do, however, get angry at moderates, liberals and traditional conservatives who avert their eyes, pretending that current disputes are just politics as usual. They aren't — what we're looking at here is a radical power play, which if it succeeds will transform our country. Yet it's considered uncool to point that out.

Many of those who minimize the threat the radical right now poses to America as we know it would hate to live in the country Mr. DeLay wants to create. Yet by playing down the seriousness of the challenge, they help bring his vision closer to reality.

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**Commentary:**

DeLay missed his true calling. He should be in a government that allows only one party. He'd make a perfect communist. If

my memory serves me, DeLay handed out checks from tobacco companies to members of Congress on the House floor while it was voting on tobacco legislation.

Conservative like DeLay would argue money is free speech, but the rest of us know the crime of bribery wouldn't exist if that were true.

I like DeLay's idea of using politics to promote a "biblical worldview." The bible clearly says everyone should be treated equally, or pure socialism. At least DeLay isn't ashamed of saying he's a socialist.

Since the bible also says it's easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter heaven, we know DeLay, being a good bible-thumper, wants to save everyone from eternal damnation and the best way to do that is to eliminate all wealth by taxing it.

tc

**U.S. Media Caved in to the Bush**

# Agenda

Toronto Sun/Common Dreams

by Eric Margolis

Published on Sunday, June 15,  
2003

Why, readers in the U.S. keep asking me, are so many Americans unconcerned their government appears to have misled them and Congress over Iraq, and then waged a war with no basis in law or fact?

Why is there growing outrage in Britain over Tony Blair's equally exaggerated or patently false warnings over Iraq, while middle America couldn't seem to care less about George Bush's "Weaponsgate."

One answer is found in an old joke.

Greenberg is sitting in a bar. He goes up to Woo, a Chinese gentleman, and punches him.

"Why'd you do that?" cries Woo.

"Because of Pearl Harbor," snarls

Greenberg.

"But I had nothing to do with Pearl Harbor, I'm Chinese!" says Woo.

"Chinese, Japanese, it's all the same to me," answers Greenberg.

A month later, Greenberg sees Woo in the bar and apologizes to him. The Chinese gentleman smiles, then punches Greenberg.

"Why did you do that?" cries Greenberg?

"Because of the Titanic."

"What do I have to do with the Titanic?" asks Greenberg.

"Greenberg, iceberg, it's all the same to me."

Iraqis, Iranians, Pakistanis, Saudis, Taliban, al-Qaida ... it's all too much for many geographically challenged Americans. Don't bother us with the details and strange names, they say, kill 'em all, God will sort 'em out. The Muslim 'A-rabs'

did 9/11 and we got revenge. Whacking those I-raquis made us feel a whole lot better. So what if Saddam didn't really have the weapons of mass destruction good ol' George W. Bush said endangered the entire world? All politicians lie. So what?"

First, venting national outrage over 9/11 was one factor that helped form this group-think.

Second, starting with Afghanistan, the Bush White House threatened big corporate media it would be held "unpatriotic" and occasionally hinted at unspecified reprisals if coverage did not actively support the war effort there and in Iraq.

Big media too often caved in, sometimes sounding like a public relations arm of the administration.

Third, there was near total domination of Iraq media commentary by the special interest groups that helped to engineer this

phony war. Almost all of it in the lead-up to war was done by self-serving Iraqi exiles, uninformed generals and neo-conservatives from Washington think-tanks sometimes echoing the views of Israel's Likud party. In short, a media lynch mob developed, endlessly repeating that Baghdad's terrifying killer weapons were about to blitz the U.S.

I scanned the major U.S. networks for voices challenging the distortions and bunkum coming from the White House and neo-cons. There was virtually none.

Group-think and the big lie prevailed. The British and Canadian media carried both pro- and anti-war views; as a result, there was far more healthy skepticism in both nations about the war than in America.

By contrast, much of the U.S. mainstream media muffled criticism, became part of the war effort and devoted itself to patriotic flag-waving. Americans would have been totally misled had it not been

for such Internet sites as Antiwar.com, Bigeye and LewRockwell, and incisive magazines such as American Conservative and Harpers.

Even the august New York Times allowed itself to be used. Right now, the Times is hand-wringing about two cases of plagiarism and phony reporting by staffers. It should instead be anguishing that its pages trumpeted phony reports about Iraqi weapons and links to al-Qaida that came from anti-Saddam exile groups and the pro-war cabal in the Pentagon.

Most so-called Iraqi "experts" on TV, including some colleagues of mine, merely regurgitated what they had read in the morning's Times. The Times and much of the major media were duped, to put it politely, abandoning their vital role in our democratic system as tribune and questioner of the politicians.

