

On the third anniversary of the commencement of War against Iraq it is appropriate to remind ourselves about some previous Wars and what the peoples of Britain and America were told about the objectives and reasons for going to War.

History Repeats Itself

"...the people can always be brought to the bidding of the leaders. That is easy. All you have to do is tell them they are being attacked and denounce the peacemakers for lack of patriotism and exposing the country to danger. It works the same in any country.' - *Nazi Reich Marshall Herman Goering At The Nuremberg War Trials*

"If you tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it, people will eventually come to believe it."
Joseph Goebbels, Nazi Propaganda Minister

"We have no interest in oppressing other people. We are not moved by hatred against another nation. We bear no grudge. I know how grave a thing war is. I wanted to spare our people such an evil. It is not so much the country, it is rather its leader. He has led a reign of terror. He has hurled countless people into the profoundest misery. We have displayed a truly exemplary patience, but I am no longer willing to remain inactive while this madman ill-treats millions of human beings."
Adolph Hitler on 14 April 1939- spoken about Edward Benes, President of Czechoslovakia shortly before Germany's invasion of that country.

The 50 lies, exaggerations, distortions and half truths that took this country to war

From The Independent newspaper 25 January 2004 Raymond Whitaker and Glen Rangwala

1 "Tonight, British servicemen and women are engaged from air, land and sea. Their mission: to remove Saddam Hussein from power, and disarm Iraq of its weapons of mass destruction." Tony Blair, televised address to the nation, 20 March 2003

2 "I have always said to people throughout that ... our aim has been the elimination of weapons of mass destruction." Tony Blair, press conference, 25 March 2003 Within days, Mr Blair contradicts himself about the aims of the war.

3 "But for this military action, Saddam Hussein and his sons would still be in absolute control ... free to continue the repression and butchery of their people which ... we now know was on such a savage scale that victims number hundreds of thousands." Tony Blair, article in 'News of the World', 16 November 2003 "Regime change" again becomes a

central justification of the conflict.

4 "You know how passionately I believed in this cause and in the wisdom of the conflict as the only way to establish long-time peace and stability." Tony Blair to British troops in Iraq, 4 January 2004 No mention of WMD was made on this trip. But with Saddam now in custody and the insurgency in Iraq showing no sign of abating, the PM finds a new reason for the war.

5 "As for the existence of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, there can be no doubt ... that those weapons existed. It is the job of the Iraq Survey Group to find out what has happened, which it will do." Tony Blair, House of Commons, 21 January 2004. Mr Blair uses lawyer's language, ignoring Iraq's claim that the weapons existed, but were destroyed more than a decade ago. His next sentence implicitly acknowledges WMD may never be found.

6 “For reasons that have a lot to do with the US government bureaucracy, we settled on the one issue everyone could agree on, which was weapons of mass destruction...” Paul Wolfowitz, US deputy defence secretary, 'Vanity Fair', June 2003. The Bush administration made no secret of its desire for "regime change". Some were ready to admit that WMD was a red herring.

7 “We know that he has stockpiles of major amounts of chemical and biological weapons.” Tony Blair, NBC TV, 3 April 2002. From early 2002, the PM began to stress claims that Iraq had WMD left over from before the 1991 war, without saying that most agents would have deteriorated to the point of uselessness.

8 “Iraq poses a threat to the world because of its manufacture and development of weapons of mass destruction.” Jack Straw, interview with David Frost, 24 March 2002 Claims that Iraq was still producing chemical and biological weapons were prominent, though UN inspectors hadn't found any production of banned weapons after 1991.

9 “It [the dossier] concludes that Iraq has chemical and biological weapons, that Saddam has continued to produce them, that he has existing and active military plans for the use of chemical and biological weapons, which could be activated within 45 minutes ... and that he is actively trying to acquire nuclear weapons capability.” Tony Blair to the House of Commons, 24 September 2002. No such weapons were found in place once the invasion began.

