Language and the legitimation of war <http://www.csmonitor.com/2003/0314/p02s01-woiq.html>

**The impact of Bush linking 9/11 and Iraq**

**American attitudes about a connection have changed, firming up the case for war.**

By [Linda Feldmann](http://www.csmonitor.com/About/Contact-Us-Feedback), Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor / March 14, 2003

WASHINGTON

In his prime-time press conference last week, which focused almost solely on Iraq, President Bush mentioned Sept. 11 eight times. He referred to Saddam Hussein many more times than that, often in the same breath with Sept. 11.

Bush never pinned blame for the attacks directly on the Iraqi president. Still, the overall effect was to reinforce an impression that persists among much of the American public: that the Iraqi dictator did play a direct role in the attacks. A New York Times/CBS poll this week shows that 45 percent of Americans believe Mr. Hussein was "personally involved" in Sept. 11, about the same figure as a month ago.

Sources knowledgeable about US intelligence say there is no evidence that Hussein played a role in the Sept. 11 attacks, nor that he has been or is currently aiding Al Qaeda. Yet the White House appears to be encouraging this false impression, as it seeks to maintain American support for a possible war against Iraq and demonstrate seriousness of purpose to Hussein's regime.

"The administration has succeeded in creating a sense that there is some connection [between Sept. 11 and Saddam Hussein]," says Steven Kull, director of the Program on International Policy Attitudes (PIPA) at the University of Maryland.

The numbers

Polling data show that right after Sept. 11, 2001, when Americans were asked open-ended questions about who was behind the attacks, only 3 percent mentioned Iraq or Hussein. But by January of this year, attitudes had been transformed. In a Knight Ridder poll, 44 percent of Americans reported that either "most" or "some" of the Sept. 11 hijackers were Iraqi citizens. The answer is zero.

According to Mr. Kull of PIPA, there is a strong correlation between those who see the Sept. 11-Iraq connection and those who support going to war.

In Selma, Ala., firefighter Thomas Wilson supports going to war with Iraq, and brings up Sept. 11 himself, saying we don't know who's already here in the US waiting to attack. When asked what that has to do with Iraq, he replies: "They're all in it together - all of them hate this country." The reason: "prosperity."

Al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden himself recently encouraged the perception of a link, when he encouraged attacks on the US in response to a US war against Iraq. But, terror experts note, common animosity toward the United States does not make Hussein and Mr. bin Laden allies.

Hussein, a secularist, and bin Laden, a Muslim fundamentalist, are known to despise each other. Bin Laden's stated sympathies are always toward the Iraqi people, not the regime.

This is not to say that Hussein has no link to terrorists. Over the years, terrorist leader Abu Nidal - who died in Baghdad last year - used Iraq as a sometime base. Terrorism experts also don't rule out that some Al Qaeda fighters have slipped into Iraqi territory.

The point, says Eric Larson, a senior policy analyst at RAND who specializes in public opinion and war, is that the US public understands what Hussein is all about - which includes his invasion of two countries and the use of biological and chemical agents. "He's expressed interest - and done more than that - in trying to develop a nuclear capability," says Mr. Larson. "In general, the public is rattled about this.... There's a jumble of attitudes in many Americans' minds, which fit together as a mosaic that [creates] a basic predisposition for military action against Saddam."

Future fallout

In the end, will it matter if some Americans have meshed together Sept. 11 and Iraq? If the US and its allies go to war against Iraq, and it goes well, then the Bush administration is likely not to face questions about the way it sold the war. But if war and its aftermath go badly, then the administration could be under fire.

"Going to war with improper public understanding is risky," says Richard Parker, a former US ambassador to several Mideast countries. "If it's a failure, and we get bogged down, this is one of the accusations that [Bush] will have to face when it's all over."

Antiwar activist Daniel Ellsberg says it's important to understand why public opinion appears to be playing out differently in the US and Europe. In fact, both peoples express a desire to work through the UN. But the citizens get different messages from their leaders. "Americans have been told by their president [that Hussein is] a threat to security, and so they believe that," says Mr. Ellsberg. "It's rather amazing, in light of that, that so many Americans do want this to be authorized by the UN. After all, the president keeps saying we don't have to ask the UN for permission to defend ourselves."

