**Screw the governments, poor people too**

ZNet Economy, March 14, 2003
by Marta Russell

State governors, facing the worst fiscal crisis since WWII, have asked for more federal funding to cover the cost of long-term care for low-income seniors and disabled who qualify for Medicaid and Medicare - and for homeland security to secure our still vulnerable cities, towns and ports.

Bush has not, however, turned down billions to foreign client states. His denial of money to the Govs and ultimately the people who live in their states is rather hard to swallow when his administration has stepped up military assistance to allies old and new around the world. The State Department and International Affairs budget request for 2003 was $25.4 billion, up $1.4 billion from last year. While the numbers pale in comparison to the Pentagon budget that consumes over 50% of discretionary spending, assistance has increased substantially.

In its report "Coalition of the Willing or Coalition of the Coerced" the Institute for Policy Studies shows that the US used military, economic and political leverage to influence allies to support the Iraq war against the will of their people. Restrictions on military aid and arms transfers to regimes involved in human rights abuses, support for terrorism, or nuclear proliferation have already been lifted for a number of coun-

"Since we haven't found WMD in Iraq, I think we should just skip the rest of the 900 suspected sites and search the oil region."

**Iraqis Suffer From Radiation Symptoms**

Associated Press, June 22, 2003
by Sabah Jerges

AL-MADA'IN, Iraq - Dozens of people are showing up every day at a hospital near a defunct Iraqi nuclear plant, suffering from rashes, bloody noses and other symptoms of radiation poisoning, doctors said Saturday.

The Tuwaitha nuclear facility, 12 miles south of Baghdad, was left unguarded after Iraqi troops fled the area on the eve of the war. It is thought to have contained hundreds of tons of natural uranium and nearly two tons of low-enriched uranium, which could be used to make nuclear weapons.

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**U.S. Troops Frustrated in Iraq: Soldiers Say They Are Ill-Prepared For Peacekeeping**

Washington Post, June 20, 2003
by Daniel Williams and Rajiv Chandrasekaran

BAGHDAD -- Facing daily assaults from a well-armed resistance, U.S. troops in volatile central Iraq say they are growing frustrated and disillusioned with their role as postwar peacekeepers.

In conversations in a half-dozen towns across central Iraq, soldiers complained that they have been insufficiently equipped for peacekeeping and too thinly deployed in areas where they are (Continued on page 6)
Missing Weapons of Mass Destruction

The Bush administration cited Iraq's possession of weapons of mass destruction as the most important justification for war. The following excerpts from several sources deal with the fact that no such weapons have yet to be found.

U.S. Insiders Say Iraq Intel Deliberately Skewed

Reuters, May 30, 2003
by Jim Wolf

A growing number of U.S. national security professionals are accusing the Bush administration of slanting the facts and hijacking the $30 billion intelligence apparatus to justify its rush to war in Iraq.

A key target is a four-person Pentagon team that reviewed material gathered by other intelligence outfits for any missed bits that might have tied Iraqi President Saddam Hussein to banned weapons or terrorist groups.

This team, self-mockingly called the Cabal, "cherry-picked the intelligence stream" in a bid to portray Iraq as an imminent threat, said Patrick Lang, a former head of worldwide human intelligence gathering for the Defense Intelligence Agency, which coordinates military intelligence.

The DIA was "exploited and abused and bypassed in the process of making the case for war in Iraq based on the presence of WMD," or weapons of mass destruction, he added in a phone interview. He said the CIA had "no guts at all" to resist the allegedly deliberate skewing of intelligence by a Pentagon that he said was now dominating U.S. foreign policy.

The top Marine Corps officer in Iraq, Lt. Gen. James Conway, said on Friday U.S. intelligence was "simply wrong" in leading military commanders to fear troops were likely to be attacked with chemical weapons in the March invasion of Iraq that ousted Saddam.

Anger among security professionals appears widespread. Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity, a group that says it is made up mostly of CIA intelligence analysts, wrote to U.S. President George Bush May 1 to hit what they called "a policy and intelligence fiasco of monumental proportions."

"In intelligence there is one unpardonable sin -- cooking intelligence to the recipe of high policy," it wrote. "There is ample indication this has been done with respect to Iraq."

Expert Said to Tell Legislators He Was Pressed to Distort Some Evidence

by Jame Risen and Douglas Jehl

A top State Department expert on chemical and biological weapons told Congressional committees in closed-door hearings last week that he had been pressed to tailor his analysis on Iraq and other matters to conform with the Bush administration's views, several Congressional officials said today.

