

Iraq Inspections Have Exposed The Hoax of the 'Dossiers'

by Michele Steinberg

After UN weapons inspectors Dr. Hans Blix and Dr. Mohamed El-Baradei gave their preliminary report to the UN Security Council on inspections inside Iraq since Nov. 27, U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld held a Jan. 15 Pentagon press conference, attacking the inspectors as weak sisters. Rumsfeld acted "like a prosecutor preparing a case," as one reporter put it, in laying out the case for war against Iraq. But in the midst of his diatribe, he was compelled to admit that President Bush has *not* made a decision about whether to go to war.

The UN inspectors reported that they had not met resistance or interference in Iraq; had carried out 230 separate inspections; and were about to intensify their activities. They also said they had found neither weapons of mass destruction, nor production facilities for them.

The truth is, that the more extended and successful the inspections are, the clearer it will be that the September 2002 "dossier" produced by British Prime Minister Tony Blair's government, and the "Decade of Defiance" dossier issued at the same time by President George W. Bush, are frauds, tainted with disinformation, exaggeration, and lies.

EIR's preliminary review of these September dossiers, when gridded against the UN inspections reported since Nov. 27, has found that the accusations were not substantiated. *EIR* has also found that "experts" who claim to have the inside scoop on Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), are all working together, financed by a network of right-wing foundations and a single New York "public relations firm."

Defectors, War-Hawks on One Roster

A little-known public relations agency in New York called Benador Associates has assembled as clients, virtually *all* of the so-called sources on whom the intelligence on Iraq's weapons of mass destruction has rested. The Benador team members are committed to a unilateral, pre-emptive war

against Iraq, and the overthrow of Saddam Hussein. Proprietress Eleana Benador is a Peruvian, now living in the United States, who also works for the notorious anti-Islam journal *Middle East Quarterly*, published by Daniel Pipes' Foreign Policy Research Institute (FPRI). In turn, FPRI is financed by the neo-conservative "sugar-daddy," foundations: the Smith Richardson Foundation, the Bradley Foundation, the Olin Foundation, and the Scaife family foundations.

In the former Soviet Union, the job of Benador Associates would have been known as "agit-prop," that is, "agitation



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Virtually all figures who have insisted on Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, excepting high U.S. government officials, are clients of one New York public relations firm.

and propaganda.”

Anyone who has followed the Iraq war partisans in the American media, will immediately recognize Benador’s clients: James Woolsey, Richard Perle, Michael Ledeen, and Laurie Mylroie, who are all affiliated with the American Enterprise Institute; Iraqi defector Khidir Hamza, source of the claims that Iraq has a nuclear bomb; Iranian exile Amin Taheri, who frequently writes on the necessity of “regime change” in Iraq, and has savaged UNMOVIC chief Hans Blix for being an apologist for Saddam Hussein. Rounding out the anti-Islam, neo-conservative set are such as the Rev. Sun Myung Moon operative Arnaud de Borchgrave, editor of the *Washington Times*, and Daniel Pipes of FPRI. Another client is Richard Spertzl, the former bio-weapons inspector for UNSCOM, accused by former chief inspector Scott Ritter of doctoring UNSCOM reports.

In December 2001, the last scientific defector to leave Iraq, Adnan Ihsan Saeed al-Hadieri, told of visiting “20 secret facilities” for WMDs in Iraq. Al-Hadieri was praised in the White House dossier on Iraq. The reporter to whom he told the story is Judith Miller of the *New York Times*, co-author of a book about Iraq with Benador client and anti-Saddam Hussein loony, Laurie Mylroie.

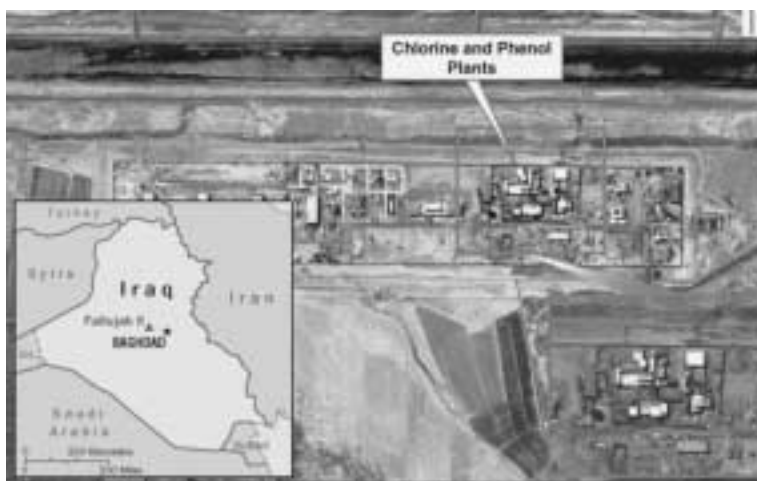
Surveillance Photos Hype

In the last week of September 2002, Tony Blair briefly dominated international headlines when he warned that it would only take “45 minutes” for Saddam Hussein to deliver a weapon of mass destruction. The war-mongers, at that time, were counting on Iraq never to let inspectors into Iraq, as he subsequently did.

While there is no way to definitively evaluate the inspections that have taken place, since much of the reporting is kept secret, it is abundantly clear that the sites featured in satellite photos played up on television, and in newspapers and magazines, were inspected—in some cases, three or four times—and nothing was found but red herrings.

The Al-Nassr complex (see photo), for example, was identified positively by the White House dossier as the site of a rebuilt and modernized chemical weapons facility. The charge has been proved unsubstantiated after the facility was searched by the UNMOVIC team at least once, on Dec. 27.

The Fallujah II plant (see photo) was identified in the dossier as the site of expanded chlorine production, at a “far higher” rate than needed for civilian production, which could be diverted “for military purposes.” UN inspectors have searched the site at least once, on Dec. 9, and again found nothing relating to WMDs.



Two sites which the British and White House “smoking gun dossiers” had identified as uncontested evidence of Iraq’s WMD: the Al-Nassr engineering complex (top) and the Fallujah II chemical plant; both are marked on the White House website. A third, even more emphasized, was the Tuwaitha Nuclear Research center (not shown). UN inspectors inspected these sites at least on Dec. 7, 9, 10, and 27, and found nothing to report.

The Tuwaitha Nuclear Research Center (just south of Baghdad), has been identified repeatedly as one of the gems of the Iraq WMD capability. So much emphasis has been put on it in the British and American reports that it was searched on at least three occasions, on Dec. 7, 9, and 10; and again, nothing was found to report to the UN Security Council in the inspectors’ Jan. 9 submission.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and members of the Security Council, including France, Russia, and Britain, have said the inspectors need the “space and time” to conduct their investigations. It is actually Ms. Benador’s clients, with their claims of “uncontested” secret evidence of Iraq’s WMDs, who are being discredited.