



Federal Bureau of Investigation

Washington, D.C. 20535

September 7, 2010

MR. GRANT F. SMITH
IRMEP
CALVERT STATION
POST OFFICE BOX 32041
WASHINGTON, DC 20007

Subject: FRANKLIN, LAWRENCE A. ET AL.

FOIPA No. 1135944- 002

Dear Mr. Smith:

The enclosed documents were reviewed under the Freedom of Information/Privacy Acts (FOIPA), Title 5, United States Code, Section 552/552a. Deletions have been made to protect information which is exempt from disclosure, with the appropriate exemptions noted on the page next to the excision. In addition, a deleted page information sheet was inserted in the file to indicate where pages were withheld entirely. The exemptions used to withhold information are marked below and explained on the enclosed Form OPCA-16a:

Table with 3 columns: Section 552, Section 552a, and various exemption codes like (b)(1), (b)(7)(A), (d)(5), etc.

405 page(s) were reviewed and 405 page(s) are being released.

- Document(s) were located which originated with, or contained information concerning other Government agency(ies) [OGA]. This information has been:
referred to the OGA for review and direct response to you.
referred to the OGA for consultation. The FBI will correspond with you regarding this information when the consultation is finished.

You have the right to appeal any denials in this release. Appeals should be directed in writing to the Director, Office of Information Policy, U.S. Department of Justice, 1425 New York Ave., NW, Suite 11050, Washington, D.C. 20530-0001. Your appeal must be received by OIP within sixty (60) days from the date of this letter in order to be considered timely. The envelope and the letter should be clearly marked "Freedom of Information Appeal." Please cite the FOIPA Number assigned to your request so that it may be easily identified.

The enclosed material is from the main investigative file(s) in which the subject(s) of your request was the focus of the investigation. Our search located additional references, in files relating to other

individuals, or matters, which may or may not be about your subject(s). Our experience has shown, when ident, references usually contain information similar to the information processed in the main file(s). Because of our significant backlog, we have given priority to processing only the main investigative file(s). If you want the references, you must submit a separate request for them in writing, and they will be reviewed at a later date, as time and resources permit.

See additional information which follows.

Sincerely yours,



David M. Hardy
Section Chief
Record/Information
Dissemination Section
Records Management Division

Enclosure(s)

Pursuant to Title 28, Code of Federal Regulations, Sections 16.11 and/or 16.49, there is a fee of ten cents per page for duplication. No fees are assessed for the first 100 pages, upon receipt of these documents, please submit a check or money order payable to the Federal Bureau of Investigation in the amount of **\$30.50** for released pages. To insure proper identification of your request, please return this letter or include the FOIPA number(s) with your payment. Failure to pay for this release within (30) days, will close any pending FBI FOIPA requests from you. Nonpayment will also cause an automatic denial of any future FOIPA requests. Please send payment to FBI, 170 Marcel Drive, Winchester, VA 22602-4843.

EXPLANATION OF EXEMPTIONS

SUBSECTIONS OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, SECTION 552

- (b)(1) (A) specifically authorized under criteria established by an Executive order to be kept secret in the interest of national defense or foreign policy and (B) are in fact properly classified to such Executive order;
- (b)(2) related solely to the internal personnel rules and practices of an agency;
- (b)(3) specifically exempted from disclosure by statute (other than section 552b of this title), provided that such statute(A) requires that the matters be withheld from the public in such a manner as to leave no discretion on issue, or (B) establishes particular criteria for withholding or refers to particular types of matters to be withheld;
- (b)(4) trade secrets and commercial or financial information obtained from a person and privileged or confidential;
- (b)(5) inter-agency or intra-agency memorandums or letters which would not be available by law to a party other than an agency in litigation with the agency;
- (b)(6) personnel and medical files and similar files the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy;
- (b)(7) records or information compiled for law enforcement purposes, but only to the extent that the production of such law enforcement records or information (A) could be reasonably be expected to interfere with enforcement proceedings, (B) would deprive a person of a right to a fair trial or an impartial adjudication, (C) could be reasonably expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy, (D) could reasonably be expected to disclose the identity of confidential source, including a State, local, or foreign agency or authority or any private institution which furnished information on a confidential basis, and, in the case of record or information compiled by a criminal law enforcement authority in the course of a criminal investigation, or by an agency conducting a lawful national intelligence investigation, information furnished by a confidential source, (E) would disclose techniques and procedures for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions, or would disclose guidelines for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions if such disclosure could reasonably be expected to risk circumvention of the law, or (F) could reasonably be expected to endanger the life or physical safety of any individual;
- (b)(8) contained in or related to examination, operating, or condition reports prepared by, on behalf of, or for the use of an agency responsible for the regulation or supervision of financial institutions; or
- (b)(9) geological and geophysical information and data, including maps, concerning wells.

SUBSECTIONS OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, SECTION 552a

- (d)(5) information compiled in reasonable anticipation of a civil action proceeding;
- (j)(2) material reporting investigative efforts pertaining to the enforcement of criminal law including efforts to prevent, control, or reduce crime or apprehend criminals;
- (k)(1) information which is currently and properly classified pursuant to an Executive order in the interest of the national defense or foreign policy, for example, information involving intelligence sources or methods;
- (k)(2) investigatory material compiled for law enforcement purposes, other than criminal, which did not result in loss of a right, benefit or privilege under Federal programs, or which would identify a source who furnished information pursuant to a promise that his/her identity would be held in confidence;
- (k)(3) material maintained in connection with providing protective services to the President of the United States or any other individual pursuant to the authority of Title 18, United States Code, Section 3056;
- (k)(4) required by statute to be maintained and used solely as statistical records;
- (k)(5) investigatory material compiled solely for the purpose of determining suitability, eligibility, or qualifications for Federal civilian employment or for access to classified information, the disclosure of which would reveal the identity of the person who furnished information pursuant to a promise that his/her identity would be held in confidence;
- (k)(6) testing or examination material used to determine individual qualifications for appointment or promotion in Federal Government service the release of which would compromise the testing or examination process;
- (k)(7) material used to determine potential for promotion in the armed services, the disclosure of which would reveal the identity of the person who furnished the material pursuant to a promise that his/her identity would be held in confidence.

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Meetings With Iran-Contra Arms Dealer Confirmed

By Bradley Graham and Peter Slevin
Washington Post Staff Writers
Saturday, August 9, 2003; Page A01

Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld acknowledged yesterday that Pentagon officials met secretly with a discredited expatriate Iranian arms merchant who figured prominently in the Iran-contra scandal of the mid-1980s, characterizing the contact as an unexceptional effort to gain possibly useful information.

While Rumsfeld said that the contact occurred more than a year ago and that nothing came of it, his aides scrambled during the day to piece together more details amid other reports that Rumsfeld's account may have been incomplete.