The officials described what they said was a dramatic moment at a House Intelligence Committee hearing last week when the weapons expert came forward to tell Congress he had felt such pressure.

By speaking out, they said, the senior intelligence expert, identified by several officials as Christian Westermann, became the first member of the intelligence community on active service to make this sort of admission to members of Congress.

Administration officials said his most specific complaints concerned issues related to intelligence on Cuba, and he has not yet provided similar specific complaints about the handling of intelligence on Iraq.

Mr. Westermann, who is in his mid-40's, has worked as a State Department expert on unconventional weapons for the last several years and is viewed within the department as a careful and respected analyst of intelligence.

Official explodes key WMD claim

by Tom Happold and agencies

Downing Street doctored a dossier on Iraq's weapons programme to make it "sexier", according to a senior British official, who claims intelligence services were unhappy with the assertion that Saddam's weapons of mass destruction (WMD) were ready for use within 45 minutes.

It is understood that the parliamentary intelligence and security committee is set to launch an enquiry into the claims made by the government about Iraq. And the former foreign secretary, Robin Cook, who resigned over his opposition to the war, last night called for a more independent select committee to investigate the matter.

The unnamed official told BBC Radio 4's Today programme: "Most people in intelligence weren't happy with the dossier because it didn't reflect the considered view they were putting forward."

Describing how it was "transformed" in the week before it was published to make it "sexier", he added: "The classic example was the statement that weapons of mass destruction were ready for use within 45 minutes.

"That information was not in the original draft. It was included in the dossier against our wishes because it wasn't reliable. Most things in the dossier were double-source but that was single-source and we believe that the source was wrong."

Today's allegations follow US defence secretary Donald Rumfeld's comments yesterday that Saddam Hussien may have destroyed his weapons before the start of war. They also follow the revelation that part of the government's February document on Iraq's intelligence network was cut and pasted from a PhD student's dissertation.

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Deputy Secretary Wolfowitz on the reasons for Iraq War  
Excerpts from the transcript of Sam Tannenhaus' Vanity Fair interview with Paul Wolfowitz

The following are excerpts from an interview with Paul Wolfowitz, Undersecretary of Defense and major architect of the Bush Doctrine of preemptive war. The interview was conducted by Sam Tannenhaus, and forms the basis of his article in the July 2003 issue of Vanity Fair.

Q: And then in the next few days [after September 11th], then there was the statement which now looks remarkably [prescient] when you said this is a campaign. At that point, I think it was the 13th, at that point was Iraq sort of moving into the scope, under the radar screen? What was your thinking at that point?

Wolfowitz: I know my thinking at that point was that the old approach to terrorism was not acceptable any longer. The old approach being you treat it as a law enforcement problem rather than a national security problem. You pursue terrorists after they've done things and bring them to justice, and to the extent states are perhaps involved, you retaliate against them but you don't really expect to get them out of the business of supporting terrorism completely.

To me what September 11th meant was that we just couldn't live with terrorism any longer. [...] 

Q: Right. So Iraq naturally came to the top of the list because of its history and the weapons of mass terror and all the rest, is that right?

Wolfowitz: Yes, plus the fact which seems to go unremarked in most places, that Saddam Hussein was the only international figure other than Osama bin Laden who praised the attacks of September 11th.

Q: [...] It's been reported in a couple of different ways, and I'd like to get it in your words if I can, the famous meetings that first weekend in Camp David where the question of Iraq came up. I believe the President heard you discussing Iraq and asked you to elaborate on it or speak more about it. Can you give us a little sense of what that was like?

Wolfowitz: Yeah. There was a long discussion during the day about what place if any Iraq should have in a counterterrorist strategy. On the surface of the debate it at least appeared to be about not whether but when. There seemed to be a kind of agreement that yes it should be, but the disagreement was whether it should be in the immediate response or whether you should concentrate simply on Afghanistan first.

Q: And then the last question, you've been very patient and generous. That is what's next? Where do we stand now in the campaign that you talked about right after September 11th?

Wolfowitz: [...] There are a lot of things that are different now, and one that has gone by almost unnoticed--but it's huge--is that by complete mutual agreement between the U.S. and the Saudi government we can now remove almost all of our forces from Saudi Arabia. Their presence there over the last 12 years has been a source of enor-

Iraqis Suffer...

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U.S. troops didn't secure the area until April 7. By then, looters from surrounding villages had stripped it of much of its contents, including uranium storage barrels they later used to hold drinking water.

