The 'Ignoble Liars' Behind Bush's 'No Exit' War

by Jeffrey Steinberg

On Sunday, March 16, 2003, Vice President Dick Cheney emerged from his cave to appear on the NBC News "Meet the Press" show, for a one-hour interview with Tim Russert. In the course of the hour, Cheney all-but-announced that there was nothing that Saddam Hussein could do to avert an unprovoked and unjustifiable American military invasion of Iraq. Cheney repeatedly referred to the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, as the "historic watershed" that, for the first time, justified an American unilateral preventive war. Yet Cheney himself, a dozen years earlier, had embraced the idea of preventive war—not against a Saddam Hussein who had been armed by the Reagan and Bush Administrations with weapons of mass destruction, but against any nation or combination of nations that challenged American global military primacy in the post-Soviet world. On the pivotal issue of preventive war, Cheney was lying, willfully. But that was just the tip of the iceberg.

Cheney's extraordinary hour-long pronouncement was composed, almost exclusively, of disinformation, which had either already been publicly discredited, or would soon be exposed as lies.

Cheney asserted that Saddam Hussein was actively pursuing the acquisition of nuclear weapons, when, days earlier, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) chief weapons inspector Mohammed El-Baradei had testified before the UN Security Council that the allegations were based on documents determined to be forgeries. Indeed, in the March 31 issue of *The New Yorker* magazine, investigative reporter Seymour Hersh detailed how IAEA investigators had determined, in just several hours of research, that purported Niger government communiqués confirming the sale of 500 tons of "yellow cake" uranium precursor to Baghdad, were shoddy forgeries, drawn up on outdated Niger government letterheads. Hersh wrote that the forgeries were passed to the Bush Administration, through British MI6, and had probably originated with the British intelligence service, with the Mossad, or with Iraqi oppositionists affiliated with the Iraqi National Congress (INC) of Dr. Ahmed Chalabi.

Cheney also repeated the by-then-thoroughly-discredited charge that Saddam Hussein had "longstanding" ties to the al-Qaeda terrorist organization, and that it was "only a matter of time" before Saddam Hussein provided the bin Laden gang with weapons of mass destruction—biological, chemical, and, ultimately, nuclear. As Cheney well knew, an October 2002 assessment from Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Director George Tenet, delivered to the Senate Intelligence Oversight Committee, had pointedly stated that Saddam Hussein would only resort to WMD, or engage with al-Qaeda, if he felt that he was backed into a corner and facing imminent American military attack. Repeated efforts by "war party" operatives, like former Director of Central Intelligence and Iraqi National Congress lobbyist R. James Woolsey, had failed to turn up any credible evidence of Saddam-al-Qaeda links, particularly prior to Sept. 11, 2001.

Perhaps Cheney's biggest lie—which flew in the face of all assessments from the CIA, the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), and State Department Middle East experts—was that the military conquest of Iraq would be a "cakewalk." Cheney told Russert, "Now, I think things have gotten so bad inside Iraq, from the standpoint of the Iraqi people, my belief is we will, in fact, be greeted as liberators."

Russert challenged Cheney's rosy forecast: "If your analysis is not correct, and we're not treated as liberators, but conquerors, and the Iraqis begin to resist, particularly in Baghdad, do you think the American people are prepared for a long, costly, and bloody battle with significant American casualties?"

To which Cheney responded: "Well, I don't think it's

The lying by the whole circle led by Vice President Cheney since Sept. 11, 2001, which has led the Administration into "permanent war," has "signalled a long-in-the-making policy putsch in Washington by a small group of neo-conservatives—a majority of whom were followers of the German-born fascist philosopher Leo Strauss (1899-1973)."

likely to unfold that way, Tim, because I really do believe that we will be greeted as liberators. I've talked with a lot of Iraqis in the last several months myself, had them to the White House. . . . The read we get on the people of Iraq is there is no question but that they want to get rid of Saddam Hussein and they will welcome as liberators the United States when we come to do that." Later in the interview, Cheney added, "If you look at the opposition, they've come together, I think, very effectively, with representatives from Shia, Sunni, and Kurdish elements in the population."

Towards the end of his performance, the Vice President extended his "cakewalk liberation" forecast, to further assert that American preventive military action to overthrow Saddam Hussein would stabilize the Middle East. He cited Dr. Bernard Lewis, the British Arab Bureau spook and author of the "Arc of Crisis," "Islamic card" fiasco, as his authority: "I firmly believe, along with, you know, men like Bernard Lewis, who's one of the great, I think, students of that part of the world, that strong, firm U.S. response to terror and to threats to the United States would go a long way, frankly, towards calming things in that part of the world."