Last night, a senior defense official disclosed that another meeting with the Iranian arms dealer, Manucher Ghorbanifar, occurred in June in Paris. The official said that, while the first contact, in late 2001, had been formally sanctioned by the U.S. government in response to an Iranian government offer to provide information relevant to the war on terrorism, the second one resulted from "an unplanned, unscheduled encounter."

A senior administration official said, however, that Pentagon staff members held one or two other meetings with Ghorbanifar last year in Italy. The sessions so troubled Secretary of State Colin L. Powell, the official said, that he complained to Rumsfeld and Condoleezza Rice, President Bush's national security adviser.

Powell maintained that the Pentagon activities were unauthorized and undermined U.S. policy toward Iran by taking place outside the terms defined by Bush and his top advisers. The White House instructed the Pentagon to halt meetings that do not conform to policy decisions, said the official, who requested anonymity.

The Defense Department personnel who met with Ghorbanifar came from the policy directorate. Sources identified them as Harold Rhode, a specialist on Iran and Iraq who recently served in Baghdad as the Pentagon liaison to Iraqi National Congress leader Ahmed Chalabi, and Larry Franklin, a Defense Intelligence Agency analyst.

State Department officials were surprised by news of the latest meeting with Ghorbanifar. Tension runs deep in the Bush administration between State and the Pentagon, which under Rumsfeld has aspired to a powerful role in foreign policy. The two agencies have sparred repeatedly over strategy toward Iran and Iraq.

The United States does not have formal relations with Iran, although a small number of sanctioned meetings between U.S. and Iranian officials have taken place, most notably to address U.S. war plans in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The Bush administration has struggled to develop a coherent and consistent approach to Iran. In his State of the Union address last year, Bush characterized Iran as being part of an axis of evil, along with Iraq and North Korea, and administration officials have repeatedly accused Iran of supporting terrorist

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groups and of seeking to acquire nuclear weapons. While broad agreement exists within the administration favoring changes in Iran's Islamic government, officials differ on how to accomplish them.

More than two years after the administration began drafting a national security presidential directive on Iran, the policy document remains unfinished. While the State Department favors increased dialogue and engagement with potential reformers inside Iran, prominent Pentagon civilians believe the policy should be more aggressive, including measures to destabilize the existing government in Tehran.

The Iran-contra scandal erupted over a decision by the Reagan administration to sell weapons to Iran in an effort to win the release of U.S. hostages in Lebanon. The proceeds of the arms sales were illegally funneled to contra fighters opposing Nicaragua's leftist Sandinista government.

Ghorbanifar was enlisted in the effort, helping to arrange the delivery by Israel of 508 TOW antitank missiles to Iran. The White House had drafted him as an intermediary despite warnings from the CIA that he was a cheat and had failed lie-detector tests.

The intelligence agency had instructed its operatives not to do business with him.

News of the Pentagon's contact with Ghorbanifar was first reported yesterday by Newsday, and Rumsfeld was asked about the story when he emerged with Bush from a meeting at the president's ranch in Crawford, Tex.

Saying he had just been told of the Newsday article by a senior aide and by Rice, Rumsfeld acknowledged that "one or two" Pentagon officials "were approached by some people who had information about Iranians that wanted to provide information to the United States government."

He said that a meeting took place "more than a year ago" and that the information received was circulated to various federal departments and agencies but did not lead to anything.

"That is to say, as I understand it, there wasn't anything there that was of substance or of value that needed to be pursued further," he said.

Asked if the Pentagon contact was intended to circumvent official U.S. exchanges with Iran, Rumsfeld replied: "Oh, absolutely not. I mean, everyone in the interagency process, I'm told, was apprised of it, and it went nowhere. It was just -- this happens, of course, frequently, that in -- people come in, offering suggestions or information or possible contacts, and sometimes they're pursued. Obviously, if it looks as though something might be interesting, it's pursued. If it isn't, it isn't."

Standing by Rumsfeld's side, Bush was asked if the meeting was a good idea and if his administration wants a change in government. "We support the aspirations of those who desire freedom in Iran," the president said, then took a question on a different subject.

According to the account given later by the senior Pentagon official, the contact in 2001 occurred after Iranian officials passed word to the administration that they had information that might be useful in the global war on terrorism. Two Pentagon officials met with the Iranians in several sessions over a three-day period in Italy. Ghorbanifar attended these meetings, "but he was not the individual who had approached the United States or the one with the information," the official said.

What his role was, however, the official did not know.

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The official said the June meeting involved one of the two Pentagon representatives who had been present at the 2001 meeting, but he declined to say which one.

Staff writer Dana Priest contributed to this report.

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Iraq War Planner Downplays Role

Conservative Strategist Denies Running Stealth Intelligence Operation

By Thomas E. Ricks
Washington Post Staff Writer
Wednesday, October 22, 2003; Page A27

In normal times, the chief of the Pentagon's office for Middle Eastern policy toils in obscurity, a third-level functionary hardly noticed inside the building, let alone outside it.

Not so Deputy Undersecretary William J. Luti. The day-to-day manager of the Defense Department's Iraq policy, he has the highest profile of anyone to ever hold his post.

A recent Google search uncovered 1,340 Internet hits mentioning him; many of them depicting him as a stealthy Svengali of Iraq policy, operating at the center of a network connecting Vice President Cheney, former House speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) and Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Douglas J. Feith -- all people for whom Luti has worked in the past seven years. Some Web sites associated with fringe political player Lyndon H. LaRouche Jr. attack him in lurid terms as an "ignoble liar" and "Satan."

The critics are especially suspicious of his Office of Special Plans, which was created last year. The purposely ambiguous title -- it was an office to work on policy for invading Iraq -- gave rise to speculation that Luti was running a shadowy intelligence operation intended to second-guess the CIA and provide the Pentagon with findings that supported its policies. The office has since been closed.

"The conspiracies out of this are quite stunning," Luti said in a recent interview in his crowded office in an unfashionable inner corridor of the Pentagon. "We are a consumer of intelligence rather than a provider."

He insists that he is not as influential as some of his critics suspect. "To paraphrase Mark Twain, the rumors of my power are greatly exaggerated," he said.

He has been attacked, he said, because "we work tough issues, we work controversial issues." But he insisted he does not preside over a secret miniature version of the CIA. "For the umpteenth time," he said, showing a bit of exasperation, "we do policy work." What that means, he said, is developing defense policy options and monitoring their implementation -- not collecting intelligence, planning wars or implementing policy.

But he also seems to have attracted attention because of his zealous manner. "I know he's a lightning rod," said Richard Shultz, Luti's doctoral thesis adviser at Tufts University. "That's partly because he is so passionate, and partly because he is so devoted to policies that have been divisive."

Defense intelligence experts say Bruce Hardcastle, a senior Defense Intelligence Agency official for Middle Eastern affairs, began avoiding meeting with Luti after sharply disagreeing with him over the past 12 months about the imminence of the threat posed by Saddam Hussein's Iraq.

"It's very difficult to inform people who already know it all," said one Pentagon official familiar with the strained relationship between Luti and Hardcastle.

