

[NOTE: I originally found this page at <http://www.tao.ca/~hermes3/gulf-war.htm> . It is the work of David Fingrut. It was still at that URL as late as the week of December 4, 1998, when I assigned it for a class of mine on the Vietnam War. By March 5, 1999, it had disappeared, and I've been unable to find it anywhere else. Fortunately, I had saved it on my hard drive in case of just such an eventuality. I claim no credit for it. If David Fingrut should like to contact me, I will be glad to take it down, as it is his property. But I did not want such an important resource to be lost -- Grover Furr, March 5, 1999]

OPERATION DESERT STORM: OUTRIGHT DISINFORMATION SCHEME

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"The enemy aggressor is always pursuing a course of larceny, murder, rapine and barbarism. We are always moving forward with high mission, a destiny imposed by the Deity to regenerate our victims while incidentally capturing their markets, to civilize savage and senile and paranoid peoples while blundering accidentally into their oil wells or metal mines."

- John T. Flynn, *As We Go Marching*

April in July

On July 25, 1990, eight days before the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, a quiet, largely unreported meeting took place between Saddam Hussein and U.S. Ambassador to Iraq April Glaspie at the Presidential Palace in Baghdad, which has since been destroyed by the war. The [transcript of this meeting](#) is as

follows:

U.S. Ambassador Glaspie:

"I have direct instructions from President Bush to improve our relations with Iraq. We have considerable sympathy for your quest for higher oil prices, the immediate cause of your confrontation with Kuwait. (pause) As you know, I have lived here for years and admire your extraordinary efforts to rebuild your country. We know you need funds. We understand that, and our opinion is that you should have the opportunity to rebuild your country. (pause) We can see that you have deployed massive numbers of troops in the south. Normally that would be none of our business, but when this happens in the context of your other threats against Kuwait, then it would be reasonable for us to be concerned. For this reason, I have received an instruction to ask you, in the spirit of friendship - not confrontation - regarding your intentions: Why are your troops massed so very close to Kuwait's borders?"

Saddam Hussein:

"As you know, for years now I have made every effort to reach a settlement on our dispute with Kuwait. There is to be a meeting in two days; I am prepared to give negotiations only this one more brief chance. (pause) When we [the Iraqis] meet [with the Kuwaitis] and we see there is hope, then nothing will happen. But if we are unable to find a solution, then it will be natural that Iraq will not accept death."

U.S. Ambassador Glaspie:

"What solutions would be acceptable?"

Saddam Hussein:

"If we could keep the whole of the Shatt al Arab - our strategic goal in our war with Iran - we will make concessions (to the Kuwaitis). But, if we are forced to choose between keeping half of the Shatt and the whole of Iraq (which, in Saddam's view, includes Kuwait) then we will give up all of the Shatt to defend our claims on Kuwait to keep the whole of Iraq in the shape we wish it to be. (pause) What is the United States' opinion on this?"

(Pause, then Ambassador Glaspie speaks carefully)

U.S. Ambassador Glaspie:

"We have no opinion on your Arab-Arab conflicts, such as your dispute with Kuwait. Secretary (of State James) Baker has directed me to emphasize the instruction, first given to Iraq in the 1960's that the Kuwait issue is not associated with America."

(Saddam smiles.)

The Green Light and the Limousine

At a Washington press conference called the next day, State Department spokesperson Margaret Tutweiler was asked by journalists:

"Has the United States sent any type of diplomatic message to the Iraqis about putting 30,000 troops on the border with Kuwait? Has there been any type of protest communicated from the United States government?"

to which she responded:

"I'm entirely unaware of any such protest."

On July 31st, two days before the Iraqi invasion, John Kelly, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern affairs, testified to Congress that the

"United States has no commitment to defend Kuwait and the U.S. has no intention of defending Kuwait if it is attacked by Iraq."

Eight days later, on August 2, 1990, Saddam Hussein's massed troops invaded and occupied Kuwait (ironically, this was done in a method historically similar to the American annexation of Texas). One month later in Baghdad, British journalists obtained the tape and transcript of the Hussein-Glaspie meeting on July 25, 1990. In order to verify this astounding information, they attempted to confront Ms. Glaspie as she was leaving the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad.

Journalist 1:

"Are the transcripts (holding them up) correct, Madam Ambassador?"

(Ambassador Glaspie does not respond)

Journalist 2:

"You knew Saddam was going to invade (Kuwait), but you didn't warn him not to. You didn't tell him America would defend Kuwait. You told him the opposite - that America was not associated with Kuwait."

Journalist 1:

"You encouraged this aggression - his invasion. What were you thinking?"

U.S. Ambassador Glaspie:

"Obviously, I didn't think, and nobody else did, that the Iraqis were going to take ALL of Kuwait."

Journalist 1:

"You thought he was just going to take SOME of it? But how COULD YOU?! Saddam told you that, if negotiations failed, he would give up his Iran (Shatt al Arab Waterway) goal for the "WHOLE of Iraq, in the shape we wish it to be." You KNOW that includes Kuwait, which [the Iraqis have always viewed as an historic part of their country!](#)"

(Ambassador Glaspie says nothing, pushing past the two journalists to leave)

"America green-lighted the invasion. At a minimum, you admit signaling Saddam that some aggression was okay - that the U.S. would not oppose a grab of the al-Rumalya oil field, the disputed border strip and the Gulf Islands (including Bubiyan) - territories claimed by Iraq?"

