

This is the major exception to the rule that Republicans are pro-life; the voters are, as are the top politicians, but many of the donors and fundraisers are not. GOP Finance Chairman Lew Eisenberg is a perfect example. Part of the Republican Leadership Council, which aims to wipe social issues out of the GOP platform, Eisenberg is the go-to guy on raising funds for Republicans. The fat cats who cut the big checks or round up hundreds of donations to become “Pioneers” or “Rangers” typically hail from Manhattan’s Upper East Side or from Hollywood—rarely from Cheyenne or Tulsa. While GOP votes come from the Red States, GOP cash comes from the Blue States, so Republicans must walk a fine line between pro-life voters and pro-choice donors.

Democrats have a different sort of tension. They are uneasy running on an issue where their victories are supplied by the courts rather than elected officials. As with many of the major advances by liberals, abortion-on-demand could not have happened through the legislative process. Imagine a constitutional amendment, or even a bill, passing both houses of Congress that legalized abortion at all stages and stripped most power to regulate—even partial-birth abortion—from the states. Democrats can only move the ball forwards through the courts, which is why they are willing to lay everything on the line to block Bush’s judges.

Elites on both sides of the aisle do not want abortion to become a defining issue, but those who fund the Democratic Party and those who vote for the Republican Party will not let it fade away. Abortion has become a bright partisan dividing line in a way no moral issue has been since slavery, and this alone should encourage pro-lifers in their struggle to become today’s abolitionists. ■

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Intelligence Quotient

Politics, unreliable defectors, and lack of human source clouded the President’s strategic vision.

By Philip Giraldi

WHEN MILITARY DISASTER led to imperial Rome’s loss of the province of Germania in AD 9, Augustus Caesar reportedly went into mourning, drawing his toga over his head and refusing to shave or cut his hair, sometimes banging his forehead against palace doors while crying out for his lost legions. If America’s imperial pretensions in Iraq meet a similar fate, Bush, Cheney, Powell, Rumsfeld, and Wolfowitz are unlikely to forego a haircut for dead soldiers and squandered resources. So has our sense of political accountability diminished since the Roman Principate.

It is evident that the Bush administration prepared to go to war against Iraq even before Sept. 11. Though the intelligence community exists to provide reliable information to assist policy formulation, in the case of Iraq, the intelligence was clearly used retroactively and selectively in worst-case scenarios to support a pre-existing policy. Examination of a timeline reveals that the administration often adopted aggressive positions despite soft supporting intelligence, which was then re-examined and hardened to justify the already established policy. Whether accurate intelligence forcefully presented could have derailed the rush to war is questionable, but intelligence failure is now being blamed for the decision to launch a war that is increasingly difficult to defend politically. To argue retroactively that the CIA never said that the Iraqi threat was “imminent,” as

George Tenet has done, is hairsplitting. Tenet clearly positioned himself and the Agency he heads as guarantors of the administration’s veracity, both at the UN and in Washington. Rightly or wrongly, the intelligence community has become the preferred scapegoat for the White House.

Constant administration sloganeering has defined and redefined the nature of the Iraqi threat and obscured the original rationale for going to war. Colin Powell even suggested that if the intelligence had been better, the war might not have been fought, though he quickly recanted. That an intelligence failure took place is indisputable, at least in the sense that the data collected and provided to the policymakers was more often than not misleading, false, incomplete, or fabricated. That the intelligence community was unable to collect detailed, reliably-sourced information that would have served to illuminate critical issues relating to the Iraqi weapons programs is also indisputable.

Looking closely at pre-war statements made by policymakers and comparing those positions to the collective judgment of the intelligence community as expressed in its National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) of October 2002 reveals a large measure of unanimity between policy and intelligence, even when there were caveats and dissenting views or little in the way of new information to support the conclusions they reached. This should not be particularly surpris-

ing. As the intelligence community has only one customer, the president, it does what it can to make the customer happy.

The judgments expressed in the NIE are particularly significant because they constitute the carefully formulated consensus product of the entire intelligence community. In this case, the NIE was an uncharacteristically political document, expedited by Tenet without the usual final vetting by the National Foreign Intelligence Board. The key findings stated unambiguously that Iraq had an abundant supply of biochem weapons and delivery systems and would soon have a nuclear device.

A careful examination of the document set alongside pre-war statements by the administration reveals four persistent elements in the Iraq intelligence-gathering process that led to overall failure. First, the pre-existing political agenda forced analysts to play catch-up in an attempt to validate what the White House was already saying. Second, analysts were overly dependent on easily gathered technical intelligence and on information obtained from friendly governments because they were woefully short on information from human spies. Third, analysts could not judge the credibility of the sources they were using and invariably veered towards worst-case scenarios that assumed that past history predicts current behavior. Fourth, uncorroborated and often fabricated defector intelligence from Ahmad Chalabi's Iraqi National Congress, used by Doug Feith's Pentagon Office of Special Plans to support the case for war, went directly to the president by way of Donald Rumsfeld and Dick Cheney without CIA vetting.

