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The White House's New Morally Bankrupt PR Campaign on Terrorism and Iraq

by [Jacob G. Hornberger](#), October 8, 2003

The Bush administration is at it once again — engaging in a new [public-relations campaign](#) to scare the American people half to death with the possibility of terrorist attacks with weapons of mass destruction and to garner support for its invasion and continued occupation of Iraq, which has not only cost the lives of thousands of Iraqis and hundreds of Americans but which now has also become an economic black hole that [threatens the economic security](#) of our nation by sucking hundreds of billions of dollars out of the pockets of the American people.

Speaking in New Hampshire, [President Bush declared](#), “I was not about to stand by and wait and trust in the sanity and restraint of Saddam Hussein.... The danger hasn’t passed. The terrorists continue to plot and plan against our country and our people.... America must not forget the lessons of September 11.”

Addressing the conservative Heritage Foundation, [Vice President Cheney declared](#) that terrorists are “doing everything they can” to get weapons of mass destruction that could kill hundreds of thousands of Americans “in a single day of horror.... Some claim that we should not have acted because the threat from Saddam Hussein was not imminent. Terrorist enemies of our country hope to strike us with the most lethal weapons known to man, and it would be reckless in the extreme to rule out action and save our worries until the day they strike.”

Speaking to the Council on Foreign Relations, National Security Advisor [Condoleezza Rice declared](#) that Saddam could have produced weapons of mass destruction “to mount a future attack beyond the scale of 9/11 — and that terrible prospect could not be put aside.”

Never mind that no weapons of mass destruction were found in Iraq, and never mind that Bush has now publicly admitted that Saddam Hussein had nothing to do with the September 11 attacks. There’s a much more fundamental problem that the American people ignore at their peril: It is the U.S. government's morally bankrupt foreign policy, including its unprovoked and illegal war of aggression against Iraq, that has produced (and continues to produce) the anger and hatred that motivates Arabs to commit terrorist acts against the United States.

After all, let's not forget that the 9/11 terrorists were motivated by the stationing of U.S. troops on Islamic holy lands in Saudi Arabia (which were used to kill innocent Iraqis as part of the enforcement of the illegally established "no-fly zones" over Iraq), the cruel and brutal [12-year embargo](#) against Iraq that contributed to the deaths of hundreds of thousands of innocent Iraqi children, and the U.S. government's unconditional financial and military support of Israeli policies.

Let's also not forget the anger and hatred that has been engendered by the U.S. government's financial and military aid to cruel and tyrannical regimes, which have brutalized, tortured, and killed their own people. Does the shah of Iran come to mind? But it's also important that we never forget what the Iraqi people will never forget — that during the 1980s the U.S. government was an ardent supporter of their cruel and tyrannical dictator, Saddam Hussein, even [furnishing him with weapons of mass destruction](#), which, as we all know, U.S. officials are still looking for.

So, Bush's and Cheney's use of their so-called war on terrorism to justify their invasion and continued occupation of Iraq is patently ludicrous and manifestly deceptive. It was the U.S. government's interventionist policies in the Middle East that engendered the terrorism in the first place. And Bush's and Cheney's invasion and occupation of Iraq are certain to produce even more of it.

Also, Bush and Cheney cannot be unmindful of the fact that the more successful they are in scaring the American people with the prospects of terrorism, especially terrorism with weapons of mass destruction, the less opposition there will be to government suppression of civil liberties here at home. After all, it was the massive fear of mushroom clouds, mustard gas, and Saddam's other weapons of mass destruction that Bush and Cheney planted in the hearts and minds of the American people that won them the necessary public support to attack and invade a sovereign and independent country that had never attacked the United States and to do so without the constitutionally required declaration of war.

It was also that mind-numbing fear that enabled U.S. officials — whose policies engendered the terrorist attacks in the first place and whose gross negligence failed to anticipate the attacks — to implement the most massive centralization of federal power and the most dangerous assault on the constitutional guarantees and civil liberties of the American people in our lifetime.

