

# Why Bolton Should Not Be Confirmed

by Michele Steinberg and Mark Bender

On April 12, Carl Ford, former Director of Intelligence and Research (INR) at the State Department, testified at the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on the behavior of John Bolton. Ford's testimony was a bombshell that showed Bolton to be a liar. And, there is more evidence of that quality, if the chairman, Richard Lugar (R-Ind.), honors the Democrats' request to call more witnesses.

Ford was one of several former and current high-ranking officials interviewed by committee investigators before the open hearings began. The other three are, Thomas Fingar, Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence; Neil Silver, Director of the Strategic Proliferation Office; and Stuart Cohen, former acting chief of the National Intelligence Council. Stuart was pressured by Bolton to remove a CIA analyst who exposed Bolton's exaggerations about Cuba, parallel to Bolton's abuse of an INR analyst.

But the case against Bolton is more than a question of his character. He was a major figure in the Administration's lying to Congress about alleged weapons of mass destruction (WMD) that led to the Iraq War. And it is high time for the truth.

## Unfit for High Office

Testifying about Bolton's treatment of an INR analyst who had disputed—accurately—Bolton's assertions about Cuba's WMD, Ford told the committee:

"I can guarantee you, though, if Secretary Bolton had chosen to come to me, or in my absence, my principal deputy . . . I wouldn't be here today. He could have approached me in the same tone and in the same attitude, shaking his finger, red in the face, high tone in his voice, and I wouldn't be here today. If he had gone to Secretary Powell or Secretary Armitage and complained loudly . . . that he had been stabbed in the back by one of INR's analysts, I wouldn't be here today. . . .

"But instead . . . Bolton chose to reach five or six levels below him in the bureaucracy, bring an analyst into his office, and give him a tongue lashing. . . . He was so far over the line that he meets—he's one of the sort of memorable moments in my 30-plus year career. . . .

"I have never seen anybody quite like Secretary Bolton. . . . I don't have a second and third or fourth in terms of the

way that he abuses his power and authority with little people. I say that because, if you bark back at him, he doesn't bother you anymore. And anyone who has either generally the same rank or even a step or so below, they don't have so much to fear. We can defend ourselves. . . . But you don't pull somebody so low down in the bureaucracy that they're completely defenseless. . . . Now, I would argue that that action, by itself, certainly brings real questions to my mind about his suitability for high office. . . ."

## A Pattern of Abuse

The following incidents are only a partial list of the allegations that have come out against Bolton, which show that he is indeed, unfit for high office.

**1988:** *Abuse of power.* While head of the Justice Department's Civil Division, Bolton threatened a senior DOJ attorney, Joan Bernott, who asked for extended maternity leave on the recommendation of her doctor. Not only did Bolton deny her the leave, but he accused her of misconduct and fraud, and threatened reprisals against her. The *Legal Times* reported that Rep. Pat Schroeder (D-Colo.) took up Bernott's case and sent a series of letters to then-Attorney General Edwin Meese, claiming that Bolton was harassing Bernott with "lengthy and hostile letters" which were hand-delivered to her home.

**1994:** *Abuse of power and harassment of USAID contract employee, Melody Townsel (see Documentation).*

**1998:** Congressional records show that Democratic Senators from the Committee on Governmental Affairs investigated the activities of Bolton as head of the National Policy Committee, a tax-exempt front group that channelled foreign money into the Republican National Committee. The investigation was never fully completed, but the minority Senators wrote in their report, that the evidence suggests "that foreign money played an important role for the RNC in the mid-term elections of 1994."

**1999:** Bolton stated at a policy forum that if 10 stories were knocked off the 38-story UN building in New York, it wouldn't mean a thing. He has said there "is no United Nations."

**1999-2001:** *Concealing his role as a foreign agent for Taiwan.* In 2002, *The Nation* wrote that Bolton had received tens of thousands of dollars in order to help Taiwan gain a seat in the United Nations. The money came from a \$100 million Taiwanese secret slush fund. While receiving these funds, Bolton testified before Congress about Taiwan without revealing that he was being paid by them, or that he had a conflict of interest. In August 1999, Bolton declared: "Diplomatic recognition of Taiwan would be just the kind of demonstration of U.S. leadership that the region needs and that many of its people hope for." Bolton, who is an attorney, admitted in his 2001 confirmation hearings that he had failed to disclose the conflict, but no Senator pursued it.

**2001-04:** *Spying on other Administration officials.* After

answering evasively to a question from Senator Dodd about his requests to “see [National Security Agency] information about any other American officials,” Bolton replied to written questions that he had done so in about ten cases. He had said only “a couple” of cases previously. Dodd wants further explanation from Bolton as to whom he was watching, and why. NSA transcripts of high-level U.S. officials are very sensitive, and are available concerning discussions with foreign parties. Bolton is reportedly still holding back information on this.