People suffering from symptoms of radiation sickness started showing up at the hospital closest to the nuclear site as early as two months ago, two doctors interviewed by The Associated Press said Saturday. Their numbers have since grown considerably.

"Some 30 to 40 patients suffering from bloody diarrhea visit our hospital every day, probably due to their exposure to nuclear radiation," said Bassim Abbud, a physician at the Mada'in General Hospital, about 9 miles from the Tuwaitha nuclear facility.

The International Atomic Energy Agency sent a team to Iraq earlier this month to see if any of the uranium was missing, fearing it had been stolen in the chaos of the war. The experts found most of the uranium on or near the site, diplomats said Friday. Plastic bags containing the uranium were found on the ground where the looters emptied out the barrels and some bags apparently spilled, the diplomats said from Vienna, where the U.N. agency is based.

The mission - whose scope was restricted by the U.S.-led interim administration of Iraq - was not allowed to give medical exams to Iraqis reported to have been sickened by contact with the materials, the diplomats said. U.S. military experts involved in the cleanup offered to buy back the barrels at $3 each.

(Continued on page 6)
Attorney General John Ashcroft foreshadowed introduction of portions of the Justice Department's "Patriot II" legislation in last week's testimony before the House Judiciary Committee. Stating that the nation overwhelmingly supports the USA PATRIOT Act and the Justice Department's efforts in the "war on terrorism," the Attorney General brushed aside concerns about post-September 11, 2001 erosion of constitutional liberties.

Overview

For the first time in over 18 months, the Attorney General appeared before the House Judiciary Committee for an oversight hearing. His testimony came amid growing calls from both Republicans and Democrats in Congress for more active congressional oversight of the Justice Department. The leadership of the House Judiciary Committee and the Justice Department have reached a tentative agreement for greater department oversight, and the Attorney General's testimony grew from those discussions.

The Attorney General's remarks acknowledging congressional requests for increased oversight were conciliatory, but the general tenor of his testimony was that of an unapologetic advocate. He emphasized the law enforcement mission of the Justice Department, with no mention of the department's broad national policy-making responsibilities. He emphatically stated many times that the Justice Department's actions were all within the law and the U.S. Constitution.

Observation: The Attorney General did not acknowledge that Justice Department actions were taken under Justice Department interpretation of federal law. He spoke as if the Administration were in charge of determining federal law, which, of course, has been the duty of the federal courts since the early 1800's.

The Attorney General repeatedly stated that criticism of Justice Department actions was based on misinformation or misunderstanding, and that the actions are absolutely necessary to control terrorism. He stated that the "war on terrorism" would have been impossible to conduct without enactment of the USA PATRIOT Act.

Observation: The Attorney General did not mention the widely published analysis, arising from the testimony of senior FBI staff, that the FBI had the information and tools that it needed to fight terrorism before September 11, 2001, but failed to analyze, interpret, and communicate the information and utilize the tools it had. Instead of seeking more power, the alternative would have been to revamp the FBI to better use the powers that it already had.

Concern about Justice Department policies cut across party lines. The House Judiciary Chair, Rep. Sensenbrenner (WI), stated that "The purpose of the PATRIOT Act is to secure our liberties and not undermine them. . . . My support for [the USA PATRIOT Act] is neither perpetual or unconditional." One committee member lamented the loss of civil liberties as unnecessarily extensive "collateral damage" in the war on terrorism. Another committee member introduced his comments by saying, "It appears that the American people feel that the government is intent on prying into every nook and cranny of people's private lives, while at the same time doing all it can to block access to government information that would inform the American people about what is being done in their name."

The committee's questions covered a wide range of topics, covered in full below. However, of utmost importance were the Attorney General's responses about two topics:

Expansion of USA PATRIOT Act powers

Although the Attorney General shrugged off the leaked draft legislation dubbed "Patriot II," he named three of its provisions that he asserted are necessary to fight terrorism: (1) expanded powers to hold suspected terrorists indefinitely before trials; (2) ability to impose the death penalty or life imprisonment for any terrorist act; and (3) expansion of criminal charges for those acting in "material support" of terrorist groups.

Observation: The Attorney General did not mention that the definition of "domestic terrorism" in the USA PATRIOT Act is so broad that the Administration has wide latitude in what it determines counts as "terrorism." The additional powers that the Attorney General wants are, therefore, even broader than they appear. In addition, he did not elaborate on the Justice Department's lack of coordination with Congress in the development of the terrorism-fighting provisions in the USA PATRIOT Act or in development of "Patriot II."

