

Truth from These Podia

Summary of a Study of Strategic Influence, Perception Management, Strategic Information Warfare and Strategic Psychological Operations in Gulf II

Sam Gardiner¹
Colonel, USAF (Retired)

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¹ The author has taught strategy and military operations at the National War College, Air War College and Naval War College. He was recently a visiting scholar at the Swedish Defence College. During Gulf II he was a regular on the *NewsHour with Jim Lehrer* as well as on BBC radio and television, and National Public Radio.

The study was not funded by any organization, and the author's arguments are not meant to represent those of any organization.

He can be reached at SamGard@aol.com

Preface

My intent was not to do this myself. The work had to be a combination of the kind of research I was doing and investigative journalism. I could do the outside part. Someone had to talk to those inside. After my return from an information warfare conference in London in July, I began looking for interest in one of the major newspapers. I found that interest in Mark Fineman at the *LA Times*.

Mark had covered the war and previously had been bureau chief for the paper in Philippines, India, Cyprus and Mexico City. Although he had covered some of the stories I examined in my research, he saw very early the point I was making about the implication of their being seen as a whole, the strategic picture. We continued to exchange e-mails, talk by phone and met four times after our initial session. He shared information he was uncovering. I shared my developing research.

Mark Fineman died of an apparent heart attack while on assignment in Baghdad on September 23, 2003.

It was not bad intelligence. It was much more. It was an orchestrated effort. It began before the war, was a major effort during the war and continues as post-conflict distortions.

The title of this study was difficult for me. When I began I thought it was going to be an analysis of Pentagon spin. I was going to call it, "Truth from this Podium." That was to be a play on promises we were given before the war. The more I did, the more it became clear that it was not just the Pentagon. It was the White House, and it was Number 10 Downing Street. It was more than spin.

I thought about calling it "Apparatus of Lies," connecting to a title the White House gave a paper on Iraq's decade of fabrication, mostly about weapons of destruction. Although lies were part of the effort, that title would have been off the mark because the story is more about aversion to truth rather than the open lie.

I also missed on the subject. I thought it was going to be about spinning the stories of the conflict. I was wrong. The real essence of what I found was a much broader problem. It is a problem about the future as much as the past. This problem became the story of the study.

This is one way of summarizing the study:

The United States (and UK) conducted a strategic influence campaign that:

- **...distorted perceptions of the situation both before and during the conflict.**
- **...caused misdirection of portions of the military operation.**
- **...was irresponsible in parts.**
- **...might have been illegal in some ways.**
- **...cost big bucks.**
- **...will be even more serious in the future.**

I know what I am suggesting is serious. I did not come to these conclusions lightly. Because my plea is for truth in war, I have tried to be very careful not to fall into a trap of describing exaggerations with exaggeration. I hope I've done that. I expect some will believe I have been guilty of the same sins. As long as we can have some discussion about truth in war, I accept the criticism.

You will see in my analysis and comments that I do not accept the notion that the first casualty of war is truth. I think we have to have a higher standard.

In the most basic sense, Washington and London did not trust the peoples of their democracies to come to right decisions. Truth became a casualty. When truth is a casualty, democracy receives collateral damage.

My plea is for truth. I believe we have to find ways to restore truth as currency of government in matters as serious as war. My story would be important if it were the last chapter of the book. It's not. There is more to come. As the United States struggles with a post-conflict Iraq, distortions continue. Probably of more concern, major players in the game are working on ways to do it "better" in future conflicts.

In other words, it appears as if the issues of this war will become even more important for future wars. We have reason to be concerned.

Another way to summarize the study:

Summary

- Clearly, the assumption of some in the government is the people of the United States and the United Kingdom will come to a wrong decision if they are the given truth.
- We probably have taken "Information Warfare" too far.
- We allowed strategic psychological operations to become part of public affairs.
- We failed to make adequate distinction between strategic influence stuff and intelligence.
- Message became more important than performance.

The concepts of warfare got all mixed up in this war. I'll come back to this subject later, but what has happened is that information warfare, strategic influence, strategic psychological operations pushed their way into the important process of informing the peoples of our two democracies. The United States and the UK got too good at the concepts they had been developing for future warfare.

The best way to describe my methodology is to use words that came from Admiral Poindexter's unfunded project, Total Information Awareness, later known as Terrorism Information Awareness. What I have done is look for "inconsistencies in open source data with regard to known facts...and goals."

Again to use the words from the Terrorism Information Awareness Program, by discovering linkages, it was possible to identify intent, methods of operations and organizational dynamics.

Through this methodology, it was possible to do what the Pentagon wanted to do, “to reduce vulnerability to open source information operations.”

Methodology

- **“The purpose...is to reduce vulnerability to open source information operations by developing the ability to detect inconsistencies in open source data with regard to known facts and...goals.”**
- **“One of the characteristics...is that their organizational structures are not well understood and are purposefully designed to conceal their connections and relationships. DARPA’s premise is that by discovering linkages among people, places, things and events...to recognize patterns of relationships that are representative..., it can help identify...intent, methods of operation, and organizational dynamics.”**

Report to Congress Regarding the Terrorism Information Awareness Program, May 20, 2003

My definitions are sloppy in this paper. Some would say I don’t know the definition of information warfare. It’s not because I don’t appreciate the clarity that comes from precise meaning. It’s because almost all of the pre-war definitions were violated in implementation. I was left with a couple questions, “What was true and who was affected by the non-truth?”

They told us what they were going to do. The Department of Defense created a rather significant press storm early in 2002 when it was revealed that there were plans to create an office to do strategic influence. Efforts to create the office were brought to a halt with White House agreement. In November, the Secretary of Defense announced in a press conference on board an aircraft on the way to South America that he was just kidding when he said he would not do strategic influence.

The White House gave a similar warning. Andrew Card, the President’s Chief of Staff told us they would do a major campaign to sell the war. Alastair Campbell, Tony Blair’s just-resigned Strategy (and communications) Director, was orchestrating the same on the other side of the Atlantic.

The research then was to discover what they did and how they did what they said they were going to do.

I’m not going to address why they did it. That’s something I don’t understand even after all the research. I would like to ask them, “Why do it?” “Didn’t you know there would be consequences?” It was not necessary. You could have told the truth. You don’t defend democracy by making light of its most basic elements. The American people would have supported the war. Why do it?

Announcing the Effort

- “And then there was the Office of Strategic Influence. You may recall that. And ‘oh my goodness gracious isn’t that terrible, Henny Penny the sky is going to fall.’ I went down that next day and said fine, if you want to savage this thing fine I’ll give you the corpse. There’s the name. You can have the name, but I’m gonna keep doing every single thing that needs to be done and I have.” Rumsfeld, November 18, 2002
- From a marketing point of view, you don’t introduce new products in August,” White House Chief of Staff Andrew H. Card Jr. told the *New York Times* in September. Card was explaining what the *Times* characterized as a “meticulously planned strategy to persuade the public, the Congress, and the allies of the need to confront the threat from Saddam Hussein.”
- It would cost over \$200 million. *Times of London*, 9/17/02

These two charts are the results of my investigation:

The Stories of Strategic Influence (1)

- Terrorism and 9/11
- Lt. Commander Speicher
- Drones
- Mohammad Atta meeting with Iraqi
- Ansar al-Salm
- Chemical and biological weapons
 - Quantities
 - Location
 - Delivery readiness
- Weapons labs
- WMD cluster bombs
- Scuds
- Cutting off ears
- Cyber war capability
- Nuclear materials from Niger
- Aluminum tubes
- Nuclear weapons development
- Dirty bombs
- Humanitarian operations
- Attacking the power grid
- Russian punishment
 - Signing long term oil contracts
 - Night-vision goggles
 - GPS Jamming equipment
 - Saddam in embassy
- German punishment
- Surrender of the 507th

The Stories of Strategic Influence (2)

- Red Zone
- 51st Iraqi Mechanized Division & commander
- Uprising in Basrah
- Liberations of Umm Qasr and Basrah
- Iraqi white flag incidents
- US and UK uniforms to commit atrocities
- Execution of prisoners
- Salman Pak training facility
- Private Lynch rescue
 - Language
 - Holding the story
- Children soldiers
- 1000 Vehicle attack from Baghdad
- Civilian casualties
- Woman hung for waving
- French punishment
 - High precision switches
 - Smallpox strains
 - Signing long term oil contracts
 - Spare parts for aircraft
 - Roland missiles
 - Passport for Iraqi leaders
- British Parliamentary punishment
- WMD location
 - Moved to Syria
 - Hidden
 - Just-in-time program
- The post-conflict enemy
- Status of infrastructure repairs

From my research, the most profound thread is that WMD was only a very small part of the strategic influence, information operations and marketing campaign conducted on both sides of the Atlantic.

These are the stories on which I ended up doing detailed research. In each case, I attempted to find when and where the story originated, which officials made statements related to the story and then look at how it came out. Obviously, I am reporting on those where the outcome differed from the story.

My research suggests there were over 50 stories manufactured or at least engineered that distorted the picture of Gulf II for the American and British people. I'll cover most in this report. At the end, I will also describe some stories that seem as if they were part of the strategic influence campaign although the evidence is only circumstantial.

What becomes important is not each story taken individually. If that were the case, it would probably seem only more of the same. If you were to look at them one at a time, you could conclude, "Okay we sort of knew that was happening." It is the pattern that becomes important. It's the summary of everything. To use a phrase often heard during the war, it's the mosaic.

Recognizing I said I wouldn't exaggerate, it would not be an exaggeration to say the people of the United States and UK can find out more about the contents of a can of soup they buy than the contents of the can of worms they bought with the 2003 war in the Gulf.

The Theory

In Strauss' view, liberal democracies such as the Weimar Republic are not viable in the long term, since they do not offer their citizens any religious and moral footings. The practical consequence of this philosophy is fatal. According to its tenets, the elites have the right and even the obligation to manipulate the truth. Just as Plato recommends, they can take refuge in "pious lies" and in selective use of the truth.

Der Spiegel

I'm not writing about a conspiracy. It is about a well run and networked organization. My basic argument is that very bright and even well intentioned officials found how to control the process of governance in ways never before possible.

I have no way of knowing intent. Those who believe the Administration influenced by a small group could point out that manipulating the truth is an important and even necessary dimension of governance.

Standing back from the details of the stories, the strategy of strategic influence and marketing emerges.

Gulf II Influence Strategy

- **This is a struggle between good and evil.**
 - Major theme of the war on terrorism as well as Gulf II.
 - The mirror of this in the Muslim world is when the U.S. is often called the "Great Satan."
- **Iraq was behind the attack on the World Trade center.**
 - The subtle theme throughout Gulf II.
 - The mirror of this is the rumor that Israel was behind the World Trade Center bombing to embarrass the Arabs.

The major thrust was to make a conflict with Iraq seem part of a struggle between good and evil. Terrorism is evil. We are good. The axis is evil, and we are the good guys.

The second thrust is what propaganda theorists would call the "big lie." The plan was to connect Iraq with the 9/11 attacks. Make the American people believe that Saddam Hussein was behind those attacks. The effort followed the basic framework of effective propaganda.

Gulf II Influence Strategy

- **24/7 News require different techniques**
 - Saturate the media time and space.
 - Stay on message and stay ahead of the news cycle.
 - Manage expectations.
 - No matter how bad the story, it tends to level; accelerate the process as much as possible.
- **Keep the message consistent daily: Qatar, Pentagon, White House, London**
- **Use information to attack and punish critics.**

Beyond the themes we can see these strategic techniques. One of the media organizations hired by the Department of Defense, the Rendon Group, was deeply involved in selling the first Gulf War as well as this one.² The first two points on this chart came from John Rendon. The last seems to have come from others within the Administration.

