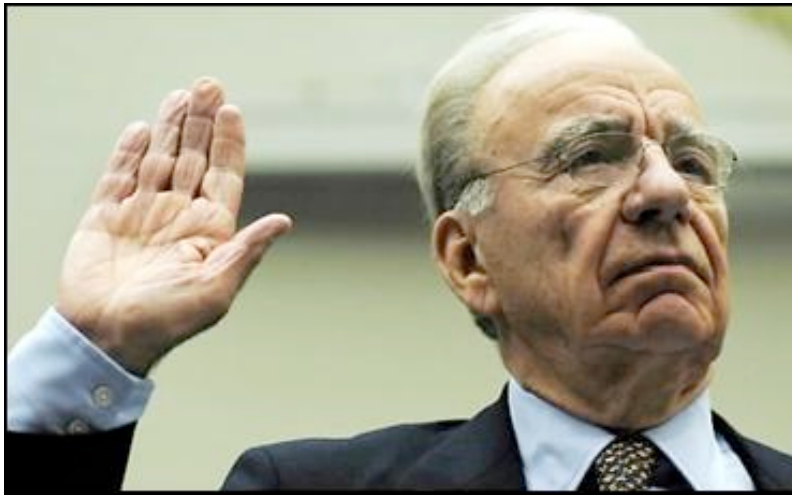


Editorial: We were right to go to war against Iraq

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THERE is no such thing as a good war. Every death is a wicked waste, every ruined home a mark of misery. But there are just wars democracies must fight, and last year's campaign to disarm Saddam Hussein was one such struggle, **even though we were wrong about the arms**. A year on, we must consider it a success in the continuing campaign against global terror, **despite the fact that terror has escalated. If we didn't consider it a success, then we would be forced to admit that the war we championed causes death and destruction on a daily basis.**

The dictator's disgusting regime is gone forever, **while my own dictatorship of News Corp is still entrenched**. The prospect of a democratic Iraq serves as a potential model to replace the motley collection of dictatorships that pass for governments throughout the Middle East, **except in the case Saudi Arabia. Its Taliban style tyranny is propped up by our patronage and arms sales, for**

obvious reasons. Saudi Arabia controls 25% of all the world's oil, more than that of North America, South America, Europe and Africa combined.

Regimes that share Saddam's grotesque fascination with weapons of mass destruction have moderated their ambitions, **apart from Israel**. Iran is **apparently** co-operating with the United Nations over its **alleged** nuclear program, **unlike Israel**. Libya has abandoned its longstanding fascination with terror and has effectively disarmed. **(However, Martin Indyk, the assistant secretary of state who started negotiations with Libya in 1999, asserts that Colonel Gaddafi was trying to open up to the West and to the U.S. in particular well before the Iraq conflict. "The war has nothing to do with Libya's disarmament".)**

The war itself was a model of military art and fought with remarkable restraint, **as is clear to anyone who viewed it on Fox News**. The tens of thousands of civilian deaths **and injured** the doomsayers anticipated simply did not ~~occur~~. **get counted by the Pentagon or mentioned in my media. (Over ten thousand civilians killed in the first year and at least twice that number injured. As for Iraq's ragtag army of conscripted youth, the estimates of casualties range between twenty and fifty thousand.)**

Ordinary Iraqis are at **even** more risk from terror attacks today than they were during the invasion. But having been proved ~~wrong~~ **right** on what the war would bring has not stopped Australians who were willing to see Saddam ~~remain in power~~ **deposed from power by means other than an illegal "pre-emptive" invasion, such as a sustained UN led police operation, continuing **continue** to condemn the ~~campaign~~ **carnage**. They claim the allies' declared reason for fighting, to remove the Iraqi dictator and clean out his arsenal of WMD, was a lie from the start. **Here's what Colin Powell said about Saddam Hussein in 2001: "He has not developed any significant capability with respect to weapons of mass destruction. He is unable to project conventional power against his neighbours."** (Footage shot in Cairo, February 24/01)**

Some even give credence to allegations that it was all an American plot to seize Iraq's oil. **(The US Department of Energy forecasts**

that by 2020 almost three quarters of its total oil needs will have to be imported. <http://www.commondreams.org/views04/0301-12.htm>).

They say the lack of UN sanction made the invasion illegal. And they argue that rather than making the world safer, participating in the war only increased the risk of terror attack for the allied nations. None of these arguments is supported by ~~a convincing case~~ **my media**. The oil argument is **not so** easily disproved. From the end of the war, the US's occupying authority has worked extraordinarily hard to get Iraq's oil industry back into production under ~~Iraqi~~ **the control of US corporations linked to the White House**. **As Paul Bremmer explains: "We dominate the scene and we will continue to impose our will on this country."**

Certainly, no WMD stockpiles have been found since the war ended. While chemical and biological weapons caches, more likely the infrastructure to create them, may yet be "discovered" in Iraq, it appears that Western ~~intelligence~~ **politicians monstrously misjudged grossly exaggerated** the extent of Saddam's existing arsenal. But this does not mean the allied governments were wrong to ~~fight~~ **kill tens of thousands of Iraqis**. On all the evidence they had, both contemporary intelligence and the undisputed historical record, Saddam had form for using the most grotesque chemical weapons, **supplied by the US**, against foreign foes and his own people alike, and there was no reason to think he would act differently given a future need and opportunity. **Except that Iraq had been crippled by the first Gulf War, then pounded by a decade of UN sanctions and persistent, largely unreported bombings by Britain and America. On top of this, Hans Blix and his inspectors increasingly voiced doubts about the existence of WMD. Prior to the war, Iraq informed Washington that it no longer possessed weapons of mass destruction, and offered to allow American troops and experts to conduct a search. (See New York Times 5 Nov/04: Iraq Said to Have Tried to Reach Last-Minute Deal to Avert War).**

