

Cheney's Impeachable Crimes Highlighted at UDC Forum

On May 7, a group of leading U.S. intelligence and military veterans joined investigative authors Peter Eisner and Knut Royce in a forum at the University of the District of Columbia (UDC), that provided, among many revelations, dramatic new evidence as to why Vice President Dick Cheney should be impeached for "high crimes and misdemeanors." Originally convened as a book-signing forum for Eisner and Royce's new book, The Italian Letter: How the Bush Administration Used a Fake Letter To Build the Case for War in Iraq (see review, below), an invaluable documentary account of the Bush Administration lies that led the country to war against Iraq, the authors decided to open the event to a panel of leading retired intelligence officers, to comment on the just-released memoirs of retired CIA Director George Tenet.

The event, which drew over 100 students, faculty, and community activists, provided one of the most damning indictments of the Bush-Cheney Administration's manipulation of intelligence and other crimes. The panelists who joined Eisner and Royce—former CIA officers Larry Johnson and Mel Goodman; retired Defense Intelligence Agency Middle East chief Col. W. Patrick Lang; and former chief of staff to Secretary of State Colin Powell, Col. Lawrence Wilkerson—presented such a significant amount of previously unknown documentation about the crimes of Bush and Cheney, that *EIR* has decided, as a public service, to publish an only slightly edited transcript of the entire event.

After a brief introduction by Dr. Bill Pollard, president of the University of the District of Columbia, the forum began with an introduction by Eisner, who served as the moderator for the panel discussion.

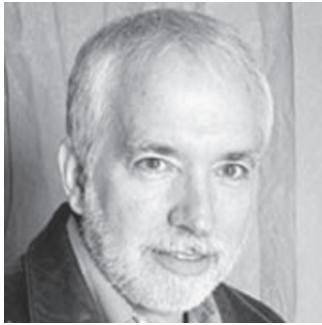
Bush's '16 Words'

Eisner: We originally had thought that this was going to be a more traditional book event, about *The Italian Letter*, which is the book that Knut Royce and I have written, which talks about, especially, the effort by the Bush Administration to sell the war in Iraq to the American people and to Congress, focussing especially on evidence about uranium supposedly having been purchased in Africa, and having been sold to Iraq, which became known as—that claim became known as the "16 words," President Bush's 16 words in the [2003] State of the Union message.

And we thought that that event, those 16 words, would encapsulate the story of leading the United States to war, and how we got to that moment.

So we took a narrow approach toward telling the story of the march toward war, by just focussing on that one event, from the first day at least, if not earlier, the first days after 9/11, to the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003. The difference today was, that we decided to put together very suddenly, and quickly, a panel that could go beyond that as well, and deal with the issues surrounding the recent release of George Tenet's book [*At the Center of the Storm: My Years at the CIA*], his memoir of his time as Director of the CIA, and his version of the lead-up to war in Iraq. And we're delighted, and thrilled, to bring together a panel that rarely has just come together, such an eminent panel, to say the least, and some of them have spoken to each other, known each other for years, but hadn't even met. . . .

First, let me introduce Larry Johnson, who was an intelligence officer with the CIA from 1985 to 1989; served in the State Department's Office of Counter-Terrorism from 1989 to 1993; and who now provides consulting services and helps



At a May 7 forum at the University of the District of Columbia, a panel of top military and intelligence veterans provided dramatic new evidence to bolster the case for impeachment of Dick Cheney (top, left to right): Peter Eisner; Col. Lawrence Wilkerson; Larry Johnson (bottom, left to right): Col. Patrick Lang; and Mel Goodman. (A photo of Knut Royce, the sixth panelist, was not available.)

the U.S. train military forces carrying out counterterrorism missions.

Next, let me introduce to you, Col. Larry Wilkerson, the Pamela Harriman Visiting Professor of Government at the College of William and Mary. And he raced back from the College of William and Mary, today, where he was giving finals, to join us here at this panel. We very much appreciate that. He, of course, was the former Chief of Staff to the Secretary of State Colin Powell.

Next, we have Mel Goodman, a 24-year veteran as a CIA analyst on the Soviet Union, 18 years on the faculty of the National War College, currently senior fellow at the Center for International Policy, and adjunct professor of government at Johns Hopkins University, the author of six books on international relations. The latest is *The Failure of Intelligence: The Decline and Fall of the CIA*.

And last and not at all least, among our special guests, Pat Lang, who was head of the Middle East section with the Defense Intelligence Agency, for seven years.

My colleague is to his immediate left, Knut Royce. Knut, besides being my friend for decades, is an eminent investigative reporter, has held a share of at least three Pulitzer Prizes over the years; and it's a pleasure to have worked with him to write this book.

What we're going to do is, start with Knut. And this will more or less, in my concept, make a link between what he and I have done, again, focussing on the uranium story, and also

comparing that uranium story to the larger story of what George Tenet has been saying. From there, I'm going to ask our guests to speak a bit toward those points, and as we move along, ask them some questions. And then finally, we'll open it up to the floor, as well.

So, I want to ask Knut to start.

Royce: You know, as we look at what George Tenet has written about, how do we compare what we see there, compared to what we found in the course of our investigation?

George Tenet devotes about half of his book to Iraq. He starts out, he starts carrying on, we're in Iraq ... It's a pretty apologetic tack and there are some obvious contrasts between what he writes about and what we write about. ...

Although Tenet does have some very interesting political tidbits in there, they don't make a book. Tenet is apologetic. There are several passages where he admits the CIA really screwed up—especially on the weapons of mass destruction part—but nowhere does he mention the key center at CIA for analyzing and publishing reports, and briefing policy-makers on weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. This was critical. The largest center at CIA is called WINPAC, and that's the Weapons Intelligence and Non-Proliferation and Arms Control division. He mentions WINPAC—they're the ones who put together, who were responsible for collating and analyzing the intelligence—in this book, he mentions WINPAC just once.

We devote at least a chapter, and probably more than that,

because WINPAC was such a key player in the bogus information that came out. We devote at least a chapter, and actually more than that, to WINPAC, and the head of WINPAC at the time, Alan Foley.

Foley's a fascinating character, and one of the persons we interviewed to get a sense of Foley, is sitting here on the panel, Mel Goodman. Foley, we describe as somebody who, later in his career, decided that fighting wasn't worth it. That—no, it wasn't worth it. He never fought anything. . . .

Goodman: He's a careerist.

Royce: He is a careerist.

But we mention in the book, when he was asked by the Administration, and when he was asked later on by the Senate Intelligence Committee, which was conducting an investigation of what had gone wrong, he told them he actually believed that Iraq had indeed tried to buy uranium from Niger, from Africa. That was a key point. Because without uranium from Africa, there was no mushroom cloud, and that was the main pitch of the Administration.

However, he told Mel, before the war started—Mel asked him: "So, what do you think we're going to find in Iraq?" And Foley said, "Little, if anything, of weapons of mass destruction." So, here was a guy who would tell people different stories at different times.

Again, WINPAC was the key agency, the key division within CIA, and Tenet only mentions WINPAC once, and Foley twice, by name, and that's only because he had to reach—. At one point, when everything was falling apart after Ambassador Joe Wilson had published his letter in the *New York Times*, that he thought the Administration knew there was no [evidence] that Iraq had tried to purchase uranium, he tried to get ahold of—and then the CIA and the White House had to get their story straight, on whose fault was it that there was no uranium, and that Iraq hadn't tried to get uranium. He had to try to track down Foley, because it was Foley who had discussed the whole issue, the 16 words that went into the State of the Union address in 2003. It was Foley and Bob Joseph at the National Security Council. . . .

At any rate, he mentions him. He tried to get ahold of him before he wrote a paper basically taking the blame for having screwed up.

Again, that's the main highlight I wanted to touch on.

'Mushroom Clouds on the Horizon'

Eisner: What I'd like to do is just, ask Pat Lang, and some of the other folks, a diverse number of types of questions. Question: From your perspective, between 9/11 and the U.S. invasion of Iraq, what did you hear, and what was received from your sources, about changes, since the National Intelligence Estimate of 1998.

Let's start from square one, which we did in our book. The

United States invaded Iraq because President Bush, the Bush Administration, said that there was a clear and present danger for the United States, if there's no action now. If the United States does not invade Iraq now, mushroom clouds may be on the horizon.

So, Pat Lang, first. What was your take on weapons of mass destruction?

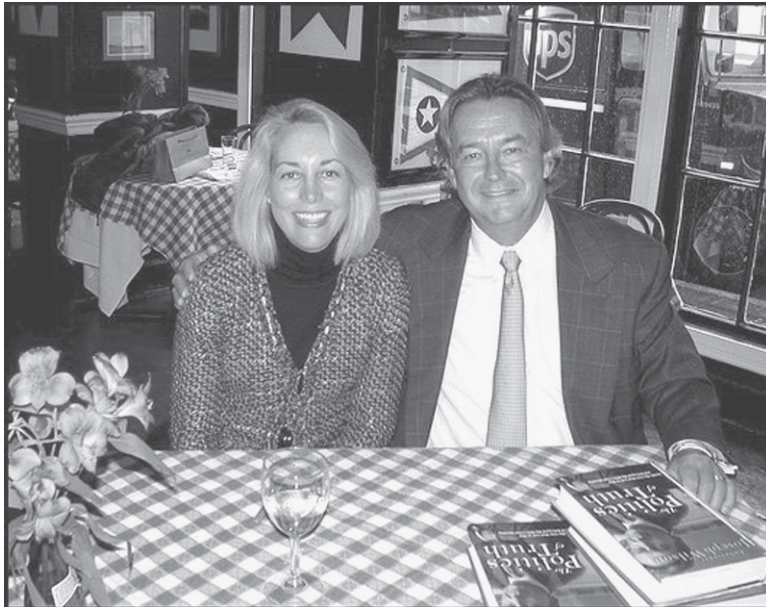
Lang: Well, I had the advantage of being around in DIA in the first Gulf War, and for several years thereafter, before I left to go into business, and I knew, with great certainty, having participated, along with my friends and companions out at CIA, in the total destruction of the Iraq nuclear program, to the point that—I won't say how we did that, but it was a very thorough job. And that went on for a couple years, and it wasn't any doubt at all, that it was just wreckage, and the only thing left were a bunch of people, maybe 5,000 scientists, engineers, technicians, who were very smart folks who had nothing to work with. And we knew that was just gone.