It's possible to get a sense of how strategic influence and the organization for combat came together by looking at a pattern from before Gulf II campaign.

In November 2001, the White House Coalition Information Center initiated an effort to highlight the plight of women in Afghanistan. Jim Wilkinson, who was working with the Center at the time, called this effort “the best thing we’ve done.”

Earlier Stuff



Source: The White House Coalition Information Center

When he said it was the best thing they've done, it was not about something they did. It was about a story they created. It was about story. It was story. Story was most

² Four or five contracted media groups were probably involved in one way or another in the Gulf II effort. John Rendon call himself an information warrior.

important.

The White House Coalition Information Center became the Office of Global Communications officially in January 2003. It was in full operation, however, by the time the White House began its marketing campaign in September 2002.

What we saw in the Afghanistan effort were patterns that would continue through Gulf II. It was designed to “build support.” It was not a program with specific steps or funding to improve the conditions of women.

Earlier Stuff

- **“Women’s campaign was designed to build support in countries in which there is heavy skepticism of the anti-terrorism coalition.” *Washington Post*, November 16, 2002**
- **“Only the terrorist and the Taliban threaten to pull out women’s fingernails for wearing nail polish.” Laura Bush, November 17, 2001**
- **“In Afghanistan if you wear nail polish, you could have your nails torn out.” Cherie Blair, November 20, 2001**
- **Human Rights Watch, 2003 report: Situation still bad for women.**

The other pattern in the Afghanistan family campaign that is important is the close coordination between the White House and Number 10 Downing Street. The coordination was so close that Laura Bush and Cherie Blair used almost the same phrase in speeches only separated by three days. The message was coordinated in the Afghanistan campaign. It would be coordinated for Gulf II.

Make the humanitarian dimension of the operation part of marketing, another pattern I’ve done some work with relief organizations. When these professionals talk about Afghanistan, I very often hear their disdain for the U.S. effort to air drop food packets into Afghanistan. There was almost no real benefit from that part of the operation, We would have expect the same in Gulf II.

Another pattern emerged that we would see in the run up to the war. One might even say they followed the concept that if you don’t know the truth, fill the vacuum with speculation that would support policy. That certainly was true during the period of anthrax uncertainty; US and UK “intelligence sources” told the press that everything pointed to Iraq.

Anthrax

- **From US and UK intelligence sources...“The prima facie evidence of the involvement of a state intelligence agency. Maybe Iran has the capability. But it doesn’t look likely politically. That leaves Iraq.” David Rose, *The Observer*, October 14, 2001.**
- **...it is “increasingly looking like” the anthrax sent through the mail came from a US source. White House, December 18, 2001**

The anthrax story lingered. It wasn’t until the middle of December that the White House put out a paper (not an announcement) that said it looked as if the source of the anthrax were domestic. We would have expected in Gulf II to see the same kind of thing. If a story supports policy, even if incorrect, let it stay around.

Based upon what went before, as we moved into marketing of the war, we would have expected to see two things. We would have expected to see the creation stories to sell the policy; we would have expected to see the same stories used on both sides of the Atlantic. We saw both.

US/UK Stories

- | | |
|---|---|
| • Parallel Storyline | • Not Parallel Storyline |
| – Terrorism | – Aluminum tubes |
| – “Armed conflict and regime” | – Shock and Awe |
| – Materials from Niger | – “Paramilitaries” and not “terrorist death squads” |
| – 45 Minute release time | – Terrorist threat |
| – Surrender of the 51st Division | – Private Lynch |
| – Uprising in Basrah | – Lt Commander Speicher |
| – US/UK uniforms (picked up from Wilkinson report) | – Cyber war capability |
| – French & German precision switches (US in NYT; UK leaked UN Report) | – Dirty bombs |
| – Weapons labs | – Woman hung for waving |
| – British Parliamentarian in pay of Iraq | |
| – Executing prisoners | |
| – Baghdad neighborhood bombings | |

The number of engineered or false stories from US and UK sources is long. These are some of them. It’s important, however, to point out that the UK did not always go along.

I’ll come to the connective network that made possible the parallel effort toward the end of the report.

Everything was not sinister, but when you begin with the small things, you again see a pattern that become important in understanding the larger distortions of the truth.

Characterizing the Action

ARMED CONFLICT WITH IRAQ BEGAN ON MARCH 20, 2003

The Department of State advises American citizens in Austria to take prudent steps to ensure their personal safety in the coming days. Remain vigilantly aware of surroundings, avoid crowds and demonstrations, keep a low profile, vary times and routes for all travel, and ensure travel documents are current. Listen to news reports and maintain contact with the U.S. Embassy/Consulate at (01) 31339-7535. The Embassy/Consulate will also post updated information on our website

- **US and UK had agreed it would be called “armed conflict.”**

It was agreed, first of all, that the activity would be called “armed conflict.” State Department documents used the term. Alastair Campbell, the UK strategic communications manager, had a list of guidance items for Tony Blair’s press people. The armed conflict guidance was part of that list. (Peter Stothard, [Tony Blair and the Test of History: Thirty Days](#))

“Regime” was also on the list. Call the government the “regime” rather than the “enemy” as the term of art.

Although a departure of the historical use of code names, it was not new that you would give the operation a code name that would be part of the marketing. The United States had used names like Operation PROVIDE COMFORT.

“Operation Iraqi Freedom” Assessment

- **Code name for the operation transformed into a part of the strategic influence.**
 - **OVERLORD:** During World War II, the codes names were for the purpose of security.
 - **DESERT STORM, DESERT FOX:** Code names continued to be for the purposes of security. They were made two words so the first word could designate the commander running the operation. DESERT = Central Command.
- **Because of the repetition and the visual quality added by the television networks, this became an effective memory producing technique in Gulf II.**

There were some dimensions of the marketing that were a little strange. Eisenhower’s military objective was to “enter the continent of Europe and destroy the

German Army.”

U.S. Objectives as Strategic Influence

- End the regime of Saddam Hussein...
- Identify, isolate and eventually eliminate Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.
- Search for, capture, drive out terrorists who have found safe harbor in Iraq.
- Collect such intelligence as we can find related to terrorist networks in Iraq and beyond.
- Collect such intelligence as we can find related to the global network of illicit weapons of mass destruction activity...
- End sanctions and to immediately deliver humanitarian relief, food and medicine...
- Secure Iraq's oil fields and resources, which belong to the Iraqi people...
- Help the Iraqi people create the conditions for a rapid transition to a representative self-government ...

The Secretary of Defense said these were the objectives given to Central Command. They were obviously meant for the press. As far as I am aware, this is the first time a military commander was given objectives that were about justifying the war.

From the very beginning it was called an “ambush” from the podia. That lingered even in articles that questioned the official version of the events. “What really happened in the ambush of the 507th?” If you drive a convoy into enemy lines, turn around and drive back, it’s not an ambush.

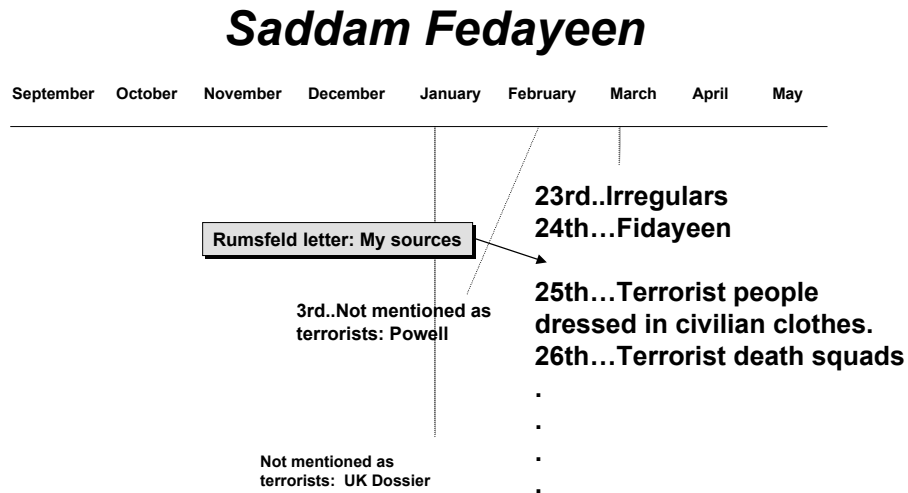
Private Jessica Lynch

- From the beginning, it was called an “ambush.”
- **Am·bush (n)**
 - 1. an unexpected attack from a concealed position
 - 2. a concealment before a surprise attack
 - 3. one or more people concealed in order to make a surprise attack
 - 4. a hiding place used in an ambush
- **Assessment: It’s not an ambush when you drive a convoy into enemy lines. Terrorists would do something like an ambush.**

Military officers who are very careful about how they talk about operations would normally not be sloppy about describing this kind of event. This un-military kind of talk is one of the reasons I began doing this research. They just didn’t cherish the truth.

In my mind, the most serious transformation of language was the direction from Washington to call the Iraqi irregular troops “terrorist death squads.” One source told me this came in a letter from Rumsfeld. I’ve read in another place it was from the White

House.



After the 25th of March, the presenters changed the name.

Saddam Fedayeen : Assessment

- Naming the irregulars seems to have been part of the strategic influence campaign:
 - Calling them terrorists connected them with one of the major themes of Gulf II.
 - Iraq = terrorists = 9/11 = grave threat in the future.
- The structure of the argument and repetition are an effective implementation of the theory of creating memory in a population.
- Obviously, this theme was successful by US opinion polls; majority of citizens believe Iraq was connected to 9/11.

This was part of the “big lie” to tie Iraq to 9/11. As the polls have shown, it has been very effective. It continues to be effective, but what would be wrong with truth?

More Terrorist Theme

- **March 22, Franks, CENTCOM Briefing, “I can’t really provide you a lot of detail. I can tell you that from time to time, in Iraq, we will come across what we believe to be terrorist-associated activity or people, and when we do so, we will strike them, and then we will exploit the site subsequent to the strike. I can tell you that in fact we did strike last evening a terrorist complex...”**
- **March 24 – Wolfowitz, BBC World Service, “We’ve just taken some very decisive action against that pocket of al Qaeda terrorists in Kramal.”**
- **March 25th – Brooks, CENTCOM Briefing, “The practices that have been conducted by these paramilitaries and by these others who are out there, sometimes in uniform, sometimes not in uniform, are more akin to the behaviors of global terrorists than they are to a nation. And that certainly is in our mind at this time.”**
- **Assessment: Obvious why an Associated Press poll conducted shortly after Gulf II was declared ended, 53 percent of the nation pin the 9/11 attacks on Saddam.**

The “terrorist” connection took many other forms, many forms but the truth. I don’t see evidence they cherished the truth.

“The first image will define the conflict.” Much of the effort was about image. It might be called the marketing event that never happened. It was to be a big show when Basrah fell. Sources in the BBC tell me the reason the US 15th MEU was assigned to this part of the battlefield was so an American unit could lead the way into the city. Although the reason for the assignment might not be true, it is almost as important point that they believed that of the Americans.

Operation TELIC Production Event

- **“The first image of the war will define the conflict...” USMC spokesman.**
- **15 Marine Expeditionary Unit given task of attacking Umm Qasr and Basrah over the objections of the UK because US wanted to have their forces lead the victory into Basrah. (My sources in the UK)**
- **Military officials said:**
 - **Marines were to carry packets of food to pass out to children.**
 - **Medics were to provide care as the forces moved as the occupation forces rolled in.**
 - **Journalists were to be bused to the city.**
 - **Television crews were to be flown into the city.**
- **Battle of Basrah took over two weeks, and the media event did not take place.**

The US and the UK had a difference over the code name to give the conflict. The Brits chose to call it Operation TELIC, more consistent with the traditional methodology for naming combat operations.

It was about image, so much effort and money on image.

