WORLD WARRING 1990–2014

The Middle Eastern Theater

I believe that [the revolt of the passengers on the hijacked Flight 93 on September 11, 2001] was the first counterattack in World War III. (President George W. Bush, 2006, in Chossudovsky 2007)

We're in the early stages of what I would describe as the Third World War and, frankly, our bureaucracies are not responding fast enough and we don't have the right attitude. (Speaker of the House of Representatives Newt Gingrich, 2006, in Chossudovsky 2007)

By 2014 American global warring had raged in five theaters: the Middle East, Central Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Pacific. So it could be said that no matter where you lived on the earth, war was coming to a theater near you—except in the US (where they watched it on their TVs), thanks to the assistance of US Security Elites 3.0. Some, like Bush II and former Congressman Newt Gingrich, quoted above, thought global warring had escalated to become an actual World War III. This, as will be shown, is plausible; but it was a world war distinct from any other.[1]

The last chapter argued that Security Elites 3.0 fixated upon global warring to control oil and to eliminate terror. The work of this chapter and the next is to investigate how the security elites actually went about doing this. It does so using evidence from the sixteen global wars between 1991 and 2014 to discover whether the New American Empire exercised violent force through application of the oil-control and anti-terrorist public *délires*. Inquiry proceeds by first examining the particularities of each theater. Then it documents the specific global wars in a theater and establishes the relevance of the oil-control and anti-terrorist public *délires* to each conflict. The powers created by the wars are considered, especially to learn whether the Security Elites 3.0 got what they *délired* when they warred.

Did they fix the vulnerabilities provoked by the storm of contradictions? This chapter investigates global warring in the Middle Eastern theater. The next chapter considers it in the other theaters. The final discussion in the next chapter concerns whether the evidence of chapters 8, 9, and 10 is consistent with the global warring theory.

The Middle Eastern Theater

> [There] is a memo [at the Pentagon] that describes how we're going to take out seven countries in five years, starting with Iraq, and then Syria, Lebanon, Libya, Somalia, Sudan and, finishing off, Iran. (NATO Supreme Allied Commander General Wesley Clark 2007)

> She weeps while telling the story. The abaya (tunic) she wears cannot hide the shaking of her body as waves of grief roll through her. "I cannot get the image out of my mind of her foetus being blown out of her body." (A memory of Muna Salim, in Jamail 2004)

Muna Salim's sister, Artica, was seven months pregnant when two rockets from US warplanes struck her austere home in Falluja. Boom! Splat! The New American Empire was in the business of blasting unborn children out of their mother's bodies. On 2 March 2007 General Wesley Clark, speaking at the civic-minded Commonwealth Club of California, let the cat out of the memorandum bag. Actually, he let out the *cats*—seven Middle Eastern countries that the Pentagon planned to "take over." Of course, nobody takes over a region without a fight. The years since the 1990s have witnessed a veritable War for the Middle East, with imperial storm troopers fighting over six of the seven countries Clark mentioned as targets. And the thing of it is, knowledgeable folk knew the Middle East to be a "dangerous neighborhood."

First, there was the problem of the military satrapies that were supposed to defend US Middle Eastern interests—the twin towers of Iran and Saudi Arabia. Since the fall of the shah, Iran has viewed the US as the "Great Satan," an interpretation only strengthened by the US's tilt toward Iraq in the Iran-Iraq War of the 1980s and especially by its use of "Robocruiser" to shoot down a civilian Iranian airliner. After 1979, Iran was an enemy of the US.

Saudi Arabia was still an ally, but one with an "uncertain future" (T. Lippman 2012). The country was governed as an absolute monarchy by the Saud royal family. Their governance exhibited a political bipolarity: on the one hand, provision of generous benefits to citizens deemed loyal; on the other, repression of opponents (Alrabaa 2010). Absolute monarchy invites rebellion. King Faisal was assassinated in 1975 by a nephew. In 1979

rebels seized the Holy Sanctuary in Mecca, citing the corruption of the House of Saud. In 1992 a group of 107 Wahhabi clerics sent King Fahd a "Memorandum of Understanding" criticizing his government for corruption and human rights abuses, as well as for allowing infidel soldiers (those of the US military) into the kingdom. Since the early nineteenth century the House of Saud had allied with the Wahhabis, a fundamentalist Sunni Islamic sect.[2] Criticism by revered religious figures was a blow to regime legitimacy.

Additionally, there had been problems in the country's East for a considerable period (Zambelis 2012). The area produces about 90 percent of Saudi oil, little of whose value returns to the region, and its inhabitants are Shiite Muslims. Wahhabis condemn Shiites as infidels. So the House of Saud had oppressed people in the East for both their religious beliefs and their grumbling about not receiving a fair share of the oil revenues. In response, Easterners had organized different nonviolent and violent resistances to their oppressors. Given such developments, knowledgeable US security elites worried about the House of Saud's durability. Thus, one twin tower had collapsed by the 1990s and the other was "uncertain."

As described earlier, the Reagan administration had sought to replace Iran with Iraq as a new tower of support for US imperial projects, knowing full well that Saddam Hussein was something of a "monster." Iraq had come out of the Iran-Iraq war in financial distress. Wars are expensive. Iraq had borrowed a lot, and owed roughly $60 billion, a debt it found difficult to service because oil prices had declined during the 1980s. Iraq, then, was a monster-satrapy, frustrated by financial exigencies.

Then there was the Israel-Palestine conflict, which began in the late 1940s with Israelis violently cleansing Palestinians from their homes, making them stateless in their own land.[3] US elites had long championed Israel. By 1990 Israel had used US support to create the most powerful military in the Middle East, which it exercised to defend its occupation of Palestinian lands and its external security concerns, as well as those of the US. Palestinians were dismayed that Israeli security forces routinely used American arms to crush their resistance.

Israeli repression of Palestinians made the Holy Land a birthing ground for resistance terror organizations opposing both Israel and its American friend. The grandparent of these was the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), founded in 1964. Associated with the PLO are Fatah, its military arm; the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP); Al Saiqa; and Tanzim. Independent of the PLO but still anti-Israeli are Islamic Jihad, the Palestine Liberation Front, Abu Nidal, Hamas, and Hezbollah. Israeli oppression motivated Osama bin Laden—the iconic terror entrepreneur and Arsenal football club supporter—to create al-Qaeda in the late 1980s

(Scheuer 2007). These organizations, as we have seen, swarmed to attack US imperial targets.

In support of its Middle Eastern vital interests, the US Leviathan forged an alliance with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), an association of six petroleum-wealthy Persian Gulf monarchies (Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Oman, Kuwait, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates) that was founded in 1981. These were authoritarian monarchies threatened by a series of popular demonstrations that began in 2010 in North Africa—first in Tunisia, next in Egypt—and seemed to target authoritarian governments such as those in the GCC. The demonstrations began peacefully, tended to quickly turn violent, and were termed the "Arab Spring." Springtime in the Middle East seemed in part to be a response to neoliberal policies that had impoverished the working and middle classes; in part a claim by Islamists for more Islamic forms of authority; and in part a demand by secularists for liberal democratic governance. [4] By 2014, the Middle Eastern springtime had been followed by a reactionary winter, especially in Egypt, where a repressive military dictatorship threatened. The implications for the New American Empire were ambiguous—hostility to neoliberalism was worrisome, as was the possibility of Islamic states. So by the end of the first decade of the new millennium, the Middle East seethed with violent movements to make and remake the region's forms of governance.

Without question, by 1990 Vulcans and Hawks fixated, as the title of Daniel Yergin's book put it, on "The Prize" (1993, Middle Eastern oil. But they equally saw enemies in Iran and its allies as well as in terrorists; plus a dubious client in Saddam Hussein's Iraq and a wobbly one in Saudi Arabia. By 2010 different countries were bothered by the Arab Spring's attempts to remake the political map of the whole region, with ambiguous implications for the American imperial project. Hence, the Middle East in the last decade of the twentieth century and the first of the twenty-first century was a rough neighborhood, getting rougher.

Nonetheless, it was a neighborhood where the Security Elites 3.0 had made preparations by building up CENTCOM during the Iran-Iraq War. Since 1990, eyes on the prize in this rough neighborhood, they have waged six global wars in Iraq, Iran, Libya, Syria, Yemen, and Israel. These are considered next, taking first the case of Iraq, where the phrase "cut and run" will assume especial significance.

The Iraq War, 1991–2011: Cutting and Running "Responsibly"

This is an assault on humanity. (Khalid Salman, lawyer for the victims of the Haditha Massacre, in AFP 2012)

In English slang the phrase "cut and run" means to run away from some‐
thing. It has been suggested that it has a nautical derivation, referring to
ships making a fast departure by cutting the anchor rope and running be‐
fore the wind. In contemporary usage it often has a scornful connotation.
To cut and run is to lose one's nerve and stop something too quickly. In
order to appreciate the significance of this phrase for American global war‐
ring in Iraq, attention turns to Anbar Province, a huge desert region to the
west of Baghdad.

Haditha is a small city about 150 kilometers northwest of Falluja, where
Artica died. After the US invasion in 2003 it became a center of resistance to
US occupation. On 19 November 2005 a detachment of patrolling US ma‐
rines—"frontline bullet chewers" (Bellavia 2007: 3)—massacred twenty-
four of Haditha's citizens. The soldiers involved in the incident were inves‐
tigated by US authorities. Only one was ever charged. He received a slap
on the hand. On hearing of the result of these legal proceedings, the lawyer
for the victims judged it "an assault on humanity." Indeed, many through‐
out the world go further and assess the New American Empire's twenty
years of warring against Iraq from 1991 to 2011 as a crime against humanity.
The narrative that follows first discusses the actual warring against Iraq,
showing how the US ended its "assault on humanity" by cutting and run‐
ning. Then, it argues that the hostilities followed from the interpretations
the Security Elites 3.0 made of events in light of the oil-control and the
anti-terrorism public *délires.*

Before we proceed, one point needs to be clear. Iraq has oil, perhaps
more of it than all but one other country in the world (Saudi Arabia).
Conservatively, it has 112 billion proven barrels of reserves, 10.7 percent
of the world's total (Klare 2004: 19). The exact size of Iraq's oil reserves is
unclear. Some estimates suggest there may be more than 300 billion barrels
(Luft 2003), which would mean Iraq has even more oil than Saudi Arabia.
Additionally, this oil is relatively close to the surface and hence easy and
less costly to extract.

US Global Warring against Iraq prior to 1991

In Arabic the name Saddam means means "one who confronts." The man is
a metonym for the country, because since the 1970s the history of indepen‐
dent Iraq has been one of confrontation—often violent—with US imperi‐
alism. Between 1972 and 1991 there were three—secret, but nevertheless
real—bouts of global warring against Iraq. Saddam had begun his political
rise in the 1960s with conflicting commitments to Iraqi nationalism, so‐
cialism, and pan-Arabism on the one hand, and to the US and the CIA
on the other (Coughlin 2005). At the age of twenty he joined the Baath

Party. In the early 1960s Iraq was governed by a left-leaning regime headed by Abdel Karim Qasim. At this time the Iraqi Petroleum Company (IPC), a consortium of British and American oil companies, controlled Iraq's oil. Under Qassim's guidance, a policy of oil nationalization began. Public Law #80 was passed, stripping the IPC of 99.5 percent of its ownership rights.

This was unacceptable to President John F. Kennedy, who in 1963 authorized CIA support for a successful Baathist coup against Qassim. JFK's authorization of CIA participation in the coup was essentially a reiteration of Eisenhower's earlier coup against Mossadeq in Iran, both coups being over control of oil. Saddam probably had his first encounters with the CIA at this time. The coup succeeded and the Baathists came to power, using lists supplied by the CIA to eliminate leftist professionals and intellectuals. The young Saddam was said to have had a hand in supervising the killing. The CIA's importance to the coup is not clear, but Andrew and Patrick Cockburn (2000) report that James Critchfield, then head of the CIA in the Middle East, insisted that "we regarded it as a great victory," while Ali Saleh Sa'adi, then the Baath Party secretary general, believed "we came to power on a CIA train." This was the first covert, indirect war between the US against Iraq.

By 1969 Saddam was the de facto leader of the country; in 1979 he became its president. There was initially some US sentiment that he might make a fine client to counterbalance more radical Arab states, especially Egypt under Nasser. However, in 1972 Saddam continued Qassim's work and fully nationalized the IPC. Worse, he signed the Iraq–Soviet Union Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation (also in 1972), making it clear that he would confront US imperial *délires.*

Unsurprisingly, President Nixon and his powerful henchman Henry Kissinger turned against Saddam, hoping to acquire greater US access to Iraqi oil. In 1973 they made a secret agreement with the shah to commence covert action against the Iraqi regime. This was to be done by arming Iraqi Kurds in their rebellion against Baghdad. Israel joined in this campaign, and for a period in 1973–1974, Iranian, Israeli, and CIA agents all operated in Iraqi Kurdistan. In 1975 Saddam negotiated a cessation of support for the Kurd rebellion by agreeing to Iranian demands concerning the Shatt al-Arab, as we saw earlier among other matters. This fighting was a second covert, indirect form of global warring between Iraq and the US. Like the first global warring, it partly concerned control over oil.

In a third bout of global warring from 1985 through 1986 (discussed in chapter 7), the Reagan administration secretly armed the Iranians in their 1980–1988 war against Iraq. The Iranians were supposed to serve as proxies for the Americans to stop the Iraqis from becoming too powerful by winning the conflict. Arming the Iranians was illegal, so it was supposed

to be covert. When the Reagan administration's actions were made public, they became known as the Iran-Contra scandal.

What made the arming of the Iranians so scandalous was how it was done: the administration had the Israelis sell US arms to the Iranians and then used the proceeds of these sales to support ultra-right militias (the Contras) in their fight against the progressive Sandinistas in Nicaragua. In principle, the weapons were sold to Iran to win the release of US hostages taken after the fall of the shah in 1979. In practice, US security elites knew these weapons would be used against Saddam and were not averse to seeing Saddam humbled. The Iran-Iraq War, as detailed earlier, ended in a stalemate. Saddam was chastened by it, though he was resurrected as a US client—though one thought to be something of a monster-alterity—with his country's finances in terrible shape.

Three times prior to 1991 the US had intervened in Iraq with covert, indirect global warring. Two of the three interventions had confronted Saddam. Two of the three interventions had been over control of Iraq's oil. As Mohammed Aboush, an Iraqi Oil Ministry official, lamented, "Oil has not been a blessing. Without oil, we would not have had these wars" (in Maass 2009: 152). In 1991, a fourth US global war against Iraq began. It would be long and grim, and it ultimately, as will become clear, involved oil.

The Twenty-Year War: US versus Iraq 1991–2011

The years between 1991 and 2011 are often depicted as a time of two wars between Iraq and the US divided from each other by a decade of peace. The wars are said to be Bush I's Persian Gulf War I (1990–1991) followed by Bush II's Persian Gulf War II (2003–2011), with the Clinton administration (1993–2009) providing an interregnum between hostilities. However, just as historians talk of the Hundred Years' War (1337–1453) between England and France, so it is appropriate speak of a protracted Twenty-Year War between Saddam and the New American Empire. In the Hundred Years' War the debate was over whether territory in continental France would be part of the English Empire. In the Twenty Year War the debate has been over Iraq's position in the New American Empire. Further, note that the soi-disant tranquility between the two opponents during Clinton's presidency was actually a time of air and naval blockade, and that blockades *are* acts of war. Consider the first period of the war.

Gulf War I, An American Anabasis: An *anabasis* in ancient Greece was any march from a coast into the interior. The *Anabasis* is Xenophon's (2004) account of an extraordinary fifth-century BC march by a Greek mercenary army from the Mediterranean through the hostile Persian Empire. Gulf

War I started at the coast in Kuwait and marched into the interior of Iraq. It was the US's anabasis. Its immediate *casus belli* was Saddam's invasion of Kuwait, which suggests that inquiry into Iraq's relations with Kuwait is pertinent.

Kuwait had been an Ottoman province of Iraq since the 1500s (Crystal 1995). Following World War I, the victorious allies at the League of Nations conference in 1920 dismembered the Ottoman Empire as punishment for its siding with the Germans, which was how they justified awarding each other its parts. The UK received, among other areas, Iraq. By 1920 it was clear that Iraq had significant amounts of oil, and the IPC was formed. A year later Kuwait was severed from Iraq and made an independent monarchy governed by the Al-Sabah lineage under the tutelage of the UK. One goal of this act was to block Iraq's access to the Persian Gulf, weakening its nationalist aspirations. In 1932 Britain granted independence to Iraq, which became a monarchy headed by the Hashim dynasty. London's military support of the Hashims meant that independence was limited. Iraqis put up lively resistance to the British disposition of Kuwait throughout the 1930s. A popular Kuwaiti uprising in 1939 demanded that Kuwait return to Iraq. The UK crushed it. In 1958, when the Iraqi prime minister publicly asked for the return of Kuwait, the British government replied, regarding this request, that it "approved in principle." That same year, Qassim overthrew the monarchy and London abrogated the agreement to return Kuwait to Iraq.

Should a powerful imperial thug sever Texas from the US, it would be Americans' patriotic duty to recover it. Saddam's bid to reconnect Kuwait to Iraq might be imagined as the fulfillment of a similar patriotic obligation. He was joining together what had been cut asunder by an imperial intimidator.[5] Further, it made splendid sense economically. Kuwait had 96.5 billion barrels of proven oil reserves or 9.2 percent of the world's total reserves (Klare 2004: 19). Gaining of control over these would solve Iraq's financial problems and so much more.

On 2 August 1990 the monster-alterity behaved like a monster-alterity (from the vantage of the US and Kuwaiti governments) and invaded Kuwait. Whatever the logic behind Saddam's annexation, Bush I was irritated. Five days later he began Operation Desert Storm, a campaign to eject the Iraqis from Kuwait. First, the elder Bush put together a coalition of thirty-nine states to assist CENTCOM, states that were for the most part imperial clients. Japan and Germany did not join the coalition but did contribute significant financial support. General Colin Powell, then chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, had overall responsibility for the order of battle. CENTCOM's commander, General Norman Schwarzkopf ("Stormin' Norman"), commanded the coalition troops that did the actual fighting;

these eventually numbered around a million. Most of the coalition's soldiers came from CENTCOM.

Combat operations began on 17 January 1991 with heavy aerial bombardment of Iraqi targets. Invasion began on two fronts—one in Kuwait, the other in Iraq—on 24 February. Just as the Germans had experimented with their newest military machines during the Spanish Civil War; so the Americans tried out their new technologies during Gulf War I—especially stealth bombers, smart bombs, and armor-piercing depleted uranium ordnance. Iraqi forces, outgunned, were devastated. On 27 February Saddam ordered evacuation of Kuwait. Long convoys of retreating Iraqis slowly straggling along the Kuwait-Iraq highway were attacked from the air, causing the road to be named the "Highway of Death." Stormin' Norman had stormed through Gulf War I in a hundred hours. Bush I declared Kuwait liberated on 28 February. They marched in, they marched out: all in all, America's anabasis had gone well.

No attempt was made to take Baghdad or remove Saddam from his presidency, partly due to the urging of Colin Powell, and partly because the president and his NSA, Brent Scowcroft, believed it would be "destabilizing" (Bush and Scowcroft 1998: 489). Regarding this restraint, as Gordon Libby has reminisced, "neither" he nor Wolfowitz "liked it much" (Isikoff and Corn 2006: 237). For that matter, neither did Cheney. There would be a next time, but it only came after a war of blockades.

War of Blockades and Other Assorted Violence: It was believed that blockading Saddam's regime would provoke internal resistance to it, so that Iraqis would themselves do the nasty work of removing the Saddamite outrage. Blockading began immediately after the Kuwait invasion. The Security Council passed United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 661, which imposed a near total financial and trade embargo on Iraq that covered everything from pencils to bras to medicines to food. A few weeks later, UNSC Resolution 665 authorized the force to enforce the embargo. The blockade was on. UNSC Resolution 687 made the cease-fire contingent upon permanent disarmament, reparations to Kuwait, and continued embargo. In April 1991, the US and the UK unilaterally established no-fly zones in northern Iraq. The Kurds, who fiercely opposed Saddam, are located in northern Iraq, and establishment of a no-fly zone there meant that the Iraqi air force could not be used against them. Equally, by mid March 1991, a Shiite rebellion against Saddam had developed in southern Iraq at Basra, Karbala, and Najaf. In August 1992 the no-fly zone was extended to southern Iraq.

President Clinton took office in 1993. Prior to his doing so, the Bush I administration had poured money, largely through the CIA, into the Iraqi

National Congress (INC), an opposition group led by Ahmed Chalabi that sought to depose Saddam. In March 1995 the INC staged an "uprising" that quickly collapsed. A year later in June 1996, the INC plotted another coup, once more with CIA assistance (Everest 2004: 337). It came to nothing.

By 1996, it was recognized that the UN embargo had led to great suffering among ordinary Iraqis. The head of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) estimated that the sanctions had led to 500,000 civilian deaths, especially among children as a result of malnutrition.[6] It was at this time that Madeleine Albright acknowledged in a television interview that US officials knew the human costs of their choice to blockade, telling her interviewer "I think this is a very hard choice, but the price—we think the price is worth it" (in Everest 2004: 185). To further make her point about being "hard," she announced in 1997 that the blockade would continue until Saddam was eliminated.

Thereafter, US Security Elites 3.0 were more open and determined in their attempts to destroy Saddam. The Project for a New American Century sent a public letter to Clinton demanding "regime change" in Iraq in January 1998. Congress passed the "Iraq Liberation Act" that October. Clinton signed it into law. In Operation Desert Fox Clinton sought to assassinate Saddam and other high military officials, bombing one of Saddam's presidential palaces as well as barracks and the command headquarters of the elite Republican Guard. Nothing worked—not sanctions, not coups, not aerial bombardments. The War of Blockades and other assorted violence failed.

In 1998 the White House became fixated upon the Monica Lewinsky affair—President Clinton's lying about his sexual dalliance with a youthful White House intern. Many titillating details were released to the prurient pleasure of an enthusiastic public. It has been argued that distaste over these hurt the 2000 Democratic presidential campaign. Perhaps, but Al Gore, the Democratic candidate, won the popular vote. Nevertheless, he lost in the Electoral College due to an adverse decision in the Republican-controlled Supreme Court. Clinton left office in 2001, judged a sexual predator by some. Meanwhile, the Saddamite remained in Baghdad. Finishing him off fell to Dubya.

Anabasis II: Going Massive, Gulf War II: Bush II was inaugurated on 20 January 2001 against a backdrop of 10,000 protesters challenging the legitimacy of his election. During the following seven months he organized his administration, concentrating on domestic matters such as federally funding faith-based organizations for the poor and tax cuts for the wealthy. Then 9/11 happened. In the hours immediately after American Airlines

Flight 77 smashed into the Pentagon, according to notes taken by an aide, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, immediately began instructing his military to work on counterstrikes; urging them to "Go massive. Sweep it all up. Things related and not" (Borger 2006). At 2:40 p.m. on 9/11, according to the notes taken by one deputy, Rumsfeld, despite evidence indicating that the attack had been the work of Osama bin Laden, directed defense officials to secure "best info fast. Judge whether good enough hit S.H." (S.H. being Saddam Hussein) (ibid.).

"Operation Iraqi Freedom" opened Gulf War II on 19 March 2003. It was based on a far smaller coalition than Gulf War II, basically US and UK-troops. A number of important US client states opposed the war, France and Germany prominent among them. The conflict might be thought of as an American anabasis II.

This time, combat operations involved implementation of a "shock and awe" military doctrine, close to Rumsfeld's heart, which might be grasped as *blitzkrieg* by alternative means. It meant an offensive war of movement with aerial bombardment replacing that of tanks. Developed by Harlan Ullman and James Wade, this strategy's goal was to achieve "rapid domination" by applying overwhelming and spectacular air power as fast as possible (Ullman et al. 1996: x). As Ullman put it to CBS News in 2003, "You're sitting in Baghdad and all of a sudden you're a general and 30 of your division headquarters have been wiped out. You also take the city down. By that I mean you get rid of their power, water. In 2, 3, 4, 5 days they are physically, emotionally exhausted" (in Correll 2003).[7]

On 19 March, intense bombing commenced against Saddam's Presidential Palace in Baghdad as well as other targets throughout the country. A ground invasion of heavily armored units coming from the south in Kuwait drove in a pincer movement directly at Baghdad. The capital fell on 9 April, and a US psychological operations unit toppled an enormous statue of Saddam, effectively ending his reign.

Coalition troops spread throughout the country and had largely occupied it by 30 April, the end of the invasion phase of the war. Iraqi forces had been devastated. Coalition combat operations had been gratifyingly "massive," with just the right touch of "shock and awe." On May Day, Bush II, a character in a comic opera, descended by helicopter onto the deck of an aircraft carrier. Dressed in a flight suit to look properly military, he delivered a rousing speech before a huge sign bearing the American flag and the phrase "Mission Accomplished." Wrong. Shock and awe, and going massive, had failed.[8] Gulf War II was about to begin. Three years later US casualties would reach 20,000 (P. Cockburn 2006: 1). By the end of the conflict in 2011, US casualties numbered around 37,000 (Statistic Brain 2015).

Let us return to the hostilities' beginning. Throughout the remainder of 2003, coalition officials instituted Iraq's occupation. They inaugurated an interim government led by retired US General Jay Garner, which soon became the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) headed by L. Paul Bremmer. For Iraqis it was a grim time—little food, water, or electricity; lots and lots of killings; enormous amounts of looting. The CPA's first acts were to outlaw the Baath Party, disband the Iraqi army, and begin neoliberal economic policies.

Insurgency quickly developed, prompting Bush to taunt, "Bring 'em on" (2010: 260).[9] They came. First were Baathists and the former military, who raided Saddam-era weapons depots and melted into the desert to fight in the manner Mao had urged. Religious groups followed the Baathists and soldiers into insurgency. These included Sunnis such as the Mujahideen Shura Council (Iraq), the Islamic Army in Iraq, al-Qaeda in Iraq, the United Jihad Factions Council, and Jaish al-Rashideen. There were also Shia insurgents, especially in the powerful Badr and the Mahdi armies. Additionally, foreign fighters came to join the insurgency; they were only a small percentage of the rebellion but were experienced combatants, motivated by Salafi/Wahhabi doctrine (sometimes generically termed "jihadists"). The most important of these groups was al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia, originally led by Abu Musab al Zaqawi, which entered the fray in 2004. Saddam, a secular leader, had kept al-Qaeda with its Salafist orientation out of Iraq. It was the US Leviathan's destruction of Saddam that allowed them in.

A second, sectarian civil war emerged in the midst of the insurgency. Iraq is a largely Shiite country. Though the Baathists were formally a secular party, there was a Sunni tilt to the state under Saddam. As the insurgency against the occupation wore on, competition for control over the provisional government increasingly sharpened between Sunnis and Shiites. Gradually, the Shiites gained the upper hand in the struggle, with Nouri Al-Maliki, head of the Dawa, a Shiite party, becoming the prime minister in May 2006. US forces were caught in the middle of this civil war, which intensified the violence of the occupation.

Between 2003 and 2007, the different insurgent groups largely targeted coalition armies. There were 26,496 recorded insurgent incidents in 2004. The figure increased to 34,131 incidents in 2005 and still more in 2006, reaching a level of 960 attacks per week. Baghdad, Al Anbar, and Salah Ad Din were the provinces with the highest concentration of attacks. The US military suffered a total of 4,486 deaths in the entire war, the vast bulk of these coming between 2003 and 2007 ("Operation Iraqi Freedom" 2009; see also B. Woodward 2006: 472–475). It was equally a time of atrocity.

The US Marines have a proud motto, semper fidelis (always faithful). In 2004 they destroyed Fallujah using, among other ordnance, white

phosphorous munitions, an incendiary weapon prohibited by the Geneva Conventions of War, killing Artica and her unborn child in the process. Some wags remarked at the time that the Marines were "always faithful! To war crimes!" Seymour Hersh (2004), writing in the *New Yorker* magazine, broke the story of torture, rape, sodomy, and other prisoner abuses in Abu Ghraib prison. Throughout this time US occupation authorities confronted enormous corruption, of which they themselves were often the authors, involving the plundering of vast sums of money authorized for Iraqi reconstruction (Auken 2009).

