



THE ORIGINS OF THE IRAQ WAR: The “Neoconservative” Agenda for Middle East Conflict

Nothing in history happens in a vacuum, especially wars. And that is certainly true with our 2003 preemptive war against Saddam Hussein and our current occupation of that broken and violent country.

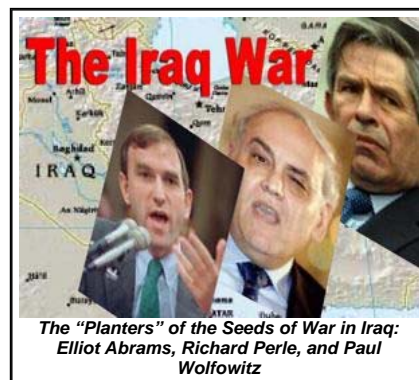
Most Americans think the plans for this war against Iraq originated in the Bush administration either before or immediately after September 11, 2001. But its foundation was laid long before, in a little-known 1996 policy paper entitled “A CLEAN BREAK: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm” (meaning Israel), written by a group of American “neoconservatives” including David Wurmser and Richard Perle, for the Israeli think tank The Institute for Advanced Strategic and Political Studies.

“A CLEAN BREAK” spelled out a simple but aggressive plan that called for Israel to sabotage any “land for peace” initiatives, including any peace plans that called for an independent Palestinian state. It called for the isolation or elimination of Yasser Arafat and the political strangulation of the Palestinian Authority.

Its most ambitious — and outrageous — proposal was to compel the United States to force a confrontation with Iraq that would end with an invasion and the removal of Saddam Hussein. This would be followed by the “rolling back” of Syria through military strikes and the pacification of Lebanon. The idea behind this plan was that brute force was the only way Israel could insure its security. And it called for this force to be directed ultimately at any Middle Eastern state that didn’t fall into line, including Egypt.

The authors of this policy paper dreamed of an AXIS OF POWER between Israel, Turkey, and Jordan with a puppet Hashemite ruler installed in Baghdad after the overthrow of Saddam Hussein.

Richard Perle’s last incarnation was Chairman of the Defense Policy Board — a civilian advisory group within the Pentagon, which he resigned from months ago because of conflict-of-interest issues involving business ties that some described as war profiteering.



One of the coauthors of the “CLEAN BREAK” paper, David Wurmser, now works with Dick Cheney’s chief of staff, Lewis “Scooter” Libby. Wurmser has long advocated the overthrow of the Assad/Baathist government in Syria. He was one of the early supporters of Ahmed Chalabi, the now-discredited con artist and would-be Iraqi savior who was embraced by Wolfowitz, Cheney, and Rumsfeld.

Libby is one of the prime suspects in the exposing of Valerie Plame as an undercover CIA agent, a serious federal crime that is now under a grand jury investigation. He has also assembled a large foreign-policy staff within the vice president’s office — an unprecedented move in White House history.



Wurmser’s wife, Meyrav Wurmser — another coauthor of the “CLEAN BREAK” paper, works for the Hudson Institute, an ultraconservative think tank that has advocated the invasion of Saudi Arabia and the occupation of their oil fields by American troops.

Douglas Feith, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Policy, was also involved in the paper. He was most recently involved with the super-secret Office of Special Plans, which many people believe was the group that manipulated CIA raw intelligence to convince Bush and the American people to invade Iraq.



These coauthors have long-standing ties with Paul Wolfowitz, Donald Rumsfeld, and Vice President Dick Cheney. And, as a group, they represent the informal war cabinet that promoted the war against Iraq based on two rationales, both of which have been discredited by time and by Congressional investigations.



Richard Perle personally delivered this policy paper to then-Prime Minister of Israel Benjamin Netanyahu in 1996, who agreed with it on ideological terms but lacked the political muscle at home and the influence in Washington, D.C., to get Clinton to buy into any of it.

In 1998, a group of American “neoconservatives” wrote an open letter to President Clinton urging him to invade Iraq. The Committee for Peace and Security in the Gulf, as they were called, was actually calling on Americans to be a proxy army of invasion for Israel.

Signers of this letter include many of the familiar faces within the “neoconservative” movement: Paul Wolfowitz, Richard Perle, Elliot Abrams, Douglas Feith, David Wurmser, Donald Rumsfeld, William Kristol, Richard Armitage — all current

high-level employees of the Bush foreign-policy team or influential advisors.

