

## THE IRAQ WAR – PART I: *The U.S. Prepares for Conflict, 2001*

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#### Quotes

By Joyce Battle

<p>"The scale of fraud at Petra Bank was enormous. It was like a tiny Enron."</p>	<p>(Mohammed Said Nabulsi, Jordanian bank governor, speaking in June 2004 of the 1989 takeover of Ahmad Chalabi's bank for financial irregularities).<sup>1</sup></p>
<p>"Set up a team, and don't tell Powell or anyone else."</p>	<p>(Dick Cheney, telling Paul Wolfowitz to work secretly on an alternative plan for the Gulf War against Iraq, late 1990).<sup>2</sup></p>
<p>"Once you've got Baghdad, it's not clear what you do with it. It's not clear what kind of government you would put in place of the one that's currently there now....How long does the United States military have to stay to protect the people that sign on for that government, and what happens to it once we leave?"</p>	<p>(Dick Cheney, April 12, 1991, explaining why he agreed with George H.W. Bush's decision not to occupy Iraq).<sup>3</sup></p>
<p>"What we were told by Prince Bandar was that as long as Saddam Hussein effected hegemony over the Mideast, no movement on the Palestinian issue was possible. If Saddam Hussein is no longer, most countries would then approach the issue on pragmatic terms."</p>	<p>(Henry Siegman, American Jewish Congress director, around June 1991, describing lobbying coordinated by the Committee for Peace and Security in the Middle East with support from the Saudi ambassador to the U.S. to win support for U.S. military action against Iraq).<sup>4</sup></p>
<p>"Our overall objective is to remain the predominant outside power in the region and preserve U.S. and Western access to the region's oil."</p>	<p>(Draft "Defense Planning Guidance" for FY 1994-1999 planning for the Middle East, around February 18, 1992, prepared by Zalmay Khalilzad under Paul Wolfowitz's direction).<sup>5</sup></p>
<p>"We seek to foster regional stability, deter aggression against our friends and interests in the region, protect U.S. nationals and property, and safeguard our access to international air and seaways and to the region's oil. The United States is committed to the security of Israel and to maintaining the qualitative edge that is critical to Israel's security."</p>	<p>(New version of "Defense Planning Guidance" for FY 1994-1999, May 22, 1992, approved by Dick Cheney).<sup>6</sup></p>

<p>"It was something like a spy novel. It was a room where people were scanning Iraqi intelligence documents into computers, and doing disinformation. There was a whole wing of it that he did forgeries in."</p>	<p>(Robert Baer, former CIA covert operator, speaking in June 2004 of his 1994 tour of an INC "forgery shop" in Kurdistan with Ahmad Chalabi).<sup>7</sup></p>
<p>"He was reporting no intel; it was total trash. The INC's intelligence was so bad, we weren't even sending it in."</p>	<p>(Robert Baer, former CIA covert operator, referring to working during the mid-1990s with Ahmad Chalabi and the Iraqi National Congress, speaking in June 2004).<sup>8</sup></p>
<p>"We knew we had to create a domestic constituency with some electoral clout, so we decided to use the AIPAC (American Israel Political Action Committee) model."</p>	<p>(Francis Brooke, aide to Ahmad Chalabi, regarding the Iraqi National Congress's setting up shop in Georgetown in 1996, speaking in June 2004).<sup>9</sup> (The actual name of AIPAC is The American Israel Public Affairs Committee).</p>
<p>"I think this is a very hard choice, but the price--we think the price is worth it."</p>	<p>(Madeleine Albright, U.S. representative to the United Nations, responding to a U.N. report that sanctions had killed more than 500,000 Iraqi children under the age of five).<sup>10</sup></p>
<p>"Israel can shape its strategic environment....This effort can focus on removing Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq -- an important Israeli strategic objective in its own right....As a senior Iraqi opposition leader said recently: 'Israel must rejuvenate and revitalize its moral and intellectual leadership. It is an important -- if not the most important--element in the history of the Middle East'."</p>	<p>(An American study group on Israeli strategy, July 1996; George W. Bush administration officials Douglas Feith and David Wurmser and Rumsfeld advisor Richard Perle were members).<sup>11</sup></p>
<p>"The INC plan for Saddam's overthrow is simple....In this effort we will require support from the U.S. but only political and logistical support....What we don't need are U.S. troops or high technology weapons."</p>	<p>(Ahmad Chalabi, June 2, 1997, speaking to the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs).<sup>12</sup></p>
<p>"There are no indications that there remains in Iraq any physical capability for the production of amounts of weapon-usable nuclear material of any practical significance."</p>	<p>(International Atomic Energy Agency, October 1997).<sup>13</sup> <b>[Doc. 1]</b></p>
<p>"The United States should....consider a comprehensive new strategy aimed at promoting a change of regime in Baghdad....Military action will</p>	<p>(Paul Wolfowitz and Zalmay Khalilzad, future George W. Bush administration officials,</p>