10 “I have absolutely no doubt whatever that he was trying to reconstitute weapons of mass destruction programs. ... [Saddam Hussein] has always been intending to develop these weapons.” Tony Blair to the Commons Liaison Committee, 8 July 2003. Mr. Blair switched to claims about weapons "programs" and Saddam's intentions. No further mention of weapons "existing".

11 President Bush, television interview, 16 December 2003 “Saddam was a danger and the world is better off because we got rid of him.” Q: But stated as a hard fact, that there were weapons of mass destruction as opposed to the possibility that he could move to acquire those weapons still -- A: So what's the

difference? Q: Well -- A: The possibility that he could acquire weapons. If he were to acquire weapons, he would be the danger. That's, that's what I'm trying to explain to you. For Bush, the "possibility" of Iraq obtaining weapons in future was enough to have justified the war.

12 “Already the Kay report identified dozens of weapons of mass destruction-related programme activities and significant amounts of equipment that Iraq concealed from the United Nations.” George Bush, State of the Union address, 20 January 2004. Weapons programs are now WMD-related programme activities.

13 “Iraq has attempted to purchase high-strength aluminium tubes and other equipment needed for gas centrifuges, which are used to enrich uranium for nuclear weapons.” George Bush, 7 October 2002 . The White House ignored persistent evidence from US scientists and the UN nuclear agency that the tubes were useless for centrifuges.

14 “The British government has learnt that Saddam Hussein recently sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa.” George Bush, 28 January 2003. The CIA knew the claim was based on crudely forged documents.

15 “We believe he [Saddam] has reconstituted nuclear weapons.” Vice President Dick Cheney, NBC's 'Meet the Press', 16 March, 2003

16 Mr Cheney on 'Meet the Press', 14 September 2003 Q: Reconstituted nuclear weapons. You misspoke. A: Yeah. I did misspeak ... We never had any evidence that he had acquired a nuclear weapon. The VP took six months to correct his eve-of-war assertion.

17 “The dossier shows that Iraq continues to produce chemical agent for chemical weapons; has rebuilt previously destroyed production plants across Iraq; has bought dual-use chemical facilities; has retained the key personnel formerly engaged in the chemical weapons programme; and has a serious ongoing research programme into weapons production.” Tony Blair to the House of Commons, 24 September 2002. All the sites in Britain's WMD dossier were visited by UN inspectors, and found to be clean.

18 "What we are talking about is chemical weapons, biological weapons, viruses, bacilli and anthrax - 10,000 litres of anthrax - that he [Saddam] has." Jack Straw, House of Commons, 17 March 2003. If the UN said it couldn't prove that Iraq had destroyed agents, Britain said this proved Iraq still had them.

19 "Saddam has ... the wherewithal to develop smallpox." Colin Powell to the Security Council, 5 February 2003. UN inspectors said there was no evidence Iraq had any seed stock from which to produce smallpox.

20 "Those who say we haven't found the banned manufacturing devices or banned weapons, they're wrong. We found them." George Bush, Polish TV interview, 29 May 2003. This claim about mobile biological laboratories, echoed by Tony Blair, was rubbished by David Kelly, who saw the vehicles and believed they were for producing hydrogen. They were built to a British design.

21 "The Iraq Survey Group has already found massive evidence of a huge system of clandestine laboratories, workings by scientists, plans to develop long-range ballistic missiles." Tony Blair, on British Forces Broadcasting Service, 16 December 2003. The Iraq Survey Group had never talked of a "massive" system, and didn't link the laboratories with weapons production or research.

22 "Is it not reasonable that Saddam provides evidence of destruction of the biological and chemical agents and weapons the UN proved he had in 1999?" Tony Blair to the House of Commons, 25 February 2003. In 1999 the inspectors emphasised they didn't have proof that Iraq had prohibited weapons. They had suspicions that needed to be checked.

