



# Special Plans

THE BLOGS ON DOUGLAS FEITH & THE  
FAULTY INTELLIGENCE THAT LED TO WAR

SELECTED AND  
INTRODUCED BY  
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*For my grandmother,  
Bernice Zens.  
—A.H.*

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*Bush misled the nation not merely because he  
hoped to use the war for political fodder in the  
2002 and 2004 elections, though that certainly  
figured into the equation. Neither was it merely*

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*because Iraq is such a significant source of oil, though that too probably was an added incentive.*

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*In one of their major reports, written in 2000, they noted that “the process of transformation, even if it brings revolutionary change, is likely to be a long one, absent some catastrophic and catalyzing event—like a new Pearl Harbor.”*

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*“Without accepting the premise of your idiotic question, let me say that indeed it doesn’t make much difference outside the beltway. The only thing that really matters to the voters of America is that Saddam’s sons are dead and the president has pulled down all their father’s statues.”*



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*In other words, all those who present a terrorist threat to the United States are by definition in league with each other. If not by definition, then somehow it is assumed to be true almost a priori, without a need for any actual evidence.*

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WHISKEY BAR

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*For the past week, watching the neocons (the ones outside the administration anyway) rally to Chalabi’s cause, I’ve been wondering if our crooked Iraqi will eventually prove to be the right’s version of Alger Hiss.*

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*It’s hard to think of a more important security issue facing the country than our capacity to gather reliable intelligence about who is, and who is not, collaborating with al-Qaeda. Feith’s operation has cut directly against this and, as the report documents, been used to mislead Congress*





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*about the state of American intelligence on the subject.*

AMERICABLOG.COM

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*We uncovered lots of VERY interesting stuff on various Pentagon officials who may or may not have anything to do with the burgeoning scandal. Nonetheless, the info we uncovered is so, well, bizarre, in terms of the interconnecting web between these folks, that we felt obliged to report it—as LONG and almost-conspiratorial all of this may sound.*

LEWROCKWELL.COM

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*The important unanswered question is: why do the neocons with their proven record of duplicity and delusion still hold the reigns of power in the Bush administration? Why isn't Feith in prison?*

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*The darkly grim irony in all of this is that, while Feith moseys off into this personal glimmering sunset, tens of thousands of common folk— butchers, bakers, candlestick makers, the guy down the street—found themselves federalized into full-time combat area duty as National Guard and Reserve members, jerked away from their jobs and families for far longer than they ever could have realistically imagined, while thousands of others were held in or called back to military service under stop-loss provisions when they thought their military commitment was about to be or had been completed.*



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*It all comes down to this: THEY KNEW THEIR PRIME PIECE OF INFO, PUSHED FOR PUBLIC CONSUMPTION, WAS WRONG, BUT THEY PUSHED IT ANYWAY!!*

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*. . . the commission report (page 49) says that "[intel] analysts shifted the burden of proof, requiring evidence that Iraq did not have WMD. More troubling, some analysts started to disregard evidence that did not support their premise." Funny, I thought it was the policy types, not analysts, that had required evidence that Iraq did not have WMDs.*

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## FOREWORD



Here's a story of espionage, think tanks, power brokers, and Douglas Feith—the Undersecretary of Defense for Policy whose Office of Special Plans oversaw the enormous manipulations and failures of intelligence that led to the U.S. war and occupation in Iraq.

I approached Allison Hantschel some time ago to generate a list possible topics for a book in this series. I probably didn't describe it to her like this, but the book I was looking for would work like a dream blog post—a lengthy introductory piece, but instead of clickable links, the piece would be followed by a selection of blog posts that enrich the story told in the introductory piece.

"I'm also fascinated with Douglas Feith," she wrote among her list of ideas, "in a sick, terrified, staring-at-a-train-wreck kind of way." Since I shared that fascination, I was pleasantly surprised to hear her come up with it on her own. I have to admit, though, that I wondered how deep this topic would go. I was familiar with Douglas Feith and the Office of Special Plans—more or less in name only—and the story I knew put it this way: desiring justification to invade Iraq and overthrow Saddam Hussein, officials of the Bush administration—especially Dick Cheney—set up Douglas Feith to head the Office of Special Plans in the Pentagon in order to run intelligence through that office and ignore inconvenient re-

## FOREWORD

ports that questioned notions such as the existence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

As it turns out, I was right about that, but a single sentence is not a book. Allison has found the material to fill out the story, and in the meantime has set me straight about what the story really is. She gives us the complete train wreck: the schedule, the station, the tracks the train ran on, and the prospect of another train coming along in the future.

So fasten your seatbelts. It's going to be a bumpy ride.

—*Tom Sumner*  
*Series Editor*



# P R E F A C E



## **Do not attempt to adjust this book**

When I'd start to talk at parties about the Office of Special Plans, people gave me the kind of looks one reserves for someone who has just announced Elvis is talking to him through the toaster oven.

If a small group of people, mostly from one right-wing think tank, had planned, pushed and executed a war based on at best massive misconceptions and at worst deceptions of the highest order, then messages from the King through the crockery seemed like a perfectly plausible scenario.

People would nod, back away slowly, and make a quiet request that the bartender not give me any more of whatever he'd been pouring.

I began prefacing conversations about work with "I swear I am not making any of this up."

I think this book, about a small group of people from one right-wing think tank who predicted, planned, pushed and executed this war, should begin the same way.

I swear we're not making any of this up.

## **Acknowledgments**

My deepest thanks to the bloggers who agreed to let us reprint their posts herein. This is their story, not mine, and hopefully after reading this you'll visit their sites and explore what they

## PREFACE

have to say on other subjects. They inspire, every day, the kind of passion our political process desperately needs.

Joel Preston Smith gave this book the benefit of his rigorous editing and it's vastly better for it. Jim Leisy at William, James & Co. gave his full support, and Tom Sumner conceived this wonderful project to introduce the blog world to the book world, and let me contribute to it.

Special thanks to my First-Draft.com partners—Holden Caulfield, Tena Hollingsworth and pie—who gave invaluable advice and encouragement throughout this process. And to my husband, Tony, who, ten years ago, convinced me to give this whole Internet thing a try.

—A.H.