(Again, Ambassador Glaspie says nothing as a limousine door closes behind her and the car drives off.)

Ross Perot gets to The National Honor

Two years later, during NBC News Decision '92's 3rd round of *The Presidential Debate*, 1992 presidential candidate Ross Perot was quoted as saying:

"...we told him he could take the northern part of Kuwait; and when he took the whole thing we went nuts. And if we didn't tell him that, why won't we even let the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the Senate Intelligence Committee see the written instructions for Ambassador Glaspie? - "

At this point, he was interrupted by former president George Bush who yelled:

"I've got to reply on that. That gets to the National Honour!... That is absolutely absurd!"

Later on in the debate, President Bill Clinton stated:

"...Several government departments, several, had information that he was converting our aid to military purposes and trying to develop weapons of mass destruction, but in late '89 the President signed a secret policy saying we were going to continue to try to improve relations with him, and we sent him some sort of communication on the eve of his invasion of Kuwait that we still wanted better relations..."

On August 23rd, Iraq offered to withdraw in return for the lifting of economic sanctions, guaranteed access to the Gulf, and full control of the Rumalyah oil field. The proposal was not accepted. In late February, the Soviets negotiated a [peace proposal](#) involving a three-week withdrawal period on the part of the Iraqis, in exchange for removal of the sanctions. George Bush did not accept.

It soon became reported in American newspapers, magazines, and [television media](#) that the Iraqis had the world's fourth-largest army with estimates of up to a million soldiers, including the battle-

hardened elite republican guard. Later, it was estimates were reduced to 2-3 hundred thousand Iraqi soldiers. By the end of the war, this number was further reduced to a hundred-thousand untrained troops, most of whom were forced to maintain their positions. This is ironic, considering that in the fall of 1990, after the start of the war, Canadian military analyst Gwynne Dyer remarked that "Saddam Hussein was not a problem that kept anybody awake in July." Three successive American administrations did nothing [from 1980 to 1988, when Saddam Hussein was responsible for killing over 150,000 Iranians](#) and 13,000 of his own civilians including approximately 4,000 unarmed Kurds.

\$11,852,329.00 for a Free Kuwait

"Anybody who thinks advertising is a hit or miss business has been asleep for 40 years."

- Lynden MacIntyre, host of CBC's *The 5th Estate*

Once the Iraqi occupation had begun, the Kuwaitis found themselves in a rather precarious situation. They had to find a way to sell a war to the American public, most of whom had never before even heard of Kuwait. The illusion had to be created that Kuwait was not an oil-rich oligarchical Islamic regime run entirely by the al-Sabah royal family that had treated its 500,000 foreign workers like slaves, disallowed its citizens membership in any political parties, excluded women from the political process, banned political assemblies, and in January 1990 had broken up a pro-democracy opposition gathering of six thousand using tear gas and batons.

To facilitate this new image, the public relations firm [Hill & Knowlton](#) was hired for \$10.7 million by *Citizens for a Free Kuwait*, an organization formed after the Iraqi invasion to represent the Kuwaiti government in exile. Under the pretence of being a grassroots citizens coalition *Citizens for a Free Kuwait* received \$11,852,329 from the Kuwaiti government, but only \$17,861 from 78 North American contributors. [Hill & Knowlton](#) had done Public Relations behalf of Pepsi, both of the [Reagan](#) campaigns, and for the governments of both [Turkey](#) and [Indonesia](#). Craig Fuller, the firm's president and chief operating officer, had been George Bush's Chief of Staff when he was Vice President to Ronald Reagan. According to [Hill & Knowlton's](#) Justice Department registration papers, 119 executives in twelve offices around the U.S. worked on the Kuwait account.

The [Hill & Knowlton propaganda](#) campaign bought a *Kuwait Information Day* on twenty college campuses, a national day of prayer for Kuwait observed in churches nationwide, the distribution of tens of thousands of *Free Kuwait* bumper stickers and T-shirts, and thousands of press kits extolling the alleged virtues of Kuwaiti society. Utilizing the public relations maxim that sufficient repetition breeds eventual agreement regardless of the truth, *Citizens for a Free Kuwait* president Dr. Hassan al- Ebraheem stated that Kuwait has a "total commitment to democracy and the Constitution," after he had undergone an image transformation at the suggestion of [Hill & Knowlton](#).

However, none of these campaign efforts aroused the wrath of America over the Iraqi invasion. Sympathy was not evoked by the U.S. public, who had been apathetically conditioned to viewing the suffering of innocent victims of hunger, war, and oppression across the world every night on CNN. It was recognized that a [propaganda](#) campaign would have to be created to manufacture enemy atrocities. Utilizing previous [propaganda](#) models employed in the [Spanish-American War \(1898\)](#) and [World War I \(1914\)](#), [Hill & Knowlton](#) decided to foster American primate aggression and stimulate inherent parental instincts by exploiting the ultimate symbol of innocence and purity: [babies](#).

Enter the Babies

"During the Gulf War, [the American media](#) was manipulated into reporting exactly what the government and military had wanted them to report."