<p>need to be a part....We should make it clear that contracts signed with his regime are not legally valid and...we will never permit him to sell the oil that people are now contracting for. Companies that want to develop Iraq's enormous oil wealth should line up with the government of free Iraq instead."</p>	<p>November 18, 1997).<sup>14</sup></p>
<p>"Dad made a mistake not going into Iraq when he had an approval rating in the nineties. If I'm ever in that situation, I'll use it—I'll spend my political capital."</p>	<p>(George W. Bush, 1998).<sup>15</sup></p>
<p>"You've got to go where the oil is."</p>	<p>(Dick Cheney, Halliburton CEO, 1998).<sup>16</sup></p>
<p>"Removing Saddam Hussein and his regime from power...Needs to become the aim of American foreign policy."</p>	<p>(The Project for the New American Century, January 26, 1998).<sup>17</sup></p>
<p>"But if we have to use force, it is because we are America; we are the indispensable nation. We stand tall and we see further than other countries into the future, and we see the danger here to all of us."</p>	<p>(Madeleine Albright, U.S. secretary of state, February 19, 1998, discussing possible military conflict with Iraq).<sup>18</sup></p>
<p>"Iraq today is ripe for a broad-based insurrection. We must exploit this opportunity."</p>	<p>(Committee for Peace and Security in the Gulf, including Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz, and Douglas Feith, February 19, 1998, in an open letter to Bill Clinton).<sup>19</sup></p>
<p>"You <i>cannot</i> lead a divided state. That was my problem with Richard Nixon. He divided the country. The leader's job is to unite. George Bush united the country for Desert Storm. Desert Storm is gonna be his legacy. Not only he united the country, but the amazing feat was, <i>he united the WORLD!</i> "</p>	<p>(George W. Bush, summer 1998).<sup>20</sup></p>
<p>It is "quite clear to me that all the members of the Security Council, including the United States, knew well that there was no current work being done on any kind of nuclear-weapons capability in Iraq. It was, therefore, extraordinary to me that later on in this saga there should have been any kind of hint that Iraq had a current capability .... We were watching this the whole time. There was never any proof, never any hard intelligence that they had succeeded in doing that. And the American system</p>	<p>(Sir Jeremy Greenstock, British ambassador to the United Nations, recalling his views upon arriving in New York in July 1998).<sup>21</sup></p>

<p>was entirely aware of this."</p>	
<p>"The United States should be prepared to commit ground forces to protect a sanctuary in southern Iraq where the opposition could safely mobilize .... It would start with limited objectives and the much more direct commitment of U.S. force and would develop depending on how resistance spread and whether Saddam's troops stayed loyal."</p>	<p>(Stephen Solarz and Paul Wolfowitz, March 1999).<sup>22</sup></p>
<p>"Yasir Arafat was forced to make peace once radical alternatives like Iraq had disappeared .... The United States needs to accelerate Saddam's demise if it truly wants to help the peace process."</p>	<p>(Paul Wolfowitz, June 18, 1999).<sup>23</sup></p>
<p>[Iraq will be the] "number-one foreign-policy agenda."</p>	<p>(Stephen Hadley, senior Bush campaign advisor, spring 2000, speaking of planning for a presumed George W. Bush election victory).<sup>24</sup></p>
<p>"There are congressmen today who want to fund the Iraq Liberation Act, and let some silk-suited, Rolex-wearing guys in London gin up an expedition. We'll equip a thousand fighters and arm them with \$97 million worth of AK-47s and insert them into Iraq. And what will we have? A Bay of Goats, most likely."</p>	<p>(Anthony Zinni, former head of the U.S. Central Command, around spring 2000).<sup>25</sup></p>
<p>"I think he is good for us."</p>	<p>(Ahmad Chalabi, June 2000, regarding George Bush's choice of Dick Cheney to be his vice presidential candidate).<sup>26</sup></p>
<p>"Further, the process of transformation even if it brings revolutionary change, is likely to be a long one, absent some catastrophic and catalyzing event – like a new Pearl Harbor."</p>	<p>(Project for the New American Century, September 2000, regarding the neoconservative goal of transforming the military to project uncontested U.S. power).<sup>27</sup></p>
<p>"I think the initial statements of the new appointees are very useful for us; all of them realize that Saddam is a problem."</p>	<p>(Ahmad Chalabi, around late 2000, on incoming members of the Bush administration).<sup>28</sup></p>
<p>"I think you will find an aggressive effort early on in the administration to implement the Iraq Liberation Act."</p>	<p>(Rep. Curt Weldon (R-Pa.), leading candidate to head the House Armed Services Committee in the incoming Congress, late December 2000).<sup>29</sup></p>
<p>"Getting Hussein was now the administration</p>	<p>(Paul O'Neill, treasury secretary, speaking later of his perception of</p>