Almost exactly 80 hours after Cheney's appearance on NBC-TV, the United States launched an unprovoked and unnecessary war on Iraq. According to Washington-based senior Arab diplomatic sources, governments of the Middle East were told by top Bush Administration officials, on the eve of the attack, that the Iraq war would be over in seven to ten days.

The Straussian Lie

Vice President Cheney's lying performance on "Meet the Press" was no mere act of personal hubris and folly. His declaration of preventive war against Iraq—which neo-conservative allies, like self-professed "universal fascist" Michael Ledeen, more frankly celebrated as the beginning of a perpetual Clash of Civilizations war, targeting virtually every Arab nation-state in the Middle East—marked the culmination of a campaign of more than a dozen years, to permanently redraw the map of the Near East and Persian Gulf, through unending war and colonialist raw material seizure.

Even more than that, it signaled a long-in-the-making policy putsch in Washington by a small group of neo-conservatives—a majority of whom were followers of the German-born fascist philosopher Leo Strauss (1899-1973). Their policy is to permanently transform the United States, from a Constitutional republic, dedicated to the pursuit of the general welfare and a community of principle among perfectly sovereign nation-states, into a brutish, post-modern imitation of the Roman Empire, engaged in murderous imperial adventures abroad, and brutal police-state repression at home.

Although a Jew, who was active in the Vladimir Jabotinsky-led Revisionist Zionist circles in Germany in the 1920s, Strauss was also a protégé and enthusiastic promoter of the ideas of two leading intellectual figures of the Nazi Party: existentialist philosopher and Friedrich Nietzsche-revivalist Martin Heidegger; and Nazi jurist Carl Schmitt, who wrote the legal opinion justifying Adolf Hitler's February-March 1933 post-Reichstag Fire dictatorial putsch. Schmitt personally arranged for Strauss to leave Germany on a Rockefeller Foundation fellowship in 1932, to study in London and Paris, and then took up teaching posts in the United States, first at the New School for Social Research in New York, and later at the University of Chicago.

In Germany of the 1920s and 1930s, there were Jews who were Nazis, but who, like Strauss and the Frankfurt School gaggle of left-wing Nietzscheans (Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Leo Lowenthal, Herbert Marcuse, et al.), had no chance for party advancement because of Hitler's anti-Semitism; and so they chose to leave Germany, to pursue more "universal" fascist ideas and policies abroad, particularly in the United States and Great Britain.

For Leo Strauss and his disciples, the ignoble lie—disinformation—was the key to achieving and holding political power. And raw political power was the ultimate goal. For

Strauss and the Straussians, there were no universal principles, no natural law, no virtue, no *agapē*, no notion of man in the living image of God.

William Kristol, a leading Washington "Straussian" and the chief public propagandist for the war party in the George W. Bush Administration, made the point bluntly in an interview with Nina J. Easton, who authored a book-length profile of the top leaders of the right-wing insurgency of the 1990s, *Gang of Five* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000). Kristol told her, "One of the main teachings [of Strauss] is that all politics are limited and none of them is really based on the truth. So there's a certain philosophic disposition where you have some distance from these political fights. . . . You don't take yourself or your causes as seriously as you would if you thought this was 100% 'truth.' Political movements are always full of partisans fighting for their opinion. But that's very different from 'the truth.' "

From his perch as editor-in-chief of the Rupert Murdoch-bankrolled *Weekly Standard* magazine, launched in 1995, Kristol has perfected the art of political deception and the Goebbels "Big Lie." The son of two first-generation postwar neo-conservatives, Irving Kristol and Gertrude Himmelfarb, Kristol was trained at Harvard from the time of his 18th birthday by one of Leo Strauss' leading disciples, Harvey Mansfield, Jr.

Kristol's Harvard graduate school roommate and fellow Straussian was Alan Keyes, later a Reagan State Department official and unsuccessful candidate for the U.S. Senate in Maryland (Kristol ran Keyes' 1988 campaign against Democrat Paul Sarbanes). His other classmates included Francis Fukuyama, later promoter of the Nietzschean idea of "the end of history," who came to Harvard following undergraduate studies at Cornell, where he was trained by Allan Bloom, another of the inner circle University of Chicago students of Strauss. Bloom's life was recounted by fellow Chicagoan Saul Bellow in the true-to-life novel *Ravelstein.*

Neo-Conservative 9/11 Putsch

Bellow's tribute to Bloom also highlighted another Straussian now playing a larger-than-life role in the Bush Administration inside putsch: Paul Wolfowitz.