- Jeff Pavir, host of CBC's Prime Time

Through press releases and [media packages](#), *Hill & Knowlton* began circulating the accusations that Iraqi soldiers had removed 312 babies from their incubators and left them to die on the cold hospital floor of Kuwait City. This incident had originally been fabricated in a September 5 report to the *London Daily Telegraph* by exiled Kuwaiti housing minister Yahya al-Sumait. It was reinforced in a later account in the *Los Angeles Times* by a San Francisco woman identified only as "Cindy" and her travelling companion "Rudi". No last names were given and no photographs were presented as evidence of this claim. Once this unsubstantiated baby atrocity accusation got out, it was repeated over and over again by journalists, having burrowed itself like a virus into the computerized clippings files of major newspapers.

At the October 10 [Congressional Human Rights Caucus](#), *Hill & Knowlton* produced "Nayirah", a fifteen-year-old Kuwaiti, to provide testimony that was later used in the *Citizens for a Free Kuwait media kit*. In her passionate account of atrocities in Kuwait city, she stated:

"I saw the Iraqi soldiers come into the hospital with guns, and go into the room where 15 babies were in incubators. They took the babies out of the incubators, took the incubators, and left the babies on the cold floor to die."

It was not asked why she didn't bend down to pick up one of the dying infants, and it was not revealed that Nayirah was the daughter of Saud al-Sabah, Kuwait's ambassador to the United States.

Aziz Abu-Hammad, investigator for the New York-based human rights group *Middle East Watch*, was unable to substantiate Nayirah's report of incubator atrocities. In a December 19 memo, he wrote that it is possible that some of the supposed witnesses "are doing their part in a public relations campaign by the Kuwaiti government, where the truth is stretched a bit." Regardless, *Hill & Knowlton* had the baby incubator story repeated before the [United Nations Security Council](#) chamber in an audiovisual presentation on November 27.

The presentation was loaded with anonymous charges of Iraqi brutality and the reiteration of the baby incubator story. A Kuwaiti dentist, claiming to be a surgeon and using a false name, testified that under his supervision 120 newborn babies were buried in the second week of the invasion. Five of the seven witnesses at the U.N. that day - coached by *Hill & Knowlton* - had used false names without saying they were doing so. Two days after this slick presentation, the Security Council passed *Resolution 678* authorizing member states to use military force to evict Iraqi troops from Kuwait.

In the five weeks following Nayirah's falsified testimony, the baby incubator story was repeated six times by George Bush in various political speeches, including a speech to the troops near Dhahran:

"It turns your stomach when you listen to the tales of those that have escaped the brutality of Saddam the invader. Mass hangings. Babies pulled from incubators and scattered like firewood across the floor."

When [Amnesty International](#) made the unfortunate mistake of publishing a two-sentence description of the incubator story in an 84-page report on [human rights](#) violations in occupied

Kuwait, [George Bush was quick to exploit Amnesty's established credentials](#) by publishing an open letter sent to campus newspapers across the country, using references to the [Amnesty](#) version of the incubator story, and stating that

"there's no horror that could make this a more obvious conflict of good vs. evil..."

At the January 8 Congress hearing on Kuwait the war resolution was passed after the [Amnesty](#) report was quoted that

"over 300 babies were reported to have died after Iraqi soldiers removed them from incubators."

[Amnesty](#) later backed down from the story in the seventh paragraph of a press release, stating that they had found

"no reliable evidence that Iraqi forces had caused the deaths of babies by removing them or ordering their removal from incubators."

Opposition to the incubator atrocity tale was conveniently ignored, until the January 17, 1991 article by Alexander Cockburn in the Los Angeles Times which openly challenged the incubator myth. Unfortunately, by then the bombing of Iraq had already begun. Later, on February 15, Vice President Dan "Potato" Quayle declared,

"There are pictures Saddam doesn't want us to see. Pictures of premature babies in Kuwait that were tossed out of their incubators and left to die."

After the war, *Middle East Watch* was shown death certificates for 30 Kuwaiti babies who were all buried on August 24, 1990. Of those 30 babies, 19 had died before the Iraqi invasion began, and 11 died during the occupation. None of the 30 were ever shown to have been removed from incubators. All of the witnesses backed off from their original claims of having supervised or participated in the burial of babies.

According to London [Amnesty International](#) spokesman Sean Styles,

"we spoke to well over a dozen doctors of different nationalities who had been in Kuwait at the time and they couldn't stand the story up, and it became quite clear to us that credible medical opinion was that this didn't happen."

Andrew Whitley, executive director of *Middle East Watch*, and part of a two-man investigation in Kuwait, was quoted as having said:

"Soon after we arrived in Kuwait, two weeks after the liberation it became apparent that the story was a complete hoax. We were able to go 'round the hospitals to count the incubators and find that - possibly with one or two that had been misplaced - that none were missing. So none of the incubators were removed in the first place. Moreover, it seemed quite clear that there weren't any deaths which had been deliberately the cause of the Iraqis having gone in and stolen equipment."

The final decision to go to war was made on January 12, 1991 in a Senate vote of 52 to 47 (a margin

of 3). Before passing this resolution, six pro-war senators specifically brought forth the baby incubator allegations in their speeches supporting the resolution. Without the incubator allegations the margin of victory within the Senate would not have been sufficient for the war effort to be approved, and hence the war would not have occurred.

Bush gets his Priorities Straight

By the way, did you all see the wonderful ad on television that played four times a day throughout the 1980's that said "Do not fight, do not go to war, it is not the right thing to do," that the government organized and put together? How many people saw that ad? Has anyone ever seen an add put on television with our tax dollars saying war was not a good thing? Yet there have been hundreds of ads paid for with our tax dollars put on there to condition us to see war as a good thing.