Powell's deputy secretary of state Richard Armitage, himself an accomplished naval commando during the Vietnam War, visited Iraq at the end of 2004 to learn how the war was going. On his return he briefed the president, telling him, "We're not winning," adding, "We're not losing. Not winning over a long period of time works for the insurgents" (B. Woodward 2006: 373). This was his not especially subtle way of reporting to the president that the US *was* losing, which the president at that time may not have got. Armitage further communicated with the CIA, the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), then US Ambassador to Iraq John Negroponte, and then Commander of Coalition Forces in Iraq General George Casey, telling them what he had told the president. They got it, and—according to Bob Woodward—the CIA, the DIA, the US ambassador, and the in-country commander of the forces "were in agreement" with his judgment (ibid.).

A year later in the fall of 2005, General Abizaid met with a number of former senior military colleagues at his Doha headquarters. He was from a Christian Lebanese-American family, spoke Arabic, had succeeded Tommy Franks as head of CENTCOM, and went on to serve the longest stint as its commander (2003–2007). He had also been part of the initial planning and execution of Gulf War II. If anybody knew the war's progress, it was he. Abizaid told his senior colleagues, according to Woodward, that "he held the position that the war was now about the Iraqis. They had to win the war now. The U.S. military had done all it could" (ibid.: 426). Abizaid was emphatic about this point, stressing, "We've got to get the fuck out" (ibid.). His colleagues asked what his strategy for winning was. He responded, "That's not my job," indicating this work was for "The president and Condi Rice" (ibid.). Impotent to reduce surging insurgency, the US military was losing the war throughout 2003–2006 and knew it, and its commanding general wanted "to get the fuck out."

Democratic elites, especially in the Congress, echoing General Abizaid, by this time, heartily clamored for withdrawal; everyone from Joe Murtha in the House of Representatives, to Hillary Clinton, in the Senate. By the late spring of 2006 Bush was personally told that in Iraq, "It's hell" (Bush 2010: 364); and

by summer of that year, according to Bush himself, all of his security elites were aware of the "deteriorating conditions" in Iraq. (Ibid.: 363)

At this time, two "wise men"— former Secretary of State James Baker and Lee Hamilton of the House of Representatives—led a group of security elite elders in what was called the Iraq Study Group (ISG), whose role was to advise the president on the war's management. The group was a reprise of the Vietnam "wise men" who had brought President Johnson the bad tidings that Vietnam was unwinnable. The ISG's central conclusion— blazoned on the first line of the first page of their report—was that the Gulf War II situation was "grave and deteriorating" (Baker and Hamilton 2006: 6). The "wise men" had spoken by 2007. The war, as the title of Thomas Ricks' book on the topic put it, was a "Fiasco" (2006).

The day after the ISG report was submitted, Bush II confided, "And truth of the matter is, a lot of reports in Washington are never read by anybody. To show you how important this one is, I read it" ("The 'Misunderestimated' President" 2009). What he read confirmed the debacle. Dubya called this time the "worst period of my presidency" (2010: 367). Perceptually, the war was interpreted as a mess, so that the procedural question of "what to do" was foremost. Here, the ISG report advised, "Our most important recommendations call for new and enhanced diplomatic and political efforts in Iraq and the region, and a change in the primary mission of U.S. forces in Iraq that will enable the United States to begin to move its combat forces out of Iraq responsibly" (Baker and Hamilton 2006: 6). The crux of what the ISG procedurally advised was to "move … combat forces out of Iraq." Make no mistake about it, this was cutting and running, which Baker and Hamilton advised be done "responsibly" after "enhanced diplomatic and political efforts."[10]

Though they were never formally publicized and the administration would deny it, the ISG's recommendations were essentially accepted. The following year, the US military and the Iraqi provisional government entered into negotiations, that is, "enhanced diplomatic and political" work, for a Status of Force Agreement (SOFA). A SOFA is a legal framework stipulating how the US military operates in a host country. The US-Iraq SOFA was signed in November 2008. Article 24 required US combat troops to exit Iraq's cities by 2009 and Iraq by 2011. Iraq is desert with occasional cities. Most of the fighting and attendant casualties had been in the cities, especially Baghdad. It was publicly announced on 18 November 2008 that there would be "full withdrawal" of US troops by 2011 (Bruno 2008). Thus, by 2008 it had been announced to the Iraqis, US Security Elites 3.0, and the American public that the war was effectively over, at least the American part of it, very soon—the next year!

Bush II and his band of Vulcans in 2007 had responded to their fiasco in a different way than had President Johnson to his Vietnam disaster. Johnson, after the slow buildup of the Kennedy administration, had chosen massive escalation, been told by his "wise men" that it had failed, and chosen to leave the presidency. Bush II had gone "massive" from the very beginning, been told by his "wise men" that this had failed, and chosen to stay in the presidency but get out of Iraq. All of this would be done "responsibly," because the very last thing Bush II and his Vulcans" needed was another Vietnam.

So in order to disguise the fact of US imperial withdrawal there had to be one last campaign in Gulf War II to provide a military rationale for leaving. This would be a "surge." At this point General David Petraeus strolled onto center stage. He was remembered in his West Point yearbook as "always going for it … even in his social life" (Bruno 2007). In fact, the general went "for it" so diligently that Senator John McCain—who had been a Vietnam War POW (supposed by some to have collaborated with his captors [Cockburn 2008])—labeled him a "genius," one of "America's greatest military heroes"; the person "responsible—after years of failure—for the success of the surge in Iraq" (Curry 2012). Why such praise? It appears that McCain awarded it because Petraeus, along with a number of like-minded military thinkers, came to believe that shock and awe was not the way to proceed—not an especially difficult understanding as shock and awe had led to fiasco. So the general proposed a turn to counterinsurgency warfare (COIN).[11]

Petreaus's COIN: Actually COIN is old hat, militarily. There have been COINdinistas (lovers of COIN) since Americans employed it in their 1630s war against the Pequots in New England (Hauptman and Wherry 1990). An iteration of COIN was used in the Vietnam War, with dubious results (Kocher, Pepinsky, and Kalyvas 2011). So a word is in order about the Petraeus reiteration of it, which might be described as "pseudo-Maoist guerrilla warfare with a wallop" (PMGWW). On the one hand, troops using PMGWW-COIN would labor to pacify the civilian population by understanding them better and improving their lives in some way. To better understand occupied people, "anthropologists" would be sent in to tell the soldiers about the enemy's "culture" so they could be "sensitive" to it.[12] These occupying soldiers would help occupied folks by making them safer, improving their water supply, helping them with health care, and paying them for different services. In doing this they would transform the Maoist doctrine of "swimming with the fish" to one of "bribing the fish." On the other hand, PMGWW-COIN regarded insurgents who remained enemies as targets for "kinetic" operations, in which they were hunted down and eliminated.

Kinetic operations were the specialty of the covert Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC), headed for much of Gulf War II by General Stanley McChrystal (2003–2008), whose operatives were often called "ninjas."[13] However, the Defense Department also developed units within the Iraq police force that might be termed hyper-kinetic. Prior to receiving overall command in Iraq, Petraeus had been sent to Baghdad in 2004 as head of the Multinational Security Transition Command (MNSTC-I), where his responsibility was to oversee training of Iraqi military and police. After a few months, he assured Americans in a *Washington Post* piece that "training is on track" (2004). A question, however, poses itself: just what sort of "track" was the general laying?

Rumsfeld, for his part, had sent an ex-colonel named James Steele to Iraq as a "consultant." Steele had been instrumental in developing paramilitary death squads in El Salvador during the Central American "dirty wars" of the 1980s. Steele worked in Iraq with another ex-colonel, James Coffman, who appears to have reported to Petraeus. Their assignment was to redo in Iraq what Steele had done in El Salvador. They succeeded, creating the Special Police Commandos (SPCs), who were commanded by General Adnan Thabit (Mahmood et al. 2013a). General Thabit has said that "the main person I used to contact was David Petraeus" (in Mahmood et al. 2013b). Together Steele, Coffman, and Thabit turned the SPC into a counterinsurgency organization whose chief kinetic tool was pain, often administered with a power drill. Mahmood et al. (2013b) write, "According to one soldier with the 69th Armoured Regiment … 'it was like the Nazis … like the Gestapo basically. They (the commandos) would essentially torture anybody they had good reason to suspect.'" The track Steele and associates were laying was that of torture. It was the "wallop" in PMGWW-COIN.

Such COIN tactics are flawed. US soldiers, when they are big guys tricked out in body armor, armed to the teeth, speaking gibberish, and, regardless of any sensitivity-training, acting like jerks by urinating on their dead enemies, posing for trophy photos with their body parts, and burning Korans (Gates 2014: 219), have trouble convincing anybody that they are benevolent "fish." Their helping of civilians is not so much swimming with the fish as suborning them. Each time one of these civilians' relatives was walloped by the JSOC or the SPC, the fish became enemies and secret ones at that, the worst type because they smile at you and inflict vengeance through surprise, and then you have to send the SPC after them. Thereafter their mutilated bodies turn up by the side of the road, perforated with holes drilled in them by power tools. The trouble with PMGWW-COIN, and for that matter other iterations of COIN, is that eventually what it does is kill fish, a condition that creates more fish who will kill you. Rums-

feld sent Steele to Iraq and must have known what he was sent to do. Petraeus, as head of training, oversaw Steele and his colleagues' work, so Petraeus's management of the development of torturers was a feather in his "genius" cap. It is time to examine his "surge."

The Surge: At the beginning of the Gulf War II (2003–2004), prior to his MNSTC-I command, Petraeus served as the 101st Airborne Division's commanding officer in Mosul, Iraq's third largest city, where he had tried to implement PMGWW-COIN. The US media credited him with success, though evidence suggests otherwise.[14] In a television address to the American public on 10 January 2007, Bush II announced that there would be a "surge" in US troops in Iraq, consisting of 21,500 additional combat soldiers. The next month, he made Petraeus commander of Multi-National Force – Iraq (MNF–I), the position that oversaw all coalition forces occupying the country. Petraeus's task was to manage the surge using his COIN tactics to achieve some kind of accomplishment that would allow a "responsible" exit from the Iraq "fiasco."[15]

The surge, which operated between February 2007 and July 2008, involved addition of five brigades, focusing on Baghdad (four brigades went there) using COIN tactics. "Violence decreased" (Gabrielsen 2013) during the surge. Figures are disputed, both Iraqi and coalition casualties appear to have been reduced. As many as 2,700 to 3,800 civilians had been killed every month in the period from September 2006 to January 2007, when death squads roamed the streets of Baghdad. The US army suffered about 100 killed and 700 wounded per month during this period. Eleven months later, the monthly average of Iraqi civilian deaths had declined to about 500, while US Army fatalities had shrunk to 23 killed per month.[16] Was the surge responsible for the violence reduction?

Thomas Ricks (2009: 200) argues for the interpretation that prevails among many—especially US political elites—that the surge worked because the additional US soldiers, as called for in PMGWW-COIN, protected the Iraqi population. Not everyone agrees. Gian Gentile (2009), a US army officer who did two tours of duty in Iraq, condemns this position as "hubris run amuck," the "hubris" being the presumption that the addition of five brigades could somehow transform a previously intractable war in which hundreds of thousands of coalition forces armed with the most lethal of technology had floundered.

Five factors warrant skepticism about the surge's success. The first is obvious. By 2007 many Iraqis, certainly those in high positions, knew that the days of American occupation were numbered. After all, Washington elites publicly spoke in favor of pulling out. Congressman Murtha had submitted a resolution (17 November 2005) to the House of Representatives

demanding immediate US withdrawal, reasoning, "The U.S. cannot accomplish anything further in Iraq militarily. It is time to bring them home" (in Schmitt 2005). General Abizaid had insisted they "get the fuck out." General Casey, MNF-1 commander, "supported a gradual drawdown of U.S. forces" (Knowlton 2010: 1). As Admiral William Fallon, Abizaid's CENTCOM commander at the time, remarked, "In the days leading up to the decision to surge, many in Iraq thought we were just looking for the quickest exit, to bail out" (in D. Davis 2010: 24). So, why fight the Americans if you knew they were about to leave (Feldman 2008)?

A second reason to be skeptical of the surge's efficacy had to do with Shiite ethnic cleansing of Sunnis in Baghdad and its environs. Baghdad was the major locus of extreme violence at this time, and the struggle between Shiite and Sunni death squads to eliminate each other from the city's neighborhoods was one reason for this mayhem. However, eventually the ethnic cleansing had a resolution: Sunnis were cleansed. This led to a reduction in casualties, for the very grim reason that by the middle of 2008 there were simply very few Sunnis left to kill, as Patrick Cockburn (2008) observed. A third, related reason to question the surge's success has to do with the role of the Shiite Mahdi Army, a significant player in the ethnic cleansing in Baghdad and surrounding areas. For reasons having to do with emerging Shiite politics, the leaders of the Mahdi Army opted "*for a temporary ceasing of fighting*" (Gabrielsen 2013), which became largely permanent.

A fourth factor in the reduced violence pertains to the movement variously called the "Anbar Awakening" (or "Sons of Iraq"). Anbar is the largest province in Iraq, covering predominantly desert to the west of Baghdad. It is a Sunni region where fighting had been especially heavy early in the conflict, at Falluja and Ramadi. The Anbar Awakening consisted of tribal paramilitary alliances between sheikhs in Sunni tribes to fight for these tribes' benefit. Additionally, the sheikhs would ally with US military units occupying their territory as the Americans practiced the bribe component of Petraeusian COIN, providing their tribal allies with money, weapons, and training. Often the privileges the sheikhs were interested in had little to do with the goals of the surge. However, certain sheikhs were concerned to curb the influence of al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia, which was in the Americans' interest. The Anbar Awakening reduced violence in three ways. First, tribes allied with US forces agreed not to attack them (Biddle, Friedman, and Shapiro 2012); second, Anbar Awakening attacks on al-Qaeda degraded al-Qaeda's fighting capacity, reducing casualties from this source (ibid.); and third, Anbar Awakening paramilitaries defended Sunnis from Shiite paramilitary attacks, thus further reducing casualties (Kilcullen 2009: 145). One may question, however, whether the Anbar

Awakening had much to do with the surge, because according to Colonel Sean McFarland, who commanded troops in the province at the time, it appears "maybe 75 to 80 percent of the credit for the success of the counterinsurgency fight in Ramadi goes to the Iraqi people who stood up to al-Qaida" (in D. Davis 2010: 24). Moreover, another source insists the Anbar Awakening appeared "to have occurred not only before that strategy (the surge) was implemented, but before it was conceived" (Walls 2008).

The role of neighboring countries in the violence was also a factor in violence reduction. Gulf War II had regional implications that pertained to the Sunni/Shiite divide in the Middle East. Predominantly Sunni countries (Saudi Arabia and Jordan) supported Iraqi Sunnis, while Shiites in Iran supported their coreligionists. Kilcullen (2009: 151–152) has argued that Gulf War II needs to be situated in the context of the Sunni/Shiite divide, which suggests a fifth reason to harbor suspicions about the success of the surge. As Gabrielsen (2013) reports, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Syria reduced the number of Sunni fighters that were allowed to infiltrate Iraq from their territories, while Iran was miserly regarding the weaponry it supplied to the Shiites. Fewer combatants and fewer weapons would likely reduce casualty levels, suggesting that the actions of regional states contributed to the reduction of violence in Gulf War II.

Is it plausible to hold that the surge made General Petraeus one of "America's greatest military heroes"? Five factors suggesting otherwise have been presented. Only in the Anbar Awakening does PMGWW-COIN play, and only probably at that, a limited role in casualty declines. Consequently, the evidence does not support the view that the US military surge significantly reduced violence. Rather, it favors the conclusion that while the surge was occurring, other factors reduced fatalities. However, considering the statistics of declining violence, and ignoring the actual factors reducing that violence, Petraeus appeared a "genius."

Moreover, the appearance of reality, not reality itself, was all that was needed because it helped Washington hermeneuts frame and perpetuate a "popular narrative"—the surge had "succeeded" (D. Davis 2010: 22).[17] Dubya certainly believed the surge to have been a "success" (2010: 388). CNN news guru Wolf Blitzer declared it a "success" (Blitzer 2008). *USA Today* announced it had led to "progress" (Dilanian 2008). The *New York Times* acknowledged it had "clearly worked—at least for now" (Filkins 2008). *Time* magazine more circumspectly called it a "success," albeit a "limited" one (Duffy 2008). The presidential campaign that year—Obama versus McCain—saw all the candidates pronounce the surge a victory. On the campaign trail, McCain said, "I can tell you that it [the Surge] is succeeding. I can look you in the eye and tell you it's succeeding" (in Dobbs

2008). Obama, not to be outdone, called it a "success" beyond "wildest dreams" (in Chipman and Goldman 2008). His primary opponent, Hillary Clinton, gave the game away when she said, "The so-called surge was designed to give the Iraqi government the space and time to make the tough decisions that only the Iraqis can make for themselves.... And I think that putting forward a very clear objective of beginning to withdraw our troops is the best way to get the Iraqis to take responsibility" ("Transcript: Hillary Clinton" 2008). The hermeneuts might be said to have constructed for Americans a manly war "hero," General Petraeus; while injecting into their understanding the stupefacient that his surge was a "success." All of this allowed "Iraqis to take responsibility" and US Security Elites 3.0 to "withdraw," or otherwise put, to cut and run, which they did—"responsibly," of course. What had they done?

They wrecked Iraq. Consider deaths during the three phases of the war. Beth Daponte, a social demographer, estimated that Gulf War I resulted in 205,500 Iraqi deaths ("Totaling the Casualties of War" 2003b). The War of Blockades, it has already been reported, resulted in between 500,000 and 567,000 deaths, mostly of children. Mortality estimates for Gulf War II vary: the Iraq Family Health Survey (WHO 2008) found 151,000 war-related deaths between 2003 and 2006, whereas a study reported in the medical journal *The Lancet* estimated some 655,000 excess deaths (Brown 2006). These Iraqi fatalities were both civilian and military, mostly civilian. Many did not die on the battlefield, but rather from the consequences of the combat. Malnutrition and disease were especial killers. And of course millions upon millions of Iraqis were in some way injured but did not die. Who would want to stay in such a place? Not the inhabitants. By 2007, roughly four million were refugees (Chatty 2010).

There was enormous infrastructural damage to Iraq. Gulf War I had destroyed an estimated $230 billion worth of infrastructure (Nordhaus 2002: 53). Enormous portions of the electrical grid; the sewage and irrigation systems; and manufacturing, health care, and educational facilities were demolished. The War of Blockades made it difficult to replace infrastructure destroyed in Gulf War I, and Gulf II re-ruined what had earlier been ruined. Ghali Hassan (2005), reporting upon living conditions in Iraq during the time of the Iraqi warring, notes that the United Nations Human Development Index for Iraq fell from 50th to 127th place out of 130 countries between 1995 and post-2003. Life was wretched: relatives and friends sick or dead, no work, little to eat, filthy water, terrible heat, and always the fear that there were people who wanted to kill you and yours. Hassan called this situation a "tragedy" (ibid.), an understatement. The US imperial elites' project made an earthly hell in Iraq and called it liberation. This poses the question, why did they do it?

"Not There for the Figs': The Security Elites and Their Public Délires

> It [Gulf War II] has nothing to do with oil, literally nothing. (Donald Rumsfeld on CBS News, 14 November 2002, quoted in Easterbrook 2002)

The task of explaining why the US invaded Iraq begins with observation of a conundrum regarding US imperial elites' understanding of why they warred in Iraq. As the above quotation illustrates, a least one Vulcan denied that oil was the reason. Furthermore, those who suggested differently ran the risk of considerable personal abuse. Consider, for example, the pillorying of Congressman Dennis Kucinich, a Democrat in the House of Representatives (1997–2013) who, speaking just prior to the invasion (February 2003) on the influential news program *Meet the Press,* proposed that the US was about to overrun Iraq because of its oil. The Vulcan Richard Perle, a co-panelist on the show who at the time chaired the Defense Policy Board Advisory Committee, retorted, "It is an out and out lie" (in Diemer 2003). Examine, next, the treatment of Senator Chuck Hagel, a Republican senator from Nebraska (1997–2009), the secretary of defense in Obama's second term, a decorated infantry soldier in Vietnam, and a successful businessman who sat on the board of directors of Chevron Corporation. During a 2007 speech he commented, "people say we're not fighting for the oil. Of course we are," adding, "We're not there for the figs" (in W. Kristol 2013). Perhaps it was the figs that did it, but William Kristol, editor of *The Weekly Standard* and neoconservative hermeneut, could not refrain from labeling Hagel's comments "vulgar and disgusting" (ibid.). Whether you were Democrat or Republican, certain Bush II loyalists declared you a loutish, sordid perjurer if you said warring in Iraq was about oil.

But certain Vulcan elites *did* affirm the "loutish, sordid" lie. Consider Wolfowitz, Rumsfeld's deputy. When asked why the US had invaded Iraq, he answered, "Let's look at it simply. The most important difference between North Korea and Iraq is that economically, we just had no choice in Iraq. The country swims on a sea of oil" ("US Admits" 2014). In a 1999 speech to the Institute of Petroleum at London's Savoy Hotel, Dick Cheney, who fourteen months later was to become the Vice President, remarked a bit more circumspectly than Wolfowitz that "the Middle East, with two-thirds of the world's oil and the lowest cost, is still where the prize ultimately lies" (in Muttitt 2012a: 4). Midge Dector, an original founder of neoconservatism and a onetime co-chair with Rumsfeld of the Committee for the Free World, said in 2004, after the hell in Iraq had become clear, "We're not in the Middle East to bring sweetness and light. … That's nonsense. We're in the Middle East because we and our European friends and our European non-friends depend on something that comes from the Middle East, namely oil" (in Moore 2013). General John Abizaid corroborated

Wolfowitz and Dector, insisting, "of course it's about oil, we can't really deny that" ("Abizaid: 'Of Course It's About Oil'" 2008). Alan Greenspan, the influential former Chairman of the Federal Reserve who, though not in Bush II's inner circle, was knowledgeable about economic matters, also stated that "the Iraqi war is largely about oil" (Greenspan 2007).

So there is a puzzle. Washington elites, including Bush II's Vulcans, asserted opposing stories of why they went to war in Iraq: they did it for the oil, and they didn't do it for the oil. This raises two questions: Did US security elites go to war over oil or did they not; and if they did, why did some of them deny it so vehemently? The response to these questions leads to the oil-control and anti-terrorist public *délires.* First, evidence concerning the degree to which oil was a reason for the Iraq warring is considered.

Iraq Warring and the Oil-Control Public Délire

Osama Kashamoula, an Iraqi Oil Ministry official, confided, "I lived in the West for more than seven years. … We have oil and you need it" (in Maass 2009: 150).[18] Kashamoula was confirming what Cheney had earlier spoken about in his Savoy Hotel speech. There Cheney had noted the world needed oil and that oil was becoming more difficult for the oil companies to acquire. Then he rhetorically asked, "So where is the oil going to come from?" responding that "the prize … lies" in the "Middle East" (in Muttitt 2012a: 4), and the "prize" would be Iraq. First discussed are the *délires* guiding Gulf War I.

Gulf War I and the Oil-Control Public Délire: Gulf War I resulted from Saddam's invasion of Kuwait, whose considerable oil resources he indicated he intended to acquire. At the NSC meeting held the morning after Saddam's invasion (2 August 1990), oil played a part in discussions. Treasury Secretary Nicolas Brady "explained that Iraq would be getting potential oil profits of about $20 million a day from Kuwait production. In all, Iraq now held 20 percent of the world's known oil reserves. If Saddam were to take over Saudi Arabia he would have 40 percent" (B. Woodward 1991: 226). Both Bush I and the then Defense Secretary Cheney were concerned that the Iraqi army of a million soldiers posed a real threat to Saudi Arabia (ibid.: 227). Brent Scowcroft, Bush I's NSA, brought up the Carter Doctrine, the original iteration of the oil-control public *délire,* suggesting that Saddam was in violation of that doctrine (ibid. 230). This first NSC meeting ended on an "inconclusive note" (ibid.: 229), but it was clear that oil occupied everybody's mind.

At a second NSC meeting the next day, discussion concerned a CIA report on the situation that argued that the invasion threatened "the cur-

rent world order" because if it succeeded, the increased oil would turn "Iraq into an Arab superpower—a balance to the United States, the Soviet Union, and Japan" (ibid.: 237). Further, the CIA estimated that Saddam could get from Kuwait to the capital of Saudi Arabia, Riyadh, in three days (ibid.). Again, the meeting ended without a formal decision. Bush I asked that Cheney, the then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Powell, and CENTCOM Commander Schwarzkopf meet him at Camp David the next day to discuss procedural military options, indicating the drift of his thinking.

Later that day Bush met with Bandar bin Sultan, the influential Saudi ambassador to the US. Bush told him, "I give you my word of honor, I will see this through with you" (in ibid. 241). The president had indicated there was to be war with Iraq, and that the US would protect Saudi Arabia in the hostilities, in effect making a payment on its strategic rent to the Saudis. The question was what type of war, and the Camp David meeting settled that question. The Pentagon already had a plan for a campaign against Iraq called Operation Plan 90-1002, which would be a large-scale conflict involving hundreds of thousands of troops and extensive aerial bombardments. This plan was accepted. It became Operation Desert Storm, and as we have seen, when implemented it was over in a few days.

Bush I's administration prevaricated little about the reasons for the war. Paul Aarts and Michael Renner (1991: 25) put it clearly: "This war was about oil access." However, an important question is whose "access" was being contested. Cheney explicated the Bush I regime's understanding of this invasion in 9/11 testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee, declaring that "once [Saddam] acquired Kuwait and deployed an army as large as the one he possesses," he would be "in a position to be able to dictate the future of worldwide energy policy, and that [would give] him a stranglehold on our economy" (in Klare 2004: 50). The defense secretary was saying Bush's national security team feared that Saddam had stolen a page from the US's own imperial military strategy. Saddam wanted to acquire access to Kuwaiti oil in order to "dictate" global "energy policy." and nobody dictates to the New American Empire what it intends to dictate to the world. Saddam was a true monster-alterity, and the Kuwait invasion had to be reversed. Gulf War I, this evidence suggests, was fought in some measure to achieve control over petroleum resources. It was fought to deny an enemy the benefits of access to such resources. Consider the Iraq warring during the War of Blockades.

The War of Blockades and the Oil-Control Public Délire: The War of Blockades was waged by the Clinton administration as part of a "dual containment" policy announced in 1994 that was largely the formulation of

Martin Indyk, then head of Middle Eastern and South Asian Affairs at the NCS, and his boss, the NSA Anthony Lake. The policy goal, largely inherited from the previous administration, was to contain, not overthrow, the Baghdad and Tehran regimes through continuation of sanctions and, in Iraq's case, aerial bombardments.

Only obliquely did the Clinton security elites consider questions of Saddam's attempts to add to Iraq's oil reserves. However, as Jerry Mraz (1997: 3) emphasized, Clinton's security elites recognized "that uninterrupted access to oil from the Persian Gulf" was "of vital national interest" to the US. Further, Washington during this time was trying to protect the Persian Gulf's oil sheikhdoms, and of course Kuwait and Saudi Arabia were sheikhdoms. On 16 December 1998, Clinton began Operation Desert Fox, four days of especially heavy aerial raids on Iraq, including one of Saddam's palaces. Some believe these were to divert attention from impeachment proceedings slated to begin the next day in response to the president's sexual improprieties (Everest 2004: 203). However, Clinton defended the attacks in a speech to the nation, insisting they were "designed to degrade Saddam's capacity to develop and deliver weapons of mass destruction and to degrade his ability to threaten his neighbors" (Clinton 1999: 292). "Weapons of mass destruction" (WMDs)—chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons—would play a considerable role in the hermeneutic politics, especially in Bush II's presidency. Iraq's neighbors, of course, were the "oil sheikhdoms." The dual containment policy might be understood, at least vis-à-vis Iraq, as an iteration of the oil-control iteration of the global domination public *délire* because degrading Saddam's weaponry and his ability to threaten oil-producing "neighbors" reduced his ability to expand Iraq's access to oil.

Criticism of the dual containment policy increased in the hermeneutic politics of the later years of the Clinton administration. A key reason for this was that even though the policy was formally supposed to contain Saddam's regime, informally it was supposed to eliminate him, and in this it failed. Further, Baghdad appeared to flout UN inspections designed to ensure that it disarmed and did not develop WMDs.[19] So, early in 1998, the PNAC had sent an open letter to Clinton, signed by the major soon-to-be Vulcans, reporting a *délire* that the US entertain "a willingness to undertake military action" against Saddam because he was a "hazard" to "a significant portion of the world's supply of oil" (PNAC 1998). By the end of the year, the PNAC's *délire* was gratified: Congress had voted in favor of an act stipulating a US policy of regime change toward Iraq. Clinton signed the act in 1 November 1998. Consequently, as Richard Holbrooke noted, "Clinton changed U.S. policy from containment to regime change" (in Isikoff and Corn 2006: 125). Secretary of State Albright named Frank

Ricciardore the special representative to Iraqi opposition groups who were to receive military assistance in overthrowing Saddam.

