

IRAQ 20 Years after “Shock and Awe.” The Wealthy Prevail at the Expense of World Safety and Freedom

By [Michael Welch](#), [Denis Halliday](#), [Scott Ritter](#), [Prof. Marjorie Cohn](#), and [Mike Prysner](#)

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Region: [Europe](#), [Middle East & North Africa](#), [USA](#)

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“The invasion of Iraq was a bandit act, an act of blatant state terrorism, demonstrating absolute contempt for the concept of international law. The invasion was an arbitrary military action inspired by a series of lies upon lies and gross manipulation of the media and therefore of the public; an act intended to consolidate American military and economic control of the Middle East masquerading as a last resort all other justifications having failed to justify themselves as liberation. A formidable assertion of military force responsible for the death and mutilation of thousands and thousands of innocent people.

We have brought torture, cluster bombs, depleted uranium, innumerable acts of random murder, misery, degradation and death to the Iraqi people and call it ‘bringing freedom and democracy to the Middle East’. How many people do you have to kill before you qualify to be described as a mass murderer and a war criminal? One hundred thousand? More than enough, I would have thought. Therefore it is just that Bush and Blair be arraigned before the International Criminal Court of Justice”

– **Harold Pinter**, from Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech [1]

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Last Sunday March 19, marks the 20th anniversary of the start of the war in Iraq, a scene of mass slaughter, inhumanity, and suffering waged by a U.S. President and his coalition of hit-men. [2]

Many mainstream media outlets have commemorated the actions of two decades ago and

its aftermath, noting that the war was, in fact, a disaster both for the millions of people in Iraq, and for the thousands of U.S. soldiers laid to rest. There has been plenty of talk about the difficulties facing Iraqis despite the execution of **Saddam Hussein** and the presence of elections. The war effort led to the decline in popularity of the hawkish leaders with the reigning whips in their hands. [3][4][5][6]

But from a casual glance at many major publication broadcasts and print articles, there has been relatively little attention to the fact that the war was based not on faulty intelligence of weapons of mass destruction that could be used against America or one of its allies. It was based on LIES! [7]

People in the peace movement, armed with the truth thanks to sites like Global Research, strove to prevent the bloodshed that would follow. It alarms these individuals that many years later, people are forgetting the extreme actions taken by the rulers acting in their name. Hence, the follow up conflicts in Libya, Syria, Yemen, and now Ukraine.

On this pivotal anniversary, the Global Research News Hour hopes to spark the flames of domestic resistance to finally burn down the U.S. war machine serving the lust of Neo-cons and the greed of defense contractors, and not the righteousness of humanity suffering drowned out by the amnesiac mainstream media din. We will look back twenty years at how the war started, how it was executed, and how the country is situated today as a so-called model of the free.

We will talk in this episode about the illegality of this war with the complicity of the United Nations Security Council, the truth that was known about WMDs, and the heartache and misery dispensed on the people we were supposedly there to fight for. The viewpoints we will hear come from former UN humanitarian coordinator **Denis Halliday**, former weapons inspector in Iraq **Scott Ritter**, Law professor **Marjorie Cohn**, and veteran turned war resister **Joshua Key**. We will also get a brief expression of outrage from another veteran turned journalist **Mike Prysner**.

***Denis Halliday** is the former UN Humanitarian Coordinator in Iraq (September 1, 1997 until 1998.) He resigned from a 34 year career at the United nations in protest to what he saw as the 'genocidal' economic sanctions carried out against the Iraqi people through the UN Security Council.*

***Scott Ritter** is a former U.S. Marine Corps intelligence officer who served in the former Soviet Union implementing arms control treaties, in the Persian Gulf during Operation Desert Storm and in Iraq overseeing the disarmament of WMD. His most recent book is [Disarmament in the Time of Perestroika](#), published by Clarity Press.*

***Joshua Key** is an Iraq War veteran. He fled the war for reasons of conscience at the end of 2003, and with his then wife and children in tow, made his way across the border to Canada in early 2005. Joshua Key is the author, along with Lawrence (Book of Negroes) Hill of [The Deserter's Tale: The Story of an Ordinary Soldier who Walked Away from the War in Iraq](#).*

***Marjorie Cohn** is professor emerita at Thomas Jefferson School of Law, former president of the National Lawyers Guild, and a member of the national advisory boards of [Assange Defense](#) and Veterans For Peace, and the bureau of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers. Her books include [Drones and Targeted Killing: Legal, Moral and Geopolitical Issues](#). She is co-host of "[Law and Disorder](#)" radio.*

Mike Prysner is an Iraq War veteran turned anti-war activist. He has co-produced the [Empire Files](#) with noted journalist **Abby Martin**. He also produces the Eyes Left podcast.

(Global Research News Hour Episode 385)

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WZBC 90.3 FM in Newton Massachusetts is Boston College Radio and broadcasts to the greater Boston area. The Global Research News Hour airs during Truth and Justice Radio which starts Sunday at 6am.

Campus and community radio [CFMH 107.3fm](#) in Saint John, N.B. airs the Global Research News Hour Fridays at 7pm.

CJMP 90.1 FM, Powell River Community Radio, airs the Global Research News Hour every Saturday at 8am.

Caper Radio CJBU 107.3FM in Sydney, [Cape Breton](#), Nova Scotia airs the Global Research News Hour starting Wednesday afternoon from 3-4pm.

[Cowichan Valley Community Radio CICV 98.7 FM](#) serving the [Cowichan Lake](#) area of Vancouver Island, BC airs the program Thursdays at 9am pacific time.

Notes:

1. <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/literature/2005/pinter/lecture/>
2. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-iraq-deaths-survey-idUSL3048857920080130>
3. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/series/iraq-war-20-years-on>
4. <https://www.msn.com/en-gb/news/uknews/mps-mark-20th-anniversary-of-iraq-war-with-tributes-to-british-lives-lost/ar-AA18RTrz>
5. <https://www.ap.org/services/live-and-location-services/events/iraq-war-anniversary>
6. <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/18/world/middleeast/iraq-war-20th-anniversary.html>
7. <https://truthout.org/articles/for-20-years-team-bush-has-escaped-prosecution-for-war-crimes-in-iraq/>

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