

# The Lessons of History for the Invaders

by Paul Wolf, 4 April 2003

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From: Paul Wolf <paulwolf@icdc.com>  
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## **The Lessons of History for the Invaders**

Norman Davies, *The Independent*, 5 April 2003

<http://www.arabnews.com/Article.asp?ID=24744>

LONDON, 5 April 2003 -- The Battle for Baghdad is beginning. Everyone asks whether it will bring a swift end to the conflict. The answer, almost certainly, is "no".

When Saddam Hussein was first transformed from a useful client into an evil dictator, the Western media was eager to call him a new Hitler. More recently, he is thought to be more like Stalin. (Even his mustache is more like Stalin's than Hitler's.) This should cause no surprise.

Saddam's regime was not set up in an advanced industrial country like Germany, but in a traditional Arab society which he set out to modernize, secularize and militarize by brute force. Saddam's Baath Party, which stands for "Renewal", boasts a heady brand of so-called Arab socialism where extreme nationalism is fused with communist-style party control.

Most importantly, since Saddam's military and security systems were largely designed by Soviet advisers, the tentacles of the ruling party penetrate into every corner of every state institution, ensuring that embedded political officers give all the orders at all times and at all levels. If this calculation is correct, the generals do not command the army. They defer to political colleagues, who may be dressed up as generals and sit in on staff meetings, but who do not answer to the army command. One may be equally sure that the military/security forces form an elaborate chain of interlocking services where every watchdog organization is itself watched over by another watchdog. The regular army is kept in check by the Revolutionary Guard. The Revolutionary Guard is guarded by a Special Revolutionary Guard. And the Special Revolutionary Guard is run by high-ranking officers from the Security Department, whose agents will oversee every other unit.

In addition, the ruling party will have organized its own armed services. There will be "blocking regiments" to shoot any soldier who thinks of retreating. (There will also be blockers of the blocking regiments.) There will be assorted militias and specialized corps of bodyguards, frontier troops, desert rangers, prison guards, and internal troops, each positioned to crush the least sign of dissent. By now, there must be a specialized corps of suicide bombers.

Washington's idea that it can swiftly "decapitate" this sort of hydra by removing Saddam, by rounding up the "death squads", or by replacing a few ministers is unconvincing. In the short term, however, the most urgent question concerns the dictator's ability to persuade his troops to fight.

Some American analysts think that armies ruled by fear will melt away when attacked. One cannot be so sure. Indeed, if Stalin be the model for this war-game, the conclusions must be rather worrying. By 1941, Stalin had already killed many millions of his own subjects. Yet, when the Soviet Union was attacked, the Red Army put up a heroic fight that surpassed all expectations. To the amazement of the German invaders, who had been told they were removing a wicked regime, Soviet troops contested every inch of land, irrespective of losses. Anyone who imagines lack of democracy means lack of fighting spirit needs to think again.

The simple fact is that the soldier defending his native soil will fight better than an invader. But other psychological and cultural factors are at work. On Stalin's eastern front, for example, observers noted something akin to "the bravado of desperation". Soldiers who had been maltreated at home, who had seen their relatives tortured or cast into the Gulag, but who were powerless to protest, had nothing to lose. So they charged at the enemy with the Motherland on their lips in the one last act that could restore their pride and dignity.

Of course, when tested, Saddam's troops may not die willingly. In that case, one might argue that Saddamism, unlike Stalinism, was not brutal enough.

Every army has its own culture, its own corporate ethos. Reports from Iraq increasingly contrast the "softly, softly" approach of the British with the "gung-ho", "trigger-happy", "cowboy" stance of many Americans. The contrast may not be entirely fair. We may yet see incidents of "friendly fire" in which Americans are the victims. But perceptions count. And the US war machine seems to suffer from two major defects. Firstly, it appears to have been trained to believe that the safety of its own members is sacrosanct, and hence that anyone

outside its own ranks is an enemy. Secondly, it is led by an ideologically driven clique, which is not typical of America and which possesses absolutely everything except self-criticism.

In the long term, especially if the US takes sole charge in Iraq, these attitudes will take their toll. For they ignore another simple fact, namely that cultures are more powerful than constitutions. Bush and Rumsfeld can introduce all the democracy and freedom that they like. But if they do it in ways that offend local sensibilities, they will be wasting their time. My old professor (the late Hugh Seton-Watson), used to talk about "the law of colonial ingratitude". In its simplest form, the law states that the better the ruler's intentions, the worse will be their effect.