23 "The United Nations concluded that Saddam Hussein had materials sufficient to produce more than 38,000 litres of botulinum toxin -- enough to subject millions of people to death by respiratory failure." President Bush, State of the Union address, 28 January 2003. Unmovic said in March 2003: "It seems unlikely that significant undeclared quantities of botulinum toxin could have been produced, based on the quantity of media unaccounted for."

24 "By 1998, UN experts agreed that the Iraqis

had perfected drying techniques for their biological weapons programmes." Colin Powell to the Security Council, 5 February 2003. Unmovic said it "has no evidence that drying of anthrax or any other agent in bulk was conducted".

25 "If Saddam Hussein does ... readmit the weapons inspectors and allow them to do their job... then the case for military action recedes to the point almost of invisibility and that is obvious." Jack Straw, interview with David Frost, 15 September 2002. When the inspectors returned to Iraq, Britain and the US said they were ineffective and were being obstructed, leaving force as the only option.

26 "Journeys are monitored by security officers stationed on the route if they have prior intelligence. Any changes of destination are notified ahead by telephone or radio so that arrival is anticipated. The welcoming party is a give away. The PM's dossier of 3 February 2003. "In no case have we seen convincing evidence that the Iraqi side knew in advance that the inspectors were coming," chief inspector Hans Blix told the Security Council.

27 "I have every confidence - and I have expressed that confidence - in the weapons inspectors ... As long as this regime is in place, and as long as it is refusing to co-operate, the inspection process becomes well-nigh impossible." Jack Straw to the House of Commons, 17 March 2003

28 "The reason why the inspectors couldn't do their job ... was that Saddam wouldn't co-operate." Tony Blair, interview, 4 April 2003. The inspectors reported they were making progress. Iraq was destroying missiles they had declared illegal when the US ordered the inspectors out on the brink of war.

29 The Foreign Secretary Jack Straw to the House of Commons, 27 November 2003 tortuously acknowledges that the weapons inspectors were getting somewhere at the time of the invasion. "Never once did I come to this House and say that I believed that we should not give the weapons inspectors more time because I did not think that they were going to get any more co-operation than they had had in the past."

30 "There is no evidence linking Iraq to the events of 11th September; there is no evidence

either so far that links Iraq to the anthrax attacks in the United States." Geoff Hoon, 29 October 2001. This was before the war in Afghanistan to oust al-Qa'ida.

31 "Iraq could decide on any given day to provide biological or chemical weapons to a terrorist group or individual terrorist ..." Dick Cheney, 10 January 2003. The White House concentrated instead on questionable connections between Iraq and terrorism.

32 Paul Wolfowitz, to 'San Francisco Chronicle', 23 February 2002 "There are things that haven't been explained ... like the meeting of Mohammed Atta [leader of 9/11 hijackers] with Iraqi officials in Prague." Q: Which now is alleged, right? There is some doubt to that? A: Now this gets you into classified areas again. US intelligence had established Atta was in the US at the time of the alleged meeting.

33 "Mohammed Atta met Saddam Hussein in Baghdad prior to September 11. We have proof of that ... The meeting is one of the motives of an American attack on Iraq." Richard Perle, Pentagon adviser, September 2002. If there was any proof, it would surely have been produced by now.

34 "Iraq has trained al-Qa'ida members in bomb-making and poisons and deadly gases" George Bush, 7 October 2002. This claim, four days before Congress authorised war, omitted classified caveats and warnings that the information might be unreliable.

35 "There is some intelligence evidence about linkages between members of al-Qa'ida and people in Iraq." Tony Blair to the House of Commons Liaison Committee, 21 January 2003. Blair had just seen an intelligence report, later leaked, which said al-Qa'ida was "in ideological conflict" with the "apostate" Iraqi regime, and there were no current links.

36 "In the event of Saddam refusing to cooperate or being in breach, there will be a further UN discussion." Tony Blair on Security Council Resolution 1441, 8 November 2002. When Britain later claimed that Iraq had violated the resolution, it said another Security Council meeting was unnecessary.

37 "Resolution 1441 gives the legal basis for

this [war]." Tony Blair to the House of Commons, 12 March 2003 The opposite of his earlier pledge.