So, too, the Democratic party, which, as war fever was being stoked by the Bush

administration and the press, shamefully rolled over and played dead - with the exception of that great American, Sen. Robert Byrd of West Virginia, who long ago denounced Bush's Iraq misadventure, and who now demands a full investigation of how Americans and their Congress were misled.

Absurd exaggerations

The black comedy continues:

Bush citing what turned out to be crudely forged documents in his state of the union address.

"Drones of death" that turned out to be rickety model airplanes.

The "decontamination" trucks cited by Colin Powell that turned out to be fire trucks when inspected by the UN.

The notorious "mobile germ labs" the British press now reports were for inflating artillery balloons and, in fact, were sold to Iraq by the U.K.

Some British and American intelligence officers are accusing their governments of outright lies or absurd exaggerations.

Maybe Americans have become brain-dead from too much TV. Maybe they don't care terrorism is surging, or that recent polls show the U.S. is reviled, hated, or distrusted around the globe thanks to this administration and its neo-con mentors.

Maybe they don't understand that over 288 Americans and an estimated 26,300 Iraqi civilians and soldiers have so far died in a totally unnecessary conflict. Or that the U.S. is now stuck in an ugly little colonial war in Iraq, its very own West Bank and Gaza.

(Note to American hate-mailers: spare Canada, I'm a New Yorker.)

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Excellent article. But there's one problem. The author thinks the media went bonkers just prior

to the war. In reality it lost all credibility when it pushed republican false accusations against the Clinton Administration around the clock for eight years and then attacked Gore for lying.

The US media is schizophrenic. It damns those it suspects of lying (based on innuendo), especially if that person is smarter than they are (which isn't saying much) while they ignore the lies of those who are ignorant (such as Bush and the entire republican party).

There were no surpluses, there were not WMD. War with Iraq was a made for TV war and had nothing to do with National Security and Whitewater was a made for TV scandal that wasn't based on any known facts. They just made it up.

# The Cover Up Continues

SF Chronicle

SCOTT LINDLAW, Associated

Press Writer

Tuesday, June 17, 2003

President Bush shot back Tuesday at those suggesting his administration inflated prewar intelligence data on Iraq's weapons program. He said the most important fact was that "the people of Iraq are free."

"I know there's a lot of revisionist history going on. But he is no longer a threat to the free world," Bush said as he promoted his domestic agenda at a community college in a Washington suburb.

Amid rising questions about the lack of hard evidence that such weapons existed, Bush's spokesman, Ari Fleischer, told reporters that the president still believes such weapons existed.

Asked what Bush meant by "revisionist history," Fleischer said, "the notion that

Saddam Hussein did not have weapons of mass destruction before the war."

However, Fleischer said that, since Bush didn't identify who he thought was revising history, he wouldn't either.

It was the second straight day that Bush defended his rationale for going to war against Iraq.

"We made it clear to the dictator of Iraq that he must disarm. And we asked other nations to join us in seeing to it that he would disarm and he chose not to do so, we disarmed him," Bush said.

"The world is still a dangerous place, but America will rise to the challenge," he added.

Bush told an audience at the Northern Virginia Community College that his economic policies would help people find work.

He called on Congress to act on his \$3.6 billion proposal for re-employment

accounts, to help tide over unemployed workers as they seek new jobs.

The plan would give unemployed Americans up to \$3,000 for job search expenses and let them keep what's left over if they find work and stay employed.

It is aimed at people who exhaust their unemployment insurance. They could draw from a special account of up to \$3,000 per person, administered by the states, to pay for child care, job training, transportation and other expenses of finding a job. People who landed work within 13 weeks and stayed there six months could keep the remaining money as a bonus.

Bush also urged the Senate to act on a House-passed bill that gives workers more flexibility in setting up investment accounts.

Bush cited "fantastic opportunities that people can find in our community college system across the country, about the idea

they need to have flexibility to make sure that training programs actually work, to help people for jobs that exist."

Bush said that the \$350 billion, ten-year tax cut and stimulus package he signed last month would go a long way toward helping to create new jobs.

"The whole focus of the legislation is how do we create the number of jobs around our country so people can find work," he said.

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### **Commentary:**

Let's review quickly what Bush has been able to do so far. He promised us 10 years of surpluses and instead is giving us record deficits. His domestic policies are therefore a complete failure. He promised us Iraq was a threat to our national security because it had WMD but he lied. The world now hates the US far more than

before Bush started his war on terrorism, thus making it more likely we'll be attacked, not less. Since respect for the US has fallen dramatically and Bush has all but destroyed the UN and NATO, his foreign policy is in shambles and we're far less safe than we were before he became president..