focus."	the tenor of the Bush administration's first principals (agency heads) committee meeting on January 30, 2001). <sup>30</sup>
"Sometimes a show of strength by one side can really clarify things."	(George W. Bush, January 30, 2001). <sup>31</sup>
"Sanctions are fine, but what we really want to think about is going after Saddam .... Imagine what the region would look like without Saddam and with a regime that's aligned with U.S. interests. It would change everything in the region and beyond it. It would demonstrate what U.S. policy is all about."	(Donald Rumsfeld, February 1, 2001, at a principal committee meeting). <sup>32</sup>
"I would certainly think it is still worthwhile."	(Paul Wolfowitz, February 27, 2001, when asked whether he favors committing U.S. forces to support Iraqi opposition groups in overthrowing Saddam Hussein). <sup>33</sup>
"Well, I just don't understand why we are beginning by talking about this one man bin Laden...There are others that do...at least as much. Iraqi terrorism for example...You give bin Laden too much credit. He could not do all these things like the 1993 attack on New York, not without a state sponsor. Just because FBI and CIA have failed to find the linkages does not mean they don't exist."	(Paul Wolfowitz, April 2001). <sup>34</sup>
"I am unaware of any Iraqi-sponsored terrorism directed at the United States ... since 1993 ..."	(Richard Clarke, counterterrorism coordinator, April 2001). <sup>35</sup>
"We have no evidence of any active Iraqi terrorist threat against the U.S."	(John McLaughlin, CIA deputy director, April 2001). <sup>36</sup>
"Publicizing the interdiction to our advantage....Getting the right story out."	(State Department concerns, June 29, 2001, after the U.S. interdicts aluminum tubes purchased by Iraq to manufacture rockets). <sup>37</sup>
"If Saddam's regime were ousted, we would have a much-improved position in the region and elsewhere...A major success with Iraq would enhance U.S. credibility and influence throughout the region."	(Donald Rumsfeld, defense secretary, July 27, 2001). <sup>38</sup>
"The people across the river [CIA headquarters] are trying to start a war. They are really beating the	(An International Atomic Energy Agency scientist, summer

<p>drum, they want to attack.”</p>	<p>2001).<sup>39</sup></p>
<p>“Don’t worry about it .... I’m in no hurry to go look for trouble.”</p>	<p>(George W. Bush, around August 1, 2001, on being warned by Colin Powell to be skeptical of Paul Wolfowitz’s claims that supporting Iraqi opposition groups in overthrowing Saddam Hussein would be easy).<sup>40</sup></p>
<p>“We are just looking to see whether there could possibly be a connection with Saddam Hussein.”</p>	<p>(Condoleezza Rice, national security adviser, September 11, 2001, to the British ambassador to the U.S.)<sup>41</sup></p>
<p>“Best info fast. Judge whether good enough hit S.H. @ same time – not only UBL ... Jim Haynes to talk w/ PW for additional support .... connection with UBL .... Go massive – sweep it all up. Things <u>related</u> and <u>not</u>.”</p>	<p>(Donald Rumsfeld, September 11, 2001, 2:40 p.m.)<sup>42</sup>.</p>
<p>“You know, we’ve got to do Iraq -- there just aren’t enough targets in Afghanistan.”</p>	<p>(Donald Rumsfeld, September 11, 2001, evening).<sup>43</sup></p>
<p>“Having been attacked by al Qaeda, for us now to go bombing Iraq in response would be like our invading Mexico after the Japanese attacked us at Pearl Harbor.”</p>	<p>(Richard Clarke, NSC counterterrorism advisor, September 12, 2001).<sup>44</sup></p>
<p>“It’s showtime.”</p>	<p>(John Maguire of the CIA Iraq Operations Group, to an Iraqi former covert operations collaborator, September 12, 2001).<sup>45</sup></p>
<p>It was “a little disgusting that they were talking about it while the bodies were still burning in the Pentagon and at the World Trade Center.”</p>	<p>(Richard Clarke, speaking later of his response to immediate demands by Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz, and Bush to target Iraq though no evidence connected it with the 9/11 attacks).<sup>46</sup></p>
<p>“Look, I know you have a lot to do and all...but I want you, as soon as you can, to go back over everything, everything. See if Saddam did this. See if he’s linked in any way...Look into Iraq, Saddam.”</p>	<p>(George W. Bush, September 12, 2001).<sup>47</sup></p>
<p>“I think one has to say it’s not just simply a matter of capturing people and holding them accountable, but removing the sanctuaries, removing the support systems, ending states who sponsor</p>	<p>(Paul Wolfowitz, deputy defense secretary, September 13, 2001).<sup>48</sup></p>