Wolfowitz was one of the first of the Strauss-Bloom disciples to come to Washington. Through Bloom, while completing his graduate studies at the University of Chicago, Wolfowitz had been introduced to RAND Corporation founder Albert Wohlstetter and to Paul Nitze, a leading arms control expert who had served in most of the post-World War II governments in senior posts. By the 1970s, Wolfowitz was working his way through the arms control bureaucracy—and establishing his ties to other Straussians and Wohlstetter protégés who had been planted on various Senate committee staffs. Among Wolfowitz's collaborators during this period were Richard Perle, Steven Bryen, and Elliott Abrams, who served on the Senate staffs of Henry "Scoop" Jackson (D-Wash.), Clifford Case (R-N.J.), and Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-N.Y.), respectively. Perle reports that he first was introduced to Wolfowitz in 1969, when the two were both sent by Wohlstetter to do a research project for Senator Jackson.

Among the other Strauss disciples who are currently part of the ongoing neo-con insurgency are: John Podhoretz, editorial page editor of Murdoch's yellow tabloid, the *New York Post*, former editor of *The Weekly Standard*, and offspring of first generation neo-cons Norman Podhoretz and Midge Decter; Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas; Attorney General John Ashcroft; I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby, chief of staff and chief national security advisor to Vice President Cheney, who was introduced to the world of Leo Strauss by his own Yale University professor and mentor, Paul Wolfowitz; Pentagon disinformation officer Abram Shulsky; Gary Schmitt, executive director of the Kristol-led Project for the New American Century (PNAC); David Brook, another editor of *The Weekly Standard;* Werner Dannhauser, a protégé of Strauss, who left academia to assume the editorship of the flagship neo-con magazine *Commentary* following the retirement of Norman Podhoretz; and Robert Kagan, also of *The Weekly Standard*, and the son of leading Yale University Straussian Donald Kagan.

As the Wolfowitz case makes clear, this cabal of Strauss disciples, along with an equally small circle of allied neo-conservative and Likudnik fellow-travellers, has operated as an underground network, in and around government, for the past 30 years—awaiting the moment of opportunity to launch their not-so-silent coup. Sept. 11, 2001 provided them with the once-in-a-lifetime moment of opportunity, a moment for which they were thoroughly prepared.

As Lyndon LaRouche has written in his LaRouche in 2004 campaign report, *Zbigniew Brzezinski and September 11th*, the events of 9/11 could not have occurred without significant inside complicity from elements of the U.S. national security establishment, given the total breakdown of rudimentary security procedures and the depth of inside knowledge about those vulnerabilities. The Sept. 11 attacks could not, LaRouche assessed, have been carried out by al-Qaeda operatives without such complicity. Indeed, the attacks constituted a sophisticated act of military covert irregular warfare, far beyond the capacities of the bin Laden apparatus. The idea that Osama bin Laden, operating out of caves in Afghanistan, could have pulled off the most significant act of irregular warfare against the United States in memory is, perhaps, the most significant Goebbels "Big Lie" of all.

In his *Brzezinski and September 11th* report, LaRouche acknowledged that while the details of precisely how the attack was orchestrated involve covert military secrets that are often the most difficult to unravel, the larger question of *cui bono*—who benefitted—from the attacks is much more accessible. To deal with this question, however, requires a review of some critical events, dating back, at minimum, to the period of the "Bush 41" Presidency.

Imperial Preventive War

On May 21, 1991, at the request of then-Secretary of Defense Cheney, a team of civilian strategists in the Pentagon policy office delivered an oral presentation to Cheney on the subject of the post-Soviet strategic environment and long-range national security implications for the United States. The bulk of the presentation was delivered by Assistant Secretary of Defense for Policy Paul Wolfowitz. Other team members included: Lewis Libby, who was Wolfowitz's deputy; Zalmay Khalilzad, a RAND Corporation/University of Chicago protégé of Albert Wohlstetter, who was at that time also in Wolfowitz's Pentagon shop; and Eric Edelman, a career Foreign Service officer also working under Wolfowitz. Today, all four men hold top posts in the "Bush 43" government: Wolfowitz is Deputy Secretary of Defense; Libby is chief-of-staff and chief national security aide to Vice President Cheney; Edelman is Libby's deputy there; and Khalilzad is White House liaison to the Iraqi opposition.