When the pattern becomes clear some of the stories have new clarity.

Ansar al-Salam

- **Said to be Al Qaeda terrorists**
 - Splinter Kurdish group who found bin Laden's efforts heroic.
 - Was formed "shortly after 9/11" although probably December 2001.
- **Said to be controlled by Saddam Hussein because there were reports of two Republican Guard officers since in the vicinity.**
- **Said to be producing ricin.**
 - Reports after the attack on the facility suggested important documents.
 - The "poison factory" lacked sophistication and was housed in a small cinderblock building bearing brown granules and ammonia-like scents. Tests by U.S. laboratories revealed traces of chemicals including hydrogen cyanide and potassium cyanide, substances usually used to kill rodents. Jeffrey Fleishman, *LA Times*, September 3, 2003

Secretary of State Powell showed a picture in his presentation to the UN Security Council. The title was "Terrorist Poison and Explosives Factory."

From the beginning, the implication that since the group was formed shortly after 9/11 it was tied to bin Laden. Because a single source reported Republican Guard officers in the area, it was tied to Saddam Hussein.

They did find rat poison in one of the buildings. Was it bad intelligence, or did they blur the line between a single source of information and the story they wanted to tell?

Salman Pak

- **"Former Iraqi military officers have described a highly secret terrorist training facility in Iraq known as Salman Pak, where both Iraqis and non-Iraqi Arabs receive training on hijacking planes and trains, planting explosives in cities, sabotage, and assassinations." White House White Paper, *Decade of Deception*, September 12, 2002**

The White House told us there was a terrorist training facility for non-Iraqi Arabs. This facility became a major part of the strategic influence, market effort. Why didn't we find compelling evidence?

Why couldn't we have been told the truth about the power grid?

Attacking the Iraqi Power Grid

- April 3, 2003 - Release Number: 03-04-38
BAGHDAD ELECTRICAL SYSTEM NOT TARGETED BY COALITION - CAMP AS SAYLIYAH, Qatar--News reports indicate that electrical power is out in Baghdad. Coalition forces have not targeted Baghdad's electrical system.
- "We did not have the power grid as a target. That was not us." - DOD News Briefing, April 4, Tori Clarke
- Facts:
 - US targeted portions of the power grid in the North during a special operations attack on the dam at Hadithah on April 1st or 2nd.
 - Power grid was attacked two or three times south of Baghdad along Highway 6; this included a Tomahawk strike using carbon fibers which would have required approval in Washington. (Human Rights Watch)

It was announced several times during the war that the United States had not struck the electrical power grid. This was not true.

Because one of the strikes was with carbon fiber, the targeting would have been approved in Washington. Where was truth from this podium?

The dirty bomb question surfaced a number of times during the marketing of the war. The Iraqi National Congress arranged for an interview of someone who said Iraq was working on a radiation weapon. In June 2002, Khidhir Hamza, an individual often quoted by the White House even by the President himself, implied Iraq was going to train terrorists to use a radiation weapon. In a very subtle technique "officials" did background interviews in which they said radiation weapons were one of the things that kept them awake at night. If it were not part of the pattern, you would almost have to admire this background technique as a way to reinforce a story.

Dirty Bombs

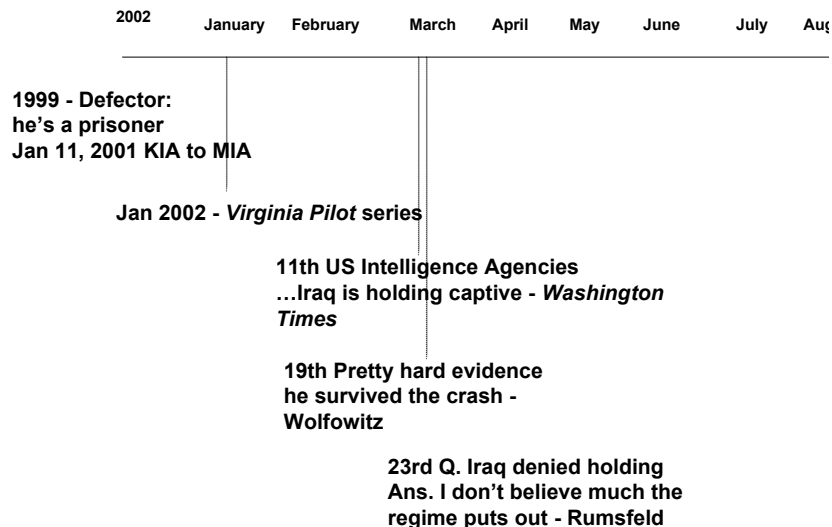
- Iraqi National Congress arranged interview with a defector.
 - "The defector describes a meeting held in Tanzania in 1994, in which he and other Iraqis met five eastern Europeans...cash was exchanged for the contents of a heavy trunk." David Rose, *Vanity Fair*, April 2002.
 - The implication was that this is material that could be used for a dirty bomb.
- "This environment is ideal for countries like Iraq to train and support a terrorist operation using radiation weapons..." Khidhir Hamza, *Wall Street Journal*, June 12, 2002.
- Program terminated, Iraq Report to the UN, December 9
- "A few officials speaking on background, have engaged in what-could-go-wrong conversations, saying they are kept awake at night by the prospect of a dirty bomb." David Sanger, *International Herald Tribune*, February 28th.

As in this case, some of the most extreme support for the message often came from individuals and groups with close connections to the White House or the Pentagon. This is one example.

The case of Commander Speicher is particularly painful when I describe it to military friends. He was a naval aviator shot down early in the first Gulf War. There was some question about his status right after that war, but the evidence suggests his case was used to generate support and to market this war. A reporter told me that Deputy Secretary of Defense Wolfowitz had a list of 10 reasons for going to war. The Speicher case was on that list.

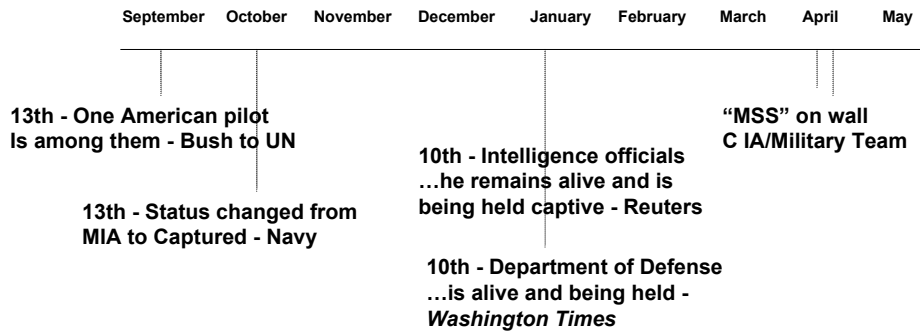
Its story came to the surface with a single defector report. Then, in a pattern typical of created stories, the *Washington Times* reported that US "Intelligence Agencies" had information that he was being held captive. The story was allowed to develop because of answers to questions by Wolfowitz and Rumsfeld. Rumsfeld's answer was particularly disturbing. When he was told in a question that Iraq had denied they were holding Speicher as a prisoner, he responded by saying, "I don't believe much the regime puts out." That answer was too clever not to have been formulated to leave the impression that he was alive. Why doesn't he cherish truth? Why didn't he consider what he was doing to Speicher's family?

Lt. Commander Scott Speicher



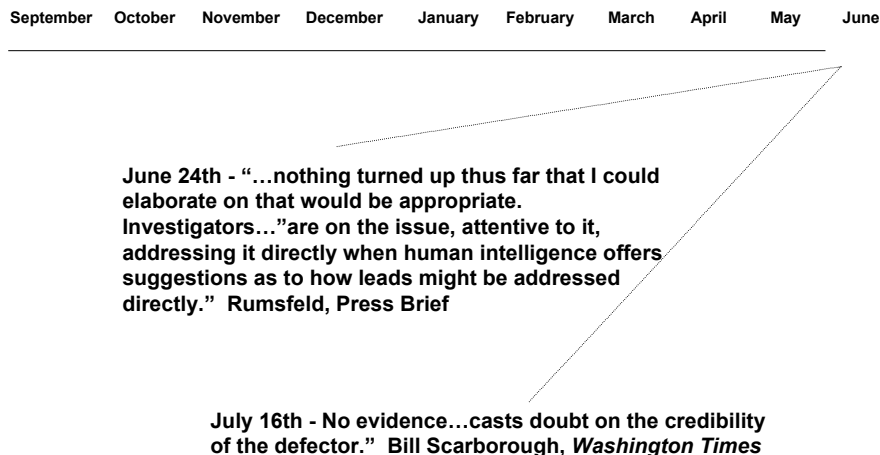
The President raised the case in his presentation to the UN. Then, early in the marketing campaign, the Navy changed his status from "missing in action" to "captured." ABC News has reported that Navy officials say they were pressured to make this change. I can't confirm that.

Lt. Commander Scott Speicher



In January 2003, "intelligence officials" continue to leak information that Speicher was alive and being held captive. In April, almost as if to keep the story alive, it was reported that his initials had been found on the wall of a cell. This was a very strange leak. Military POW recovery personnel are very careful about releasing information that would cause false hope in families.

Lt. Commander Scott Speicher



The facts are that no trace has been found of him. DNA of hair fibers in the cell where the initials were found did not match.

Again, what becomes important is the pattern. It does not seem as if we were getting truth from the podia.

There were the chemical cluster bombs:

Chemical Cluster Bombs ***Quick Response***



The chemical cluster bomb story certainly didn't linger. It was around only a couple days. It was part of the attack on the second report from Hans Blix. On March 10, there were releases and statements by Administration officials that the UNMOVIC report did not cover the Iraqi chemical cluster bomb program.

Chemical Cluster Bombs ***Complex Way of Delivering Chemicals***

- **There is no evidence to conclude that Iraq has a warhead with chemical submunitions. No information on testing has been obtained, and experimentation with bursts at relatively high release points has not been seen. OSD, Post 1991 Report on Patriot Use During Gulf I**
- **Assessment: This is a technologically very difficult to achieve; much better ways of delivering chemical or biological weapons.**

OSD had discounted Iraq developing what would be a very complex weapons system during the first Gulf War.

Chemical Cluster Bombs Discrediting UNMOVIC

- UN weapons inspectors in Iraq recently discovered a new variety of rocket seemingly configured to strew bomblets filled with chemical or biological agents over large areas, U.S. officials say. - *New York Times News Service*, March 10, 2003
- Inspectors discovered cluster bombs and sub munitions that appeared designed to deliver chemical or biological agents. Contrary to initial Iraqi statements, a number of bombs and over 100 sub munitions were found. State Department, March 10, 2003
- Another is a videotape showing Iraq testing a cluster bomb that could disperse chemical weapons over a wide area. - CNN, March 10, 2003
- Administration spokesmen said that chief inspector Hans Blix did not give details...of the possible existence of a cluster bomb that could deliver deadly poisons. - *Boston Globe*, March 11, 2003
- The U.S. is also aware of UNMOVIC's discovery of Iraqi production of munitions capable of dispensing both chemical and biological weapons... - Ari Fleischer, March 11, 2003

Certainly, the information operation or strategic influence effort included attacking and discrediting. Attack or discredit those who did not support the story.

Chemical Cluster Bombs: Assessment

- Quick turn response to Blix report that got carried widely by print and broadcast media.
- Good example of the concept of responding within the news cycle although it lacked consistency.
- The cluster bomb story did not have legs because it was rather weak, but it still served its purpose at the time.
- Probably worth the minor negative impact of the Blix statement in June that it was part of a campaign to discredit him.

Again, the cluster bomb story fits the pattern and methods.

We were told Iraq had a major program for computer network attack in a White House paper. Wolfowitz gave the warning in a presentation to the Council on Foreign Relations.