38 "France said it would veto a second resolution whatever the circumstances." Tony Blair to the House of Commons, 18 March 2003. President Chirac said France would vote against any resolution that authorised force whilst inspections were still working.

39 "The oil revenues... should be put in a trust fund for the Iraqi people administered through the UN." Tony Blair to the House of Commons, 18 March 2003. Britain co-sponsored a Security Council resolution that gave the US and UK control of the oil revenues.

40 "The United Kingdom should seek a new Security Council Resolution that would affirm... the use of all oil revenues for the benefit of the Iraqi people." Commons motion for war, proposed by Tony Blair, 18 March 2003. Iraq's oil revenues have been used to pay US firms, often at vastly inflated prices.

41 "Over some period of months, the Iraqis will have their government selected by Iraqi people." Donald Rumsfeld, press conference, 13 April 2003.

42 "This is about building a new civil society in Iraq after 35 years when we know women were suppressed, and ensuring women have a voice in Iraq." Patricia Hewitt, Trade and Industry Secretary, 16 October 2003 The US-appointed Iraqi Governing Council has removed all the rights Iraqi women have acquired since the 1950s on divorce, marriage, inheritance and child custody, reverting them to the "traditional" form.

43 "Iraq's ... got tunnels, caves, all kinds of complexes. We'll find them." George Bush, press conference, 3 May 2003. This combination of vagueness and certainty was common during and immediately after the fighting.

44 "There will certainly not be the quantity and proximity [of WMD] that we thought of before. [Saddam might even have launched] a massive disinformation campaign to make the world think he was violating international norms, and he may not have been." Kenneth Adelman, member of US Defence Policy

Board, 17 May 2003

The excuses begin.

45 “It is also possible that they decided that they would destroy them [WMD] prior to a conflict.” Donald Rumsfeld to the Council on Foreign Relations, 27 May 2003. Hans Blix is now convinced they were destroyed before the conflict - at least seven years before.

46 “It is not the most urgent priority now for us since Saddam has gone ...” Tony Blair 30 May 2003. Finding WMD slides down the scale of importance.

47 “In a land mass twice the size of the UK it may well not be surprising you don't find where this stuff is hidden.” Tony Blair, interview with David Frost, 11 January 2004. This excuse variously describes Iraq as “the size of California” or “twice the size of France”.

48 “We know where they are. They're in the

area around Tikrit and Baghdad and east, west, south and north somewhat.” Donald Rumsfeld, 30 March 2003

49 “I should have said, 'I believe we're in that area. Our intelligence tells us they're in that area,' and that was our best judgment.” Mr Rumsfeld, 10 September 2003. WMD excuse which is now most prevalent: we believed it at the time.

50 The PM blames the intelligence.

Tony Blair, interview with David Frost, 11 January 2004 Q: But it is absolutely clear now that the 45 minute thing and so on, that the weapons of mass destruction idea and you've moved on to talking about programs now rather than weapons of mass destruction. But that was wrong wasn't it?

A: “Well you can't say that at this point in time. What you can say is that we received that intelligence about Saddam's programs and about his weapons that we acted on that; it's the case throughout the whole of the conflict.”

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Please consider the whether you could support some of these actions -

- **Write to your MP or Tony Blair**

Write to your MP at the Houses of Parliament, London, or on the net go to www.faxyourmp.com. Emphasise your concern in your own words. Remember local MPs Hywel Williams and Betty Williams are opposed to the War.

- **Join in demonstrations**

Details from the Peace Group.

- **Tell your friends**

Please get this message to as many people as possible - a better understanding of these problems is very important. Press and TV coverage of these issues often focuses on the immediate conflict rather than the causes behind it.

- **Join a Peace Group**

Bangor and Anglesey Peace and Justice Group meets every Monday at 6:30pm in the Anglican Chaplaincy, Princes Road, Upper Bangor. Visit www.bangorpeace.co.uk for more information.