But there will be those who will rewrite history. They will try to spin Bush's lies and failures into success. Let's not let him do it. I saw John Kerry says he's going to go after Bush on Iraq. He says Bush misled (lied) to all of us. Now we get to see how the press tries to destroy Kerry for telling us the truth.

tc

## **North Korea Warns U.S., Japan Against Blockade**

Reuters/ABCNEWS Wire

June 17 , 2003

— By Paul Eckert and Arshad

# Mohammed

SEOUL/PHNOM PENH (Reuters) - North Korea vowed on Tuesday to retaliate against any U.S.-led blockade of the Stalinist state, which Secretary of State Colin Powell said was in dire straits and living on Chinese handouts.

Isolated and impoverished North Korea is facing deepening international ostracism and mounting pressure from the United States and its allies over its pursuit of nuclear weapons.

"I am pleased at the unity we have been able to achieve with the countries in the region," Powell told reporters en route to the Cambodian capital, Phnom Penh, for a security meeting of the ASEAN (Association of South East Nations) regional forum.

"Everybody is saying the same things to the North Koreans with respect to the unacceptability of their actions, that they want a Korean peninsula without nuclear

weapons," said Powell who will discuss the crisis with his counterparts on Wednesday.

The nuclear crisis has also thrown a spotlight on North Korea's trade in arms and illegal drugs, prompting plans by the United States and its allies to curb such traffic.

U.S. and South Korean officials say any policing action would merely enforce existing laws and not represent sanctions or a blockade. A quarantine would not work without the help of China and Russia, which share borders with North Korea, experts say.

North Korea's official Rodong Sinmun daily said the moves were part of a premeditated war plan.

"The DPRK will take an immediate physical retaliatory step against the U.S. once it judges that its sovereignty is infringed upon by Washington's blockade operation," said the newspaper in a

commentary carried by the North's KCNA news agency.

DPRK is the acronym for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, North Korea's official title.

"Nobody can vouch that this blockade operation will not lead to such a serious development as an all-out war," it said.

## JAPAN WARNED

The United States and its allies say Pyongyang is exporting narcotics, counterfeit money and missile technology to help fund its nuclear weapons program and prop up its ailing economy.

Powell underscored North Korea's problems.

"North Korea, even with Chinese aid, is suffering mightily. It is a country that is in great difficulty," said Powell.

"(They) live in a Potemkin capital but the countryside is in dire straits and that is with Chinese aid. They need more than

Chinese aid and Chinese fuel. They need aid from other neighbors and they need aid from the rest of the world," he said.

In a meeting with South Korea and Japan in Hawaii at the weekend, the United States won support for efforts to clamp down on North Korean contraband.

Eleven countries including the United States agreed to join forces to find a way to block North Korean ships suspected of carrying drugs, counterfeit money or materials for weapons of mass destruction at a meeting in Madrid last week.

North Korea has rejected the trafficking allegations as groundless and part of U.S. attempts to undermine Pyongyang.

The ruling Workers Party organ added an explicit warning to Japan, a main market for smuggled North Korean stimulants. Tokyo has stepped up inspections of visiting North Korean ships on suspicion the vessels carry drugs and intelligence agents.

"In case a war breaks out on the Korean peninsula it will immediately spill over into Japan as the territory of Japan is used as a U.S. base of aggression against the DPRK and Japan is fully involved in the U.S. policy to isolate and stifle the DPRK," it said.

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#### **Commentary:**

Japan's media is reporting they and the US don't have any evidence that North Korea has nuclear weapons. Duh. For those of you just joining this topic, a brief history is in order. On Sept. 22, 2002 Bush announced his first strike doctrine. A few days later on October 04, 2002, North Korea called his bluff and said they had nukes. Bush quickly backed down and the world learned the US would back down

when faced with an advisory that was armed, especially armed with nukes.

Japan says it'll give food to North Korea, or at least that's what their press is saying. But the US press is reporting Japan will place restrictions on North Korea, a simple embargo. It's all nonsense. Whether North Korea has nukes or not, it has already won. Bush's bluff was called and he folded. Bush also went so far as to say the US would not invade North Korea, which was one of their demands. Finally, Bush said he wouldn't talk to North Korea (nuclear blackmail) as long as they had nukes. Bush broke that promise and the US talked to North Korea in China a few weeks ago. As each day passes Bush looks more and more like a man who's clueless about how the world works.

tc

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