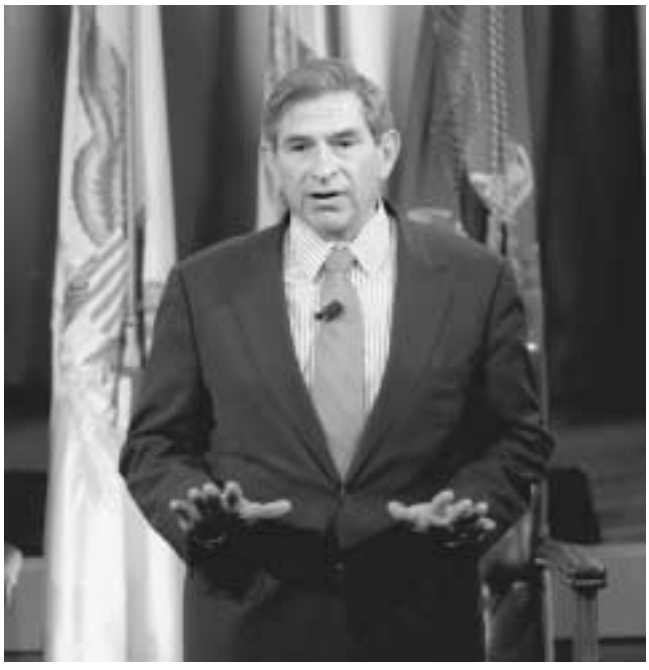
In that 1990 briefing to Cheney, Wolfowitz proposed that the United States adopt a policy of preventive action to forestall any nation or combination of nations from challenging American military and economic "primacy" for the forseeable future, using all means necessary. When Cheney incorporated the Wolfowitz concept in his 1992 Defense Planning Guidance (DPG), all Hell broke loose. Senior military officers leaked portions of the Guidance to the *New York Times;* President George H.W. Bush, his National Security Advisor Gen. Brent Scowcroft, and his Secretary of State James Baker III, all rejected the unilateralism of the Cheney-Wolfowitz strategy.

Ultimately the DPG was re-written, and featured only a substantially watered-down version of the scheme. But following President Bush's re-election defeat, in January 1993, Secretary Cheney and his team delivered a parting shot, with the publication of *Defense Strategy for the 1990s: The Regional Defense Strategy,* which not only revived the idea of preventive unilateral war, but also promoted the idea that the United States must develop a new generation of mini-nuclear weapons, appropriate for use against Third World targets.

It was no secret that both Cheney and Wolfowitz were furious at President Bush for not allowing the U.S.-led "coalition" forces to roll into Baghdad and overthrow Saddam Hussein, at the conclusion of Operation Desert Storm in 1991. Indeed, associates of Wolfowitz report that he has been obsessed with overthrowing Saddam Hussein and overturning the entire Middle East chessboard since the late 1970s. Saul Bellow's *Ravelstein* reported that Wolfowitz telephoned his Straussian mentor Allan Bloom, back in Chicago, to rant against President Bush for his lack of Nietzschean hubris.

The 'Clean Break'

Largely out of power in Washington during the eight-year Clinton Presidency, the Straussian cabal did not go dormant. Following the September 1993 signing of the Oslo Accords



Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz. "As the Wolfowitz case makes clear, this cabal of Strauss disciples . . . has operated as an underground network in and around government for the past 30 years. Sept. 11 provided them with the . . . moment of opportunity for which they were fully prepared."

at the White House, the Straussians and neo-cons launched an all-out drive to kill the "land for peace" deal. Several leading disciples of Strauss and Bloom had already migrated to Israel, and they would form the core of an apparatus inside Israel dedicated to sinking the peace process.

In 1994, Hillel Fradkin and Yoram Hazony founded the Shalem Center, with financing from two American billionaires, both associated with the little-known but powerful "Mega Group" of right-wing Zionists—Ronald Lauder and Roger Hertog. Hertog is today part owner, with Lord Conrad Black and Michael Steinhardt, of the *New York Sun;* and is also a one-third owner, with Martin Peretz and Steinhardt, of *The New Republic,* long a bastion of Straussian political propaganda. (*New Republic* editor Lawrence Kaplan, for example, has recently teamed with *The Weekly Standard*'s William Kristol to produce a book-length promotion of the war on Iraq.)

Fradkin was a student of Allan Bloom, and taught at the University of Chicago Committee on Social Thought. He later went on to launch the Shalem Center's Washington office, while also serving as director of the Ethics and Public Policy Center (he replaced Elliott Abrams in that post, when Abrams was brought onto the National Security Council under "Bush 43"), and as a Middle East scholar at the American Enterprise Institute (AEI). Hazoney got his PhD at Rutgers University under another Strauss disciple, Wilson Cary McWilliams, then moved to Israel, where he worked as a speech-writer for

At the key neo-conservative Washington think-tank Institute for Advanced Strategic and Political Studies (IASPS), which issued the Cheneyite "Project for a New American Century," applicants for its fellowship programs must be steeped in Leo Strauss' fascist work, before they can even apply.

Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu. Hazoney is an unabashed backer of the racist Rabbi Meir Kahane, the late founder of the terrorist Jewish Defense League and Kach Movement.

In addition to the Shalem Center and the Foundation for a Constitutional Democracy, launched by leading Strauss student Paul Eidelberg—an advocate of the permanent annexation of all of "Judea," "Samaria," and Gaza by the Israeli state—a third Israeli think-tank played a pivotal role in advancing the Straussian/neo-con agenda during the Clinton Presidency. The Institute for Advanced Strategic and Political Studies (IASPS), with offices in Jerusalem and Washington, was launched in 1984 as an outpost of the "Chicago School" of British System free-trade economics, promoting the work of Adam Smith, Friedrich von Hayek, and Milton Friedman. Twelve years later, the Institute established a Division for Research in Strategy. By its own description, IASPS is a center of Straussian influence in Israel. An advertisement for the Institute's Strategic Fellowship program in Washington, posted on the IASPS website, warns applicants that if they are not followers of Leo Strauss, they need not apply.

In 1996, following the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, the newly established IASPS Division of Research in Strategy commissioned a series of studies on how to undo the Oslo Accords, to be presented to incoming Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu.

The key study in the series, "A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm," was prepared by a team of American neo-cons led by Richard Perle. Other members of the study group were: James Colbert of the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs (JINSA); Charles Fairbanks of the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), a Strauss disciple and an intimate of Paul Wolfowitz since the 1960s; Douglas Feith, now Undersecretary of Defense for Policy; Robert Loewenberg, President of IASPS; Jonathan Torop of the Washington Institute for Near East Studies (WINEP), the think-tank spawned by the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), the official Israeli lobby in America; David Wurmser, then the director of the Middle East project at AEI, and now the special assistant to State Department chief arms control negotiator John Bolton—himself, former Vice Chairman of AEI; and Meyrav Wurmser, formerly with the Middle East Research and Information Project (MERIP) of Sharonist Israeli military intelligence officer Col. Yigal Carmon, and now the director of Middle East programs at the Hudson Institute.

The six-page "Clean Break" document was hand-delivered by Perle to Netanyahu on July 8, 1996—two days before Netanyahu addressed a joint session of the U.S. Congress. Most of Netanyahu's speech consisted of pre-selected excerpts from "Clean Break." The paper called for a total rejection of Oslo and "land for peace"; a brutal crackdown and reoccupation of the Palestinian Authority territories by the Israeli Defense Forces—to be justified on the basis of the "right to hot pursuit" of terrorists, leading to Israel's eventual permanent annexation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip; and a war against Iraq, to overthrow not only the Saddam Hussein regime in Baghdad, but the Ba'ath regime in Damascus.

"Israel can shape its strategic environment," Perle and company wrote, "in cooperation with Turkey and Jordan, by weakening, containing, and even rolling back Syria. This effort can focus on removing Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq—an important Israeli strategic objective in its own right—as a means of foiling Syria's regional ambitions."

Perle and company penned "Clean Break" knowing full well that in 1990-91, the Bush Administration had launched Operation Desert Storm in response to Israeli threats to launch their own war of extermination against Saddam Hussein. Israel's move would have triggered a perpetual Middle East religious war, precisely along the lines of the Clash of Civilizations first spelled out by Dr. Bernard Lewis in a 1990 *Atlantic Monthly* article, three years before the appearance of Samuel Huntington's more well-known Clash of Civilizations diatribe in *Foreign Affairs.* The Bush Administration caved in to the Israeli threats and pre-empted Israeli strikes on Iraq, by conducting the "Coalition" war and imposing the post-war sanctions, no-fly zones, etc. Now, through Perle, Feith, Wurmser, et al. the Straussians were upping the ante.

'New American Century'

In early 1997, William Kristol and Robert Kagan, two of the leading neo-con "Straussian intellectuals" in Washington, joined forces with collaborators at the AEI to shove the "Clean Break" policy down the throat of the Clinton Administration.

Using office space on the fifth floor of the AEI headquarters, Kristol and company launched a new tax-exempt front group, the Project for the New American Century (PNAC), specifically to promote the buildup of American military force to unilaterally police the globe—starting with the overthrow of Saddam Hussein.

