

US occupation “hands over” Iraq to lethal puppet regime

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In a secret ceremony on June 28, Iraq’s “sovereignty,” which was taken by force in 2003, was “handed over” to an Iraqi interim puppet government constructed and controlled by the US, appointed by the US proconsul Paul Bremer, and headed by [terrorist and CIA asset](#) Iyad Allawi. This follows the recent appointment of war criminal and terrorist [John Negroponte](#) as the new US ambassador to Iraq. What hell Iraq has already been subjected to may pale in comparison to what is to come.

Marking the handover at the NATO summit in Istanbul, a leering US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld slipped George W. Bush the confirmation note penned by Condoleeza Rice that read, “Iraq is sovereign.” The smug Bush added the words, “Let freedom reign!” then informed British Prime Minister Tony Blair. Bush and Blair congratulated each other for the cameras.

Grotesque propaganda notwithstanding, Iraq is not sovereign. And there will be no freedom. The world knows it.

A Puppet **Regime By Definition**

Upon his departure, US proconsul Paul Bremer declared to the Iraqis, “You are ready now for sovereignty, and we think it’s an important part of our obligation as temporary custodian to return the sovereignty to you.”

Consider what Bremer has “returned” to Iraq:

1. US officials will hold direct authority over all the key institutions—including state finances, the armed forces and media and communications.
2. Allawi and all members of the cabinet and ministries were personally chosen and appointed by Bremer.
3. The US controls all legislative authority, and continues to have full authority to intervene in the drafting of the new Iraqi constitution (in 2005, when a “full-time” puppet government is finalized).
4. The US has invalidated over 100 Iraqi laws.

5. Operational control of the Iraqi military remains under the US command in Iraq. Iraqi troops take orders from the Pentagon.
6. A Board of Supreme Audit—appointed by Bremer—will have representatives in every Iraqi ministry, with powers to monitor all contracts and expenditure.
7. US “advisors” will remain in every ministry.
8. US and foreign troops are immune from prosecution for war crimes.
9. An Iraqi government [beholden to US interests](#) will sign off on the sale of Iraq’s oil industry and other major assets to American corporations (the first steps towards free market [privatization](#) , and full control of the national economy) and “invite” the US military to maintain permanent bases in the country. Article 59(C) authorizes the transition government to negotiate “internationally binding agreements” that would sanction the indefinite presence of foreign forces in Iraq.
10. Some 145,000 US troops will “stay as long as needed,” with “wide latitude to conduct counter-insurgency raids, set roadblocks, enter Iraqis’ houses and detain people indefinitely without a trial.”
11. John Negroponte is the new US ambassador. (See below.)

The Killers **In Charge**

Iraq’s new Prime Minister, Iyad Allawi, is a former Iraqi exile and founder of the [Iraqi National Accord](#) . The INA was founded by Allawi in 1990 and is a collective creation of the CIA, the British MI6 and Jordanian intelligence. Former CIA agent [Ralph McGehee](#) confirmed that the INA was “heavily sponsored by the United States and under the influence of the CIA” and quoted another Iraqi opposition figure as saying that “it is common knowledge among Iraqi dissidents that the accord is directly financed by the CIA.”

The INA’s goal during Saddam Hussein’s regime was to engineer a coup using former Iraqi officers and top Baghdad officials. Allawi’s group engaged in numerous acts of terrorism, and claimed responsibility for the bombing of civilian targets, including a Baghdad cinema and newspaper offices. According to INA insiders, these activities were carried out in order to “impress the CIA.”

Allawi has been a prominent figure in the [war lobby](#) consisting of Washington elites and [Iraqi exiles](#) that have pushed for regime change in Iraq since the early 1990s. He attended numerous summit meetings with Bush administration officials (and neocon elites from the Project for a New American Century and other groups), during which the [plan for the eventual invasion and occupation](#) of Iraq was formed and put into action.

It should be noted that [Ahmed Chalabi](#) —America’s [chief intelligence asset](#) , darling of the

Bush administration and the Washington [Iraq war lobby](#) , and the leading figure of the Iraq Governing Council—was removed from authority, perhaps [intentionally](#) . According to Michel Chossudovsky, “Chalabi now emerges with a brand new anti-American image, which contributes to confusing public opinion. He remains America’s Number One ‘intelligence asset’ in Baghdad, serving a central role in the economic colonization of Iraq.”