Intended to Mislead Yes	False X (No Attacks)	Engineered
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Information Warfare

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION PROGRAMS
Middle East/North Africa | **Iraq** Arabic Version

23 January 2003

White House Report Details Iraq's Efforts to Block U.N. Inspections

□ According to Iraqi defector Dr. **Khidhir Hamza**, **Iraq's** Babylon Software Company was developing cyber warfare capabilities on behalf of the Iraqi Intelligence Service as early as the 1990s. People assigned to Babylon initially worked on information security technologies and techniques, but some of the programmers were segregated into a "highly compartmented unit" and tasked with breaking into foreign computers in order to download sensitive data or infect the computers with viruses. Some of the programmers reported that they had accumulated enough expertise to break into moderately protected computer systems.

...also Wolfowitz to the Council on Foreign Relations

The Deputy Director of Information Operations on the Joint Staff announced at a conference in London in early July that the United States experienced no major attempts to penetrate its systems during the war. What happened to the "highly compartmented unit" of the Babylon Software Company?

There was the story about the bad guys using US uniforms:

Iraqi in US Uniforms

- March 7th. Iraq is acquiring military uniforms "identical down to the last detail" to those worn by American and British forces and plans to use them to shift blame for atrocities, a senior U.S. official said Thursday. Jim Wilkinson, Tampa Florida.
- March 26th. Soldiers in the U.S. 3rd Infantry moving north toward Baghdad say they believe they have been attacked by Iraqis wearing American uniforms. And they say they're worried that some of the uniforms were stolen several weeks ago while the U.S. troops were in Kuwait. David Bloom, NBC.

We were told Iraq had acquired US and UK uniforms. There was one report from an embedded reporter that a unit "thought" they had seen American uniforms; their fear was partly driven because some of their laundry had been stolen while they were in Kuwait.

There was also an item from an embedded reporter that his unit had found and

Iraqi “soldier” who had been blown up by his own explosives.

We have no reports of Iraq trying to shift the blame for atrocities. The way it was put by Jim Wilkinson, a name that keeps appearing in these questionable stories, it seems to fit a pattern of pre-blaming Iraq. It has the feel of being a created story.

Iraqi in US Uniforms

- **March 26th Clarke:** Well, I remember several weeks ago out here talking about we knew they were acquiring uniforms that looked like U.S. and U.K. uniforms. And the reporting was that they planned to use them, give them to the thugs, as I call them, to go out, carry out reprisals against the Iraqi people, and try to blame it on coalition forces. So just recently we have seen reports again that they may be wearing or using what looked like U.S. uniforms to confuse people, to confuse our forces, to confuse the Iraqi people.
 - **Q:** Have you seen specific reports about them wearing U.S. uniforms accepting the surrender of Iraqi troops, and then executing them?
 - **Clarke:** I have seen -- I have seen at least one report.
 - **Clarke:** I want to caution that and caveat that and say I have seen one report like that
- **March 28th Rumsfeld:** They put on American and British uniforms to try to fool regular Iraqi soldiers into surrendering to them, and then execute them as an example for others who might contemplate defection or capitulation.

The story got turned into Iraqi wearing uniforms to get others to surrender, but even Tori Clarke cautioned about its validity. Two days later, Rumsfeld announced it as if it were true.

We were going to be fighting children. The State Department put out a paper in December warning that we could see fighting from some as young as 10.

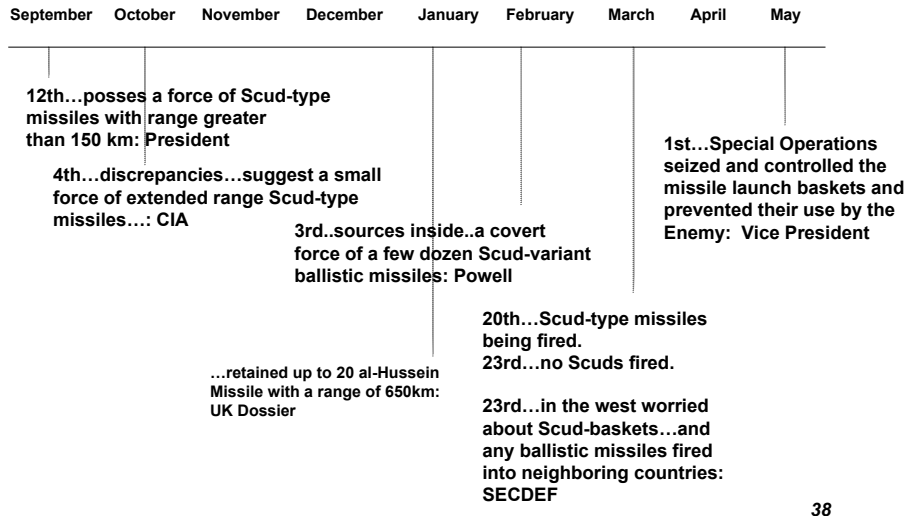
Children Soldiers

- **December 2002**
 - ***Iraq: A Population Silenced*** by State Department Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor.
 - **Could have to fight children**
 - **Training classes for ages 10 to 15**
- **Surfaced again during the conflict in some press reports.**
- **Assessment: An exaggeration probably part of the strategic influence campaign.**

There were no reports of units encountering units of fighting children soldiers.

Before the war, we were told Iraq had some number of Scuds left over. It was a story consistent on both sides of the Atlantic. This was important because it would have meant the capability to attack Israel.

Scuds



For the first three days of the war, spokesmen were using the term Scud-type missiles to describe the missile attacks. They, of course were not Scuds, and we have found no Scuds, but for three days, they kept the story alive.

Scuds: Assessment

- **CIA made the point with the October report that there were accounting discrepancies which could mean some hidden missiles.**
- **By the Powell speech to the UN the missiles became a fact for both the US and UK.**
- **The “Scud” storyline was carried through the war, probably part of the strategic influence campaign.**

Once the story had been created, it was hard to let go, but no Scuds.

We were supposed to be threatened by Remotely Piloted Vehicles that could deliver chemical or biological weapons:

Remotely Piloted Vehicles



In October in the CIA report, these were airplanes. By the time of the Powell presentation to the UN, they had gotten much smaller.

Remotely Piloted Vehicles

- **October CIA Report:** “...attempted to convert some of its J-29 jet trainer aircraft into an RPV... that can be fitted with spray...”
- **President in Cincinnati in October -** drones that could be used to attack the U.S.
- **June 15th, *LA Times*,** “They quickly found the ‘drones’: five burned and blackened 9-foot wings dumped near the front gate. ‘It could have been a student project, or maybe a model,’ the team’s expert, U.S. Air Force Capt. Libbie Boehm, said with a shrug.
...from an investigation of a reported drones with sprayers by the 75th Exploitation Group

The President even said these drones could reach the United States. An Air Force captain who went to the location with the WMD Exploitation Group said they looked like a “student project.”

More recently, a USAF team has done further analysis and concluded the remotely piloted vehicles were for reconnaissance. Their mission was to take pictures.

There is still a great deal we don’t know about the Jessica Lynch story, but there are some insights we can get once we have gotten the pattern of how engineered or manufactured stories were handled during the war. It certainly has the characteristics of strategic influence campaign.

Post would have been very highly classified, with special handing, limited only to those who had a need to know. This was a major pattern from the beginning of the marketing campaign throughout the war. It was okay to release classified information if it supported the message.

On the afternoon of the 3rd when Rumsfeld and Myers gave their press briefing, the story on the street was that she was America's new Rambo. We know. However, that they had been briefed. We know he would have been aware of her injuries. When asked, he pulled back. He left the *Washington Post* story as possibly being right. Again, we see the pattern. When the story on the street supports the message, it will be left there by a non-answer. The message is more important than the truth.

Private Jessica Lynch

- April 3, *Washington Post*... "sustained multiple gunshot wounds" and also was stabbed while she "fought fiercely and shot several enemy soldiers ... firing her weapon until she ran out of ammunition." The paper cited an unnamed U.S. military official as saying "she was fighting to the death."
 - NYT also reported she had gunshot wounds.
- April 3, Rumsfeld, "We are certainly grateful for the brilliant and courageous rescue of Sergeant -- correction -- Pfc. [Private First Class] Jessica Lynch, who was being held by Iraqi forces in what they called a "hospital."
 - Question: Rumsfeld: Gen. Myers and I get briefed on these types of things and there's an orderly process for debriefing and discussing them. And I have no intention of discussing it piecemeal.
- ...April 5, CENTCOM briefing "... in coordination with conventional forces from the Marine Corps and the Air Force and the Army were able to successfully rescue Private First Class Jennifer (sic) Lynch out of a hospital and irregular military headquarters facility that was being used by these death squads in Nasiriyah and successfully return her to U.S. hands..."

My friends who are graduates of the Air Force Academy agree that General Myers would have been taken before an honor board if he been a cadet during this press briefing and did not speak up when he knew an untruth was being let stand.

Even Central Command kept the story alive by not giving out details.

Private Jessica Lynch

- April 5, Armed Forces Information Service... "There were no firefights inside the hospital, but plenty of action outside, Brooks said."
- April 5, Brig Gen Brooks, "There was not a firefight inside of the building, I will tell you, but there were fire fights outside of the building, getting in and getting out."
- No reports on her condition.
- April 6, *Washington Times*, "The hospital where Pfc. Lynch was held was reported to be a stronghold of the Fedayeen Saddam, a guerrilla force sworn to martyrdom for Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein. The rescuers arrived by helicopter, secured the building by gunfire and forced their way inside, CNN reported."
- April 14th, *Time*, "According to the *Washington Post*, Lynch, an Army supply clerk with only minimal combat training, shot several advancing Iraqi soldiers, emptying her weapon of ammunition and possibly incurring a series of gunshot wounds."

The exaggerated story was allowed to stay, and even appeared in the April 14th *Time Magazine* article about her.

On March 23rd General Pace, Myers' deputy, got a little carried away with his making Iraq evil.

Hanging of a Waving Woman

- **March 23rd - "In once case, and Iraqi woman was hanged after she waved to Coalition forces." General Pace, CNN**
- **No other reports of an incident like this and no verification of this story.**

A very strange part of the strategic influence or information of integrity would have allowed themselves to be spokesmen for very weakly supported stories. Even if there were a single report of something like this happening, my expectation would have been that someone like General Pace would have wanted more details before going on national television to make such a statement.

Punishing the French - The Stories

September October November December January February March April May



The evidence points to the French being the focus of punishment in the strategic influence campaign. There are at least eight times when false stories or engineered stories were aimed at them, the majority appearing after their lack of support in the UN for US and UK actions.

well put together. The production line for the Roland 2 shut down in 1993.³
We were told the French were helping Iraqi official escape to Syria:

Punishing the French - Passports

May 6 - Washington Times

“An unknown number of Iraqis who worked for Saddam Hussein’s government were given passports by French officials in Syria, U.S. intelligence officials said.”

“...said officials familiar with intelligence reports.”

“...revealed through sensitive intelligence-gathering means angered Pentagon, State Department and intelligence officials in Washington.”

“...one official said. “...a second Administration official said.”

This story had some legs, and the *Washington Times* kept getting fed information to keep it alive.

Punishing the French

May 6

May 7

**Ireland on Line
Australian Broadcasting Corp.
Expatica, Netherlands**

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**Fox News
“The reports add fuel to the fire
that Paris had been colluding
with Baghdad before and during
the coalition invasion of Iraq.”**

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**Washington Times
“US intelligence officials are
intensifying the search in
Europe for officials of the
Saddam Hussein government
who fled Iraq with French
passports, US officials said
yesterday.”**

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Many newspapers carried the story, and it even generated an official inquiry.

³ It is hard to explain, but this Roland fabrication keeps surfacing. It came up again in early October when a Polish unit was reported to have found recently manufactured missiles. After it bounced around for couple days, a Polish spokesman announced that it was not true.