On June 3, 1997, PNAC released a Statement of Principle, which was signed by Elliott Abrams, Gary Bauer, William Bennett, Florida Governor Jeb Bush, Dick Cheney, Midge Decter, Francis Fukuyama, Lewis Libby, Norman Podhoretz, Peter Rodman, Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz, and others.

Leo Strauss as a young man in Germany (left) became a Zionist and admirer of Vladimir Jabotinsky, and was also permanently "gripped" by the writings of Friedrich Nietzsche (right), whose lunatic "superman" ideology inspired Hitler and his Nazis.

The Statement of Principle was based on an article co-authored by William Kristol and Robert Kagan, published in the July/August 1996 issue of *Foreign Affairs,* the journal of the New York Council on Foreign Relations—simultaneous with the Perle-Feith-Wurmser release of "Clean Break." Kristol and Kagan called for a "Neo-Reaganite Foreign Policy." This was a willfully dishonest choice of terms, given that President Reagan's most noteworthy foreign and national security policy achievement had been his collaboration with Lyndon LaRouche in launching the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), which Reagan envisioned as a joint, cooperative effort with the Soviet Union, to bring about the end of the era of "mutually assured destruction." When Soviet General Secretary Yuri Andropov rejected Reagan's generous offer of scientific and technological cooperation to build a global defense against nuclear weapons, the collapse of the Soviet empire was guaranteed, as LaRouche forecast in 1984, and again in a now-famous October 1988 speech in West Berlin, in which he anticipated the fall of the Berlin Wall a year later.

Kristol and Kagan defined their "neo-Reaganite foreign policy" as "benevolent global hegemony," based on a massive buildup of American military might. The authors were reviving the 1991 Wolfowitz doctrine of unilateral preventive war, explicitly stating, "The appropriate goal of American foreign policy is to preserve that hegemony as far into the future as possible."

Kristol and Kagan specifically called for the overthrow of more than 200 years of American anti-colonialist tradition, singling out John Quincy Adams as their particular nemesis: "Conservatives these days," they wrote, "succumb easily to the charming old metaphor of the United States as a 'city on a hill.' They hark back . . . to the admonition of John Quincy Adams that America ought not go 'abroad in search of monsters to destroy.' But why not? The alternative is to leave monsters on the loose, ravaging and pillaging to their hearts' content, as Americans stand by and watch. What may have been wise counsel in 1823, when America was a small, isolated power in a world of European giants, is no longer so, when America is the giant. Because America has the capacity to contain or destroy many of the world's monsters, most of which can be found without much searching, and because the responsibility for the peace and security of the international order rests so heavily on America's shoulders, a policy of sitting atop a hill and leading by example becomes in practice a policy of cowardice and dishonor."

On Jan. 26, 1998, PNAC issued an Open Letter to President Clinton, calling for immediate "regime change" in Iraq, based on the bogus claim that Saddam was about to launch weapons of mass destruction against the United States and America's allies. Among the signators on the Open Letter were the following individuals, all of whom are now in the "Bush 43" Administration: Abrams, Richard Armitage, John Bolton, Fukuyama, Khalilzad, Perle, Peter Rodman, Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz, and Robert Zoellick. Other signators included Kristol, Kagan, and James Woolsey, who briefly served as President Clinton's Director of Central Intelligence, and who was, at the time the PNAC letter was issued, already the attorney representing the Iraqi National Congress.

In September 2000, on the eve of the Presidential elections, pitting George W. Bush against Al Gore, PNAC issued a lengthy study, "Rebuilding America's Defenses—Strategy, Force and Resources for a New Century," which revived at great length the Cheney-Wolfowitz 1991-93 preventive war strategy. Among the "usual suspects" who contributed to the "Rebuilding" study was Wolfowitz protégé Lewis Libby. He had just completed a stint as the general counsel to the Cox Commission, which was promoting a strategic showdown in North Asia with China and North Korea; he would soon be Vice President Cheney's chief of staff. While out of government, Libby had also been the personal attorney of Marc Rich, the Russian "Mafiya" godfather who had been convicted in

Strauss, before being posted to Paris and London by Carl Schmitt in 1932 and beginning his long University of Chicago career spawning the leading U.S. neo-conservatives, was an enthusiastic supporter of Martin Heidegger (left), the top intellectual enforcer of Adolf Hitler's Nazism on German universities.

absentia in Federal court for tax evasion and "trading with the enemy"—Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini—during the American hostage crisis of 1979-80. Libby was the behind-the-scenes Svengali responsible for the disastrous Clinton Presidential pardon of Rich, working directly with "former" Mossad operatives Zvi Rafiah and Avner Azulay.