"Basically, he [Luti] didn't like other people's information if it didn't agree with his opinion," a former DIA analyst agreed.

Hardcastle declined to comment for this article.

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Overall, Luti said of his critics, they are "either confused, malicious, or both."

He added, "Policy people and intelligence analysts perform different functions, but what's important is that they work together, not that they agree on everything."

Those critical views are hardly universal. John Trigilio, a former DIA official who works with Luti on defense policy issues, described him as "a straight shooter, professional, honorable," and called the notion that he manipulated intelligence "ridiculous." Adm. William J. Fallon, who commanded Luti when Luti was skipper of the USS Guam, remembers him as an extremely competent leader who did not skew data.

"I've heard the allegation, and I've kind of chuckled at it," said Fallon, who recently became commander of the Atlantic Fleet. "I never saw anything along those lines."

Luti's 26-year Navy career was an unusual mix of sea duty and high-level Washington policy positions. After serving as a weapons officer for EA-6B Prowlers -- aircraft that jam enemy electronics -- he studied strategy and diplomacy at Tufts University. He went there for a master's degree, "but he was such a damned good student that we admitted him to the doctoral program," recalled Shultz, an authority on international politics and military operations.

In the early 1990s, while deputy director of the chief of naval operations' executive panel, a civilian advisory group, Luti became interested in the views of one member, strategy guru Albert Wohlstetter. A mentor to Deputy Defense Secretary Paul D. Wolfowitz, Defense Policy Board member Richard N. Perle and several other prominent conservative defense thinkers, Wohlstetter became Luti's entree into their world.

From there, while still in the Navy, Luti became a congressional fellow in the office of then-Speaker Gingrich. His time there, in part spent working on legislation related to arming and training Bosnian Muslims, again brought him into contact with interventionist conservatives.

"We were talking with people like Perle and Wolfowitz about doing the right thing in Bosnia," recalled Randy Schuenemann, who then was a foreign policy aide on the Hill, and later, as a lobbyist for an organization that advocated toppling Hussein, worked with Luti on Iraq issues.

Gingrich, who has stayed in touch with Luti through meetings of the Defense Policy Board, described his former employee as "very smart, very aggressive, slightly impatient, and . . . with a very deep feeling that the world is more dangerous than many of his colleagues in the Pentagon, in the services, understand."

Luti's last major Navy assignment was as captain of the USS Guam, an aging helicopter carrier with a crew of 700. "Guam was one of the oldest ships in the fleet," recalled Fallon, but Luti kept it in "marvelous condition."

When the Bush administration came into office, Luti was asked to work for Cheney on Middle East policy. A few months later, he retired from the Navy to take his current position.

He was in Cairo on Sept. 11, 2001, and, with commercial traffic stopped, got back to the United States aboard an Air Force KC-135 refueling jet. On the way home, he recalled, the plane flew over New York City, escorted by F-16 fighters, and the pilot lowered a wing so those aboard could get a full view of the smoke plume rising from the rubble of the World Trade Center.

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In Profile

Wednesday, October 22, 2003; Page A27

William J. Luti

Title: Deputy undersecretary of defense for Near Eastern and South Asian affairs.

Age: 49.

Education: Bachelor's degree in history, the Citadel; master's degree in national security and strategic studies, U.S. Naval War College; master's and doctorate in international relations, Tufts University.

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Pastime: Golf.

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Mother Jones Magazine
January/February 2004

The Lie Factory

Only weeks after 9/11, the Bush administration set up a secret Pentagon unit to create the case for invading Iraq. Here is the inside story for how they pushed disinformation and bogus intelligence and led the nation to war.

By Robert Dreyfuss and Jason Vest

It's a crisp fall day in western Virginia, a hundred miles from Washington, D.C., and a breeze is rustling the red and gold leaves of the Shenandoah hills. On the weather-beaten wood porch of a ramshackle 90-year-old farmhouse, at the end of a winding dirt-and-gravel road, Lt. Colonel Karen Kwiatkowski is perched on a plastic chair, wearing shorts, a purple sweatshirt, and muddy sneakers. Two scrawny dogs and a lone cat are on the prowl, and the air is filled with swarms

So far, she says, no investigators have come knocking. Not from the Central Intelligence Agency, which conducted an internal inquiry into intelligence on Iraq, not from the congressional intelligence committees, not from the president's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board. All of those bodies are ostensibly looking into the Bush administration's prewar Iraq intelligence, amid charges that the White House and the Pentagon exaggerated, distorted, or just plain lied about Iraq's links to Al Qaeda terrorists and its possession of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons. In her hands, Kwiatkowski holds several pieces of the puzzle. Yet she, along with a score of other career officers recently retired or shuffled off to other jobs, has not been approached by anyone.

Kwiatkowski, 43, a now-retired Air Force officer who served in the Pentagon's Near East and South Asia (NESA) unit in the year before the invasion of Iraq, observed how the Pentagon's Iraq war-planning unit manufactured scare stories about Iraq's weapons and ties to terrorists. "It wasn't intelligence-it was propaganda," she says. "They'd take a little bit of intelligence, cherry-pick it, make it sound much more exciting, usually by taking it out of context, often by juxtaposition of two pieces of information that don't belong together." It was by turning such bogus intelligence into talking points for U.S. officials-including ominous lines in speeches by President Bush and Vice President Cheney, along with Secretary of State Colin Powell's testimony at the U.N. Security Council last February-that the administration pushed American public opinion into supporting an unnecessary war.

Until now, the story of how the Bush administration produced its wildly exaggerated estimates of the threat posed by Iraq has never been revealed in full. But, for the first time, a detailed investigation by Mother Jones, based on dozens of interviews-some on the record, some with officials who insisted on anonymity-exposes the workings of a secret Pentagon intelligence unit and of the Defense Department's war-planning task force, the Office of Special Plans. It's the story of a close-knit team of ideologues who spent a decade or more hammering out plans for an attack on Iraq and who used the events of September 11, 2001, to set it into motion.

SIX MONTHS AFTER THE END of major combat in Iraq, the United States had spent \$300 million trying to find banned weapons in Iraq, and President Bush was seeking \$600 million more to extend the search. Not found were Iraq's Scuds and other long-range missiles, thousands of barrels and tons of anthrax and botulism stock, sarin and VX nerve agents, mustard gas, biological and chemical munitions, mobile labs for producing biological weapons, and any and all evidence of a reconstituted nuclear-arms program, all of which had been repeatedly cited as justification for the war. Also missing was evidence of Iraqi collaboration with Al Qaeda.

The reports, virtually all false, of Iraqi weapons and terrorism ties emanated from an apparatus that began to gestate almost as soon as the Bush administration took power. In the very first meeting of the Bush national-security team, one day after President Bush took the oath of office in January 2001, the issue of invading Iraq was raised, according to one of the participants in the meeting-and officials all the way down the line started to get the message, long before 9/11. Indeed, the Bush team at the Pentagon hadn't even been formally installed before Paul

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Wolfowitz, the deputy secretary of Defense, and Douglas J. Feith, undersecretary of Defense for policy, began putting together what would become the vanguard for regime change in Iraq.