Punishing the French

May 8

Charleston Post Courier

“France is rumored to have issued passports of Iraqi officials in Syria.”

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House Judiciary Chairman James Senesbrenner wrote Tom Ridge: “If the Department of Homeland Security receives or uncovers any information suggesting that this allegation is true...France should be suspended...from a visa waiver program.”

May 9

Rumsfeld, DOD Briefing:

“France has historically had a very close relationship with Iraq. My understanding is that it continued right up until the outbreak of the war. What took place after that, we’ll find out. I’ve read these reports, but I don’t have anything to add to them.”

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When Rumsfeld was questioned, he followed pattern. When something is on the street that is part of the strategic influence campaign, let it linger. He said when asked about the reports, “I have nothing to add to them.” Clearly, the implication of that kind of answer is that he wanted people to believe the stories. He had nothing to add.

Even the White House got into this strategic influence effort. One has to believe the Administration knew by mid-May that the stories were not true, but at the White House press briefing, it was not stopped.

Punishing the French

May 14

Washington Post
French deny...

May 15 & 16

France accuses the United States of a smear campaign, using this as one example.

White House Press Brief:

Q Going back to France, the French have denied selling arms to Iraq and issuing passports to Syria to fleeing Iraqi officials. Are those charges valid?

MR. McCLELLAN: Well, I think that those are questions you can address to France.

Q On that point, Scott, do you have any information that the French did, in fact, issue passports to people so that --

MR. McCLELLAN: I think -- no, I think that’s a question you need to address to France.

Q Well, no, it’s information the U.S. claims to have.

MR. McCLELLAN: I don’t have anything for you.

Punishing the French: Assessment

- **Technique made effective use of the concept of “echo.”**
 - Less than professional journalism repeated in 100's of newspapers and on television reporting on the story as a story.
 - *Washington Times* repeated the story with small bits of information so it lingered.
- **Seems most likely that this was part of the strategic influence campaign that can be traced at least circumstantially to the Special Plans Office in the Pentagon.**

I've been told from sources in the press that most of the leaks during the “armed conflict” that appeared in the *Washington Times* came from the Special Plans Office in the Pentagon. Using the kind of methods Admiral Poindexter was going to do on information operations, there would appear to be validity in what I was told.

The Secretary of Defense told us before the war he was going to do strategic influence. It appears as if the French were a target.

I'm confident from my research the white flag story was engineered. Even more, it is beginning to appear as if it were fabricated to cover a very serious friendly fire event.

Details of two incidents involving white flags have surfaced. The first was reported on March 23rd. General Abizaig, the Deputy Commander of Central Command, said that right after some Iraqi soldiers surrendered artillery fire came in on a Marine unit. He called it a ruse. On the surface the explanation seems strange. The Iraqi Army had trouble coordinating artillery fire at all. It is a stretch of the imagination to believe they could put together a plan in which a part of their force would surrender then they would start firing artillery.

White Flag Incident(s)

March 23

March 24

“There were several incidents reported today in which there were types of behavior that I can only describe as ruses...In one incident, a flag of surrender was displayed, and it was followed up by artillery.” CENTCOM briefing, General Aibzaig

“The Iraqi regime is engaged in other deadly deceptions. They are sending forces out carrying white surrender flags...the most serious violations of the laws of war.” DOD Press Briefing, Clarke

Extremely difficult
Military operation
To coordinate.

After this incident, however, it seems to have become a matter of policy to talk about white flag killing. It began the next day.

(The other white flag incident was when Iraqi soldiers shot civilians that were trying to surrender with a white flag. Both the civilians and the Iraqi soldiers were killed. Stories also have two sides. A memorable picture of the war was of British troops standing over two dead Iraqi in a foxhole; they had been holding up a white flag.)

White Flag Incident(s)

March 25

March 27

“The regime has committed has Committed acts of treachery...sending soldiers out Waving white flags and feigning surrender, with the goal of drawing coalition forces into ambush.”

“Some of the biggest losses we have taken are due to Iraqis committing violations of the law of armed conflict...by luring us into surrender situation then opening fire on our troops. So this is the plan that is very well thought out, and that will pay out, I think, as we expect.” DOD Press Briefing, Rumsfeld.

“With each passing day and everyday an increasingly violated desperate Iraqi regime violated many international laws...As you know, enemy soldiers have pretended to surrender, to give up, and then brought fire in on our forces.” DOD Press Briefing, Clarke

Rumsfeld really got into the story on March 25th. It continued on the 27th.

White Flag Incident(s)

April 5

April 18

“They have executed prisoners of war, waged attacks under the white flag or truce...” Bush

“Nixon, who served with the 1st Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Expeditionary Brigade from Camp LeJuene, North Caroline, died in battle March 23 when his unit was ambushed by Iraqi soldiers as the pretended to surrender near Nasiriyah in southern Iraq” Arlington National Cemetery Web Site

<u>Intended to Influence</u>	<u>False</u>	<u>Engineered</u>
Yes	X	X

The President came in and picked it up on April 5th. The story had so much legs (many legs) that it was even told as the reason for the death of a Marine at his funeral at Arlington Cemetery.

A disheartening aspect of the white flag story is what is beginning to surface about what might have been the real cause of the Marine casualties near An Nasiriyah on March 23rd. Marines are saying that nine of those killed may have been killed by an A-10 that made repeated passes attacking their position.

We know from a lessons learned report released early in October that the death of nine Marines is under investigation as a friendly fire accident. From individual reports, we know that at least one of the Marines killed on the March 23rd, reported as having been caught in the ruse, was hit directly in the chest with a round from an A-10 gun. We know at least one of the wives of a Marine killed that day is asking for the truth of her husband's death.

We need more truth on the white flag story.

The most significant seemingly fabricated story was the execution of prisoners. Tony Blair was in the United States meeting with the President at Camp David. He came out of the meeting and announced that two British prisoners had been executed. That same day, March 27th, General Pace said almost the same thing on CNN.

Execution of Prisoners

March 27

March 28

Iraq has executed two British prisoners. "If anyone needs any further evidence of the depravity..." Tony Blair at Joint News Conference with Bush at Camp David

"They have executed prisoners of war." Gen Pace, CNN, *Larry King Show*

March 27th, UK Briefing; no mention made of executions by Air Marshal Burridge.

Daily Mirror: Sapper Allsopp's sister Nina said: "His Colonel told us he was not executed we just can't understand why people are lying."

March 27th: Victoria Clarke had told reporters the U.S. had at least one unconfirmed report that Iraqi forces had shot Americans who had either surrendered or were attempting to surrender.

March 27th *Daily Telegraph*: "Intelligence officials have received one uncorroborated report indicating that at least some of the dead soldiers had been captured alive...a senior Pentagon official said today on the condition of anonymity. The information...is of undetermined reliability, the official said."

That day (March 27th) we began seeing statements attributing the story to one report. By the next day, the UK press began attacking the story as not true. One of the soldier's sisters reported his colonel had said he was not executed.

Execution of Prisoners

April 3	April 5	April 7
“They have executed prisoners of war...Bush, American Forces Press Service.	“They have executed prisoners of war...” Bush	“They have executed prisoners of war...” Rumsfeld
The British prime minister’s spokesman said there was no “absolute evidence” that UK servicemen had been executed.		

The UK finally pulled away from the story. The US side stayed with it through April 7th.

When Rumsfeld was questioned on the 7th, the story began to change; the pattern of non-answer surfaced.

Execution of Prisoners

April 7 Press Briefing

- Q: Mr. Secretary, you stated flatly that American POWs have been executed. On what basis do you make that statement? And now that there are at least nine remains that have come back from the ambush in Nasiriyah, how many of those do you believe were American soldiers that were executed?
- Rumsfeld: Let me just see precisely what I said. (Looks through briefing materials.) I think I said they have executed prisoners of war. Did I say American prisoners of war?
- Q: That was my -- that's been the understanding here.
- Rumsfeld: I didn't -- you just said I said American prisoners of war, and I'm not sure I said that. (To General Myers.) Do you know?
- Myers: I don't know.
- Q: Are you saying that there have not been American prisoners executed then?

Execution of Prisoners

April 7 Press Briefing

- Rumsfeld: I'm not saying either. There may very well have been, but I'm not announcing that, if that's what you're asking. Would you check and see if I said that right now? You've got a copy of it; I'd be curious. If I did, I'd want to make it right.
- Q: Well --
- Rumsfeld: Just a minute. If I did say precisely American prisoners of war, I'd want to correct it, because I don't have the names of anyone who has -- any American prisoners of war who we know of certain knowledge has been executed. We do know they executed a lot of prisoners of war over the years. And that's what I --
- Q: Do you know if any of the nine sets of remains that have been returned, if the forensics -- preliminary forensics have shown any of those to have been executed?
- Rumsfeld: I have not heard the report on that. Have you?
- Myers: I have not seen any of that.
(Later in the briefing)
- Rumsfeld: Let me correct this. Your question was inaccurate. I had said, "They have executed POWs," and I did not say from what country.

By the end of the questioning, he implied they were not Americans.

I've talked to people who have seen the picture taken when the individuals from the 507th were found. They described head wounds and fresh blood that could have been consistent with execution. Again, the pattern was that the story was more important than the facts.

What is wrong with the truth? Why didn't these guys level with us? That frustrated me at the time, and it continues to frustrate me.

Shula District Bombing

- **March 29 - Explosion kills more than 50 civilians: Central Command spokesman suggests the likely cause was Iraqi fire.**
- **April 2 - The British *Independent* newspaper reports that it reporter, Robert Fisk, found a 30-centimeter piece of shrapnel at the site of the Shula bombing showing the serial number of the bomb, identifying it as a HARM built by Raytheon.**
- **April 3rd - Jim Wilkinson, a Central Command spokesman, said American forces have received "reliable information" that the Iraqi regime may be planning to bomb some Shiite Muslim neighborhoods of Baghdad, then blame the U.S.-led coalition for the destruction. AP**
- **April 3 - UK Defense Chief Geoff Hoon says there is no evidence the market bombings were caused by coalition missiles.**

On March 29th, 50 civilians were killed in a neighborhood in Baghdad. A British reporter found parts of a US anti-radiation missile (HARM).

The CENTCOM cover story came from Jim Wilkinson. He said Iraq had planned this kind of thing. It was part of the pattern. The UK side continued the "not us" line.

This is another one of those stories that is particularly painful. One keeps wanting

to say, “Why did you do this?” Iraq had place surface to air missiles in the area. That was justification enough.

General Pace did not seem to have had a very good day on March 27th while on the *Larry King Show* on CNN. He said troops from the 507th were shot when they attempted to surrender.

Capture of the 507th

- “Intelligence reports indicate when the troops attempted to surrender, they were shot.” Gen Pace CNN, March 27th
- Official Army Report: “...with no means to continue to resist, SGT Riley made the decision to surrender the two Soldiers (Hernandez, and Johnson) and himself. PFC Miller moved beyond the crash-site, engaged the enemy, and was captured after being surrounded. ... Hudson, also wounded, was immediately surrounded after the shooting stopped, and was pulled from the vehicle by Iraqis and captured.”

It does not seem to have been true, according to the Army report.

There was something about the “Red Zone” that caught a lot of people’s imaginations. Maybe it was because it was easy to understand the football metaphor.

Red Zone

March 21st – Rumsfeld, DOD Press Briefing, “There have been a variety of views offered on that subject (WMD use), and a lot of them tend to cluster around the idea that the most serious period would be if the Iraqi regime did not flee, and the forces got close to where they likely are in Baghdad or Tikrit, and the closer they got, the greater the danger of that. But we don’t -- that’s been more a theory on the part of outsiders rather than a theory on the part of insiders through interrogation or communication.”