terrorism.”	
“A long investigation to prove Osama Bin Laden's guilt with prosecutorial certainty is entirely unnecessary. He is guilty in word and deed. His history is the source of his culpability. The same holds true for Saddam Hussein.”	(Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs, September 13, 2001). <sup>49</sup>
“Why are you working on Afghanistan? You ought to be working on Iraq.”	(Douglas Feith, Defense Department policy under secretary, soon after September 11.) <sup>50</sup>
“Don't over-elevate the importance of al-Qaida.”	(Donald Rumsfeld, September 14, 2001, at a Pentagon meeting to discuss responding to 9/11). <sup>51</sup>
“We will get this guy but at a time and place of our choosing.”	(George Bush, September 15, 2001, speaking of Saddam Hussein). <sup>52</sup>
“If you want to go after that son of a bitch to settle old scores, be my guest. But don't tell us he is connected to 9/11 or to terrorism because there is no evidence to support that. You will have to have a better reason.”	(A CIA analyst, a few days after September 11, 2001). <sup>53</sup>
“We don't need to deputize former DCIs to play gumshoe.”	(An unnamed Washington official, speaking of James Woolsey's late September 2001 trip to London to look for evidence linking Iraq to the World Trade Center attacks). <sup>54</sup>
“Even if evidence does not link Iraq directly to the attack, any strategy aiming at the eradication of terrorism and its sponsors must include a determined effort to remove Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq .... The United States must therefore provide full military and financial support to the Iraqi opposition. American military force should be used to provide a 'safe zone' in Iraq from which the opposition can operate. And American forces must be prepared to back up our commitment to the Iraqi opposition by all necessary means.”	(Project for the New American Century, September 20, 2001). <sup>55</sup>
There is no “evidence as understood in the legal sense.”	(Laurie Mylroie, September 22, 2001, regarding her assertion that state sponsorship [meaning Iraq] had to be involved in the 9/11 attacks). <sup>56</sup>

<p>"He's always been a hawk, a total hawk. It's just that his arguments carry a lot more weight than they did a month ago."</p>	<p>(A "Wolfowitz admirer", around September 23, 2001).<sup>57</sup></p>
<p>The goal was "to put the data under the microscope to reveal what the intelligence community can't see."</p>	<p>(A "Pentagon adviser" referring to Counter Terrorism Evaluation Group and Office of Special Plans activities beginning around October 2001).<sup>58</sup></p>
<p>They seemed to be "pulling people out of nooks and crannies of the Defense Intelligence Agency. They wanted nothing to do with the professional staff. They wanted us the fuck out of there."</p>	<p>(A former analyst, speaking of events in 2001, when Harold Rhode ("Feith's hatchet man, according to one analyst") was seen as purging Defense Department personnel considered insufficiently supportive of Wolfowitz and Feith's pro-war views).<sup>59</sup></p>
<p>"Jeez, what a fixation about Iraq."</p>	<p>(Colin Powell, in late 2001 after meetings at the White House, according to State Department officials).<sup>60</sup></p>
<p>"This is definitely Saddam!"</p>	<p>(Gen. Wayne Downing, Bush administration counterterrorism advisor, around October 4, 2001, after letters containing anthrax are discovered at several Senate and media offices).<sup>61</sup></p>
<p>"The United States and Britain know very well that Iraq has no relation whatsoever to what happened in the United States and no relation whatsoever to the parties accused of doing it."</p>	<p>(Naji Sabri, Iraqi foreign minister, October 10, 2001).<sup>62</sup></p>
<p>"We know he is developing weapons of mass destruction..."</p>	<p>(George W. Bush, October 11, 2001, regarding Saddam Hussein).<sup>63</sup></p>
<p>"I can fully believe that SISMI would put out a piece of intelligence like that but why anybody would put credibility in it is beyond me."</p>	<p>(A CIA consultant, around October 15, 2001, regarding documents produced by Italy's intelligence service on an alleged Iraqi attempt to buy uranium ore from Niger).<sup>64</sup></p>
<p>"We all agree that Iraq is not on, that we have no evidence of a link...We should focus on Afghanistan. If you go into Iraq, it's really going to complicate things."</p>	<p>(British foreign ministry officials, October 16, 2001).<sup>65</sup></p>



