IRAQ DIARY

BY Jo WILDING

DIALLA, MARCH 25—It's hard now to tell the bombings from the storm: both beat at the windows and thunder through the city, but after a missile explodes, flocks of birds fill the sky, disturbed by the shock waves. After a gust, they are replaced by a cornucopia of rubbish, drifting in the smog of sand and dust and smoke which has turned the air a dirty orange so thick it blot out the sun and everything went dark in the middle of the day. Even the rain was filthy: the cleansing, healing drops fill with grime on the way down and splatter you with streaks of mud.

In the end three people died yesterday in the farmhouse that was bombed at Dialla, including the young wife, Nahda, who was missing in the rubble. She, along with Zahra, the eight-year-old daughter and her aunt, Hana, were buried this morning. People are taken for burial in coffins but are buried in shrouds and a pickup returned to the remains of the house with the three caskets, cobbled out of small pieces of wood, riding in the back.

The couple had been married just one week. A neighbor showed us a flouncy pink invitation to the wedding festival. Omar, the bridegroom, sat silently crying on the floor in the hospital corridor, leaning on the wall, body bent, head in his hands.

Neighbors said the bomb hit at 4 p.m. yesterday. The plane had been flying overhead for a while, they said, when it fired three rockets, one of which demolished the entire upper story of the house. It looked as if it had only ever been a bungalow until clambering through the hallway, we came to the stairs, leading up to nothing.

Small farmhouses sat between cultivated fields, the occasional cow, two or three compact plots, then another building. A couple of sheep held court over the empty marketplace as we entered the village, over the small Dialla Bridge across a slim branch of the Tigris. There was nothing which could explain the attack: nothing which even looked like a target that, perhaps, the pilot might have been aiming for. It made no sense. The villagers said the plane had been circling overhead. Its pilot must have seen what was there.

The animal shelters behind the house were crumpled, the family's cow lying crushed under her roof. They wouldn't have known that yet, still in the hospital. The windows of 16 houses nearby were all broken, the neighbors told us, and the blast made the children's ears bleed.

Ration sacks were piled in the kitchen and there was a bowl of green beans, which looked as if they were being prepared for an evening meal. Two or three of the neighbors invited us to eat in their homes. Humbling seems too small a word for the experience of being invited to share food and hospitality, by people with so little, while crouching in the rubble of their friends' and neighbors' home which was obliterated, with several lives, by my country, only the previous day.

Hours earlier, in the Al Kindi hospital, we had gone to take a statement from another casualty. He was dying, his family around him, so we didn't go into the room. As we walked away one of the men came after us with a tin of sweets to offer us. "Thank you for coming," he said in English. These people constantly overwhelm me with their dignity, their kindness, their gentle grace and warmth.

“President Bush hasn’t shown that this war is necessary. He has shown that this war is for the U.S. to have the oil.”

—Fernando Suarez de Solar, father of 20-year-old U.S. Marine Jesus Suarez de Solar, who died in Iraq last month.
U.S. TAKES AIM AT UNEMBEDDED JOURNALISTS

The U.S. says it is fighting in Iraq for (among other reasons) democratic freedoms. Yet, the freedom of the press to tell stories that fall outside the official U.S. line is becoming increasingly difficult. Here are just a few of the troubling incidents of outright censorship.

BY IMC STAFF

March 26 — “Don’t mess with my soldiers. Don’t mess with them because they are trained like dogs to kill. And they will kill you if you try again,” an American lieutenant told Dan Scemama and three other roving reporters after they were arrested 100 miles south of Baghdad. Scemama, an Israeli, describes the ordeal that followed as “the worst 48 hours in our lives.” Luis Castro and Victor Silva of RTP Television in Portugal were both beaten and Castro sustained broken ribs.

March 27 — Philip Smucker, an unembedded reporter traveling with the 1st Marine Division, was kicked out of southern Iraq for allegedly divulging sensitive information during a live CNN appearance.

However, Smucker’s boss disagrees. “We have read the transcript of the CNN interview and it does not appear to us that he disclosed anything that wasn’t already widely available,” said his Christian Science Monitor editor.

March 31 — NBC fires Peter Arnett a day after he tells an Iraqi television interviewer that U.S. war plans are going badly. Arnett, who won a Pulitzer Prize for his coverage of the Vietnam War, was also harshly criticized during the 1991 Gulf War for reporting on CNN that a U.S. missile strike had wiped out a baby milk factory that the Pentagon claimed was a chemical weapons plant.

A day after his sacking by NBC, Arnett was hired by the Daily Mirror (“Fired by America for telling the truth” trumpeted the April 1 front-page headline) a British tabloid whose readers presumably won’t be as averse to hearing bad news about the war.

March 25 — Iraqi state television was hit with a missile strike two days after it ran footage of captured American POW’s.

“Once again, we see military and political commanders from the democratic world targeting a television network simply because they don’t like the message it gives out,” said Aidan White, general secretary of the International Federation of Journalists. The U.S. attack may have violated international law in targeting these facilities, which are protected by the Geneva Conventions and cannot be targeted unless they are used for military purposes. The Pentagon previously bombed an Al Jazeera station in Kabul in November 2001 and Serbian state television during the 1999 Kosovo War.

BY IMC STAFF

Sometimes, a bunch of eager beavers approach you on CNN and ask if you’re embedded. If you say no, they are likely to reply, “Well, that’s too bad.”

Interestingly, the term “embedded” originated in the coverage of the Vietnam War and the intention was to portray the people and events in a certain area in a greater, more comprehensive context. However, the media strategy remains the same as in previous wars. The tactic of “embedding” journalists with American and British military units.

Here is Mitchell’s list of stories that have been widely misrepresented.