Both Wolfowitz and Feith have deep roots in the neoconservative movement. One of the most influential Washington neoconservatives in the foreign-policy establishment during the Republicans' wilderness years of the 1990s, Wolfowitz has long held that not taking Baghdad in 1991 was a grievous mistake. He and others now prominent in the administration said so repeatedly over the past decade in a slew of letters and policy papers from neoconservative groups like the Project for the New American Century and the Committee for the Liberation of Iraq. Feith, a former aide to Richard Perle at the Pentagon in the 1980s and an activist in far-right Zionist circles, held the view that there was no difference between U.S. and Israeli security policy and that the best way to secure both countries' future was to solve the Israeli-Palestinian problem not by serving as a broker, but with the United States as a force for "regime change" in the region.

Called in to help organize the Iraq war-planning team was a longtime Pentagon official, Harold Rhode, a specialist on Islam who speaks Hebrew, Arabic, Turkish, and Farsi. Though Feith would not be officially confirmed until July 2001, career military and civilian officials in NESA began to watch his office with concern after Rhode set up shop in Feith's office in early January. Rhode, seen by many veteran staffers as an ideological gadfly, was officially assigned to the Pentagon's Office of Net Assessment, an in-house Pentagon think tank headed by fellow neocon Andrew Marshall. Rhode helped Feith lay down the law about the department's new anti-Iraq, and broadly anti-Arab, orientation. In one telling incident, Rhode accosted and harangued a visiting senior Arab diplomat, telling him that there would be no "bartering in the bazaar anymore.... You're going to have to sit up and pay attention when we say so."

Rhode refused to be interviewed for this story, saying cryptically, "Those who speak, pay."

According to insiders, Rhode worked with Feith to purge career Defense officials who weren't sufficiently enthusiastic about the muscular anti-Iraq crusade that Wolfowitz and Feith wanted. Rhode appeared to be "pulling people out of nooks and crannies of the Defense Intelligence Agency and other places to replace us with," says a former analyst. "They wanted nothing to do with the professional staff. And they wanted us the fuck out of there."

The unofficial, off-site recruitment office for Feith and Rhode was the American Enterprise Institute, a right-wing think tank whose 12th-floor conference room in Washington is named for the dean of neoconservative defense strategists, the late Albert Wohlstetter, an influential RAND analyst and University of Chicago mathematician. Headquartered at AEI is Richard Perle, Wohlstetter's prize protege, the godfather of the AEI-Defense Department nexus of neoconservatives who was chairman of the Pentagon's influential Defense Policy Board. Rhode, along with Michael Rubin, a former AEI staffer who is also now at the Pentagon, was a ubiquitous presence at AEI conferences on Iraq over the past two years, and the two Pentagon officials seemed almost to be serving as stage managers for the AEI events, often sitting in the front row and speaking in stage whispers to panelists and AEI officials. Just after September 11, 2001, Feith and Rhode recruited David Wurmser, the director of Middle East studies for AEI, to serve as a Pentagon consultant.

Wurmser would be the founding participant of the unnamed, secret intelligence unit at the Pentagon, set up in Feith's office, which would be the nucleus of the Defense Department's Iraq disinformation campaign that was established within weeks of the attacks in New York and Washington. While the CIA and other intelligence agencies concentrated on Osama bin Laden's Al Qaeda as the culprit in the 9/11 attacks, Wolfowitz and Feith obsessively focused on Iraq. It was a theory that was discredited, even ridiculed, among intelligence professionals. Daniel Benjamin, co-author of *The Age of Sacred Terror*, was director of counterterrorism at the National Security Council in the late 1990s. "In 1998, we went through every piece of intelligence we could find to see if there was a link between Al Qaeda and Iraq," he says. "We came to the conclusion that our intelligence agencies had it right: There was no noteworthy relationship between Al Qaeda and Iraq. I know that for a fact." Indeed, that was the consensus among virtually all anti-terrorism specialists.

In short, Wurmser, backed by Feith and Rhode, set out to prove what didn't exist.

IN AN ADMINISTRATION devoted to the notion of "Feith-based intelligence," Wurmser was ideal. For years, he'd been a shrill ideologue, part of the minority crusade during the 1990s that was beating the drums for war against Iraq. Along with Perle and Feith, in 1996 Wurmser and his wife, Meyrav, wrote a provocative strategy paper for Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu called "A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm." It called on Israel to work with Jordan and Turkey to "contain, destabilize and roll back" various states in the region, overthrow Saddam Hussein in Iraq, press Jordan to restore a scion of the Hashemite dynasty to the Iraqi throne, and, above all, launch military assaults against Lebanon and Syria as a "prelude to a redrawing of the map of the Middle East which would threaten Syria's territorial integrity."

In 1997, Wurmser wrote a column in the Wall Street Journal called "Iraq Needs a Revolution" and the next year co-signed a letter with Perle calling for all-out U.S. support of the Iraqi National Congress (INC), an exile group led by Ahmad Chalabi, in promoting an insurgency in Iraq. At AEI, Wurmser wrote *Tyranny's Ally: America's Failure to Defeat Saddam Hussein*, essentially a book-length version of "A Clean Break" that proposed an alliance between Jordan and the INC to redraw the map of the Middle East. Among the mentors cited by Wurmser in the book: Chalabi, Perle, and Feith.

The purpose of the unnamed intelligence unit, often described as a Pentagon "cell," was to scour reports from the CIA, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the National Security Agency, and other agencies to find nuggets of information linking Iraq, Al Qaeda, terrorism, and the existence of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction (WMD). In a controversial press briefing in October 2002, a year after Wurmser's unit was established, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld acknowledged that a primary purpose of the unit was to cull factoids, which were then used to disparage, undermine, and contradict the CIA's reporting, which was far more cautious and nuanced than Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz, and Feith wanted. Rumsfeld particularly enjoyed harassing the CIA staffer who briefed him every morning, using the type of data produced by the intelligence unit. "What I could do is say, 'Gee, what about this?'" Rumsfeld noted. "'Or what about that? Has somebody thought of this?'" Last June, when Feith was questioned on the same topic at a briefing, he acknowledged that the secret unit in fact looked at the connection between Iraq and terrorism, saying, "You can't rely on deterrence to deal with the problem of weapons of mass destruction in the hands of state sponsors of terrorism because [of] the possibility that those state sponsors might employ chemical weapons or biological weapons by means of a terrorist organization proxy...."

