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From: [Karolyn Martin](#)

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Subject: Colin Powell, Exploiting the Dead of Halabja . . Kurt Nimmo

Not that Colin Powell is an attractive candidate, but this White House Propaganda Inc., has done everything it can think of to vilify him and everyone connected with Bush. Elevating Bush? Is that the idea? That he has surrounded himself deliberately with these weasels - the collection of his choices brings him even down deeper. It does not make Bush look better because he is surrounded by less than Statesmen and Diplomats.

There is too much of a concentration of bad press spewing out by a press corps absolutely devoted to Poppy Bush & Son.

The systematic trashing of Rumsfeld, Cheney, Ashcroft, even Rice and the sorry flock of advisors behind the shower curtain has now become tedious.....km.



September 20, 2003

Colin Powell in Iraq

Exploiting the Dead of Halabja

By KURT NIMMO

The Bushites love to visit the mass graves in Halabja. That's where about 7,000 Kurds died after a chemical weapons attack. "I can't tell you that Saddam Hussein was a murderous tyrant -- you know that," said Colin Powell with prosaic certainty.

"What I can tell you is that what happen here in 1988 is never going to happen again."

No, probably not. But what Powell didn't bother to mention is the fact the US State Department "instructed its diplomats to say that Iran was partly to blame," according Joost R. Hiltermann of Human Rights Watch, which has extensively investigated the Halabja incident. "The result of this stunning act of sophistry was that the international community failed to muster the will to condemn Iraq strongly for an act as heinous as the terrorist strike on the World Trade Center."

Photo ops with disentombed corpses aside, Powell also didn't bother to mention that people connected to the US government at the time of the Halabja massacre believe Iran, not Iraq, committed the atrocity. "We cannot say with any certainty that Iraqi chemical weapons killed the Kurds," insisted Stephen C. Pelletiere a few months ago in the New York Times. "I am in a position to know because, as the Central Intelligence Agency's senior political analyst on Iraq during the Iran-Iraq war, and as a professor at the Army War College from 1988 to 2000, I was privy to much of the classified material that flowed through Washington having to do with the Persian Gulf. In addition, I headed a 1991 Army investigation into how the Iraqis would fight a war against the United States; the classified version of the report went into great detail on the Halabja affair."

In another article published in the New York Times

last year, Col. Walter P. Lang, a senior defense intelligence officer during the Iran-Iraq war, said the CIA wasn't particularly concerned over the use of chemical weapons. "It was just another way of killing people -- whether with a bullet or phosgene, it didn't make any difference." In fact, that was the idea -- to not only sit back while the Iranians and Iraqis killed each other off in huge numbers, but actively arm both sides.

Declassified government documents and interviews with former policymakers reveal US intelligence and logistical support played a crucial role in assisting Iraqi defenses in their efforts to resist "human wave" attacks by suicidal Iranian troops. Both the Reagan and Bush administrations authorized the sale to Iraq of various items that had both military and civilian applications, i.e., chemical and biological weapons. "Fundamentally, the policy was justified," David Newton, a former US ambassador to Baghdad, told the Washington Post. "We were concerned that Iraq should not lose the war with Iran, because that would have threatened Saudi Arabia and the Gulf. Our long-term hope was that Hussein's government would become less repressive and more responsible."

This is nonsense, of course -- the US policy was to make sure Iran and Iraq killed each other off in record numbers. Estimates of the number of dead range up to 1.5 million.

In 1983, Jonathan T. Howe, a senior State Department official, was filling in Secretary of State George P. Shultz on the "almost daily use of CW" against the Iranians. Nonetheless, the nurtured relationship with the Butcher of Baghdad was so important to the Reaganites that they appointed a special envoy to the Middle East -- none other than Donald H. Rumsfeld, who flew off to Baghdad to shake Saddam's hand. The so-called "talking points" the Reagan-Saddam relationship were contained within National Security Decision

Directive 114 of Nov. 26, 1983, the exact contents of which remain classified.

"The presidential directive was issued amid a flurry of reports that Iraqi forces were using chemical weapons in their attempts to hold back the Iranians," writes Michael Dobbs of the Washington Post. "In principle, Washington was strongly opposed to chemical warfare, a practice outlawed by the 1925 Geneva Protocol. In practice, U.S. condemnation of Iraqi use of chemical weapons ranked relatively low on the scale of administration priorities, particularly compared with the all-important goal of preventing an Iranian victory."

Mr. Dobbs is being polite -- the US sold chemical and biological weapons to Iraq and through Israel Hawk missiles to Iran for the express purpose of making sure the two sides fought to a bloody stalemate. As for the Geneva Protocol, it means nothing to the Reaganites, the Bushites, or, for that matter, the Clintonites -- that is unless some official enemy engages in some nastiness.

"In May, 1986, West German authorities foiled an \$81 million ammunition deal and uncovered a tank deal in the process," writes the Jane Hunter, editor and publisher of Israeli Foreign Affairs. "Charged in the case were an Israeli and a former Israeli citizen. The West German weekly Stern said a telex from the state-owned Israeli Military Industries dated April 1 indicated official Israeli involvement... During the Reagan administration US policy has swung through various levels of support for Iraq. Israel's often-stated policy on the Gulf war is to keep it going as long as possible because the dreadful carnage ties up the combatants and prevents either from attacking Israel."

Moreover, when the Halabja massacre came to light a few years later, the Reagan administration opposed congressional efforts to respond by imposing economic sanctions, arguing that they

would be contrary to US interests.

In fact, when Bush I came into office, his administration recommended assigning high priority to US-Iraq relations because Saddam Hussein was considered a potential "major player" in regard to the development of political and economic relations. In 1989, Bush signed a National Security Directive (NSD) designating "economic and political incentives" supposedly designed to "moderate" Iraqi behavior and expand US influence. A few months before Bush signed this NSD, the FBI raided the Atlanta branch office of the Banca Nazionale del Lavoro (BNL) and discovered there were off-the-books loans to Iraq's Ministry of Industry and Military Production, including its chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons and missile programs.

In other words, the officials in the Reagan and Bush administrations are directly responsible for selling Iraq the weapons Bush Junior now carps about so self-righteously and Colin Powell promises the Iraqis will never use on the Kurds or anybody else ever again -- not even the Iranians.

Naturally, none of this means diddly to the average American, who knows nothing about how Reagan and Bush's daddy armed Saddam to the teeth. After all, millions of Americans think Saddam is Osama, Saddam is responsible for the horrific events of 9/11, and the US found tons of chemical and biological weapons in Iraq. Colin Powell, standing before the headstones of Halabja, can easily perpetuate the outlandish myths and brazen lies that drive the Bush Doctrine of Total War forward in the Middle East, as the Likudite neocons deem necessary.

Powell's macabre stop at the mass graves of Halabja was stage managed to counter criticism over the United States' failure to find Saddam's illusory caches of chemical and biological weapons.

"What happened over the intervening 15 years?" Powell asked rhetorically, referencing the period since the Halabja attack. "Did he suddenly lose the motivation?"

No, Colin. Saddam was no longer useful -- and there was no longer any reason to sell him weapons of mass destruction after the Iran-Iraq war was fought to a bloodstained draw. David Kay, the former UN inspector who is head of the Defense Intelligence Agency's Iraq Survey Group, will not find any WMD in Iraq -- not because Saddam furtively hid them but rather because they don't exist.

And that's because the US stopped providing them soon after Iraq Invasion I.

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