1. Saddam may well have been killed in the first night’s surprise attack (March 20).
2. Even if he wasn’t killed, Iraqi command and control was no doubt “decapitated” (March 22).
3. Unumm Qasr has been taken (March 22).
4. Most Iraqi soldiers will not fight for Saddam and instead are surrendering in droves (March 22).
5. Iraqi citizens are granting Americans as liberators (March 22).
6. An entire division of 8,000 Iraqi soldiers surrendered en masse near Basra (March 23).
7. Several Scud missiles, banned weapons, have been launched against U.S. forces in Kuwait (March 23).
8. Saddam’s Fedayeen militia are few in number and do not pose a serious threat (March 23).
9. Basra has been taken (March 23).
10. Unumm Qasr has been taken (March 23).
11. A captured chemical plant likely produced chemical weapons (March 23).
12. Nassirya has been taken (March 23).
13. Unumm Qasr has been taken (March 24).
15. A convoy of 1,000 Iraqi vehicles and Republican Guards are speeding south from Baghdad to engage U.S. troops (March 25).

Source: Editor & Publisher Online
**LEADING HAWKS PAVE WAY FOR BECHTEL**

By Mike Burke

“It has nothing to do with oil, literally nothing to do with oil.” Those were the words of Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld explaining why the United States was preparing to launch a pre-emptive attack on Iraq.

That was November 15, 2002.

Flash back 19 years to December 20, 1983. The setting is Baghdad. President Reagan's special envoy is meeting a certain Saddam Hussein and his deputy Tariq Aziz. The discussion centers on one topic: oil. The envoy is Donald Rumsfeld. Let's read Rumsfeld's notes from the meeting with Aziz.

"I noted that Iraq's oil exports were important... I raised the question of a pipeline through Jordan. He said he was familiar with the proposal. It apparently was a U.S. company's proposal." The U.S. company was Bechtel. The San Francisco-based firm wanted to build a pipeline from Iraq to Jordan. The deal would eventually fall apart, and with it U.S.-Iraq relations.

Today Bechtel stands to profit immensely in the rebuilding of Iraq as soon as the U.S. military victory is declared. With the contracts valued at $25 to $100 billion (paid for by your tax dollars), it's not surprising that companies are fighting for them, nor that most of the contenders either have ties to the administration or contributed heavily to Bush's 2000 presidential campaign.

Let's go back 20 years: The Iraq-Iran war is in full swing. Reagan and Bush (the first) are in the White House. The Secretary of State is George Shultz, a former CEO of Bechtel. Iraq has already begun gassing Iran with chemical weapons.

On December 2, 1983, the U.S. State Department invited Bechtel to discuss building an oil pipeline from Iraq to the Gulf of Aqaba, Jordan.

Within three weeks special envoy Rumsfeld was in Baghdad. Declassified notes indicate Rumsfeld told Hussein: "The U.S. looks with favor on other means, such as the expansion of Iraqi pipeline capabilities through Saudi Arabia and possibly elsewhere [to] redress the Iran-Iraq oil export imbalance."

Rumsfeld would return on March 26, 1984. On the same day he met with Aziz to discuss the pipeline, the United Nations issued its first report condemning Iraq's use of chemical weapons.

Iraq's use of chemical agents against Iran was no secret to Washington. Declassified documents reveal that a U.S. diplomat met with an Iraqi counterpart on April 6, 1984 to discuss, among other things, the Bechtel pipeline and chemical weapons. The diplomat, Placke, did instruct Iraq to stop using chemical weapons, he only asked Iraq not to "ebbarrass" the Reagan administration by purchasing weapons from U.S. suppliers. (It should be noted that Bechtel also played a role in Iraq's development of chemical weapons. Iraqi documents turned over to the United Nations a few months ago listed 23 U.S. companies that helped Iraq build its arsenal of weapons of mass destruction during the 1980s.)

Meanwhile in Washington, Secretary of State Shultz was quietly pressuring the U.S. Export-Import Bank and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation to provide aid to Iraq and to his former company, Bechtel.

Iraq however, was still hesitant to OK the Bechtel project because of fears Israel would target the oil pipeline. Over the next two years, countless hours of questionable negotiations occurred, involving a cast of characters, including Attorney General Edwin Meese III, former CIA Director and Defense Secretary James Schlesinger, National Security Advisor Robert "Bud" McFarlane, National Security Advisor Roger Robinson and Judge William B. Clark (who simultaneously represented Bechtel and the Reagan administration during negotiations with Iraq).

Despite the intense negotiations, the Iraqis eventually rejected the pipeline proposal. U.S.-Iraq relations never recovered. Many of the officials who rejected the pipeline proposal transformed into hawks calling for war on Iran.

In February 1998, Clark, Robinson and McFarlane joined future members of the Bush/Cheney cabinet such as Rumsfeld, Richard Perle, Elliot Abrams, Richard Armitage and Paul Wolfowitz in writing an open letter to President Clinton urging him to end Saddam Hussein. And last year Shultz helped form the pro-invasion Committee for the Liberation of Iraq.

The men who courted Saddam while he gassed Iranians are now waging war against him, ostensibly because he holds these same weapons of mass destruction" said Jim Vallette, lead author of a new report on the Bechtel pipeline by the Sustainable Energy and Economy Network and Institute for Policy Studies. "To a man, they now deny that oil has anything to do with the conflict. Yet during the Reagan Administration, and in the years leading up to the present conflict, these men shaped and implemented a strategy that had everything to do with securing Iraq oil exports."

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**CASHING IN ON IRAQ**

By Vanessa Hradsky

Even before the war started, the Bush administration was busy looking for candidates for the post-war reconstruction of Iraq. With the contracts valued at $25 to $100 billion (paid for by your tax dollars), it's not surprising that companies are fighting for them, nor that most of the contenders either have ties to the administration or contributed heavily to Bush's 2000 presidential campaign.

The main contract, for capital construction, could be worth $600 to $900 million in the first year alone. Halliburton (previously run by Vice President Dick Cheney), Bechtel (whose board includes two former Republican cabinet officers), Fluor (which has ties to several former government officials), the Parsons Corporation, the Louis Berger Group and Washington Group International are all bidding for it.

Contracts already awarded:

- **February 21, 2003:** $71 million contract for Portion of support services to the Washington, DC-based International Resources Group, a private mercenary company
- **March 24, 2003:** $4.8 million contract for Seaport Administration of the port of Umm Qasr awarded to Seattle-based Stevedoring Services of America (SSA), the largest marine terminal operator in the country.
- **March 25, 2003:** $489 million (estimated) contract for oil infrastructure repair awarded to Halliburton's Brown & Root unit. Cheney was CEO of Halliburton from 1995 to 2000, and after the UN relaxed sanctions on Iraq in 1998, two Halliburton subsidiaries did $24 million worth of business with Saddam Hussein to repair war damage and get Iraq's oil pipes working again.