Though Feith, in that briefing, described Wurmser's unit as an innocent project, "a global exercise" that was not meant to put pressure on other intelligence agencies or create skewed intelligence to fit preconceived policy notions, many other sources assert that it did exactly that. That the White House and the Pentagon put enormous pressure on the CIA to go along with its version of events has been widely reported, highlighted by visits to CIA headquarters by Vice President Cheney and Lewis Libby, his chief of staff. Led by Perle, the neocons seethed with contempt for the CIA. The CIA's analysis, said Perle, "isn't worth the paper it's printed on." Standing in a crowded hallway during an AEI event, Perle added, "The CIA is status quo oriented. They don't want to take risks."

That became the mantra of the shadow agency within an agency.

Putting Wurmser in charge of the unit meant that it was being run by a pro-Iraq-war ideologue who'd spent years calling for a pre-emptive invasion of Baghdad and who was clearly predisposed to find what he wanted to see. Adding another layer of dubious quality to the endeavor was the man partnered with Wurmser, F. Michael Maloof. Maloof, a former aide to Perle in the 1980s Pentagon, was twice stripped of his high-level security clearances—once in late 2001 and again last spring, for various infractions. Maloof was also reportedly involved in a bizarre scheme to broker contacts between Iraqi officials and the Pentagon, channeled through Perle, in what one report called a "rogue [intelligence] operation" outside official CIA and Defense Intelligence Agency channels.

As the momentum for war began to build in early 2002, Wolfowitz and Feith beefed up the intelligence unit and created an Iraq war-planning unit in the Pentagon's Near East and South Asia Affairs section, run by Deputy Undersecretary of Defense William Luti, under the rubric "Office of Special Plans," or OSP; the new unit's director was Abram N. Shulsky. By then, Wurmser had moved on to a post as senior adviser to Undersecretary of State John Bolton, yet another neocon, who was in charge of the State Department's disarmament, proliferation, and WMD office and was promoting the Iraq war strategy there. Shulsky's OSP, which incorporated the secret intelligence unit, took control, banishing veteran experts-including Joseph McMillan, James Russell, Larry Hanauer, and Marybeth McDevitt-who, despite years of service to NESAs, either were shuffled off to other positions or retired. For the next year, Luti and Shulsky not only would oversee war plans but would act aggressively to shape the intelligence product received by the White House.

Both Luti and Shulsky were neoconservatives who were ideological soulmates of Wolfowitz and Feith. But Luti was more than that. He'd come to the Pentagon directly from the office of Vice President Cheney. That gave Luti, a recently retired, decorated Navy captain whose career ran from combat aviation to command of a helicopter assault ship, extra clout. Along with his colleague Colonel William Bruner, Luti had done a stint as an aide to Newt Gingrich in 1996 and, like Perle and Wolfowitz, was an acolyte of Wohlstetter's. "He makes Ollie North look like a moderate," says a NESAs veteran.

Shulsky had been on the Washington scene since the mid-1970s. As a Senate intelligence committee staffer for Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, he began to work with early neoconservatives like Perle, who was then an aide to Senator Henry Jackson. Later, in the Reagan years, Shulsky followed Perle to the Pentagon as Perle's arms-control adviser. In the '90s, Shulsky co-authored a book on intelligence called *Silent Warfare*, with Gary Schmitt. Shulsky had served with Schmitt on Moynihan's staff and they had remained friends. Asked about the Pentagon's Iraq intelligence "cell," Schmitt-who is currently the executive director of the Project for the New American Century-says that he can't say much about it "because one of my best friends is running it."

According to Lt. Colonel Kwiatkowski, Luti and Shulsky ran NESAs and the Office of Special Plans with brutal efficiency, purging people they disagreed with and enforcing the party line. "It was organized like a machine," she says. "The people working on the neocon agenda had a narrow, well-defined political agenda. They had a sense of mission." At NESAs, she says, began "hot-desking," or taking an office wherever he could find one, working with Feith and Luti, before formally taking the reins of the newly created OSP. Together, she says, Luti and Shulsky turned cherry-picked pieces of uncorroborated, anti-Iraq intelligence into talking points, on issues like Iraq's WMD and its links to Al Qaeda. Shulsky constantly updated these papers, drawing on the intelligence unit, and circulated them to Pentagon officials, including Rumsfeld, and to Vice President Cheney. "Of course, we never thought they'd go directly to the White House," she adds.

Kwiatkowski recalls one meeting in which Luti, pressed to finish a report, told the staff, "I've got to get this over to 'Scooter' right away." She later found out that "Scooter" was none other than Lewis "Scooter" Libby, Vice President Cheney's chief of staff. According to Kwiatkowski, Cheney had direct ties through Luti into NESAs/OSP, a connection that was highly unorthodox.

"Never, ever, ever would a deputy undersecretary of Defense work directly on a project for the vice president," she says. "It was a little clue that we had an informal network into Vice President Cheney's office."

Although Feith insists that the OSP did not seek to gather its own intelligence, Kwiatkowski and others sharply disagree. Staff working for Luti and Shulsky in NESAs/OSP churned out propaganda-style intelligence, she says. As an example, she cited the work of a U.S. intelligence officer and Arabic specialist, Navy Lt. Commander Youssef Aboul-Enein, who was a special assistant to Luti. "His job was to peruse the Arabic-language media to find articles that would incriminate Saddam Hussein about terrorism, and he translated these." Such raw intelligence is usually subject to a thorough vetting process, tracked, verified, and checked by intelligence

professionals. But not at OSP-the material that it produced found its way directly into speeches by Bush, Cheney, and other officials.

According to Melvin Goodman, a former CIA official and an intelligence specialist at the National War College, the OSP officials routinely pushed lower-ranking staff around on intelligence matters. "People were being pulled aside [and being told], 'We saw your last piece and it's not what we're looking for,'" he says. "It was pretty blatant." Two State Department intelligence officials, Greg Thielmann and Christian Westermann, have both charged that pressure was being put on them to shape intelligence to fit policy, in particular from Bolton's office. "The Al Qaeda connection and nuclear weapons issue were the only two ways that you could link Iraq to an imminent security threat to the U.S.," Thielmann told the New York Times. "And the administration was grossly distorting the intelligence on both things."

BESIDES CHENEY, key members of the Pentagon's Defense Policy Board, including Perle and ex-House Speaker Newt Gingrich, all Iraq hawks, had direct input into NESAVOSP. The offices of NESAVOSP were located on the Pentagon's fourth floor, seventh corridor of D Ring, and the Policy Board's offices were directly below, on the third floor. During the run-up to the Iraq war, Gingrich often came up for closed-door meetings with Luti, who in 1996 had served as a congressional fellow in Speaker of the House Gingrich's office.