Clinton resisted these efforts and, instead, supported the Iraq Liberation Act, which provided \$97 million for equipment and training for Iraqi exile groups.



Benjamin Netanyahu

In 2000, this group went on to organize a “neocon” think tank called the Project for the New American Century. Its manifesto mirrored many of the points in the “CLEAN BREAK” policy blueprint for Israel. The founders of this group include Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, Lewis Libby, and Paul Wolfowitz.

Three influential pro-Israel think tanks promoted these same ideas: The Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs (JINSA), The Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI), and the Center for Security Policy (CSP). Many of “the Vulcans” were, or continue to be, board members of these organizations that advocate total war in the Middle East — all in the name of Israel’s security. And lost in all this war talk was any concern for a just and lasting peace with the Palestinians.



Lewis “Scooter” Libby

During Bush’s 2000 presidential campaign, these “neoconservatives” became his principal foreign-policy advisors, later referred to as “the Vulcans.” Essentially a disinterested and intellectually dull man, Bush was easily influenced by these powerful personalities with their ideological obsessions. Their agenda became his agenda, especially after September 11.

Today, some of these high-ranking individuals in the Bush administration are collectively known as “Israeli Firsters,” implying that they put the interests of Israel over those of the United States.



**Left: U.S. President George W. Bush
Right: Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon**

The Sharon administration eventually resurrected the heart and soul of “A CLEAN BREAK” and has been dealing with the consequences ever since. He has done so with the quiet enthusiasm of the Bush administration.

On September 20, 2001, the Project for the New American Century issued a call for the Bush administration to attack Iraq as part of the war on terrorism, even though then, as now, no collaborative relationship had ever been established between Saddam Hussein and al Qaeda. As their own letter reads, “...even if evidence does NOT link Iraq directly to the attack, any strategy aimed at the eradication of terrorism and its sponsors must include a determined effort to remove Saddam Hussein.”

Just days after the September 11 attacks, Defense Secretary Rumsfeld posed the question, “Why shouldn’t we go after Iraq, not just al Qaeda?” And with the arrogant confidence of someone who is positive he knows what he’s talking about, Deputy Defense Secretary Wolfowitz said, “attacking Afghanistan would be uncertain.” But that Iraq “would break easily ... and was doable.”

Secretary of State Powell was one of the few rational voices against this rush to war, arguing that the war on terrorism must stay focused on the actual perpetrators and that we needed international support for this worldwide effort. But he was eventually co-opted, undermined, and, in the end, made a willing partner in the charade about Iraq being a grave and imminent threat. As a statesman, Colin Powell has lost much of his credibility as an independent thinker and a man of rock-solid principles.

Bush, under intense pressure from his coterie of “neoconservative” advisors and endowed with a new sense of “religious righteousness,” began to turn the war on terrorism away from the people who actually attacked us and toward Iraq — as Israel and their allies within the Pentagon and the Vice President’s office had always wanted us to do.



Douglas Feith

This complete shift in focus was finalized in Bush’s State of the Union speech in January 2002, when he issued the famous “Axis of Evil” term, which singled out North Korea, Iran, and Iraq as the biggest threats to international security. Bush never mentioned Osama bin Laden, the terrorist leader who masterminded the September 11 attacks.

The original “CLEAN BREAK” policy of preemptive war in the Middle East came true in the spring of 2003 with our invasion of Iraq! The disastrous consequences of this foreign-policy blunder will haunt us for years to come — in the bloodshed of over 880 dead young American men and women in uniform, over 5,100 of our soldiers wounded or maimed, plus countless innocent Iraqi men, women, and children killed by our missile strikes that missed their target or by insurgent suicide bombers, and in our National Treasury — over \$160 billion spent so far on the war and occupation — and the huge loss of international prestige and respect.



How did it come to pass that a small group of like-minded extremists could hijack the foreign policy of a superpower and bend it to their will?

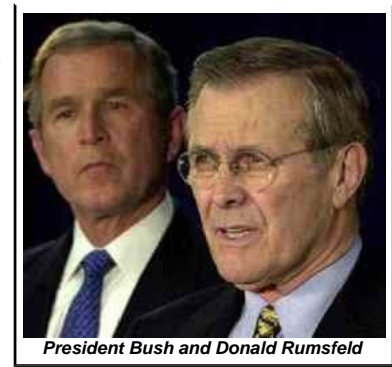


At face value, the “CLEAN BREAK” policy paper and outline for Middle East wars was a strategic plan for Israel, with the United States providing the military might to do what the ISRAELI Defense Forces



(IDF) could never hope to accomplish. But it was essentially a hyperaggressive Israeli survival plan.