- former CIA agent John Stockwell

The opportunities for a negotiated Iraqi withdrawal were open for six months from mid-August up until the American invasion in mid-January. Diplomatic solutions leading to a [peaceful](#) withdrawal of Iraq were discouraged, out of fear that this might "defuse the crisis" with "a few token gains for Iraq". In the 3 months from December 1990 to February 1991 the percentage of Americans who thought the country was on the right track went from 22% to 65%. Bush's approval rating went up to 91%. After the war, a *New York Times* poll showed that 8 out of 10 Americans said that the U.S. was in bad shape, 67% disapproved of the way Bush was handling the economy, and his approval rating went down to 48% (a drop of 43%).

Although Bush and various other U.S. officials denied it, killing Saddam Hussein really was a top priority after all. The Americans spent a lot of time and effort building and testing a bigger bomb that could knock out Saddam Hussein's bunker, with the ability to penetrate the many layers of concrete. They knocked out all the bunkers where they thought Saddam would be, but he turned out to be hiding somewhere else.

According to Daniel Sheehan's lecture *The Persian Gulf War, Covert Operations and the New World Order*, eight days after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, an Arab summit was called in Cairo to seek an Arab solution to this problem. When the foreign minister of Kuwait confronted Tarik Aziz, Iraq's foreign minister for the invasion, Tarik Azziz turned to him before the Cairo summit and said, "You had better be extremely careful about what you say to me in public because we're in possession of transcripts of your meetings with the Central Intelligence Agency in which you were planning with the United States Central Intelligence Agency a covert operation to get rid of Saddam Hussein." Following this, the Kuwaiti foreign minister passed out.

The [coalition](#) built by the Americans consisted of British, Italian, French, Canadian, and Saudi military support and included backing from Syrian President Hafez el-Assad, who had a long history of jockeying for power in the region against Saddam Hussein. This alliance brought an end to the illusion that the war in the Gulf was for humanitarian purposes and the restoration of democracy, since Assad, who killed 20,000 of his own citizens to quell an uprising in Hama, Syria, was comparatively more dictatorial than Saddam himself.

In a report issued on February 27, 1991 [Amnesty International](#) stated that it had been increasingly disturbed by the failure of the international community to selectively ignore the consistently reported patterns of [human rights violations](#) in virtually all the countries involved in the Gulf crisis, and by the selective use of [Amnesty](#) reports by parties to the conflict.

A news release sent out on February 8, 1991 stated that

"in times of war, governments often tend to sweep [human rights](#) aside in the name of political or military expediency. They are also selective in the [human rights violations](#) they condemn - those of their enemies are loudly criticized while those of their allies are overlooked."

A February 20 [Amnesty International](#) news release stated that

"countries around the world have done virtually nothing over the years to put a stop to serious [human rights violations](#) - in Iraq and elsewhere - that have set the scene for the present war. Now those violations are being exploited as [propaganda](#) and others are being committed in the name of national security."

Let the Rhetoric Begin

"This was a tremendous manipulation of public opinion. The [media](#) let us down in whole-sale fashion in terms of the coverage. They accepted the handouts from the Pentagon. They relied on their authorized knowers and their official sources, and they didn't make, really, any attempt to give us an accurate picture of what the reasons for this war were and what the results of this war were with respect to the terrible human carnage. So I think that from my perspective as a professor of [Media Studies](#), the most important lesson was how little we could rely on [the media](#) to tell us what's going on."

[Dr. James Winter, professor of Mass Communications at the University of Windsor, author of *Common Sense: Media Portrayal of the Gulf War and Other Events*](#)

The success of the Gulf War was determined by the overwhelming support of the [international mass media](#). Without it, this century's most technologically advanced butchery could not have been legitimated in the eyes of the American public as *The Mother of All Battles*: a [Noble Crusade](#) against *Islamic Militant Fanaticism* for the establishment of a *New World Order*, the preservation of waning *Family Values*, the creation of *jobs*, and the maintenance of the price of [gasoline - the holy elixir that keeps the American Dream running smoothly](#).

In the "*high-tech precision battle*" with Iraq a bombing mission was carried out every single minute. This [Nintendo War](#) between *Patriots* and *Scuds* was the first real *feel-good war* that the cholesterol-laden [testosterone-poisoned](#) MTV/CNN-addicted American public had witnessed in half a century. Former U.S. [President George Herbert Walker Bush](#) managed to beat the *wimp image* (at least temporarily) and end the deadly *Vietnam Syndrome* that forced the American military to fight without public support at home. Most importantly, however, Neil Bush's considerable investment in Bahrain oil was secured by his father's declaration that the U.S. has "*a moral imperative*" to police that area.

A [propaganda](#) war was successfully waged against the American people through intensive 24-hour television and radio coverage from Baghdad, Riyadh, Kuwait City, Tel-Aviv, and the Persian Gulf. Newspapers and magazines attempted to outdo one another with [coloured maps of the region](#). Gulf War playing cards quickly became a hot item. In a format considered palatable to the largely uneducated populace of McDonaldLand, the constant barrage of glossy-packaged journalism provided predigested ethnocentric distorted historical, religious, political, and geographical information on the Middle East.