As OSP got rolling, Luti brought in Colonel Bruner, a former military aide to Gingrich, and, together, Luti and Bruner opened the door to a vast flow of bogus intelligence fed to the Pentagon by Iraqi defectors associated with Chalabi's Iraqi National Congress group of exiles. Chalabi founded the Iraqi National Congress in 1992, with the help of a shadowy CIA-connected public-relations firm called the Rendon Group, one of whose former employees, Francis Brooke, has been a top aide to Chalabi ever since. A scion of an aristocratic Iraqi family, Chalabi fled Baghdad at the age of 13, in 1958, when the corrupt Iraqi Hashemite monarchy was overthrown by a coalition of communists and the Iraqi military. In the late 1960s, Chalabi studied mathematics at the University of Chicago with Wohlstetter, who introduced him to Richard Perle more than a decade later. Long associated with the heart of the neoconservative movement, Chalabi founded Petra Bank in Jordan, which grew to be Jordan's third-largest bank by the 1980s. But Chalabi was accused of bank fraud, embezzlement, and currency manipulation, and he barely escaped before Jordanian authorities could arrest him; in 1992, he was convicted and sentenced in absentia to more than 20 years of hard labor. After founding the INC, Chalabi's bungling, unreliability, and penchant for mismanaging funds caused the CIA to sour on him, but he never lost the support of Perle, Feith, Gingrich, and their allies; once, soon after 9/11, Perle invited Chalabi to address the Defense Policy Board.

According to multiple sources, Chalabi's Iraqi National Congress sent a steady stream of misleading and often faked intelligence reports into U.S. intelligence channels. That information would flow sometimes into NESAVOSP directly, sometimes through Defense Intelligence Agency debriefings of Iraqi defectors via the Defense Human Intelligence Service, and sometimes through the INC's own U.S.-funded Intelligence Collection Program, which was overseen by the Pentagon. The INC's intelligence "isn't reliable at all," according to Vincent Cannistraro, a former CIA chief of counterterrorism.

"Much of it is propaganda. Much of it is telling the Defense Department what they want to hear, using alleged informants and defectors who say what Chalabi wants them to say, [creating] cooked information that goes right into presidential and vice presidential speeches."

Bruner, the aide to Luti and Gingrich's former staffer, "was Chalabi's handler," says Kwiatkowski. "He would arrange meetings with Chalabi and Chalabi's folks," she says, adding that the INC leader often brought people into the NESAVOSP offices for debriefings. Chalabi claims to have introduced only three actual defectors to the Pentagon, a figure Thielmann considers "awfully low." However, according to an investigation by the Los Angeles Times, the three defectors provided by Chalabi turned up exactly zero useful intelligence. The first, an Iraqi engineer, claimed to have specific information about biological weapons, but his information didn't pan out; the second claimed to know about mobile labs, but that information, too, was worthless; and the third, who claimed to have data about Iraq's nuclear program, proved to be a fraud. Chalabi also

claimed to have given the Pentagon information about Iraqi support for Al Qaeda. "We gave the names of people who were doing the links," he told an interviewer from PBS'S Frontline. Those links, of course, have not been discovered. Thielmann told the same Frontline interviewer that the Office of Special Plans didn't apply strict intelligence-verification standards to "some of the information coming out of Chalabi and the INC that OSP and the Pentagon ran with."

In the war's aftermath, the Defense Intelligence Agency-which is not beholden to the neoconservative civilians at the Pentagon-leaked a report it prepared, concluding that few, if any, of the INC's informants provided worthwhile intelligence.

SO FAR, DESPITE ALL of the investigations underway, there is little sign that any of them are going to delve into the operations of the Luti-Shulsky Office of Special Plans and its secret intelligence unit. Because it operates in the Pentagon's policy shop, it is not officially part of the intelligence community, and so it is seemingly immune to congressional oversight.

With each passing day, it is becoming excruciatingly clearer just how wrong U.S. intelligence was in regard to Iraqi weapons and support for terrorism. The American teams of inspectors in the Iraq Survey Group, which has employed up to 1,400 people to scour the country and analyze the findings, have not been able to find a shred of evidence of anything other than dusty old plans and records of weapons apparently destroyed more than a decade ago. Countless examples of fruitless searches have been reported in the media. To cite one example: U.S. soldiers followed an intelligence report claiming that a complex built for Uday Hussein, Saddam's son, hid a weapons warehouse with poison-gas storage tanks. "Well," U.S. Army Major Ronald Hann Jr. told the Los Angeles Times, "the warehouse was a carport. It still had two cars inside. And the tanks had propane for the kitchen."

Countless other errors and exaggerations have become evident. The thousands of aluminum tubes supposedly imported by Iraq for uranium enrichment were fairly conclusively found to be designed to build noncontroversial rockets. The long-range unmanned aerial vehicles, allegedly built to deliver bioweapons, were small, rickety, experimental planes with wood frames. The mobile bioweapon labs turned out to have had other, civilian purposes. And the granddaddy of all falsehoods, the charge that Iraq sought uranium in the West African country of Niger, was based on forged documents-documents that the CIA, the State Department, and other agencies knew were fake nearly a year before President Bush highlighted the issue in his State of the Union address in January 2003.

"Either the system broke down," former Ambassador Joseph Wilson, who was sent by the CIA to visit Niger and whose findings helped show that the documents were forged, told Mother Jones, "or there was selective use of bits of information to justify a decision to go to war that had already been taken."

Edward Luttwak, a neoconservative scholar and author, says flatly that the Bush administration lied about the intelligence it had because it was afraid to go to the American people and say that the war was simply about getting rid of Saddam Hussein. Instead, says Luttwak, the White House was groping for a rationale to satisfy the United Nations' criteria for war. "Cheney was forced into this fake posture of worrying about weapons of mass destruction," he says. "The ties to Al Qaeda? That's complete nonsense."

In the Senate, Senator Jay Rockefeller (D-W.Va.) is pressing for the Intelligence Committee to extend its investigation to look into the specific role of the Pentagon's Office of Special Plans, but there is strong Republican resistance to the idea.

In the House, Rep. Henry Waxman (D-Calif.) has introduced legislation calling for a commission to investigate the intelligence mess and has collected more than a hundred Democrats-but no Republicans-in support of it. "I think they need to be looked at pretty carefully," Waxman told Mother Jones when asked about the Office of Special Plans. "I'd like to know whether the political people pushed the intelligence people to slant their conclusions."

Congressman Waxman, meet Lt. Colonel Kwiatkowski.

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HEADLINE: Pressure Builds for President to Declare Strategy on Iran

BYLINE: Michael Dobbs, Washington Post Staff Writer

BODY:

Soon after George W. Bush took office in January 2001, his advisers began drafting a strategy for dealing with Iran, a radical Islamic state long suspected by Washington of supporting international terrorism and pursuing weapons of mass destruction.

More than two years later, the national security presidential directive on Iran has gone through several competing drafts and has yet to be approved by Bush's senior advisers, according to well-placed sources. In the meantime, experts in and outside the government are focusing on Iran as the United States' next big foreign policy crisis, with some predicting that the country could acquire a nuclear weapon as early as 2006.

Critics on the left and the right point to the unfinished directive as evidence the administration lacks a coherent strategy toward a country Bush described as a key member of the "axis of evil," along with North Korea and Saddam Hussein's Iraq.

"Our policy toward Iran is neither fish nor fowl, neither engagement nor regime change," said Flynt L. Leverett, a Bush adviser on the Middle East who left the National Security Council staff in March and is now with the Brookings Institution.