In 1995, Halliburton pleaded guilty to violating the U.S. ban on exports to Libya, after peddling six pulse nuclear generators to Muammar Gadhafi that could be used to detonate nuclear weapons. Under Cheney, Halliburton continued to do business with "rogue nations" such as Libya, Iran and Iraq.

Halliburton also over billed the Pentagon on contracts over a 4-year period ending in 1998 – like charging $756,000 for electrical repairs at Fort Ord; CA that cost only $125,000 – and ultimately settled with the Army to pay a two-million-dollar fine.

And in 1998, Halliburton and its auditor Arthur Andersen cooked the books to postpone losses from deadbeat clients to artificially inflate Halliburton's profits by about $100 million, a maneuver still under investigation by the Securities and Exchange Commission.

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**1983:** U.S. special envoy Donald Rumsfeld meets with Saddam Hussein to talk business. **2003:** Rumsfeld says "It's not about the oil." Tell that to the U.S. soldiers at "Forward Operating Bases Exxon and Shell."
The invasion has quickly devolved into a grinding war in “days or weeks.” Instead, the invaders, even before they could fire a shot. The occupying troops are ringing Iraq cities with steel and clamping down on traffic either in or out and on surrounding roads. The shift may make sense tactically, but it is against the Geneva Convention to show photographs of prisoners arrived, by displaying them, just as they were denied proper mess premises (35), opportunities for physical exercise (38), access to the text of the convention (41), freedom to write to their families (70 and 71) and parcels of food and books (72).

“There was no independent confirmation, however. During the 1999 Kosovo war, NATO claimed that 90 percent of the Serbians were dead. When Serbia finally caved in – because its civilian infrastructure was being decimated – its military leaders were captured. They used camouflage and decoys, and have passed on their lessons to the Iraqis. One military analyst at the Brookings Institution questions the claim that “50 percent” of Republican Guard units have been destroyed, suggesting the actual kill rate is one-tenth of that.”

In Afghanistan, the U.S. would assert that hundreds of enemy forces were killed and captured. Yet, the body counts would be steadily downgraded daily, just like in Iraq. Perhaps the only shock is that war planners’ hubris, reminiscent of the “Best and the Brightest” who were convinced despite all evidence – they would prevail in Vietnam. Saddam Hussein’s regime was supposed to be fragile, and it never entered the minds of the war planners that he may have spent the last 12 years preparing for the final showdown. The final showdown.

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By ROBERT FISK

BAGHDAD, MARCH 30—The piece of metal is only a foot high, but the numbers on it hold the clue to the latest atrocity in Baghdad. At least 62 civilians had died by yester-
day afternoon, and the coding on that hunk of metal contains the identity of the culprit. The Americans and British were doing their best yesterday to suggest that an Iraqi anti-aircraft missile destroyed those dozens of lives, adding that they were “still investigating” the carnage. But the coding is in Western style, not in Arabic. And many of the survivors heard the plane.

In the Al-Noor hospital yesterday morning, there were appalling scenes of pain and suffering. A 2-year-old girl, Saida Jafar, swaddled in bandages, a tube into her nose, another into her stom-
ach. All I could see of her was her fore-
head, two small eyes and a chin. Beside

her, blood and flies covered a heap of old
heads. Three brothers, the eldest 21 and
the youngest 12, for example, were cut
off in front of their parents. A man – in fact, the opposite – and I don’t
say it out loud before. It was such a
moment that an Iraqi anti-aircraft missile
was doing its best yesterday to sug-
gest that an Iraqi anti-aircraft missile
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A piece of metal the codings
were retrieved only minutes after the
missile exploded on Friday evening, by
an old man whose home is only 100 yards
from the six ft crater. Even the Iraqi
authorities do not know that it exists. The
missile sprayed hunks of metal through
the crowds – mainly women and children –
and through the cheap brick walls of
local homes, amputating limbs and
heads. Three brothers, the eldest 21
and the youngest 12, for example, were cut
down inside the living room of their
brick hut on the main road opposite the
market. Two doors away, two sisters
were killed in an identical manner.

“I have never seen anything like
these wounds before,” Dr Ahmed, an
anaesthetist at the Al-Noor hospital
told me later. “These people have been
shocked to their core by the violence.

I wanted to belong and I wanted ano-
ther direction in my life, and this seemed
to offer it,” said Mr Funk, who is being coun-
selled by conscientious objectors from the
1991 Gulf war. “They told me I would be
able to go back to school [university].” Recruits have their college fees paid once
they complete their service.

“The ads make the armed forces look so
cool – ‘Call this number and we’ll send you
a free pair of boxer shorts’ – and a lot of
kids don’t realize what’s involved,” he said.
Mr Funk said he had started to have doubts
about military service during his training.

“When every day in combat training you had to
yell out ‘Kill! Kill!’ and we would get into
trouble if you didn’t shout it out, so often
I would just mouth it so I didn’t get into
trouble.” The recruits were also encouraged
to hurt each other during hand-to-hand
combat training. “I couldn’t do that so they
would pair me up with someone who was
very violent or aggressive.”

He said many recruits were envious of those
who were being sent to the Gulf. “They would say things like, ‘Kill a rag-
head for me – I’m too jealous.’”

As a Catholic he eventually decided to
take his concerns to the chaplain. “He said,
‘It’s a lot easier if you just give in and don’t
question authority.’ He quoted the Bible at
me and said, ‘Jesus says to carry a sword.’

“But I don’t think Jesus was a violent
man – in fact, the opposite – and I don’t
think God takes sides in war.”

At shooting practice, although he scored
numbers. What I’m doing is really trying to
teach people to weigh their options –
there are so many more ways to get money
for school.”

Funk said he had gone public to try to
dissuade other recruits from not
thinking through their reasons for joining
the forces. “All they [the military] want is
numbers. What I’m doing is really trying to

He became concerned about the reasons
for the conflict in Iraq. “This war is very
immoral because of the deception involved
by our leaders. It is very hypocritical.”