And then, if you talk about the biological weapons program, that was never more than research, in my opinion. It was research. . . . Every Arab country plays around with biological warfare research. It's kind of a prestige item. It shows "we're big people," you know that "we're doing that kind of stuff."

And then there was the chemical weapons thing. Well, you know, people are frightened of chemical weapons with good reason. In this room here, some sarin would wipe us all out easily. But this is not really a strategic weapon. In fact, this is really a battlefield tactical weapon. Even the most persistent kinds are not persistent for a very great period of time. And it isn't the kind of thing you can threaten the life of a great country with, really. It's harassment basically. Even a real job in the subway in Tokyo, but you know, including in the subway in New York City; yet this is not something which threatens the life of the United States.

So, people started talking about how this guy had these weapons programs, I knew for a fact that the BW [biological weapons] thing, and the chemical thing, even though I'd been away for a few years—I'd been hanging around the Middle East all that time, since I left—and I knew very well that these things did not fill the bill for the terrible, terrible threat that was being portrayed. And the nuclear program, we'd smashed it up so totally that I didn't see how they could be doing more than maybe trying, after '98—that's when the inspectors left. And after they'd left, maybe they were trying to resume some kind of furtive thing. But this is a big enterprise, making nuclear weapons. This is not something you do in your garage. And you have to have an awful lot of equipment, and people, and stuff.

So, my impression was, when I started to listen to this, and the drumbeat got higher and higher, and heavier and heavier all the time, that there's something really screwy about this.



Carol Joynt/Nathan's Restaurant

Ambassador Joseph Wilson and his wife, Valerie Plame, were “desperately hounded” by the Cheney cabal, after Wilson published an op-ed in the New York Times July 6, 2003, reporting that he had found no evidence that Saddam Hussein had attempted to purchase uranium yellowcake in Niger.

There’s something here that doesn’t add up. In fact, in terms of what the realities could possibly be, what they could be doing.

So, I became increasingly suspicious as time went along after 9/11. Here we kept hearing this more and more and more. And then it became increasingly clear after a while, that the intelligence was being driven, the analysis of information and the evaluation of the information, was being driven by policy, rather than being a free-standing object intended to limit policy, which is the way I always did it. (People always thought I was pretty limited anyway.)

And, in fact, I thought there was something very basically wrong. But I’ll shut up there, because other people will have other things to say, and I could go on for a couple hours.

The CIA Caved In to the Administration

Goodman: Well, let me make three points, to join what Pat was saying.

Number One, you have to realize that the best source of intelligence that the CIA had, was the fact that they had operational people on the United Nations inspector teams. They had a significant number in every round of inspection. And they were there to collect intelligence, not only in terms of WMD, but on Saddam Hussein, and on a variety of Iraqi chiefs.

When the UN inspectors left, and tried to get back in after Desert Fox, the Clinton bombing attack on Iraq in 1998, Saddam Hussein said no. What that meant was the CIA lost the very best intelligence collection, the clandestine collection

that it had. The reason why this is important, is, they went from 1998, when they had some collection, and were very cautious about what they said about chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons—and if you look at all of their intelligence throughout the ‘90s, up to ‘98, they were extremely cautious—they went in 2002, all of a sudden, with no additional collection, the CIA claims they have high confidence—and Tenet talks about high confidence in this book.

So, I knew that was nonsense. They had no reason to be confident, and they had no reason to claim that they had any specific information, because for four years, they had nothing.

The second point that’s important—and remember I was at the War College then, so I still had all the clearances I had when I was at the CIA—I called up NSA colleagues from times past when I worked on the Soviet Union, and I basically asked them, without telling me anything in terms of sources and methods, what were they picking up that would give them any indication that Iraq was working on either chemical weapons, biological weapons, or nuclear weapons?

Now, the background of that was, I knew from my Soviet experience, there was no way that Iraq, or any other country, could be moving things around without certain circuits pulsing, that NSA [the National Security Agency] had access to, particularly in the Middle East. NSA knew there was nothing in terms of nuclear weapons.

So, if NSA says there was nothing—and I consider NSA a very fine professional outfit, and in some ways, it’s the most professional outfit in the intelligence community—it was clear to me that there was nothing there.

Then, the third thing that’s very important, and gets to the heart of the corruption of the tradecraft of the CIA—and this is what I blame Tenet for, as much as anything else: Not only did they politicize the intelligence, but they didn’t honor any of the basic tradecraft of how you go about doing intelligence analysis. The fact of the matter is, the CIA had made a decision—I think they made it in August/September of 2002—basically to cave in to the Administration and to give them what they wanted.

The White House, according to the Downing Street memo, had decided to fuse the issues of terrorism and WMD, to make a case for war, and [then head of British MI6 Richard] Dearlove, the author of that memo, has said that the agency was fixing its intelligence to that policy. And the clearest indication of that was the very good intelligence the CIA was collecting on the fact that Iraq had nothing. And that was intelligence from Saddam Hussein’s son-in-law, remember, who defected, went out to Jordan in the middle of the 1990s, somewhere around ‘94 or ‘95; he was debriefed by the Jordanians,



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Former CIA Director George Tenet “caved into the Administration” and “gave them what they wanted,” thus, corrupting the basic tradecraft of intelligence.

and debriefed by the CIA, and he told them, since he was the head of the Iraqi military mobilization department, he was responsible for destroying a lot of the chemical and biological stocks and missiles—they didn’t have a nuclear program after ‘91—and he told them all of this.

The CIA didn’t put *any* of this information in its finished intelligence products.

Number two, the CIA was doing a very good job in recruiting a former foreign minister of Iraq by the name of Sabri, until the White House said, lay off of Sabri, we don’t want his information any more. As Tyler Drumheller says in his very useful book, this isn’t about WMD any more, this is about regime change. Well, Sabri was telling us everything we needed to know about what Iraq did not have.

And also the CIA had a very curious character who I’m not going to get into by the name of Charlie Allen, who’s now over at the Department of Homeland Security, who was very controversial at CIA, but he came up with something very interesting in the 2002 period. It was Charlie Allen’s idea to go around the country, to find Iraqi-Americans who had relatives in Iraq who worked in the weapons area, who were scientists, engineers, technicians. Send them back to Baghdad and Iraq, before the war started, to see what they could find out from family members, who had access. These people came back, and they reported, and they said, “All of these programs have been shut down.”

And again, the CIA had never printed *any* of this material in the President’s daily brief, in the National Intelligence Estimates, in any kind of intelligence assessment.

So, what the CIA did, and it’s a violation of the Holy Grail—I mean, this is the worst possible thing you can do,

they ignored all of the intelligence that you could argue, you could make one series of assumptions from, and they trumped up the intelligence that for the most part was single source, or primary source. And any good investigator or reporter—Knut is one of the best investigative reporters, and he’ll tell you that you don’t go into print with one source—and that’s exactly what the CIA did. They found the source that told them what they needed to know. And when I testified against Bob Gates in 1991, when he was confirmed as CIA Director, I said the CIA and Gates and Bill Casey were guilty of judge-shopping in the courthouse. That’s what exactly what George Tenet did. It’s what John McLaughlin did. It’s what Paul Pillar did, it’s what Robert Walpole did, and it’s what Alan Foley did. And it’s *totally unconscionable*, and it needs to be corrected.

Throwing a ‘Curveball’ at Powell

Wilkerson: I come at this from a very different perspective, because for some 35-36 years, I’ve been an intelligence user, not an intelligence officer. Tactical-operational and strategic level in the military, principally the strategic level at the State Department. And like the other members of the panel, I could probably talk forever, but I’m going to focus on George Tenet. Because I have grave concerns about what he’s written in his book, and what I saw him say on “60 Minutes,” and other interviews that I’ve witnessed, over the last few days.

I also have grave concerns about John McLaughlin, the DDCI, his deputy, because I spent five of the most intimate days of my life, and five nights, without sleeping, as did my team, staring into George Tenet’s, and John McLaughlin’s, and Robert Walpole’s, and Larry Gershwin’s, and other people’s faces, at Langley.

And while I agree with my panel members up here, and I think I’m going to hear the same thing over here, and Carl Ford, who is assistant secretary for intelligence research at the State Department, and for whom I have a great deal of respect, that this was one *colossal* intelligence failure, my concern is even deeper than that. And my concern has grown, and grown, as I have been able to do some research since I left the State Department, and listened to people like this, and others—investigative reporters, and so forth.

And here’s where my concern focuses: Either George Tenet is lying through his teeth, or Tyler Drumheller is lying through his teeth—the chief of the European division for CIA—with regard to one of the most important pillars of Secretary Powell’s presentation at the United Nations: the mobile biological laboratories. One of the things Secretary Powell and I told Mr. Tenet and Mr. McLaughlin at the outset of our frenetic five or six days, trying to get ready for the UN, was “multiple sources.” We will not take anything and put it in this presentation, unless there are *multiple, independently corroborated sources* for the items we’re putting in the testimony. That was the going-in position.

Now, I learn, I think—although George has again put



UN photo/Mark Garten

Secretary of State Colin Powell, briefing the UN Security Council on alleged evidence of Iraq's WMD, Feb. 5, 2003. Someone threw Powell a "Curveball," on key points placed in Powell's speech.

some doubt in my mind—that there was a single source for the mobile biological laboratories; that his codename was Curveball; and that there were several, some very key, dissents as to this individual's testimony, during or before the preparation of the Secretary of State. None of that, ladies and gentlemen, *none of that* was revealed to the Secretary of State, or to me, or to any member of my team, by either John McLaughlin or George Tenet.

So, that's my first area of concern: Who's lying? This isn't an intelligence matter. This is worse, far worse. This isn't just cherry-picking, or political spin on intelligence. This is plain-out outright falsehood to the Secretary of State.

The second point is even more dramatic. Secretary Powell, on my advice and others', was getting ready to whittle the terrorism portion of his presentation, from 25 pages that had been given us by the CIA, down to about 5; and then, about the third day, we were going to eliminate it altogether, because frankly, it stunk.

At the moment that we were having this discussion, about whether or not we were going to include anything about Saddam's contacts with terrorist groups and so forth, a dramatic thing occurred. All of a sudden, we were told that a high-level al-Qaeda operative—I was never told his name, I'm not sure that the Secretary was either, you'd have to ask him—had been interrogated; and that that high-level al-Qaeda operative had revealed that there was major training going on by the Mukhabarat in Iraq—Saddam Hussein's people—of al-Qaeda operatives in how to use chemical and biological weapons. This was quite a revelation, and, as you can imagine, changed the Secretary's mind about how much he was going to include about contacts between al-Qaeda and Iraq in his presentation.