Two struggles flared during 1999 and 2000. One was the presidential campaign to replace Clinton, with the Democrats hampered by their president's recent sexual improprieties. His nickname had gone in certain quarters from "Slick Willie" to "the Stainmaker" ("The Many Nicknames" 2002); the latter moniker referring to seminal fluid that stained an article of Ms. Lewinsky's clothing. The other conflict was the continual bombing of Iraq, unhampered by the Iraqi air defenses, which had been debilitated by earlier American raids. More than a hundred airstrikes were mounted against Iraq in 1999. Between 1999 and 2001 the US and UK air forces dropped on the order of 1.3 million pounds of bombs ("Clinton bombing of Iraq" 2005).

Bob Woodward (2004: 9) has said that the Clinton administration ran a "low grade war" against Iraq. From the perspective of the Iraqis who experienced food and medical deprivation along with bombing, it may not have felt so "low grade." However, Woodward makes an important point: Gulf War I never stopped; rather, the Clinton administration conducted it by other means, that is, blockade and air raids. Consequently, when Bush II took office on 20 January 2001, he did not so much start Gulf War II as continue combat operations begun by his Poppy and continued by Clinton.

Gulf War II and the Oil-Control Public Délire:

> "We won't do Iraq now," the president said, "we're putting Iraq off. But eventually we'll have to return to that question." (Bush to Rice, 15 September 2001, in B. Woodward 2004: 26).

Dubya, in the above quotation, was telling his NSA Condoleezza Rice four days after 9/11 how they would respond. They would not deal with Iraq first. Rather, the administration would begin with Afghanistan and then return to the problem of Iraq. In American English the verb "do" has a double significance. It can mean to "go about" something, as in "George is going to do homework." It can also have the more raffish meaning of having sexual intercourse with a woman, as in "George is going to do Mary." Further, in American English "fucking" has a double meaning of "to make love" or "to hurt someone," as in "I'm going to fuck you over." Perhaps Bush II's statement to Rice was rich in *all* these significations. On 20 March 2003, as dawn's rosy fingers spread over Baghdad, they revealed a city once again blasted and burning due to shock and awe. Bush II was really doing Iraq.

The question of when the Bush II administration actually decided to "do" Iraq has been debated. Richard C Clarke (2004), a member of the NSC from 1992 through 2003 and for a considerable time in charge of

anti-terrorism, has said Bush took office with a predetermined plan to attack Iraq. According to Ron Suskind, Bush's first treasury secretary, Paul O'Neill, recalled that Dubya's first NSC meeting, held ten days after the inauguration, "was all about finding a way to do it. The president saying, 'Go find me a way to do this'" (in Stein and Dickinson 2006: 3). "It" was invading Iraq. O'Neill later recanted what he told Suskind, saying, "Actually there was a continuation of work that had been going on in the Clinton administration" ("O'Neill: 'Frenzy'" 2004). Possibly, Clarke, Suskind, and O'Neill were all correct. Having adopted a policy of violent regime change, Clinton's people, especially those in the Pentagon, were likely to have formulated contingency plans for a possible war. Certainly the Vulcans, with their 1998 PNAC letter to Clinton urging Saddam's elimination, had expressed an intention to forcefully get Saddam, so it was entirely possible that they would have entered office with a generalized *délire* to do what Clinton had already been doing.[20]

Matters moved quickly after 9/11. Recall, on that day, Rumsfeld had ordered his officials to "judge whether [the evidence is] good enough [to] hit SH [Saddam Hussein]" (in Stein and Dickinson 2006: 4; edited for clarity). Eight days later the Pentagon's Defense Policy Board, headed by Richard Perle, declared that Iraq should be invaded after Afghanistan (ibid.). On 21 September, the intelligence community informed Bush that there was no evidence linking Saddam to 9/11 (ibid.). It made no difference. On 21 November Bush "collars Rumsfeld physically," asking "what have you got in terms of plans for Iraq? What is the status of the war plan?" (ibid.: 5). Three days after Christmas, Dubya has his answer. General Tommy Franks, now CENTCOM's commander, briefed the president on the status of the Iraq war plan (ibid.: 6).[21] War followed a lengthy campaign of vilification of Saddam, considered in the following section, and apparently was intended to impose at least five types of control over oil, thereby implementing the oil-control public *délire*.

Readers should be clear about the following enquiry. Its interest is in the intentionality of Bush II and the Vulcans' *délires*, not their achievement—the powers they wanted, not those they actually got. The first sort of control the Bush administration intended to gain from its global warring was US oil companies' access to Iraqi oil. In January 2003, before the invasion, it was "reported that representatives from ExxonMobil Corp, Chevron Texaco Corp, ConocoPhillips and Halliburton, among others, were meeting with Vice-President Cheney's staff to plan the post-war revival of Iraq's oil industry" (Leaver and Muttitt 2007: 3). This "revival," the *Washington Post* explained in 2002, was meant to provide a "bonanza for American oil companies" (in Everest 2004: 267–268). This "bonanza" was potentially enormous, as one appraisal projected future profits to private oil compa-

nies operating in Iraq running between a low of $600 billion and a high in the order of $9 trillion (Paul 2004).

Further, this access was believed, by at least some in the administration, to extend to control over the supply and the price of oil. Bush II's economic security elites believed that war would increase the supply of oil by bringing more of Iraq's oil on line, thereby keeping oil prices in check. Later, in February of 2003, the pro-war newspaper mogul Rupert Murdoch echoed this position, claiming that hostilities would hold the price of oil around $20 a barrel and that this would be good for the world economy (Day 2003).

However, there was a problem. Iraqi oil had been nationalized as part of the wave of 1970s nationalization, which meant that Baghdad strictly controlled it, and part of this control included strict limitation of foreign enterprises' access. The Bush administration sought to eliminate this problem by awarding Bearing Point Incorporated a contract to restructure Iraq's economy, including the oil sector. Bearing Point, a financial and business consulting firm, was actually itself in financial disarray and would file for bankruptcy in 2009. A week after the invasion, however, the US Agency for International Development (USAID), the development branch of the State Department, conferred a no-bid contract for $240 million on Bearing Point, charging it, according to Naomi Klein (2006), with the responsibility of designing a private sector along the lines of "neocon utopia."

The contract Bearing Point signed with USAID instructed the firm as to the sort of economy to create in Iraq. Its 100 pages clearly laid out the Bush administration's intention to open Iraq's economy in a neoliberal fashion (King 2004). USAID's intentions vis-à-vis oil were probably largely hammered out in the Oil and Energy Subgroup of the State Department's Future of Iraq Project (Muttitt 2006).

The Future of Iraq Project began on 1 October 2001, headed by Thomas Warwick.[22] It involved US and exiled Iraqi "experts" organized into seventeen working groups, and was charged with planning for "the day after" in Iraq (Economy and Infrastructure Working Group 2005: 4). It produced thirteen volumes and was the most extensive pre-invasion planning for post-invasion Iraq. The extent of its actual influence has been questioned. One senior CPA official remarked, "It's our bible coming out here" (Hassen 2006).[23] Critically, the Oil and Energy Working Group called for a "restructuring" of the "oil industry" (Oil and Energy Working Group 2005: 5) that involved its "denationalization" (ibid.: 9) and privatization. The Iraq National Oil Company would become private, and international oil companies would be allowed into Iraq (ibid.: 3).

Immediately following the occupation, General Jay Garner, who had been successful in humanitarian operations during Gulf War I, became the

head of the post-invasion occupation body, the CPA. He was succeeded by L. Paul Bremer III, a protégé of Kissinger, on 11 May 2003. For a while Bremer was a veritable viceroy of the newly conquered territory. He largely adopted Bearing Point's recommendations. Denationalization and privatization were forgone conclusions intended to allow all private companies, including American ones, access to Iraq's economy.

The privatization of the oil industry was to go as follows:

> When Bremer left Iraq in June 2004, he bequeathed the Bush economic agenda to two men, Ayad Allawi and Adel Abdul Mahdi, who Bremer appointed interim Prime Minister and Finance Minister, respectively. Two months later, Allawi (a former CIA asset) submitted guidelines for a new petroleum law to Iraq's Supreme Council for Oil Policy. The guidelines declared "an end to the centrally planned and state dominated Iraqi economy" and advised the "Iraqi government to disengage from running the oil sector, including management of the planned Iraq National Oil Company (INOC), and that the INOC be partly privatized in the future." (Juhasz 2007)

Iraqi oil would be privatized through introduction of production sharing agreements (PSAs). These are contracts between oil companies and a state stipulating that oil ownership ultimately rests with the government, but that the more lucrative exploration and production sectors of the oil industry are given to the private companies under decidedly advantageous terms.[24]

Saddam's regime had awarded contracts to other countries' oil industries to develop Iraq's oil fields. In fact, sixty such contracts had been presented to firms from over thirty countries, especially France and Russia. None went to US companies (Juhasz 2007). The imposition of sanctions upon Iraq after Gulf War I had meant that few of these contracts were implemented, and there was fear that lifting them might threaten the American majors' access to Iraqi oil. However, because only seventeen of Iraq's eighty known oil fields have been developed, it was recognized that there would be room for US expansion into Iraqi oil, especially because it was believed that the American oil multinationals were more efficient and would consequently win contracts against their competitors. Clearly, Bush's security elites had planned to pry open access to Iraqi oil for US majors.

A second sort of control the Bush administration intended to provide through its global warring was that of denying Saddam, and his successors, control over their own oil, at least in ways that the US did not approve. They were grimly successful in the first of these goals. Saddam, soon after the invasion, inhabited a hole in the ground, where he was captured (14 December 2003), taken for trial, and eventually hung (30 December 2006). Thereafter, US occupation authorities attempted to induce post-Saddam Iraqi rulers to regulate the oil in the manner the US desired.

When Bremer left Iraq in 2004, he appointed Ayad Allawi and Adel Abdul Mahdi to run the Iraqi Interim Government. Allawi submitted proposals to Iraq's Supreme Council for Oil Policy for a new petroleum law that had been drawn up previously by Bremer's people and sought to induce the "Iraqi government to disengage from running the oil sector." Allawi's proposals also projected turning all undeveloped oil and gas fields over to private international oil companies, putting them beyond the control of Baghdad. Mahdi, commenting on these plans, stated, "I think this is very promising to the American investors and to American enterprise, certainly to oil companies" (in Juhasz 2007), something of an understatement. Allawi and Mahdi, doing Bremer's bidding, proposed to eradicate the Iraqi government's access to its own oil.

A third sort of control the Bush II administration intended its global warring to confer was to increase the business of US companies working in support of oil companies in Iraq. Such firms are called oil service companies, or colloquially "plumbers." Philip Carroll, who had headed both Shell and Fluor Daniel, an oil service and engineering firm, was appointed the CPA's adviser to the Iraq Ministry of Oil. Carroll brought success to not only the international oil companies but also the plumbers who helped them. Juhasz (2007) reported that in the three years immediately following occupation, "Halliburton received the largest contract, worth more than $12 billion." Halliburton, headquartered in Houston, is the world's largest plumber.

As Iraq's oil industry reestablished itself in the years after 2006, US oil services companies' business flourished. In part this was because Iraq allowed only the "Big Four" plumbers (Halliburton, Baker Hughes, Weatherford International, and Schlumberger) to bid for contracts. The *New York Times* reported, "The oil services companies Halliburton, Baker Hughes, Weatherford International and Schlumberger [have] already won lucrative drilling subcontracts and are likely to bid on many more in one of the world's richest markets for companies that drill oil wells" (Kramer 2011).

A fourth form of control that Bush's security elites intended global warring to provide concerned the dollar's role as a reserve currency. In 1999 the euro was introduced as a common European Union currency. A year later on 6 November 2000, Saddam demanded that buyers of Iraqi oil pay in euros, a decision that potentially lessened demand for the dollar, reducing its value. The dollar did depreciate 17 percent against the euro in 2001. There were rumors that other OPEC nations might begin demanding euros for their oil. Consequently, by 2001 the US and Iraq were involved in a petrodollar war.

There is not much of a paper trail concerning the Bush administration's preparation to address the petrodollar war. However, in a document

drafted just prior to the invasion, the Economy and Infrastructure Working Group of the Future of Iraq Project stated, "Oil revenues can be expected to increase. … This significant dollar flow must be used … to finance current and future redevelopment" (Economy and Infrastructure Working Group 2005: 1). The working group did not recommend that oil sales be conducted in dollars rather than euros; rather, it assumed that they would be. Then, shock and awe attended the invasion on 7 March 2003, Saddam took to a hole, and on 5 June 2003 "Iraq … stepped back into the international oil market for the first time since the war, offering 10m barrels of oil from its storage tanks for sale to the highest bidder. … The tender … switches the transaction back to dollars—the international currency of oil sales—despite the greenback's recent fall in value" (Hoyos and Morrison 2003: 1). The petrodollar war was over. The US had won control over the currency in which Iraq would conduct its oil business, which would be greenbacks.

A fifth form of control that Bush's security elites intended to gain through global warring was US clients' access to Iraq's oil, thereby helping the US pay its strategic rents.

During a 2001 series of meetings of Vice President Cheney's Energy Task Force, charged with devising the new Bush II administration's oil strategy,

> a map of Iraq and an accompanying list of "Iraq oil foreign suitors" were the center of discussion. The map erased all features of the country save the location of its main oil deposits, divided into nine exploration blocks. The accompanying list of suitors revealed that dozens of companies from 30 countries—but not the United States—were either in discussions over or in direct negotiations for rights to some of the best remaining oil fields on earth. (In Holland 2006)

The map and the discussion at the meeting appear to have been about which non-Americans were likely to seek Iraqi oil, and whether Bush's security elites would choose to assist or hinder them in the search for oil contracts.

When the Future of Iraq's Oil and Energy Working Group reported its plans for "the day after" it was clear that it intended for there to be "international oil companies" in Iraq, not only American ones (Oil and Energy Working Group 2005: 3). They would be there because they had won PSA contracts in competitions open to different countries' oil firms. Of course unstated, but understood, was that the US would help its friends win such contracts.

Robert Stevens has reported on some of the haggling over access to Iraqi oil that went on between the US and some of its allies. In late 2002, Baroness Symons was trade minister of Tony Blair's government, and the UK was the staunchest of Bush II's clients. Symons told British Petroleum

(BP) officials that Blair's government "supported British energy firms being given a share of Iraq's oil and gas reserves. She said this would be a reward for Prime Minister Tony Blair's military commitment to US plans for regime-change" (Stevens 2011). Further, Stevens quoted an article in the *Independent,* a newspaper, that discussed the minutes of a meeting between BP and the baroness on 31 October 2002, saying that the minutes, "show that Lady Symons agreed to lobby the Bush administration on BP's behalf because the oil giant feared it was being 'locked out' of deals that Washington was quietly striking with US, French and Russian governments and their energy firms" (ibid.). These quotations indicate that in the months just prior to the invasion, Bush II's security elites were busy "striking" deals about the "reward" there would be for client countries' oil companies. Remember, there was a purported $600 billion to $9 trillion dollars of Iraqi oil profit to be made, suggesting that the rewards could be substantial. Of course, another term for such rewards is strategic rents.

The previous discussion concerned imperial *délires* vis-à-vis oil. Were they gratified? As Iraq acquired more sovereignty after the invasion, it strove to develop its petroleum resources on its own terms. Initial Iraqi support for denationalization gave way after 2005 to a complex struggle to retain control over their petroleum resources, best documented in Muttitt (2012a). A Transitional National Assembly began to function in 2005, and its members were suspicious of anything that looked like privatization to benefit foreigners. Nevertheless, occupation authorities required the assembly to pass an oil law favorable to them By 2007 it was clear that there were not enough votes to pass the law. As of 2013 it still had not passed. Nevertheless, Iraqi government officials allowed Big Oil to bid on different oil fields, and by 2010 BP and the China National Petroleum Company were developing the Rumaila oil field; France's Total was developing the Halfaya oil field; ExxonMobil and Royal Dutch Shell were developing West Qurna I; Russia's Lukoil and Norway's Statol were doing the same for West Qurna 2; and Shell and Petronas, a Malaysian company, had the Majnoon oil field (Stevens 2011). Moreover, access was secured not through PSA contracts but through Technical Service Contracts, under which international oil companies gained less control and profits, for shorter time periods. Muttitt concludes that "any oil company victory in Iraq," by which he means the Big Oil of the US and its allies, "is likely to prove as temporary as George W. Bush's triumph in 2003" (2012b)

In June 2013 Denise Natali, a Middle East expert at the National Defense University in Washington, noted in the *New York Times* (in Arango and Krauss 2013) that "the Chinese are the biggest beneficiary of this post-Saddam oil boom in Iraq." By 2013 they appeared to have acquired more than half of Iraq's oil (ibid.). As the *Times*'s reporters observed, "Chinese

state-owned companies seized the opportunity, pouring more than $2 billion a year and hundreds of workers into Iraq, and just as important, showing a willingness to play by the new Iraqi government's rules and to accept lower profits to win contracts" (ibid.). In 2013, the Chinese sought to reduce US access to Iraqi oil by "bidding for a stake … owned by Exxon Mobil in one of Iraq's largest oil fields" (ibid.). Michael Makovsky, a former Bush II Defense Department official responsible for Iraq oil policy, ruefully grumbled, "The Chinese had nothing to do with the war, but from an economic standpoint they are benefiting from it, and our Fifth Fleet and air forces are helping to assure their supply" (in Arango and Krauss 2013). So the Vulcans' global warring against Baghdad increased access to Iraqi oil for the Chinese; who, after all is said and done, are a grave potential threat to the New American Empire. Increasing an opponent's power is not a recommended strategy for the successful empire.

It is time to draw a conclusion regarding global warring in Iraq and the oil-control iteration of the global domination public *délire.* Fixated upon oil, Bush II's security elites sometimes found their intentions thwarted, yet these were nevertheless manifest in statements and plans: prior to the commencement of hostilities, the intention was to war so as to control Iraq's oil in five different ways. Hence, the resort to violent force to achieve the power of such control was an implementation of the oil-control public *délire.* Saddam knew what was happening: a few months before the invasion, he had told the UN General Assembly that the US wanted "to destroy Iraq in order to control Middle Eastern oil" (in Yetiv 2004: 2). The empire went about destroying Iraq. Yet, as Muttitt (2012b) judges, the destruction vis-à-vis oil appears to have been "mission unaccomplished."

Iraq Warring and the Anti-terrorism Public Délire

> When you read George Bush, Tony Blair, Bill Clinton, and all the rest of them, they tell you, "We have to go after Saddam Hussein, this guy is such an evil monster that he even used chemical weapons against his own people." It is true. (Chomsky 2002)

Consider, for a moment, the development of the international law of war. From the Franco-Prussian War (1870) through World War I and on to World War II (1945), there were seventy-five years of wars of aggression, where one country attacked others to gratify its elites' *délires*. The result was devastation at unimagined and unintended levels. The legal judgments that the Nuremberg War Crimes Tribunal (1945–1946), specifically held to try Nazi War criminals, have come to have the moral and legal weight of international law. The Tribunal had blunt words about "wars of aggression." Its chief US prosecutor at the tribunal, Judge Robert H. Jackson,

stated, "To initiate a war of aggression, therefore, is not only an international crime; it is the supreme international crime, differing only from other war crimes in that it contains within itself the accumulated evil of the whole" (in P. Scott 2007: 180).

Of course, the New American Empire's attacking other countries to achieve power over the world's oil is an offensive exercise of violence to control the force resource that allowed power over other force resources and, thereby, the world. It was aggressive warfare. It was an "international crime." Not only that, it was the "supreme" such crime. This falsified any US assertion—claimed and reclaimed by elites from Governor Winthrop in 1630 to Bush II—to be "a city upon a hill" divinely elected to lead the world to heaven on earth.

However, the US might still claim "city upon a hill" status if it could show that it had—a bit like Saint George and the Dragon—slain the fire-breathing terror monster. Chomsky, in the quotation that begins this section, tells his readers that the security elites, "all … of them," said Saddam was an "evil monster," and that consequently they had to "go after" him. The following narrative shows the string of events that portrayed Iraq's president as a monster (worse than a fire-breather, he was a chemical spewer); how this monsterization allowed the Security Elites 3.0 to war on the basis of the anti-terrorism public *délire,* camouflaging the actuality that the US was a "supreme" international criminal. The analysis begins with a spot of phantasmagoric baby killing.

Gulf War I and Baby Killing: Saddam invaded Kuwait in 1991. In his eyes and undoubtedly those of numerous Iraqis, this was not commencing a war of aggression, but correcting a colonial injustice by returning to Iraq what British imperialism had severed from it. When this context was ignored, however, Saddam's invasion was very much a war of aggression if you believed the evidence of your eyes, which saw Iraqi tanks streaming into Kuwait City. A US invasion of Iraq to stop the Saddamite needed selling. At this point the public relations business Hill and Knowlton Strategies (H&K) enters the narrative.

In the late 1980s and 1990s H&K was the world's largest public relations firm and had special Republican ties. In the 1960s it was famous for representing the tobacco industry's denial of links between smoking and cancer. More recently it has represented the domestic US gas and oil industry in support of fracking. During Gulf War I its Washington office was headed by Craig Fuller, a close friend of Bush I and his former chief of staff in vice presidential days. After Saddam's invasion, Kuwait hired H&K to make the case for its liberation by the US. The Wirthlin Group, Ronald Reagan's former pollsters, did H&K's research. It was their job to discover

the messages that struck Americans as emotionally powerful. A Canadian Broadcasting Company television documentary, *To Sell a War,* presented an interview with a Wirthlin Group official who said the most emotionally compelling message they had found concerning the Iraq situation was one constructed as the "fact that Saddam Hussein was a madman who had committed atrocities even against his own people, and had tremendous power to do further damage, and he needed to be stopped" (CBC 1992). The Wirthlin Group revealed this to H&K, which in turn revealed to Bush I's security elites that in order to fight terrorism, he needed "a madman" terrorist who "committed atrocities." Monsterization of Saddam was on.

There needed to be a "hook"—something that grabbed people's attention and made them believe that the former ally and CIA asset who ran Iraq was a monster. H&K's hook was an old one, adapted from one the British had employed to monsterize the Germans during World War I: the Huns killed little babies! H&K's hook would be that Saddam's soldiers killed little babies. They first presented their hook on 10 October 1990, at a Human Rights Caucus hearing on Capitol Hill. Explosive testimony was delivered by Nayirah, a sobbing Kuwaiti teenager who recalled what she had witnessed in a Kuwait City hospital: "I saw the Iraqi soldiers come into the hospital with guns, and go into the room where … babies were in incubators. They took the babies out of the incubators, took the incubators, and left the babies on the cold floor to die" (in MacArthur 1992: 58). Nayirah's story was distributed worldwide.

It was untrue. Nayirah was the daughter of Kuwait's ambassador to the US. She never saw babies being removed from incubators. Other stories with similar messages were produced. One person recalled, "I heard Bush Sr. personally deliver an atrocity tale that had been revived from I don't remember where. The Iraqis ordered a family to bring out their sons who were shot before the parents' eyes. 'And then they charged the parents for the bullets used to kill their sons,' said Bush" (in Center for Media and Democracy 2005).[25] Here was the Saddamite, a monster disgorging terror; and under the anti-terrorist public *délire* the procedure for treating such terror was to go to war against its perpetrators, as Bush I did in Desert Storm.

The point here was that H&K constructed Saddam as a monster prone to terrorizing. Did Bush I and his security elites believe their propaganda? They certainly interpreted him as a distinctly scary character who as such warranted application of the anti-terrorist public *délire*: he could be perceptually understood as a terrorist, which meant he was procedurally a monster to be attacked. Ponder next Saddam's treatment during the Clinton administration.

The War of Blockades and WMDs: During the Clinton years, much of the foreign policy attention focused upon Africa and the Balkans. The Iraq policy was the previously mentioned "dual containment" iteration, with Iraqi containment performed by the sanctions. Saddam was not forgotten, but for much of the time he was on the back burner as the debacles in Somalia and Rwanda detonated and as Yugoslavia disintegrated. All this changed in 1997.

The sanctions regime imposed following Gulf War I included creation of a UN group, the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM), charged with responsibility to inspect for Iraq's weapons of mass destruction and, upon finding them, to eliminate them. UNSCOM and Saddam had a testy relationship throughout the early and middle years of the 1990s. Testy became dysfunctional when it became clear that UNSCOM was supplying information to US intelligence.[26] Unsurprisingly, on 11 November 1997 Baghdad requested that US personnel working for USCOM leave Iraq. The following day Clinton met with his top security elites, and they decided to move toward war. This involved a campaign to inform Americans of the reasons for such aggression.

Clinton's "campaign" lacked the melodramatic hook of the previous administration. There were no babies dying on hospital floors. Rather, the president started the campaign in his 27 January 1998 State of the Union address, declaring, "Saddam Hussein has spent the better part of this decade and much of his nation's wealth not on providing for the Iraqi people, but on developing nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, and the missiles to deliver them" (W. Clinton 1998b). The presidential message was that Saddam had developed monster weapons, WMDs, to terrorize. This was a reprise of an earlier Cold War trope shown on television screens across America during the 1950s to warn against the USSR: a rising mushroom cloud from an atomic explosion triggered by monster Soviets. Let us call this the "scare-them-with-monster-weapons" trope. Khrushchev had nuclear bombs. Saddam, even more terrifyingly, had WMDs that included ghastly poisonous gases, terrible epidemic diseases, and atomic weapons. Clinton told Saddam point blank in the State of the Union address: "We are determined to deny you the capacity to use them again" (ibid.).[27]

Three weeks later, three principals of the security elites—NSA Sandy Berger, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, and Secretary of Defense Bill Cohen—traveled to the campus of Ohio State University to hold a "town meeting" to further excoriate the Baghdad regime. Albright told her audience, "Iraq is a long way from Ohio, but what happens there matters a great deal here. For the risk that the leaders of a rogue state will use nuclear, chemical or biological weapons against us or our allies is the greatest

threat we face" (in Freedom Agenda 2012). The secretary of state had elevated Saddam to "the greatest threat," a monster with WMDs.

Did Clinton's security elites actually believe their monsterization? Iraq had *had* a nuclear weapons program. There *had* been a biological weapons program. With the assistance of Europeans and the connivance of the US, Saddam *had* used chemical weapons during the Iran-Iraq War. UNSCOM *had* destroyed considerable quantities of WMDs, and nobody really knew what might be hidden out in the desert. Clinton's security elites had reason to believe. Seen in this light, their aggression against Iraq was implementation of the anti-terrorist public *délire* to keep the terrorist in check. Attention turns now to how the Bush II administration dealt with the Saddamite.

Gulf War II and "Repeating Things Over and Over Again": A nugget of wisdom from a candidate on the 2000 campaign trail, delivered to high school students in Rochester, New York, let slip a secret of how he planned to govern: "See in my line of work you got to keep repeating things over and over again for the truth to sink in, to kind of catapult the propaganda" (in "Bush: 'You Have to Keep Repeating Things'" 2005). Dubya and his Vulcans would "keep repeating over and over again" that the problem with Saddam was WMDs and the terror they caused, in effect "repeating over and over again" the Clinton administration's rant against Saddam.

It began with Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz, who from the outset of Bush II's presidency, well before 9/11, had supported the idea that Saddam was a terrorist. He did so by championing the views of Laurie Mylroie, a Harvard political science Ph.D. and an Iraq "expert." Initially she had supported US government attempts to ally with Saddam, but eventually she made a 180-degree turn and insisted that he was behind much of the world's terrorism (Mylroie 2000). Her arguments were later dismissed as crackpot (see Plotz 2001). Wolfowitz, however, used her views to argue to the new administration that Saddam was the world's terrorist mastermind (Isikoff and Corn 2006: 66–67). When 9/11 finally occurred, Wolfowitz immediately insisted Saddam was behind it. A year after 9/11, in an address on Ellis Island with the Statue of Liberty in the background, Bush echoed Wolfowitz in a speech, saying, "We will not allow any terrorist or tyrant to threaten civilization with weapons of mass destruction" (in Isikoff and Corn 2007: 42). Saddam was a bad guy. Why did Bush II and Wolfowitz link Saddam with terrorism and WMDs?