Despite the proliferation of Straussians and neo-cons inside the George W. Bush national security team, the Iraq war lobby made very little headway until the event that Vice President Cheney termed "the historic watershed."

The Sept. 11, 2001 attacks on the Pentagon and the World Trade Center triggered an instant response from the neo-cons in and around the Bush Administration. Just four days after the attacks, Paul Wolfowitz attended a Sept. 15 National Security Council session with President Bush at Camp David, where he delivered a pitch for an immediate U.S. invasion of Iraq. For reasons that still remain in dispute, the President, the Vice President, and even Defense Secretary Rumsfeld rejected the Wolfowitz proposal as "premature." However, several days later, in a Presidential national security order authorizing the attack on Afghanistan, President Bush did authorize the CIA and the military to begin developing contingency plans for dealing with Saddam.

'Chickenhawk Intelligence Agency' Is Born

A week after Wolfowitz's "premature" war pitch, Richard Perle convened a session of the Defense Policy Board addressed by British Arab Bureau veteran spook Dr. Bernard Lewis, and INC founder Dr. Ahmed Chalabi, a bank swindler and protégé of Albert Wohlstetter at the University of Chicago, who was the Zionist Lobby and the Israeli right wing's hand-picked successor to Saddam Hussein. At the CIA and the State Department, Chalabi was considered virtually *persona non grata,* and his INC umbrella was viewed as a collection of martini-slurping professional exiles, with virtually no assets on the ground inside Iraq. Perle and Bernard Lewis had been introduced to Chalabi in the early 1980s, and the former banker, who faces a 20-year prison sentence in Jordan for bank fraud and currency manipulation, has been a pet project of JINSA and AEI ever since.

In a candid moment shortly before Sept. 11, 2001, Defense Secretary Rumsfeld had confided to associates that he was thinking about resigning his Cabinet post and returning to Chicago. His explanation was revealing: "The Likud has taken over the building," he told friends, referring to the Wolfowitz-Perle cabal that had run circles around him in the early months of the "Bush 43" Administration. Sources familiar with Rumsfeld describe the Secretary as a "control freak" and micro-manager, who had presumed that his participation in a Clinton-era commission on missile proliferation had sufficiently offset his quarter-century absence from Washington, and that he would be able to maintain a tight grip on the vast Pentagon bureaucracy, including the uniformed military command, centered at the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Through the personal efforts of former Secretary of State and "Chicago School" ideologue George Shultz, Deputy Defense Secretary Wolfowitz had been inserted in the inner circle of George W. Bush campaign policy tutors, the so-called "Vulcans," which enabled him to bring Perle and the whole neo-con crowd to Austin, Texas for personal mis-education sessions with the President-to-be. Wolfowitz parlayed that personal relationship with the new President, and staffed Rumsfeld's office with a veritable army of like-minded Strauss disciples and Likudniks.

In June 1988, *EIR* had revealed that then-Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger's general counsel office had compiled a list of suspected members of the "X Committee," the network of Israeli spies and agents-of-influence who had penetrated the Reagan-Bush Administration's national security establishment, and were believed to have directed the espionage efforts of Jonathan Jay Pollard. Among the dozen leading "X Committee" suspects being probed by the general counsel team were: Wolfowitz, Perle, Feith, Wohlstetter, Fred Iklé, Stephen Bryen, Michael Ledeen, Frank Gaffney, John Lehman, and Henry Rowen.

Under Wolfowitz, the "Bush 43" Pentagon once again became a hub of "X Committee" influence and penetration.

Nevertheless, the intelligence coming out of the CIA, the DIA, and the State Department firmly rejected any evidence of linkage between Saddam Hussein and the attacks of 9/11. The overwhelming evidence also suggested that Iraq posed no immediate or near-term threat to the United States or any

of its neighbors. Early in the Bush Administration, Secretary of State Colin Powell had proposed a revision of sanctions, called "smart sanctions," recognizing that international support for the continuing isolation of Iraq was wearing thin.

To seize upon the dramatic shift that occurred on Sept. 11, 2001, Wolfowitz and Deputy Secretary of Defense for Policy Doug Feith, one of the most rabid of the Jabotinskyites in the Pentagon civilian bureaucracy, launched a secret intelligence unit. Its mission was to provide Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld—who had abandoned his pre-9/11 plans to retire, and was now fully in synch with the Wolfowitz cabal—with a constant flow of "intelligence" to counter the CIA/DIA resistance to the "Get Saddam" agenda of the "Clean Break" crowd. One of the principal sources of this unvetted "intelligence" was to be Chalabi's discredited INC.