The [mass media](#) maintained its illusion of objectivity, restricting [media access](#) to talking heads within the ranks of the government and the military, and rejecting many news stories [considered unimportant for the American public](#). Not wanting to risk the friendly relationship between the press and government information sources, news journalists neglected to raise questions that the military declared off-limits. By abdicating their role as critical, adversarial journalists, they transformed their role from government watchdogs to government lapdogs to preserve their ratings-conscious profit-oriented [media bureaus](#) and maintain the likelihood of government deception.

In his essay *The War Psychoses*, Mark Twain documented the fact that traditionally, many Americans speak out in opposition to the build-up of every war. However, once the killing starts, almost everybody goes mad with blood-lust and few question military authority. Two days before the bombardment of Iraq began on January 16, a CNN poll showed that 51% of the American public still opposed the war. Two days after the killing began, a similar poll showed that 97% now supported the war.

The triple-headed [media beast](#) *DanRatherTedKoppelTomBrokaw* hosted ample coverage of soldiers heading off to war and mothers tying yellow ribbons on trees in a ritualistic attempt to return their sons and daughters to them unharmed by chemical weapons or friendly fire. While Americans were seen expressing their support for the war in cities across the U.S., very little coverage was shown of the protests and demonstrations of the large anti-war movement in the U.S. A mid-winter demonstration of 250,000 in Washington received four seconds of [media coverage](#). By February, there had been over 3,200 protests against the war in the U.S. alone, though these events were not represented in [the media](#). Reporters were punished for being sympathetic to the anti-war movement.

An editor in Pennsylvania was fired for writing an article entitled [How About a Little Peace?](#) Selective control was exercised over which journalists got into Saudi Arabia to cover the war. Visas were not given to critical journalists from [alternative media sources](#). "For reasons of national security", press pools involved only 190 of the 1400 journalists, technicians, and photographers that were stationed in the Persian Gulf region during the war. Displeasing military censors resulted in the loss of press credentials and being dropped from the pool. Reporters from *The New York Times* who displeased the military were denied interviews, put on long-term hold, had their credentials pulled and were removed from the pool.

Of the 190 journalists permitted to cover the war, only 30 were allowed to be at the front to cover hostilities at any given time, and these reporters were forced to stay with their military escorts at all times. All stories were subject to security review (military censorship). One reporter from *The Detroit Free Press* filed a story which described pilots returning from bombing missions as giddy. The military censor changed it to proud. A compromise was eventually arrived at with pumped up. Military censors then delayed the story by two days.

[The Defense Department](#) referred to the invasion of Iraq as Desert Storm, which is a naturally occurring phenomenon beyond human control. [Military intelligence](#) reports depicted a battle of high-tech smart bombs and surgical strikes carried out with pin-point accuracy. Now and then, there was the odd bit of collateral damage (translation: the killing of innocent civilians) and sometimes, the Desert storm forces were guilty of accidentally "pulling a friendly" (translation: the killing of not-so innocent brainwashed former-civilians). The American public was presented with the image of a sterile war without casualties. Throughout the entire battle, [no casualty estimates were ever given on national television](#).

According to Theodore Postol, an MIT physicist and former Pentagon advisor, the American Patriot missiles had been "an almost total failure". The triumphant scenes of Iraqi scud missiles being destroyed that American believed in - because they saw it live on CNN - had really just been the primitive scuds breaking apart by themselves. Of the 84,000 tons of bombs that the U.S. forces dropped on Iraq, 91% were "dumb" bombs - or simple iron gravity bombs, and 75% of those missed their targets.

An article entitled *Mad Dogs and Englishmen* in the February 3, 1991 edition of *The Guardian*

Weekly described the use of rhetoric by the British Press in waging the psychological war against Iraq. British soldiers were described in the press as *lion-hearted boys* and *resolute lads*, while the Iraqi troops were called *brainwashed troops* and *fanatical hordes*. The *young knights of the skies* launched *first strikes pre-emptively*, while the *bastards of Baghdad* launched *sneak missile attacks without provocation*. The allied army, navy and air force would *precision bomb* and cause *collateral damage*, while the *Iraqi war machine* would *fire wildly at anything in the skies*, causing *civilian casualties*.

The *brave* American troops were *loyal to George Bush*, who was *resolute, statesmanlike, and at peace with himself*, while the *ruthless Iraqi mad dogs* were *blindly obedient to Saddam Hussein, the demented crackpot monster and evil tyrant*. *Heroic* allied troops *suffered a high rate of attrition and failed to return from missions*, whereas the *Iraqi cannon fodder* were *shot out of the sky*. *Professional Allied troops would dig in and take out*, while *cowardly Iraqis would cower in their foxholes and kill*. Ironically, the *confident, yet cautious* allies were reported to have *reporting guidelines* and *press briefings*, while the *desperate and cornered* Iraqis reportedly had *censorship* and [*propaganda*](#).

As in any war, the enemy was dehumanized as much as possible in the [popular media](#). Returning American pilots referred to the Iraqis as *cockroaches*, *camel-jockeys*, and *sand- niggers*. [Saddam Hussein](#) was portrayed as *The Butcher of Baghdad*: an irrational mad-man, with many obvious comparisons made to Adolf Hitler. The implication manufactured by the U.S. military that Saddam Hussein desired to conquer Saudi Arabia helped further justify the war effort, especially in the mind of George Bush, who saw the war as a potential re-run of Hitler's unquestioned invasion of France in 1940.