They may have done it simply because the Clinton administration had previously done it. However, Wolfowitz suggested a second reason for linking terrorism with WMDs and Saddam when he recollected, "For bureaucratic reasons, we settled on one issue, weapons of mass destruction

[as justification for invading Iraq] because it was the one reason everyone could agree on" (in Counterpunch News Service 2003). "Everyone" could "agree" because in the past it had been known that Saddam had WMDs and used them. After all, there were the widely screened 1988 films of his gassed victims in Halalja. Even journalists, the most skeptical of observers, thought Saddam had WMDs. When Patrick Cockburn installed himself in Iraq to cover the war, he found that "in what had been the lobby of the hotel was a birdcage with a canary called Diehard 2 which was expected to provide early warning of a poisoned gas attack by dutifully expiring at the first whiff" (2006: 43–44).

It was in the summer of 2002 that the Vulcans became serious about tying Saddam to WMDs. Chief of Staff Andrew Card and Karl Rove, Bush's senior advisor and *eminence grise* of political strategy, inaugurated a task force that came to be known as the White House Iraq Group (WHIG) to market the anti-Iraq message. Key WHIG members included Condoleezza Rice; her deputy Stephen Hadley; Irve "Scooter" Libby, Cheney's deputy; and Michael Gerson, Bush's speechwriter. According to James Bamford (2005: 325), WHIG operated as follows: upon receiving "false or exaggerated intelligence; then [they] … leak it to friendly reporters, complete with prepackaged vivid imagery; finally when the story breaks, senior officials point to it as proof and parrot the unnamed quotes." Gerson is supposed to have provided WHIG members with their most vivid imagery, the potential mushroom cloud rising over America if Saddam's regime was not dealt with (Isikoff and Corn 2007: 35). The mushroom cloud evoked memories of school days for many mature Americans who had had to "duck and cover" under their school desks in anticipation of a Soviet nuclear attack. What a hook!

After WHIG was formed, senior Vulcans began a barrage of announcements decrying the dangers of Saddam's WMDs. The opening salvo was made by Cheney in a 26 August 2002 speech to the Veterans of Foreign Wars, in which he announced, "Simply stated, there is no doubt that Saddam now has weapons of mass destruction" (in "Context of 'August 26, 2002'" 2003). A few weeks later on 8 September, Rice took to the Sunday talk shows, insisting certain aluminum tubes that had been discovered in Iraq were "only really suited for nuclear weapons programs" and that it was inadvisable to ignore this because "we don't want the smoking gun to be a mushroom cloud" (Blitzer 2003). She had used Gerson's hook. On 27 September Rumsfeld said the evidence linking Iraq and al-Qaeda was "accurate and not debatable" (Stein and Dickinson 2006).

Two days later on September 29, the DIA demurred, judging there was "no reliable" evidence of Iraqi WMDs (Stein and Dickinson 2006). To counter this breach in the hermetic seal, the CIA was tasked with the

chore of creating an NIE concerning Iraq and WMDs. Recall that NIEs, as compendiums of all the US intelligence agencies' views on a particular topic, are the "last word" on the government's views on intelligence matters. The 2002 NIE's last word, released in October of that year, was: "We judge that Iraq has continued its weapons of mass destruction" (NIE 2002). Tenet, using a basketball metaphor, told his president the case for Saddam having WMDs was a "slam dunk" (in B. Woodward 2004: 249). In a 7 October speech in Cincinnati, Bush ignored his DIA and accepted the NIE, once again employing Gerson's hook by telling his audience that "facing clear evidence of peril, we cannot wait for the final proof—the smoking gun—that could come in the form of a mushroom cloud" (Stein and Dickinson 2006). Rumsfeld reiterated Bush's claim on 29 January 2003, appearing to give it quantitative legitimacy by revealing that "the Iraqi regime has not accounted for some 38,000 liters of botulism toxin, 500 tons of sarin, mustard gas, VX nerve gas and upwards of 30,000 munitions capable of delivering chemical weapons" (in Rosenberg 2006: 2).

A little over six weeks before the attack on Iraq, the constructing of Saddam as a WMD toting terrorist gained greater stridency. On 5 February Powell gave his embarrassing speech at the UN, declaring to the world that Iraq was awash in WMDs. Three days later in his weekly radio address, Bush warned the American people, "We have sources that tell us that Saddam Hussein recently authorized Iraqi field commanders to use chemical weapons" (in B. Woodward 2004: 139). Ominously, on 10 February the newly instituted Department of Homeland Security advised Americans to buy plastic sheeting with which to seal their houses from Iraqi chemical or biological attacks (Stein and Dickinson 2006). The assault on Iraq began on 19 March. No Iraqi WMDs were used in the combat. Two and a half years later (18 December 2005), speaking from the Oval Office to a world audience, Bush admitted "we did not find those weapons" (in B. Woodward 2006: 435).

Many people around the world believed the slogan "Bush lied. People died." Scholars have suggested that it was known before the onset of hostilities that the case for Iraq's possession of WMDs was weak (Cole 2013c). Did Bush's security elites really believe Saddam had WMDs? Tenet, perhaps, was representative of Vulcan understandings on this matter. In his memoir he disputes Woodward's account of his "slam dunk" exclamation, asserting he was not maintaining it was a slam dunk case that Saddam had WMDs, but that a slam dunk case could be made that he had them (Tenet 2007: 362).[28] However, a few lines after this assertion he insisted he "strongly" believed Saddam had WMDs (ibid.). After all, Saddam had once had them, and he had used them. Bush (2010: 269) stressed in his memoirs that "supporters of the war believed it [that Saddam had WMDs];

opponents of the war believed it; even members of Saddam's own regime believed it." Some might wonder if Bush is truthful here. However, many did worry about the possibility of Iraqi WMDs. Remember the journalists in Irbil with their canary, Diehard 2.

Meanwhile, "slam dunk" proof was elusive. Prewar US intelligence, an oxymoron, was poor. Bush's security elites added to the problem by biasing their intelligence against Saddam. Tenet (2007: 348) regretted that only "much later" did he realize Wolfowitz, Libby, and Feith had been purveyors of tainted intelligence. Feith's Office of Special Plans (OPS) was especially notorious for distributing anti-Iraq information, what Tenet called "Feith-based analysis" (ibid.: 342–358).[29] At the same time, the Vulcans also had to contemplate data indicating that WMDs had not been found, realizing too that Iraq was a large place with a large desert in which to hide WMDs. Consequently, when Bush security elites examined intelligence upon Iraq, what was clear was that either there were, or there were not, WMDs.

Finally, Tenet and Gates have identified emotional states relevant to Vulcan dispositions during the run-up to Iraq II. Gates, in his memoir of his years as defense secretary, confided that the Bush II security elites felt that by not preventing 9/11 they had "let the country down" and consequently had a "huge sense of having allowed a devastating attack on America to take place on their watch" (2014: 93). Tenet reminded readers in his memoir that "few understand the palpable sense of uncertainty and fear that gripped those in the storm center in the aftermath of 9/11" (2007: 496). Bush and the Vulcans were the ones in the "storm center," and they had failed horribly in 9/11. Now they were scared. Bush II wrote in his memoirs, "I still see the Pentagon smoldering, the towers in flames, and that pile of twisted steel. … And it redefined my job. … I would pour my heart and soul into protecting the country, whatever it took" (2010: 151). Rice (2011: 88) confided in her memoir that she felt Bush "was carrying a weight heavier than any other president, at least since Abraham Lincoln." Perhaps she was a bit hyperbolic here.

But Dubya *was* the president, after all, and his window of authority authorized him to be the "decider." He knew that if anything else appalling happened, "I would be responsible" (Bush 2010: 237). So the "decider" felt failure as well as "fear" and the *délire* to avoid it. Dreading that some other horrible event could occur on their watch, and sensitive that it was their responsibility to prevent it, Bush and his Vulcans consequently interpreted Iraq's president as a monster Saddamite—the better to prevent him from hurting them, even though deep down in their heart of hearts they probably did not *really* know the truth of their interpretation.

The preceding information reveals that perceptually, Bush II and his Vulcans understood Saddam's regime as that of a monster terrorist, which

meant that procedurally, if no other way was found to address Saddam, war was required. This suggests that Gulf War II was, at least in part, implementation of the anti-terrorism public *délire*. So elimination of terrorism was a *délire* in each of the wars the US Leviathan fought against Saddam. Were the security elites successful in their anti-terrorist warring?

They certainly eliminated Saddam. However, Saddam had kept al-Qaeda out of Iraq. After his demise in 2003, al-Qaeda in Iraq, led by the Jordanian Abu Musab al Zaqawi, was formed to resist the Americans. It became influential during the occupation. Its powers were curbed by the time of the surge but were never completely eliminated. Al-Qaeda in Iraq became a magnet for foreign Islamic radicals from throughout the Middle East and other Muslim areas, providing them with training and experience in insurgency. These radicals tended to return to their home countries and in turn diffuse al-Qaeda doctrines and warring skills. This grew terrorism, according to two NIE reports in 2006 (Mazzetti 2006). How much the Iraq War contributed to the growth of terrorism has been debated, but support that this was the case has come from journalists (Priest 2005), scholars (Gunaratna 2004), security research institutes such as the International Institute for Strategic Studies (Sengupta 2004), and US intelligence agencies (NIE 2006, 2009[30]). Bluntly, the empire increased terrorism by warring to fight it.

The preceding established that the twenty-year imperial war in Iraq involved implementing the oil-control and anti-terrorist iterations of the global domination public *délire*. In the implementation of later iteration, it might be added, a violent grab for energy force resources believed able to facilitate reproduction of the US Leviathan was cloaked in the noble light of purging terrorist monsters from the world. Of course the Security Elites 3.0 could only attack the Saddamite when they believed that nonviolent ways of achieving their intentions had failed. The following section investigates the hermeneutic politics that led to the awarding of Shultzian Permission in Gulf War II.

The Conflict that Led to the Conflict: The Hermeneutics Politics of Shultzian Permission in Gulf War II

"Mr. President, this force is ready. D-day H-Hours is 2100 hours tonight Iraqi time…"

President Bush nodded to the NSC, then, turned toward me.

"All right. For the sake of peace in the world.… As of this moment I will give Secretary Rumsfeld the order to execute Operation Iraqi Freedom."

"Tommy," The President added, his voice firm, "May God bless the troops." (Franks 2004: xvi–xvii)

"Tommy" was CENTCOM Commander General Tommy Franks, sitting in the conference room of his headquarters in Doha, Qatar. The president, of course, was Dubya, thousands of miles away in Washington, sitting with the Vulcans of the National Security Council. "For the sake of peace" the "order to execute" did just that: it began Gulf War II and executed hundreds of thousands of people, most of them civilians. It has already been suggested that the Vulcans proceeded on the basis of the two oil- and anti-terrorist public *délires,* but a question remains: why did the actually give themselves Shultzian Permission? This had to do with the hermeneutic politics of a very restricted circle of Vulcans, discussed next.

Remember, Bush was the "decider." Further, understand that the president largely took his decisions from the Vulcans, within whose *délires* he was hermetically sealed. Actually, the choice to war occurred within an inner circle of the inner circle of Vulcans. Five made Gulf War II—the NSA, Rice; the Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld: the Vice President, Cheney; the Secretary of State, Colin Powell; and the Director of the CIA, George Tenet.

These actors' relationships to each other, and to Bush, varied. Cheney originally had the closest ties to the president. As Dubya once told Bob Woodward, "I love Cheney" (in Woodward 2004: 420).[31] Rumsfeld "impressed" Bush (2010: 84), who found he had a "captivating vision" for the defense department. One wonders what was "captivating" about an institution whose practice was to slaughter enormous numbers. Nevertheless, Bush saw Rumsfeld as having "strength and experience," and besides, Cheney "recommended him strongly" (ibid.). Rumsfeld and Cheney were a "secret cabal"—as Powell's State Department Chief of Staff, Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson, put it (Froomkin 2005)—in "alliance" throughout Bush II's presidency (Gordon and Trainor 2006: 44) in a collaboration dating from the Ford administration.

Rice, as the title of her memoirs made clear, found "no higher honor" than in serving Bush II (Rice 2011). Gordon and Trainor (2006: 168) found her to be "more coordinator than maestro" as compared to her NSA predecessors Kissinger and Brzezinski. She seems to have believed her task was to divine Dubya's *délire* and then help deliver it. Secretary Powell's Chief of Staff Wilkerson claimed in a 2005 speech that Rice, aiming to strengthen her closeness with the president instead of transmitting the best possible advice, would send what she believed Dubya wanted to hear (Froomkin 2005).[32]

Tenet's relations to Bush resembled those of Rice, though for different reasons. The CIA director had also been Clinton's final head of the agency. Bush found he "spoke bluntly" and grew to like the "blue-collar," "cigar-chomping," "Greek-to-the-core" guy (Bush 2010: 84). Others have

reported that Tenet strove energetically to win Dubya's backing (B. Woodward 2004: 67–68). He had to. The Office of the Inspector General (OIG 2005: vii) had examined CIA operations prior to 9/11 and concluded, "the Director of Central Intelligence," Tenet, "was either unwilling or unable to marshal the full range of … resources necessary to combat" terrorism. Thus condemned as "unwilling or unable," Clinton's man had to work harder to please Bush II.[33]

As for Powell, I once met a grandmother, a knowing matriarch, who as a child had played with Powell's sister. He was the little brat brother who tagged along. They used to put him in the closet. In a sense, the story told below concerns what happened to Powell after he got out of the sisters' clutches, going from the closet to the refrigerator. Bush's relations with Powell were, according to Rice (2011: 20), "complicated," which puts the matter mildly. Importantly, Powell had "extraordinary stature" and had been spoken of as a candidate for the presidency (ibid.: 21). Further, he had had far more political and military experience at the highest levels of Washington than had the president. So regardless of whether or not he intended it, Secretary of State Powell was the president's competitor. Bush II, for his part, had lost the popular election and only been granted the presidency—illicitly, many believed.

Make no mistake about it: neither Rumsfeld nor Cheney liked Powell. Rice (2011: 22) observed that "Don and Colin did not get along," which "the President knew." Cheney, according to Bob Woodward (2004: 411), insisted "Colin always had major reservations about what we were trying to do." Gordon and Trainor (2006: 44) believe that "Cheney's alliance with Rumsfeld allowed him to set the terms of the policy debate," leaving Powell "the odd man out."

Tenet (2004), reflecting on the time when it was decided to attack Iraq, has said, "There was never a serious debate that I know of within the administration about the imminence of the Iraqi threat." That is, there may never have been discussion of the "imminence" of danger from Saddam, in the sense of when it might occur. However, in addition to personal animosities toward each other, members of the inner circle had opposing views of what to do about the "threat." These differences were the conflict that led to the conflict.

Gordon and Trainor (2006: 44) revealed the heart of these differences when they observed, "Bush had picked Cheney and Rumsfeld for a number of reasons and their tough-minded approach to the exercise of power was one of them. It was a troika. The president would preside, the Vice President would guide, and the defense secretary would implement." "Tough-minded" meant pro-war, and as Cheney told the world on national television just after 9/11, this would be war working on "the dark side"

(Cheney 2011: 335). Going to the "dark side" meant a number of things to Cheney and Rumsfeld, one of which was having their underlings run campaigns to provoke conflict with Iraq. The key underlings working for Rumsfeld were Wolfowitz, Feith, and Pearle; Scooter Libby was the most important of those working for Cheney. Going to the "dark side" also meant utilizing unlawful forms of extreme violence. Bush II would become the first president in US history to authorize torture of captured prisoners.[34]

It is sometimes said that Powell opposed going to war in Iraq. Powell's differences with Cheney and Rumsfeld were more nuanced than that. He agreed with Cheney and Rumsfeld that Saddam was a thug. He also agreed that the regime probably had WMDs. So he shared with them the perception that Iraq was a menace. Nevertheless, speaking in 2007, Powell (2007) remembered, "I tried to avoid this war." This was because he was troubled by the way Cheney and Rumsfeld proposed to address Iraq. The basis for this foreboding was his professional soldier's worry about what the "secret cabal" planned to do. As Gordon and Trainor (2006: 577) observe, "Rumsfeld and Franks dominated the [war] planning" and Cheney "never once challenged the realism of Rumsfeld's expectations." Powell recognized flaws in the plans well before combat began. Specifically, he "raised both the issue of insufficient troops and the difficulties the U.S. would encounter in post war Iraq" (ibid.).[35] Following his experiences in Vietnam, he had formulated what became known as the Powell Doctrine, first articulated during preparation for Gulf War I (C. Powell 1992).

This doctrine has a number of elements. Two are basic: the resort to violent force should only occur after all peaceful means are exhausted; and when this happens, overwhelming force should be applied. The first element accepts the validity of Shultzian Permission as a condition for commencing hostilities, while the second reflects the belief among some in the US military that such tactics will reduce US casualties and shorten hostilities. In planning for Gulf War II, General Franks, Cheney, and Rumsfeld violated the Powell Doctrine in two ways. First, they proposed to go directly to war without seeking Shultzian Permission. As a soldier, and perhaps due to the success of the coalition he helped build as chief of staff during Gulf War I, Powell appreciated that seeking such permission facilitated alliance-building, which helped with the fighting and insured its legitimacy. Second, Franks and his colleagues did not plan for applying overwhelming force. Rather, they sought "a revolution in war" by using relatively few US soldiers in what was termed a "turbo-blitzkreig." From Powell's perspective, this was unrealistic because it did not anticipate post-conflict difficulties, such as the possibility of insurgency.

So, the Powell versus Cheney/Rumsfeld debate was not over interpretations of perceptions. According to Powell (2012: 222), "None of us knew

that much of the evidence was wrong," the "evidence" being the proof of the existence of WMDs.[36] Everybody perceived Saddam had WMDs, knew he had used them, and so was a monster who should go. The dispute was over procedure. How was he to go? Here, considerable differences led to hermeneutic politics that ended in the granting of Shultzian Permission, which ultimately ushered in Gulf War II. Let us follow the course of the (hermeneutic) conflict that led to the (violent) conflict.

Granting Shultzian Permission: The inner-circle conflict was most rancorous between Powell and Cheney. The stage was set for acrimony probably immediately after 9/11. Cheney (2011: 369) reports that in the emotional days following the destruction of the World Trade Center, he "spoke … privately" to the president:

> I was aware that Secretary Rumsfeld had set up a process to review all Department of Defense war plans, and I suggested to the president that it would be useful to make certain that Rumsfeld had assigned priority to planning for possible military action against Saddam Hussein. … I also suggested that our planning be … under the command of General Tommy Franks.

Bush accepted Cheney's "suggestion" and asked Rumsfeld to start planning for war in Iraq, "two months after 9/11" (Bush 2010: 234). Almost immediately afterward on 27 November, Rumsfeld told Franks to begin developing an Iraq war plan (Franks 2004: 329). Bush (2010: 234) is careful to say in his war memoirs that this planning was not necessarily to actually go to war; rather, it was "the coercive half of coercive diplomacy." It is impossible to discern at this point whether Bush is telling the truth about coercive diplomacy, or whether he and Cheney in their private conversations actually intended to go to war all along. Nevertheless, two months after 9/11 the formulation of the plans that would be used against Iraq was initiated.

Powell, his "megastar wattage" notwithstanding, was already in trouble. In the first sixteen months of Dubya's administration he and Armitage joked about how he (Powell) was "in the refrigerator" (B. Woodward 2004: 149). The press noticed this and suggested the secretary of state was on the way out. Not only was he a nonentity, but as Mitchell and Massoud (2009: 275) judge, "By directing Rumsfeld to work on an invasion plan, Bush gave an advantage to the pro-war faction. … This meant that Powell" was "further hamstrung in trying to influence the policy process." Cheney, Franks, and Rumsfeld kept the actual invasion planning between themselves and the president. Bush (2010: 235) recalls that Franks briefed him about war planning "more than a dozen times" between December 2001 and August 2002. The details for invading Iraq were well under way, and Powell was chilling in the fridge.

In the spring of 2002, Cheney (2011: 380–81) "began hearing … that Secretary Powell and Deputy Secretary Armitage were not only failing to support the president's policies, but were openly disdainful of them"—information likely to have been passed on to Bush II. For Powell, it looked like he was being moved from the refrigerator to the freezer. Powell (2007) remembered that, hoping to strengthen his position, "I went to the president in August of 2002, after coming back from a trip and seeing all the planning that was under way, and we had a long meeting upstairs in the residence." This meeting, which took place on 5 August between himself, Rice, and the president, has come to be known as the "Pottery Barn" meeting. At it Powell used the pro-war cabal's understanding that they were conducting coercive diplomacy to begin a string of events that resulted in the granting of Shultzian Permission, and war.

Powell's rhetorical tactics at the meeting appear to have been meant to inform the president of the frightening consequences of invading Iraq.[37] At one point, he told Bush that if the hostilities were successful, "'You are going to be the proud owner of 25 million people,' and 'You will own all their hopes, aspirations and problems. You'll own it all'" (in B. Woodward 2004: 150). The press called this the "Pottery Barn rule." Retail stores selling fragile ceramics and earthenware, like those in the Pottery Barn chain, can have a "you break it, you own it" rule, meaning that if you break it, you must pay for it. Broken pottery was a metonym for all the damage invasion might cause in Iraq, and a warning to Bush that if he broke the stuff, he would have to pay.[38]

Bush (2010: 238) recalled of the meeting, "I listened carefully and shared Colin's concern." Woodward says that Bush eventually inquired, "What should I do?" (2004: 151), to which Powell responded, "You can still make a pitch for a coalition or U.N. action," cautioning that "if you take it to the U.N., you've got to recognize that they might be able to solve it" (ibid.). What taking "it to the U.N." actually meant during the Pottery Barn meeting was probably left unclear, though it would have been understood that it included asking the Security Council to conduct inspections for WMDs. Bush did not commit to going the UN route at the meeting, but he certainly leaned toward it.

There followed a month of fierce hermeneutic politics during which, in General Franks's somewhat amazed terms, the "Washington bureaucracy fought like cats in a sack" (Aslam 2013: 69), the two chief combatants being Cheney and Powell debating whether to go to the UN. Bob Woodward (2004: 155), with long and detailed knowledge of the capital's intrigues, reports, "Rarely … had there been such deep division within a national security team as between Cheney and Powell." The dogfighting commenced at a 14 August NSC principals' meeting from which the president was

absent. During the meeting Powell argued for going to the UN. Woodward writes, "Powell believed he had Cheney boxed in, and to a lesser extent Rumsfeld. He argued that even if anyone felt that war was the only solution, they could not get to war without first trying a diplomatic solution" (ibid.: 156). In a sense, Powell was saying they could only grant themselves Shultzian Permission if peaceful, that is, diplomatic measures had been tried and failed. Powell believed, according to Woodward, that Cheney was "terrified" of the prospect of going to the UN because going diplomatic "might work," so he "harangued" against the UN, saying that dealing with it would lead to "a never-ending process of debate" (ibid.: 157).

The 14 August meeting resolved nothing. However, the next day the *Wall Street Journal* ran a piece by Bush I's close associate and former NSA Brent Scowcroft, headlined "Don't Attack Saddam," that recommended taking the Iraq problem to the UN. It appeared that the father was sending the son a message, one Cheney did not want to hear. "Boxed in," the vice president went out and delivered the 26 August speech to the Veterans of Foreign War in which he announced that there was "no doubt" that Iraq had WMDs. This led to a Labor Day (1 September) meeting at the White House between Powell and the president, with Rice present as usual. Worried about the effects of Cheney's speech, Powell asked Dubya if it was his policy that inspectors should return to Iraq. The president responded yes, "though he was skeptical that inspections would work" (ibid.: 167). Powell was relieved, believing that at least for the moment Cheney was "neutralized" (ibid.). However, ominously, WHIG was formed two days later to make the case that Saddam had WMDs.

On 6 September there was a principals meeting at Camp David, again in the president's absence. The principals were to consider the UN issue and the upcoming summit meeting with the UK prime minister before the full NSC meeting the next day. Once again, Cheney did not trust the UN and Powell did, so the "conversation exploded into a tough debate" (ibid.: 175). Powell remembered that Cheney argued with a "fever" and that he was "beyond hell bent for action against Saddam" (ibid.). However, "the decider" was absent, so no decision could be taken. The next day the "decider" was there to meet with the NSC principals. Powell once again argued for the need "to offer a plan to begin inspections again as part of any reengagement with the U.N." Cheney listed all the reasons this "could mire them in a tar pit" (ibid.: 176). Tenet (2007: 319), recalling the meeting, said Bush "pretty much let them duke it out." Woodward (2004: 176) reported that Bush thanked the debaters and "promised to think about it."

As Rice (2011: 181) observed, "Some people have claimed that the president never asked his advisors whether he should go to war against Saddam." Solicitous of Bush's memory, she disagreed, declaring that the

7 September meeting "was the culmination of the debate that had been playing out over the summer," which finally "decided on a course of action" (ibid.: 180). The verdict came in obliquely as the president announced what Saddam's response to renewed inspections would be: "Either he will come clean about his weapons, or there will be war" (quoted ibid.: 181). Later that day, Bush met with UK Prime Minister Tony Blair. He informed Bush that in order to achieve parliamentary consent for war in Iraq, he had to first go to the UN. Bush knew the UK was likely to be his only major ally, one that would deliver a substantial number of soldiers and weapons. So he informed "Blair he had decided to go to the U.N." (ibid.: 178).

The "decider" had decided. They would go to the UN. Powell had won, for the moment. It is important to grasp just what was chosen. It was a procedure to resolve whether, or not, peaceful means of settling the argument with Saddam had been exhausted and Shultzian Permission could be granted. Bush was clear. If Saddam did not "come clean" there would be war. War preparations continued. Bush told Blair where he stood on the matter at the summit, affirming, "Saddam Hussein has weapons of mass destruction" (in B. Woodward 2004: 178). On 8 September, WHIG organized the entire Vulcan inner circle to appear on the Sunday talk shows to excoriate Saddam and insist he possessed WMDs. This was when Rice told the world that the smoking gun of Saddam's WMDs might be a mushroom cloud (ibid.: 2002). That autumn US "troops and supplies" began moving to the region (Cheney 2011: 438).

Now that they had decided to go to the UN, they had to actually do it. This was Powell's job, and it involved negotiations with the UN that were made difficult by what were considered the US's bellicose intentions. Nevertheless, the negotiations were successful and resulted in the 8 November UNSC Resolution 1441, which gave Iraq a final chance to comply with its disarmament requirements by providing a "complete accounting of all aspects" of its WMD programs and allowing UN inspectors immediate and unrestricted access to these programs. Iraq had thirty days to comply and was warned that it faced serious consequences if it failed.

Some Bush security elites made efforts to make clear to Iraq that this was Saddam's last chance. General Franks (2004: 407), for example, remembered how, during a visit with Yemen's President Ali Abdullah Saleh, who had ties to Saddam, he asked Ali to tell Saddam that "he should cooperate with the UN immediately." On 27 November, UN inspectors led by Hans Blix, head of the UN Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission, and Mohamed El Baradai, head of the International Atomic Energy Commission, entered Iraq. Iraq responded to Resolution 1441 on 7 December, within the required time frame, sending the Security Council a 12,000-page declaration that it lacked WMDs. On 27 January, Blix

spoke publicly about Iraq's compliance with Resolution 1441 to the Security Council, announcing, "Iraq appears not to have come to a genuine acceptance—not even today—of the disarmament" (Blix 2003).

The Vulcan inner circle smelled blood. Rice (2011: 186) believed "Saddam seemed to be playing games with inspectors." Rumsfeld (2011: 442) dismissed Iraq's declaration as "contemptuously incomplete." Franks (2004: 417) thought the problem was that the Iraq declaration "was basically a collection of papers judged false in the 1990s." At an 18 December NSC meeting, as remembered by Feith, the president observed, "It's clear that Saddam is not cooperating," to which Powell responded, "That's right" (in Feith 2008: 339). Yet it seems that Rice was the person who convinced Bush that Saddam had not confessed. Dubya (2010: 251) recollected in his memoirs that "she had been a strong supporter of inspections. But after meeting with Blix and his team, she was convinced Saddam would do nothing but stall." Woodward (2004: 251) reports that during the Christmas holidays of 2002, there "was a lot of stress." Bush told him, "I would constantly talk to Condi."

