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Subject: "U.S. government objectives in Iraq"

Posted by [havocsnipe](#) on Sat, 22 Mar 2003 12:53:41 GMT

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On March 20, the United States began its military campaign against Iraq. The self-stated goal of this action is to remove the current Iraqi government and replace it with a U.S.-friendly regime. Washington has also expressed its desire to occupy Iraq until the Middle Eastern state is stable enough for self-government.

There are a variety of other objectives involved in this military action. Washington would like to remove a regime that in the past has expressed its desire to become a regional power. If Iraq were to become a regional power, it would weaken U.S. control in the region, as Iraq would have an increased ability to take actions opposed to U.S. interests. The Gulf War in 1991 was a conflict meant to neuter the growing power of the Iraqi state.

In removing the Saddam Hussein government, the U.S. will be projecting its power further into the Middle East. Following the ouster of Saddam, Washington will find it necessary to construct military bases in Iraq in order to handle U.S. military activity in the post-war phase. This will follow the model successfully implemented in Afghanistan. With Iraq as a new military launching point, the U.S. will find itself in an incredibly strategic location. Bordering six critical states, Iraq is located at the heart of the Middle East.

Once military bases are active in Iraq, Washington will be able to reshape the Middle East, a term that has been used by administration officials for the last decade. U.S. government officials have expressed their concern with the country of Syria, which is located on Iraq's western border. Damascus has been in a constant state of conflict with Israel, an important U.S. ally in the region and a country with which some officials in the administration strongly identify. Both Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz and Defense Policy Board chairman Richard Perle have been involved in the formation of Israeli foreign policy. Syria has also been accused by the Bush administration of taking actions counter to U.S. interests. By having an amassed military on Syria's eastern border, Washington would be able to increase its leverage in dealing with a recalcitrant Damascus.

In addition to Syria, Washington would be able to apply pressure more easily on Iraq's eastern neighbor, Iran. The Bush administration has labeled Iran as part of an "axis of evil," and expressed concern over Iran's weapons program. In the same way the U.S. will be able to increase their influence over Syria, Washington will also attempt to apply pressure on Iran by establishing military bases within striking distance of Tehran. Moreover, Washington will greatly improve its military logistics by being able to take military action from Iraqi bases, rather than having to negotiate airbase rights with other states in the region.

This projection of power into the Middle East is the primary reason for invading Iraq. But in addition to increasing its influence in the region, Washington will also be securing its control over the Middle Eastern oil supply. By establishing a strong military presence, Washington will attempt to increase the stability of the oil supply in the global market. The Bush administration believes that U.S. influence in the region will reduce the chances of an oil shortage that would greatly damage the U.S. and other oil dependent economies.

Moreover, the oil lobby in the United States has sway with this administration. Many administration officials have prior experience and service in the oil industry, such as National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice, Vice President Dick Cheney and President Bush himself. Therefore, an invasion of Iraq would inevitably lead to contracts for the American energy industry. Iraq's energy industry is currently in a state of disrepair; U.S. companies will be needed to rehabilitate the industry along with possibly increasing national energy output. American companies have already been bidding on contracts and soon the Bush administration will decide which companies to award with lucrative deals.

The Bush administration has also set a new precedent for U.S. foreign policy. By attacking Iraq without U.N. approval, and devoid of support from traditional allies, the Bush administration has established a new international order where the U.S. will take military action despite opposition from international institutions and multilateral arrangements.

These concerns all play an important role in the Bush administration's desire to invade Iraq and replace the Saddam Hussein regime with a new government more beholden to U.S. interests.

Erich Marquardt drafted this report.

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