Wolfowitz and Feith chose Abram Shulsky to head the secret cell, which was buried in the maze of civilian Pentagon bureaucracy under the Assistant Secretary for Policy. A Strauss disciple, Shulsky had been a professional staffer for Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-N.Y.), along with Elliott Abrams and Gary Schmitt—now the President of Bill Kristol's and Robert Kagan's tax-front, PNAC. Shulsky had served on the staff of the Senate Intelligence Oversight Committee. He had been an underling of neo-con wunderkind and Iran-Contra operative Roy Godson at the Consortium for the Study of Intelligence, a project of the New York City-based National Strategy Information Center. And Shulsky had co-authored, with Zalmay Khalilzad and others, a 1999 RAND Corporation study, "The United States and a Rising China," which promoted the idea that China, more than any other nation, posed a direct challenge to American global and regional military primacy, and would have to be directly confronted.

Who Makes This 'Intelligence'?

Others identified with the Shulsky "chickenhawks intelligence agency" included:

Harold Rhode, the Middle East specialist in Dr. Andrew Marshall's Pentagon Office of Net Assessments (ONA). Marshall was a founder, with Albert Wohlstetter, of the RAND Corporation at the close of World War II. He was installed at the Pentagon in 1975 by then-Secretary of Defense James Rodney Schlesinger, who created the ONA specifically to house Marshall and his team of RAND systems analysis and game theory utopians. At the very outset of the "Bush 43" Administration, Marshall had grabbed the ear of Rumsfeld, provoking a near revolt of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who considered Marshall to be the driver behind the dangerously incompetent "revolution in military affairs."

Michael Ledeen, in his recent book-length rant, *The War Against the Terror Masters* (New York: St. Martins Press, 2002), described Rhode as his "guru on the Middle East for nearly 20 years." In 1991, Rhode was in the Pentagon Office of International Security Policy, covering Turkey, at a time that Perle and Feith were running an international consulting operation, selling Israeli military hardware to the Turkish Army. Wolfowitz has described Rhode as his "Islamic affairs advisor" at ONA; and according to one account, Rhodes, in a meeting during the early months of the Bush Administration, had staged a noisy in-your-face confrontation with a top Saudi official, vowing that the historical U.S.-Saudi partnership was a thing of the past. The incident reportedly cost Rhode a more senior—and visible—post inside the Wolfowitz-Feith Pentagon bureaucracy.

Rhode, according to several sources, has travelled, on several occasions, to London, with Richard Perle, Chairman, until recently, of the Defense Policy Board, to gather "intelligence" from INC officials, which has been funneled through Shulsky's shop to Rumsfeld—without first being evaluated and cross-checked by CIA or Defense Intelligence Agency professionals.

William Luti, formerly an advisor to Vice President Cheney, more recently named as the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Special Plans and Near East and South Asian Affairs, has been described by a recent visitor to his office as a man crazed with the mission to eliminate Saddam Hussein. "He reminded me of a serial killer, right out of a Hollywood horror flick," according to the source, who described Luti's Pentagon office as covered from floor to ceiling with desecrated photographs and news clippings of Saddam Hussein and his inner core. A retired Navy Captain and pilot who served during Operation Desert Storm, Luti was described, in a March 11, 2002 *New Yorker* story by Seymour Hersh, as "so obsessed with an immediate overthrow of Saddam Hussein that he hasn't thought through the consequences." Despite these psychological profiles, Luti has been one of the Pentagon civilian point-men, working with the Iraqi "opposition" on both intelligence and operations. According to accounts in the *New York Times,* Luti was dispatched to London in November and December 2002, to meet with Chalabi and other Iraqi exiles.

On Dec. 17, Luti and Maj. Gen. David Barno met secretely with 11 Iraqi opposition figures in London, and selected the initial group of Iraqis to be trained in Hungary to participate in any military operation, as the indigenist "window dressing" on what would, in reality, be an all-American or Anglo-American military invasion.

In a Washington speech on Oct. 16, 2002, Luti had promoted, aggressively, the need for the United States to adopt a new, imperial interventionist policy, which he dubbed "anticipatory self-defense."

Reuel Marc Gerecht, a retired CIA officer, has been identified as one of the secret liaisons between the Shulsky "chickenhawk intelligence agency" at DOD and the Iraqi oppositionists in London and elsewhere in Europe. Based most of the time in Brussels, along with Robert Kagan, Gerecht is a senior fellow at AEI, and is the Director of the Middle East Initiative at PNAC, working directly under Kristol, Kagan, and Shulsky's close associate Gary Schmitt.