I have subsequently learned, once again—as best as I can tell from numerous sources—that this information was gained

from a Libyan al-Qaeda operative named al-Libi; that it was gained under torture, or near-torture, waterboarding and other. It was gained in Egypt, and no U.S. personnel were even present when this interrogation was going on. Nonetheless, the moment the information came forth, if indeed it did come forth, it was hurried to the appropriate authorities, and was given to the Secretary of State, and created quite a dramatic moment in Langley.

I have subsequently learned that the DIA dissented, very quickly, on this information. I was told that a "computer glitch" kept us from seeing that dissent. I'm also told that even as we were in Langley, and in New York, preparing the Secretary for his presentation, that al-Libi himself recanted the entire confession—which you might say, "aw, who'd believe al-Libi?" Nonetheless, it should have been known, and it should have been delivered to the Secretary of State, that this had happened, not to mention the DIA dissent.

So, we went ahead with two central pillars of his presentation at the United Nations, essentially based on information that I have every reason to believe now, was *known* to be unreliable, and even false, by the DCI George Tenet, and the DDCI John McLaughlin. And yet, I never heard a *single word of doubt* on their part, as to these two pillars of the presentation.

Quite the contrary. I heard words to the effect of "slam dunk." As you know, George Tenet is a real basketball fan, and so he uses terms like that a lot. And I heard those kinds of terms, or similar phraseology, a number of times, with regard to these kinds of points. Because Secretary Powell was very skeptical about some of this stuff. After all, we'd started out with a 48-page script handed to him by Scooter Libby, chief of staff to the Vice President, which we had, within eight hours of arriving at Langley, completely debunked and thrown out, and turned to the October 2002 National Intelligence Estimate, in lieu of that script, because that script was so full of holes, and uncorroborated.

So, we were highly skeptical as to what we were going to take, and what we weren't going to take, and the Secretary laid down the law. And as far as I'm concerned, the DCI and the DDCI, at a minimum, had a responsibility to be as honest as possible with him, in following his dictates. And I am increasingly of a mind that they didn't, and they knew they weren't.

'The Books Were Cooked'

Johnson: Cooking the books is something I personally became acquainted with back in 1986, as a new analyst at the Central Intelligence Agency. I became the Honduran analyst, and Honduras was important in the context of U.S. policy in Central America, because Honduras was the aircraft carrier for Contra forces attacking the Sandinista government. And,

being caught in that position, and learning how intelligence analysis and politics at the White House, particularly in terms of what the White House and the President want to say, it was an important, let's say, it was a formative experience.

I recall sitting in a morning meeting, where Bob Vickers, who was the morning officer for Latin America at the time, and as I referred to the Contras, he stopped me. He said, "You have to refer to them as the Democratic National Resistance." And I said, "But the President calls them the Contras!" And his response was, "Yes, but he's the President." And that insight, how we start playing with words, where you can no longer describe something for what it is, and you have to make up euphemisms and other things, is one of the, if you will, warning signs, or the canary in the mineshaft singing, that the oxygen is running out quickly.

In the lead-up to the war, I was constantly bouncing things off of Pat [Lang], because, apart from his tenure with the Defense Intelligence Agency, he set up the Arabic program over at West Point, and he had basically trained every colonel, most of the Arabist colonels that are running around the U.S. Army today, and had spent a lot of time out in the field, and was a combat officer. So, he had a broad base of experience. It struck us at the time, we talked on several occasions and said, "they must have something else."

And I recall during my time at State Department, when there was a terrorist attack. And we put together a brief—that was the Tiny Star, it was a maritime attack off the coast of Israel—we put together a briefing team of NSA and CIA analysts who went around with a State Department official to brief friends and foes in the Middle East, and around the Mediterranean about, "here's the goods that we've got on 'em," and at that time, people said, "Okay, yeah, you got it."

So, I was proceeding on the assumption. "Surely, they've got something they're not telling us." I would like to say I was one of those who, before the war started, said this is a crock. I didn't. However, I did get fired from the Fox News network as a news analyst for having the audacity in November of 2002 to say, that if we went into Iraq, it would be a diversion in the war on terror. And in January of 2003, I put together a paper—this was in my pre-blog days. I'm convinced, if I'd known more about blogs then, and there were more blogs active, we might have stopped the war.

But, I wrote this paper. It was detailing Iraq's involvement, or lack thereof, in terrorism. And I gave it to Jerry Bremer, L. Paul Bremer, and my old boss at State Department, Morris Busby. Both Jerry and Buzz had been coordinators of counterterrorism, and the thrust of the paper was this: It is true that Iraq is a state sponsor of terrorism, or was. But when you broke out and looked at what those acts were, Iraq was not responsible for any mass-casualty attacks. Iraq's targets were Israel and Iran, with the UN inspectors to a lesser extent. And it was not terribly effective in using terrorism, and the last known attack of its involvement against U.S. targets, was in



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White House photo/David Bohrer

Information provided to Powell "was known to be unreliable, and even false, by the DCI George Tenet, and the DDCI John McLaughlin" (left). A 48-page script handed to Powell by Cheney's chief of staff Scooter Libby (right), had been "completely debunked and thrown out."

February of 1993, when they tried to blow up former President Bush—I think it was '95; no, '93—in Kuwait.

And I wish I would have saved the e-mail back from Jerry, but he basically came back and said, "Hey! You're barking up the wrong tree here. Nobody's interested in the facts. We're going to war."

Our friendship, you'll be surprised to know, has evaporated in the light of his excellent, and not-so-excellent, adventures in Iraq.

In May of 2003, I got an e-mail from one of my former colleagues. Now George Tenet has tried to run away from the letter that several of us drafted decrying his book, and calling upon him to give back the proceeds, at least some of the proceeds, from his advance, to the soldiers, and the families of soldiers, who were killed or wounded in Iraq. Because in my view, and our view, the man has blood on his hands. He had a chance, if he would have spoken up, he could have *stopped* this rush to war. He chose to remain silent, but not just remain silent, he chose to be an active participant in a deception that was carried out, not only against other U.S. government officials, but against the American people.

And it's not a matter of my word against his. The evidence is quite clear.

In May of 2003, I got a note from one of my former colleagues in the CIA. A senior person. And this person said, "the books were cooked." And I went, "Uh oh." And so at that point, I started looking back, and pushing into other areas, and it became clear, that this was a deception that was being carried out on the people of the United States. So, if you haven't bought George Tenet's book, let me put in a plug: Don't buy it. Don't give the bastard a dime. If you need to read it, you can probably borrow Mel [Goodman]'s copy, or go to the library. But for this man to now pretend—"Look, I had doubts from the beginning"—and he said nothing.

Mel's point, and Pat I know would endorse this, because as intelligence professionals, your responsibility is not to take

sides in an issue; your responsibility is to tell what you know, it's to tell what you don't know, and it's to give policy-makers at least a range of options about other, be it different circumstances and assumptions—what's the likely outcome.

But George Tenet has now admitted that in saying “slam dunk,” he was signing on as the chief cheerleader for the Bush-for-war team. And he was going to help lead the cheers to the American people. And if that doesn't disqualify him for public service ever again in the United States, I don't know what does.

A Corruption of the Process

Lang: I have a couple points I'd like to make. As I started to say earlier, you know, at the strategic level one of the main functions of intelligence production, analysis production, is to reduce policy options from the level of fantasy, to that of extreme reality. In order for that to work, the intelligence function has to have—its products have to be respected, and they have to be given due weight by policy-makers, the decision-makers, as to what you're actually going to do.

This is also true of the military, by the way, at a different kind of level.

But in fact, a problem arose in this Administration, which is inherent in any administration, but it really got out of hand in this one, in my opinion. I'm more or less retired now, so I can get to do just the things that I feel like doing, pretty much. So I spend a lot of time on things like academic panels, seminars, and boards of academic people, things like that, foundations boards, you know. And I get to associate with a lot of young fellows who were big-time staffers in the first term of the Bush Administration, and now, a lot have returned to academia, and I listened to what they say. And one of things that's very noticeable here, that amongst these guys, there is almost universally a great disdain for the functioning of intelligence. As far as they're concerned, what the function of the intelligence community, is to gather raw information, repeat it to them, so that they apply to it their understanding of history, and what the nature of history is, and where it's going, so as to say what the meaning of that information is.

Of course, I always resist that pretty strongly, and it gets fairly heated at times. But in fact, the belief is, amongst folks like this, that the old sweats in the intelligence community, the guys who apply the tradecraft of analysis, as Mel says, are really people who are kind of second- or third-rate people. Nothing like as grand as the guys who've got two or three degrees from Ivy League universities or Stanford, or someplace like that. And really, what you need to do is you feed the stuff up—give us the raw data, and we'll tell you what it means, we'll tell you what it means in every case.

And that is a terrible corruption of the process of decision-making in foreign policy, I think. Because if you do that, and you no longer have an independent brake on the fantasies and the option generation of the decision-makers, of their staffs—

nobody tells them, this is a crock, which is what they need to be told if it's a crock: that it's a crock. So that tends to go down the drain in situations like this, and it certainly did in this case, I think.

The other thing I would like to make an observation about, is the fact that most analysts in the community are people of some integrity, varying integrity—and of course, there are always outright careerists, as Mel would say. I know a few. But in fact, most people would like to do the right thing. And they study very hard, and I think, as Ruskin said, that the life's so short, the craft's so long to learn. Well, it's just exactly like that. So, in fact, they want to do the right thing.

But when they go up to tell the policy-maker, “Hey, this is a crock, you're full of it,” right? Then this guy is going to push back, because, as I said before, he and his kids—and they usually are kids—

And so, when that happens, and it always happens—it happened a lot at the beginning of this administration; because my old friends, colleagues, and subordinates used to come to me and say, “These guys beating the bejesus out of us up at the Office of the Secretary of Defense, and won't listen to us. They just say we're wrong, we're stupid, they imply that we're stupid.” And when that happens, then the leaders of the analysts, the working-level analysts, have to go back to the leadership, the real leadership, George Tenet, the Vice Admiral Jacoby over in DIA, this one, that one there, and say: “Boss, you've got to stand up for me. You got to back us up. Because the very thing we do in life, is at stake here. And if you don't do that, then we'll all be dead. We will all, as somebody said, ‘have drunk the kool-aid.’”