With his first words as prime minister, Allawi promised unremitting violence. He vowed to “stand up and destroy” terrorists, and stated that martial law would be imposed, along with curfews and the suspension of civil liberties, in order to battle “insurgents.” President Ghazi Mashal Ajil al-Yawer concurred, stating that “we’re not going to be merciful with them.”

Iraq’s new national security advisor is [Mowaffak al-Rubaie](#) , whose nickname is “Mr. Cellophane.” Al-Rubaie was the international spokesman for one of the most feared terrorist organizations in the Middle East during the 1980s—the Iranian-backed Islamist al-Dawa Party. Al-Dawa has been suspected of the 1983 bombing of the US embassy in Kuwait. That Bremer and the Bush administration selected al-Rubaie for this post, despite his likely involvement in the embassy bombing, speaks volumes about the morality and ethics driving US policy.

The new deputy prime minister, [Barham Salih](#) , joined the [Patriotic Union of Kurdistan](#) (PUK) in 1976, when it was still an underground organization. Both the PUK and KDP (Kurdistan Democratic Party) have been [consistently supported by the CIA](#) . Salih served for 10 years in Washington as the PUK and Kurdistan Regional Government representative to the United States. Salih participated in the preparation for “Operation Iraqi Freedom.” In the past, Salih has complained to American officials that the Kurds would oppose any attempt to topple Saddam Hussein by a coup. Yet, he now occupies a high post of a regime created by an Anglo-American coup that he assisted.

God of **Bloodshed**

Iraq’s new US “ambassador”, [John Negroponte](#) , headed US foreign service posts during some of the most brutal episodes in history. War crimes in Vietnam, death squads in Honduras, the Contra wars, and CIA-Contra narco-trafficking are just some of the crimes directly connected to Negroponte. His resume speaks for itself:

- Vietnam, 1964-68, political affairs officer at the US Embassy in Saigon.

- Vietnam, 1969-71, aide to Henry Kissinger.

- Vietnam, 1971-73, officer-in-charge for Vietnam in the National Security Council, under Kissinger.

- US Embassy, Ecuador, 1973-75.

- Deputy assistant secretary of state for East Asia and Pacific affairs, 1980-81.
- Ambassador to Honduras, 1981-85. Under Negroponte, Honduras was used as a base for the US-backed Contra rebels, and a key narco-trafficking station.
- Deputy assistant to the president for national security affairs (for Colin Powell), 1987-1989.
- Deputy ambassador to Mexico, 1989-93.
- Ambassador to the Philippines, 1993-97.
- United Nations ambassador (George W. Bush administration), September 18, 2001 to June 2004.
- Member, Council on Foreign Relations.

It is not surprising that the Bush administration has appointed one of the most legendary war criminals in modern history to pacify Iraq. As noted by Michel Chossudovsky:

“The hidden agenda is to replicate in Iraq, the Central American death squadrons of which Negroponte was one of the main architects.

“Negroponte is not being nominated for his diplomatic skills. His mandate does not consist in ‘peace-keeping’ or ‘peace-making’ in liaison with the UN, nor is it concerned with post-war ‘reconstruction.’

“His background is CIA. His nomination responds in a very direct way to the current situation, with a mounting resistance movement, which is challenging US military presence throughout Iraq. In other words, his mandate is to mount an effective counterinsurgency, using both overt and covert operations.” (See <http://www.globalresearch.ca/articles/CHO404E.html>)

Silencing Saddam **Hussein, Burying History**

Following the “handover,” the Iraqi exiles, turned national puppet leaders, turned immediately to the unfinished business of revenge against the man they have longed to destroy. Saddam Hussein, their old nemesis, was hauled before a judge, to be tried for war crimes—including (but not limited to) the alleged gassing of the Kurds, and even the 1991

invasion of Kuwait.

It is uproariously absurd, but not unexpected, that Saddam is now being “tried” for the past war crimes of the United States (including the Gulf War itself), and war crimes that Saddam carried out only with the support of the Reagan and Bush I administrations. Another patsy must take the fall.

Saddam Hussein himself was a US creation, a US ally and a CIA asset. Throughout the ensuing decades up to the start of the Gulf War in 1990, Saddam was a key US ally in the region, as well as a US trading partner, and a business associate of George Herbert Walker Bush. (In another hemisphere, Panamanian strongman Manuel Noriega played a similar role over the same period.)