In the meantime, the Battle for Baghdad has to be won and lost. And historians are being squeezed for precedents. The most popular choice still seems to be Stalingrad, notwithstanding protestations from Antony Beevor that Berlin was the nearer comparison. *Radio 4* was nearer the mark yesterday when someone mentioned the more recent battle for Grozny. At all events, one precedent does invite examination. From the political viewpoint, Warsaw in 1944 bears no resemblance to Baghdad in 2003. But as a tactical scenario in which a first-class army was ordered to capture a foreign capital from a greatly inferior force of locals, it gives food for thought.

Poland's underground army seized central Warsaw in a series of surprise attacks on the evening of Aug. 1, 1944. They numbered some 45,000. They possessed less than one rifle or pistol per person. They were completely surrounded by Panzer divisions, which were preparing to confront the advancing Soviets; and they faced a ferocious SS punitive force backed by tanks, rocket batteries, mine-throwers, giant mortars, field cannon, armored trains and Stuka dive-bombers. They hoped for assistance from the air from their British and American allies. But their aims were modest: to hold out for the two to three days, which they estimated Marshal Rokossovsky would need to storm across the river and relieve them. Their troubles began when the Western allies failed to assist them and the Soviet advance was halted.

The battle for Warsaw is sometimes cited as the classic example of urban guerrilla warfare. The Germans were unable to turn their vast technical superiority to advantage. By shelling the streets and barricades, they created masses of ideal cover for snipers, grenade-throwers and petrol-bombers. By attacking residential districts, they turned most terrified civilians against them. They lost scores of tanks and trucks, and thousands of men, before they abandoned frontal assaults. The desperate defenders, in contrast, stood firm. They were masters of ambush.

They seized German weapons and stores. They retreated from positions under overwhelming firepower only to reoccupy them at night.

Chronically short of ammunition, they adopted the principle of "one bullet, one German", and killed twice as many as they wounded. They held out not for two to three days but for 63. The price was paid by the 200,000 civilians killed -- 10 times the insurgent casualties. A furious Hitler ordered the rebel city to be totally razed. Unfortunately, the Warsaw Rising does not fit the ever-victorious Allied myth, and is almost forgotten.

## **Rome, Hitler And Bush - Facing Reality**

by David Comissiong, *Barbados Daily Nation*, 24 March 2003

<http://www.nationnews.com/StoryView.cfm?Record=35774&Section=LO>

THE "will of power" and the "impulse to dominate" have been dominant trends in much of the European thought, behaviour and culture over the past 2 500 years.

What we are witnessing with United States President George W. Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair and their assault on the nation and people of Iraq, is the spectacle of the international Anglo-Saxon ruling oligarchy's love affair with force, power and domination.

Make no mistake about it, the ultimate aim that the Bush and Blair regimes have embarked upon is nothing less than "universal or world domination". Iraq is merely a stepping stone along the way.

And we must not fall into the fatal error of believing that these blood-thirsty policies are the personal creations of the two individual political leaders of the United States and Britain. On the contrary, it is important to grasp that Bush and Blair are the agents for powerful, deeply entrenched Anglo-American elites, who have determined that the 21st century must be a new "age of empire", totally saturated with Anglo-American power.

In fact, the fundamental policy-making of the Bush Administration is held captive by a cabal of powerful policy-makers who operate under the aegis of an entity called, "Project For The New American Century".

Key leaders of the " Project " are United States Vice-President Dick Cheney, Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, and such strategically placed National Security and Pentagon advisers as Paul Wolfowitz, Richard Perle, Abram Schulsky and Elliot Abrams.

Any meaningful effort to analyse and understand this imperialist drive toward universal domination, and to develop effective strategies to counteract it, must examine the historical precedents upon which it is based. The two most important such precedents are the Nazi regime of Adolf Hitler and the ancient Roman Empire.

One philosopher/historian who examined the Roman and Hitlerian enterprises on detail, and who sought to pinpoint the common fundamental strategies that these two imperialisms used in order to construct their oppressive empires, was Simone Weil.

In her 1939 essay entitled *Reflections On The Origins Of Hitlerism*, [published as "The Great Beast: Some Reflections on the Origins of Hitlerism, 1930-1940," p.12 in Richard Rees, ed., *Selected Essays*, 1934-1935 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1962)] Weil identified common, fundamental characteristics of Roman and Hitlerian policy -- characteristics which are today unfolding before our very eyes with the Bush and Blair regimes.

The first principle of both Roman and Nazi policy was to maintain the maximum degree of prestige in all circumstances and at any cost. There is indeed no other way by which a limited power can proceed to universal domination -- for no single nation can possess in

reality, sufficient force to dominate many other peoples.