<p>"I think the seminal event of the Bush administration was the anthrax attacks. It was the thing that changed everything. It was the hard stare into the abyss."</p>	<p>("Someone close to the president," after October 22, 2001, when anthrax was found to have been sent to the White House).<sup>66</sup></p>
<p>"We're not just going to pick off individual snakes; we intend to drain the entire swamp."</p>	<p>(Paul Wolfowitz, October 22, 2001).<sup>67</sup></p>
<p>"This time, no Mr. Nice Guy. This time, no stopping short of absolute destruction of the Baath regime...This time, no quarter."</p>	<p>(James Woolsey, October 22, 2001, Clinton administration CIA director and Defense Policy Board member).<sup>68</sup></p>
<p>"Absurd. We don't need nearly that many. Not very many. Certainly no more than 125,000."</p>	<p>(Donald Rumsfeld, November 21, 2001, on being informed that current contingency plans for war with Iraq call for deployment of some 500,000 troops).<sup>69</sup></p>
<p>"You got to be shitting me. We're only kind of busy on some other things right now."</p>	<p>(Maj. Gen. Gene Renuart, Central Command director of operations, November 21, 2001, upon being told that Rumsfeld wants a new commander's estimate for war with Iraq).<sup>70</sup></p>
<p>"What the fuck are they talking about?"</p>	<p>(Gen. Tommy Franks, Central Command chief, November 21, 2001, on being told that Rumsfeld wants a new war plan for Iraq).<sup>71</sup></p>
<p>"Afghanistan is still just the beginning."</p>	<p>(George W. Bush, November 26, 2001).<sup>72</sup></p>
<p>"The president said it, so that's that – its back."</p>	<p>(Richard Armitage, deputy secretary of state, on increasing pressure on Iraq regarding weapons programs, December 1, 2001).<sup>73</sup></p>
<p>"The fact is that we have Iraq on the radar screen."</p>	<p>(Condoleezza Rice, December 1, 2001).<sup>74</sup></p>
<p>He "should be worried."</p>	<p>(Colin Powell, December 2, 2001, speaking of Saddam Hussein).<sup>75</sup></p>
<p>"We are in grave danger of overreaching. Having failed to uncover any solid evidence linking Iraq to the attacks of Sept. 11 or to the succeeding anthrax threats, the anti-Iraq war party...is resurrecting the argument that Saddam Hussein's</p>	<p>(Vincent Cannistraro, former CIA counterterrorism official, December 3, 2001).<sup>76</sup></p>

presumed accumulation of weapons of mass destruction poses an imminent threat. It is a dubious proposition, supported by little validated intelligence. Indeed, Iraq may be one of the least appropriate targets for the antiterrorism campaign ... we will diminish our ability to deter new rounds of violence against America – and we may create new threats rather than containing immediate ones.”

“I’m not sure that much force is needed given what we’ve learned coming out of Afghanistan.”

(Donald Rumsfeld, December 4, 2001, questioning troop levels Central Command plans call for to invade Iraq).<sup>77</sup>

“I think it’s very clear – let’s not get into the question of September 11<sup>th</sup>. It is clear that Iraq is developing noxious, dangerous weapons. And I don’t know what he means by ‘imminent threat’.”

(Paul Wolfowitz, December 9, 2001, asked what he thinks about Vincent Cannistraro’s comments that administration claims about Iraq are dubious).<sup>78</sup>

“You need to look at things that you could do even as early as April or May.”