And, in fact, that didn't happen. So, I don't give a damn about George Tenet, personally. I hope he collects his royalties, and lives to be miserable with them. But in fact, the problem is that it doesn't seem that this process has ended, in fact. If you look around right now, as to what the Administration is broadcasting, and there are a million little signals everywhere about Syria and Iran—what you see is a similar case being made against these places, by innuendo, half-truth, exaggeration, refusal to interact with people who tell them the truth, or even offer to cooperate, and things like that. The same kind of case is being built. The underpinnings are the same.

So I think you have to ask yourself, do we have better leadership now in the intelligence community? Do we? I don't know. Maybe my friends do.

A ‘Cabal’ in the Administration

Eisner: I have a question for everyone here. It's going to be moving into a slightly different direction. As Colonel Wilkerson said, he has a different position, has held a different position, was a customer of intelligence during this whole period. He also was famously, I'm not putting him on the spot, but he's famously known for saying, that there was some form of cabal working in the Administration. When I am asked the

whys of this story, when I talk about the fact that the 16 words were well-known to be false before they were uttered by President Bush, how the CIA almost, if not immediately after first getting the information about nuclear weapons, didn't even investigate very much, because many analysts discarded the information, because Iraq didn't need uranium, because it already had it. Iraq had no program to process uranium, because the act of obtaining uranium from Africa, would have been very difficult. And beyond all those things, the source for the information was highly questionable.

So, people started talking about how this guy had these weapons programs, I knew for a fact that the BW [biological weapons] thing, and the chemical thing, . . . did not fill the bill for the terrible, terrible threat that was being portrayed. And the nuclear program, we'd smashed it up so totally that I didn't see how they could be doing more than maybe trying, after '98—that's when the inspectors left. . . . But this is a big enterprise, making nuclear weapons. This is not something you do in your garage. . . .
—Pat Lang

So, adding that to everything that's been said so far, people then come to the question: Why? What was the superstructure? Who was cooking the books?

You're talking about cooking the books, you're talking about the hijacking of intelligence. Where did it come from? And why?

Dick Cheney's War

Goodman: I don't think that's a very difficult question to deal with. I think the master of this war, and the one who outlined the strategy for the war, and designed—and I agree with Larry [Johnson] that it was just a classic case of agitprop: There was a propaganda campaign, and we were taken in by it, and the press was taken in by it—but the chief operator in all this, let's call him "Geppetto," was Dick Cheney. This is Dick Cheney's war. It has always been Dick Cheney's war.

Now the one thing that Dick Cheney needed to sell this war, to market his war, was nuclear reconstitution. And re-

member, I think it was September the 8th, [2002], when all of the high-level members of the Bush Administration went on national television with "smoking gun" and the mushroom cloud. And what Joe Wilson was threatening, was to take down the argument about nuclear reconstitution, when he said, "I'll tell you what I found in Niger. I found nothing."

So, you had only two pins for nuclear reconstitution. It was Niger, enriched uranium, and the phony 16 words; and you had the aluminum tubes. And frankly, I'll pass the question to Larry, because people feel that Tenet should have resigned. I've always thought that Colin Powell should resign. Colin Powell is a hell of a lot more popular in this country than George Bush. If Colin Powell had stood up, and said what he thought, and told us what he knew, there would have been no war.

George Tenet is an *apparatchik*. I'm not impressed with George Tenet. He should never have been CIA Director. But how did Colin Powell, a military officer, a Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, get taken in by the aluminum tubes, which was driven by a kid, a young kid engineer by the name of Joe Turner, at the CIA, who stood up somehow to all of the PhD scientists of the weapons labs, and Department of Energy, because Foley wanted this argument out there to make the case for war. I think Powell could have stopped this.

But that's why this was so important to Cheney. That's why they desperately hounded Valerie Plame—and again, sorry Peter, but I'll go after the *Washington Post* on this: I don't know why Fred Hiatt is so convinced that Joe Wilson was lying about many of these issues. The *Washington Post* owes Joe Wilson an apology. But Fred Hiatt *continues* to write and sponsor op-eds and editorials about all of the misleading advice that Joe Wilson gave the country. Joe Wilson was trying to get in the way of this moving train, that was moving toward war in 2002.

So, there are still a lot of things that we don't know. But I think the key element in the question: This was Cheney's war, this was Cheney's issue, and he had to run with it. He couldn't allow it to be compromised.

Wilkerson: I don't disagree with that. I think my previous comments about a cabal between the two Secretaries of Defense—one, then a Vice President, the other, another Secretary of Defense—you watch the body language around these two men, you wouldn't know which one was which. I didn't know whether Rumsfeld was running things, or Cheney was running things. On any particular issue, you could take your pick.

But the Vice President, in my mind, is the person who ran this country on a foreign policy perspective from 2001 to 2005, when I was at the State Department.

On the issue of the aluminum tubes: It's far more complicated than these people know. Another dramatic moment occurred: If you go back and review the Secretary's presentation, then you will see that he, himself, qualified his comment

at the UN about the aluminum tubes, because his mind was not clear on it.

When he was getting ready to toss it out completely, we suddenly got another dramatic moment. This dramatic moment, I still can't say the name of the country, but let's just say this—it was a well-respected country, with one of the best intelligence services in the world—a country suddenly reported to us that not only had it spun its consignment of tubes—there were different consignments intercepted. And they had spun them to 98,000 rpm, which means nothing to you, but everything to someone that's looking at potential centrifuges, over an extended period of time with no visible deterioration, etc., etc., etc. It was a very dramatic report. Not quite as dramatic as al-Libi, but nonetheless dramatic.

And we inquired, including the Secretary—if I recall right, I have to go back and check my notes—but I think Dr. Rice may have been there at that time, too; I think she inquired, too, as you might suspect, “Can we use this?” And Mr. Tenet, with Mr. McLaughlin sitting beside him, nodding his head up and down, said “Well, we're going to have to check with our counterparts, because their political authorities might not allow us to use this.” Duh! Damage was done! The Secretary had suddenly made up his mind that, at least, he was going to leave it in his presentation and qualify it, to express the fact that he knew there was debate still going on about the aluminum tubes.

And, needless to say, the next morning, when Mr. Tenet came back and said, reluctantly, the political authority would not allow that intelligence service to let us use that information, because it had been a commercial lab that had done this, and the bonds between this commercial lab and this intelligence service were delicate, etc., etc., etc.—sort of like “sources and methods”—we couldn't use that in the presentation specifically, but we didn't need to use it in the presentation specifically. It convinced the Secretary that he ought to leave that information, as has been said here, the only real information that constituted any proof of an attempt to reconstitute a nuclear program in Iraq.

And so, it was a little bit more complex. Carl Ford [head the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) in the State Department from 2001 until 2003, reporting directly to Powell] and I have argued about this a lot—it's a little more complex than even Carl knew. And if I fault myself for anything, in this particular instance, it's not calling Carl and getting him over there, and fighting in front of Tenet over this issue. Carl had decided, that the Secretary had access to him, I had access to him—which was true—and that we didn't need him or any of his people over at the CIA. The Secretary passed every script past him, called him, talked with him, and so forth. But I wish now, that I'd brought Carl over to the CIA with me, because he would have given me some *intelligence* professionalism to push back at McLaughlin and Tenet, when we doubted something.

A Finger in the Eye'

Johnson: “Poking a finger in the eye”: That's one of the phrases you learn as an analyst. The process of writing, whether it's for the Presidential Daily Brief, or the National Intelligence Daily, is, you start off in the morning, sort of like a newspaper reporter dealing with breaking news; we offer up a story-line; the section chief carries it forward to a morning meeting. At the morning meeting, the division chief says, “Yeah, I think we'll go with that.” Then the division chief has to go upstairs and present it to an office chief. So it's very much a bureaucratic function, and it's amazing that anything gets done, but somehow in that process, you're able to turn these pieces out.

So, anything that gets written like this, it's not just because somebody is sitting there on their own saying, “Boy! I've got a great idea for a story!” It is overseen, it is supervised; and in fact, my understanding is, over the last seven years, they have actually added layers of management review to the process. So the fact that someone like this analyst Joe Turner, in WINPAC, was able to run amok, it was not Joe Turner on his own: He was running amok with the witting cooperation of senior CIA officials, with Jamie Miscik, the DDI, with the people of Alan Foley who was in his chain of command. These people participated in that, willingly. These are not ignorant, stupid people.

One of the things you learn as an analyst early on, is, you have to properly present the information about what you know, and properly source it. And if you are faced with a situation in which you are dealing with only one source, then, that doesn't quite carry the weight of, say, three or four independent sources that corroborate one another.

But the other thing, I'd like to bring this home to you, because they're still saying it: George Tenet is out there saying, “Well, everybody knew that Saddam had weapons of mass destruction.” Most people go, “Well, yeah, that's true.” You gotta say, “Stop, right there.” Saying that, “Everybody in Virginia owns a firearm”: Okay. What's the nature of those firearms? If most of them are 19th-Century or 18th-Century collectors' items, that's a far different problem than saying, everybody's got an AK-47 or an automatic weapon, or a 50-caliber Barrett rifle. What are those weapons? How are they used? And this goes back to the point that Pat was making earlier: That it is always the context of looking at Saddam, who used to have X amount of weapons; a percentage of those were destroyed during the first Gulf War; an additional percentage were destroyed in the subsequent inspection period. And now, we're asked to believe that he's had this many weapons destroyed through one fashion or another, but now poses a greater threat? How does less become more? I've never understood it.

And one last observation on this “friends and family program” that became the Bush Administration. Dick Cheney got his job in Washington, in part—well, not in part—because of Don Rumsfeld. I know the man, and the man's a good per-



DOD photo/R.D. Ward

“Dick Cheney’s war” in Iraq was promoted by a “cabal” in the White House, at the center of which was Veep Cheney (left) and SecDef Donald Rumsfeld (right). “You watch the body language around these two men, you wouldn’t know which one was which.”

sonal friend of mine, who was called by Don Rumsfeld in 1972, and he said to my friend, “Hey, I’ve got this young man, his name’s Dick Cheney, and he needs a job.” So, my friend gave Dick Cheney a job for two years, and at the end of that two-year period, Cheney walked in and said, “Hey, I’ve been offered the Chief of Staff job at the White House.” So, this relationship between Rummy and Cheney goes back 40 years. And when they bring up Paul Wolfowitz—remember Wolfowitz was Under Secretary of Defense under Cheney. You know, so when you start doing the wiring diagram relationships on this, just like an anthropologist, you understand that you’re dealing with sort of an inbred tribe that would do a disservice to call it “West Virginia inbreeding.” [laughter]

Eisner: One other connection there, is that Colin Powell came into the mix pretty close to that period, being brought into in-

vestigate the My Lai incident, and is, I believe, widely recognized to have whitewashed the My Lai incident, having said that it was an isolated case, involving one person, one incident, and not anything broader than that. And as a result of that report, he suddenly hopped over about four levels of infantry officers, and found himself in the White House.

