



## IRAQ WAR: 'SUPREME INTERNATIONAL CRIME'

by Enver Masud, Chairman and CEO, The Wisdom Fund

Having launched a pre-emptive war, and lied to the world about its reasons, he was left with few options. During his internationally televised speech to the nation from Fort Bragg on June 28, U.S. president George W. Bush put on a brave front, and vowed to stay the course.

Before launching the war on Iraq in March 2003, Mr. Bush said the war was about eliminating weapons of mass destruction from Iraq, and Iraqi president Saddam Hussein was a threat to the U.S. Mr. Bush implied that Mr. Hussein was responsible for the September 11, 2001 attack on America. He was not.

When no weapons of mass destruction were found in Iraq, spreading democracy in the Middle East became Mr. Bush's rationale for war. It wasn't. It isn't.

Yesterday, Mr. Bush said the Iraq war was fought to prevent terrorism. But it is the war that is creating more terrorists. He recalled September 11, wrongly reinforcing what many Americans believe, that Iraq was responsible for the biggest attack ever on the U.S. mainland.

Mr. Bush launched the Iraq war "not in March 2003, as everyone believed, but at the end of August 2002, six weeks before Congress approved military action against Iraq" wrote Michael Smith—the

British journalist who first revealed the secret Downing Street memos.

The July 23, 2002 memo states that "Bush wanted to remove Saddam, through military action, justified by the conjunction of terrorism and WMD. But the intelligence and facts were being fixed around the policy."

Former Supreme Court Justice Robert Jackson, chief U.S. prosecutor at the first Nuremberg trial, called waging aggressive war "the supreme international crime differing only from other war crimes in that it contains within itself the accumulated evil of the whole."

"The same view would later be confirmed by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Far East. It was also confirmed in the detailed judgment in the 'Ministries Case' of the Subsequent Proceedings held at Nuremberg" wrote Benjamin B. Ferencz—a prosecutor at the subsequent Nuremberg war crimes trials.

Some would have us believe that it was a just war. It was not.

It was not waged in response to an imminent threat. It was not proportionate to any perceived threat. Civilian infrastructure was not spared. Iraqis are not better off than they might have been in an Iraq contained by sanctions. ❖

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