Denial of national concern about erosion of civil liberties in the post-9/11 era

The Attorney General brushed off numerous questions about widespread concern over erosion of civil liberties since the Administration declared "war on terror." On the contrary, he stated that there was "overwhelming support" for the USA PATRIOT Act across the country.

Observation: The Attorney General provided no basis for this statement. Twice in his remarks, the Attorney General disparaged the Bill of Rights Defense Committee (BORDC) movement, claiming that it is based on misinformation and arguing that the country must discuss and dispel the "myths" being spread.

Observation: He did not attempt to name any specific inaccuracies or distortions.

This report was prepared by Friends Committee on National Legislation Civil Liberties and Human Rights Program staff in attendance at the hearing.

The full analysis is available at: http://www.fcnl.org/issues/immigrant/sup/civil-liberties_ashcroft-617-03.htm
Attilio A. Boron: Looking at the recent US policies in Iraq, What do you think was the real goal behind this war?

Noam Chomsky: Well, we can be quite confident on one thing. The reasons we are given can't possibly be the reasons. And we know that, because they are internally contradictory. So one day, Bush and Powell would claim that "the single question," as they put it, is whether Iraq would disarm and the next day they would say it doesn’t matter whether Iraq disarms because they will go on and invade anyway. And the next day would be that if Saddam and his group get out then the problem will be solved; and then, the next day for example, at the Azores, at the summit when they made an ultimatum to the United Nations, they said that even if Saddam and his group get out they would go on and invade anyway. And they went on like that. When people give you contradictory reasons every time they speak, all they are saying is: "don't believe a word I say". So we can dismiss the official reasons.

And the actual reasons I think are not very obscure. First of all, there’s a long standing interest. That does not account for the timing but it does account for the interest. And that is that Iraq has the second large oil reserves in the World and controlling Iraqi oil and even ending up probably with military bases in Iraq will place the United States in an extremely strong position to dominate the global energy system even more than it does today. That's a very powerful lever of world control, quite apart from the profits that comes from it. And the US probably doesn't intend to access the oil of Iraq; it intends to use primarily safer Atlantic basin resources for itself (Western Hemisphere, West Africa). But to control the oil has been a leading principle of US foreign policies since the Second World War, and Iraq is particularly significant in this respect. So that’s a long standing interest. On the other hand it doesn't explain the timing.

If you want to look at the timing, I think that it became quite clear that the massive propaganda for the war began in September of last year, September 2002. Before that there was a condemnation of Iraq but no effort to whip people into war fever. So we asked what else happened then September 2002. Well, two important things happened. One was the opening of the mid term congressional campaign, and the Bush’s campaign manager, Karl Rove, was very clearly explaining what should be obvious to anybody anyway: that they could not possible enter the campaign with a focus on social and economic issues. The reason is that they are carrying out policies which are quite harmful to the general population and favorable to an extremely narrow sector of corporate power and the corrupt sectors as well, and they can't face the electorate on that. As he pointed out, if we can make the primary issue national security then we will be able win because people will -you know- flock to power if they feel frightened. And that is second nature to these people; that's the way they have ran the country -right through the 1980’s- with very unpopular domestic programs but accustomed to press into the panic button -Nicaragua, Grenada, crime, one thing after another. And Rove also pointed out that something similar would be needed for the presidential election.

And that's true and what they want do is not just to stay in office but they would like to institutionalize the very regressive program put forward domestically, a program which will basically unravel whatever is left of New Deal social democratic systems and turn the country almost completely into a passive undemocratic society, controlled totally by high concentration of capitals. This means slashing public medical assistance, social security; probably schools; and increasing state power. These people are not conservatives, they brought the country into a federal deficit with the largest increase in federal spending in 20 years, that is since their last term in office- and huge tax cuts for the rich, and they want to institutionalize these programs. They are seeking a "fiscal train wreck" that will make it impossible to fund the programs. They know they cannot face an election declaring that they want to destroy very popular programs, but they can throw up their hands in despair and say, "What can we do, there's no money," after they have made sure there would be no money by huge tax cuts for the rich and sharp increase in spending for military (including high tech industry) and other programs beneficial to corporate power and the wealthy. So that's the second, that's the domestic factor and in fact, there was a spectacular propaganda achievement on that. After the government-media propaganda campaign began in September they succeeded in convincing a majority of the population very quickly that Iraq was an imminent threat to the security of the United States, and even that Iraq was responsible for September 11th. I mean, there is not a grain of truth in all that, but by now majority of the population believes those things…

For the full text of the Chomsky interview visit: [http://www.zmag.org/content/showarticle.cfm?SectionID=11&ItemID=3768](http://www.zmag.org/content/showarticle.cfm?SectionID=11&ItemID=3768)

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**Iraq Body Count**

Number of media-verified Iraqi civilian deaths resulting directly from military actions of US and allies as of June 28th:

- Minimum: 5570
- Maximum: 7243

[www.iraqbodycount.net](http://www.iraqbodycount.net)
Screw the governments...