“War is about destruction and violence
and death. It is young men fighting old
men’s wars. It is not the answer, it just rav-
ages the land of the battleground. I know
it’s wrong but other people in the military
have been programmed to think it is OK.”

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Excerpted from

The London Guardian

THE REAL FACE OF WAR

MUHAMMED ADNAN (Left): Received cuts to his head and face from shrapnel. NADA ADAN (Above): Recovered from a
shrapnel wound to her right cranium in Baghdad’s Al Kindi Hospital.

PHOTO IRAQ PEACE TEAM

SHOCKING AND AWFUL

Origins of a Military Doctrine

By CATRIONA STUART

Minutes after the first bombs fell on Iraq, “shock and awe” became the latest buzzword on
every television news report. First deployed by BBC in late January, shock and awe described an emerging
battle plan for Iraq; rising quickly from a few
dozens of anti-aircraft missiles launched in February, to more than 600 in the early days of the war.

Horrifying some human rights advocates and
exciting war-hungry hawks, the term is only one
part of a coordinated public relations campaign
that has sought to obscure controversial issues
with marketing-friendly catch-phrases; lathering
the media with such terms as Operation Iraqi
Freedom, MOAB (Mother of All Bombs), and the “Coalition of the Willing.”

Drawn from a 1996 book, Shock and Awe: Achieving Rapid Dominance, by Harlan Ullman and
James Wade, this chilling military strategy rests
on the notion of overwhelming military force; an assault so devastating that soldiers
“would be unable or unwilling to fight,” and the
population would be destroyed “physically, emo-
tionally, and psychologically.”

In a recent report from The London Guardian,
Ullman edged away from his notorious reputa-
tion as the father of “shock and awe,” lambasting the current representation of his thesis and
expressing disagreement with the Bush adminis-
tration’s approach to the war. The use of the
phrase by U.S. military officials has created a
“Doomsday approach – the idea of terrorizing
everybody,” he said.

Although the reality of the initial Baghdad
bombings was less ferocious than initially fore-
casted, the strategy remains firmly rooted in a
bloody history. During the Spanish Civil war, the
Nazis destroyed Guernica, itself a target of little
military value, in an effort to break the spirit
of the Basque resistance, and the U.S.-decimated
Hiroshima and Nagasaki as a demonstration of
military might.

Shock and awe has even been traced back to
the 5th-century B.C. Chinese warrior-philosopher
Sun-tzu, author of one of the history’s most influ-
ential military handbooks, The Art of War.

Although little is known of Sun-tzu’s life, it is
rumored that after he was challenged to trans-
form the emperor’s 180 concubines into an army,
he brought two of the group and ordered them to
discipline the rest. When his commands were met
with laughter, Sun-tzu promptly beheaded the two, shocking the
others into submission.

Such is the “liberation” that awaits the Iraqis.
Iraq, the birthplace of civilization, has seen its heritage decimated

BY KRISTEN McLEOD-BALL

Karbala. Najaf. Basra. Just weeks ago, these Iraqi cities were unknown to most Americans. Now, they’re settings for bloody combat between U.S.-led forces and Iraqis. Hundreds of innocent civilians have reportedly been killed and wounded in the fighting, and hundreds of thousands of others are facing a humanitarian crisis as U.S. and British forces lay siege to these cities.

Yet another crisis is also looming, one that is receiving scant attention. The invasion of Iraq is putting at risk some of the world’s most important archaeological sites in the birthplace of human civilization.

Over 5,000 years ago, the region that would become Iraq was home to the Sumerian society, where the first examples of writing, codes of law and cities developed. Archaeologists have already found 10,000 sites where remains of this ancient civilization’s life still stand – and it is believed that thousands of other sites remain undiscovered.

Iraq’s wealth of historical culture does not stop there; during the Middle Ages, the region was home to blossoming Islamic societies whose mosques, tombs, and houses still grace Baghdad. Najaf and Karbala are holy cities for the Shia branch of Islam and contain some of the religion’s most sacred shrines. Basra, meanwhile, houses early Islamic mosques and is 50 miles south of Al Qurna, said to be the site of the Garden of Eden.

War threatens the remains of these civilizations and, with them, the chance to explore the roots of modern society. While international conventions and Iraq law attempt to protect the nation’s cultural property, it remains to be seen what toll war, looting, and a U.S. occupation will take on ancient sites.

BOMBING ANTIQUITIES

The first challenge for Iraq’s antiquities will be surviving the war itself. The 1954 Hague Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (which the U.S. has not ratified) outlawed attacking cultural monuments unless they are located in or next to military targets. During the first Gulf War, the military says it planned targeting to avoid most important historical sites. However, several locations still sustained damage. Two notable examples were the ziggurat at Ur, which was repeatedly hit by machine gun fire, and the Great Arch at Ctesiphon, which cracked due to nearby bombing. Also, underground sites, such as Tell Lahm, were damaged when troops dug trenches into the desert.

Perhaps to prevent such incidents during this war, the Pentagon has invited leading archaeologists to identify the locations of ancient ruins. Duke University professor Scott Stillman, who served as an Air Force lawyer planning target sites during Operation Desert Storm, believes the United States will again do its best to protect cultural monuments.

“We not only have greater and more precise technology which will be employed in the targeting process, but we also have much more research and public education on the location of those sites protected under international law,” Stillman explains.

Others are not as convinced. John Russell, an archaeologist and professor at Massachusetts College of Art, says that based on the experience of the 1991 war, there is “considerable risk to standing buildings due to bombing and considerable risk to buried sites due to military trenching.”

One concern is the sheer number of sites. "The mounds occur in the thousands. If you stand on any mound in southern Iraq, you can count five to ten other mounds in the neighborhood.”

POST-WAR PROBLEMS

The end of the conflict, however, may just be the start of the danger to the ruins and artifacts. In 1991, the vast majority of damage was a result of post-war looting. During the period of intense civil unrest following Iraq’s defeat, more than 3,000 objects were stolen from regional museums.