The Crucial Role of Colin Powell

Wilkerson: I’ve got to say something here. I was out in Monterey, California on Saturday at a conference, and Dr. Perry was in the audience, and a host of other people. And I got asked a question, you know, “Why didn’t Colin Powell resign?” And I’ll be very honest, as I was honest with them: It would have lasted a month. It wouldn’t have any impact. It might have had a little bit of impact initially, maybe a week’s worth of impact, but then it would have faded. And he would have been like any other Secretary of State, like [Cyrus] Vance or whomever. We tend to think it would have been very powerful—it wouldn’t have done anything. In fact, Dick Cheney would have exulted in his departure. And moved right out, just as ruthless, with the vision that he has, as he had before.

Here’s the key, I think, and if I ever write a book, this is what my book is going to be about: *You would not have liked at all, to have seen the first Bush Administration without Colin Powell.* We would not have relations with Germany, France, or probably any NATO country. Turkey would have told us to go to Hell long ago, not just taken a very close vote on whether they were going to be with us in the Iraq War—they’d have told us the strategic relationship was at an end.

We would have had a *real* mess. Colin Powell held [former German Foreign Minister] Joschka Fischer’s hand under the table; [former French Foreign Minister] Dominique de Villepin’s hand under the table. The French are the best counterterrorist people in the world. Donald Rumsfeld is sticking his finger in their eyes in every conceivable way he could, even to the nitty-gritty stuff, like telling the commandant of the Marine Corps that he couldn’t, for the 30th year in a row, go and celebrate the birth of the Marine Corps with his French counterpart. I mean, this was absurd! And every time something like this happened, Colin Powell stepped in.

Let me tell you something even more serious: The Defense Department, with Feith, Cambone, Wolfowitz, Rumsfeld, was dispatching a person to Taiwan every week, essentially to tell the Taiwanese that the alliance was back on. Essentially to tell Chen Shui-bian, whose entire power in Taiwan rested on the independence movement, that independence was a good thing. We dispatched either our AIT [American Institute in Taiwan] representative, or someone from the State Department right behind that guy, every time they sent somebody, to disabuse the entire Taiwanese national security apparatus of what they’d been told by the Defense Department.

This went on until George Bush weighed in, and told Rumsfeld to cease and desist, told him multiple times to re-

establish military-to-military relations with China, one time in a raised voice that even surprised Dr. Rice. And he fired the wife of Larry Di Rita, Therese Shaheen, who was the Taiwan rep here in Roslyn, Virginia. Because she went out, after the President finally *rebuked* Chen Shui-bian, *publicly*, she went out and said the President of the United States didn't really mean what he said.

And so, Colin Powell had the U.S.-China relationship, with, I will admit, strong backing from the President on occasion, in his hand, the whole time, too: from the EP3-F8 collision in April 2001, till the time he left the State Department. So, let me say again: *You would not have liked to have seen the first Bush Administration, without the balanced voice of Colin Powell.*

Cheney: 'Truly Delusional'

Eisner: Let me ask a question about Dick Cheney: Pat Lang might have one of the closer relationships with Dick Cheney over time; how has he changed, and why is he doing what he's doing, to the degree that you can analyze it?

Lang: Well, I contemplated this issue a lot. When I was the head Middle East/South Asia guy in the period of the first Gulf War, I used to brief the man quite a lot, and he was not an inspiring student or pupil, but he wasn't an offensive one. You know, he would listen politely and impassively, and ask an occasional question. But he didn't challenge anything you said, he didn't—he just asked for an elaboration of points occasionally. And so, I thought he was a reasonably balanced kind of guy.

And then all of a sudden, in this Administration, starting in 2000, you have this guy who is increasingly revealed as somebody who is really destiny-driven or something, by some sort of deep-seated animosity toward Iraq, especially, and has signed up to the historical theorizations of a lot of people like Wolfowitz, and Feith, and people like that. And the change-over is quite striking. You see, there either was a change-over there, or I just missed it completely the first time around. And a lot of people told me that. A lot of people who knew him in earlier days, say that they do not, in fact, recognize the man. Who was it who said famously, "I no longer know Dick Cheney?"

[From the audience: "Brent Scowcroft."]

Lang: Scowcroft. And I remember I briefed him the morning that he went to Saudi Arabia, under Bandar's supervision, I guess, to persuade the King to let us in the Kingdom after the Iraqis had invaded Kuwait. And he listened, listened, listened, and he talked, he looked at all the pictures and everything, you know, he asked a couple of questions; then, "Thank you very much," and left the room. And this is not—it doesn't add up to the guy who's encouraged all these analysts to be driven to the wall so that they had to fall back on their own resources of courage, or roll over and play dead, in the run-up to the Gulf

War, and I think that that's a puzzlement. And I don't quite understand the man at all.

Q: You described Cheney as delusional. Do you still believe he's delusional?

Lang: Yeah. The evidence of Cheney number 2, or Cheney version 22, or whatever it is—is that this man, I think, this man is truly delusional in a lot of ways, and he doesn't in fact have a good grip on reality, and is easily captive of various fantasies proposed to him about the nature of reality and history, what the Middle East is all about, and things like that. He seems to be very, very minimal in some ways, and it fits in with a pattern of rigidity in his thinking, which is—I think delusional would be still be my word.

Bring In 'Team B'

Goodman: Let me just tell one anecdote, because it shows there's been no change whatsoever in Cheney on policy or intelligence matters, and it also points to what Larry was talking about in terms of the inbreeding, and the Cheney-Rumsfeld relationship, which was incredibly tight, until I think Rumsfeld lost interest in this war, which was why he was forced to resign—it had *nothing* to do with the election, as far as I'm concerned.

In the mid-1970s, when Cheney was Chief of Staff for [President Gerald] Ford, and Rumsfeld was Secretary of Defense, they wanted to go after the CIA then. It was their idea to put together a "Team B" of troglodytes: people like Paul Wolfowitz, Gen. Danny Graham, Bill Van Cleave, people who were well-known as neo-conservatives, before we used the term neo-conservative. He wanted to send this group out to the CIA, but CIA Director Bill Colby, who I worked for for a short period of time, wouldn't let them in the building. Bill Colby was forced to resign.

And in comes George Herbert Walker Bush, where Rumsfeld wanted to put Bush in, because he thought Bush was a lightweight; but there's a chance that Bush could become nominated as a Republican candidate for President, something that Rumsfeld thought *he* deserved as the smartest person in all of Washington. And of course, they go back to the CIA, and George Herbert Walker Bush, says, "Yeah, bring in Team B."

So, they bring in these troglodytes to try to push CIA analysis on the Soviet Union to the right, at the very time, we're getting very sensitive information, including very sensitive intercepted information from NSA, about the efforts the Soviets now want to make to try to move toward arms control and détente. And this was '77, when—I don't want to get into the Kremlinology—the important Brezhnev speech at Tula, and they were starting to cut back on the growth in defense spending.

So, the point I want to make, is, Cheney and Rumsfeld have never wanted the kind of intelligence organization that



Defense Department

Paul Wolfowitz and Doug Feith were the “theorists” at the Defense Department, who provided the “Team B” of troglodytes,” aka neo-cons, with the intellectual justification for the war.

Harry Truman wanted to put together, and did put together, in 1947, in the National Security Act: that is, an independent agency providing intelligence, with the bark on, that was outside of the policy process; that would hopefully be as objective and balanced as you could make it, and not wedded to any specific policy. They wanted to end that role for the CIA, and intelligence in general, and intelligence would serve the same function that every other policy instrument serves: It would be part and parcel of the White House.

And just as this group now has politicized every agency in government, from what I can tell—every regulatory agency, every key domestic agency, the whole national security process has been militarized and politicized under this regime: This, to me, is what this cabal is all about. It’s very serious. It won’t easily be reversed. It has caused *incredible* mischief and problems for American national security policy.

Lang: Give me another shot at this, will you? I’d like to revisit what I said, for just a minute here, thinking about that. When Wolfowitz was Undersecretary of Defense for Policy under Cheney, in the early ‘90s, working for him, of course, there were two deputy-deputies, were Scooter Libby and Zalmay Khalilzad. Khalilzad had the portfolio for strategy formulation, and that intersected with my job—even if they had to talk to me about it, if they didn’t want to have a mess and an

argument all the time.

So, Zalmay Khalilzad drafted a policy statement to go into some sort of defense document—I forget what it was—and it essentially said that the United States should use its power to benevolently dominate the world, and not hang back from use of force if necessary. And we had several interesting dust-ups about that, because they kept saying if DIA would support this, in its aspects with regard to the real situation in the world, among others, I kept saying no.

And this culminated one day, in a nasty scene in the dining hall in the Army-Navy Club, downtown, in which Khalilzad got more and more angry with me and finally yelled at me, so that every head in the room turned around, and says, “The problem with you native Americans, is”—and he didn’t mean an Indian, either—“the problem with you native Americans is that you don’t understand your responsibility in the use of power.” And then, shortly after that, the Army General Staff leaked the documents in the *Washington Post* and the scheme came to an end.

Goodman: Actually, the *L.A. Times* as I recalled, the *L.A. Times*, the *New York Times*, and the *Washington Post* always felt that Scowcroft was responsible for that. It was a document, a defense policy review, from ‘91 to ‘92.

Wilkerson: I’d like to just say one thing here, as an academic: In 1963, in fact, Dec. 22, 1963, Harry Truman had an op-ed in the *Washington Post*—go Google it, you can find it; go read it, I recommend it to you—Harry Truman was accusing the CIA of being a beast, something he didn’t recognize, something he had not created, in 1963. And who could blame him? A 1953 coup run by Kermit Roosevelt and Allen Dulles, under John Foster Dulles, that overthrew the first democratically elected Persian government, in Iran, and put us where we are today; ‘54, coup in Guatemala. Need I say more? Harry, in ‘63, was not happy with the CIA.