March 24th – David Martin, CBS News, “Iraqis have drawn a red line on the map around Baghdad, and once American troops cross it, the Republican Guards are authorized to use chemical weapons.”

March 24th - GEN. FRANKS: I think -- I actually think we don’t know. There is a school of thought that says as the compression becomes tighter and tighter and tighter, the pressure will be greater and greater to use these weapons. So we don’t know

The discussion began with a question to Rumsfeld on March 21st. He provided a fairly good answer; it would not have stimulated much of a story. It was probably close to truth. Three days later someone got to CBS with more, although that same day Franks tended to put it back in the box.

Red Zone

March 25th – Rumsfeld, DOD Press Briefing: “There has been intelligence scraps-- who knows how accurate they are-- chatter in the system that suggest that the closer that coalition forces get to Baghdad and Tikrit, the greater the likelihood, and that some command-and-control arrangements have been put in place. But whether it will happen or not remains to be seen.”

Marc 28th - GEN. BROOKS: “We’re really referring to the earlier reports that it remains consistent as there might be trigger lines that are out there or places that which the regime would be threatened enough that they would use it. And as we add the additional evidence we found on the battlefield, again, we begin to take that very seriously that in fact there is a linkage between the two.”

April 2nd - GEN BROOKS: “First, the red zone or the red lines that we describe is simply a term that characterizes that there may be a trigger line where the regime deems sufficient threat to use weapons of mass destruction, weapons that we know are available to them, weapons that we’ve seen the regime use on their own people in the past, weapons we believe are in the possession of some of their forces now.

By March 25th, Rumsfeld began to pick up the theme. One can be alerted to strategic influence stuff when he talks about “scraps of intelligence.” By April 2nd, the Red Zone had taken on a life.

Red Zone

April 2nd – Military Official at U.S. Central Command, ...said the imaginary red line, the conceptual trip wire for the danger zone, runs east from Karbala, about 50 miles south of Baghdad on the Euphrates River, to Kut on the Tigris River southeast of Baghdad.

...after April 2nd, there were more than 1500 articles using the “Red Zone.”

April 16th – USA Today, A salt desert strip west of the town of Karbala, the gap is only a little more than a mile wide. It also lies inside what the Army commanders came to call the “red line” — turf so close to Baghdad that Iraqi troops might defend it with chemical weapons. U.S. commanders feared that the Iraqis would sucker advance units through the gap, only to “slime” them from behind with chemical weapons, cutting them off to be killed.

By the middle of April, thousands of stories appeared in the written press about the Red Zone.

Even if one grants the Administration some room for not knowing Iraq didn’t have chemical weapons it was immediately prepared to use against us at the beginning of the war, by April 16th, it did know. Joint Task Force 20 whose mission it was to go to the WMD sites first would have been to the majority of them. The coalition air forces had even stopped flying sorties against WMD areas. The evidence would have been coming back to Washington. But, they kept the story alive.

It continued into April:

The WMD and Scud Stories

- **April 10 – NYT, “The Iraqi forces in the area, along the Euphrates River, have been defending a large compound that includes phosphate fertilizer and water treatment plants. American officials say the sheer tenacity of the Iraqi fight has led them to suspect that the Iraqis might be defending Scud missiles or other weapons.” (Reference is to Al Qa’im.)**

No scuds or WMD were found at Al Qa’im.

An Even Darker Side

One element of the darker side was psychological operations. Strategic influence is aimed at international audiences (and maybe domestic audience). PSYOPS, on the other hand, are targeted at the bad guys. The problem is that during this war PSYOPS became a major part of the relationship between the governments of the US and the UK and the free press.

Psychological Operation

- **March 19: “The days of Saddam Hussein are numbered.”**
- **March 21: “...regime is starting to lose control of their country.”**
- **March 23: “The outcome is clear. The regime of Saddam Hussein is gone. It’s over.”**
- **Rumsfeld**
- **Assessment: Most likely part of of the Strategic PSYOPS. U.S. press used to communicate the message.**

At the lower end of the scale, when Rumsfeld and officials in London kept saying the days of the “regime” were numbered, they were talking to people in Iraq who might have been thinking of fighting.

Psychological Operation

- Air Marshall Brian Burridge, March 24th, "It's probably unnecessary at this stage in the campaign to focus on him as one man. The key aspect is the regime itself. Once the regime recognizes that its days are up, then they will crumble. And while they are crumbling, others who for some years maybe have had designs on overthrowing the regime, will probably develop greater levels of courage themselves. So we'll see a crumble and Saddam's place in that is largely becoming immaterial."
- Assessment: Most likely part of of the Strategic PSYOPS.

When the British commander gave a presentation to the international press on March 24th and talked about uprising, he was not giving an assessment as a professional about likely outcomes, he was broadcasting to see if he could inspire that to happen. It was psychological operations. We can see where psychological operations begin to color the free press. It would have been wrong to conclude from his remarks that he was predicting overthrow. His target audience was inside Iraq.

A major example of PSYOPS distorting the free press with false information was the case of the 51st Division. On the 21st and 22nd of March, their surrender was a major story. It was told as if it were a truth. It was told on both sides of the Atlantic. It had been coordinated. It was not true.

Psychological Operation?

51st Division

- **WASHINGTON, March 21 (Reuters) -"The commander of Iraq's regular 51st Division on Friday surrendered to American Marines advancing through the desert toward Baghdad in southern Iraq, U.S. defense officials said. ...The defense officials, who asked not to be identified, did not provide details but told Reuters that both the commander and vice-commander of the division had surrendered...the unit had been peppered in recent weeks with tens of thousands of air-dropped leaflets calling on the Iraqi military to give up."**
- **March 22, CBS News - "An entire division of the Iraqi army, numbering 8,000 soldiers, surrendered to coalition forces in southern Iraq Friday, Pentagon officials said. The move marked the largest single unit to surrender en masse."**

Psychological Operation? *51st Division*

- **Agence France-Presse, March 23.** “An Iraqi commander near the southern city of Basra said Sunday that his division, which Washington earlier said had surrendered, would continue to resist US and British forces. ‘I am with my men in Basra, we continue to defend the people and riches’ of the town, Colonel Khaled al-Hashemi, commander of the 51st Mechanized Division, told the satellite television channel Al-Jazeera.”
- **UPI, March 25.** “It's quite clear elements of the Iraq regular army the 51st Division that was west of Basra have pulled back into the town, of what scale and size, we're not quite clear.” Colonel Chris Vernon, UK Spokesman

By the 23rd, because of interviews with the commander who was supposed to have surrendered, it became clear the 51st had not surrendered.

If the first unit the Coalition encountered had surrendered as a group immediately, it would have been a powerful message to the rest of the Iraqi military to do the same. Certainly, it was not an intelligence failure. You would know if you have an entire division.

The US/UK announcement of the surrender of the 51st Division was a psychological operation.

The Brits seems to have been given lead on another strategic psychological operation.

Psychological Operation?

- **September 8 visit by General Ali Hasan al-Majid, a cousin and trusted member of Saddam's clan.**
- **Saddam Hussein has made secret plans to move his family and some members of the regime in case of a war.**
- **\$3.5 Billion deposited in Libyan banks.**
- **Not clear if Uday is part of the deal.**

The Times, UK

Assessment: Strategic PSYOPS with the target most likely the people of Iraq

It was a planted. The story reported that Saddam Hussein had worked a plan to take members of his family to Libya. The Secretary of Defense told us he was going to do this kind of thing.

I need to mentioned “black programs.” There are some very powerful historical

examples from the Cold War. A former CIA manager for clandestine operations has suggested some of that probably took place in this war. After one sees the pattern of the stories in the press, it is possible to see some black operations might have been generated by the US and the UK. Both countries have organizations whose missions are to generate these kinds of stories.

Milt Bearden raises a profound question for me. If we would manipulate truth, would we also manipulate evidence? That would be very serious. Is that what the Secretary of Defense meant when he said he was going to be doing strategic influence?

Black Programs

- **Historical**
 - US responsible for creating and experimenting with AIDS in Africa.
 - Soviet Army's use of bobby trapped toys in Afghanistan.
- **"It will be important to learn who was behind the fake Niger document and why and what other information driving American policies might carry their fingerprints." ...aluminum tubes?**
Milt Bearden, Former CIA Manager for Clandestine Operations

Here are some possibilities of black propaganda.

September 9th - IISS Report... "only months away if it were able to get hold of weapons grade uranium...from a foreign source."

Black Program?

- Niger nuclear materials documents came to the CIA through the Italians and the British.
- Mentioned in the President's State of the Union Message.
- Reported in the September UK Dossier on the threat from Iraq.
 - February - Joseph Wilson to Africa to investigate the reports.
 - Sept 24th - CIA to Congressional committee
 - Sept 26th - Powell in closed hearing
 - Dec 19th - State position paper; first public
 - Jan 28th - State of the Union Message
 - March 7th - IAEA reveal forgeries
- Fundamental questions is who had to gain by forging these documents?

It is fairly clear now the Niger documents were forged. We have to ask ourselves who would have benefited? For what groups was the fact that Iraq might be close to having nuclear weapons important? There are three possibilities.

The forgery could have been by someone inside the US Government probably

other than the CIA. It could have been done by parts of the Department of Defense. It could have been done by Israeli intelligence. Israeli intelligence was participating with the Department of Defense in the Iraq collection effort. Israel had a great deal to gain. There was a pattern of bad intelligence from the Iraqi National Congress. This could have been part of that pattern. If it were any of the three, the American people certainly have a “need to know.”

There was an interesting timing of the Africa connection. On September 9th, International Institute for Strategic Studies released a report about nuclear weapons that said Iraq was, “only months away if it were able to get hold of weapons grade uranium...from a foreign source.” The UK Dossier the came out shortly after that, quoted the IISS report and mentioned that Iraq had tried to get nuclear materials from Africa. Someone gave IISS bad information. Their argument was compounded in the Dossier by more bad information.

What about the case of George Galloway, a British member of Parliament?

Black Program?

- **April 22nd**, London *Daily Telegraph* reports papers retrieved from Iraq's Foreign Ministry alleged payoffs to George Galloway, longtime critic of a hard line against Hussein
- **April 25th**, *Christian Science Monitor* reports Saddam Hussein had paid British member of Parliament, George Galloway, \$10M over 11 years. Obtained from a retired general.
- **May 11th**, British paper *The Mail*, reported to have gotten documents from the same source that were forgeries.
- **June 20th**, *Christian Science Monitor* reports their analysis revealed their documents were forgeries.
- **Who had anything to gain? Is this part of the pattern of punishment?**
 - Same retired general told the *Christian Science Monitor* he has documents proving 6 of the 9/11 hijackers learned to fly in Iraq.

Documents were forged to suggest direct links between George Galloway and the Iraq regime. Was this part of the pattern of punishment? Was this a black operation?

Documents were “found” which supported the US contention that Iraq planned a guerilla campaign. It does stretch the imagination, however, to believe that Saddam Hussein envisioned the eleven-step program that would go on after he had been removed from power. Who was to benefit by these found documents? Were they forged?

Black Program?

- Iraqi Intelligence Service Emergency Plan, January 23, 2003
 - Steps after the fall to American-British-Zionist allies, God forbid, discovered in Basrah (NYT, June 28)
 - 11 steps
 - Looting and burning government office buildings
 - Sabotaging power plants
 - Cutting communications lines
 - Attacking water purification plants
 - Infiltrating new political parties and Islamic groups, particularly in Najaf, a Shiite religious center
 - Buying stolen weapons
 - Assassinating Shiite and anti-Baathist leaders
- Rumsfeld - "...there are a lot of Baathists and Fedayeen Saddam still in the country, and that they are doing things unhelpful to the coalition..."
- Bremer - On "Fox News Sunday, July 20: "There has been some evidence of planning for the possibility of losing the war militarily and going into some kind of insurgency or organized resistance,"

What is so strange about this is that someone would have us believe that Saddam Hussein would put on his list of things to do actions that would have negative effects on the welfare of the Iraqi people. This is not a guy who cared much about that when he was in power, but now it becomes a major thrust of his popular campaign?

