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Stop Paying the Exorbitant Price of George Bush's Lies!

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"Simply stated, there is no doubt that Saddam Hussein now has weapons of mass destruction."

-- Dick Cheney, Vice President,
Speech to VFW National Convention,
8/26/2002

"We know where they are. They're in the area around Tikrit and Baghdad and east, west, south and north somewhat."

-- Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense, ABC Interview, 3/30/2003

1,400 Americans, who clearly should have never been

taken from the joys of everyday pleasures with family and friends at home, came back from Iraq in aluminum caskets because of the Bush administration's audacious WMD lie.

They're joined by many more young men and women who've lost limbs, eyesight, hearing and sanity for the same shameful deception.

Meanwhile, the journal *Lancet* reports that [100,000 Iraqi noncombatants -- mainly women and children](#) -- have perished since Bush's totally unprovoked, unjustified aggression began.

Considering Iraq's population, that's the equivalent of a 9/11 casualty count every ten or eleven days, which should harrowingly haunt all conscientious, decent souls.

Lying about the war didn't stop there, of course.

Remember the toppling of Saddam's statue, using U.S. troops and "grateful Iraqi citizens" who turned out to actually be operatives of a partisan activist group specifically brought in for that stage-managed propaganda event?

Recall, too, the incessant claims by Rumsfeld that Iraqi insurgents are isolated "dead-enders" who weren't supported by the Iraqi populace, despite a poll conducted under the Pentagon's own auspices showing overwhelming Iraqi backing for ending what's plainly a deeply despised occupation.

The lies have been constant, and utterly absurd.

Vehicles well known to be trucks for filling Iraqi artillery balloons were ominously misrepresented as deadly biochemical machines.

Short-range drone aircraft -- little more than enthusiasts' flying models -- were hyped as terror delivery systems threatening the continental United States!

And let's not forget the recent Iraqi election charade.

TAINTED IRAQI "DEMOCRACY"

Originally opposed to an election (preferring instead a rule-by-vice-roy type arrangement consistent with historical imperialism), Bush relented to direct balloting only after being pressured by the influential Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani.

Nevertheless, the vote was more completely organized and controlled by a foreign occupier than elections in Hungary and Czechoslovakia had been under the Soviets decades ago. Washington indignantly called those elections "hoaxes".

In the time that's elapsed since initial reporting boasted an allegedly "huge" voter turnout, the percentage of actual participants has sharply declined, and the degree of American manipulation has begun to be revealed:

"Pinned in Arabic across the helmet of a guard inside a polling station Sunday were the words "My God, Allah." Without as much as a second glance, voters in the crowded school courtyard queued past the soldier, who wore a brown speckled Iraqi military uniform and a scarf that covered his blond moustache...He was a U.S. Marine." (Dionne Searcey, Newsday, Feb.4, 2005)

But it all seems to have backfired.

With the Sunni boycott having been virtually total, Sistani's Shiite grouping is the election's certain winner, by a wide margin. Second place will probably go to a Kurdish ticket, or the list including the Iraqi Communist Party. Bush's choice, interim prime minister and longtime CIA asset Ayad Alawi, appears destined to come in no better than third.

Having so vociferously billed the election as an impressive example of democratic success, Bush will now have to abide by what the winners want, or be decisively exposed as an egregious prevaricator and hypocrite.

And what they'll want is a one-way ticket for sending all U. S. forces out of Iraq.

If Bush goes ahead with the de facto conquest plan that the establishment of 14 permanent U.S. military bases and the world's largest American embassy on Iraqi soil very plainly point to, not only will his scant, remaining credibility be shot to pieces...so, too, will American sons and daughters for bloody months and years to come.

Or however long it takes their parents to snap out of their jingoistic, myth-based trance and face inescapable facts -- and then angrily demonstrate to demand a complete U. S. withdrawal.

REHASHED FASCIST FALSEHOODS

George Bush invaded Iraq as immorally, illegally and as completely without warranted reason as Mussolini invaded Ethiopia in 1935.

Lies as preposterously fabricated as the WMD calumny were used by Hitler to "convince" the German people that attacking Poland in 1939 was mandatory. (Polish troops had supposedly first raided German border posts, and a radio station, but the attackers were actually Nazi provocateurs wearing Polish uniforms.)

The price we pay for such monumental deceit goes well beyond immediate death or traumatic, bodily and emotional injury.

Bush is requesting an additional \$80 billion beyond the

massive outlays that have already made his dirty war the most socially destructive guns-before-butter folly since Vietnam.

The resulting cost can be measured in everything from public schools and community health-care facilities forced to close for lack of funding, to potholes in residential streets that are simply left to deepen. Bush speaks of reducing or eliminating 150 federal programs that benefit countless ordinary citizens, which ought to trigger mass unrest by those who'll be hurtfully affected.

Using scare tactics reminiscent of his WMD scam, he tells us Social Security is "going bust" and must be privatized, which has been a rightwing foot in the door for abolishing the vital pension program since at least Barry Goldwater's day.

Any potential Social Security shortfall, which could easily be covered by removing the cap on incomes above \$90,000, is dwarfed by the staggering amount being squandered on an un-winnable war, plus the mammoth tax breaks Bush freely gave the rich.

The only "crisis" is one of will, and priorities.

INTO THE STREETS IN MARCH

Only those content with America being increasingly despised in global eyes, as our domestic infrastructure goes to pieces -- and as the laughing children in their

back yards face a grim future of becoming shrapnel-perforated victims of imperialism's violently ongoing, profiteering pipedreams -- can keep supporting this dreadful president's patently dishonest, intolerably costly policy.

They'll continue listening to xenophobic Toby Keith tunes as small flags flap from their SUV antennae, while pretending to enjoy the worst political brainwashing since the Nazi era.

But those who listen beyond the numbing white noise of misplaced complacency will hear other sounds.

There's a rumbling beneath us that must be acknowledged. It's Paine and Jefferson furiously whirling in their coffins over what's happened to proper American ideals.

There's the unified voice of international public opinion, which we can ignore only at our infinite peril. Listen to what it says about insufferable superpower arrogance!

Finally, the beginning whispers of personal conscience suggest from deep within that maybe -- just maybe -- it's wrong for the mightiest military on earth to attack a far weaker country for an entirely bogus rationale.

We've come light years from the categorical rectitude of our anti-fascist WWII role to a hideous present that could well have been conceived by Machiavelli or Rasputin if

they'd had the chance to watch Apocalypse Now while under the influence of LSD.

Can we regain our senses and set things right?

Will we quit demonizing the rest of humankind and see the terrible evil glaring back at us in the mirror? Or will unrelentingly stubborn denial slip us down the skids to mutual oblivion, repeating Ancient Rome's fate?

If it's holy or patriotic sanction that we're waiting for to unlimber our wholesale dissent, both are already in place:

"Do not partake in any
barren works of darkness.
Instead, expose them."

-- Ephesians
5:11

"To sin by silence when they
should protest makes
cowards of men."

-- Abraham
Lincoln

George Bush's price isn't right. It's absolutely wrong, and excruciatingly high.

It's time to stop payment, beginning with the coordinated, worldwide antiwar protests that will take place everywhere on March 19-20. Watch your local, alternative news sources for information about the rallies in your vicinity.

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