Part of the mystery involves President Bush’s fundamentalist religious beliefs, which few Americans are aware of or the extent to which his religion shapes the way he sees his place in the world. White House insiders — who wish to remain nameless — describe how Bush went from being a bored and careless president to an avenging “god of wrath” after September 11. And that the “neoconservatives” used this passion to turn Bush toward their hidden agenda — the “CLEAN BREAK” imperative for preemptive war in the Middle East to promote Israel’s security and dominance.



President Bush and Donald Rumsfeld

The attacks on September 11 gave new life to this ambitious and deadly plan. The war hawks within the Bush administration saw their opportunity to subvert the legitimate war on terrorism to include the “CLEAN BREAK” notion of Israeli/American supremacy in the entire Middle East region. And Bush bought into it completely.

One of the most important pieces in the puzzle — if not the most — was the formation within the Pentagon of an entirely new and separate intelligence unit called the Office of Special Plans. It was run by Deputy Under Secretary of Defense William J. Luti, who served in the Navy during the first gulf war. He had been recruited by Wolfowitz and Albert Wohlstetter,* who was also a mentor to Perle and Wolfowitz. This unit, under Luti, discarded or ignored any intelligence that disagreed with its preconceived conclusion that Iraq posed a grave and imminent threat. And any scrap of gossip or questionable intelligence that supported their conclusion got star treatment and was immediately presented at the White House as rock-solid fact. It was this unit — which intimidated the Defense Intelligence Agency and the CIA — that was primarily responsible for the manipulation and distortion of intelligence that was used by Bush to advocate war.

**Albert Wohlstetter had a profound effect on Perle and Wolfowitz about forcefully changing the Middle East and Arab countries ... “the seeds of our war” with Iraq.*



Ahmed Chalabi

This was also the unit that promoted Ahmed Chalabi and his Iraqi National Congress as the savior of Iraq — even though he had been convicted in Jordan of multiple counts of bank fraud and was a fugitive from justice. Chalabi had been living in luxurious exile, on American taxpayer dollars, for many years and had virtually no support within Iraq. He spoon-fed Luti and his group the information they wanted to hear about WMDs in Iraq — information we now know was contorted or fabricated so Chalabi could remain in high favor with Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz.

Ahmed Chalabi was finally cut off from U.S. support this June when it was discovered that he had been revealing top secrets to Iran, in his continuing role as a self-serving con artist.

George Tenet has fallen on his sword by resigning as director of the CIA for the whole intelligence failure but it is this group — the Office of Special Plans — that deserves to be singled out and exposed for the great disservice it performed to our nation. Hopefully, the final report from the 9-11 Commission will do just that.



Our invasion and occupation of Iraq may give Israel some temporary peace of mind but it will prove to be a disaster in the long run. It has inspired a whole new generation of terrorist recruits and it has made it more difficult than ever for moderates in the region to make their voices heard above the din of extremism.

Instead of reducing terror, this whole controversial war on Iraq has multiplied terrorist activity against us a thousandfold.

Several Congressional investigations are now looking into the lead-up to war and the 9-11 Commission is due to release its damning report this July. It apparently paints a dark picture of distorted and manipulated intelligence to convince the American people that an invasion of Iraq was a legitimate extension of the war on terrorism.



Now that the 9-11 Commission has issued a preliminary announcement that says, “there was no credible connection between Saddam Hussein and the September 11 attacks,” the “neoconservatives” are scrambling to discredit their president’s own commission. Their arguments about WMDs have turned out to be a complete embarrassment for the administration. That leaves them with this single spurious claim as their justification for war. If it fails, so does their entire argument — and what’s left of their credibility, competence, and honesty.

Cheney, Wolfowitz, Rumsfeld, and Perle are now engaged in a desperate attempt to rewrite the history of their own words. Instead of claiming or implying that there was a direct link between Iraq and September 11 — as the record proves that they did — they are now claiming that they were simply “suggesting” and “indicating” a connection or relationship. They are now saying that because al Qaeda “approached” Saddam Hussein their war was justified — even though the truth is that Hussein, a secular despot, had nothing in common with Islamic fundamentalists and, in fact, feared their influence to incite Iraqis against him.

The tragic irony is that the war and occupation has turned Iraq into a prolific recruiting ground and on-the-job training facility for al Qaeda, with American soldiers and civilian contractors now serving as targets for car bombs, sniper fire, roadside bombs, and rockets.