• *Staff writers Liz Marlantes and Faye Bowers contributed to this report.*

One Report and Viewpoint about the Iraq War Oil Question: <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/03/13/opinion/13juhasz.html>

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Op-Ed Contributor

**Whose Oil Is It, Anyway?**

By ANTONIA JUHASZ

San Francisco

TODAY more than three-quarters of the world’s oil is owned and controlled by governments. It wasn’t always this way.

Until about 35 years ago, the world’s oil was largely in the hands of seven corporations based in the United States and Europe. Those seven have since merged into four: ExxonMobil, Chevron, Shell and BP. They are among the world’s largest and most powerful financial empires. But ever since they lost their exclusive control of the oil to the governments, the companies have been trying to get it back.

Iraq’s oil reserves — thought to be the second largest in the world — have always been high on the corporate wish list. In 1998, Kenneth Derr, then chief executive of Chevron, told a San Francisco audience, “Iraq possesses huge reserves of oil and gas — reserves I’d love Chevron to have access to.”

A new oil law set to go before the Iraqi Parliament this month would, if passed, go a long way toward helping the oil companies achieve their goal. The Iraq hydrocarbon law would take the majority of Iraq’s oil out of the exclusive hands of the Iraqi government and open it to international oil companies for a generation or more.

In March 2001, the National Energy Policy Development Group (better known as Vice President Dick Cheney’s energy task force), which included executives of America’s largest energy companies, recommended that the United States government support initiatives by Middle Eastern countries “to open up areas of their energy sectors to foreign investment.” One invasion and a great deal of political engineering by the Bush administration later, this is exactly what the proposed Iraq oil law would achieve. It does so to the benefit of the companies, but to the great detriment of Iraq’s economy, democracy and sovereignty.

Since the invasion of Iraq, the Bush administration has been aggressive in shepherding the oil law toward passage. It is one of the president’s benchmarks for the government of Prime Minister Nuri Kamal al-Maliki, a fact that Mr. Bush, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Gen. William Casey, Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad and other administration officials are publicly emphasizing with increasing urgency.

The administration has highlighted the law’s revenue sharing plan, under which the central government would distribute oil revenues throughout the nation on a per capita basis. But the benefits of this excellent proposal are radically undercut by the law’s many other provisions — these allow much (if not most) of Iraq’s oil revenues to flow out of the country and into the pockets of international oil companies.

The law would transform Iraq’s oil industry from a nationalized model closed to American oil companies except for limited (although highly lucrative) marketing contracts, into a commercial industry, all-but-privatized, that is fully open to all international oil companies.

The Iraq National Oil Company would have exclusive control of just 17 of Iraq’s 80 known oil fields, leaving two-thirds of known — and all of its as yet undiscovered — fields open to foreign control.

The foreign companies would not have to invest their earnings in the Iraqi economy, partner with Iraqi companies, hire Iraqi workers or share new technologies. They could even ride out Iraq’s current “instability” by signing contracts now, while the Iraqi government is at its weakest, and then wait at least two years before even setting foot in the country. The vast majority of Iraq’s oil would then be left underground for at least two years rather than being used for the country’s economic development.

The international oil companies could also be offered some of the most corporate-friendly contracts in the world, including what are called production sharing agreements. These agreements are the oil industry’s preferred model, but are roundly rejected by all the top oil producing countries in the Middle East because they grant long-term contracts (20 to 35 years in the case of Iraq’s draft law) and greater control, ownership and profits to the companies than other models. In fact, they are used for only approximately 12 percent of the world’s oil.

Iraq’s neighbors Iran, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia maintain nationalized oil systems and have outlawed foreign control over oil development. They all hire international oil companies as contractors to provide specific services as needed, for a limited duration, and without giving the foreign company any direct interest in the oil produced.

Iraqis may very well choose to use the expertise and experience of international oil companies. They are most likely to do so in a manner that best serves their own needs if they are freed from the tremendous external pressure being exercised by the Bush administration, the oil corporations — and the presence of 140,000 members of the American military.

Iraq’s five trade union federations, representing hundreds of thousands of workers, released a statement opposing the law and rejecting “the handing of control over oil to foreign companies, which would undermine the sovereignty of the state and the dignity of the Iraqi people.” They ask for more time, less pressure and a chance at the democracy they have been promised.

The National Security Council was never consulted about the threat the Iraq might pose to the US

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