Poverty brought on by sanctions compounded the problem. The Iraq antiquities department, which had been first class, could no longer afford to pay archaeologists, curators or guards. Iraqis began to loot neglected dig sites and unexplored ancient settlements, carrying off wall reliefs, statues, and clay tablets. This was motivated by the knowledge that collectors in the West pay millions of dollars for certain artifacts and often do not seek to verify the legality of their removal. Now the question lingers: Will the U.S. post-war occupying force consider itself with preventing a repeat of this destruction?

After the first Gulf War, Iraq requested that the U.N. Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) investigate war-related damage and post-war looting. However, the United States, along with the U.K., blocked such an inquiry through the Security Council. To this day, there has yet to be an independent investigation into the losses suffered by Iraq.

The U.S. record in Afghanistan, where very little money has been provided for the protection of antiquities, adds to the doubts. Professor Russell says the situation in that country is “not encouraging,” since “the U.S. has left cultural assistance entirely up to other countries.”

However, some believe that there will be a more concerted effort at protection following this war. Professor Gibson says, “The U.S. government is aware of the problem and will, I presume, take responsibility for protecting the sites from further pillaging and smuggling out of antiquities.”

Groups are already meeting with the Defense and State departments to ensure a functioning antiquities department within Iraq after the war. The American Council for Cultural Policy (ACCP) is in the forefront of this effort and has offered help in rebuilding the necessary institutions. It remains to be seen whether this assistance will materialize following the war and what form it will take.

CONCERNED OR CASHING IN?

Not everyone trusts the ACCP – there is concern the group, whose members are major collectors and curators, might try to change Iraq’s antiquities policy for its own benefit. Their contact with the State Department, which is planning to form a working group on antiquities and heritage in the region, has left cultural assistance entirely up to other countries.”

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The Pentagon accepted a list of 5,000 locations, but some archaeologists contend that the country may contain more than 100,000 sites in all. In fact, since southern Iraq is located in an alluvial plain, every visible hill is actually the mound of an ancient settlement.

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Iraq, could certainly give them a chance to influence post-war policy. While the ACCP maintains that such claims are absurd, individual members have suggested that a post-war Iraq ought to liberalize certain laws — allowing more dig permits for foreigners and the export of some artifacts. According to Science, the group’s treasurer, William Pearlstein, says that Iraq should allow “some objects [to be] certified for export” and that his group should seek to “influence conservation of cultural heritage [with the State Department].”

Currently, Iraq maintains that all antiquities, both above and below the ground, are property of the Iraqi people. This policy was instituted as a direct result of the immense number of artifacts removed to European museums during the reign of the Ottoman Empire. Yet Iraq’s laws could be a target for free-trade-loving globalizers. In an age when “trade barriers” are dirty words, laws protecting cultural heritage may be seen as unnecessary protection of a product from the forces of free market economics — and their nullification simply part of economic liberalization.

Many archaeologists feel that Iraq’s current policy is the best option for its cultural property, and they will judge the actions of the US government and its advisors accordingly. “Just how [State Department policy] is implemented — whether as beneficial support for the existing antiquities authority in Iraq, or as a neo-colonial rewriting of Iraqi laws to benefit the Western market — will be crucial,” says Professor Russell. “In the opinion of archaeologists, the most destructive thing the US could do for Iraqi archaeology in a hypothetical post-war scenario would be to try to take over the operation of the antiquities department or to change Iraq’s state-of-the-art antiquities policies. The most constructive thing would be to ask the department what it needs and then make sure they get it.”
By Chris Anderson

At the conclusion of a recent midnight screening of Michael Moore’s documentary Bowling for Columbine, the crowd spontaneously erupted into prolonged applause. Two weeks later, the film won a Writers Guild award for best screenplay and, on March 23, it garnered an Oscar for Best Documentary. While it was Moore’s impassioned anti-war acceptance speech that made the headlines, the award was a clear affirmation of the film’s artistic quality. What is less certain, however, is whether those showering praise on the movie would understand its true intentions.

According to most reviews, Bowling for Columbine examines the roots of America’s gun culture by recounting the events that led two Colorado teenagers, Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, to gun down twelve classmates at Columbine High School. It isn’t surprising that liberal audiences from New York to Los Angeles appreciate a film about the need for gun control. Except, that’s not what the movie is really about. Rather, it is a film that ponders the impact of fear on this nation’s often-brutal domestic and foreign policies.

“Why are people scared?” Michael Moore asks midway through the film. This complex question, rather than the simpler one about whether “guns kill people or people kill people,” is the true center of the movie. Bowling for Columbine goes beyond the standard liberal cliches about domestic American violence, striking directly at the heart of our nation’s equally violent foreign policy—a policy that, since September 11, Moore argues, is increasingly driven by fear.

“Nowhere has this fear-driven outlook been more obvious than in the Bush Administration’s relentless push for preemptive war against Iraq. The shadow of September 11 hangs like a cloud over the President’s increasingly Manichean pronouncements about events in the world. Instead of drifting along toward tragedy, we will set a course toward safety.” Bush said in his nationally televised speech on March 17. “Before the day of horror can come, before it is too late to act, this danger will be removed.”

At the same time, our fearless leaders in the Department of Homeland Security created a new website, www.ready.gov, which ominously declares that “terrorists are working to obtain biological, chemical, nuclear and radiological weapons, and the threat of an attack is very real.”

In this light, the immense popularity of Bowling for Columbine makes sense—especially in New York. A film that analyzes our dread, extrapolates it, turns it upside down and pokes at it from all angles, is bound to resonate. We are, after all, a city that has been on perpetual “Orange Alert” for almost a year and a half. New Yorkers, more than other Americans, have a uniquely personal sense of both the fear of terrorism that animates current U.S. foreign policy, and the “blowback” that this foreign policy seems bound to create.

In a March 17 column for the New York Times, Paul Loeb argues that “given how continually Bush plays the fear card, [the anti-war movement] might acknowledge the real fear felt by ordinary Americans have some reasons for fear. And then make clear that relentless zealotry and a willingness to make entire populations expendable does nothing to bring real security.”