This is why in the third Punic War, the Romans exhausted themselves in an interminable war against a relatively small city -- Carthage -- whose existence was no threat to them. It was all a matter of maintaining the prestige and reputation of Roman power.

Indeed, the parallels between Carthage and Iraq are startling. In 149 BC, Rome won a quick and complete victory over the North African city of Carthage, and the Carthaginians accepted all Roman demands and surrendered their arms. They were then ordered to abandon their city and permit it to be destroyed. Thereupon, the Carthaginians rescinded their surrender and defended themselves heroically for three years. After much effort by the Romans, the weak and harmless city was finally captured and razed to the ground.

Rome, Nazi Germany and George Bush's America also exhibit a great concern to preserve the prestige of their power by investing it with the appearance of legality. As Weil noted -- "Pretexts are not useless when they are transparent and cannot fool anyone, provided they are put forward by the strong." Hence, Bush's grossly contradictory and hypocritical contention that his assault in Iraq is legally justified by the United Nations Charter and Security Council Resolution 1441.

And what will be the eventual outcome of an age of global United States domination? Well, once again, the record of Rome provides a clue:

"The long and profound decadence that was caused for the subjugated peoples by a single, centralised domination cannot be denied. The Mediterranean basin was reduced to spiritual sterility . . . The Roman peace was soon the peace of the desert, of a world from which had vanished together with political liberty and diversity, the creative inspiration that produces great art, great literature, science and philosophy."

David Comissiong is president of the Clement Payne Movement and writes this column in that capacity.

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### **CBS Producer Sees Bush as Another Hitler**

Carl Limbacher, *NewsMax.com*, 3 April 2003

<http://www.newsmax.com/showinsidecover.shtml?a=2003/4/3/111255>

If you thought the rabid anti-Americanism displayed by such bottom-sucking slugs as Michael Moore was as low as Hollywood can sink, think again. The producer of the *CBS* miniseries "Hitler: The Rise of Evil" says it is a warning to the American people that if they don't watch out the Bush administration could morph into a carbon copy of Hitler's National Socialist dictatorship.

According to the *New York Post*, something called Ed Gernon, the *CBS* producer of the Hitler miniseries starring Robert Carlyle, Peter O'Toole and Julianna Margulies, says he sees the program as a warning for Americans about the Bush administration. And this craven fool says that that he, Margulies and director Christian Duguay all think it's a good idea for

Americans to keep Hitler's Nazi regime in mind while looking at the Bush White House.

A fearful American public's cooperation with Bush's policies, Gernon tells *TV Guide*, is "absolutely" similar to post-World War I Germany's acceptance of Hitler's extremism. "I can't think of a better time to examine this history than now," he said.

*CBS* President Leslie Moonves quickly separated himself from Gernon's disgusting tirade, telling *TV Guide* he doesn't share the filmmaker's highly paranoid views and doesn't subscribe to the Bush-Hitler comparison.

Isn't that big of him?

What the American people need to do is keep Stalin's propaganda ministry in mind when watching *CBS*, a network that hires people such as Comrade Gernon and keeps them on the payroll when they compare the president of the United States to Adolf Hitler.

What can you expect from the network that refuses to lift a finger against useful idiot Dan Rather after he spread propaganda for genocidal dictator Saddam Hussein?

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### **Bush attack**

*ABS-CBNnews.com*, 4 April 2003 [http://www.abs-cbnnews.com/abs\\_news\\_opbody.asp?oid=19874](http://www.abs-cbnnews.com/abs_news_opbody.asp?oid=19874)

A Filipino-American wrote complaining about our reference to "Americans" when we obviously mean the Bush administration because she does not want to be identified with "that S.O.B."

She's right; we apologize. Americans are staging some of the biggest rallies against the US war on Iraq since the Vietnam War. And before we slip into treating the compliant Italians the same way -- we could say, "What do you expect, they have a crook as Prime Minister?" -- it bears remembering the huge antiwar rallies in Rome, not to mention Madrid. We accused Spain of beating its chest gorilla-fashion in the Azores summit only to do nothing in the war.

Even in Britain, whose main industry now is war for export, half of the public opposed a US attack on Iraq. And in Spain and the Czech Republic, just 13 percent of the population endorsed an American, that is, a Bush attack on Iraq.

Our letter writer is right. Next time we shall refer to the invaders as "Bush forces," "Cheney attack dogs" and "the best British export." Yet, somehow, none of that sounds right because, from all appearances, those ardent young men and women in uniform really believe they are fighting for America. This is the Information Age; they know what's going on. And they probably believe as well that, if the United States grabbed most of the world's oil for itself, America would be a happier place and the world living in its shadow would have less to worry about its foul moods.