During one of these tête-a-têtes, the conversation went: "'What do you think?' the president asked Rice, 'Should we do this?' He meant war. … 'Yes,' she said" (ibid.). Gates tells readers in his defense secretary memoir that Rice reported that "the fact is we invaded Iraq because we believed we had run out of other options. The sanctions were not working, the inspections were unsatisfactory, and we could not get Saddam to leave by other means" (Rice in Gates 2014: 27). When Rice insisted they had "run out of options," she meant peaceful ones. Thus Shultzian Permission could be given and her president's stress relieved, and "Yes," they could go to war.

On 16 March, three days before the start of the invasion, Cheney was asked on the nationwide television program *Meet the Press* whether Saddam's 7 December declaration was a true confession that Iraq possessed no WMDs. To some extent the confession Saddam was being asked to make resembled those demanded of persons accused of witchcraft in medieval and early modern Europe (Thurston 2001): the accused (usually women) were told to admit their witchcraft, whereupon refusal to confess was judged further proof of guilt and reason for burning at the stake. Bush and his Vulcans appear to have expected Saddam to perform a ritual of public confession of his WMDs. Saddam, not having any WMDs, did nothing of the sort. So when asked whether Saddam had made a true confession, the vice president responded, "We asked for a declaration of all of his WMD [so he would] come clean. He refused to do that. He's, again, continued to do everything he could to thwart the inspectors" (Cheney 2003).

The hermeneutic politics had come down to a public ritual during which the Iraqi president was to confess to WMDs. The 7 December "Declara-

tion" denied possession of such weapons. The inner circle of Vulcans interpreted this to mean he did not "come clean." So the granting of Shultzian Permission was appropriate. Many, many innocent Iraqi were burned at a figurative stake of US military operations. A year later Blix changed his mind and declared that 700 inspections had occurred in Iraq and none had found WMDs. Further, he announced that during this time the US government had had the "same mind-frame as witch-hunters of the past" (in Azab Powell 2004). It is time to review the narrative just presented.

Each of the three stages of the Iraq War—Gulf War I, the War of Blockades, and Gulf War II—can be accounted for in part as a result of the implementation of the oil control and anti-terrorist iterations of the global domination public *dêlire.* Furthermore, there is evidence that in Gulf War II that the actual triggering of hostilities was due to a hermeneutic politics pitting the secretary of state against the other members of the inner circle over whether the violations of the oil and anti-terrorist public *dêlires* could be diplomatically resolved. The inner circle believed Saddam had not "come clean" and interpreted this to mean that peaceful diplomacy was impossible, which allowed them to award themselves Shultzian Permission.

The war that followed was a preemptive war of aggression—preemptive, because it was supposed that Iraq intended to harm America; aggressive, because the US invaded Iraq. Iraq, already crushed by Gulf War I and the War of Blockades, had neither the intention nor the means to attack America. Because it was a war of aggression, it was a crime under international law. Recollect that Robert Jackson, the chief American prosecutor at the Nuremburg Tribunal, had classified wars of aggression as "the supreme international crime." Recall additionally that although the figures for Iraq civilian deaths and injuries during Gulf War II vary, they do so at high levels—from hundreds of thousands to millions killed and wounded.

Moreover, the three phases of US global warring with Iraq actually left the Hawks' and Vulcans' *délires* frustrated. With regard to fighting terrorism, they may have eliminated Saddam, but they allowed al-Qaeda into Iraq, where it had never been before, and where the Islamic State has grown. With regard to controlling oil, the wars appear to be, as Greg Muttitt puts it, a case of "mission unaccomplished," with Chinese oil companies a primary beneficiary of the US warring.

Finally, the evidence concerning the Iraq War is consistent with the global warring hypothesis. Prior to and during the global warring, there was intensification and coalescence of the cyclical, the land/capital, and the dominator/dominated contradictions. Shultzian Permission was granted in Gulf War I and the War of Blockades because hostilities were already ongoing when the US intervened; and in Gulf War II because, as Rice put it, they had run out of peaceful "options." Bush I, Clinton, and Bush II saw to

it that the global warrings they executed were implementations of the anti-terrorist and the oil-control public *délires*. Obama, as Gates (2014: 297) has reported, has claimed that the US ended the war in Iraq "responsibly." Perhaps, but consider what the US Leviathan was responsible for. Its myrmidons came, butchered (perhaps over a million people), and cut and ran.

The Iraq War was but one of a number imperial wars during the changing of millenniums. Attention now turns to another Persian Gulf hostility in a "fairyland" where there is a lot of oil and there has been a lot of global warring.

Twilight Warring in "Fairyland": 1994–2013

Winston Churchill, who helped the UK acquire control over Iran's oil industry in the early twentieth century, in words of condescension and, perhaps, sexual innuendo, called this acquisition "a prize from fairyland beyond our wildest dreams" (in Kinzer 2008: xi).[39] We have already seen how the US engaged in global warring against "fairyland" in 1953 and again during the Iran-Iraq War. According to David Crist (2012: 572), a former US military officer with combat experience in the Persian Gulf, after 1979 there were "three decades of twilight war." By "twilight" warring Crist meant relatively small-scale, largely indirect, clandestine global warring. Ari Ratner (2012), of the United States Institute of Peace, has spoken of a "covert war" between the US and Iran during the Bush II and Obama administrations. Actually, information on the period under review points to indirect, overt and covert global warring beginning during the Clinton administration in 1994 and continuing through 2013, which warring is evaluated below.

Twilight Warring

During his inaugural address in January 1989, Bush I announced to Iran that "goodwill begets goodwill" (in Haass 2010). From the American perspective, Iran did not respond with much "goodwill," especially because Khomeini's officials dragged their heels about freeing American hostages held by Iran-backed Hezbollah. Of course, from the Iranians' vantage point Bush I's 1990 awarding of the Legion of Merit to Will Rogers III, who had downed the civilian Iranian airliner at the end of the Iran-Iraq War, did not seem an act of "goodwill." There were numerous complications between the two countries. However, according to Richard Haass (2010), who was George H. W. Bush's special assistant (1989–1993), "The U.S.-Iran relationship was largely stagnant during the Bush administra-

tion." As it stands, this assertion is correct but misleading, for the inertia was of a particular sort. During the Bush I years, as had been the case since the elimination of the US-imposed shah, ill will begat ill will. So what remained stagnant, in the words of Donald Rumsfeld (2011: 4), was that "U.S.-Iran relations" were "poisoned."

Rumsfeld (2011: 638–39) notes in his memoirs that "every American administration since the Iranian revolution has participated in some form of diplomatic engagement with" Iran. However, recall that he believed such diplomacy to be "poisoned." Steven Kinzer (2008: xviii–xix) identified the toxin when he observed that "the American political class has never recovered from the shock of losing the Shah and the humiliation of the hostage crisis that followed." The poison is "humiliation," and US security elites, having drunk deeply of it, are impelled to stealth violence against Iran whenever they think they can get away with it, in effect granting themselves Shultzian Permission against Tehran.

During the Clinton administration this violence involved two sorts of global warring: blockades and CIA covert operations. Washington had been sanctioning Iran since 1979 and the taking of US embassy hostages. Under Clinton the sanctioning became considerably more onerous in the spring of 1995, when he signed Executive Order 12957, barring any trade with Iran's petroleum industry, and Executive Order 12959, prohibiting any US trade with Iran. A year later, the US Congress passed the Iran-Libya Sanctions Act, which punished all foreign companies that invested in Iranian hydrocarbons. Additionally, in 1995 the Clinton administration allocated 18–20 million dollars for covert operations inside Iran. This money was in principle to be used as part of the administration's dual containment policy.[40] The exact operations of this "containment" are unclear, but Tehran would probably have regarded all of them as hostile. So, by the mid 1990s the New American Empire was globally warring in Iran, largely by blockading its oil sector—its greatest source of wealth—while running covert operations.

The Bush II administration had its hands full dealing with its invasion of Iraq. As part of it, the Vulcans had to confront a "counter invasion of Iraq" from Iran that "followed shortly after the American attack. MOIS and Quds force officers arrived in southern Iraq on the heels of U.S. tanks driving north to Baghdad" (Crist 2012: 468). The MOIS was Iran's Ministry of Intelligence and National Security, the Iranian equivalent of the CIA. The Quds Force was a special unit of Iran's Revolutionary Guard, which by the 1990s had become a "blend of U.S. Special Operations and the Peace Corps" (Crist 2012: 468). The combination of MOIS and Quds Force strengthened Shiite rebellion against the American occupation. How would Bush II's Vulcans respond?

Evidence circulated in 2006 of U.S. covert military operations inside Iran aimed at destabilizing the country. When this covert warfare began is unknown, but it is clear that in 2007 the Bush II administration allocated $400 million to increase it (S. Hersh 2006). How this money was spent is uncertain. It appears U.S. commandos were ordered into Iran to establish contact with Kurdish, Baloch, and Arab ethnic groups that opposed the Iranian government. There were charges that the U.S. was using the Mujahedin el Khalg, an opposition movement in exile that advocated the Islamic Republic of Iran's overthrow, to conduct cross-border operations between Iraq and Iran (Bergman 2008). It is known that drone missions over Iran were initiated, as was Operation Olympic Games, a program for cyber attacks on Iran's nuclear program. It can be speculated that at least some of the covert funds went to media campaigns against the Tehran regime and to dissenting members of its governing elite. In sum, probably starting around 2005, the US had considerably escalated covert global warfare against Iran, though instead of using the Iraqi state as its proxy as it had during the Iran-Iraq War of the 1980s, it now appeared to be relying upon its own covert operations.[41]

Obama, largely because of his Iran adventures, was labeled "George W. Bush on steroids" by one critic (A. Miller 2012). Such a designation seems melodramatic. Nevertheless, his regime did further escalate global warring against Iran. It added new and broader sanctions against Tehran designed to hinder all sectors of its economy, especially its financial sector. It has also pressed the UN and individual countries to impose their own sanctions upon Tehran. Consequently, Iran faced a harsh sanction regime intended to strangle economic life by blockade. This was only one aspect of the New American Empire's violent operations against the country.

Obama's Security Elites 3.0 have specialized in covert campaigns of "high-tech sabotage" (Ratner 2012). They took the Bush II administration's Olympic Games to a new level of performance. Apparently in collaboration with the Israelis, a computer virus called Stuxnet was developed and deployed in 2009 and 2010. It was designed to, and did, destroy centrifuges in Iran's nuclear program.[42] The Obama security elites have had an elective affinity for drones, whose use in Iran has seemingly been largely for intelligence purposes. Iranian facilities (refineries, pipelines, and a missile development center) have had a high rate of explosions; Iranian nuclear physicists have been assassinated on the streets of Tehran (probably by Israeli agents); and US Special Ops teams have been inserted in several places for undisclosed covert goals. So it is clear a "twilight war" began under Clinton, strengthened under Bush II, and intensified still further under Obama, posing the question of what the fighting was all about. This brings

the analysis back to the anti-terrorist and the oil-control iterations of the global domination public *délire.*

The Anti-terrorist Public Délire

Iran may be "fairyland," but according to the Security Elites 3.0, "fairyland" is a bastion of terrorism. Katzman (2010: 26–37) catalogs the extent of Iran's terrorist activities, as recorded by the US government. During Clinton's presidency his NSA Anthony Lake proposed that some countries were "rogue states" because, among other things, they sponsored terrorism. Rogue states were to be isolated and punished. Lake labeled Iran a prime example of such a rogue. Bush II continued this theme in 2002, when in a speech he branded Iran (along with Iraq and North Korea) part of an Axis of Evil for its state support of terrorism. As Obama's Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton (2007) condemned Iran as "the country that most sponsors state terrorism." Iran's purported nuclear weapons program has especially concerned US imperial elites since the Bush II administration.[43] Thus, the New American Empire's attacks on Iran have been entirely consistent with implementation of the anti-terrorist public *délire.*

The Oil-Control Public Délire

In 2007 Iran was the fourth largest oil producer. It has the fourth largest oil reserves, slightly ahead of Iraq. Global warring against Iran might contribute to maintaining or increasing US imperial control over oil, securing a number of the different types of control. However, making this happen would require regime change, with a new government returning Iran to US client status. First, consider the positive potential of global warring for the New US Empire's control over access to oil. Kinzer (2008: xiii) has reported that "those who like the idea" of attacking Tehran believe it will "allow American oil companies free access to Iranian petroleum" because it would facilitate re-entry of both US oil production and oil-support firms into the Iranian petroleum industry. Another potential consequence of such fighting is that it could prevent Tehran from subverting either Kuwait or Saudi Arabia in ways that restrict their production and/or prevent US oil companies from doing business there, as the State Department and Pentagon feared was possible during Khomeini's rule (Kinzer 2008). A decrease in Kuwaiti or Saudi Arabian production would roil both the supply and the price of oil. Yet another possible consequence of such fighting is that it could facilitate distribution of oil. The Iranian navy can mine the Strait of Hormuz—the point where the Persian Gulf opens onto the sea-lanes to Europe, the US, and Asia—through which roughly 40 percent of

the world's oil flows. A successful closure of shipping at the choke point of the strait would gravely disrupt the movement of oil to its markets. During the Iran-Iraq War, Tehran did mine the Strait of Hormuz. However, the US Navy's Operation Praying Mantis in 1988 removed the mines, proving it feasible to use naval force to keep sea-lanes open.

An additional positive potential of US global warring against Iran is that it could help the Security Elites 3.0 pay strategic rents. Should Tehran return to being a client in the US imperial system, then control over Iranian oil will provide the US elites with "carrots and sticks" to utilize as strategic rents. Provision of the "carrot" of access to Iranian oil to another country would constitute payment to that country of rent equal to the amount of money its companies earn in the Iranian petroleum sector. Meanwhile, the wielding of the "stick" of denying access to Iranian oil to another country would constitute a potential cost to the client equal to the amount its companies could earn if they had access to Iranian oil.

Third, global warring could help the US Security Elites 3.0 maintain the dollar as the world's reserve currency. Like Baghdad, Tehran had planned an oil bourse based on euros rather than dollars (W. R. Clark 2005: 150–157), and it opened in 2008. This threatened the petrodollar. Regime change might well eliminate the Iranian oil bourse, facilitating the dollar's continuation as the world's reserve currency. Such information is consistent with the view that Security Elites 3.0 have conducted overt war and covert war to implement the oil-control public *délire*.

US security elites 3.0 have been conducting "twilight" global warring in "fairyland" since 1990. Since the 1990s the US Leviathan has faced intensification and coalescence of the cyclical, land/capital, and dominator/dominated contradictions. Shultzian Permission has been de facto granted since the debacle of the US embassy hostage-taking and subsequent failure to rescue them. The hostilities appear to be an implementation of the anti-terrorist and oil-control public *délires.* This is evidence consistent with the global warring hypothesis.

Unfortunately, from the perspective of the US Leviathan's masters and commanders, this global warring has been disappointing. There has been no regime change in Tehran. If anything, the Iranian political elites' rancor toward the New American Empire has deepened. The insistence upon warring via blockades has, according to one source, led to a "growing tension between the US and its international allies and rivals" (Howard 2007: xii), "undermining" the Leviathan's "global power" (ibid.: 23). This is because of the sanctions that oblige countries to forgo economic activities with Iran, including those in the petroleum sector. Sanctions equally burden the US economy. American companies estimate that they cost US business $19 billion a year and on the order of 250,000 jobs (ibid.: 57). The

Iranian nuclear program has not been substantially harmed by US-Israeli cyber attacks on it.

Worse, US covert warring against Iran has contributed to the formation of a "Shiite Necklace." Alliances might be imagined as necklaces, with countries the jewels in the strands of an alliance. The empire's global warring in the Middle East spurred the forging of an alliance involving Shiite Iran and other countries with Shiite populations that oppose US domination. The biggest gem in the necklace is Iran. Oil-rich Iraq, also predominantly Shiite, is another rich jewel in the necklace. Iran encouraged closer cooperation with Iraq once the US's removal of Saddam and his Sunni government allowed the majority Shiites to take power—a result of US warring there. The Iraqi government was delighted to enter into this cooperation as a way of resisting US occupation. Together, Iran and Iraq boast enormous oil reserves (294.3 billion barrels). Syria is a third jewel in the necklace. Since the 1990s its government has "built increasingly close ties" with Iran (Rumsfeld 2011: 640). The fourth jewel is Lebanon's powerful Hezbollah, the most effective paramilitary in the world, which has received Iranian financial and military support since the 1980s. The Shiite Necklace stretches from Iran's border with Pakistan and Afghanistan in the east to Lebanon's Mediterranean shoreline in the west. It has strengthened due to US warring since the 1990s, with Iraq and Syria being strung more securely on it, and has become a powerful bloc contesting the Middle East with the US Leviathan.

This leads to the question of why the US has not exercised greater violent force against Iran. After all, the potential benefits of controlling its oil are significant. Consider, however, that Iran is the eighteenth largest country in the world in terms of landmass, and much of it is rugged and mountainous, that is, ideal for guerilla operations. It has almost 80 million people, and in the Iran-Iraq War it demonstrated its ability to war for long periods over large areas. It has allies, especially Hezbollah, that allow it to strike widely in the Middle East. Recently, Austin Long and William Luers (2013) summarized the results of a study analyzing the costs and benefits of overt, direct warfare against the Islamic republic. The resulting document was endorsed by thirty-two major security elites ranging from former NSAs to senators to a State Department official and a gaggle of generals, including a former commander of CENTCOM. It judged that extensive military strikes against Iran would set back Iran's nuclear program for about "four years" (ibid: 9)—in other words, not very much—and "would increase Iran's motivation to build a bomb" (ibid.: 12). Further, occupation of Iran "would require" more violent force resources than "the U.S. has expended over the past ten years in the Iraq and Iran wars" (ibid.: 10). Churchill may have been right about "fairyland" in a manner he did not understand.

"Fairyland" *appears* to be a "prize" "beyond" the US security elite's "wildest dreams." The narrative now turns to a third area of US global warring in the Middle East. Once again, it is Libya.

Once Again Libya, 2011: "A Model Intervention"?

When we last left the tale, Gaddafi, who termed himself the Brother Leader, had been condemned by Reagan's security elites as a terrorist monster. Attempts to destroy him had failed, though readers were warned that he faced troubles ahead. These came in February 2011 in the form of an Arab Spring rebellion against his regime. The US and its European allies sided with the rebels as part of a liberal hawk "responsibility to protect" (R2P) hermeneutic to rid Libyans of their monster. It was an intervention that Ivo Daalder, a former NSC member and permanent US Representative to NATO, and Admiral James Stavridis, a commander of EUCOM and NATO, "hailed as a model intervention" (Daalder and Stavridis 2012: 2).

Hostilities commenced in February 2011. They were effectively over by 20 October, the date Gaddafi was killed. Upon learning of Gaddafi's death, Hillary Clinton, then Obama's Secretary of State, jovially channeled Julius Caesar by quipping, "We came. We saw. He died" (in Daly 2011). Perhaps she should have said, "We came. We saw. We sodomized." The Brother Leader, whom the rebels called Abu Shafshufa ("Old Fuzzhead"), was trying to escape in a convoy. After it was strafed by NATO planes, Old Fuzzhead was captured—dragged from the culvert he was hiding in as one rebel attempted to thrust a knife in his anus (Shelton 2011)—and shot.[44] Let us analyze this "model intervention," especially as it pertains to the anti-terrorist and oil-control iterations of the global domination public *délire*.[45]

Duct Taped and Krazy Glued

Libya had successfully resisted the global warring of the Reagan administration, but it emerged from the hostilities weakened in a number of ways. The first of these pertained to the fiasco of the Chad campaign. According to Alison Pargeter (2012: 133), the Chadian defeat "was not lost … on the Libyan army, which was deeply embittered over a reckless campaign." This made Gaddafi suspicious of his officers' loyalty, leading him to downgrade their effectiveness to lessen their likelihood of attempting coups. He was entirely successful in this degradation. By the time of the rebellion his government was reliant on three units estimated at ten thousand troops. These included the Revolutionary Guard Corps, recruited largely from Gaddafi's own ethnic group; the Khamis Brigade, commanded by Gaddafi's youngest

son; and the Amazon Corps, a personal guard composed of women. US officials judged these troops to be "not very skilled" and to have "equipment far from cutting edge," so that by the time of the rebellion they were "trying to hold things together with duct tape and Krazy Glue" (in Hosenball 2011). International sanctions imposed upon Libya also contributed to the sorry state of his armed forces because "the country was never able to recover and rebuild its armed forces" (Pargeter 2012: 133). Consequently duct taped and Krazy glued, Gaddafi's ten thousand would take on the New American Empire.

Gaddafi Faces Problems at Home: Following Reagan, and in part because of Libya's alleged guilt in the downing of Pan Am 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, in 1988, the Clinton administration influenced the UN Security Council to impose a regime of sanctions on Libya in 1991 and 1992. These did not prohibit oil exports, but they banned importation of spare parts and other consumer goods. This hurt the oil industry and raised importation costs, leading to high inflation of 35 percent per year from 1993 to 1997. Inflation eroded public services like schools and hospitals, and made acquisition of imported staples more onerous.

For most citizens, "simply getting by became more difficult," so "resentment hardened," leading to an "utter desperation for change" (Pargeter 2012: 172–173, 188). "Desperation" engendered resistance, by citizens against their government. To some extent this involved spontaneous manifestations on the part of the populace. However, starting in the late 1980s Islamists threatened the regime for the first time, and Gaddafi responded in two contradictory ways by increasing both repression and handouts for ordinary citizens and for elites. Although tortured and imprisoned individuals experienced this repression as grim, its level appears to have been relatively modest.[46] In an additional response to these problems, Gaddafi began to reform his regime in a more Western direction.

Reform involved submitting to Washington and its allies' demands that the Libyan economy be opened to neoliberal policies; destroy its weapons of mass destruction; forgo terrorism; and pay reparations to the relatives of the downed Pan Am 103. A kowtowing Gaddafi appointed his hybrid-elite, intellectual son Saif-al Islam to oversee the process of liberalization. Saif al-Islam had an MBA from a Viennese university and a Ph.D. from the London School of Economics, and had hobnobbed with English high society at the turn of the millennium. Perhaps Saif's most notable act was to negotiate elimination of Libya's WMD program. In 2004, in the midst of warring in Iraq, Bush II signed an executive order lifting any remaining US sanctions against Libya. A team of US officials visited Libya in 2009 and congratulated the country as "an important ally in the war on terror" (in

Dinucci 2011). Gaddafi was back in the fold of the New American Empire, or so he thought.

Unfortunately for Gaddafi, going neoliberal solved neither the problems with his people's welfare nor his problems with his people. In fact these worsened, and they did so along lines of existing geographic antipathy. The country has long had an east/west antagonism pitting the old Ottoman provinces of Cyrenaica in the east with its capital Benghazi, against Tripolitania in the west with its capital Tripoli.[47] The 1969 coup transferred control over the country from King Idris, of the east, to Gaddafi, of the west. Consequently, throughout Gaddafi's 42-year reign eastern Libya was always more discontented. Especially disgruntled were the Islamists, who were largely from the east. A number of them had had combat experience in Afghanistan, and in 1989 the regime had discovered armed militant cells in the eastern cities of Benghazi and Ajdabia (Pargeter 2012: 166).

Throughout 2009 and early 2010, Arab Spring rebellions against authoritarian governments to the east in Tunisia and Egypt were successfully occurring. Unsurprisingly, they diffused westward to an already disgruntled Cyrenaican populace, and spontaneous uprisings in Benghazi began on 15 February 2011. Very quickly, Washington and its allies chose sides. Old Fuzzyhead was abandoned. On 17 March the UN Security Council voted to establish no-fly zones in Libya, using "all necessary measures" (in Daalder and Stavridis 2012: 2).

Two points are unclear concerning the onset of the Libyan revolts: how much they resulted from diffusion of the idea of rebellion during the Arab Spring, and how much the New American Empire helped shape the spontaneous uprisings. Wayne Madsen (2012) and Maximilian Forte (2012) report that American, British, and French Special Ops were on the ground in eastern Libya before Obama's security elites' began insisting on intervention, a suggestion substantiated by Nazemroaya (2011).[48] If this was the case, the message of rebellion may have been carried to eastern Libya from the Arab Spring, but the actual violence may have been choreographed by helpful hints from the CIA, MI6, and SAS.

Hermeneuneutic Politics

Senior security elites in the Obama administration entered into a hermeneutic politics over whether Washington should go about "getting involved" in the anti-Gaddafi insurgency (Gates 2014: 518). Robert Gates, then defense secretary, reported the politics were between liberal hawks and their opponents. On the liberal hawks' side were Susan Rice, then US Ambassador to the UN; Samantha Powers, on the NSC; and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. All argued the US Leviathan "had to" get involved

(ibid.: 518). Opposed to the Hawks were principally Vice President Biden, Defense Secretary Gates, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mike Mullen, and Obama's NSA Tom Donilon. Those opposed to intervening in Libya basically interpreted such operations as risky and unnecessary. The US had already engaged in two difficult and expensive wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. The political perils were great. The US had invaded two Muslim countries since 1991; how would the Islamic world feel about a third? The military consequences were too open-ended—what if the fighting dragged on? Finally, what vital US national security issues were at stake just because Old Fuzzyhead's citizens repudiated him?

The liberal hawks, on the other hand, interpreted the situation through the optic of the R2P hermeneutic. Perceptually, Gaddafi used bloodcurdling rhetoric, vowing to crush the rebels with "no mercy, no pity" (in Golovnina and Worsnip 2011). Procedurally, the liberal hawks believed that if this was the case, it was necessary to intervene "to prevent an anticipated massacre of the rebels," as Gates (2014: 511) expressed it. On 3 March 2011 President Obama declared Gaddafi "must go" (ibid.: 515).

Twelve days later (15 March) a NSC meeting was convened over the issue. Obama went with his liberal hawks. He told Gates that his decision to accept the Hawk interpretation "had been a 51-49 call" (ibid.: 518). One wonders is if this was really the case. As reported in a previous chapter, Obama was a liberal hawk, so the interpretations of Clinton, Rice, and Powers simply reinforced his hermetic seal into R2P. Two days after the NSC meeting the UN established the no-fly zone in Libya.

Operation Unified Protector: Regardless of the degree to which the original rebellion was "spontaneous," the US, UK, and France initiated land and sea bombardment of Libya two days after establishment of the no-fly zone. Eventually the global warring came to be directed by NATO in a campaign called Operation Unified Protector, but Daalder and Stavridis (2012: 3) are clear: the US "played a critical role." Manlio Dinucci (2012: 1–2), summarizing these hostilities, reported that for

> over seven months, US and NATO air forces carried out 30,000 missions of which 10,000 were offensive air strikes, using more than 40,000 bombs and missiles. Additionally, Special Forces were infiltrated into Libya, among them thousands of easily concealed Qatari commandos. They also financed armed tribal groups hostile to the Tripoli government and supported Islamic groups that only months earlier were watchlisted as terrorists. The operation in its entirety was directed by Washington, according to the US ambassador to NATO.

The duct taped and Krazy-glued ten thousand did not stand a chance. Operation Unified Protector was over on 31 October, 222 days after it had

commenced. Why did the US Leviathan do it? This question leads to discussion of the roles of the anti-terrorism and the oil-control public *délires*.

R2P and The Anti-Terrorist Public Délire

Bear in mind, hostilities were already underway in February of 2011, so if the US Leviathan was to intervene in Libya, it had to do so in a situation where hostilities were ongoing. This meant that peaceful options were over and Shultzian Permission granted. Even though Obama's security elites had decided Libya was an "important ally" against terrorism in 2009, two years later they returned him to monster status, organizing a press campaign depicting him as a terrorist.

As Thomas Josceyln (2011), writing for the conservative *Weekly Standard,* put it, "Gaddafi is, after all, a terrorist." As mentioned earlier, Obama's UN ambassador Susan Rice, speaking to the Security Council in April 2011, claimed Gaddafi was supplying his troops with Viagra "to encourage mass rape" (MacAskill 2011).[49] Once again, America's foe was "paranoid" and full of "horror." With Gaddafi back in the docket as a terrorist, as Daalder and Stavridis (2012: 2–3) explain, it was easy for US to lead "the charge" for "intervention" on the basis of "the responsibility to protect." Of course, "responsibility to protect" was the way that liberal hawks discoursed about the anti-terrorist public *délire*: if you perceived a monster terrorist, then it was your responsibility to protect against it, by killing it. However, US intervention in Libya was not entirely about slaying monsters. Libya has oil that is cheap to produce and highly profitable, so as is about to be shown, the oil-control public *délire* was equally relevant to the global war in Libya.