The Bush administration has yet to formulate a true Iran policy, agreed Michael A. Ledeen, a Middle East expert with the American Enterprise Institute. With other neoconservative intellectuals, Ledeen has founded the Coalition for Democracy in Iran, which is looking for ways to foment a democratic revolution to sweep away the mullahs who came to power in 1979.

Senior administration officials refused to talk about the status of the Bush policy directive on Iran, on the grounds that it is classified, but they say they have had some success in mobilizing international opinion against Iran's nuclear weapons program. As evidence, they cite recent threats by Russia to cut off nuclear assistance to Tehran and moves by the International Atomic Energy Agency to censure Iran for failing to report the processing of nuclear materials.

While the officials have stopped short of embracing a policy of "regime change" in Iran, U.S. officials from Bush down have talked about providing moral support to the "reform movement" in Iran in its struggle against an unelected government. As defined by Secretary of State Colin L. Powell, the U.S. goal is to speak directly to the Iranian people "over the heads of their leaders to let them know that we agree with them."

The internal and external debate about what to do about Iran has been brought to a head by recent revelations suggesting the Iranian nuclear weapons program is much further along than many suspected. Tomorrow, the IAEA Board of Governors in Vienna is to discuss findings showing that Iran has a wide range of options for producing fissile material for a nuclear bomb, from using heavy water reactors to produce plutonium to experiments in uranium enrichment.

U.S. officials have also accused Iran of harboring members of the al Qaeda terrorist network who escaped from Afghanistan after the fall of the Taliban in December 2001. They say some al Qaeda supporters hiding in Iran appear to have known in advance about recent terrorist attacks in Saudi Arabia, although there is no direct evidence of operational ties between the Iranian government and al Qaeda.

The escalating Iranian nuclear threat and suspicions of Iranian ties to terrorists have sharpened long-standing divisions in the administration over how to deal with Tehran. In the past, the State Department has put the emphasis on opening a dialogue with reformist elements in the Iranian leadership while the Pentagon has been more interested in looking for ways to destabilize the authoritarian Islamic government.

Bureaucratic tensions have reached the level where each side has begun accusing the other of leaking unfavorable stories to the media to block policy initiatives. "The knives are out," said a Pentagon official, who criticized national security adviser Condoleezza Rice for failing to end the dispute by issuing clear policy guidelines.

Powell, meanwhile, insisted to journalists that there has been no change in policy on Iran, despite what he depicted as frenzied media speculation "about what this person in that department might think or that person in another department might think."

The Iran debate goes back to a failed attempt by the Clinton administration to open an "unconditional dialogue" with Tehran. Even though the Iranians rejected the U.S. offer of unconditional talks, some Bush administration officials led by the State Department's director for policy planning, Richard N. Haass, favored making renewed overtures.

The proposals for a dialogue with Iran were partly inspired by the 1994 framework agreement with North Korea under which the North Korean government agreed to accept international controls over its nuclear program in return for economic assistance, including the construction of a civilian nuclear reactor. But the State Department approach ran into strong opposition from the Pentagon and Vice President Cheney's office, and was shot down in interagency meetings at the end of 2001.

While there would be no "grand bargain" with the Iranian leadership, the Bush administration agreed to a more limited diplomatic dialogue, focusing on specific areas such as the war in Afghanistan or cooperation over Iraq. Several rounds of such talks took place in Geneva and Paris, with the involvement of a special presidential envoy, Zalmay Khalilzad, but were suspended after the bombings in Saudi Arabia on May 12.

The administration debate has been echoed by a much more public debate among Middle East analysts, nuclear proliferation experts, and leaders of the Iranian diaspora. Congress has also weighed in with legislation sponsored by Sen. Sam Brownback (R-Kan.) that would funnel more than \$ 50 million to Iranian pro-democracy initiatives, including private California-based satellite television and radio stations set up by Iranian exiles.

"We are not calling for a military attack on Iran," said Brownback, whose proposed Iran Democracy Act has drawn bipartisan support but is opposed by the leadership of the Foreign Relations Committee. The goal, he said, is to support Iranian democracy activists, including students who took to the streets of Tehran again last week to protest the closure of opposition newspaper and the jailing of dissidents.

Just how far the United States should go in supporting the protests is the subject of heated argument inside and outside the government, even among conservatives. Some argue Iran is ripe for revolution. Others contend there is little guarantee of radical change in Tehran in the three-year period some independent proliferation experts estimate it will take before Iran could acquire nuclear weapons, and the United States should be thinking about other options, including preemptive action against suspected nuclear sites.

"The internal democratic forces in Iran are real and growing, but they're not going to save us from having to think about what we are going to do about the Iranian nuclear program and support for terrorism," said Reuel Marc Gerecht, a CIA case officer for Iran now with the American Enterprise Institute.

Some analysts say that U.S. financial and propaganda support for the Iranian democracy movement could be counterproductive. "It allows the hardliners to argue that there is an external threat, and they must crack down in the name of national unity," said Kaveh Ehsani, an editor of the pro-reform journal Dialogue in Iran, now visiting the United States. "There is a kind of an unholy alliance between the Bush administration and the Iranian hardliners."

"We have tried appeasement, we have tried containment, and we have tried engagement," countered S. Rob Sobhani, a co-founder of the Coalition for Democracy in Iran and adjunct professor of government at Georgetown University. "All these policies have failed. What have we got to lose by empowerment?"

The White House has avoided taking a position on the Brownback legislation and has restricted its encouragement of democracy in Iran to verbal broadsides against the mullahs. In comments Thursday, Rice described Iran's pursuit of weapons of mass destruction as "not acceptable" and said that the United States "cannot tolerate circumstances in which al Qaeda operatives come in and out of Iran." She also accused Iran of stirring up trouble among Shiite communities in southern Iraq.

"We have to stand with the aspirations of the Iranian people which have been clearly expressed," she told a meeting in Los Angeles, as thousands of Iranians took to the streets of Tehran in anti-government protests.

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Pentagon Shadow Loses Some Mystique

Feith's Shops Did Not Usurp Intelligence Agencies on Iraq, Hill Probers Find

By DANA PEREST
Washington Post Staff Writer

In February 2002, Christina Shelton, a career Defense Intelligence Agency analyst, was combing through old intelligence on Iraq when she stumbled upon a small paragraph in a CIA report from the mid-1990s that stopped her.

It recounted a contact between some Iraqis and al Qaeda that she had not seen mentioned in current CIA analysis, according to three defense officials who work with her. She spent the next couple of months slogging through 12 years of intelligence reports on Iraq and produced a briefing on alleged contacts Shelton felt had been overlooked or underplayed by the CIA.

Her boss, Douglas J. Feith, undersecretary of defense for policy and the point man on Iraq, was so impressed that he set up a briefing for Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld, who was so impressed he asked her to brief CIA Director George J. Tenet in August 2002. By summer's end, Shelton had also briefed deputy national security adviser Stephen J. Hadley and Vice President Cheney's chief of staff, Lewis "Scooter" Libby.