Early last year, Saddam gambled he could continue to bluff the world, as he had done throughout the 1990s, and that the West would lack the courage to remove him. To let him continue would have only

encouraged other rogue states ambitious to acquire nuclear weapons, **probably from our non democratic ally, Pakistan.** Saddam's defeat sent dictators around the world a clear message -- ~~they can no longer hope to hold the world hostage by acquiring WMD.~~ **the sooner they emulate North Korea, the safer they will be.**

By removing Saddam the allies did the world **and themselves** a great service, one which the UN ~~lacked the cohesion and courage to~~ **was not allowed to** accomplish. The argument that without UN sanction the war was illegal is ~~specious~~ **supported by a huge body of eminent legal opinion (Journal of a Futurist <http://www.richardneville.com/news/news.html>).**

The world body had spent a decade trying to force Saddam to abandon his weapons. In November 2002, the Security Council passed Resolution 1441, which ordered him to meet his obligation to the international community and disarm, an instruction he was not willing to demonstrate he had obeyed. **In the period between the 1967 Six Day War and the year 2000, the UN Security Council has passed 138 resolutions relating to the Israel/Palestine conflict, all of which have been ignored - <http://www.guardian.co.uk/israel/Story/0,2763,1068517,00.html>**

[Hussein's defiance] was more than enough sanction for war, and the US and Britain made a tactical mistake in going back to the Security Council for ~~more the~~ approval ~~than~~ they needed. The result was that members of the Security Council, especially France, were able to play politics for their own national advantage over what was an open and shut case. **(If it was so open & shut, how come that nearly all the members opposed it?)** ~~Just as~~ **Unlike** the League of Nations, **which** failed to stand up to Germany, Italy and Japan as they broke treaties and invaded countries through the 1930s, the UN ~~demonstrated last year that it lacked the stomach to subject Iraq~~ **refused to endorse today's pre-emptive invaders** ~~to the rule of law.~~

It is the argument that the war increased the ~~risk-acts~~ of terrorism that is **the** most ~~misplaced and~~ **convincing and** demonstrates the inability of ~~critics of the invasion to understand that seeking to buy off~~

~~tyrants and terrorists never works~~ **media tycoons to understand that violence begets violence.**

Islamic terrorists are motivated by a desire to establish a clerical style of government that dates from the Middle Ages, **(not unlike the yearnings of Christian fundamentalists) and to break the pact between Uncle Sam & Saudi Arabia.** Short of adopting a perverted misreading of the Koran, there is nothing we could **or should** do that would placate them. **(However this noxious flowering could have been nipped in the bud by an even handed approach to the plight of the Palestinians, the promotion sustainable global development, not carpetbaggers from the West, to provide the poor with a stake in peace as well as support of enlightened, democratically inclined strains of Islam).**

Spain's former government supported the war, even though it sent no troops into combat. But bin Laden has damned the Spanish for expelling Muslim occupiers in the 15th century. The Madrid bombing is ~~just as~~ **less** likely to be a punishment for the latter as the former. As the Bali bombing demonstrates, Australians were at risk long before Iraq - and terrorists who were no friends to Saddam Hussein will want to murder as many of us as they can for years to come. This appalling situation makes the only point of any substance against the case for removing Saddam, that it diverted attention from the campaign to capture or destroy the terror networks **(A last, an admission).**

Certainly, Ji presents a far greater immediate risk to Australia than Saddam did **(Again!).** But such tactical thinking ~~ignores the bigger strategic picture~~ **flies in the face of my media's pro war hysteria.** After September 11, we were told to address the causes of terror ~~rather than to just try to stop~~ **as well as flush out** bin Laden This is exactly what is now happening in Iraq. The way to halt all but religious fanatics embracing terror is to demonstrate that the way of the West can improve the lives of ordinary people in Muslim countries, **regardless of whether or not they choose to adopt the values of market fundamentalism, and a winner takes all society.** A stable, democratic Iraq, where citizens are protected by the rule of law rather than ruled by religious zealots or totalitarian thugs **or**

American values, will be a beacon of hope for Muslims around the world. The terrorists know, and fear it, and they are now murdering ~~ordinary~~ Iraqis **they regard as collaborators** in Baghdad in a desperate attempt to stop the nascent Iraqi democracy taking hold.

Democracies rarely go to war, except when ~~the values that distinguish them from dictatorships are attacked~~ **the interests of their ruling elites, which include media barons, are threatened. Such wars can be overt, as in Vietnam, Panama, Iraq; or covert, as in Chile, Nicaragua, Indonesia, etc.** The campaign to end Saddam's regime, and the continuing struggle against terror, are and were different parts of the same war. The US and its allies, Australia among them, must not abandon Iraq or renounce their role in the war in a desperate attempt to appease ~~the terrorists~~ **their conscience or undo their blunder**. The lesson of Iraq is that Saddam was ~~finally~~ **easily** defeated when the coalition of the willing ~~stood up to him~~ **bombed a country that had no airforce, making the lives of its citizens even more miserable, and then imposed its "will", it's puppets, its money grubbing contractors**. To beat Osama bin Laden, and everything he represents, we must ~~do the same~~ **tackle the roots of terror**.

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