The Oil-Control Public Délire

Libya had already kowtowed to Washington and begun neoliberal reform by 2004. What more could concern the New American Empire about Gaddafi? Plenty, it turns out. Tripoli may have reconciled with Bush II, but the old revolutionary's heart was not comfortable settling into New American Empire client-state status. In 2009, at the second Annual Africa–South America Summit, Gaddafi joined with fellow revolutionary Hugo Chavez in calling for an "anti-imperialist" front. For Security Elites 3.0 back in Washington, three aspects of such politics were especially distressing. The first had to do directly with oil. Back in the 1970s Gaddafi had been one of the most aggressive oil nationalists, pioneering nationalization of oil production and the increased flow of black gold to the oil producers. At the turn of the millennium, even as Libya was supposedly opening up to invest-

ment from the US and its allies, Libya resisted giving away the oilfields and imposed higher royalties than the foreign oil companies wanted to pay. So imperial security and oil industry elites worried that Gaddafi might outfox them and return to his old nationalism.

Two other areas of concern pertained to oil, though less directly. At the very end of his government Gaddafi proposed two financial innovations for the African continent. These were an African Investment Bank to be located in Syrte, Libya, and an African Monetary Fund to be based in Yaoundé, Cameroon. Both would be backed by Libyan assets ultimately derived from oil. Their opening was to be followed by introduction of a pan-African currency, the dinar, backed by gold derived from Libyan oil. The bank and the fund would invest in African projects at loan rates below those of international financing institutions like the IMF or the large private banks. Payments for oil would be made not in dollars, but in the new dinars. Gerald Perreira (2011), one of the few journalists to have worked in Libya for an extended period, wrote at the onset of the attack upon the regime,

> Gaddafi's creation of the African Investment Bank … and the African Monetary Fund … would have supplanted the IMF and undermined Western economic hegemony in Africa. Furthermore … creation of a gold dinar based on the African gold reserve to replace reliance on the U.S. dollar, the French franc and the British pound threatened to finally swing the global economic pendulum.

Such an endeavor threatened the US dollars reserve currency status, among other things.

Finally, and similarly at the very end of the regime, Gaddafi was frustrating US Security Elites 3.0's major African policy initiative. By the end of the 1990s competition for African resources, especially oil, was accelerating. Alarmingly, this was due to Chinese economic operations. In 1999 Chinese investment in Africa was $6 billion; a decade later it was $90 billion and had displaced the US as the continent's largest trading partner (Glazebrook 2013: 5). US security elites in the Bush II administration began to develop US military force resources in Africa (see the section on Africa in the following chapter). Just as CENTCOM had been created to establish control in the Middle East; so a new military command, AFRICOM, was initiated in Africa in 2006 for the same purpose. If the empire could not hold the continent with economic force, it intended to do so with violent force. However, Gaddafi was a fly in the AFRICOM ointment because "leaked US diplomatic cables make it very clear that Libya was viewed by the US as THE main obstacle to establishing a full muscular US military presence on the African continent" (Glazebrook 2013: 5).[50] It is

argued next that addressing each of these three concerns with global war-ring against Libya could contribute to the New American Empire's control over Libyan oil and was in this sense an application of the oil-control pub-lic *délire.*

The following points warrant this judgment. First, imperial fighting could increase the empire's and its allies' oil and oil-supply companies' ac-cess to Libyan oil. The degree to which this actually occurred is unclear. However, once source asserts that there has been a "give-away" of Libya's oil, "with contracts allotted according to the number of bombing runs each country had made—France on behalf of Total, Spain on behalf of Repsol, Italy on behalf of Eni, England on behalf of BP, and the US on behalf of Marathon, Hess, and ConocoPhillips" (Barahona 2012: 3). The precise nature of these contracts remains to be seen. However, talk of a "give-away" is a report of the empire's and its allies' increased access to Libya's oil, suggesting that imperial security elites perceived that the rebellion against Gaddafi offered an opportunity to increase the empire's access to oil, an opportunity they seized with the NATO intervention.

Second, imperial fighting could help maintain the dollar as the world's reserve currency by eliminating the alternative of the gold-backed dinar. Since termination of hostilities in October 2011 there has been no Afri-can Investment Bank or African Monetary Fund. Gold-backed dinars are nowhere to be found in circulation; which may be unfortunate for Afri-can development but is just fine for the dollar. The non-occurrence of the competing currency recommends the view that imperial financial elites intended its elimination, which suggests they perceived the anti-Gaddafi rebellion as an opportunity to defend the dollar—which they seized with the NATO intervention.

Third, imperial fighting could help the empire pay its strategic rents. A letter signed by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Libya, a forerunner to the National Transitional Council, and published in the French daily, *La Liberation,* recounted a deal struck at a 29 March 2011 summit on Libya held in London, where Hillary Clinton met Mahmoud Jebril, head of the rebels. It was reported that the New American Empire would side with Brother Leader's opponents. The quid pro quo of the deal was that the empire and its allies would get a percentage of Libya's oil. France's cut was to be 35 percent of the crude oil (Barahona 2011: 1). The French Foreign minister at the time, Alain Juppe, considered this to be "logical and fair" because, after all, armed intervention is "expensive" (quoted ibid.: 3). Fur-ther, by removing the Brother Leader the security elites were eliminating his opposition to AFRICOM, helping the empire acquire oil spoils not only in Libya but in other areas of Africa as well. China might be snapping up African oil resources, but US military would help ensure the empire's allies

got their fair share and in so doing pay its security rent to its allies. In sum, the Libya War could contribute to strengthening US control over Libyan oil in three different ways and as such was an application of the oil-control public *délire.* However, security elites cloaked this oily reality by declaring "Old Fuzzyhead" a monster and US global warring a noble undertaking of R2P.

Unlike the covert activities in Iran, the Libyan global war of 2011 was no "twilight" operation but had been broadcast in the full glare of the empire's media. It was short and extremely violent—you actually saw the guy try to stab Gaddafi in the rectum on television. Hostilities occurred when cyclical, land/capital, and dominator/dominated contradictions were intensifying and coalescing. Shultzian Permission had been granted due to the ongoing aggression that was the uprising against Gaddafi in the east. The ensuing combat was implementation of the anti-terrorist and oil-control public *délires*—all of which is evidence supportive of the global warring theory.

Supposedly the Libyan War rid the world of a terrorist monster and gave the New American Empire greater control over Libyan oil. Did it succeed? In the immediate aftermath of fighting, the "model intervention" appeared to have given the empire's oil companies greater access to Libyan oil, to have helped it defend the petrodollar, and to pay its strategic rents. However, by 2013 oil production had almost entirely "stopped" owing to "disintegrating" governmental authority (P. Cockburn 2013). Any Libyan assault on the dollar appears to have been thwarted. But if oil production is greatly reduced, then are the empire's Big Oil companies actually acquiring greater access to Libyan oil, and is much strategic rent being paid?

What about the elimination of terrorism? The English NGO Global Civilians for Peace in Libya ("The Standard of Living in Libya" 2011), reviewed the literature bearing upon Libyans' standard of living at the end Gaddafi's regime. Gaddafi had actually used Libya's oil wealth to give its citizens the highest standard of living in Africa, with wealth fairly equitably distributed. Libya under Gaddafi had gone from being one of the poorest countries in the world to being 64th out of 187 countries on the UN Human Development Index.

Post-Gaddafi Libya is described by *Time* magazine as "demonstrating remarkable stability" (Hauslohner 2012). Is this really so? Cyrenaica, where two-thirds of the oil is located, has declared itself a semi-autonomous region. Ahmed al-Zubair was appointed as its head—a reactionary move, because he is the grandson of the King Idris deposed by Gaddafi in 1969. Throughout the country, paramilitaries—armed and trained during the war by the empire's soldiers—defied central government authority, ruling considerable chunks of territory as their fiefs. Certain of these are headed

by Islamists, some with al-Qaeda links (ibid.: 2012). In 2012 some Islamists killed a US ambassador on a visit to a diplomatic mission in Benghazi. This was largely given over to the CIA (Friedersdorf 2013), which appears to have been training counterrevolutionaries to attack the Islamists (Schmitt, Cooper, and Schmidt 2012). By 2014, Khalifa Hiftar, whose earlier adventures as a CIA proxy were recounted as part of Reagan's war against Gaddafi, had left his Virginia home and was back in Libya attacking Islamists and declaring the overthrow of the government (Stephen, Black, and Ackerman 2014).

The UN Security Council has expressed its concern with "ongoing illegal detention, torture, and extrajudicial killings" in post-Gaddafi Libya (in Dinucci 2012: 2). Forte reports an account of the current situation as experienced by an ordinary Libyan as follows, "Two years ago the anti-Gaddafi uprising had the strongest support in Benghazi but today a very different mood has emerged. 'Most people would say they are very unhappy,' a local worker said. 'Some say they are worse off than before'" (in Forte 2013: 1). It is unclear what the future might hold, but currently there is no state in Libya. It is a place of marauding paramilitaries, some affiliated with al-Qaeda, others tied to the Islamic State. Overall, the "model intervention" hardly moved Libya into the realm of "remarkable stability." Consider next US global warring in Syria, where a dead man is said to be walking, or maybe not.

Syria 2011–2013: Dead Man Walking?

Since December 2010, the Middle East had been experiencing an Arab Spring of popular unrest against authoritarian governments, first in Tunisia and Egypt; then in Lebanon, Oman, Yemen, and Morocco; and in February 2011 in Libya with, as just documented, terminal consequences for Gaddafi's regime. A month later, on 15 March 2011, "spring" began in the Syrian city of Daraa.[51] Protesters insisted on an end to Baath Party rule and the resignation of President Bashar al-Assad, whose father Hafez al-Assad had held the Syrian presidency from 1971 until 2000. The father had governed adroitly but with an iron fist when necessary, especially in his suppression of a 1982 uprising in Hama. As the popular demonstrations spread there was question as to how the son would respond. Hafez had been a military man. Bashar, like Saif al-Islam, was a hybrid elite: an ophthalmologist, educated in part in London, married to a woman who had worked for J.P. Morgan (Ajami 2012). He appeared to be a geek who had inherited the government only after his elder brother—a dashing military man—was killed in an automobile crash.

However, Bashar proved ophthalmologists too have moxie. The Syrian army was ordered to crush the uprising. Easier ordered than done! After months of government military strikes against local protests, the protesting groups converged into a countrywide armed rebellion. By the end of 2011 it was a full-blown civil war, with the rebels seizing considerable chunks of territory. By 2012 this war had come to have a sectarian dimension, pitting mainly Sunni rebels against a largely Alawi branch of Shiites in the government. By 2013, approximately a hundred thousand rebels faced Bashir's forces. Government forces were reinforced by Hezbollah, and the rebels by radical Islamists, including the Jabhat al-Nusra and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), now called the Islamic State.[52] US diplomats are sometimes called "cookie pushers" by other security elites because their job is imagined to consist of walking around at receptions proffering refreshments. Frederic Hof, cookie pusher *par excellence*, declared Al Assad to be a "dead man walking" (in Matthew Lee 2011). What do cookie pushers know? What follows is an answer to this question.

The Shiite Necklace and Another Dead Creature Walking?

Let us begin by clarifying the Americans' glee at Bashar's discomfiture. During Bush II's Iraq war, the Vulcans had been furious that Syria allowed anti-American fighters to slip across its border to fight in Iraq (Rumsfeld 2011: 463; Cheney 2011: 437). After this war wound down, it became clear that Syria was part of what was earlier termed the Shiite Necklace. The Security Elites 3.0 were gleeful at Bashar's problems because if Syria could be broken, the Shiite Necklace might come unstrung, and the US Leviathan's position in the Middle East would be strengthened.

A counter coalition to the Shiite Necklace had formed in 2011 to oppose Assad. Based upon the New American Empire's clients, it included Israel, NATO, and states in the Gulf Cooperation Council, with Saudi Arabia and Qatar especially active. Operations and leadership of this countercoalition have been murky. The overt policy of Obama's administration toward the Syrian uprising was initially to provide "humanitarian, medical, and communications assistance" in what was termed a program of "band aids and halal happy meals" (Rogin 2013). However, knowledgeable observers were not buying this. The respected geopolitical analyst Mahdi Nazemroaya (2012) reported that Syria was being attacked in a strategy orchestrated by Washington that emphasized proxy operations.

The US Leviathan's coalition's basic operations were to provide covert military support to the rebel organizations, which were disorganized and increasingly dominated by radical Islamists.[53] Rebel political organizations included the Syrian National Council (founded in 2011) and the National

Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces (founded in 2012). Rebel military groups included the Free Syrian Army, more or less allied with a collection of around a thousand localized "brigades." The radical Islamists included the Jabhat al-Nusra and ISIL. Saudi Arabia and Qatar have been especially active in arming the rebel military.[54] Initially the rebel forces were successful. At the end of 2011 rebel brigades brought the fighting to Damascus, Syria's capital, and Aleppo, the country's largest city.

But the ophthalmologist hung tough. The rebel offensives against Damascus and Aleppo were blunted by the fall of 2012, when the national army began a counteroffensive. On 26 March 2013, rebel commander Khaled al Hamad, leader of the Al Farooq al-Mustakilla Brigade, fighting near the Syrian town of al-Qusayr, consumed the flesh of a dead government soldier, proclaiming "I swear to God, you soldiers of Bashar, you dogs, we will eat from your hearts and livers! O heroes of Bab Amr, you slaughter the Alawites and take out their hearts to eat them!" (Baker 2013). Snacking on their opponent did not work; on 5 June government forces retook al-Qusayr, a town of strategic significance.

Mustafa Alani, director at the Dubai-based Gulf Research Council, warned, "This is an Iranian fight. It is no longer a Syrian one," adding, "The issue is hegemony in the region" (Sly 2013). The war had spread. It was the New American Empire versus the Shiite Necklace. In the Security Elite 3.0's terms, the "issue" was not hegemony; it was defense of empire. The empire had been weakened by cutting and running in Iraq, and by the strengthening of the Shiite Necklace. Defeat in Syria would further threaten it. So what did the cookie pusher know? Not much, for the "dead man walking" was still walking tall by 2013, part of a war for the Middle East. Something drastic had to be done to strengthen the Americans' hand.

Unsurprisingly, eight days after the fall of al-Qusayr, US news sources publicly announced the US government's news that Assad's forces had used chemical weapons, killing up to 150 people in this manner (out of a total 93,000 fatalities up to that time). Earlier, Obama had declared (20 August 2012) use of such weapons to be a "red line" not to be crossed. The line had been crossed, and US officials announced they would begin to arm the rebels (Goodenough 2013; Mazzetti, Gordon, and Landler 2013). Until this day, 13 June 2013, Obama's Security Elites 3.0 had been involved in a twilight covert, indirect global war against Syria. Thereafter, imperial warring in Syria was to be neither entirely covert, nor entirely indirect.

The Assad regime was not especially attractive. It was authoritarian, prone to violent repression, and in bed with its crony capitalist elites. Nevertheless, it had not the slightest intention of attacking America because it could not attack America; its violent forces were too puny. Obama's administration had received no UN approval to war in Syria but he was do-

ing it, if only in a desultory manner. Desultory or not, US warring in Syria was an unsanctioned war of aggression and thus illegal. Recall that when Obama (2009) accepted the Nobel Peace prize, he warned in his speech, "For make no mistake: Evil does exist in the world."

"Evil" was about to make an appearance. In the days after the "red line" was crossed in June, the ophthalmologist's troops continued to make gains against the rebels. Then, on 21 August 2013, a sarin gas attack in Ghouta, an agricultural belt to the south and east of Damascus, killed substantial numbers of civilians—1,429, the US claimed (White House 2013: 1). Nine days later, the White House released a report declaring, "The United States Government assesses with high confidence that the Syrian government carried out a chemical weapons attack in the Damascus suburbs" (ibid.).[55] Obama's Security Elites 3.0 asserted, none more passionately than John Kerry, his new secretary of state, that this time the Assad regime had crossed the red line blatantly and massively. It had terrorized its people with a weapon of mass destruction. Assad, according to Kerry, was the author of "inconceivable horror," a "thug" and a "murderer" (Mohajer 2013). "Evil" had arrived, and the US Leviathan's R2P, superseding the international law of war (at least according to liberal hawk fixations), obligated the empire to punish Syria for its "Evil." The US proposed that this punishment be an attack by US forces. Whether the attack might be the launching of a few cruise missiles or a long-term aerial bombardment went unspecified. What was specified was that the New American Empire would overtly increase use of violent force directly against Syria.

Then something curious happened. There was unexpected (at least in the eyes of Obama's security elites), widespread rejection of the empire's proposal. Polls showed that Americans strongly opposed intervention. Such polling certainly influenced Obama's decision to turn to the Congress for authorization to strike Syria. The mere fact of requesting Congress's permission to war was unprecedented since World War II and reflected presidential weakness. Moreover, it appeared that a majority of Democrats and Republicans in Congress opposed attacking Syria. Beyond US boundaries almost everyone (except the French) condemned the proposed military intervention. The Pope was against it. The BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India, and China) were against it. The fact that the Russians and the Chinese were against it frustrated any UN Security Council authorization of US force. Significantly, key imperial clients opposed it. The UK parliament refused to allow Great Britain to participate in any attack on Syria. A meeting of EU Foreign ministers refused to authorize US intervention. The bonds of empire appeared to be loosening.

Luckily for US Security Elites 3.0, the Russians proposed that the Syrians might give up chemical weapons in exchange for not being attacked by

the US, and the Assad regime quickly agreed. The Obama regime equally accepted, grumbling that it was its idea that Assad give up his chemical stockpiles, and that if he didn't, Damascus would be walloped by imperial rocketry. A decision to attack the ophthalmologist's government had sparked widespread rebellion against the empire. Could it be that Obama just might be another candidate for "dead man walking"? His Republican Congressional antagonists certainly appeared to think so when they began conducting their own foreign policy that bypassed the President. Dead man walking or not, Obama has been guided by the anti-terrorist and oil-control public *délires* while seeking to manage the Syrian debacle. These are explored next.

The Anti-terrorist Public Délire

Arabi Souri (2013) claims that "Bashar al-Assad has been systematically demonized by the mainstream and so-called alternative media who claim that he is a brutal dictator." This was not always the case with the Obama administration. Initially, talks were begun with Assad. As part of this initiative, Hillary Clinton referred to him as a "reformer" (Case 2012). Then, when the popular demonstrations began, Washington remembered it had listed Syria as a state sponsor of terrorism since 1979. At that point Bashar's monsterization began. Typical of these efforts was the *New York Daily News'* transmogrification of Bashar from a "reformer" to a "brutal dictator," a "pampered London-educated eye doctor" who led a "blood-soaked crackdown" on pro-democracy demonstrators (Weinthal 2011). Theodore Dalrymple (2012) continued this theme in the UK paper *The Telegraph*:

> When you look at pictures of Assad you see a weak man, whom you would expect to be a pettifogger rather than a brute. But push a pettifogger to the wall and he is capable of the greatest obduracy, which is the strength of the weak. A cornered rat, that normally resides incognito, is a ferocious and dangerous beast, even if he remains in essence weak and highly vulnerable.

Surveying Syria after 2011, Obama's liberal hawks perceived Bashar as a "pampered," "brutal" "rat" commanding a terrorist state. They saw "Evil." Given such a perception, Obama publicly requested on 18 August 2011 that Bashar step aside. Following the Ghouta incident, he proposed to blow the "thug" aside with imperial rocketry if he did not step down. The "thug"-"rat" refused. In such situations, nonviolent ways of doing things had failed. It was time for granting Shultzian Permission. Further, the anti-terrorist public *délire* directs, once such permission has been accorded the proper procedure is to eliminate the terrorists with violence. This was precisely what the Obama administration began to implement—first co-

vertly and indirectly; then, at the time of al-Qusayr, overtly, and directly; and finally, upon realizing he lacked support domestically as well as from his clients, he backed off, with Russian assistance.[56] Let us consider a role for the oil-control public *délire* in Syria.

The Oil-Control Public Délire

Syria produces oil, but its fields are depleting rapidly from a high of 610 thousand barrels per day in 1996 to roughly 385 thousand barrels per day in 2010. Such a modest amount is not a tempting prize for the New American Empire. Rather, Syria's relevance to the Security Elite 3.0's oil-control *délire* has to do with its potential power over the distribution of petroleum products, and the implications of the Shiite Necklace for overall control of Middle Eastern oil. Consider, first, distribution issues, which are all about pipeline politics.[57]

In February 2013, Iraq authorized the signing of an agreement for an Iran-Iraq-Syria pipeline to transport natural gas from Iran's South Pars field across Iraq to Syria (AFP 2013b). This pipeline, easily extendable to Lebanon and Europe, would further boost Iran's position as a formidable global player in the oil industry. Additionally, the Iran-Iraq-Syria project directly competed with Qatar's plans for a pipeline running from Qatar's North field, contiguous with Iran's South Pars field, through Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Syria, and on to Turkey, also with a view to supply European markets. Pepe Escobar (2013) explains, "It's crucial to remember that the Iran-Iraq-Syria pipeline is … anathema to Washington. … The difference is that Washington in this case can count on its allies Qatar and Turkey to sabotage the whole deal." The Syrian and the Qatar pipeline dreams were in competition. Qatar, a member of the GCC and the host of the chief US naval base in the Persian Gulf, was a close ally of the US. Clearly, Washington preferred the Qatar pipeline. Regrettably, and equally clearly, "Only Al-Assad" was "in the way" (ibid.). Syria, then, stood in the way of Washington's control over gas distribution in the Persian Gulf.

Then there is the fact that Syria is allied with Iran in the Shiite necklace. The two are curious bedfellows: Syria's Baathist dogma is secular and [in principle] socialist; Iran's ideology is Islamic and supposedly scandalized by godless socialism. However, having strong enemies in common makes for strong friendships. Having the US and Israel as heavy-duty enemies has helped cement strong Iranian-Syrian bonds. This alliance began after Iran's 1979 revolution and was formalized in 1982 with the conclusion of bilateral oil, trade, and military agreements. Since then, the two countries have coordinated political and military force resources. This involved developing a stable of surrogate militias to frustrate their opponents' designs

that has at different times included, besides Hezbollah, Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and an array of radical Palestinian groups. Their collaboration flushed US forces from Lebanon in 1984 after the bombing of the Marines in Beirut, and thwarted Israel's effort to dominate Lebanon during an eighteen-year occupation that finally ended in Israel's unilateral withdrawal in 2000. By doing this, *The Iran Primer* reports, they, "inflicted repeated setbacks on six American presidents" (Goodarzi 2013).

Otherwise put, Obama's Security Elites 3.0 harbored a grudge against Syria—the more so because it strengthened the Shiite Necklace, and a strong necklace could better contest the Americans for overall control over Middle Eastern petroleum resources.

At this juncture the oil-control public *délire* becomes relevant. Perceptually, the Syrian pipeline threatened US control over petroleum product distribution. Worse perceptually, Syrian friendship with Iran strengthened the Shiite Necklace menacing US Middle Eastern oil control. Under such conditions, the appropriate action was to put violent force into operation, if Shultzian Permission had been granted.

Had Shultzian Permission been approved? Earlier we suggested it had. In his memoirs Rumsfeld (2011: 639) reported, "For decades, Syria has been considered a prized quarry for optimistic American diplomats," a quarry that has never been captured. Rather, the reverse appears to have been the case, as noted above in the *The Iran Primer* (Goodarzi 2013), with Syria engineering setbacks for six presidents. The US Leviathan, according to Rumsfeld, had tried to settle differences with Syria diplomatically and failed. So, given the reality of open rebellion in Syria by 2011, US security elites effectively granted themselves Shultzian Permission and began implementing the anti-terrorist and oil-control public *délires.*

Consider the following: US global warring in Syria occurred during intensification and coalescence of the cyclical, land/capital, and dominator/dominated contradictions; Shultzian Permission had been granted following the failure of peaceful fixes of problems with Syria and the onset of hostilities there; and covert, indirect and overt, direct global warring was implementation of the anti-terrorist and oil-control public *délires*. All this information is consistent with the global warring theory.

By 2014, Assad—dead guy walking—was still walking. Moreover, after two years of fierce hostilities, the inability to break the Shiite Necklace at the point of Syria promised trouble for the New American Empire's control of Middle Eastern oil. The UK's refusal to countenance an imperial attack on Syria after the Ghouta gas attack indicated the US's closest client was dissatisfied with American imperial operations. Saudi Arabian officials, on the other hand, "boiled over," promising a more independent policy following the Obama administration's eventual refusal to attack Syria after

the Ghouta incident (Mohammed and Wastall 2013). Ominously, the existence of disgruntled clients indicates strain on the bonds of empire. All this suggests, if not a dead empire walking, a wobbly empire wobbling. Sadly, according to the UN, by the middle of 2013 about a hundred thousand Syrians had found peace—that of the grave (AFP 2013c).

Consider, next, Yemen, in whose wars the New American Empire has been droning on and on.

The Prophet's Place of Refuge: Yemen 2001–2013; Warfare Droning On and On…

Early in his career, his religion attacked from all sides, and himself driven from Mecca into the desert, the Prophet Muhammad is said to have advised, "When disaster threatens, seek refuge in Yemen" (in Johnsen 2012: xi). Many centuries later, the followers of another prophet took this advice to become a thorn in the side of the New American Empire. The narrative now turns to an account of how the US became involved in global warring in Muhammad's place of refuge and the implications this had for certain of his later followers.

Droning On: A Lighter Footprint

The US, according to the Bureau of Investigative Journalism, has conducted both direct and indirect, covert warfare in Yemen since 2001 (Drones Team 2012a). The signature weapon in these hostilities has been unmanned aerial vehicles, called drones—the latest robotic killing technology. Drones can either fly autonomously or be directed by a "pilot" sitting at a console, perhaps continents away from the vehicle itself. They may be used to gather intelligence or to fire rockets. People hunted by drones are often up against an invisible machine raining Hellfire (the name of the preferred US rocket). According to the Bureau of Investigative Journalism, between 2002 and 2013 in Yemen there were 44–54 confirmed drone strikes and 78–96 possible additional strikes, in addition to 12–76 other sorts of covert actions (probably largely JSOC ninja raids) (Serle and Woods 2013: 1). The use of drones began in the Bush II years and increased during those of Obama. From the perspective of Yemenis, global warring drones on and on. Why?

Greater reliance on drones has to do with the Obama administration's response to how the Bush II administration had globally warred. Dubya's security elites, as seen in the Iraq War, waged large-scale, troop-intensive global wars that were expensive. US global warring in Iraq, Afghanistan,

and Pakistan has cost an estimated $4 trillion (Costs of War Project 2013). The financial burden of Vulcan warring became worrisome after 2007 owing to constrained government revenues as the US, along with the rest of the globe, entered the Great Recession. Moreover, though the American public may have shown indifference to casualties among the peoples its military attacked, which ran into the millions, it was increasingly distressed about the death and injury done to its own.

Given this context, a procedural hermeneutic politics about how to continue fighting developed among Obama's security elites. On one side, Hillary Clinton in State; Robert Gates in Defense; and Petraeus, then in the CIA, argued for continuing a large military footprint. On the other side, Vice President Biden argued for "a modest military footprint around the world" (Sanger 2013). Initially, the Clinton-Gates-Petraeus faction appeared to have won: there was, as will be analyzed later, an increase in US troops in an Afghanistan surge (2010–2012). Gradually, especially under the stewardship of John O. Brennan—first as Obama's chief counterterrorism advisor and then as Petraeus's CIA replacement—the US moved toward a lighter footprint. Drones, actually first used by the Vulcans, were a key element of Brennan's policy. They were an "efficient way to kill" (C. Kirk 2012). They replaced people with machines, reducing costs. They were especially useful used in targeted assassination programs aimed at opponents' leaders in order to "decapitate" their organizations. We will encounter them in several of Obama's global wars. Why were they so important in Yemen?

The answer to this question turns upon appreciation of Yemen's geographic position and its tumultuous recent political history. Yemen occupies the southwestern end of the Arabian Peninsula, bordered to the north by Saudi Arabia, to the south by the Gulf of Aden and Arabian Sea, to the west by the Red Sea, and to the east by Oman. For the most part the landscape is grim: arid, baking coastal plains leading to interior mountains and desert. The southwestern-most point in Yemen is at the entrance to the Bab al Mandab, a strait that joins the Red Sea to the Indian Ocean and is one of the most heavily used waterways in the world.