Feels like forgery. Feels like a black program.

Black Program?

- **Saddam Hussein in the Russian Embassy in Baghdad?**
 - First reported by Al Jazeera network.
 - White House, however, picked up on the story.
 - Lines were "hot" to Moscow over the issue.
- **Two possibilities:**
 - It was just a rumor.
 - It was a planted tumor
 - This is probably more likely because of the way the White House picked up on it.
 - There seems to be no other case in which the White House picked up on an Al Jazeera rumor.

Another story with a feeling of blackness was when Al Jazeera reported that Saddam Hussein was in the Russian Embassy. The White House picked up on the story and treated it as if it were truth.

Black Program?

Withheld Iraq Report Blamed on French

- “London - The French secret service is believed to have refused to allow Britain’s MI6 to give the United States ‘credible’ intelligence showing that Iraq was trying to buy uranium ore from Niger, U.S. intelligence sources said yesterday.

U.S. Intelligence sources believe the most likely source of the MI6 intelligence was the French secret service, the DGSE.”

Michael Smith, *London Daily Telegraph*
July 14, 2003

Someone planted a story that the French had a hand in denying credible evidence about Iraq buying uranium. This story burned out very quickly, but I have a feeling of strategic influence.

The strategic influence campaign had some other strange dimensions. It’s almost hard to believe. The Pentagon media consultants created a web site during the war entitled “Empower Peace.” Obviously, it would be wrong to conclude the US Department of Defense was trying to establish a peace movement. It seems as if this program were designed to give the impression that the people of the United States (children) wanted peace. It seems to have been aimed at the Arab audience set. It didn’t say that on the site. It looked like a grassroots effort. Seems like playing with truth.

The web site was very short-lived. This might have been because it could have been a violation of the Smith-Mundt act. The Smith-Mundt Act (1948) forbade the domestic dissemination of U.S. government materials intended for

The screenshot shows the EmpowerPeace website. At the top left is the logo with the text "EmpowerPeace". To the right are dropdown menus for "The Rendon Group" and "Student & Teacher Resources". Below these are navigation buttons: "EP NETWORK", "PRESS ROOM", "ABOUT US", and "BROADCAST". The main content area features a large image of diverse children smiling, with text that reads "PROMOTING CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING and tolerance between youth worldwide through communication. We look to promote this vision through video conferences for youth in participating countries. >MORE!". Below the image is a news snippet: "The Boston to Bahrain Broadcast was a resounding success!!! Thanks to all involved... You can watch the broadcast by clicking on to our Broadcast page... look for highlights, photos, press coverage, and video of this historic broadcast in the coming days!!! And watch for an announcement of our next video conference scheduled for this coming Fall right here!!! Finally, let us know what you think by 'Stating Your Peace' in our Guestbook... May peace find all soon!!!". At the bottom, there are three columns of links: "2003: BOSTON to BAHRAIN", "EMPOWER PEACE NEWS" (with links for "March 2003 - Empower Peace Builds Worldwide Network" and "April 2003 - USDLA Joins"), and "GET EMPOWERED!" (with a link for "EXPLORE THE EP NETWORK!"). On the left sidebar, there are sections for "WATCH THE EP welcome video!", "How to Join!" (with links for "Online Registration" and "Download Classroom Kit"), "Who We Are" (with links for "Our Mission" and "About Us"), "Partners" (with a link for "Coalition Partners"), and "Guestbook" (with a link for "State Your Peace!"). At the bottom left is a "MAKE A pledge of peace" section with a "FIND OUT MORE!" button.

There are some important questions I was not able to answer. Did the Rendon Group pay for this effort with money from its DOD contracts?

“The Iraq Crisis Bulletin” was another strange web site. There was absolutely no indication of the sponsor of the site, but the articles were by Voice of America correspondents.

It was fairly good and was even recommended to reporters by the American Press Institute. The problem is the Voice of America is prohibited from doing communications for the American press, but during Gulf II, it was getting the message to them.

I contacted the press office at VOA and asked if they were aware of the “Iraq Crisis Bulletin” and who maintained the site. No response.

VOA Serving the US Press

- **“Iraq Crisis Bulletin” a web site that provided daily update and reports from around the world about the crisis.**
 - **Subscribe by e-mail**
 - **No indication of the source of the stories.**
 - **Most of the authors, however, were from the VOA.**
- **A recommended site by the American Press Institute.**
- **Question: Who was maintaining the site? Who was paying?**

After I had gotten a handle on the stories that were part of psychological operations and those that were false or engineered for the purpose of either information operations or strategic influence, it was possible to go back over press briefings and score them. Of the topics covered, which were part of PSYOPS and which were false or engineered? I added a category of “no information” in order to see how much truth we were getting.

This is the first brief of the war with Rumsfeld and Myers. As one might expect, the opening remarks were heavy on PSYOPS content.

Collateral Damage

March 20, 2003, DOD Press Briefing

	No Information	PSYOPS	False or Engineered
Rumsfeld: 1. Hit leadership		X	
2. Fight or help		X	
3. Use of WMD		X	
4. Military in free Iraq		X	
5. Protect civilians		X	Influence theme
6. Humanitarian		X	Influence theme
7. Coalition			Influence theme
8. Includes muslims			Strategic influence
9. War against regime		X	Influence theme
10. Coalition			Influence theme
11. Security			
12. Men and women			
13. Coalition			Influence theme

Collateral Damage

March 20, 2003 DOD Press Brief

	No Information	PSYOPS	False or Engineered
Myers: 14. Operational security			
15. Troops			
17. Full information			
Q&A: 18. Oil fires	X		
19. Oil fires	X		
20. Regime and WMD	X		
21. Liberation		X	
22. Rising up		X	
23. Leadership attack			
24. Saddam killed	X		
25. The "Plan"			
26. Liberation		X	
Total	4	10	4 (plus 3 also PSYOPS)

That continued through the question and answer part. Even if you give them slack for not giving any information, it turns out that more than half the answers were not truth.

I'll accept I might make the criteria for truth someone tough. Maybe a better way to say it would be that if an American (or Brit) who were diligent about wanting to understand the war, he could not rely on the statements made by the US Secretary of Defense and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. In less that 50% of the topics covered, the answer would have been "no."

Doing the same kind of analysis on a press briefing on April 7th, I found a similar pattern. The briefing opened with heavy psychological operations.

Collateral Damage

April 7, 2003, DOD Press Briefing

	No Information	PSYOPS	False or Engineered
Rumsfeld: 1. Leadership isolated		X	
2. Forces surrender		X	
3. "Chemical Ali" end		X	(Bad Intelligence?)
4. Tribute to troops			
5. Terrorist, execute prisoners			Influence theme
6. Humanitarian		X	Influence theme
7. People no longer fear regime		X	
8. Meyers: Tribute to troops			
9. Facts of the operations			
10. "Chemical Ali"		X	(Bad Intelligence?)
11. Avoiding civilians			Influence theme

Collateral Damage

April 7, 2003, DOD Press Briefing #2

	No Information	PSYOPS	False or Engineered
Q&A: 12. Sarin found near Karbala	X		
13. WMD Chair of Custody			
14. Missile unit mentioned by Powell	X		Myers appeared not to have heard of the unit
15. Free Iraqi Forces			
16. Impact of Basrah on Baghdad	X		
17. Post-conflict organization	X		
18. Execution of POW's		X	Influence theme & cover of previous
19. Tipping Point			
20. Republican Guard			

This briefing also had two strange exchanges. I have already mentioned the exchange about which prisoners (if any) had been executed. Also during this briefing, General Myers was asked about the chemical missile unit Secretary Powell had talked about in his UN speech as being on the outskirts of Baghdad with WMD warheads ready to fire. He was very evasive saying that he did not recall ever having heard about such a unit. I categorized that as "no information," but it is easy to see why he did not want to respond. It is impossible for me to believe he did not remember the unit.

Collateral Damage

April 7, 2003, DOD Press Briefing #3

	No Information	PSYOPS	False or Engineered
21. Fragging			
22. Post-conflict government	X		
23. Governments supporting Iraq		X	
24. Friendly fire			
25. Character of victory			
26. Stabilization			
Totals	5	8	3

At the end of the briefing, we were left with fewer false stories, quite a few PSYOPS and some “no information.” Were the American people helped understand the true nature of what we were involved with in Iraq? They were not.

Strategic Influence Scorecard

	Desired Influence	Some Desired Influence	No or Negative Influence
Iraq		✦ →	
U.S.	✦ →		
West			✦
Arabs			✦
Rest of the World			✦

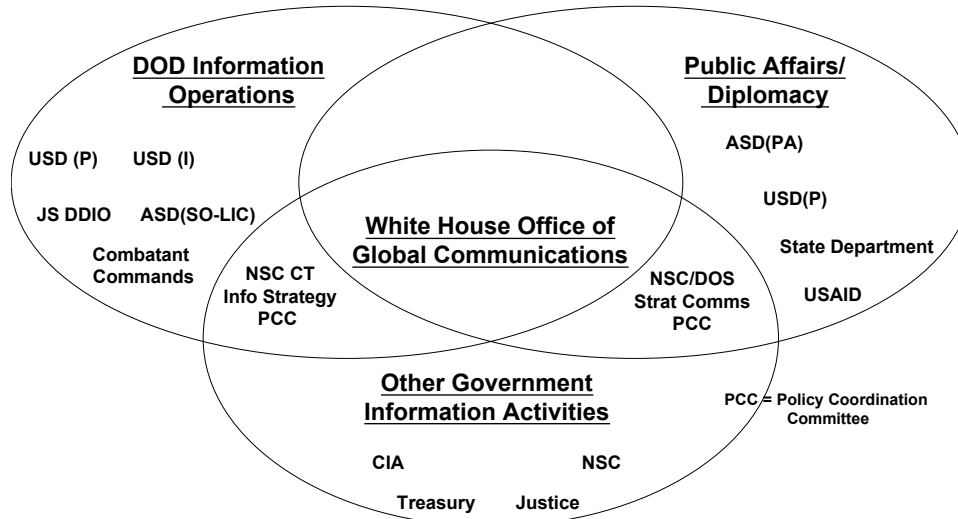
Source: The concept of the five separate perception wars comes from John Rendon, 2 July 03. 91

One of the Pentagon media consultants said there were five separate audiences in the perception war. After all these efforts, it’s possible to come back to the conclusion that the truth is best story. Only two audiences were influenced positively by the strategic influence campaign, and that influence is now diminishing.

According to the UK PSYOPS specialists I heard at a conference in London the first week in July, they are convinced that one of the reasons we are currently having problems in Iraq is because we oversold our story. We told them too many times and too strongly that we would make it better and fix things.