(Donald Rumsfeld, December 12, 2001, to Tommy Franks, who is planning an invasion of Iraq at Rumsfeld’s direction).<sup>79</sup>

“But the evidence is increasingly looking like it was a domestic source.”

(Ari Fleischer, December 17, 2001, speaking of anthrax used in U.S. mailings).<sup>80</sup>

“I recommend that you read the attached op-ed [in which] A prominent Catholic theologian outlines the moral justification for a pre-emptive strike against Iraq, [which] demonstrates how pre-emptive action against Iraq fits into the just-war tradition.”

(Robert Andrews, Defense Department, Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict, December 17, 2001).<sup>81</sup>

“If the United States overthrew Saddam Hussein next, it could create a reliable American ally in the potential superpower of the Arab world....I was to provide a justification for a war....An American-led overthrow of Saddam Hussein [replaced] with a new government more closely aligned with the United States—would put America more wholly in charge of the region than any power since the Ottomans, or maybe the Romans....Bush needed something to assert, something that made clear that September 11 and Saddam Hussein were linked after all and that for the safety of the world, Saddam Hussein must be defeated rather than deterred.”

(David Frum, around late December 2001, referring to preparation of George W. Bush’s State of the Union speech).<sup>82</sup>

“We’ve got to work the nations in the region.

(George Bush, December 28, 2001, during a planning session

Develop a strategy for me on how best to do that."	for invading Iraq). <sup>83</sup>
"Is this good enough to win?"	(George Bush, December 28, 2001, to Tommy Franks regarding Franks' Iraq war plan). <sup>84</sup>
"I would not read anything into it other than that people are coming in and out of this building all the time."	(Donald Rumsfeld, January 30, 2002, regarding a visit by Iraqi National Congress members to the Pentagon and the State Department). <sup>85</sup>
"U.S. intelligence officials say there is no evidence that Iraq played a role in the Sept. 11 attacks or has been particularly active in sponsoring international terrorism in recent years .... Most Iraqi-sponsored violence is directed against the regime's opponents."	<i>(McClatchy, January 30, 2002, reporting reaction to George Bush's State of the Union address).</i> <sup>86</sup>
"He told me that we were no longer fighting a war in Afghanistan and...some of the key personnel, particularly some special-operations units and some equipment, specifically the Predator unmanned drone, were being withdrawn in order to get ready for a war in Iraq. That was my first indication that war in Iraq was as serious a possibility as it was, and that it was in competition with Afghanistan for materiel. We didn't have the resources to do both successfully and simultaneously."	(Bob Graham (D-Fla.), chairman of the Senate intelligence committee, speaking of events in February 19, 2002, when he visited Central Command headquarters to speak to Tommy Franks). <sup>87</sup>
"Fuck Saddam. We're taking him out."	(George Bush, March 2002). <sup>88</sup>
"The question was no longer if the U.S. would attack Iraq, the only question was when."	(Dick Cheney, March 2002, to a group of Senate Republicans who are warned not to repeat it). <sup>89</sup>
"There are a number of means that we're pursuing, but the president has made no decision about the use of force."	(Condoleezza Rice, March 1, 2002, speaking of Iraq). <sup>90</sup>
"I made up my mind that Hussein needs to go. That's about all I'm willing to share. The policy of my government is that he goes."	(George Bush, April 2002). <sup>91</sup>
"That's a great question and one for which I don't have an answer because my boss has not yet asked me to put together a plan to do that .... But beyond speculation that I read much about in the press, my bosses have not asked me to put together anything yet, and so they have not asked me for	(Tommy Franks, May 21, 2002, asked at a Defense Department news briefing about force levels he would need to invade Iraq). <sup>92</sup>

