

Exit Strategy? Bushwah!

**Dubya has no exit strategy for Iraq.
There's a simple reason. We don't plan
to leave. Period.**

David Podvin writes that when Dubya signed Executive Order 13303, effectively transferring Iraqi oil into American custody, it constituted history's greatest acquisition of wealth. Iraq's proven oil reserves of 115 billion barrels are just too great a resource to leave. Geological surveys show the existence of a similar amount of unconfirmed petroleum deposits, leaving, at current prices, about 14 trillion dollars worth of oil beneath the Iraqi sands.

Podvin says the result will be the same whether the Democrats or the Republicans are in power; the American military isn't going anywhere. "Not sooner. Not later. Not ever."

The proof, according to Podvin, is that hugely expensive military bases are being constructed throughout Iraq. He says the world's only superpower did not build its financial juggernaut by being the type of impetuous nation that repudiates 14 trillion dollars.

We already have American soldiers permanently stationed in more than a hundred countries. Iraq is just one more. Podvin says that at some point we will bring our troops home from Iraq

in the same way troops were recalled from World War II; some of the soldiers remain positioned to protect business interests.

This scenario is believable in part because we already have 120,000 private mercenaries and other personnel stationed in addition to our regular army and the marines. When big money is involved democracy goes on sabbatical.

Nobody today really believes in the various Bush explanations for our occupation. It's certainly not "all about democracy!" or even "If we don't fight them over there we will have to fight them over here!"

Podvin believes our losing situation in Iraq now requires expansion of our military

domination in the Middle East, meaning a move on Iran, which would like to drive America out and take all the oil for itself.

Iran makes a good villain for a number of reasons, including its fanatical leaders. Legitimate cause exists to insure that Iran does not acquire the Iraqi oil. An Irani takeover of Iraq's oil wells would give them major influence on the world economy, as well as enabling them to advance their jihadist agendas. Iran's chances for grabbing Iraqi oil were maximized because of Dubya's destabilization of Iraq.

Dubya's current request for \$82 billion for Iraq includes a half-billion dollars for permanent military bases and another

half-billion for building the world's largest embassy—clear signs the US is preparing for a lengthy stay in Iraq.

In the context of spending more than \$200 billion on the Iraq War so far, spending a billion dollars on new facilities seems rather insignificant, but keep in mind that the US already operates out of about 50 locations the include 14 “enduring bases” in Iraq.

Our new US Embassy in Iraq will be located on 104 acres and will house 1,020 staff and 500 guards, making it the world's largest embassy. Read about it in the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* at:

http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/opinion/224055_iraqbases.html

The US-backed Iraqi government has just approved leasing the country's oil production facilities to multinational corporations, usually for periods of from 15 to 30 years, still another sign of our plans to stay. Oil production in the Middle East has almost entirely been a function of central governments in recent decades; turning the wells and refineries over to private corporations is another new development that should be watched carefully.

Will we fight in Iran? Actually, if one reads the news carefully, it's easy to see we already are. The real escalation of the war has already moved across the Iranian border. Iranian bravado in the face of our

military might—no matter the difficulties we're facing in Iraq and Afghanistan—has been tempered lately, but there are a lot of signs it's already too late.