Loeb is right, as far as he goes. Apart from the occasional artist or director like Moore, the anti-war movement has done a poor job examining the real reasons for the popularity behind Bush’s hawkish and overtly soothing stance. Fear drives the Bush agenda, and it is only by acknowledging the real fear felt by ordinary Americans that a long-term opposition to that agenda can take root.
FOOD FOR THOUGHT:
New-Age Grocery Giants Nix Workers’ Rights

BY TONY PECINOVSKY

What do the well-known organic grocery stores Whole Foods and Wild Oats have in common? A commitment to the environment? Devotion to the community? On their website, Wild Oats says they are “planting the seeds that will support our communities, employees and the environment for generations to come.” Once every three months each Wild Oats store donates five percent of its gross store sales to a community non-profit group, and Whole Foods, the world’s largest retailer of natural and organic foods, contributes at least five percent of total net profits to non-profit organizations.

It seems that these socially and environmentally conscious grocery stores can provide customers with healthy, non-genetically modified foods, support the community and the environment and still make a profit.

But wait a minute. Another question remains to be answered.

Consider the issue of workers rights, the right to organize a union and bargain collectively, an important consideration for the thousands of people across the country employed by these grocery stores.

Workers’ rights have been recognized for some time, but not by John Mackey, CEO and founder of Whole Foods. “A union is like having herpes. It doesn’t kill you, but it’s unpleasant and inconvenience and it stops a lot of people from becoming your lover,” said Mackey.

Patrick Parcell, director of organizing for UFCW Local 1500, is currently involved in a Whole Foods organizing campaign here in New York. “You have to appreciate the hypocrisy. Whole Foods presents a false image. They’ve created an environment that seems leftist and transformative. But Whole Foods is far to the right when it comes to workers rights.” Currently there is only one unionized Whole Foods grocery store in the country, located in Madison, Wisconsin.

And Wild Oats isn’t any better. Brian Petronella, president of the UFCW Local 371, says Wild Oats “will go to any extent, just like Wal-Mart, to stop people from organizing into a union.”

Local 371 successfully organized the first and only Wild Oats-owned health-food store, “Food For Thought” in 2001. But shortly after the campaign succeeded, Wild Oats sold the store and opened a new non-union grocery store “within throwing distance of Food for Thought,” said Petronella.

During the campaign, Wild Oats was charged with harassing, coercively interrogating and surveilling employees. The store also threatened a reduction in hours, loss of benefits and store closure if the employees voted for a union.

Nationally, union workers earn 28 percent more on average than non-union workers and are significantly more likely to receive health care and pension benefits.

According to Parcell, “full-time Whole Foods workers pay $250 dollars a month for healthcare.” In addition, “employers in union grocery stores in New York pay the freight, dental, vision and family coverage.”

As Parcell points out: “Whole Foods provides healthy food. But not health.” Whole Foods and Wild Oats promote themselves as environmentally conscious, progressive companies, dedicated to creating and fostering workplace environments where “team members” can “make their own decisions.” And it has paid off. In 2002 Whole Foods reported sales of $2.27 billion and profits of $67.9 million.

It seems this window-dressing is nothing more than a clever and insidious way to tap into a niche market.

Currently the UFCW is asking members and supporters not to patronize Whole Foods and Wild Oats.

A union is like having herpes. It doesn’t kill you, but it’s unpleasant and inconvenient and it stops a lot of people from becoming your lover.

BY PANDI HOPKINS

WHOLE FOODS
FOUNDED: 1980
HEADQUARTERS: AUSTIN, TEXAS
2002 ANNUAL REVENUES: $2.27 BILLION
2002 ANNUAL PROFITS: $67.9 MILLION
NUMBER OF STORES: 143 THROUGHOUT THE U.S.

WILD OATS
FOUNDED: 1987
HEADQUARTERS: DENVER, COLORADO
2002 ANNUAL REVENUES: $919 MILLION
2002 ANNUAL PROFITS: $6.9 MILLION
NUMBER OF STORES: 100 IN 29 STATES AND BRITISH COLUMBIA.

NATIONAL BRIEFS

SENATE SAYS VOTERS PAY, NOT POLLUTERS
On March 25, the Senate voted against restoring a Superfund provision to force polluters to pay fees for cleanups. Some of the most frequent and infamous polluters, like General Electric, ExxonMobil, and General Motors, will instead pass the bill along to taxpayers. Four of the most polluted sites among the nation’s 600,000 toxic waste sites. New Jersey and New York have the most sites that will be potentially affected by lack of resources. According to this year’s budget, the Bush administration will have taxpayers pay 79 percent of the Superfund program’s costs, and yet the program will remain underfunded by about $1 to $1.4 billion per year.

FEFS: ENRON IMPlicated in CALIFORNIA ENERGY CRISIS
Enron and other leading energy companies instigated the 2000-2001 energy crisis that cost California residents billions of dollars and caused widespread rolling blackouts, according to a recently released report from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). FERC concluded that Enron and its trading partners, along with 37 other energy companies, violated the anti-gaming provisions of their FERC-approved tariffs for the California markets. Among the 37 companies investigated for their connection to the manipulation of the California energy market are AEP, BP, Duke, Dynegy, El Paso, Enron, Mirant, Morgan Stanley, Reliant, Sempra and Williams. FERC will consider beginning proceedings to require companies to hand over profits linked with these tariff violations.

Watchdog groups say they will monitor carefully the FERC’s actions to penalize the companies as they are skeptical of the regulatory body’s commitment.

MAY DEPARTMENT STORES CLOSE DOOR ON BURMA

May Department Stores, the owner of 14 chains including Foley’s, Lord & Taylor, Hecht’s, Strawbridges, Robinsons-May, and David’s Bridal, recently stated that it will no longer sell products made in Burma. Due to the country’s history of forced labor, particularly within the garment industry, the Free Burma Coalition and a number of other groups boycotted May Department stores for carrying “Made in Burma” clothing. So many retailers, such as Saks, Wal-Mart, Costo, Tommy Hilfiger, Fil, Hanes, The Spiegel Group, and Jones Apparel, have joined in the decision to ban Burmese products that U.S. imports have dropped by 27 percent, from $411 to $303 million dollars, between 2001 and 2002.
BUDGET CUTS ROCK CUNY

BY SASHA NEVSEKAYA

Six billion dollars in loans and aid to Turkey for use of its airspace, $2 billion to Israel, and just shy of $5 million to tighten security in New York City. These were some of the disbursements resulting from the war. Meanwhile, $1.6 billion is being slashed from the New York City public school budget.

