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US companies aided Saddam?

By Joe Baker, Senior Editor

We all know that the Bush administration edited out more than 8,000 pages from the 11,800 page disclosure report supplied by Saddam Hussein's government.

Have you ever wondered why? The sanitized version, which was given to UN members, did not contain information on nations supplying Iraq with weapons-related materials between 1975 and 1999.

The Progressive Populist (populist.com) reports the U.S. government said it removed the pages to prevent sensitive information from getting into the wrong hands.

An unedited copy, however, found its way into the hands of a German newspaper. The Populist said the copy had data on 150 companies—including 24 U.S. firms—that supported Iraq's program to build or obtain weapons of mass destruction.

American firms listed in the document include Honeywell, Semetex, UNISYS, Sperry Corp., Hewlett Packard, Rockwell, DuPont, Kodak and Bechtel.

According to the Populist, much of that information was gathered by UN inspectors between 1991 and 1998, but the U.S., Britain, Russia, France and China—all permanent members of the Security Council—voted against revealing the extent of these companies complicity in order to preserve "necessary cooperation" by the firms involved.

This story was widely reported in Canadian and European media but the only mention in the American press was a tiny article in The New York Times which listed only two defunct U.S. companies as participants in aiding Iraq.

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