<p>those kinds of numbers.”</p>	
<p>“You can save your breath ...The president has already made up his mind on Iraq.”</p>	<p>(Condoleezza Rice, early July 2002).<sup>93</sup></p>
<p>“Privately even the hawks within the U.S. government lobbying for war acknowledged that President Saddam was no threat to America .... those who favor this attack now will tell you candidly, and privately, that it is probably true that Saddam Hussein is no threat to the United States. But they are afraid at some point he might decide if he had a nuclear weapon to use it against Israel.”</p>	<p>(Wesley Clark, retired NATO commander, around August 20, 2002).<sup>94</sup></p>
<p>“We have great information. They’re going to welcome us. It’ll be like the American army going through the streets of Paris...The people will be so happy with their freedoms that we’ll probably back ourselves out of there within a month or two.”</p>	<p>(Dick Cheney, around September 2002, lobbying for the U.S. invasion of Iraq).<sup>95</sup></p>
<p>“Why would Iraq attack America or use nuclear weapons against us? I’ll tell you what the real threat is and actually has been since 1990. It’s the threat against Israel....The American government doesn’t want to lean too hard on it rhetorically, because it is not a popular sell....The Iraq problem is a peculiar combination at the moment, of being exceptionally dangerous at a time when Iraq is exceptionally weak militarily. Now that’s an appealing combination for immediate action.”</p>	<p>(Philip Zelikow, Presidential Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board member, September 10, 2002).<sup>96</sup></p>
<p>“You don’t know what you don’t know. So in comes the [CIA] daily briefer and she walks through the daily brief. And I ask questions .... ‘Gee, what about this? Or what about that? Has somebody thought of this?’”</p>	<p>(Donald Rumsfeld, October 24, 2002, on trying to find an Iraq link to al-Qaeda).<sup>97</sup></p>
<p>“I don’t have time for this fucking bullshit.”</p>	<p>(Gen. Tommy Franks, December 2002, after a briefing on the proposal that armed exile opposition groups participate alongside U.S. forces in invading Iraq).<sup>98</sup></p>
<p>“Powell and others have argued that if the United States alienates central Iraq’s Sunnis, say, by overthrowing Saddam, Iraq could be plunged into chaos. (During the war in Afghanistan, Powell made the same point—wrongly, as it turned out—about overthrowing the ethnic Pashtuns who led the Taliban.) But predictions of ethnic turmoil in Iraq</p>	<p>(Lawrence Kaplan and William Kristol, neoconservative pundits, 2003).<sup>99</sup></p>

are even more questionable than they were in the case of Afghanistan....Iraq could even replace Saudi Arabia as the key American ally and source of oil in the region....a Baghdad under American supervision would surely improve its relations with the region's other democracies, Turkey and Israel."

"There's no question but that they would be welcomed. Go back to Afghanistan -- the people were in the streets playing music, cheering, flying kites...Now, is there a risk when that dictatorial system isn't there that there could be conflicts between elements within the country, get-even type things? Yes. And we've got to be careful to see that that doesn't happen."

"They still don't get it. Instead of going all out against al Qaeda and eliminating our vulnerabilities at home, they wanna fuckin' invade Iraq again. We have a token U.S. military force in Afghanistan, the Taliban are regrouping, we haven't caught bin Laden, or his deputy, or the head of the Taliban. And they aren't going to send more troops to Afghanistan to catch them or to help the government in Kabul secure the country. No, they're holding back, waiting to invade Iraq. Do you know how much it will strengthen al Qaeda and groups like that if we occupy Iraq? There's no threat to us now from Iraq, but 70 percent of the American people think Iraq attacked the Pentagon and the World Trade Center. You wanna know why? Because that's what the Administration wants them to think!"

"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."

"September 11th gave them the opportunity, and now they're in heaven. They believe the intelligence is there. They want to believe it. It *has* to be there."

"[CIA analysts] write reports justifying their intelligence rather than saying what's going on. The Defense Department and the Office of the Vice-President write their own pieces, based on their own ideology. We collect so much stuff that you can find anything you want."

(Donald Rumsfeld, February 20, 2003, asked whether invading American troops would be welcomed by Iraqis).<sup>100</sup>

(Randy Beers, formerly of the White House and State Department, around March 2003).<sup>101</sup>

(Paul Wolfowitz, May 2003).<sup>102</sup>

(Vincent Cannistraro, May 2003, speaking of neocons and followers of the late conservative political philosopher Leo Strauss).<sup>103</sup>

