

War on Iraq:

April 8-16, 2003

A selection of alternative coverage and analysis

“First came the looters, then came the arsonists. In what can be seen as the final chapter in the sacking of Baghdad, the national library and archives - priceless storehouses of Ottoman historical documents - were turned to ashes.”

—**Robert Fisk**

“The Library houses all books published in Iraq and antique manuscripts, some dating back a millennium to the Ottoman and Abbasid periods... More than 170,000 historical treasures were stolen or destroyed, experts say... The stolen articles included some of the first art and writings known to history.”

—**Canadian Broadcasting Corp.**

“They put US troops round the Oil Ministry and the headquarters of the Secret Police, but stood aside as the mobs looted Baghdad’s Archaeological Museum and torched the National Library. It sounds like something right out of Newt Gingrich’s Contract with America, only here the troops protecting the American Petroleum Institute are lobbyists and politicians, lobbying tax breaks over the wall.”

—**Alexander Cockburn**

“At least 10 people were shot dead and scores wounded Tuesday in the northern Iraqi town of Mosul, a hospital doctor said, with witnesses claiming US troops had opened fire on a crowd after it turned against an American-installed local governor.”

—**Agence France-Presse**

“In Nasiriyah, some 20,000 mostly Shiite demonstrators provided a vocal counterpoint to a US-organised meeting of Iraqi opposition leaders to discuss the country’s political future. The protesters marched to the centre of town chanting “Yes to freedom ... Yes to Islam ... No to America, No to Saddam” while the political forum was

held under tight security at the nearby Biblical city of Ur.”

—**Hi Pakistan**

“Jay Garner is about to become the most important businessman you’ve never heard of... it will take someone with serious business know-how to ‘introduce a capitalist system where there’s been central-control socialism since the 1960s,’ says Ariel Cohen, a foreign-policy expert at the Heritage Foundation. Garner has that too. He directed several major Defense Department programs, including Star Wars, a Rumsfeld favorite.”

—**Fortune Magazine**

“I fled the country after the 1991 Gulf War and Saddam was still in charge (thanks to the US which had bombed Iraq back to the pre-Industrial age, but left Saddam in place)... Alas, tyranny is now replaced with colonialism. Let us not be intoxicated by that image and let it erase the fact that this “liberating” power itself was complicit in propping and supporting Saddam throughout the 1980’s when he waged his war against Iran and killed one million Iraqis. All those Iraqis were not worthy of liberation back then, because they were serving another function: fodder for weapons and for containing Khomeini’s Iran. I remember seeing Rumsfeld shake hands with our oppressor on Iraqi TV back in the early 1980’s and both Bush I and Reagan supplied him with weapons and military intelligence while he was gassing Iraqi Kurds. No wonder it was difficult to topple him without his original sponsors who came uninvited and with ulterior motives that have become painfully obvious by now.”

—**Sinan Antoon**

“The process of getting all this infrastructure to work is usually called ‘reconstruction.’ But American plans for Iraq’s future economy go well beyond that.

Rather, the country is being treated as a blank slate on which the most ideological Washington neoliberals can design their dream economy: fully privatized, foreign-owned and open for business.”

—**Naomi Klein**

“Why does the US give billions of dollars to Egypt and Israel to maintain a tenuous cessation of hostilities that isn’t rooted in any real resolution? Why does Washington loan money to countries, and then absolve those countries of any obligation to repay their debt? It seems silly to keep track of debt at all if the debts end up written off.”

—**Counterpunch**

“Washington is trying to portray its battle as one of liberation, not conquest, but Iraq is about to be invaded by thousands of U.S. evangelical missionaries who say they are bent on a ‘spiritual warfare’ campaign to convert the country’s Muslims to Christianity.”

—**Globe and Mail**

“Back in 2001, the United States fired a cruise missile at al-Jazeera’s office in Kabul <ETH> from which tapes of Osama bin Laden had been broadcast around the world. No explanation was ever given for this extraordinary attack on the night before the city’s ‘liberation’; the Kabul correspondent, Taiseer Alouni, was unhurt. By the strange coincidence of journalism, Mr Alouni was in the Baghdad office yesterday to endure the USAF’s second attack on al-Jazeera.”

—**Robert Fisk**

“I cannot claim any originality for that opinion. I am just quoting the CIA and other intelligence agencies and virtually every specialist in international affairs and terrorism. Foreign Affairs, Foreign Policy, the study by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the high-level

Hart-Rudman Commission on terrorist threats to the United States all agree that it is likely to increase terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.”

—**Noam Chomsky**

“Shortly after Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld issued a stark warning to Iran and Syria last week, declaring that any “hostile acts” they committed on behalf of Iraq might prompt severe consequences, one of President Bush’s closest aides stepped into the Oval Office to warn him that his unpredictable defense secretary had just raised the specter of a broader confrontation. Mr. Bush smiled a moment at the latest example of Mr. Rumsfeld’s brazenness, recalled the aide. Then he said one word — “Good” — and went back to work.”

—**David Sanger in NYTimes**

“According to a New York Times/CBS News survey, 42 per cent of the American public believes that Saddam Hussein is directly responsible for the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. And an ABC news poll says that 55 per cent of Americans believe that Saddam Hussein directly supports al-Qaida. What percentage of America’s armed forces believe these fabrications is anybody’s guess. It is unlikely that British and American troops fighting in Iraq are aware that their governments supported Saddam Hussein both politically and financially through his worst excesses.”

—**Arundhati Roy**

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Compiled by Dru Oja Jay dru@monkeyfist.com