The administration used the collective description "weapons of mass destruction" to define the threat posed by Saddam Hussein's regime. WMD include chemical, biological, and nuclear devices. Prior to the war against Iraq,

administration spokesmen described the threat from WMD as real and immediate, though there were some nuances employed in terms of the individual threats subsumed within the collective description. Some of the administration's judgments vis-à-vis Iraq's WMD were derived from intelligence-community analysis, though others were based on unreliable defector information or on political assessment of the presumed intentions of the Iraqi leadership.

Nuclear weapons were the greatest threat to the United States and were consequently emphasized. The administration stated that Saddam might have or soon develop a nuclear weapon. It cited his efforts to purchase equipment that could be used to enrich uranium, as well as attempts to obtain yellowcake in Africa. Prior to the preparation of the most recent NIE, the intelligence community's best judgment was that Iraq had a nuclear research and development project and was possibly seeking to acquire technical material to reconsti-

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tute its program. The NIE then hardened that view, stating that Iraq had definitely revived its program and would probably have a nuclear weapon by 2010. Like the White House, it cited purchases of equipment and attempts to buy uranium ore in Africa as proof.

State Department intelligence and the Department of Energy dissented, stating that the overall evidence for a nuclear program was inconclusive. In reality, it was subsequently learned that the United Nations had effectively dismantled Saddam's nuclear program, which was

never revived. The yellowcake story was a complete fabrication and had previously been exposed as such by the CIA, even though it later made its way into the NIE and State of the Union Address. The faulty intelligence assessment of Iraq's capabilities was based on the unfortunate assumption that Saddam was hiding something and had bad intentions. It was supported by intentionally false intelligence, most of which came from the neoconservatives' defector sources. The persistence of the yellowcake story was indefensible since it was already known to be erroneous. The intelligence community meanwhile had no human intelligence sources in the Iraqi weapons program to correct both its own and the administration's misperceptions. Both the policymakers and the intelligence community were completely wrong on every aspect of Iraq's nuclear program.

Biological and chemical weapons were another major concern. The administration stated repeatedly that Iraq had

hundreds of tons of identified stockpiles of both types of weapons, "capable of killing millions." They were described as constituting an imminent threat to Iraq's neighbors and potentially to the United States. Baghdad was also accused of having mobile bio-weapon labs. Pre-NIE intelligence estimates had suggested that Iraq might be hiding stockpiles and might have recreated dual-use production lines. The NIE again hardened that position, asserting "high confidence" that Iraq both had stockpiles and had begun new production. The intelligence

community made the claim because it could not be confirmed that all stockpiles had been destroyed post-1991, and it was widely assumed that production lines were being hidden from gullible UN inspectors. Much of this assessment was based on pre-1991 realities and historic use of such weapons on Iranians, Kurds, and Shi'ites.

Additional reporting from Iraqi defectors controlled by neoconservative favorite Chalabi and his associates claimed the stockpiles and mobile weapons labs existed. These reports were debunked by the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) at the time and have since been determined to have been fabricated. Misinterpreted aerial photos appearing to confirm munitions storage areas were featured in Colin Powell's presentation to the UN. Again, the intelligence community had no human agents reporting on the possible Iraqi program so it could not address the biochem issue authoritatively by relying on a knowledgeable inside source. In fact, it now appears certain that Iraq had no biological or chemical weapons and that all its stockpiles were destroyed post-1991 by the United Nations. Two trailers initially identified as mobile labs are now generally conceded to be hydrogen generators for artillery balloons. As in the case of the nuclear weapons, the policymakers were wrong, and the intelligence community also failed in its assessment based on faulty prior case analysis, on a lack of human agents in place, and on manufactured confirmatory information generated by the Pentagon.

WMD are only as usable as their delivery systems, so Iraq's ability to employ its weapons became the third object of White House scrutiny. The administration stated that Iraq had medium-range Scud-type missiles and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) capable of striking American troops and allies in the Middle

East and also posing a threat to the United States itself using chemical or biological payloads. The NIE stated that Iraq had some Scuds and also had a program for larger missiles and UAVs, though Air Force intelligence dissented on the latter judgment. In reality, Iraq's Scuds were largely destroyed by UN

ship, often coming from the neoconservative-connected Iraqi National Congress defectors, was considered by DIA to be either unreliable or fabricated.

Even the White House has finally agreed that the case for an Iraq-al-Qaeda link is speculative. A recently surfaced U.S. Army memo relating to a planned

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inspectors in the 1990s, though Baghdad retained some research and development capabilities. No UAVs have been discovered that were weaponized. Again, both the policymakers and the intelligence community were completely wrong. The intelligence failure consisted of the analysts' belief that Iraqi military priorities that had prevailed in the past would inevitably continue in the present and into future. If Iraq had missiles prior to 1991, it would always want to have missiles. Defector information provided by the Pentagon was alarmist and inaccurate, and technical intelligence collection provided no significant insights. Again, there were no human-source agents within Iraq's missile program to provide balance.