Here's the big picture regarding the relationship between the U.S. government's morally bankrupt foreign policy and terrorism against America, a picture that unfortunately both Bush and Cheney studiously avoid in their renewed public plea for support for both their "war on terrorism" and their invasion and occupation of Iraq:

1. Throughout the 1970s, the U.S. government supports the shah of Iran and helps him to brutalize, torture, and kill his own people. In anger and hatred, the people of Iran revolt and oust the shah from power, replacing him with an Islamic fundamentalist who refuses to do the bidding of the U.S. government.
2. In retaliation, the Reagan-Bush administration in the 1980s supports Saddam Hussein and authorizes [the delivery to him](#) of biological and chemical weapons, which he uses against the Iranian people with the [full support of U.S. officials](#).

3. When Saddam Hussein signals to U.S. Ambassador April Glaspie in 1991 that he intends to invade Kuwait, she inexplicably gives him a green light by indicating that such disputes are no concern of the United States. When Saddam invades Kuwait, the U.S. government turns on him and intervenes in the Persian Gulf War to reverse the invasion.

4. After reversing the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, the U.S. government, under President George H.W. Bush, leaves Saddam Hussein in power. Promising the Iraqi people support and assistance, U.S. officials induce them to revolt against Saddam and then double-cross them by standing by as Saddam massacres them and fills mass graves with them.

5. U.S. officials then initiate their 12-year campaign to convince the American people that Saddam Hussein (with whom they previously had had a [cozy relationship](#)) was the most dangerous person in the world and implement their [12-year embargo](#) against Iraq with the purpose of squeezing the Iraqi people into ousting Saddam from power. The embargo contributes to the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Iraqi children. U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations (and later Secretary of State) Madeleine Albright expresses the unbelievably callous sentiments of U.S. officials when she tells 60 Minutes that the deaths of the Iraqi children have been “worth it,” a statement that quickly reverberates within the Arab community all over the Middle East.

6. U.S. officials station U.S. soldiers, who are oftentimes obsessively preoccupied with sex and booze, in Saudi Arabia, where the lands that are considered the most holy in the Islamic religion — Mecca and Medina — are located. It is an action that U.S. officials know is certain to produce tremendous anger and resentment among Muslims. Those bases are then used to enforce unilaterally established (i.e., established without support of the UN) “[no-fly zones](#)” over Iraq, with bombs and missiles that kill innocent Iraqis, including children, without any remorse whatsoever among U.S. officials.

7. And of course we can't ignore the U.S. government's long-held policy of unconditional financial and military support of the Israeli government, without respect to whether its actions are right or wrong, a policy that has never ceased to engender anger and hatred among the Arab community.

Ask yourself these important questions: Can you think of a more perfect prescription for terrorism against the United States than all that? How could anyone be surprised that the victims — or friends and relatives of the victims — would ultimately retaliate? That's why it is amazing that U.S. officials were so surprised by the September 11 attacks. After all, being surprised by the 1993 terrorist attack on the World Trade Center, the 1998 terrorist attacks on U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, and the 2000 terrorist attack on the USS Cole in Yemen, is one thing. But being surprised by the 2001 terrorist attack on the WTC is quite another, especially since it came after a cruel and brutal foreign policy that contributed to the deaths of multitudes of innocent people throughout the intervening period of time and after multiple terrorist responses to that policy.

The American people are now faced with a big choice: Should we continue to believe the falsehoods, exaggerations, and deceptions of those who have led our nation down a road that has produced massive amounts of death and destruction — a road of empire, intervention, and dominion over the lives and fortunes of people all over the world — a road that now threatens the [economic security](#) of the American people through the

uncontrolled federal spending that is necessary to finance it — a road that will inevitably produce more animosity and hatred against our nation, which in turn will produce more terrorism against the United States, which in turn will produce more government oppression here at home?

Or has the time come to reestablish the constitutional republic that our Founders and ancestors intended for us — a republic that would restore peace, prosperity, and harmony to our lives and once again make America the most admired and respected country in the world?

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