Dialogue with the Audience

Question: Yes, my name is Michele Steinberg with *EIR* magazine: I cover U.S. policy in the Middle East. There’s a very famous quote, beside “slam dunk” which is, I think, from Secretary Powell. It’s: “You break it, you own it.” And the thing that’s broken more, in my mind, than Iraq, is the United States of America. And right now, there is a Congressional resolution on the table, H.R. 333: Rep. [Dennis] Kucinich, Rep. [Janice] Schakowsky from Illinois, Rep. William Clay from Missouri—and it’s about impeachment. And it’s not about impeachment of Bush, it’s about impeachment of Dick Cheney, and the documentation which is about—oh, I’d say about 60 or 70 items long—is on many of the issues that are addressed today, like the mushroom clouds, aluminum tubes, all of that.

Now, I wish that all of you folks were sworn-in witnesses before the U.S. Congress right now, but inasmuch as Colonel Lang mentioned something that is happening now, Syria and Iran, disinformation, cooking the books, etc., would you say that this is appropriate to get this kind of investigation going right now?

Wilkerson: I think that's an excellent question. I think our Founding Fathers would be appalled, that in some 200-plus years, we never used that clause they put in our Constitution, except fecklessly, and in one case, successfully. The Articles of Impeachment that threatened Richard Nixon certainly were the reason he decided to resign. I believe, if you asked Hamilton, Madison, Monroe, even Washington, they would probably say, "Yeah, probably about every 30 years, they'll take somebody out." And if you look at Clinton, and the peccadilloes for which they brought impeachment proceedings against him, as compared with the "high crimes and misdemeanors"—and that's a direct quote from Article II of the Constitution—with regard to Cheney and Bush, I think there's a helluva lot better case, with regard to Cheney and Bush.

Is it going to happen? I think it's a political impossibility right now, and it's a political impossibility, partly because of what you just said: Our political process, not just the Federal bureaucracy, but our political process is broken. And somehow, we as Americans have allowed that to happen. And I don't know what you think about it, but I'm damned mad about it, and I'm doing everything I can, across the country, to tell people that I believe this; to tell them how I think the Federal bureaucracy needs to be repaired—including the Congress of the United States; its committee relationship with the Executive branch is *absurd*, it's an anachronism. The Congress needs to be reformed, the Executive branch needs to be reformed.

But the *big* problem we're confronted with is going to come to bear again, very shortly: it's this insane process where you have less than 50% of Americans electing our President. And if you think about that, that means one in four, actually elect him or her. And this insane process of primaries, and factions, as Washington called it—not parties; he called it "factions"—who go out there and appeal to their extremes, and are successful in doing so! We have to do something about that, and the only people who can do something about that, are us.

Goodman: Just one quick point, because I agree with Larry so strongly: [Rep.] John Conyers has been saying for the last couple of years, and his [Judiciary] committee has written a wonderful report about the Constitutional crisis: We face a Constitutional crisis! The Congress doesn't work, oversight doesn't work. The media didn't do its job leading up to the war. The courts won't deal with national security issues. The FBI is abusing National Security Letters. A general at NSA

approved warrantless eavesdropping, the CIA is still torturing and abusing—and Tenet, one of the most disgusting and offensive charades he went into was that nonsense about "we don't talk about it, and we don't do it," when he referred to enhanced interrogation techniques. Of course they do it! You had two CIA directors violating the charter of the CIA, engaging in policy advocacy—both Goss and General Hayden, asking for exemptions. I'm not a big fan of John McCain, but on *this* issue, he is the leading authority, and he's totally right! And it's got to be stopped!

'The British Have Learned...'

Jeff Stein (*Congressional Quarterly*): Colonel Wilkerson, I'd like to hear you talk a little bit about your view of the uranium documents escapade from the vantage point of the State Department. In particular, do you think the SISMI, the Italian agents, were taking off on their own, busting into the embassy, the Niger Embassy and getting these stamps and so on, to help fabricate these documents? Is there a possibility in your mind? Did you discuss it at the State Department, that [former Italian Prime Minister Silvio] Berlusconi might have put this in motion?

Wilkerson: No, not in so many words, but I think there were a lot of suspicions, especially around Rich Armitage's office. If you know Rich at all, you know he's got his fingers in everything clandestine. And thinking about it, and was on the phone with John [McLaughlin] or George [Tenet] almost every day, multiple times. And probably had his fingers stuck in things, as well as Carl Ford did, and maybe even better.

But I think the fact that it got said, the way it's said, that "the British have learned," threw everybody off for a few minutes, maybe a day or two. And you also have to remember, that until I insisted with the White House cabinet secretary, that foreign policy speeches come over to the State Department—we weren't even seeing the speeches. And after those words appeared, my insistence was finally complied with. And even then, I had to call the Under Secretaries and Assistant Secretaries and other experts into my office, sit them down on my couch, and let them read the speech in *my* presence, and then I had to consolidate their comments and send them over to the White House. That's how hard it was to get a speech out of the White House that the Secretary of State could look at. That might mind-boggle you, but that's the way it was.

So, I don't remember any specific discussion. I do know there was a lot of doubt and wonderment, as to how this was happening. Because INR, and others in the State Department had already discounted that information.

For one reason, we knew the French controlled Niger, in terms of the nuclear. And we knew the French were talking to us, and we were talking to the French, despite Rumsfeld. And so, how could you get *that much* out, without the French

knowing about it? And they were absolutely cold on it. So.

Royce: Could I comment? The French, by the way, the Administration has insisted to this day, keeps insisting, that we weren't the only ones who screwed up on weapons of mass destruction, that all the major Western intelligence services also did.

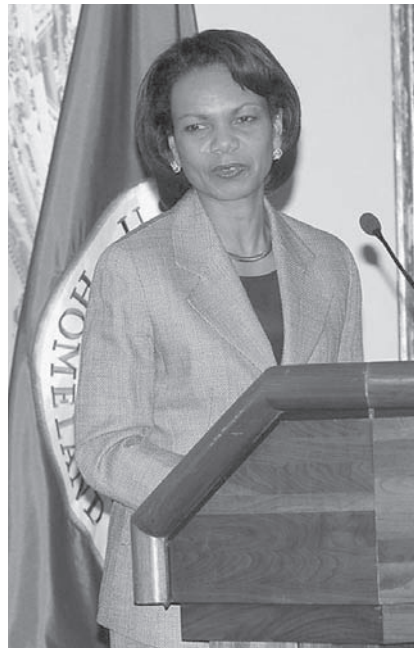
The French did not. The French intelligence service *never* believed that Saddam, Iraq, was stockpiling weapons of mass destruction, and it passed its intelligence on to CIA, very clearly. That never got into any of the reporting, that we've been aware of. The French didn't believe it. The *Italians* didn't believe it. And Berlusconi, while he's a very a good friend of Bush, didn't really believe that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction. SISMI, as an organization, didn't believe it, either.

So, it's kind of hard, given that, to believe that Berlusconi somehow, as a favor to his good friend G.W., ordered SISMI, the Italian intelligence service, to come up with this phony story of uranium. That's where it stands.

Lang: If you've ever been in the business of conducting liaison or relationships with a bunch of intelligence services—you know, with the exception of the French and maybe one or two others—most of these outfits are fairly bush league organizations, in fact. They have very, very limited means of collection; they may have some particular mission in Africa, or someplace where they had colonial possessions once or something like this, but they don't have anything like the kind of availability of information and things like that the U.S. intelligence community has. And the heads of these organizations are under tremendous pressure from the heads of their governments, to play up, to “be as good as the Americans, to give me something that I can argue with, like I'm one of the big guys.” So, the pressure to go along with American positions, on the part of a lot of these services, is—and then look who the boss, the head of the countries—is tremendous. Of course, the French don't give a damn about that, which is one of their strong callings, in my opinion.

The Rose Garden Speech

Johnson: There was one nugget that did come out of Tenet, that we noticed, and someone had asked me about it previously, which was: We thought that the first time that Tenet dealt with pulling a reference to uranium and nukes out of President Bush's speech, was the Oct. 7 speech that President Bush gave in Cincinnati. But Tenet speaks about a Rose Garden speech on Sept. 26, 2002, which would have been two days after the British white paper came out, mentioning this for the first time. And interestingly enough, Condoleezza Rice apparently recognized at that moment, that the material was questionable enough that it should be pulled out of the speech. So the question would then be, what's the track of the White House knowing whether or not there was a question about



State Department/Michael Gross

The White House knew that the British documents were “fabrications, they were forgeries, and could not be used.” When Condoleezza Rice said, on television, “‘Maybe someone lower down the chain knew, but no one told me’: That was a lie.”

uranium and nukes in Iraq?

Goodman: Well, here I think you have to give the CIA a certain amount of credit: The White House knew, almost from the beginning, that these documents were fabrications, they were forgeries, and could not be used. When Condoleezza Rice said, and I remember she said it on television, “Maybe someone lower down the chain knew, but no one told me”: That was a lie. And the person who told her was Jamie Miscik, who was the deputy director for intelligence, and she reported back to Tenet and McLaughlin that she had that conversation. So, Tenet wrote letters and memos to Hadley that he conveniently forgot about, but then I think in May, he suddenly remembered, “Yes, I do remember those memos from the CIA.”

The point that I always make is, up until around the first or second week in October, the CIA in some areas, was playing it straight. But I think once Tenet was convinced that this administration was going to war, regardless, and you weren't going to stop it, he had to face the fact, “Am I going to play this game honestly? Am I going to tell truth to power? Or do I want to put on my suit and tie every morning, and be an important person in Washington?” And he decided on the latter course: He wanted to be part of the team. And there's a certain jocularly about this book and a sophomoric bent in this book, that is almost—and I apologize for buying it [laughter], but I just couldn't resist...

It's what's so appalling about George Tenet. I mean, he is just, to me, a low-breed *apparatchik*. But on the issue of this fabrication, the White House knew everything they needed to know, and when Foley was on the phone, more than once or

twice with Bob Joseph at the NSC, working out this language, all Foley wanted was a sentence in that State of the Union that pinned it on something other than the CIA or the intelligence community. Whoever came up with the formulation, “the British have learned,” which got Foley off the hook—but he stupidly did not tell his boss; George Tenet did not know about any of these negotiations, Foley really dropped the ball. But Jamie Miscik was running this, and now, the number 3 man at the CIA, Mike Morrell, who handled the October episode over the Cincinnati speech, and handled it well, and made sure there was follow-up and policy process to get that language out of the speech.