One last major selling point was Iraq's suspected ties to terrorist groups. The administration stated unambiguously that Iraq had links to al-Qaeda and would not hesitate to provide terrorist groups with WMD. It was often implied that Saddam was somehow tied to Sept. 11, so much so that most Americans believed it to be true. The intelligence community worked very hard to demonstrate that there were links between al-Qaeda and Iraq but was unable to do so. Information suggesting such a relation-

al-Qaeda disruption of postwar Iraq does not appear to contradict the consensus that Iraq and al-Qaeda had no operational connection. The October 2002 NIE did not address the issue of possible terrorist ties, though it did pirouette around the administration view that Iraq would likely give WMD to terrorists. It stated that Saddam would be unlikely to pursue such a course for fear of being attacked, though he might become desperate enough to do so to exact revenge if he were facing defeat. The differences between policymakers and the intelligence community were widest over the issue of terrorist connections. The White House persisted in saying such ties existed until it became clear that the assertion was indefensible. Vice President Cheney continues to suggest that Iraq and al-Qaeda were connected, but no other senior official currently makes the case for this view.

The administration was wrong and the intelligence community was right, not because of good inside information, but because of effective analysis of what was available. ■

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It's the Jobs, Stupid

To the Beltway's surprise, primary voters grasp the importance of fair trade.

By Martin Sieff

A STRANGE THING happened on the way to the Democratic National Convention in Boston. The Democrats discovered protectionism, though of course, none of them dares call it that.

The way was pioneered by a candidate with impeccable protectionist credentials, Rep. Dick Gephardt of Missouri. Yet he got nowhere. He was pulverized in the Iowa caucuses and pulled out the very next day.

An experience like that ought to have confirmed all the other Democratic candidates in their well established conviction that the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was A Good Thing and the World Trade Organization is too. But strangely enough, Gephardt's fate did not deter the others. He was more like a fox, laying a trail that the hounds eagerly chased when they caught the scent, even after they had torn him to bits.

It was Howard Dean of Vermont, that strange precursor of a new or revived Democratic national spirit, who took up the tattered banner. Even in the closing days of the Iowa race, Dean was already scenting around protectionist issues in that curiously prescient, intuitive yet unfocused way of his. Just before flying out of Iowa for his disastrous adventure in trying to woo former President Jimmy Carter two days before the caucuses, he told reporters on his campaign bus that he favors re-negotiating the terms of the WTO and NAFTA.

The former governor said he still believes in free trade but only when it is fair. And it isn't fair when countries like

Mexico and China don't have free trade unions, have vastly lower environmental standards, and appalling records on human rights. "International free trade must not be distorted into a race to the bottom," Dean said.

It was a thoughtful analysis delivered off the cuff in response to a question from this reporter. But no one else paid attention to it amid such epochal issues for the Republic as Dean's odyssey to Georgia or his wife Judy's "blink and you missed it" four-hour daring venture into the Hawkeye State.

In the Jan. 19 caucuses Dean melted down, a victim of his own weirdness and a clumsy campaign. That should have been the end of the jobs and protectionism issue. Sen. John Kerry, after all, had voted for NAFTA along with the Senate Democrat consensus in 1993, and Sen. John Edwards had not exactly been a protectionist hawk during his one and only Senate term.

But as the race inexorably turned into a two-man contest amid the arctic blasts of New Hampshire and then down to the balmy climes of South Carolina, a strange thing happened: the two Senator Johns started picking up trade too. Almost overnight, it went from being the issue of the losers to a staple of the debate between the two frontrunners. How to explain this conundrum?

The answer is simple: Dean was destroyed not by issues but by his personal flaws and appalling strategy. In order to defeat him, more credible and skillful national candidates had to co-

opt his message, and that included protecting jobs and confronting the unfair terms of international trade. By Wisconsin, Dean's Waterloo, Edwards was promising, "I will not sign a trade agreement ... that does not embrace enforceable labor and environmental standards. ... Senator Kerry is entitled ... to support free trade as [he] always [has]." In a state that has lost 75,000 manufacturing jobs, that was good enough to guarantee Edwards a second-place finish and to send Howard Dean home to Vermont. Though it had scarcely been a centerpiece of his campaign, the night Kerry claimed victory over Dean, his speech included a promise to "insist on workers' rights and environmental rights and human rights in every trade agreement."

Edwards perfected his trade pitch to Dean's detriment in Wisconsin, but he had begun to practice in more familiar territory. In South Carolina, a state hit hard by the collapse of its textile industry in the face of foreign competition and the consequent loss of some 400,000 jobs, rank-and-file Democratic voters are less enamored with free trade than the national party leadership. There the biographical fact Edwards most emphasized was not his tremendous success as a trial lawyer but that he is the son of a mill worker. He began turning his signature "two Americas" speech toward trade, pledging that he would negotiate fair trade deals, stand up for U.S. trade rights, and keep companies from relocating abroad. In bilateral trade agreements, he told South Carolinians, "both