To further demonize the enemy leader, the New York Times carried an editorial-page cartoon entitled "*The Descent of Man*" with a picture of Clark Gable, then a gorilla, a monkey, a snake, and finally Saddam Hussein. An editorial in *The Globe and Mail* read: "*The world faces war in the middle east because of the intransigence of one man*", referring to Hussein. Saddam became known as an *environmental terrorist* for his [supposed scorched-earth policy](#), and at a time when North American ecological sensitivity and news coverage was at it's peak, this was quite a serious castigation. He also had the opportunity to make a guest appearance in the American war-comedy *Hot Shots*, starring Charlie Sheen.

The *New York Post* ran a front page picture of Saddam Hussein patting the head of a child hostage with the headline "*Child Abuser*". Combined with the term "*naked aggression*" coined by George Bush, and the "*Rape of Kuwait*" theme brought out in headlines throughout the war, the Iraqi leader was symbolically implicating in some form of sexual assault, and effectively demonized before the wholesome American public. The average response to a CNN video-survey taken of deep-south small-town Americans for their opinion on Saddam was: "*If I had a gun, I'd shoot him.*"

Strange Interpretations

Taking a Jungian perspective on the conflict, to George Bush Saddam Hussein merely represented the archetypal *shadow* figure; the repressed fears of the American leader's own devious nature. The parallels seemed striking. Every scolding remark that Bush made against Hussein could be applied back to his own covert activities as head of the CIA and as President. In a lecture of the *Toronto Jungian Society*, a Swiss psychologist viewed the Gulf War as the physical manifestation by the collective unconscious in the form of a synchronistic reenactment of the ancient Babylonian creation myth. *The Mother of All Battles* was apparently a title attributed to the primal mother goddess Tiamut, slain by the god Marduk in his campaign to establish a *New World Order*.

[General Schwartzkopf](#), whose name means '*black head*' in German, was compared to the black-headed Babylonian god of military victory, an ally of Marduk. Patriots and Scuds were compared to the giant war spears that sparked a *thousand points of light* when the gods fought their battle, and

fearful rhetoric of chemical weapons were compared to the supernatural yellow wind used against the god Marduk. The Swiss psychologist's implication was that in order for George Bush to establish his *New World Order* (a phrase initially coined by Adolph Hitler), he would first have to destroy the *Old World Order* of humanity that began 3700 years ago with the empires of Sumeria, Assyria and Babylonia, in the cradle of civilization that is now Iraq.

American televangelists such as Dr. (!?) Jack Van Impe, predictably jumped on the war bandwagon and predicted an imminent armageddon starring Saddam Hussein in the role of *Anti-Christ*, which he attempted to prove through numerological permutations of biblical scriptures. To this prophet of profit, the *New World Order* represented the long-awaited return to earth of Jesus Christ and the beginning of a thousand-year era under theocratic rule. Fortunately, for those of us who did not share his vision, *he was wrong*.

As far as most Americans were concerned, the Persian Gulf War was created ex nihilo by Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait City. Few were familiar with the history of the oil-rich monarchy of Kuwait, such as the establishment of a British base in 1793, the establishment of a puppet government, the dominion under British colonial forces from 1899-1961, and the 1961 British aggression towards the legitimate long-standing Iraqi claims to this region. The Iraqi complaint that the Kuwaitis slant-drilled into the Rumalyah oil field on the Iraq/Kuwait border and stole Iraqi oil also went largely unnoticed outside of OPEC nations.

Most Americans were unaware that during the 1980's Iraq was supplied with \$50 billion in American arms to fight its ten-year war with Iran, and was also financed by Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. During that time, Kuwait expanded its borders by 900 square miles to cover Iraqi oil fields and bought the *Santa Fe Drilling Company*, which specializes in slant oil drilling, for \$2.3 billion, according to John Stockwell. When, after the war, Iraq was unable to repay their \$80 billion war debt to Kuwait, the Kuwaitis drove down the price of oil. This cost Iraq \$16 billion and angered Saddam Hussein, who was unable to repay his debts to the Kuwaitis who were tapping into Iraqi oil fields.

The Iraqi war effort had been assisted by U.S. intelligence following a 1984 meeting between Ronald Reagan and Iraqi foreign minister Tariq Aziz. U.S. navy ships helped the Iraqis guide their missiles to Iranian targets. According to BBC correspondent John Simpson's *From the House of War*, on May 17, 1987 the USS Stark was hit by two Iraqi missiles because the Iraqi pilot "homed in accidentally on the radio beam from the Stark which was directing the pilot to his [Iranian] target." The incident killed thirty-seven American crewmen and the White House never asked Iraq for compensation. On May 29, Assistant Secretary of Defense Richard Armitage stated publicly, "We can't stand to see Iraq defeated."

In 1989 the White House ensured loan guarantees of \$1 billion to Iraq, since according to the State Department, Iraq was "*very important to U.S. interests in the Middle East*", it was "*influential in the peace process*" and was "*a key to maintaining stability in the region, offering great trade opportunities for U.S. companies.*" The U.S. supported Saddam Hussein as he crushed the Shi'ites in the south and the Kurds in the north.

Iran had also been armed with TOW missiles by the U.S. in criminal violations of the *Arms Export Control Act* in what was to become known as the *Iran-Contra Affair*. After a few years, Iraq was supplied with arms by the United States, Germany, and several other world powers once it was recognized that the fundamentalist regime of the Ayatollah did not serve the interests of the United States, whom they referred to as '[*The Great Satan*](#)'.