Since the 1960s Yemen has had a politically rowdy time of it. After years of civil war the area of northern Yemen became the Yemen Arab Republic in 1968. The southern region, more strategically important because of Bab al Mandab's location there, remained a British colonial possession until 1967, when a communist rebellion ended UK domination and led to a socialist state, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. Relations between the two Yemens in the 1970s and 1980s alternated between wary amity and open hostility. In 1978 Ali Abdallah Saleh became president of North Yemen. Then, in 1990, the two Yemens' governments agreed on

unification, joining on 22 May 1990. Saleh became president and had to fend off persistent threats to his rule, especially the Harak Uprising (1994 and ongoing) and the Houthi Rebellion (2004 and ongoing). His rule continued until Arab Spring demonstrations brought it down in 2011. Yemen contains numerous, powerful tribes that have competed with the state for control since its inauguration.[58] The combination of Haraks' and Houthis' rebellion with tribal competition has meant that the central government has often not had control in many areas of the country.

The Republic of Yemen, as the country is formally known, is one of the poorest Arab states. The economy centers on oil, which is unfortunate because Yemen actually has few reserves. Production was at 170,000 barrels per day in 2011, down from 259,000 the previous year (EIA 2012b). Reserves are predicted to be exhausted by 2017. There is natural gas, which has only just begun to come into production. The country has been, and continues to be, plagued by poverty (affecting 43 percent of the population in 2009) (Breisinger et al. 2011). Its "economy is caught in a jobless slow growth cycle leading to stagnant per capita incomes and rising levels of unemployment, particularly amongst the youth and women" (Pournik and Abu-Ismail 2013; see also Pridham 1985; World Bank 2013). Yemen, then, is the poor, dusty, rugged outback of the Arab world whose central government maintains tenuous control. All in all, it is just the place to hide from enemies.

In 2009, Admiral Dennis Blair, then Obama's director of national intelligence, reported in a Congressional appearance that "we are concerned about their (al-Qaeda's) ability to move around. It's kind of like toothpaste in a tube" (in Scahill 2013: 255). Curious metaphor: al-Qaeda is the "toothpaste," squeezed from place to place in the "tube," which is the container in which the US seeks imperial domination. The defeat of the Taliban government in Afghanistan after 9/11 might be imagined as Security Elites 3.0 pressing down on the al-Qaeda toothpaste tube and squishing adherents elsewhere. Unsurprisingly, one of the places they went was to Yemen.[59]

Osama bin Laden's family originally came from Yemen. He had contacts there. Even before 9/11, al-Qaeda took refuge there and began organization. Abu Ali al-Harithi appears to have been the earliest leader, operating in the mountainous Shabwa Province—east of Sanaa, Yemen's capital. In early 2000, Abu Assem al Ahdal, an al-Qaeda leader operating in Saudi Arabia, was captured by Saudi authorities and expelled to Yemen. There he joined forces with al-Harithi, and together they planned and implemented the attack upon the American destroyer the USS *Cole* as it was being refueled in the port of Aden. After that they shifted operations to the Marib province, also to the east of Sanaa. The Bush II government, in the midst of its Iraq War planning, took the time to execute one of the first drone

strikes in Yemen, directed at and killing al-Harithi (3 November 2002). The strike was successful and, together with other anti-terrorist activities that either killed or imprisoned partisans, al-Qaeda appeared vanquished (Hull 2011). In fact, it had merely sought deeper refuge.

Thereafter, as Scahill (2013: 130) explains, "The period following from 2003 to 2006, was notable only insofar as the Bush administration seemed to take almost all focus off Yemen and potential al-Qaeda threats emanating from that country." In Sanaa in 2006, the years of planning and organization in deep refuge culminated in a prison escape by a number of jailed al-Qaeda including Nasir al-Wihayshi and Qasim al Rayni, who immediately began further developing their movement. Soon they were conducting operations throughout Yemen that culminated in a September 2008 assault on the US Embassy in Sanaa. Several months later, al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) was inaugurated, amalgamating the Yemeni and Saudi branches in a common rebellion. The Obama administration responded by introducing a targeted assassination program to rain Hellfire (missiles) on al-Qaeda leaders (Becker and Shane 2012).

Some al-Qaeda leaders were destroyed by drones. New ones appeared. AQAP, for its part, tried to assassinate Saudi Arabia's Deputy Interior Minister Muhammed bin Nayyif in January 2009. In December of that year it attempted to blow up a Northwest Airlines flight over Detroit using Richard Reid, who had a bomb in his underpants. In the same year, General Petraeus, then CENTCOM commander, "approved a plan developed with the US Embassy in Sanaa and the CIA and other intelligence agencies to expand US military action inside Yemen" (Scahill 2013: 258). The plan was implemented and a busy time followed. Drones flew. Yemeni security forces were trained and sent in harm's way. JSOC ninjas raided. Unfortunately, al-Qaeda was not eliminated. In fact during the time of Yemen's Arab Spring, AQAP seized a fair amount of Yemen's land. Thus, between 2001 and 2013, Security Elites 3.0 engaged in indirect and direct covert operations that gradually became less covert, as the press reported them. Al-Qaeda persisted. Why did the US fight an indecisive conflict in Yemen? This question leads us to the anti-terrorist and oil-control public *délires*.

The Anti-Terrorist Public Délire

From the moment al-Qaeda was identified as the perpetrator of 9/11, the Bush II administration considered it by far the gravest terrorist threat. The "presidential findings and other directives" decreed in the days immediately after the attacks directed US Special Operations troops (Spec Ops) to eliminate al-Qaeda; with Yemen, the rugged hideout for al-Qaeda partisans, "put on a list of potential early targets" (Scahill 2013: 64). We have

seen how rocket attacks, as in the 2002 case of al-Harithi, became the favored tactic for hitting al-Qaeda targets in Yemen and elsewhere.

"Less than a year into President Obama's term, Yemen would be catapulted to the top of the list of trouble spots on the US counterterrorism radar" (ibid.: 269). It will be recalled that when Obama became president he authorized escalation of the drones and with them the targeted assassination program. In fact, his Security Elites 3.0 employed drone attacks, especially in Yemen and Pakistan, five times more than had the Bush II administration. Yemen was of especial concern to Obama because some of AQAP's attacks had targeted the US, and because there was worry that AQAP imams like Anwar Awlaki, an American citizen and a compelling leader, might inspire other Americans to join al-Qaeda.

So, visions of charismatic clerics and ticking bombs in terrorist tighty whities danced in liberal hawk heads. Admiral Blair, in that same testimony to Congress in which he likened al-Qaeda to toothpaste, announced an "intensifying al-Qaeda presence in Yemen," stressing concern "about the potential for homegrown American extremists, inspired by al-Qaeda's militant ideology, to plan attacks inside the United States" (ibid.: 255).

The preceding observations indicate that in both the Bush II and the Obama administrations there was a perception that Yemen was a place of activity of the most dangerous terrorist organization in the world, al-Qaeda, and that the proper way to proceed against such an organization was to answer its violence with the empire's violence via a covert war of targeted assassinations, which everybody eventually found out about. Such observations suggest that global warring in Yemen has been an implementation of the anti-terrorist public *délire*. But US fighting in the prophet's land of refuge has not been only about terrorism.

Oil-Control Public Délire

Yemen, as earlier noted, possesses little oil. So the problem of controlling it is not that of acquiring access to it. Rather, the difficulty is one of its distribution from Persian Gulf producers to its consumers, many in Europe: a disquiet prevails because this oil must pass through the Bab al Mandab, which means "Gate of Grief" in Arabic. The "grief" in the Bab al Mandab refers to Arab legends of navigating fragile boats in it. The exigencies of US imperial control over oil suggest the possibility of another sort of grief for American security elites.

The US Energy Information Administration reports:

> The Bab al-Mandab is 18 miles wide at its narrowest point, making tanker traffic difficult and limited to two 2-mile-wide channels for inbound and outbound shipments. Closure of the Strait could keep tankers from the Persian Gulf

> from reaching the Suez Canal or SUMED Pipeline, diverting them around the southern tip of Africa, adding to transit time and cost. In addition, closure of the Bab el-Mandab would mean that oil entering the Red Sea from Sudan and other countries could no longer take the most direct route to Asian markets. This oil would instead have to go north into the Mediterranean Sea through other potential chokepoints, such as the Suez Canal and SUMED Pipeline. (EIA 2012c: 10)

In 2010 approximately 3.5 million barrels of oil passed daily through the Bab al Mandab (EIA 2012b).

AQAP understood the strategic significance of the strait. As reported in the *New York Post* toward the beginning of 2010, Sufyan al Azdi al Shahri, who then was the second highest ranking al-Qaeda leader in Yemen, stressed "the importance of Bab al Mandab which if we, God willing, controlled it, and brought it back to the house of Islam, would be a great victory and would give us great influence" because AQAP would be able to "close the door and tighten the noose" (in "Al Qaeda Leader in Yemen" 2010). Likewise, the Iranian government appears to have understood the significance of Bab al Mandab by 2013. The Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, a conservative think tank, responded to information in the Middle Eastern press by warning in June 2013 that Iran was attempting to ally with the Southern Mobility Movement (Hirak), which was itself still trying to re-establish a separate state in the south that would lie along the Bab al Mandab. Iran was said to be training Hirak militants. Should the Hiraki be successful, an alliance with Tehran would give Iran some ability to "close the door" of the Bab al Mandab (Foundation for the Defense of Democracies 2013). What were US security elites doing about this threat?

They were on the job. Colonel Yadoomi, a Yemeni officer, explains how. In 1991, while participating in a program at the US Army War College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, he wrote a paper documenting US military interest in the Gate of Grief. He explained how the strait was already "an important base for control and command of petroleum as well as the route for transporting it" (Al-Yadoomi 1991: 16). Colonel Yadoomi's recognition that the strait was "important" for oil's "control" was probably no surprise to the US naval officers because, he reports, at that time there were already four naval installations (at Massawa, Caneo, Diego Garcia, and Masira) functioning to "support free navigation through the Red Sea and Bab al-Mandab, and to make sure of continuing the flow of the Gulf oil to U.S. allies in Europe" (ibid.: 17). By the turn of the millennium, the US had provided assistance to train and supply a modern Yemeni coast guard to defend the Bab al Mandab (Sharp 2009).

The US government "got it" with regard to the Gate of Grief. If they lost control of it, their power to control global transportation of oil was

reduced. Consequently, security elites classified this waterway as an "oil transit chokepoint" (EIA 2012c) and ensured it was directly defended by naval bases and indirectly protected through support of Yemen's coast guard. Furthermore, the direct global warring by JSOC ninjas and drone attacks maintained the Yemeni government's client status, thereby helping to keep the Bab al Mandab open.

US global warring in Yemen, given the preceding, is a way for the US to control oil by maintaining power over distribution of oil production. Equally, it is a way of helping the empire pay its strategic rents. Guaranteeing unimpeded shipping through the Gate of Grief assures European clients they will have the oil supplies they need. US government global warring in Yemen would appear to be an application of the oil-control public *délire*. The actions of US Security Elites 3.0 indicate they perceived global warring in Yemen as strengthening two sorts of controls over oil—control over oil's distribution, and payment of strategic rents. Given this perception, the proper procedure was to implement the oil control public *délire,* which they did.

The empire's warring in Yemen has droned on and on. Has it worked? Has AQAP been eradicated? After ten years of combat operations, John O. Brennan, Obama's counterterrorism chief, judged in fall 2011 that the AQAP was "gaining strength" (DeYoung 2011). Not only was the AQAP ever stronger, but in 2014 the Houthi insurgency captured Sanaa. Houthis practice a form of Shiite religion and are suspected of having ties with Iran. Perhaps a new jewel has been added to the Shiite Necklace.

In the spring of 2013, in the aftermath of the Boston Marathon bombings, Qassim al Rimi, then AQAP's military leader, addressed "A Letter to the American People." Rimi taunted, "Have you eliminated the jihadist groups that have spread everywhere after they had only been in Afghanistan? Today, they are in your land or close to it," which, he warned, meant that "every day you will be hit by the unexpected and your leaders will not be able to defend you" (AFP 2013d). Cheeky man! Nevertheless, he has a point. US global warring as practiced in Yemen has been a losing proposition. It is time to quit Muhammad's place of refuge and contemplate a place where the New American Empire always wars (if indirectly), wins, and in so doing loses.

Israel: The "Aircraft Carrier"

In a 2006 interview with Noam Chomsky, Khatchig Mouadian (2006: 1) reminded him of his (Chomsky's) frequent reference to Israel as the "cop on the beat" and then asked him to explicate this phrase. Chomsky responded:

> The expression "local cop on the beat" comes from the Nixon administration. It was their conception of how the Middle East should be run. There should be a peripheral region of gendarme states (Turkey, Iran under the Shah, Israel joined after the 1967 war, Pakistan was there for a while). These states were to be the local cops on the beat while the US would be the police headquarters."

A nice trope: a cop is an enforcer and, in the case under discussion, Chomsky was claiming that Israel was a client enforcing US interests in the Near East and elsewhere. Those who view Chomsky as radical and thus biased might look instead to the reactionary Senator Jesse Helms, who famously called Israel (in Pipes and Clawson 1995) "America's aircraft carrier in the Middle East." Here two gentlemen from opposite ends of the political spectrum concur in their judgment: Israel does the empire's work. Below it is argued that the US has been involved in indirect, overt global warring on the side of Israel because Israel, as America's cop in the Middle East, hurts enemies of the empire who threaten its control over oil. Documentation of this claim begins with a discussion of Israel's wars, and the US's role in them, since the 1990s.

Israel's Wars in Lebanon and Gaza

Prior to the 1980s Israel had largely, overtly warred against other Arab states. There was the Suez Crisis (October 1956) when Israel, allied with the UK and France, attacked Egypt; followed by the Six Day War (June 1967) when it engaged Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and Iraq; and then, the Yom Kippur War (October 1973), when it again fought Egypt. Since that time it has warred overtly, largely in Lebanon and the Gaza Strip, and covertly throughout the Middle East, but especially in Syria, Iraq, and Iran. It is important to specify the US's role in this warring.

Israel is the largest recipient of American foreign aid in the world, receiving $3 billion annually since 1985, the vast bulk of it going to Israel's military. The goal of this investment in violent force is to maintain Israel's "'qualitative military edge' (QME)" (Sharp 2012: 3). Israel's military, the Israel Defense Force (IDF), has 176,500 soldiers on active duty and is the thirty-fourth largest active military in the world. There are 445,000 troops in the reserves. The country's air force has approximately 600 combat aircraft. Israel also has 200 attack helicopters, 3,600 tanks, 9,000 armored personnel carriers, some 1,400 artillery pieces, 360 ballistic missiles, and three nuclear submarines. The country is also suspected of holding stocks of chemical and biological weapons. Despite its government's policy of "nuclear ambiguity" regarding nuclear weapons, Israel is known to possess between 75 and 400 nuclear weapons (IMEU 2005).

Most of these weapons systems either are American or were made possible by American funds and technical assistance. They are the reason Israel enjoys QME. Helm's likening of Israel to an aircraft carrier is appropriate. Such a ship is a technologically sophisticated killing machine. Israel, flaunting its QME technology, is an entire country serving as a killing machine.[60] Make no mistake: when Israel wars, the Leviathan is a major, indirect participant, because the US makes it possible. The Israeli aircraft carrier and the US Leviathan cruise the oceans, killing together.

Israeli warring in Lebanon emerged from the original fighting at Israel's creation in the late 1940s, which entailed an ethnic cleansing of Palestinians (the *Nakba*), many of whom were driven north and east into Lebanon and Jordan as refugees. The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), headed by Yasser Arafat, formed in 1964 to defend Palestinian interests. Fatah, its military branch, having recruited supporters in Lebanon from among Palestinian refugees, began cross-border attacks in the late 1960s. The PLO leadership, along with many Palestinian refugees, was expelled from Jordan in the 1970s and fled to Lebanon, intensifying raids into Israel from there. In 1978 Israel invaded Lebanon and pushed the PLO north of the Litani River. This failed to stop the cross-border attacks. Subsequently, Israel invaded Lebanon in 1982. Tens of thousands of civilians were killed in grim urban warfare in Beirut. In time the PLO was driven from Lebanon and Arafat fled to Libya. Israel withdrew to a narrow buffer zone in southern Lebanon, held with the aid of its proxy, the South Lebanon Army (SLA).

A new resistance group, Hezbollah, began to form in the wake of the PLO's departure. Whereas the PLO had been a secular, nationalist organization, Hezbollah was begun by Shiite clerics in southern Lebanon and thus had Islamist roots. It was supported by Iran and Syria. By 1985 Hezbollah was strong enough to call for armed struggle to eject Israel from Lebanon. By the late 1980s, Hezbollah had taken over where the PLO left off and was successfully conducting an insurgency against the IDF. Israel had a serious problem on its northern border.

To address this problem the IDF attacked Lebanon in Operation Accountability (25 July 1993–31 July 1993), an operation that displayed Israel's QME. Its aerial bombardments were described as "state terror" because much of the bombing targeted civilians (Gordon 1999). Lots of Lebanese infrastructure was destroyed, and 300,000 Lebanese were turned into refugees and fled to Beirut. The IDF lost two soldiers. Still, Hezbollah, though weakened, was not destroyed and soon returned to harass the IDF and SLA. Three years later Israel launched Operation Grapes of Wrath (11–27 April 1996). Another display of air power and more state terror ensued, and infrastructure was destroyed in large amounts in large areas

of Lebanon. This time 350,000 to 500,000 Lebanese were displaced. Only three IDF soldiers were killed in action. Nevertheless, there was a problem. Operation Grapes of Wrath did not destroy Hezbollah any more than Operation Accountability had. Only fourteen Hezbollah partisans were killed, and this time Hezbollah managed to strike back, firing rockets into northern Israel and displacing 20,000 to 30,000 civilians. Israel had had enough. In July of 2000, abandoning its proxy SLA allies, it unilaterally evacuated southern Lebanon.

Hezbollah had driven Israel from territory it had conquered. This ceding of territory was a first for the IDF. Hezbollah strengthened and continued its harassment, this time in northern Israel itself. In July of 2006 its actions were especially enervating (from the Israeli perspective) as it launched rocket attacks and tried to kidnap IDF soldiers. So once more Israel struck, in what was to be called the Second Lebanon War (12 July–14 August 1996). The IDF inflicted heavy air and artillery strikes throughout Lebanon, largely targeting civilian infrastructure (including Beirut's airport) and civilian residential areas. There was a complete air and naval blockade. A hundred thousand cluster bombs were dropped, 90 percent of them in the last three days of combat. Additionally, there was an IDF ground assault on southern Lebanon. Hezbollah stood its ground and was not dislodged; meanwhile it launched more, and more sophisticated, rockets into northern Israel, largely against Israeli civilians.

Compared to the previous hostilities, the Second Lebanon War had consequences that were altogether more serious for both parties in the conflict. More people were killed, more wounded, more property destroyed. Israeli hermeneuts claimed, "Hezbollah lost, and Hezbollah knows it" (Totten 2009). Yet Hezbollah partisans could not be routed, even in facing an assault from the IDF. Their rockets forced the evacuation of 300,000 Israeli citizens in the north of Israel. Hassan Nasrallah, by then Hezbollah's head, declared "divine victory." Since 2006 Israel has refrained from assaulting its northern neighbor. Rather, it has turned its wrath upon Palestinians in Gaza.

The Gaza Strip is a territory on the Mediterranean Sea in the southwestern part of Israel. It is tiny, just 139 square miles, but for its size it has a large population, about 1.7 million, almost all of whom are Palestinian. It is governed by Hamas, a Sunni group founded as an offshoot of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood in 1987. Hamas contests Israel's right to exist, though in 2006 Ismail Haniyeh announced that if a Palestinian state was formed along the borders allotted to it in 1967, then Hamas would be willing to declare a truce that could last for up to twenty years.

The year of Hamas's founding also saw the start of an insurrection against Israel, the First Intifada (1987–1991). This involved acts of civil disobe-

dience, sometimes quite violent, against Israelis in Palestinian operations organized by the PLO and Islamist groups like the new Hamas and Islamic Jihad. No outside Arab states joined in the uprising. Israel responded with what it called its Iron Fist policy of killings, deportations, and beatings of its opponents. The First Intifada showed that Palestinians could wage their own battles for statehood. The following Second Intifada (2000–2008) was a gorier affair. The PLO was less involved in this insurrection, in which Hamas, Islamic Jihad, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), and the al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades conducted insurgency against military and civilian targets, utilizing ambushes, sniper attacks, and suicide bombings. Remote-controlled landmines were employed against Israeli armor, as were car bombs and drive-by shootings.

Toward the end of the Second Intifada, Arafat died (2004) and Mahmoud Abbas was elected to head the Palestinian Authority (2005), which, it was hoped, would evolve into a Palestinian state. Abbas, a moderate, opted for peaceful negotiations and the end of violence as the way to achieve this statehood. His consequent close cooperation with Israeli authorities led to conflict with the more radical Hamas, which held that the Israeli government would not allow the Palestinians' peaceful accession to statehood. In 2006 Hamas won a majority of seats in the Palestinian Legislative Council, designated to be the legislative branch of the Palestinian state. Abbas declined to cooperate with Hamas. The US and the EU declared it a terrorist organization and refused funding to any Hamas-dominated institution. Hamas seized control of Gaza, ejected Fatah, and has governed there since June 2007. Israel responded by completely blockading the Gaza Strip, seeking to destroy industry, reduce nutritional levels, and exacerbate health conditions.

Unsurprisingly, Israel attacked Gaza in Operation Cast Lead (27 December 2008—January 18, 2009). The casus belli was rockets fired from Gaza into Israel in response, Hamas said, to attacks by Israel. Between 2005 and 2007, the IDF had fired 14,600 155 mm artillery shells into Gaza (Human Rights Watch 2007). Operation Cast Lead began with air strikes followed by a ground invasion. Many Palestinians were killed, especially civilians, who after all had no place to flee to. Gaza was conquered. Both sides declared unilateral ceasefires, and Israel withdrew from Gaza. Who won? Israel claimed a tactical victory. Hamas had withstood the enormous violent force of Israel and endured. It continued to govern Gaza.

Three years later, Israel attacked Gaza again in Operation Pillar of Defense (14–21 November 2012). Again the Israeli rationale was that the Palestinians were firing rockets at them. Again the IDF attacked with a vigorous air campaign. Again many Palestinians died. The Israelis lost two soldiers. This time there was no Israeli ground invasion. Hamas was a bit

stronger and was firing somewhat more advanced rockets into southern Israel. So the Egyptians arranged a ceasefire. Once again Israel chalked up a tactical victory, but Hamas was still there and was, if anything, stronger in its military experience. You learn fast, surviving the IDF.

Some in Israel refer to the wars they fight with Hezbollah and Hamas as "mowing the grass" (Pillar 2012). This may strike some as snide, given that the figurative blades cut off lives, not grass. However, this trope holds an unpleasant truth: grass grows back after being cut. Now, on both its northern and its southwestern borders, Israel has two foes who have fought it and grown back like grass, that is, grown in terms of their ability to choreograph violent force. What does all the Israeli warring have to do with US global warring? Part of responding to this question is to assess how strongly one may assert that Israel has been America's air craft carrier.

Sailing the High Seas

What evidence is there that Israel is the empire's "air craft carrier"? To respond to this question, Israeli operations in the New World, Africa, and the Near East are examined next.

Air Craft Carrier in the New World: Writing in the late 1980s, Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi (1988: 107) states, "Israel's activities in Latin America … were part of an American strategy to counter radicalism in the area." Specifically, starting in the 1970s, Israel supplied weapons and training to reactionary regimes that the US government favored in Central America, including Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua. Additionally, within Latin America, Israel provided weapons and training to the Pinochet regime in Chile beginning in the 1970s, to the junta in Argentina during its eight years of military dictatorship (1976–1984), and to dictatorships in Bolivia and Paraguay. With the end of the Cold War, the US's need to prevent Latin America from going over to the Soviets disappeared, and its concerns migrated to other regions that posed new reproductive vulnerabilities. Israel made a parallel migration.

Air Craft Carrier in Africa: After the 1970s, Africa became a continent of insecurity due to wars, as well as a place with supplies of oil that the US *délired* to control. At this time, "Israeli weapons and trainers … [were] observed in numerous African trouble spots" (S. Wezeman 2011: 14). Unsurprisingly these were not random "trouble spots." Rather, they were ones where the US had its interests.

Consider first Sudan, during the long civil war in what then was southern Sudan (1955–1972, 1983–2005). Khartoum accused Israel of assisting

the rebel army in the south, the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement (SPLA). Later, when civil war erupted in the province of Darfur in 2003, Khartoum again accused Israel of aiding the rebels there. US global warring in Sudan is discussed later. Suffice it to say that there is oil in Sudan, that the US lost control of it during the Clinton administration, and that the empire was interested in re-establishing that control. Israeli training and weapons to rebels in both the south and the west of Sudan was reported. Support to those rebels helped the New American Empire weaken Khartoum's control over its oil. Since 2003 Chad, Sudan's neighbor to the west, also has oil, whose production ExxonMobil largely controls. It is in Washington's interest to maintain Exxon's position in Chad. Israel has supplied weapons to the government of President Déby in his struggles with rebellions against his rule that could threaten Exxon (P. Wezeman 2009).

Nigeria is the largest oil producer south of the Sahara. Production occurs in the Niger Delta region and is largely done by US or US clients' companies (Shell, Chevron, ExxonMobil, Agip, and Total). Since the early 1990s there has been armed rebellion in the delta against the central government and the oil companies over the distribution of revenue from the oil, almost none of which goes to the people in the delta. Needless to say, rebellion threatens the US Leviathan's oil interests. Israel's ambassador to Nigeria announced in 2008 that the Nigerian Ministry of Defense was "well connected" with the Israeli military (Pindiga 2011). These connections included Israel's clandestine provision of training and other services to Nigerian troops deployed to combat the Niger Delta rebellion (ibid.: 2011). Israel certainly appears to be policing the empire's oil interests in Nigeria.

Angola, according to *The Economist,* had the highest GDP growth rate in the world, 11.1 percent per annum, between 2001 and 2010. (*The Economist Online* 2011). This is largely because of its abundant petroleum resources. Some predicted that Angolan production could surpass that of Nigeria. For a long time the US was suspicious of the Angolan government. It seemed too socialist for Washington's tastes. However, oil began to be produced in the 1970s. Nominally, the government went from a one-party socialist state to a multiparty democracy in 1992. In 1998 an economic reform in the country introduced neoliberal structural adjustment. Angola had become a country in which the empire could do business, which it did. Angolan oil is largely produced by the US's or its clients' oil companies (Texaco, ExxonMobil, Total, Agip, BP, and Petrobras). It is important to the empire that its oil companies retain their dominance in the Angolan oil sector. To this end, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute observed, "The largest *reported* Israeli arms deal in Africa is a set of contracts worth $1 billion with Angola in 2006" (S. Wezeman 2011: 14). Once again, Israel appears to be assisting the US's Angolan oil interest.

Consider, finally, the case of Uganda. Oil has been discovered in Uganda and in Kenya as recently as May of 2012. Tanzania is believed to have oil, though no commercially exploitable amounts have yet been located. It is known, however, to hold reserves of natural gas. East Africa is thus starting to be of interest for its petroleum resources. It also harbors some determined terrorists, especially al-Shabaab in Somalia. Enter Yoweri Museveni, who became president of Uganda in 1986 after proving himself a skilled general in African conflicts. Soon after he was inaugurated he began neoliberal structural adjustment, to Washington's delight. Appreciative of the military prowess of Uganda's president, the US designated the country as having, according to Wendy Sherman, Obama's under secretary of state for political affairs, a "leadership role" in policing US interests (in Okwir 2011. Not surprisingly, Uganda receives "significant military aid" from Israel (Pfeffer 2013). It might be said that Israel became the policeman's policeman in Uganda during the early years of the new millennium. Clearly, in Africa and Latin America too, Israel has helped to US to secure certain military interests, especially as they pertain to the control of oil. Now, let us explore Israel's role as a US cop in the Middle East.