But basically, the White House knew what they were doing, but that was the case for war: It was a nuclear case. It was to scare the hell out of us, because of our frail nature in the wake of 9/11. They took advantage of us. But I agree with Larry: It’s the American people.

Eisner: Well, again there, when you say the White House knew—I’m asked that question—who in the White House knew? Are we talking Rice?

Speaker: Rice knew, Hadley knew, Cheney knew, Powell knew. Powell, I believe, called the NCS and told them what to do about this, in addition to the CIA telling them. I assume that Bush knew. If he didn’t know, then someone failed him. And I think Rice was a disaster as the National Security Advisor anyway. She only has two jobs: One is to keep her President informed of all the various policy options and what you need to know about an option; and then two, to make sure that the policy agencies then follow up with any decisions a President makes. She couldn’t do either one! So, now she’s Secretary of State.

Someone in Cheney’s Office...

Johnson: Yeah, back to this “knowing,” and put some of the activity into context: I bring to the experience of having worked in the office of the CIA Operations Center and knowing how the paper’s generated and forwarded to principals: When Dick Cheney saw that reference in a Defense Intelligence Agency report, to the possibility of Iraq buying uranium from Niger, and queried his briefer, we now know, basically—I was in Valerie Wilson’s training class, by the way, at CIA—we now know from her testimony before Congress, that that very same day, somebody in Cheney’s office—and it had to be Libby; if it wasn’t Libby, it was Hadley—somebody called out and got a *junior* case officer in Valerie’s office on the phone, and said, “Hey! We really need this information!”

So, on the question of any information dealing with Iraq, uranium, Niger, that was on the radar screen for top-level officials. It’s not like we were talking, “What was banana production in Costa Rica?” Or, “How many diamonds came out of Liberia?” You know, this was something that was at the

very *top* of their issue. It was at the White House Situation Room there, it was at the top; the CIA Operations Center there was at the top, because when you’re sitting there as a watch officer, when you see these topics come across your screen, you hit the “print” button, and you make sure that certain critical documents are available for the principals the next day.

That’s why I’m *certain* Dick Cheney saw Joe Wilson’s report. Because the White House Situation Room hit the “print” button. Dick Cheney didn’t *like* Joe Wilson’s report that was generated based upon his trip, because it didn’t support the notions that they wanted. But the knowledge at the White House level, just the way the bureaucracy works, there is no way in Hell, that these people were not being briefed on a regular basis on anything that had to do with Iraq acquiring uranium, and the possibility of reconstituting the nuclear program—no way.

Eisner: Is there any trail that could show that, in any possible way?

Wilkerson: I think there was another part to it, too, and I can’t confirm this. I wish I could. I think what happened, a lot of times, is when Libby, John Hannah, two key players in the Vice President’s office, Hannah being sort of the pin and Libby being the orchestrator, the hatchetman, if you will: When there was any debate over an intelligence item, they call Feith’s shop in the Defense Department. Feith’s shop was running an alternative intelligence operation. It was kind of weird, because what they did, was produce, for example, that 48-page script that Libby handed to Secretary Powell to take to the UN, or out to Langley, and then eventually to the UN. But whenever they had a question over a particular item of intelligence, they got confirmation, *not* from the intelligence analysts. They might check with them, and see what happened. But they got their final confirmation, and usually made the decision as to whether or not they would run with a talking point, from Douglas Feith’s shop, and from Steve Cambone—*not* from the people at Langley.

Question: I’d like to ask a couple of questions. You’ve done a good job of painting the culprits, identifying the culprits. But what were their motivations to get up there? Why are we there? Was it to drum up business for Halliburton? Was it oil? Was it Bush avenging his Daddy? I mean, why are we there? That’s Question #1.

Wilkerson: Let me take a shot at this, because this is what I’m teaching right now. I usually can throw a hierarchy up on the board for my students, and I say “Take a hit. And when you get through, I want you to defend each one, and then I want you to put them in priority.” And what I throw up there, it depends on the individual who’s advising the President, and it depends on what the President makes of that advice—but I

throw up there everything from the military-industrial-Congressional complex; have you seen what Lockheed's share price is now? It went from \$26 to about \$98. Man, when war is profitable, you have an influence!

I throw up oil. If you look at Paul Wolfowitz's comments in *Vanity Fair*, you'll see that Paul Wolfowitz said, very candidly, "this is all because Iraq is floating on a sea of oil." I throw up there, "democracy and freedom," the neo-con mantra: "We're going to bring utopian society to the world or die trying." And I throw up there other things, like Bush's psychology. This is a naive, untutored, not-steeped-in-foreign-policy President! With all these pachyderms around you, who are steeped in something! They're particularly steeped in the militarization of U.S. foreign policy. We elected a defense contractor Vice President of the United States! And a former Secretary of Defense! And a former Secretary of Defense as a Secretary as Defense! And a Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as the Secretary of State: Talk about militarizing America! That's what we did. And we got war.

The 'Doug Feith Story'

Lang: I decided, at the urging of my friends, to tell my Doug Feith story. I've done this in print before, so I'm not shy about it.

In the first year of the Bush Administration, I had a friend who's an old Army friend, who was working for Rumsfeld in hiring seniors over there. And so he called me up one day, and he asked me, I think you'd make a wonderful Assistant Secretary of Defense for Whatchamacallit. And I thought about that, and you know, I'm not a Republican. Actually, I'm a helluva lot more conservative than these neo-cons, that's for sure. So I thought, "that'd be interesting," so I said, "Go ahead." So, he put my name in the hopper, and I ended up going around the Stations of the Cross in the Pentagon, you know, you see all these offices, all these people.

And I finally end up one day, in the penultimate moment of this, in Doug Feith's office. And he was sitting there munching a sandwich while he was talking to me (which I thought was remarkable in itself), but he also had these briefing papers—they always had briefing papers, you know—about me. He's looking at this stuff, and he says, "I've heard of you. I heard of you." He says, "Is it really true that you really know the Arabs this well, and that you speak Arabic this well? Is that really true? Is that really true?"

And I said, "Yeah, that's really true."

He says, "That's too bad." [laughter]

That was the end of the interview. I'm not quite sure what he meant, but you can work it out.

Speaker: Thank you. A lot of pieces of information, but it's largely in response to the question the lady just had asked. It must have been about three or four years, that I too kept saying "Why?" Because I had come out of the former White House, you knew that White Houses don't puff up overnight,

and all of a sudden policy is made; that there is history and research. And without it, you're going to be in a lot of trouble with the Constitution and the country. And I would just like to suggest that I have read most all of the books that were put out—whether it was the CIA, what happened in Afghanistan, whether it was Osama bin Laden; or all of the other ones.

There was one book that goes, not back to Truman, but far enough back, that gives us an answer to her question why. And it isn't just energy, and it isn't just oil, and it isn't just Halliburton. But if you read *American Theocracy* by [Kevin] Phillips, you'll understand how we have, literally, from our complacency, from our interest in our own personal lives—you want to call it a cabal, of a whole set of believers, ideological believers, that you don't do research, you don't look at history, they know what the Bible taught them, and they were going to take over this country. And they did it, with patience, and with people who had been in government and knew where they were going. And Dick Cheney is one of them, and Rumsfeld was another one, and all of them. And they had a very gullible guy, in the name of George Bush, who was Mr. Happy-Guy in college, and if they'd just let him be a CEO—not a President—but a CEO, he could do what they wanted him to do, and he would give them the responsibility.

And we do have a broken government: And until we realize how we got to where we are, I believe that we will not be able to change.

Wilkerson: I think you're right, in many of your comments. I didn't mention some of the other things I throw up for my students. One of them, is, depending on if you believe Kevin, and I let them read some of his books, especially the *Financialization of America*, which is quite good. How many of you know we're in \$42 trillion in corporate and private debt, right now, for example? That's the largest debt in human history. You can even do it in constant dollars, and it's still the largest debt in human history, and we're talking Spain and the New World, and gold and silver and so forth. So we're really walking down a road that no one's ever been on before, and Kevin does a good job of pointing that out.

The evangelical/Pentecostal population in America, which is part of the radical religion right, is astounding. When I tell my students about it, when I show them the polling data; when I show them how many Americans believe in the inerrancy of the Bible; how many Americans don't believe in evolution; how many Americans don't believe in science, unless it's supported by God-theory. And I'm a Christian: But my grandmother didn't teach me this version of Christianity.

You're stunned! By some accounts, and some polls, there's as many as 48 million Americans out there, who are actively, politically, pursuing their agenda through people like Falwell, and Pat Robertson, and so forth. And when I see Mitt Romney and John McCain and people like that, go over and cater to these people, I understand why: It's all about power—



DOD photo/Helene C. Stikkel

The “Principals” in 2001 (left to right): President Bush, Vice President Cheney, then-Defense Secretary Rumsfeld; then-National Security Advisor Rice. “There is no way in Hell, that these people were not being briefed on a regular basis on anything that had to do with Iraq acquiring uranium, and the possibility of reconstituting the nuclear program—no way.”

but it turns my stomach. I don’t know about you. It bothers me, because I don’t see that as a reasonable, practical future for this country.

But there are other influences on decision-making. But I come back to the bottom line, which I always try to convince my students of: *This is the most colossally inept, and incompetent administration in American history.* And even with all these other influences, that’s the real bottom line.

9/11 Created the Opportunity

Question: I have a question. This question’s for you, and you, sir: How did the Bush Administration pull this whole thing off? How did they sneak this by the press? It seems that everyone in Europe was privy to information, that wasn’t privy here? How did they pull it off? These guys must be the most amazing people in the world. Everything you’re saying is true. I believe you. How did they pull it off? How did the press not get wind of this? And how did they get into this war?

Goodman: I mean, look, what you had take place—and I agree with Larry, and what Larry said with reference to the incompetence of this administration. On the one hand, they have carried out a covert action, or—when I worked at the CIA, I participated in the Afghan Task Force covert action to manipulate the press overseas, to help accomplish foreign policy objectives, and in this case, the press became both, in most cases, witting participants, and in some cases, unwitting. But we saw that spectacle of Judith Miller, Michael Gordon,

being leaked information by the White House, and then the White House fanning out very quickly with Condoleezza Rice and Dick Cheney, to say, “Boy! Look what’s in the press today!” Well, they knew how it got in the press.