To some parties, such as the City College Coalition for Peace, these events are connected.

That’s why the group held a rally the day the war began, March 20, to demand not just a halt to the invasion of Iraq, but a freeze on upcoming tuition hikes. More than 100 students and faculty members gathered in the City College North Academic Center Rotunda to listen to some 15 speakers.

Hank Williams, a representative from the Student Liberation and Action Movement, set the pace for the rally by calling the Bush administration a bunch of “gangsters and thugs.” Faculty members advised students to take action and organize against the war. City College’s proud history of rebellion was also emphasized: in 1969 thousands of students kept the college’s South Campus occupied for weeks, forced the resignation of the college president and ended his policy of segregation.

At 2 p.m., students and faculty moved the rally to the grounds of the tightly secured administrative building. The group had a petition signed by hundreds of City College students that demanded an end to the war on Iraq and sanctions, a halt to attacks on immigrants and civil liberties, and no tuition hikes.

“All we want is [the] position of our administration on the key issues of the day,” said the rally’s MC Lydia Onuaga.

Yet City College President Greg Williams did not acknowledge the students. In fact, even faculty members were denied passage to the administration building by security guards. Soaked by the spring rain the crowd chanted: “We are cold, we are wet, President Williams we are angry at us: our trade policy, robbing native resources, enslaving the work force in terrible conditions,” said Smiley.

“We have to recognize that this war is one front of a broader, larger effort to impose U.S. economic domination over the world,” said Karim Lopez. “The only way out of this conflict is to continue to make the link between the war abroad and war at home, to connect the issues, to mobilize.”

NYU: About 100 NYU students take over the Kimmel Center for University Life on March 27 after staging a walkout in Washington Square Park. (PHOTO: MARK MOSKY)

Students Demand Books Not Bombs

BY TONY PECINOVSKY

When asked why students are protesting the war on Iraq, Jessie Marshall of the Young Communist League and National Youth and Student Peace Coalition, says it’s because politicians are “not sending the sons and daughters of rich people over to Iraq. They’re sending that kid from down the street, the one who was trying to get an education.”

Locally and nationally, youth and student peace organizations are trying to sort out the complex issues of how to oppose the war in a super-charged atmosphere of patriotism. They say they oppose this unjust war in part because it’s fought predomnantly by working class youth and youth of color who are enticed by military recruiters offering money for college and a way out of poverty.

Karim Lopez, an organizer for Up Town Peace and Justice, says the “poverty draft is the economic pressure that forces young people of color to join the army.”

Portia Pedro, director of organizing for the United States Student Association (USSA), adds “working class young people are the majority of the ones doing the fighting.”

USSA, the oldest and largest student organization in the country, with affiliates on hundreds of campuses, sees a direct link between the war abroad and the tuition hikes at home. “When money goes to one place, it has to be taken from another,” said Pedro. “This war isn’t about democracy, it’s about money.”

Nationally, tuition is rising, class sizes are increasing, financial aid is being cut and there are fewer and fewer jobs for youth at living wages.

Erica Smiley, national coordinator of the Black Radical Congress Youth Division, said: “We’re not only being asked to sacrifice our lives. We’re being asked to sacrifice our education and our jobs.”

While in the past few months hundreds of thousands of youth have participated in mass national protests, many have also voiced their opposition to the war on Iraq on a local level.

Many youth have put candles in their windows, held vigils and organized campus teach-ins. Perhaps one of the most effective actions organized entirely by youth and students was the March 5th Books Not Bombs student strike.

One of the nearly 400 participating colleges was Stanford University. Clara Webb, a senior at Stanford, and a member of the Stanford Committee for Peace and Justice (SCPJ), told strike participants that “federal money, financial aid, after-school programs and health services are all being cut out of state budgets so that Bush can pay for his war.”

On March 5 the SCPJ, representing about 30 endorsing organizations, mobilized close to 1,000 students to go on strike. The striking students rallied in the quad, held workshops, wrote letters to congressional representatives and held cultural events throughout the day. Over 60 faculty members endorsed the strike, and around 30 cancelled classes.

The March 5th action was an example of how national and local youth and student peace organizations have been coordinating material, information, training and support.

Internationally, “we have to look at the root causes of what is making people so angry at us: our trade policy, robbing natural resources, enslaving the work force in terrible conditions,” said Smiley.

“We have to recognize that this war is one front of a broader, larger effort to impose U.S. economic domination over the world,” said Karim Lopez. “The only way out of this conflict is to continue to make the link between the war abroad and war at home, to connect the issues, to mobilize.”

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The lady needs help distributing NYC's only radical citywide paper. Stop by for bundles or call for info.

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PHOTO: TRAVIS RUZICKA

National Day of Mass Nonviolent Direct Action to STOP THE WAR at Home and in Iraq

Monday, April 7th, 2003

Targeting war profiteer: The Carlyle Group, 35th Street & 5th Avenue during morning rush hour

www.ActAgainstWar.org

PHOTO: TRAVIS RUZICKA

THE INDYPENDENT
DYING FOR PEACE

BY VANESSA HRADSKY

On Thursday, March 27, I was sent on assignment to cover the citywide civil disobedience planned in protest of the war on Iraq. So I grabbed my camera and walking shoes, and headed for adventure.

The events started early, with a “die-in” organized by the M27 Coalition at about 8:30 a.m. on Fifth Avenue, in front of Rockefeller Center. About 400 people gathered, with 170 of them lying down in the street, acting as war victims and blocking traffic. Some had pictures of dead Iraqis with a caption that read, “Your silence is killing us.” The actions were intended to draw public attention to what protesters say is biased media coverage of the war, fueled by corporate interests.

Some 200 people were arrested for “disorderly conduct,” including all of the die-in participants. Some of the arrests came as a result of plumedoches police officers instigating provocations. Many protesters complained of aggressive verbal and physical treatment by the police.

As the die-in fizzled out, I followed clusters of protesters walking around midtown with signs reading, “No blood for oil” and chanting, “This is what democracy looks like.” A couple of the protesters in the group were arrested for no apparent reason while waiting to cross a street.