(Continued from page 1)

tries in exchange for their support reports the Arms Trade Resource Center.

The Pentagon now estimates the cost of the Iraq War and occupation for 6 months to cost $85 billion.

Yale Professor William D. Nordhaus, using the metaphor of war as a giant roll of the dice says, "we might say that the US could end up paying the "low" costs of around $120 billion if the dice come up favorably. If some dice come up unfavorably, the costs would lie between the low and the high cases. However, if the US has a string of bad luck or misjudgments during or after the war, the outcome, while less likely, could reach the $1.6 trillion of the upper estimate." Even this may be an underestimate, he warns under some circumstances.

It is not that a deficit in and of itself is detrimental but as the Reagan era economic advisor David Stockman later revealed, deficits could be used as a prelude to and pretext for cutting back public social services.

California's deficit is estimated at between $26 billion and $35 billion -- more than the GDP of some nations -- could we qualify as a needy client state?

For specific figures, see full article at ZNet Economy: http://www.zmag.org/content/showarticle.cfm?SectionID=10&ItemID=3234

U.S. Troops Frustrated...

(Continued from page 1)
dered us, and every day we hear of another soldier getting killed. Is it worth it? Saddam isn't in power anymore. The locals want us to leave. Why are we still here?"

"What are we getting into here?" asked a sergeant with the U.S. Army's 4th Infantry Division who is stationed near Baqubah, a city 30 miles northeast of Baghdad. "The war is supposed to be over, but every day we hear of another soldier getting killed. Is it worth it? Saddam isn't in power anymore. The locals want us to leave. Why are we still here?"

"The way it seemed is, once Iraqis got over being grateful for getting rid of Saddam, they found out quickly they don't want the Americans, either," said Sgt. Nestor Torres, a military policeman with the 3rd Infantry Division in the restive town of Fallujah, 35 miles west of Baghdad. "Everyone is blending in with everyone else, so you can't tell the friendly ones from the hostile." [...]

The inability to unwind outside their camps or interact with Iraqis in a non-military setting has added to soldiers' frustration, several said. Soldiers are prohibited from leaving their compounds without a weapon, body armor and a specific mission. Although they are encouraged to talk to Iraqis while on patrol, they have been urged not to eat local food, and alcohol consumption is prohibited by a general order applying to all military personnel in Iraq.

At a checkpoint on the outskirts of Baghdad set up to search for illegal weapons, a soldier sweating in the 110-degree heat told a reporter, "Tell President Bush to bring us home." On a skyscraper atop Fallujah's city hall, a soldier has scrawled in the dust: "I'll kill for a ticket home."

Wolofitz...

(Continued from page 3)

mous difficulty for a friendly government. It's been a huge recruiting device for al Qaeda. In fact if you look at bin Laden, one of his principal grievances was the presence of so-called crusader forces on the holy land, Mecca and Medina. I think just lifting that burden from the Saudis is itself going to open the door to other positive things.

I don't want to speak in messianic terms. It's not going to change things overnight, but it's a huge improvement. [...] The truth is that for reasons that have a lot to do with the U.S. government bureaucracy we settled on the one issue that everyone could agree on which was weapons of mass destruction as the core reason, but [...] there have always been three fundamental concerns. One is weapons of mass destruction, the second is support for terrorism, the third is the criminal treatment of the Iraqi people. Actually I guess you could say there's a fourth overriding one which is the connection between the first two. [...] The third one by itself, as I think I said earlier, is a reason to help the Iraqis but it's not a reason to put American kids' lives at risk, certainly not on the scale we did it. That second issue about links to terrorism is the one about which there's the most disagreement within the bureaucracy, even though I think everyone agrees that we killed 100 or so of an al Qaeda group in northern Iraq in this recent go-around, that we've arrested that al Qaeda guy in Baghdad who was connected to this guy Zarqawi whom Powell spoke about in his UN presentation.

Q: So this notion then that the strategic question was really a part of the equation, that you were looking at Saudi Arabia --

Wolofitz: I was.

For the full transcript please visit the News Transcript section of the U.S. Department of Defense site at: http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/2003/tr20030509-depsedef0223.html