Shelton's analysis, and the White House briefings that resulted, are new details about a small group of Pentagon analysts whose work has cast a large shadow of suspicion and controversy as Congress investigates how the administration used intelligence before the Iraq war.

Congressional Democrats contend that two Pentagon shops—the Office of Special Plans and the Policy Counterterrorism Evaluation Group—were established by Rumsfeld, Feith and other defense hawks

expressly to bypass the CIA and other intelligence agencies. They argue that the offices supplied the administration with information, most of it discredited by the regular intelligence community, that President Bush, Cheney and others used to exaggerate the Iraqi threat.

But interviews with senior defense officials, White House and CIA officials, congressional sources and others yield a different portrait of the work done by the two Pentagon offices.

Neither the House nor Senate intelligence committees, for example, which have been investigating prewar intelligence for eight months, have found support for allegations that Pentagon analysts went out and collected their own intelligence, congressional officials from both parties say. Nor have investigators found that the Pentagon analysis about Iraq significantly shaped the case the administration made for going to war.

At the same time, the Pentagon operation was created, at least in part, to provide a more hard-line alternative to the official intelligence, according to interviews with cur-

rent and former defense and intelligence officials. The two offices, overseen by Feith, concluded that Saddam Hussein's Iraq and al Qaeda were much more closely and conclusively linked than the intelligence community believed.

In this sense, the offices functioned as a pale version of the secret "Team B" analysis done by administration conservatives in the mid-1970s, who concluded the intelligence community was underplaying the Soviet military threat. Rumsfeld, in particular, has a history of skepticism about the intelligence community's analysis, including assessments of the former Soviet Union's military ability and of threats posed by ballistic missiles from North Korea and other countries.

Rumsfeld's known views—and his insistence before the war that overthrowing Hussein was part of the war on terrorism—only enhanced suspicion about the aims and role played by Feith's offices.

Sen. Carl M. Levin (D-Mich.), a member of the intelligence panel, charged that Feith's work "reportedly involved the review, analysis and promulgation of intelligence outside of the U.S. intelligence community."

Levin pressed Tenet on Tuesday before the Senate Armed Services Committee: "Is it standard operating procedure for an intelligence analysis such as that to be presented at the NSC [National Security Council] and the office of the vice president without you being part of the presentation? Is that typical?"

"My experience is that people come in and may present those kinds of briefings on their views of intelligence," responded Tenet, who said he had not known about the briefings at the time. "But I have to tell you, senator, I'm the president's chief intelligence officer; I have the definitive view about these subjects. From my perspective, it is my view that prevails."

Hussein's Role

Feith, who worked on the NSC staff in the Reagan administration, is a well-known conservative voice on Israel policy who once urged the Israeli prime minister to repudiate

the Oslo peace accords. His views are a source of tension between him and foreign policy officials at the State Department and elsewhere who advocate concessions be made by Palestinians and Israel to achieve a peace settlement.

No sooner had Bush announced that the United States was at war on terrorism than it became Feith's job to come up with a strategy for executing such a war.

"We said to ourselves, 'We are at war with an international terrorist network that includes organizations, state supporters and non-state supporters. What does that mean to be at war with a network?'" Feith said in an interview.

But Feith felt he needed to bring on help in the Pentagon for another reason, too, said four other senior

current and former Pentagon civilians: the belief that the CIA and other intelligence agencies dangerously undervalued threats to U.S. interests.

"The strategic thinking was the Middle East is going down the tubes. It's getting worse, not better," said one former senior Pentagon official who worked closely with Feith's offices. "I don't think we thought there was objective evidence that could be got from CIA, DIA,

INR," he added, referring to the Defense Intelligence Agency, the Pentagon's main intelligence office, and the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research.

Feith's office worked not only on "how to fight Saddam Hussein but also how to fight the NSC, the State Department and the intelligence community," which were not convinced of Hussein's involvement in terrorism, said the official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

Feith set up the first of his two shops, the Policy Counterterrorism Evaluation Group, to "study al Qaeda worldwide suppliers, chokepoints, vulnerabilities and recommend strategies for rendering terrorist networks ineffective," according to a January 2002 document sent to DIA.

The group never grew larger than two people, said Feith and William J. Lutz, who was director of the Office of Special Plans and deputy undersecretary of defense for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs.



Douglas J. Feith wanted a more hard-line alternative.

The evaluation group's largest project was what one participant called a "sociometric diagram" of links between terrorist organizations and their supporters around the world, mostly focused on al Qaeda, the Islamic Resistance Movement (or Hamas), Hezbollah and Islamic Jihad. It was meant to challenge the "conventional wisdom," said one senior defense official, that terrorist groups did not work together.

It looked "like a college term paper," said one senior Pentagon official who saw the analysis: It was hundreds of connecting lines and dots footnoted with binders filled with signals, intelligence, human source reporting and even third-hand intelligence accounts of personal meetings between terrorists.

One of its key and most controversial findings was that there was a connection between secular states and fundamentalist Islamic terrorist groups such as al Qaeda.

If anything, the analysis reinforced the view of top Pentagon officials, including Rumsfeld, Deputy Secretary Paul N. Wolfowitz and Feith, that Hussein's Iraq had worrisome contacts with al Qaeda over the last decade that could only be expected to grow.

The evaluation group's other job was to read through the huge, daily stream of intelligence reporting on terrorism and "highlight things of interest to Feith," said one official involved in the process. "We were looking for connections" between terrorist groups.

From time to time, senior defense officials called bits of intelligence to the attention of the White House, they said.

Feith said the worldwide threat study itself never left the Pentagon. It helped inform the military strategy on the war on terrorism, but it was only one small input into that process, he said.

Mainly, the work of the evaluation group, Lutz said, went into the corporate memory.

'Very Helpful'

In the summer of 2002, Shelton, who had been working virtually on her own, was joined by Christopher Carney, a naval reservist and associate professor of political science at the University of Pennsylvania. Together they completed their study on the links between al Qaeda and

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Tagon Shadow Loses Some Mystique

Shops Did Not Usurp Intelligence Agencies on Iraq, Hill Probers Find

It was a familiar debate and by now, it is a foregone conclusion. The two offices, the Central Intelligence Agency and the State Department, have long had a tense relationship. The CIA is the agency that provides intelligence on Iraq and other countries, while the State Department is the agency that handles diplomatic relations with those countries. In this case, the offices have clashed over the issue of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction (WMD). The CIA has reported that Iraq has WMD, while the State Department has denied it. The CIA's report was based on intelligence gathered by its agents in Iraq, while the State Department's denial was based on intelligence gathered by its agents in Iraq. The CIA's report was based on intelligence gathered by its agents in Iraq, while the State Department's denial was based on intelligence gathered by its agents in Iraq.



Sen. Carl Levin (D-Mich.)

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