The Bush administration’s National Security Decision Directives (exposed in an LA Times investigation in 1992), as well as records detailing the Bush-Saddam relationships through the notorious BCCI and Banco Nacional del Lavoro (BNL), offer clear evidence that Saddam Hussein’s government was explicitly and knowingly armed and financed by the US and personally involved with Bush.

It is also a historical fact, exhaustively confirmed, that the invasion of Kuwait was provoked by the George H.W. Bush administration (via its envoy, April Glaspie).

Other aspects of the [unsavory relationship between Saddam Hussein and Reagan-Bush administrations](#) , as well as the personal and business relationship between Saddam and George H.W. Bush, is just as well-documented:

- According to the *New York Times* page one story (8/18/02), “Officers Say US Aided Iraq in War Despite Use of Gas,” it was revealed that the Reagan administration provided Iraq with battle planning assistance, despite knowledge that chemical weapons were being used against Iran.

- According to investigative journalist [Tom Flocco](#) , Baker & Botts, the law firm of then-Secretary of State James Baker III, maintained numerous legal and financial ties with a Boca Raton, Florida, chemical company headed by Iraqi terrorist Ihsan Barbouti.

- Reagan-Bush provided Saddam with dual-use technology—computers, armored vehicles, helicopters, chemicals—through a vast network of companies, based in the U.S. and abroad.

- In 1984, [Donald Rumsfeld](#) was the US special envoy to Iraq. Armed with State Department evidence of Iraq’s use of chemical weapons, Rumsfeld maintained a cordial relationship with Saddam, and did nothing.

Many credible sources confirm that the myth about the gassing of the Kurds is war propaganda and distortion. According to UC Berkeley Professor [Peter Dale Scott](#), Stephen Pelletiere, chief of the CIA Iraq desk at Langley in the 1980s (and author of *Iraq and the International Oil System: Why America Went to War in the Gulf*) confirms that several hundred Kurds were likely killed by Iran—not Iraq. It is likely that the deaths were caused by cyanide gas, which Iraq had not used in the war against Iran, and which Pelletiere says they had no ability to produce.

The defiant Saddam Hussein blasted his televised humiliation as “theater by Bush.” It is also the crumbling Bush administration’s eleventh hour attempt to close the books on past history (and Bush family history), while they still occupy the White House.

No End **In Sight**

As pointed out by [Stan Goff](#), “the Bush administration is hell-bent on substituting a military solution for a political one, in large part because there never was a political solution to begin with.”

From the construction and installment of a puppet government by force, to the Saddam show trial, torture and “interrogations” (conducted by the likes of [Oliver North](#)), and Negroponte-led counter-insurgency, the Bush administration is pouring kerosene over raging flames.

Goff: “Every Iraqi who now dies at the hands of US troops is called an ‘insurgent’ . . . the US will not only undermine their puppets in Iraq with the upcoming military operations in Najaf and Fallujah, they will endanger their own regional servant-autocrats.”

And Democratic presidential candidate John F. Kerry has declared that he will send even more troops, if elected president. The reinstatement of [the draft](#) will not be far behind.

The most nightmarish probability, looming above all the rest, is that the US will never leave Iraq, and its [11 percent of world oil reserves](#). It will never leave Afghanistan—or Saudi Arabia, Iran, Venezuela or any other “geostrategic pivot” now in the cross hairs of Washington’s war planners.

In August 2002, a prescient [Mike Ruppert](#) wrote:

“On the eve of a U.S. invasion of Iraq the deployment of U.S. military personnel in the region is also a convenient placement of resources for what may be a one-two punch to take over a tottering kingdom that owns 25 percent of all the oil on the planet at the same time that Saddam Hussein is removed from power in a country that controls another 11 percent. Together, the two countries—which have not yet peaked in production capacity—and which are the only two nations capable of an . . . increase in output possess 36 percent of the world’s known oil. And still the American people try to ignore the fact that the administration knew about, and could have prevented, the attacks of September 11.”

Against the backdrop of [Peak Oil](#) (see also [Towards a Petro-Apocalypse](#), Yves Cochet, Le Monde, March 31, 2004), and light of the National Security Strategy of the United States (which states [unimpeded access to Persian Gulf oil](#) as the priority, a [permanent US entrenchment](#) is an imperative.

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