Bolton served as a spy for Cheney and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, keeping watch on former Secretary of State Colin Powell lest he “stray too far from their [neo-con] agenda,” according to one reporter.

According to officials who have worked with him, Bolton frequently blocked information from reaching Secretary of State Powell, and has already, on one occasion, done the same to Secretary Condoleezza Rice, regarding information vital to U.S. strategies on Iran. A dozen examples have been cited by career officials, of memos or information that Bolton refused to forward, prompting officials to occasionally form back channels to Powell or to his deputy, Richard Armitage. Otherwise, the information would be delayed for weeks or never arrive.

Bolton let Rice go on her first European trip without letting her know that he had been trying to get International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director Mohamed ElBaradei replaced, because the Bush Administration considers him too soft on Iran. The fact that Bolton’s anti-ElBaradei campaign was drawing growing opposition in Europe, was also concealed.

**2002: WMD disinformation/Cuba.** State Department WMD analyst Christian Westermann was berated and threatened after he had sent the CIA an e-mail proposing changes in a Bolton speech on Cuba, because the information was distorted. Bolton had to change his speech, but then tried to have the analyst transferred. As noted above, Westerman’s account was confirmed by former Assistant Secretary of State Carl Ford, despite Bolton’s denial.

**2002: WMD disinformations/Iraq.** In December 2002, Bolton, arranged for false information about Iraq’s procurement of “yellow cake” uranium from Niger, to be put in a “Fact Sheet” requested by Richard Boucher, State Department spokesman. The information went out to the press and the United Nations, despite the fact that it had already been noted to be *false* in CIA and intelligence community evaluations.

**July 2003: WMD disinformation/Syria.** Just when the White House was running the dirty tricks operation against former Amb. Joe Wilson, for exposing that the claim that Iraq had procured uranium from Niger was false, Bolton reportedly cooked up a phony report that accused Syria of developing nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons.

According to articles by Knight Ridder and the *Washing-*

*ton Post*, Bolton’s prepared testimony to a subcommittee of the House International Relations Committee was refuted, in 35 pages of criticism and correction by CIA analysts. Bolton did not give the testimony in July, but presented a corrected version on September 2003. It was another case where Bolton used his post to attempt to insert garbage into the Congressional or public record about WMD.

The Senate has not yet probed the CIA’s intervention to stop Bolton’s testimony, and it is unknown whether Bolton or a surrogate sought to punish those CIA officials responsible for toning down his propaganda.

**2003: Abuse of power.** Bolton transferred Ryon Ryu, then a young official working closely with Secretary of State Powell at State’s non-proliferation bureau, supposedly because Ryu “concealed” information from him. Ryu reportedly failed to produce a document requested by Bolton’s Chief of Staff, and was accused by Bolton of insubordination and withholding information. A subsequent investigation of the matter found that Ryu’s omission was “inadvertent.”

**2003: WMD disinformation/North Korea.** President Bush’s Ambassador to South Korea from 2001 to 2003, Thomas Hubbard, has contacted the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and briefed them on two confrontations which he had with Bolton over North and South Korea, reported *Newsweek*. In one instance, Bolton erupted in anger and slammed down the phone, because Hubbard had not arranged a meeting for him with President-elect Roh Moo-hyun of South Korea.

More significantly, Hubbard also is in possession of details about how Bolton had planned public statements about North Korea wmd that were exaggerated, and had to be corrected. Because of Bolton’s inflammatory statements, North Korea demanded that he be excluded from the Six Power talks in 2003, but his provocations have been effective in derailing talks.

In another allegation of abuse of power, *Newsweek* reported that there is another case, now being examined by Senate Democrats, of Bolton berating a State Department intelligence analyst who had raised questions about the accuracy of an alarming CIA report about China’s WMD.

**2004: Harassment and slander of UN officials.** In December 2004, the *Washington Post* reported that the Bush Administration had “dozens of intercepts” of telephone calls of IAEA Director Dr. ElBaradei. Bolton has led the Administration vendetta against ElBaradei, trying to get him fired from IAEA for being “too soft” on Iran. Bolton favors military action against Iran.

The Administration vendetta goes back to March 2003, when ElBaradei told the UN Security Council that UN inspectors had found in Iraq since November 2002 had found *no evidence* that Iraq had a nuclear weapons program. Bolton’s patron, Dick Cheney, on March 16 told the American people via a TV interview that ElBaradei was wrong, and incompetent. Days later, the bombing began.