Around noon everyone decided to regroup in Washington Square, so I headed south. When I got there, some 600 NYU students were staging a walkout, skipping class to march for peace. Various speakers discussed the problems of the war on Iraq, cheered on by about 200-300 students, while dozens of police officers paced around them. At about 2 p.m. the students took over the new student union building (the Kimmel Center for University Life) and 100 of them staged their own die-in in the lobby and main stairwell of the building. Luckily for them, the New York City cops surrounding the building (and photographing protesters) were not allowed access into the student union by NYU security. After waiting for about an hour, the police started to disperse.

Other sporadic events took place all around the city. Between 9 and 10 a.m., anti-war activists blockaded traffic at 28th Street and Broadway, at 26th Street and 6th Avenue, and at Prince and Broadway. The feminist anti-war group Code Pink entered Tiffany’s on Fifth Avenue, walked through the store in protest, and then staged a die-in on the sidewalk outside. They “died” again at the fountain in front of the Plaza Hotel. Another 30 people marching on the sidewalk were surrounded and detained by police at 48th Street and 5th Avenue, and six protesters were arrested.

Organizers from the M27 Coalition and Code Pink reported that arrests were held at One Police Plaza and denied access to legal counsel. M27 was just the beginning. The M27 Coalition has put out a nationwide call for direct action targeting war profiteers on April 7. The New York contingent plans to protest at the offices of investment giant, the Carlyle Group, located at 58th Street and Fifth Avenue.

See www.m27coalition.org for details.

FIFTH AVE: Protesters lie down in the street on March 27 bringing a halt to rush hour traffic. PHOTO: FRED ASKEW

ALT MEDIA LIFTS FOG OF WAR

BY CHRIS ANDERSON

Looking for substance over style? Here are some of the places to go for independent perspectives on the war.

Iraq Peace Team:
Daily Diaries www.iraqpeace.org

Iraq Body Count:
For news about the worldwide movement to stop the war, Iraqbodycount.net

AL-JAZEERA

Under frequent hacker attack since the start of the Second Gulf War, Al-Jazeera Online at english.aljazeera.net has nonetheless finally arrived on the web in English. Find out what’s being reported by the “CNN of the Arab World” and consequently, what most of that world thinks about the war.

The Palestine Chronicle
palestinechronicle.com provides news and commentary from Palestine, Iraq and beyond.

Ha’aretz
This mainstream Israeli daily with a left-of-center editorial perspective can be found at www.haaretzdaily.com.

What do the Russians think?
The IRAQWAR.RU at www.aeronautics.ru is an analytical center recently created by a group of Russian journalists and military experts to provide accurate and up-to-date news and analysis of the war against Iraq.

IRIB News
Reporting and analysis from the other member of the “axis of evil” in the Middle East, Iran can be found at www.iribnews.com.

Anti-war.com
A large anti-war portal with libertarian leanings.

Buzzflash.com
A clearinghouse for progressive information and interesting articles.

Democracy Now!
War and Peace Report: Monday-Friday from 9-10am on WBAI 99.5FM. Website is located at democracynow.org

Indymedia.org
For news about the worldwide movement to stop the war, Indymedia is the independent source for reported civilian deaths in the war on Iraq.

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Silvia Arana

Sunset Park, Brooklyn. La compañía Sunset Energy Fleet (SEF) reinicia planes para construir una planta eléctrica que incrementará la contaminación ambiental en esta área. La central eléctrica se construiría en la Tercera Avenida, en un área densamente poblada, multiétnica, con predomínio latino. Tendría el tamaño de tres estadios de fútbol, de más de 300 yardas. En el proceso de generar electricidad, la planta produciría por año unas 200 toneladas de partículas -PM 2.5- que causan asma, enfermedades respiratorias y cardiovasculares. Hoy en Sunset Park, la cantidad de partículas PM 2.5 en el aire ya es más alto que el permitido por EPA (Agencia de Protección Ambiental). Además, la planta producirá por año 134 toneladas de óxido de nitrógeno, que causa asma y enfermedades respiratorias y 153 toneladas de monóxido de carbono, que causa problemas cardíacos. Por incumplimiento de reglas ambientales, esta misma compañía fracasó hace dos años y medio en sus intentos de construir una planta eléctrica. En ese momento, los residentes y organizaciones como UPROSE (Unión de Organizaciones Puertorriqueñas) de Sunset Park se opusieron firmemente contra estos planes. Los residentes le dicen no al asma, al cáncer, al y a Sunset Energy Fleet.

El Independiente, 15 de abril de 2003

No queremos asma, cáncer, ni la planta de energía eléctrica

La inversión en Irak: En 24 horas –entre la noche del viernes y del sábado- murieron 140 personas en Irak, según el portavoz oficial iraquí. El bombardeo indiscriminado de Bagdad del fin de semana dejó 89 iraquíes muertes. La gran cantidad de civiles muertos y heridos le da un carácter genocida a esta invasión. Fuentes hospitalarias citadas por las agencias AFP y Reuters reportaron más de 50 muertos en el mercado Shula, el segundo en ser bombardeado esta semana.

Gran Bretaña admite que no puede tomar Basora, la segunda ciudad de Irak. Las fuerzas invasoras surgen en un esfuerzo por mejorar su imagen. Hasta hace un mes, se trataba de una guerra por el poder. Hoy se trata de un esfuerzo por mejorar la imagen. Hasta hace un mes, se trataba de una guerra por el poder. Hoy se trata de un esfuerzo por mejorar la imagen.

Boicot a los productos norteamericanos e ingleses: A través de IndyMedia Ecuador y otros sitios de internet se pide un boicot a los productos norteamericanos e ingleses para protestar por la agresión imperialista liderada por Bush y Blair con el fin de apropiarse de las reservas de petróleo de Irak. Proponen boicotear McDonald’s, Burger Kings y otras cadenas de comida rápida y tomar agua, jugo, cafe o té en lugar de Coca Cola, Pepsi, Seven Up o otra bebida producida por una empresa de EE.UU. Piden que no se compren autos producidos por Ford, Chrysler, General Motors o Rover. La lista incluye desde alimentos hasta ropa.