9-11 Commission Officials



What does the future hold if Bush is reelected for a second term and retains his “neoconservative” advisors to shape our foreign-policy decisions? The Washington gossip circuit says it’s a fair bet that Colin Powell will not return — which would leave a high-profile Cabinet position to be filled with another ideologue from this group. And it’s also clear that Cheney wants to return for a second term. Because he’s one of the founding members of “the Vulcans,” this indicates more of the same.

If the “CLEAN BREAK” policy paper is any guide, the Middle East will become inflamed with more war after we have formally transferred the government to the new Iraqi leaders.

Their “policy” calls for the “rolling back” of the regime in Syria, by preemptive war if necessary, as well as belligerent pressure on Iran. And it would be American soldiers doing the “rolling back,” because Bush and Cheney have already started campaigning for it in their own subtle way. As soon as it started to become clear that stockpiles of WMDs were never going to be found in Iraq, they started suggesting that Saddam Hussein had secreted them for safekeeping in Syria.

This flawed “policy” would also spell disaster for the Palestinians. The Bush administration remains firmly and uncritically on the side of Sharon and his Likud extremists — which means an independent Palestinian state will be talked about, debated, and finally ignored for another four years. And during that time, the Palestinian refugee camps will remain fertile ground for terrorism and resentment — a simmering anger that is now ready to explode will be focused on us as much as it is on Israel.



To bring all of this diverse and disturbing activity into focus, we refer to the vital message of Ambassador Joseph Wilson, who was castigated by the Bush administration because he, after a fact-finding mission to Africa, revealed that there was no validity to the claim that Iraq was getting nuclear material from Niger.

Because of his revelation, which went counter to Bush’s statement in his State of the Union speech, Ambassador Wilson was ostracized from his role as a time-honored government servant — and apparently someone in the White House leaked to columnist Robert Novak that Wilson’s wife was an agent for the CIA ... an unthinkable breach of honor, patriotism, and federal law.

The CIA is presently interviewing President Bush, Vice President Cheney, and “Scooter” Libby to help determine who, if any of them (or how many of them), were involved in this nefarious, criminal and un-American activity.

As a result, Ambassador Joseph Wilson has written a book, *The Politics of Truth*, in which he reveals startling information about how our government has been subverted by a “cell” of like-minded ideologues who has wormed its way into the inner circle of our government to fulfill the mission of achieving the “CLEAN BREAK” plan, and the forceful transformation of the Middle East into democratic societies friendly to Sharon and the Likud Party of Israel — for whom it is engaged in this secret effort of influencing American foreign policy.

Here is what Ambassador Joseph Wilson has to say in the following excerpt from his book:



In his new book, *The Politics of Truth*, Ambassador Joseph Wilson presents a case for President Bush to make strategic changes in his administration — advice we believe to be well-founded in this election year.

“President Bush could fundamentally change the direction of his administration by firing fewer than 15 senior officials, beginning with those signatories of the ‘Project for the New American Century’ and those currently holding government posts who signed a 1998 letter that urged President Clinton to wage war on Iraq.

“They are clustered at the National Security Council (NSC) in the Defense and State Departments, and within Vice President Cheney’s own parallel National Security Office ...

“... Never in the history of our democracy has there been established such an influential and pervasive center of power with the ability to circumvent long-standing reporting structures and to skew decision-making practices.

“It has been described to me chillingly by a former senior government official as a coup d’état within the State. That’s all it would take — firing fewer than 15 officials, and the scuttling of Cheney’s questionable office — to alter this administration’s radical course.”

From *The Politics of Truth* by
Ambassador Joseph Wilson
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Finally, we would like to leave you with the thoughts and recommendation of Senator Richard Lugar on “Meet the Press” in October 2003, “The President has to be President. That means the President is over the Vice President and over the Secretaries [of State and Defense].”

President Bush owes this to the American people — not to be controlled by these alien forces who along with AIPAC and Sharon are “pulling his strings.” The purpose of Goals for Americans Foundation is to set a course for America that will bring honor, meaning, and purpose to our nation and to be a beacon for the rest of the world.

President Bush still has time, before our November election, to make these corrections — take a firm hand in cleaning up our government and not just “look like” a strong and reckless president to the outside world but be a strong and noble president like Teddy Roosevelt for the sake of the American

people and our American values!

Mr. President, we, the American people, want to be proud of you. Please give us that opportunity!

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