Air Craft Carrier in the Middle East: Israeli military and intelligence have fought for the empire in three major places in the Middle East—Iraq, Iran, and Syria. Consider first Iraq. By the advent of the new millennium, Israel had been running covert operations in Iraq for well over three decades. Perhaps the most significant of these was the 7 June 1981 bombing of the Osirak nuclear reactor, which was nearing completion when the Israeli air force destroyed it early in Reagan's administration. The reactor was being constructed with the help of the French. Washington was wary of Osirak because Security Elites 2.0 believed it would allow Saddam to develop nuclear weapons, a destabilizing prospect. However, these same officials were for the most part averse to terminating it because that would be an act of blatant aggression, one likely to elicit criticism in world opinion. So the Israeli air force did the job for the Americans and absorbed the UN Security Council's condemnation of the raid. In principle, Reagan was furious about the raid, but in his diary he reported he recognized that Saddam "was trying to build a nuclear weapon" and was a "no good nut" (Reagan 2007). Six months later, the US and Israel signed a statement of strategic accord (30 November 1981). The communication that announced it stated that the "the two countries" would "act cooperatively, to provide each other military assistance to cope with threats to the security of the entire region (Gwertzman 1981). This strategic accord might be said to have replaced the lost twin tower of the shah's Iran with the cop of Israel. The cop continued activities in Iraq.

Prior to the founding of Israel, a significant Jewish population in northern Iraq had had affable relations with the Naqshbandi, an important Sufi order, as well as with the Barzani family. These good relations continued after the founding of Israel, importantly with Massoud Barzani, leader of the Kurdish Democratic Party. By 1980, Mossad was training the *peshmerga*, the Kurdish military force. This Israeli-Kurdish amity gave Israel the ability to operate on the ground in Iraq. This became especially important after the US's 1991 invasion of Iraq, when US officials entered a condition that Bob Woodward (2006: 96) termed "intelligence blindness," which was especially detrimental to Washington as it began to prepare for a second war against Saddam after 9/11.

However, Tel Aviv hurried to Washington's aid. Prior to Gulf War II, Israeli agents, especially the Mossad, had moved into northern Iraq. According to Iraqi sources, one of their activities was formation of front companies, supposedly Arab or European firms, which operated throughout Iraq (Hersh 2004b). Israel, of course, was cooperating with the US and in effect provided Bush II's security elites with on-the-ground information that the Americans otherwise lacked.

There were two further ways Israel supported the US in the buildup to Gulf War II. First, Israeli covert forces trained "Kurdish fighters in anti-terrorism techniques" (Urquhart and Howard 2005). This created the possibility of a northern front against Baghdad. Second, according to the retired Brigadier General Schlomo Brom of the IDF, "Israeli intelligence was a full partner with the US and Britain in developing a false picture of Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction capacity" (Lévesque 2012). As we have seen, once Gulf War II was winding down, Washington focused its attention on Iran.

Here too Israel's stealth operations have been considerable. Of course, they have been performed with US cooperation.[61] Perhaps the most controversial of them has been a "decapitation" program that uses assassins to eliminate "human assets" critical to Iran's nuclear program (ibid.: 2009). A special unit of the Mossad—*kidon*, "the tip of the spear"—performs the murders. There appear to have been four or perhaps five killings of senior scientists, which may seem a small number until one imagines what would happen if a foreign country was known to have assassinated four or five senior US personnel.

Israel has commingled traditional and high-tech sabotage to undermine Tehran. The old-fashioned sabotage has included blowing things up. In November 2011, the assassination program involved a serious explosion at an Iranian missile base that killed the then head of missile development (Raviv and Melman 2012). Additionally, Israel has set up front companies

to sell Iran goods needed for its nuclear program, including critical items that are defective and accordingly hinder its progress.

More novel sabotage tactics have utilized computer-based assaults upon Iranian nuclear installations. These were part of the US-Israel collaboration in Operation Olympic Games, which was authorized in 2006 by Bush II, reauthorized in 2009 by Obama, and implemented as a collaboration between the CIA and the NSA on the one hand, and Unit 8200 of Israeli military intelligence, often called Aman (Vielhaber and Bleek 2012), on the other. Operation Olympic Games developed Stuxnet, a computer worm that attacked Iran's Bushehr nuclear power plant and its Natanz uranium enrichment facility. The atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagaski was the first use of nuclear arms. Stuxnet's deployment was the first use of computer malware in the history of warfare.

A final area of Israeli covert operations against Iran is espionage. From a Kurdish base, intelligence agents launch cross-border operations to find "smoking gun" evidence that Tehran is actually building a nuclear warhead (Lévesque 2012). As of this writing no such evidence has been found, though not for want of trying. So much for Israel in Iran; next, consider Israel in Syria.

Mahdi Dasrius Nazemroaya (2013), an award-winning sociologist and journalist with the Voltaire Network, notes that "the US President told the Telemundo network that the Israelis were justified in striking Syria and that the United States was coordinating against the Syrian government with Tel Aviv." So it appears that Obama has deployed its Israeli cop for missions against Syria. In 2007, Israel did to Syria what it had already done to Iraq and bombed a nuclear reactor at Al Kibar that was apparently funded by Iran and nearing completion (Hersh 2008). Nazemroaya (2013) claims that Israel has sent spies, vehicles, and drones into Syria.

Lévesque (2012) is concerned that there is "a rerun of previous attempts to funnel fabricated evidence into the news chain" about Syria's possession of WMDs. Lawrence Wilkerson, Powell's chief of staff during the Bush II administration, speculated more specifically that reports of the use of chemical weapons in Syria could be the result of an "Israeli false flag operation" (Edwards 2013). These allegations should be treated with some caution. Conflict is still very much ongoing in Syria. Covert participants are still very much hiding their operations, but it does appear that Israel is up to old tricks launching stealth missions for the New American Empire. Lamentably (from the American and Israeli perspective), as observed in the earlier section on Syria, the "dead man walking" is still walking. Israel, then, has been a formidable aircraft carrier sailing the violent seas of US global warring. Of course, Tel Aviv receives the reward of a strategic rent,

which is discussed below in the context of the anti-terrorist and oil-control public *délires.*

Anti-terrorist and Oil-Control Public Délires

Certain facts from the previous analysis need to be highlighted. First, the US's military supply of the IDF provides Israel with its qualitative military edge, which means that when Israel wars, the US is indirectly globally warring because it provides Israel with much of the violent force it needs for success. Thus, when Israel fights, the US Leviathan is conducting secondary warring, as the term was defined in chapter 2.

Second, since the 1990s, when the US turned to Middle Eastern global warring against terrorists and for oil control, Israel has participated as a US proxy. Because the US is fighting in the Persian Gulf to combat terrorism and control oil, and because Israel is a US force resource in this fight, it therefore can be said that the US's secondary fighting in support of Israel is implementation of the anti-terrorist and oil-control public *délires.* Shultzian Permission was granted because Israel functioned as a US proxy when hostilities were ongoing, so that peaceful opportunities were effectively terminated.

The following is clear: the US has used Israel in global warring during the time of coalescence of the cyclical, land/capital, and dominator/dominated contradictions; Shultzian Permission has been granted because of ongoing hostilities; and global warring has implemented oil-control and anti-terrorist public *délires*—all of which supports the global warring theory.

In the book *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy,* the respected political scientists John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt (2007) argue that pro-Israeli lobbying, especially by groups like the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, has overly influenced US foreign affairs, hurting both the US and Israeli interests. Their book provoked venomous criticism that branded the authors as anti-Semitics, among other things. Lost in the name-calling was recognition of what Israel does for the US. It is the cop in rough Middle Eastern neighborhoods, and policing costs a lot. US deference to Israeli interests is part of the strategic rent it pays for that policing. Mearsheimer and Walt's argument that US deference to Israel may hurt both countries' interests should be taken seriously. Israel's covert warring in Iraq II was not able to influence the outcome, nor has it been decisive in either Iran or Syria. However, whenever and wherever Israel wars using US weaponry, abhorrence of Tel Aviv and Washington is generated throughout Middle Eastern peoples and others around the world. For many in the Middle East, such antipathy motivates the *délire* to institute terrorist movements like Fatah, the PFLP, Abu Nidal, Hezbollah, and al-

Qaeda. Thus, the more the US supports Israeli wars against Palestinians and others, the more it is a catalyst for terrorism. It is time to conclude discussion of imperial world warring in the Middle Eastern Theater.

Conclusion

Recall that Mustafa Alani of the Dubai-based Gulf Research Council observed that "the issue," concerning US fighting in the Middle East, "is hegemony in the region" (Sly 2013). He is correct. Since 1991 imperial global warring has, in different ways, been about implementing the anti-terrorist and the oil-control public *délires* to dominate the Middle East and control its prize, oil, allowing relaxation of the vulnerabilities generated by the perfect storm of contradictions. Further, in each of the cases analyzed in this chapter—Iraq, Iran, Libya, Syria, Yemen, and Israel—the evidence supports the global warring theory: it has been a time of intensifying and coalescing contradictions; for various reasons Shultzian Permission was granted; implementation of the oil-control and anti-terrorist public *délires* resulted in global warring.

The US Leviathan's War of Middle Eastern Domination was ongoing in 2014, so conclusions about it must be tentative. Nevertheless, consider Iraq first: the US Leviathan came, warred, and cut and ran. Imperial fighting caused enormous harm, stimulating the growth of terrorism and leaving the country highly unstable. It has not led to greater imperial control over Iraqi oil resources. Next contemplate "Iran," which Churchill called "fairyland." Pretty tough fairies: no regime change; no real stopping of nuclear development; and although US sanctions have hampered Iranian oil production, these same sanctions are said by one source to have equally "undermined" US "global power." Furthermore, US "twilight" warring against Iran has strengthened the Shiite Necklace, the alliance formed to resist US attempts to control the Middle East. Next, in Libya the "model intervention" left the country's oil production almost "stopped," meaning there is little oil for the empire to control. The country's governance is dominated by violent paramilitaries, making it something of a "failed state." The paramilitaries' violence terrorizes Libyans of all stripes and spreads their terrorism to other areas such as Syria. Now remember Syria, where the US, with its ally Israel, has been unable to break the Shiite necklace. At the same time terrorism has flourished. Washington's proposed direct intervention caused friction with its close allies, like the UK and Saudi Arabia, a further sign of weakened bonds of empire. Now recall Yemen, where the empire has specialized in drones and targeted assassinations. These helped the terrorists. The Yemeni branch of al-Qaeda, AQAP, is described as "gaining

strength." Finally, consider US secondary warring for Israel in return for Tel Aviv's acting as an empire cop. Israeli warring has not been decisive in the course of any of the conflicts the US has engaged in in the Middle East. Rather, imperial support for Israel has nurtured the forces of terrorism. *Deadly Contradictions* is a peregrination, and travelers to the vicinity of the empire's Near Eastern warring observe a Leviathan, accompanied by its aircraft carrier, in trouble.

Notes

1. Debate exists about how many world wars there have been. Eliot Cohen (2001), counselor to Condoleezza Rice (2007–2009), insisted the "war on terror" was World War IV.

2. Introductions to Wahhabism can be found in DeLong-Bas (2008) and Commins (2009).

3. The claim that Israel ethnically cleansed Palestine of Palestinians during the creation of Israel in the late 1940s is rejected by many Israelis. The case for it is made by Ilan Pappé (2007, 2012). Pappé has been criticized (see Karsh 1996; B. Morris 2004), but his argument is credible.

4. There is a hefty literature on the Arab Spring. More conventional approaches can be found in the Council on Foreign Relations (2011b), Galvin (2012), and Bradley (2012). More leftist takes on these events can be found in Binh (2013), Dabashi (2012), and Petras, Morley and Smith (2012).

5. It might be objected that the Kuwaitis did not want unification, because in 1991 Iraq was acting as an imperial thug, just as Britain had done in 1921. The House of Sabah had Iraqi roots, having emerged from a clan within the Bani Ulbah, a tribal confederation with ties to Basra in Iraq. Nevertheless, by the late twentieth century the Kuwait royal lineage and merchants resisted returning to Iraq. Both had thrived by collaborating with the English and later from acquiring oil revenues (Crystal 1995). It is far from clear what ordinary Kuwaitis felt about Iraqi occupation. After all, in 1939 they had revolted in favor of reunification with Iraq.

6. Mary Fawzi and Sarah Zaidi in an Food and Agriculture report estimated the child mortality due to sanctions at 567,000 (in Crossette 1995). The US government and much of the American press has tended to either disregard or challenge this figure. Fawzi and Zaidi were professionals who utilized standard estimation methods.

7. The actual invasion plans were formulated by General Tommy Franks, CENTCOM head, and went through a number of iterations described by Bob Woodward (2004). The plans actually called for shock and awe "lite"; as destruction of infrastructure was emphasized less, in part because much of it had not been rebuilt after Gulf War I.

8. The shock and awe doctrine has been subject to criticisms. One is that all aerial attacks involve shock and awe (Correll 2003). Perhaps the most serious criticism is that such a strategy is not applicable to counterinsurgencies. When the enemy has no infrastructure, their location is a mystery, and they will not stand up and fight, where does a diligent commander shock them?

9. The insurgency developed in part due to the incompetence of the US occupation, especially during Bremer's time (2003–2004). The decision to ban the Baathists was important in igniting it. Where this decision originated has been unclear. Wolfowitz appears to have had a hand in it. He scrawled, on the margins of a memo suggesting reconciliation with former Baathists, "They are Nazis" (in Crist 2012: 421). Patrick Cockburn (2006), who was in Iraq at the time, provides the fullest account of occupation horrors. Even Bush recognized in his memoirs that there was "chaos" (2010: 259). The Defense Department was charged with managing the occupation, even though much of the planning for it had been done in the State

Department. Secretary Rice blamed the occupation's failure on post-invasion turmoil, saying, "Unfortunately, the Pentagon had minimal ability to manage the elaborate [postwar] plans given the chaos on the ground" (2011: 210). The Rand Corporation performed a detailed evaluation of the prewar occupation planning, concluding, "The evidence suggests that the United States had neither the people nor the plans in place to handle the situation that arose after the fall of Saddam Hussein" (Bensahel et al. 2008: xvii).

10. Gates was a member of the ISG and has described its workings (2014: 27–38), remarking "how much fun" it was (2014: 30). Gates does not say that the ISG supported "cutting and running." Rather he emphasizes that important committee members, including himself, were interested in a short-term surge. However, the surge was conceived as an operation that would allow reducing American combat forces; i.e., cutting and running.

11. Ricks (2009) and Fred Kaplan (2013) describe the rise of Petraeus and COIN. Two others arguing for COIN were David Kilcullen (2010), who originally served in the Australian military and held a doctorate in anthropology, and John Nagl (2005), from the US military, a tank platoon commander during Operation Desert Storm. A key problem was to account for the debacle of COIN in Vietnam. Petraeus offered an explanation in his PhD (1987) dissertation. Nagl (2005) did the same. Kilcullen (2010) explained how to win with COIN, using the British handling of the Malayan insurgency as a model. Arrequin-Toft (2002) has offered a critique of US COIN.

12. The Human Terrain System, a project designed to integrate anthropologists into the US Army, was condemned by the American Anthropology Association in 2007 (AAA 2007).

13. Scahill (2013) provides the most complete account of the JSOC. It was formed out of the debacle of the failed mission to rescue the American hostages held in the US embassy in Tehran in 1979 and modeled after the British Strategic Air Services (SAS), and includes Navy Seals, the Delta Force, and the 75th Army Rangers.

14. Some believe that Petraeus's 2003 pacification of Mosul was a "just so" story. A US army report analyzing the success of counterinsurgency in Gulf War II found that around Mosul, "insurgent organization and violence increased throughout" 2003 (Broemmel, Nielsen, and Clark 2006: 27), and that the same was so during 2004 (ibid.: 52), the time of Petraeus's command there. Mansoor (2013), who was Petraeus's executive officer during the Surge, has written an account of it that is favorable to his commander.

15. Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld did not approve of COIN. Eight retired senior admirals and generals called for Rumsfeld's resignation on grounds of incompetence in early 2006. He resigned his position on 6 December of that year. His replacement, Robert Gates, quickly approved the surge with its adoption of COIN.

16. The neoconservative think tank The American Enterprise Institute took credit for suggesting the "surge" (Kagan 2007).

17. Perhaps, the commander Petraeus most resembles is Civil War General George B. McClellan. Petraeus, like McClellan, never really won a decisive battle. Like McClellan, he "never missed an opportunity to make a friend in the media" (W. Stern 2012). There was a bit of the intimidator in Petraeus. Once, when he and Defense Secretary Gates were in disagreement, Petraeus threatened Gates: "You know I could make your life miserable" (Gates 2014: 68). Gates was not amused.

18. The most complete analysis of the role of oil in Gulf War II is Muttitt (2012b).

19. Mraz (1997) discussed the dual containment policy and its problems. The United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) was in charge of inspecting Iraq's disarmament and WMD development. Just prior to Operation Desert Fox, Baghdad refused or hampered inspections, claiming that the US was using UNSCOM to spy on it. It was on the basis of these debates over inspections that Clinton ordered the 1998 bombing. The US *was* using UNSCOM to spy on Iraq (Everest 2004: 202–203).

20. Linda McQuaig (2004: 84–85) has suggested there is evidence to believe the Vulcans intended to war against Iraq by February of 2001.

21. Franks, in consultation with Rumsfeld, would end up revising the war plan several times. Initially there was a plan called 1003V, left over from the Clinton administration. It was replaced by a "generated start" plan, a "running start" plan, a "hybrid" plan, and in the end, the plan actually used, Cobra II, which was finished only in February 2003, a month before the onset of hostilities.

22. The Future of Iraq Project documents were originally secret. Their publication date is given as 2005, the year they were declassified. Most appear to have been drafted between 2002 and 2003.

23. Other major planning for postwar Iraq was done in the Defense Department office of Undersecretary for Defense Policy Douglas Feith, who created an Office of Special Plans that issued guidance papers. There was little cooperation between the Office of Special Plans and the Future of Iraq project, which hindered postwar planning. Bensahel et al. (2008: xvii) provide an account of the imperfections of the planning for postwar reconstruction, which they declare to have been "unprepared" for the situation after Saddam's fall.

24. The proposal that PSAs should be introduced in Iraq is discussed in Muttitt (2006). It was first suggested in 2002 by the Oil and Energy Subgroup of the Future of Iraq Project (Oil and Energy Working Group 2005: 4, 5).

25. The quotation is the first "Comment" to the *PRWatch* piece (Center for Media and Democracy 2005).

26. The *Washington Post* revealed in November 1999 that US intelligence used UNSCOM to spy on Iraq (Gellman 1999). In 1996 the CIA mounted a failed coup attempt against Saddam using UNSCOM information.

27. Clinton's condemnation of Saddam's use of poison gas was hypocritical. During the Iran-Iraq War the US had provided the Iraqi military with information on the disposition of the Iranians, which the Iraqis needed in order to gas them. As one US intelligence officer noted, the Pentagon "wasn't so horrified by Iraq's use of gas. It was just another way of killing people" (in Everest 2004: 104).

28. What Tenet actually meant by his "slam dunk" remark is open for debate. Bob Woodward (2004: 440) reported that Powell "knew very well that Tenet had told the president 'in brash New York language' … that the case on WMD was a 'slam dunk.'" Being from the Bronx, Powell would have known such language when he heard it.

29. Seymour Hersh (2003) was instrumental in revealing the activities of the OPS. Feith (2008: 294) defends the OPS and fulminates against Hersh in his memoirs. One whopper certainly came out of OPS: the claim that Iraq was ultimately responsible for 9/11 (Isikoff and Corn 2006: 111). Feith (2008: 295) outlined the distribution network of his work when he reported that one "paper" was sent to Rice, "who then distributed it to Cheney, Powell, General Myers, and Tenet (and to the White House Chief of Staff Andrew Card and the Presidential Counsel Alberto Gonzales). … She also sent copies to all the Deputies."

30. I was unable to access the 2006 and 2009 NIE reports and have relied upon accounts of them.

31. Bush II's Cheney "love" had faded by the end of his presidency (Calabresi and Weisskopf 2009).

32. Burke (2005), who evaluated Rice's proficiency as NSA, judged that by reporting to Bush what he was disposed to hear, she failed to alert him of the dubious quality of the Iraq intelligence he was actually hearing.

33. There is debate over the degree to which the CIA warned the White House of 9/11. Tenet (2004: 151) contends he warned Rice at a 10 July 2001 meeting of the possibility of a "spectacular" al-Qaeda operation. Rice (2011: 67) has replied, "My recollection of the meeting is not very crisp."

34. The exact history of the Bush administration's instituting of torture remains unclear. Assistant Attorney General John Yoo in the Office of Legal Council (2001–2003) is identified as having written "torture memos" legitimating CIA and military torture of their captives. He

has been said to have had "strong working relationships" with White House and Pentagon officials (Golden 2005).

35. Gordon and Trainor (2006: 577)—Trainor being a retired general—judged Franks and Rumsfeld's plans "unrealistic." Ricks (2006: 3) called them "flawed."

36. Powell seems disingenuous in this quotation. The State Department certainly knew that Cheney and the Defense Department were presenting suspicious evidence of Saddam's WMDs.

37. Rice does not discuss the 5 August meeting in her memoirs. Neither Cheney nor Rumsfeld discusses in his memoirs, except *en passent*, the 5 August or any other meeting that led to the 7 September decision to go to the UN. However, Bob Woodward (2004) gives a full account of these meetings. Bush (2010: 238) mentions the 5 August meeting briefly and does not contradict Woodward's version.

38. Powell reports that Pottery Barn stores did not have a so-called Pottery Barn rule and were angry that the attribution was bandied about in the press. He also claimed that neither he nor Armitage used the term and that it was the media that invented it (C. Powell 2012: 212).

39. In the year prior to World War I's onset, the Anglo-Persian Oil Company (APOC), BP's forerunner, negotiated with then First Lord of the Admiralty Winston Churchill, who sought to modernize Britain's navy by replacing coal with oil as the British navy's fuel. He also sought to free the UK from dependence upon foreign oil companies. In exchange for secure oil supplies for its ships, the British government injected new capital into APOC and in doing so acquired a controlling interest in it.

40. The 18–20-million-dollar figure for covert funding of anti-Iranian operations is probably low, as it does not take into account the US intelligence and military "black budget" for secret operations. The size of the black budget is never officially revealed. However, Edward Snowden released information that placed the 2012 US black budget at $52.8 billion, with roughly $14.7 billion going to the CIA (Gellman and Miller 2012). During the Clinton administration some CIA money was likely directed against Iran.

41. Gates (2014: 182) is clear that after he replaced Rumsfeld as defense secretary he attempted to keep the US out of overt, direct warring with Iran; Cheney, however, "talked openly" of using "military force" in Iran.

42. General James Cartwright appears to have overseen development of the Stuxnet virus. Problematically, it attacked more than just Iranian installations and as of 2010 had bedeviled over 100,000 computers in 115 countries (Cole 2013b).

43. Ironically, it was the US, during the Shah's rule in the 1970s, that first suggested to Iran that it initiate a nuclear program (Kinzer 2008)

44. The nickname "fuzzhead" may have been a racial attack upon Gaddafi. A person with "fuzzy" hair is racially classified as "black" in Chad and Libya.

45. Chorin (2012: 2, 4), a former State Department employee, portrays Gaddafi as "a despot" who ran a government with the "markings of a totalitarian state." "One thing that struck" him during his two year Libyan assignment, he tells readers, "was how many times people … would take me aside and insist that the 'US government should know' what they are dealing with in Gadaffi" (ibid.: 5). According to his own estimates, Chorin worked "12 to 15 hour days" in a "5 star hotel" (ibid.: 5). Such a work environment and schedule would inhibit getting out to systematically discover what people actually believed. McKinney (2012) and Forte (2012) offer less Washington-centric discussions of the Libya revolution. Pargeter (2012) has a useful account.

46. There was only a single major case of human rights abuse during the Gaddafi years. This was a massacre at the Abu Salim prison, where perhaps 1,200 were executed in 1996 (Human Rights Watch 2009).

47. The east/west divide in Libya extends back to ancient times. Starting roughly in 600 BC, eastern Libya or Cyrenaica consisted of Greek cities, while the west, Tripolitania, consisted of Punic cities under Carthaginian domination.

48. The *Telegraph,* a centrist UK newspaper, reported that US and UK Special Ops were in Benghazi and Tobruk by 24 February 2011 (Iqbal 2011).

49. Forte (2012) has rebutted the propaganda claims of the Obama administration, including the claim that Gaddafi armed his soldiers with Viagra.

50. Keenan (2009) discusses AFRICOM's introduction into the Sahara. Maximilian Forte (2012) has analyzed the impact of Gaddafi's opposition to AFRICOM.

51. Hinnebusch and Schmidt (2009) discuss the political economy of Syria and its neoliberal reforms immediately prior to the onset of the rebellion. Landis (2012) has an account of Syrian politics through the beginning of the popular rebellion in 2011. Pipes (1990) provides a conservative background to modern Syrian history. Ajami (2012: 10), originally from Lebanon but currently at the Hoover Institution, offers an Orientalist understanding of government under the Al Assads, dismissing it is as "a drab … dictatorship." Seale (1990: 441) offers an understanding of Hafez al Assad as "an Arab de Gaulle." Assaf (2012) and Sustar and Khalil (2012) analyze the course of the rebellion against Assad. Landis operates a blog, *Syria Comment,* which provides an English-language account of Syrian events.

52. The local protests that began the Syria civil war did not originate in sectarian politics. They arose from a conjuncture of a deteriorating climate and an intensifying contradiction pitting a governing/business class against rural and urban poor. In the new millennium, Bashir and his regime had implemented a number of neoliberal policies "in the service of a new stratum of crony capitalists" (Hinnebusch and Schmidt 2009: 4). These policies impoverished the rural poor, many of whom migrated to cities where, unable to secure employment, they became urban poor. Drought, which was especially grave in 2008–2010, deepened the rural distress (Kelley et al. 2015). Bashir did nothing to address rural and urban impoverishment. Rebellion began among the rural and urban distressed (Assaf 2012).

53. Reports estimated that between early 2012 and the middle of 2013 the CIA had facilitated airlift of at least 3,500 tons of arms from Saudi Arabia and Qatar to the rebels (P. Scott 2013).

54. The *Financial Times* reported that as of mid 2013 Qatar had given Syrian rebels over $3 billion (Khalaf and Smith 2013).

55. There are five imaginable perpetrators of the Ghouta attack: Syrian government forces, rebels, US military/intelligence units, Israeli military/intelligence units, and coordinated US/Israeli military/intelligence units. The Secretary of State Kerry did not appear to think evidence was necessary to back his assertion of Assad's evil. The document Kerry used to justify charging the Syrian government with Ghouta is a list of unsubstantiated assertions (White House 2013). The *Eurasia Review* reports that Turkish prosecutors have indicted Syrian rebels for seeking the components of chemical weapons (RT 2013). Seymour Hersh (2013: 1) published the news that "American intelligence agencies" knew before the Ghouta incident that the al-Qaeda–affiliated Al Nusra, "had mastered the mechanics of creating sarin and was capable of manufacturing it in quantity." Both the Americans and the Israelis have a penchant for false flag operations. Both have the technology, organization, and finances to perform gas attacks. Sepahpour-Ulrich (2013) explains how the US might have done it in collaboration with Israel. As of this writing, a dense propaganda fog obscures the perpetrators' identity.

56. Some suggest Obama has approached Syria with "extreme caution" (P. Scott 2013) and that the monsterization of Bashar in 2011 and 2012 was relatively restrained. Perhaps this was in part because Obama's officials sought to avoid the swaggering rhetoric of Bush II's security elites, and in part because they hoped, at least through June 2013, to resolve the Syrian problem covertly.

57. Syrian pipeline politics are discussed in Peter Scott (2013) and Dinucci (2013).

58. Dresch (1994) and Al Dawsari (2012) discuss tribe-government interactions in Yemen. The Harak Uprising, which is Sunni-dominated and found in southern Yemen, struggles to secede from the Republic of Yemen and reinstitute South Yemen. It began in 1994, turned to peaceful means to achieve its goal, and appears to be returning to violence. The Houthi

Rebellion, for the most part confined to the extreme northwest of Yemen, is a Shia movement that seeks overthrow of the Yemeni government.

59. Discussion of al-Qaeda in Yemen can be found in Johnsen (2012) and Hull (2011). The former provides a background that leads al-Qaeda from Afghanistan to Yemen. Hull, who was US ambassador to Yemen (2001–2004), provides detailed discussion of the weakening of al-Qaeda following the attack on the USS *Cole*.

60. I have Sephardic and Ashkenazi relatives. Partisans of the Israeli state, on the basis of the discussion of Israel in the text, may label me as either an anti-Semitic or a self-hating Jew. Hurling insults is an illegitimate form of argument.

61. Raviv and Melmen (2012) discuss covert operations in Iran from an Israeli perspective.