

What Does the Imperial Mafia Really Want?

By [William Blum](#)

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Which is the more remarkable — that the United States can openly announce to the world its determination to invade a sovereign nation and overthrow its government in the absence of any attack or threat of attack from the intended target? Or that for an entire year the world has been striving to figure out what the superpower's real intentions are?

There are of course those who accept at face value Washington's stated motivations of "liberating" the people of Iraq from a dictatorship and bestowing upon them a full measure of democracy, freedom and other eternal joys fit for American schoolbooks. In light of a century of well-documented US foreign policy which reveals a virtually complete absence of such motivations, along with repeated opposite consequences, we can dispense with this attempt by Washington to win hearts and minds. Presented here are some reflections about several of the causes that make the hearts of the imperial mafia beat faster in regard to Iraq, which may be helpful in arguing the anti-war point of view:

Expansion of the American Empire: adding more military bases and communications listening stations to the Pentagon's portfolio, setting up a command post from which to better monitor, control and intimidate the rest of the Middle East.

Idealism: remaking the world in what the true believers see as America's image, with free enterprise and Judeo-Christianity as core elements; here is Michael Ledeen, former Reagan official, now at the American Enterprise Institute (one of the leading drum-beaters for attacking Iraq): "If we just let our own vision of the world go forth, and we embrace it entirely, and we don't try to be clever and piece together clever diplomatic solutions to this thing, but just wage a total war against these tyrants, I think we will do very well, and our children will sing great songs about us years from now." **Oil:** the sine qua non of Middle East policy, yesterday, today and tomorrow; to be in full control of Iraq's vast reserves, with Saudi oil and Iranian oil waiting defenselessly next door; OPEC will be stripped of its independence from Washington and will no longer think about replacing the dollar with the Euro as its official currency; oil-dependent Europe may think twice next time about being so uppity.

Globalization: Once relative security over the land, people and institutions has been established, the transnational corporations will march into Iraq ready to privatize everything at fire-sale prices, followed closely by the IMF, World Bank, World Trade Organization and the rest of the international financial extortionists.

Arms industry: As with each of America's endless wars, military manufacturers will rake in their exorbitant profits, then deliver their generous political contributions, inspiring

Washington leaders to yet further warfare, each war also being the opportunity to test new weapons. Israel: The men driving Bush to war include long-time militant supporters of Israel, such as Richard Perle, Paul Wolfowitz, and Douglas Feith, who, along with the rest of the powerful Israeli lobby, have advocated smashing Iraq for years. Israel has been playing a key role in the American military buildup to the war. Besides getting rid of its arch enemy, Israel could use the opportunity to carry out its final solution to the Palestinian question — transferring them to Jordan, (liberated) Iraq, and anywhere else that expanded US hegemony in the Middle East will allow. Iraq's abundant water could be diverted to relieve a parched Israel.

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