(A former CIA officer, around May 2003).<sup>104</sup>

<p>"I'd love to be the historian who writes the story of how this small group of eight or nine people made the case and won."</p>	<p>(An advisor to the Bush administration's Office of Special Plans, around May 2003, referring to its "case" that Iraq was linked to 9/11, had WMD, and was a threat to the U.S.)<sup>105</sup></p>
<p>"The President of the United States is not a fact checker."</p>	<p>(Dan Bartlett, White House communications director, July 18, 2003).<sup>106</sup></p>
<p>"In Afghanistan, at first things did indeed go badly, and there are still problems...Today with minimal help from the U.S., a central government is gradually extending its political and financial control to the rest of the country and dealing more and more effectively with the problem of the maintenance of order ...What then should we do in Iraq? [It is] to hand over, as soon as possible, to a genuine Iraqi government ...Fortunately, the nucleus of such a government is already available, in the Iraqi National Congress, headed by Ahmad Chalabi... they continue to acquit themselves well in Iraq, and there can be no reasonable doubt that of all the possible Iraqi candidates they are the best in terms alike of experience, reliability, and good will."</p>	<p>(Bernard Lewis, retired professor and neoconservative icon, August 29, 2003).<sup>107</sup></p>
<p>"Well, we have no evidence that Saddam Hussein was involved with the 11 September attacks."</p>	<p>(George Bush, September 17, 2003).<sup>108</sup></p>
<p>"Never said that. Never did. You may remember it well, but you're thinking of somebody else."</p>	<p>(Donald Rumsfeld, reminded that he had predicted that American troops would be welcomed in Iraq, September 25, 2003).<sup>109</sup></p>
<p>"I take satisfaction in the fact that we went to war with Iraq and got rid of Saddam Hussein. The rest is details."</p>	<p>(Laurie Mylroie, neoconservative pundit, around November 2003).<sup>110</sup></p>
<p>"We do not have to weaken the economy to pay for the war. We can pay for it by holding the line on federal spending, setting tax rates at levels that promote economic growth, and borrowing the remainder. Victory triggers economic prosperity—which in turn repays the debt we incurred to achieve the victory."</p>	<p>(David Frum and Richard Perle, around December 2003).<sup>111</sup></p>
<p>"We are heroes in error. As far as we're concerned we've been entirely successful. That tyrant Saddam is gone and the Americans are in Baghdad. What was said before is not important."</p>	<p>(Ahmad Chalabi, around February 18, 2004).<sup>112</sup></p>

<p>"I mean that people, intelligence people who are supposed to do a better job for their country and their government did not do such a good job .... This is a ridiculous situation. Every story that comes out in the press says, 'Defectors have an axe to grind. Don't believe them. Defectors have an axe to grind. Don't believe them.' Before the war, they kept saying that. OK, so why did they believe them so much .... They were skeptical. Read the articles that we were unreliable all the time in the press before the war. Now you're telling me that despite all this public evidence, the United States government took our word without checking out the people."</p>	<p>(Ahmad Chalabi, around March 2004, marveling that U.S. policy makers believed anything he had to say).<sup>113</sup></p>
<p>"I think there is quite a bit of street legend out there that somehow [Ahmad Chalabi] is the favorite of the Defense Department, and that we had some idea of installing him as the leader of Iraq."</p>	<p>(Paul Wolfowitz, April 29, 2004).<sup>114</sup></p>
<p>"Ahmed Chalabi is a treacherous, spineless turncoat .... He said he would end Iraq's boycott of trade with Israel, and would allow Israeli companies to do business there."</p>	<p>(L. Marc Zell, attorney in Israel and law partner in the firm Douglas Feith left in 2001 to become under secretary of defense, around May 2004).<sup>115</sup></p>
<p>"They're opening them (oil fields) up to other companies all over the world ... We're entitled to it. Heck, we even lost 5,000 of our people, 65,000 injured and a trillion, five hundred billion dollars .... We leave there with the Chinese getting the oil."</p>	<p>(T. Boone Pickens, oil magnate and Bush contributor, October 20, 2009, on Iraq's oil).<sup>116</sup></p>
<p>"Chalabi is an erstwhile Pentagon and CIA ally who played a crucial role in the run-up to the invasion. He's fallen out of favor, and most U.S. officials now call him an Iranian agent."</p>	<p>(<i>Washington Post</i>, January 19, 2010).<sup>117</sup></p>
<p>"The Americans outplayed themselves, nobody outplayed them. They believed their own propaganda."</p>	<p>(Ahmad Chalabi, around February 26, 2010)<sup>118</sup></p>

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<sup>2</sup> James Mann, *Rise of the Vulcans* (New York: Penguin Books, 2004), 187.

<sup>3</sup> *NYT*, April 13, 1991.

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- <sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>10</sup> *60 Minutes*, May 12, 1996; "Child Deaths Rise Sharply in Iraq under U.N. Sanctions, U.N. Says," *Deutsche Presse-Agentur*, August 12, 1999; *FAIR*, November/December 2001, [http://www.fair.org/index.php?page=18&region\\_id=25](http://www.fair.org/index.php?page=18&region_id=25).
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