Organizing for Combat

Players in USG Strategic Communication

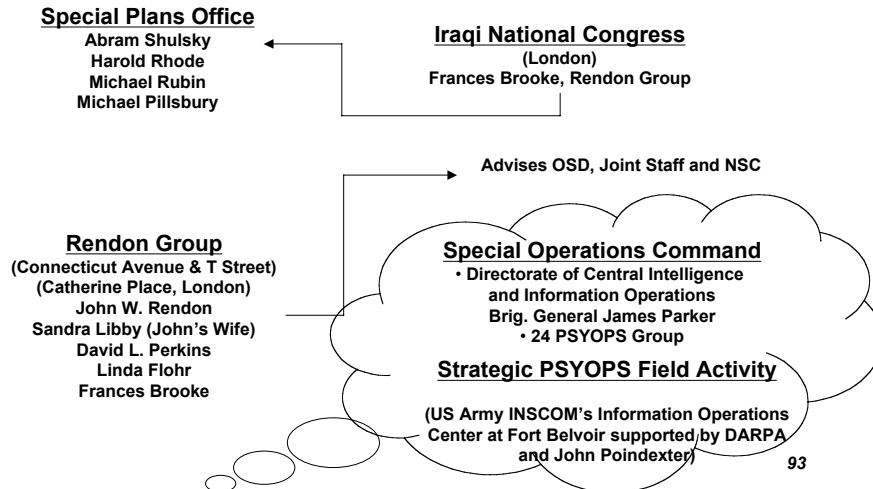


Source: Capt. Gerald Mauer, Assistant Deputy Director for Information Operations, Joint Staff, 2 July 03 92

One way to view how the US Government was organized to do the strategic communications effort before, during and after the war is to use the chart that was used by the Assistant Deputy Director for Information Operations. The center is the White House Office of Global Communications, the organization originally created by Karen Hughes as the Coalition Information Office. The White House is at the center of the strategic communications process.

Its important to note that there are two Policy Coordination Committees, one that deals with the information component of the war on terrorism and one that deals with strategic communications in general.

Organizing for Combat



In the Pentagon, in addition to the normal public affairs structure, the Special Plans Office was deeply involved in this effort, supported (with information) by the Iraqi National Congress. There was the Rendon Group, headed by John Rendon who gave media advice to OSD, the Joint Staff and the White House. Finally, there were connections to large PSYOPS activities.

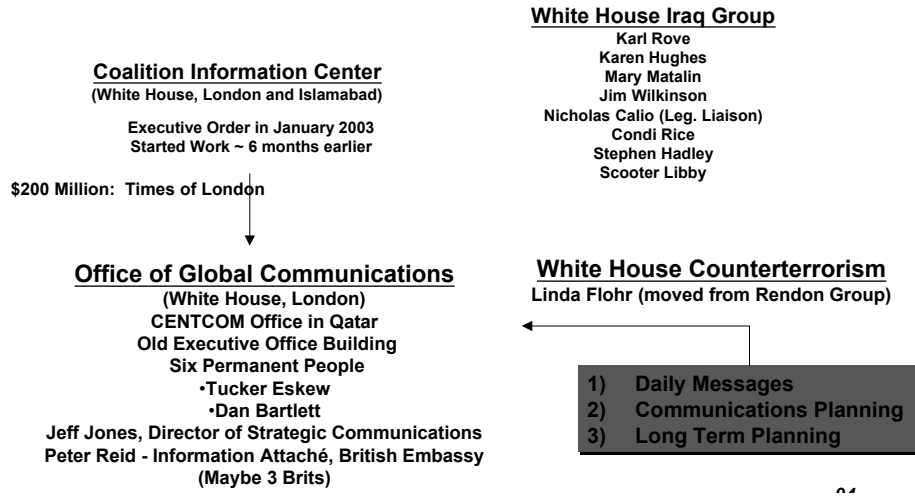
The names of individuals came from open reports. I was given the names of people in the Special Plans Office by a press source.

The Rendon Group worked for the Government of Kuwait during the Gulf I. John Rendon proudly tells that it was he who shipped small American flags to Kuwait for the citizens to wave as troops entered Kuwait City. He suggested the same technique for this war, but the Joint Staff information operations office turned down the idea.

The Rendon Group worked for both OSD and the Joint Staff during this war. John Rendon says he was part of the daily 9:30 phone calls with the key information players to set themes.

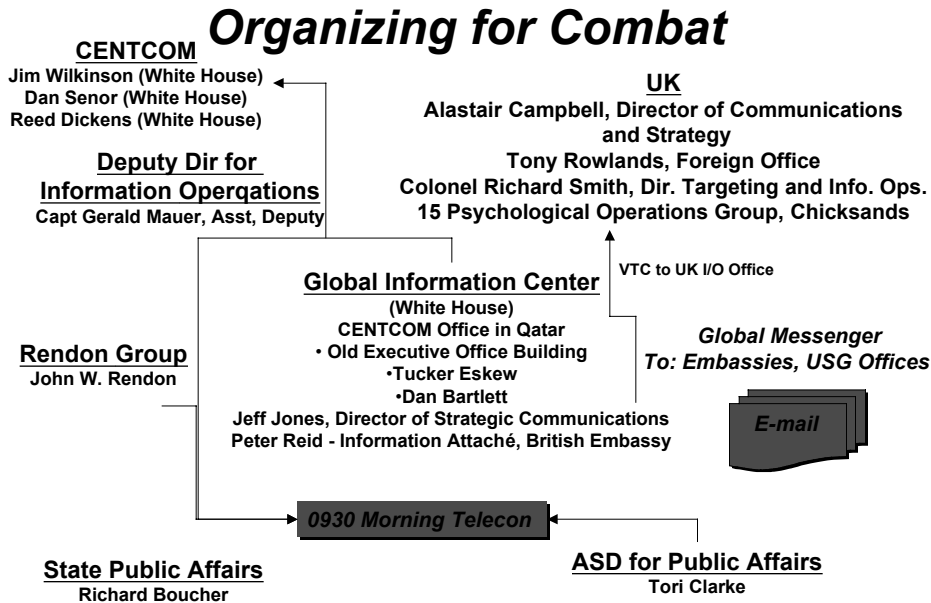
Inside the White House there was an Iraq Group that did policy direction and then the Office of Global Communications itself.

Organizing for Combat



The *Times of London* said the Office of Global Communications was a \$200M program. That certainly raises the question of how much all of this cost, including the \$250,000 for the pressroom in Doha.

It's important to note that at times there were as many as three Brits associated with the Office of global Communications.



These assets were networked. To insure the military would be a willing part of the network, three people from the White House Office of Global Communications were sent to work with Central Command. Jim Wilkinson became General Franks Director of

Strategic Communications.

The war was handled like a political campaign. Everyone in the message business was from the political communications community. It was a political campaign.

UK Organizing for Combat

***0830 - UK Policy Meeting**
0930 - UK Information Operations Cell
works the message for the day.
• For discussions with the US
• For their forces in the field
1300 - News Release Group Meeting
...ad hoc Targeting and Info. Ops.
discussions with Washington

Twice weekly - Iraq Media Group

Every Friday - VTC with Washington

White House Office of
Global Communications

Direct Coordination

Coalition Information
Center

**P. Hamill

**J. Pratt

**M. Khan

**Alison Blackshaw (Campbell's
Personal Assistant)

*Source: Tony Rowlands, Foreign & Commonwealth Office, 2 July 03
** Drafted the February 3rd Dossier, *Telegraph*, 2/8/03

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In London, there was a parallel organization and a parallel coordination process. They kept the coordination with secure video teleconferences.

My concern became even greater when I attended a conference on information operations the first week in July. This was John Rendon's list of things that need fixing.

The Future

- **John Rendon, July 3rd, London conference**
 - We were on the wrong side of expectations during the conflict; we need to fix that.
 - Embedded journalists were the equivalent of reality television, and they got air time.
 - We allowed others to give the context too much; we need to fix that.
 - We were still behind the news cycle by four hours, particularly in other time zones.
 - Lanes are not important as long as an agency with the capability contributes.

He said the embedded idea was great. It worked as they had found in the test. It was the war version reality television, and for the most part, they did not lose control of the story. He said one of the mistakes they made was that they lost control of the context. The retired people in the networks had too much control of context. That has to be fixed for the next war. He said he again was made aware that lanes are not important. By

lanes he meant not letting individual organization take control the story.

The Future

- **Captain Gerald Mauer, Assistant Deputy Director for Information Operations, Joint Staff, July 3rd, London conference.**
 - Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs are slowly being integrated into information operations.
 - We are looking to have a USG Strategic Fusion Center that brings everything together.
 - The Information Operations Roadmap is being coordinated within DOD; I/O will probably go to USD (Policy).
 - We hope to make more use of Hollywood and Madison Avenue in the future.
 - “Adversary” has been taken out of the working definition of information operations; we will attempt to “disrupt, corrupt or usurp adversarial...decision making.”
- **15 Psychological Operations Group (UK) will grow, and strategic information operations will take on new importance.**

The information operations part of the future is frightening. He said without a sense of the implications that public diplomacy and public affairs are being integrated into information operations. He said looking ahead to the next war that the US Government needs a single fusion center that can integrate the story.

The Future

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He described a paper called the Information Operations Roadmap that was being coordinated in the Pentagon. He said when the paper was drafted by his office it said that information operations would be used against an “adversary.” He went on to say that when the paper got to the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (Feith), it was changed to say that information operations will attempt to “disrupt, corrupt or usurp adversarial...decision making.” Adversarial...decision-making will be disrupted. In other words, we will even go after friends if they are against what we are doing or want to do.

They seem to be documenting the practice that emerged during Gulf II. If you don't agree with us, you could be the target of an information attack.

Last Chart

If the democracies of the United States and the United Kingdom are based upon informed, open debate of the issues, we've got some fixing to do.

A close friend always asks about my last chart. What's your last chart? He means what are your recommendations? What do we do? He is right. It does not seem to be enough just to say things have gone bad.

Parliamentary Inquiry. In the UK, it's not enough to look at the arguments about weapons of mass destruction before the war. There needs to be an inquiry of the broader question of how spin got to be more important than substance. What roles did information operations and strategic psychological operations play in the war? What controls need to be placed on information operations?

Information Operations. Someone inside the US Government said to me as I was doing this research that there were so many offices doing information operations he couldn't even name them. We need a major investigation. We need restrictions on which parts of the government can do information operations. We should not do information operations against friends. We have to get this back in control.

SmithMundt Act. The law was written right after World War II. It's intent was that the American people would not become the target of our own propaganda. It no longer works. We became collateral damage, a target group of messages intended for other groups. The Internet and international media access have changed the conditions. We need to revise the laws.

Post Script

The reactions to my research have been very interesting.

When I show the stuff to individuals inside the government, mostly the career people who have been around more than one administration, they have an almost universal first reaction. They say something like, “Be careful with this; they will punish you.” I don’t hear that I have gotten it wrong. They don’t correct my research. I keep hearing the notion that, as I found in the research, punishment of those who disagree is a dimension the strategy.

Print media have been quite interested. I think reporters like the idea of someone confirming they had not been getting the true story. I have detected a major issue in these discussions in what reporters have not said to me.

I think the materials point to problems in the way newspapers did their job during the war. Why don’t they react immediately that they need to do some self-appraisal? I think one could take the stories I have highlighted and ask some direct questions. How was it that the *Washington Post* took classified information on the Jessica Lynch story and published it just the way the individual leaking it in the Pentagon wanted? Why did the *New York Times* let itself be used by “intelligence officials” on stories? Why did the *Washington Times* never seem to question a leak they were given? Why were newspapers in the UK better than those in the U.S. in raising questions before and during the war?

I’ve not heard any self-criticism from reporters to whom I have talked.

When I’ve talked to television producers and reporters my sense is they believe the whole story is just too complex to tell. That’s sad but probably true.

Cynicism is the most disturbing reaction I have found. I got from a limo driver who was taking me to the MSNBC studio for a debate on the no WMD story. He said, “It’s just what politicians do.”

I gave a briefing on my research to one of the major Washington research organizations, a think tank. A major thrust of reactions was to keep asking, “What’s new.” This kind of thing always takes place. I think I heard laughter when I said there was no passion for truth in those who were taking us to war. Didn’t I understand what goes on in government?

I pain for the limo driver because leaders have pushed him to cynical. I pain even more for the senior researcher. He seems to have no sense of a higher vision. I pain for our democratic process when I find individuals not angered at being deceived.