And the ultimate irony here, is, on the one hand, the Bush Administration is very aggressive about leaking information which will help make their case; at the same time, they are pressing more aggressively than any administration in recent memory, in trying to shut down the press from reporting anything that is critical, whether it’s the Sy Hersh articles about Abu Ghraib, or the *Washington Post* pieces about the secret interrogation and the torture. And, in this case, we’ve had press become witting participants in it.

9/11 created the opportunity: It opened the door. They took full advantage of it. They used the fear factor to drive people forward, and it worked.

It’s not that there was nobody out there trying to raise the warning voice. Anthony Zinni was quite clear. Scott Ritter was quite clear. There were some members of Congress, that were speaking out. But people, by and large, chose not to be informed, not to listen, and now we’re in this mess that everyone recognizes, “Boy, wish we hadn’t driven off the cliff.” But we have.

Lang: You’re probably not going to like this, and that’s what I’m here for. You know, one of the things I learned from the aftermath of 9/11, and Mel kind of touched upon it, but I’ll touch on it too, is the fact that the American people are amazingly fearful, really. And the level of abject terror and unreasoning fear toward these jihadi networks that had been sent into this country, you know, it’s astonishing! Really, astonishing!

Like, a couple of days after 9/11, a friend of mine called me from Chicago; he’s a hugely rich guy. And he said to me, “Well, Pat,” he says, “you knew what kind of misspent life I’ve had.” He said, “Now we all live in your world.” In other words, a world filled with fear and danger, you see?

And I must say, that one thing that I’ve learned, is that people in this country didn’t handle this all that well. They were easy to bulldoze after this. And this administration was set up to do it, and if you look at it in the aftermath, it’s pretty obvious they had a deliberate campaign to manipulate where people were going. How many people here saw Bill Moyers’ piece on PBS about manipulating the press? Well, anybody who hasn’t should go find it. How the press was manipulated

in the run-up to the war, because he's got it just about right, and it's very obvious, that if you've dealt a lot with the media, as many of us have here in last several years, you saw that the modern generation of journalists are not like the old guys. They're not this guy, the fellow down at the other end of the table there [Royce]. You know, they're not like them, who are well educated men of the world. In fact, you know, you got a whole bunch of new, young people who are working the field, who are communications graduates, and journalism graduates, who are terrific on process, but zero on content. And they can be told anything, if they're told by a sufficiently highly prized source, and it's said over and over again.

And then, these news media are all really, large, corporate structures. And you get down the ladder in someplace like this, what goes on down there, that affects what happens in the news process, is pretty astonishing stuff. There's great deal of pressure put on by advertisers, things like this, to manipulate the content of the news, things like this.

So basically, folks: You've been had. You've been had, in a big way. And you'll probably be had again, actually.

Goodman: I would just say one other thing about the media: There was another period in my lifetime, and there are others who can look at it, you can look at the Indian wars from 1866 to 1890 and see how the politics of fear were exploited to kill Indians, Native Americans. But the period that we look at extensively is the McCarthy period, where you had a man with the stature of Dwight Eisenhower, for example, actually refusing to defend a man with the stature of George Marshall, because he needed some Wisconsin votes. And Eisenhower said, afterwards, when he'd been on the stand in Wisconsin with McCarthy, that it was the most revolting moment in his entire life—when he had to cater to McCarthy. And Truman actually had to change personnel policies and ruin *countless* American lives, because of the fear of communism, and the ideology of the Soviet Union. And after '49, when they exploded the bomb, it got worse.

But we've had periods like this before. I'd just like to point out that one of the agencies, the fourth estate in this case, that brought McCarthy down, was Edward R. Murrow, and the kind of educated, talented, intellectual, "I'm going to get you if you're abusing power" press. And we just don't have that any more. We came to a peak, sort of, with [Bob] Woodward and Watergate, and that sort of thing, but it was more for entertainment purposes, and started sort of the entertainment industry that the news has become, rather than for "speak truth to power" purposes, and to keep the abuse of power from plaguing people like you and me.

When our Founders set this whole thing up, you know, they set up understanding that we're all evil people, and if we get too much power, we'll all abuse it. And so, what they did, was, they designed a system where we'd abuse the power, and you'd abuse the power, but we'd check each other. And we've

let that get all out of kilter.

Eisner: We're just about out of time. One more question.

Congress Was AWOL

Question: I would like to hear you guys, some elaboration on who in this entire process has earned your respect? And I haven't also heard as much talk as maybe I would like, about how Congress plays games with the whole story?

Lang: My hero in this whole deal, is a guy you've probably never heard of, Gen. [David] McKiernan. He was the ground force commander for the preparation for the invasion of Iraq, and I visited him and his staff in Kuwait, shortly before the invasion, got to talk to staff, I talked to various people. And I would say [about] that guy: He fought Rumsfeld and those dumbbells in the office of the Secretary of Defense *every day*. *Every day!* All the time! Over what the troop list was going to be for Iraq.

I went to see the famous John Hannah at OVP [Office of the Vice President] one time, because somebody working there asked me to come over and talk to him. And this guy, as we're sitting there, he says to me, "Well, we're advised that all you need for this invasion is two armored brigades." You know, I'm not a good soldier in the war, but I know better than that. This is like 10,000 men, and 100 tanks or something like this. And I just laughed, I thought it was a joke. And then I saw it wasn't really a joke; they actually were thinking things like that.

When I got over to Kuwait, McKiernan's staff told me how they fought *every day*, for every piece of everything, because Rumsfeld—not only did he not accept the previously existing contingency plan for Iraq, which was a really well-done thing; but in fact, he rejected the entire process of planning! Of systematic planning that the Army had for generating a force properly sized for this. Instead, he said, "You tell me what you want, and I'll tell how much of it you can have, and when I'll give it to you."

Now, that's hard to run a war like this, on the basis like that, when you've got to bring stuff 6 or 7,000 miles, to start. And McKiernan and these guys, they fought that big fight all the way to the end, and they managed to have a big enough force to do the job. And I nominate McKiernan, as a hero.

Speaker: And the second part of your question was Congress, and Congress was absent without leave. The seminal study, intelligence study, about Iraq and weapons of mass destruction and what a bad guy Saddam was and all that, was the October 2002 National Intelligence Estimate. It was created at the insistence of *Congress*. Normally, they're done at the insistence of the Executive. This one was unusual. Tenet didn't want to have an NIE on Iraq, because, as he says in his book, the administration just was bored about intelligence about

Iraq. But Congress ordered this. When it finally came out in October, before Congress voted to authorize the war, six Senators and a handful of Congressmen read the entire report. It's 90 pages.

Now, here, they're preparing to vote on whether or not the United States goes to war. They don't bother to read the National Intelligence Estimate.

Wilkerson: I have to say, that, when I first started speaking publicly, the main issue was detainee abuse, and the corruption of your Armed Forces in this process. And so I got up-close and personal with a couple of people as we worked, as Colin Powell put a letter, for example, on the desk of every Senator, as John McCain was finally able to get that 99-0 vote, to essentially stop the Armed Forces from doing this kind of thing. And I'd known him before, and I know him well, now. I told him one day, I'm talking about Sen. Chuck Hagel, who's the only Republican I know who's really a Republican; and I told him, I said, "You know, we ought to bring out Kennedy's book again, *Profiles in Courage* and make an addendum for you." So, he's my hero in this.

Johnson: I think Carl Ford over at INR, standing up—they have a good track record. They were the intelligence analysts who got it right more often than not. But out in the media, John Landay and Warren Strobel at Knight Ridder; Sy Hersh—they were it. It was a lonely group.

Goodman: I can't provide names, but if I had to put a medal on one group, it would be the military lawyers, the JAGs, the Judge Advocates General. I think they stood up for principle, they stood up for military ethics, they stood up for the Uniform Code of Military Justice; and I would compare them to the CIA lawyers who've been trying to get exemptions for torture and abuse, who've been pursuing ways to allow secret prisons to take place for conducting the worst *fascist* policy I've ever heard of: "extraordinary renditions," which has involved turning innocent people over to countries that practice torture. It's kind of interesting, in the Tenet book, we talk about, and everyone believes, that al-Libi recanted, because he had been tortured and abused, and he recanted when he got out of prison. Tenet is probably the only person in the world, who doesn't believe in the recantation.

So, to me, the JAGs have really represented the best of America. They've understood what the Constitution is about, and they've understood what the Founding Fathers wanted from this country. And I'm sure there are some heroes on the Hill. Frankly, I'm not happy with the Military Commissions Act of 2006. I think McCain and [Sen. John] Warner and [Sen.] Lindsey Graham, in the end, caved in. I'm not pleased with what they did with that bill. As always, we're continuing to torture, to render, to use former Soviet Gulag institutions in East Europe for our own CIA secret prisons: It means there's

a disease in this country. And we better find a way to treat it.

Eisner: I have three points to make, and then to thank everyone. One is, that, in terms of nominating people, you've been—we've had the rare opportunity to listen to the four gentlemen to my side, who probably have about 100 years of intelligence and government experience among them, if not more. And to be saying the things that they're saying—you're

I think our Founding Fathers would be appalled, that in some 200-plus years, we never used that clause they put in our Constitution, except fecklessly, and in one case, successfully. The Articles of Impeachment that threatened Richard Nixon certainly were the reason he decided to resign. . . . And if you look at Clinton, and the peccadilloes for which they brought impeachment proceedings against him, as compared with the "high crimes and misdemeanors"—and that's a direct quote from Article II of the Constitution—with regard to Cheney and Bush, I think there's a helluva lot better case, with regard to Cheney and Bush.
—Lawrence Wilkerson

hearing experience, you're hearing dedication to careers, dedication to democracy, and positions that have not been easily taken, and walking a road that's not been easy. But words that need to be listened to, otherwise, to our peril.

So, I'd nominate them in answer to the question, and like to thank them all very much for coming to join us.

And a shameless plug for the book that can be bought—*The Italian Letter*—which attempts, in a nutshell, to tell you how we got to where we are, by putting together a story of baked intelligence which led to 16 words that were known not to be true at all.

Thanks very much for coming. We thank the University of the District of Columbia and the staff for helping us. And good night.