And the Final Score Is:

According to George Bush, the people of Iraq weren't the enemies of the coalition forces. This didn't prevent thousands from dying as a result of U.S. intervention, although the American public only

saw the death of one Iraqi soldier in a burnt-out tank because of war censorship. [American media](#) did not report the fact that retreating Iraqis were buried alive with tank bulldozers and burnt alive with napalm bombings - the only use of chemical weapons during the war - thus violating the Geneva Conventions covering chemical warfare. Former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark commented that there was "*nothing but collateral damage*" in his travels with international observers across Iraq over a two month period after the war.

[Greenpeace](#)'s William Arkin estimated 243,000 casualties between the war itself, fighting in the aftermath, deaths of refugees, and deaths due to inadequate medical care and nutrition in the post-war period. There was a 380% increase in infant mortality since the war; an estimated 46,900 children died from war-related causes in the first eight months of the bombings. 900,000 Iraqi children under the age of five are now malnourished, some facing death by starvation. Clean water is scarce due to the destruction of sewage and water purification systems. Incidence of poverty in Iraq is now greater than in India, and unemployment rates are near 70%.

Study teams from organizations such as Science for Peace, UNICEF, OXFAM, The Canadian Friends Service Committee and The Gulf Peace Team U.K. also compiled information on the devastating environmental damage of the war. Hundreds of oil well fires caused acid rain and soil contamination that disrupted agriculture, and spread soot as far as the Himalayas. Millions of barrels of oil were spilled into the sea causing widespread destruction to coral reefs, sea-grass beds, and 460 miles of coastline. Over a million migratory birds were killed, as well as large numbers of dolphins and marine turtles.

Contrary to the International Red Cross Geneva Convention resolutions, which require warring parties to distinguish between civilians and military and to avoid civilian targets, civilian damage included massive gratuitous violence and destruction. Carpet bombing techniques destroyed water filtration plants and hydro-electric facilities, electricity in hospitals was shut off, and Iraq was pushed back into pre-industrial times. Iraq's agricultural and water treatment facilities were destroyed, its electrical systems were crippled, and air attacks were carried out against clearly marked civilian vehicles. Iraq and Kuwait are still full of unexploded bombs and land mines. Democratic opposition in Iraq has been greatly weakened, and attacks by the Iraqi government continued on the Kurds throughout 1991-2.

George Bush was replaced by the younger, fresher Bill Clinton while Saddam Hussein remains in power, despite the last-minute bombing attempts at election time. The Kurdish people learned that, in the long run, they couldn't rely upon the American administration. The American people have learned alternative perspectives on war are becoming increasingly rare as government sophistication increases. Vietnam protests have become a thing of the past. The U.S. government will continue to justify their incredible military budget, so the absurd spectacle of war will continue to occur at regular intervals: major conflicts every 15- 20 years, with several minor skirmishes in between as the military-industrial complex plays realpolitik games with their expensive toys at the trifle expense of human suffering.

"The first casualty when war comes is truth"

- Senator Hiram Johnson
U.S. Senate speech, 1917

Footnotes

1. Transcript courtesy of:
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Iraqi borders were established by the British in 1923. Saddam Hussein believed that he had a legitimate claim to Kuwait for many reasons, including the fact that before 1923 both Kuwait and Iraq were parts of the same Ottoman Empire.

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Ronald Reagan consulted an astrologer throughout his career as President of the United States (which, I suppose is not quite so bad as a certain former Canadian Prime Minister who received political advice from his dog, whom he believed to be possessed by the ghost of his dead mother). Reagan was also well-remembered for his SDI "*Star Wars*" plan, and for his long-term commercial career with *General Electric*, which owns the NBC network and NBC news, has been the world's largest producer of nuclear weapons, and has a GNP larger than most mid-sized countries.

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Before taking on the Kuwait account, *Hill & Knowlton* vice president Gary Hymel worked to downplay Turkey's habitual torture, killing, and unjust imprisonment of its own citizens, the persecution of its Kurdish minority, and its violent war against Greece in Cyprus.

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Since 1975, Indonesia has occupied the former Portuguese colony of [East Timor](#) and conducted a brutally repressive cultural genocide that has killed 250,000 - over one-third of the indigenous Timorese population. Massive human rights violations continue, largely due to the diplomatic support of countries like [Canada](#).

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An extensive history of the Spanish-atrocities propaganda, such as the demonization of Cuban

general Valeriano "Butcher" (sound familiar?) Weyler that helped fuel American intervention in Cuba in 1898, and of the British depiction of WWI German army as a barbarian horde committing unspeakable crimes against women and children, can be found in *The First Casualty* by Philip Knightley.

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On November 8, 1990 *Citizens for a Free Kuwait* donated \$50,000 to the *Human Rights Foundation* (of course, legally separate from the *Human Rights Caucus*) which occupies free office space valued at \$3,000 a year in *Hill & Knowlton's* Washington, D.C. headquarters.

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The revolving presidency of the council had landed on the United States that day, allowing U.S. Ambassador Thomas Pickering to preside over the meeting.

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Bush's hypocritical exploitation of [Amnesty International](#) to justify the war effort was illustrated by his subsequent refusal to meet with [Amnesty](#) officials on other issues, including atrocities in newly liberated Kuwait. Bush had first exploited the fears and concerns of other Americans during the 1988 presidential elections, when the American marketing industry had him successfully elected by running him in a racist campaign against the Black rapist/murderer William (a.k.a. Willie) Horton, instead of against the Democratic nominee Michael Dukakis.

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George Bush unilaterally forgave Egypt's multi-billion dollar debt in exchange for their vote. For China's vote, he agreed to extend unilateral loans of \$140 million and overlook condemnation for slaughtering over 1,000 students at a pro-democracy rally in Tienamen Square. The Soviet union was promised \$7 billion in economic aid, Columbia and Zaire were promised further military assistance, Saudi Arabia was promised \$12 billion in arms in exchange for their vote, and the U.S. agreed to finally pay off the \$187 million in back fees to the U.N. that were withheld under the Reagan presidency. After Yemen voted against the war resolution all U.S. aid to that country was terminated.

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Interview with Dr. James Winter for *Desert Swarm* on CBC Radio's *Prime Time* with Jeff Pavir, January 26th and 27th 1993.

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The Crusades were racist bloody military expeditions designed to increase the power and prestige of the papacy, though killing hundreds of thousands of peasants, children, and those unfortunate to be

non-Christian, and failing in terms of any military objectives. [They were launched 900 years ago by Pope Urban II at the Council of Clermont in 1095, with a militant propaganda speech that would have put even an American President and former head of the CIA to shame.](#)

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According to former CIA agent John Stockwell and others, this war was also known as *Operation Desert Swarm*, *The Super Bowl War*, *The Made-for-Television War*, *The Women Have a Right To Kill, Die and Be Captured Too War*, *The Censored War*, *The Saddam Hussein Is So Evil We Have To Do It War*, *The I've Got To Support Our Troops Right Or Wrong War*, and *Operation Desert Muzzle*.

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Fortunately for the U.S. War Machine, the American public was frightened by the menacing sound of the word '*Scud*', due to the auditory effect of combining the words '*scam & dud*', '*scar & crud*', '*scum & mud*', or '*skull & blood*'.

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Testosterone, the hormone that provokes male sexuality, can provoke violence when found in excessive amounts in males living in a precarious or apprehensive environment. Laboratory research quoted in Michael Hutchinson's *The Anatomy of Sex and Power* (1990) reveals that when both boys and girls are given testosterone, their violent behaviour increases. Research in Kinsey's *Sexual Behaviour in the Human Male* (1948) notes that males are most sexually active between age 17 and 24: the peak years for violent crimes by males. Research quoted by Hutchinson on wrestlers and tennis-players also indicates that winning at competitive sports causes a temporary increase in testosterone. This may explain why wars - large- scale competitive acts of violence - are usually orchestrated by men over 60, such as George Bush, with declining levels of testosterone. The booster effect of victory in war may be what former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger meant when he said, "*Power is the ultimate aphrodisiac*".

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The name '*George Herbert Walker Bush*' with every letter permutated forms *Huge Berserk Rebel Warthog*, just as *Insane Anglo Warlord* is found through the permutation of '*Ronald Wilson Reagan*'.

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Most American's could not even point out Kuwait on a map before the war. In this respect, the Gulf War could be considered to have been a constructive and educational exercise beneficial for the American public, of whom an estimated 90 million are only semi-literate.

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The genocidal occupation of [East Timor](#) by Indonesian forces is one example of a story gone largely

unreported in the [major news media](#), possibly due to the fact that the island produces no oil.

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From the foundation of the American Empire to the end of WWII, the U.S. war machine was once more honestly referred to as *The War Department*.

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This term is as much of an oxymoron as the phrase "*fighting for peace*".

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American army [propaganda](#) commercials never depict actual combat scenes, let alone casualties such as blown off legs, when they attempt to romanticise the army. In their attempts to entice eligible victims to *be all that they can be* (to kill and die to protect the political interest of their leaders), powerful incentives are offered such as financial assistance for college, and respect upon returning home. One army commercial depicting a young soldier returning home to be embraced and forgiven by his father was played during the *Super Bowl* and cost hundreds of millions of dollars. The intended message was that by joining the army all your sins will be forgiven by an attentive father-figure (not the beer-swilling couch potato you're accustomed to).

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The Iraqi leader's name was alternately pronounced as: *Sodom* (as in *Sodomize*) Hussein, rhyming with Goddam Insane, or as *SAH-dam* (rhymes with *Satan*) - a derogatory term in Arabic.

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According to [Greenpeace](#) reports, the oil spills in the Persian Gulf were at least partially caused by the allied bombing of Iraqi oil tankers.

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Norman Schwarzkopf - hero of Desert Storm - quickly became a celebrity and contender for People Magazine's *Sexiest Man Alive* award.

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The term "Satan" is derivative from the Hebrew *HaShatan* (lit: the adversary) as mentioned first in the book of *Job*, and has a similar meaning in other Semitic languages such as Arabic and Persian. What the Ayatollah meant was that the U.S. was the *Great Enemy*; after all, it had supplied the arms to Iraq during their war against Iran. The Ayatollah's comments were therefore mistranslated and misinterpreted, much in the same way that Japan's response to U.S. requests for surrender

following the bombing of [Hiroshima](#) resulted in the subsequent bombing of Nagasaki.

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