This is probably what the Bush administration means when it says it is only making the world more peaceful and less violent by eliminating regimes that stand up to the United States. We predict that Venezuelan populist Hugo Chavez will not last out the year in power. He will be taken out for standing between a nationalized Venezuelan oil sector and the Venezuelan rich who want to share it with Texas.

The Nazis felt the same way. They didn't want to fight for what they craved. The ideal was the cakewalk into Austria, the quiet grab of the Sudetenland, and a few melodramatic tears shed by Frenchmen as German soldiers marched down the Champs Elysee. The best advice for rape victims to avoid getting seriously hurt remains the same: lie back and even appear to enjoy it, because some of these guys want to see a glad reaction. Hence the continued badgering of *CNN* and *BBC* reporters in the field by their TV news anchors at home to show Iraqis acting happy about what they are undergoing.

### **No UN role**

The foregoing editorial just about settles the question in a *Newsweek* article this week on which historical analogy best applies to current events: Munich, the blitzkrieg against France, or Adolf Hitler.

The answer is all three. When the United Nations tried to appease an American president chafing at the bit to attack Iraq for its oil fields by passing a unanimous resolution laying down an ultimatum for Iraq to disarm or face sanctions, it lost the power to decide what acceptable disarmament and sanctions would be. The result is the US blitzkrieg in Iraq that is more like the one against a feudalistic Poland fielding 19th-century cavalry at German tanks and Stukas, than the one against the better-equipped French. There is no comparable Guderian or Rommel in the Anglo-American forces. This war is a pure Kentucky turkey shoot.

There is no likeness, however, between Hitler and George W. Bush. No one has questioned the rightful election of Hitler as Germany's leader. And while a communist really set fire to the Reichstag, the Iraqis had absolutely nothing to do with the attack on the twin towers of the World Trade Center.

So it is déjà vu all over again, though with some interesting variations. Thus, moves by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and European Union members to wangle a significant role for the United Nations in a post-Saddam Iraq will show us what the world would have been like if Churchill had not rallied the British against the Germans and Roosevelt had not maneuvered his mighty country to war against the same.

What if Britain and the United States had rushed forward instead to ask Nazi Germany for a role for the League of Nations in the administration of its European conquests, say food aid, because the Nazis had cut calorie consumption by half to weaken subject populations, and police work so the Nazis could send back home only the handful of German police they needed to keep order in conquered Europe.

A UN role in a post-Saddam Iraq will only ratify aggression and paint a thin veneer of multilateralism over pretty thick and naked unilateral power-hunger; in this case, over the

second largest quantity of the sweetest and easiest-to-get oil in the world. UN peacekeepers will end up as decoys to flush out residual Iraqi military resistance for US choppers to come in and finish off.

No need for a UN role. Letty Ramos-Shahani had delivered the eulogy of the institution she gave the best years of her life to. It's dead, as she said. Dragging it out of the coffin to preside at a table of vultures might only get it mangled in the scramble for the choicest morsels.

The best thing is for the UN to do nothing except look, listen and remember. The US may plant weapons of mass destruction on Iraq and the agenda of a post-independent Iraq can only be, to borrow lyrics from *The Sound of Music*, "How do you solve a problem like America?"

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### **N Korea 'prepared for war'**

by Stephen Lunn in Toyko, *The Australian*, 5 April 2003

[http://www.news.com.au/common/story\\_page/0,4057,6240143%255E401,00.html](http://www.news.com.au/common/story_page/0,4057,6240143%255E401,00.html)

NORTH Korea's nuclear standoff with the US had the potential to escalate into a war with "unthinkable consequences", a senior UN official warned yesterday.

Maurice Strong, a special adviser to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, said he believed communist North Korea was "prepared to go to war if they believe the security and integrity of their nation is really threatened, and they do."

"There is a real potential for this escalating into conflict," Mr Strong said on his return from Pyongyang as a UN special envoy.

"I think war is unnecessary, unthinkable in its consequences, and yet it is entirely possible."

North Korea is suspected of possessing at least two nuclear bombs.

"So much of this often arises from a breakdown of trust, a breakdown of confidence, an inability to read the real intentions of signals of others," Mr Strong said.

Pyongyang's media outlets have bombarded the world in recent months with harsh anti-US rhetoric and statements [that] the reclusive Government of Kim Jong-il expects to be the next in line for military conflict after the Iraq conflict is resolved.

Much is dismissed as breast-beating propaganda, but Mr. Strong's comments after speaking to top North Korean officials were a telling insight into the growing seriousness of this security threat in northeast Asia.

They come just ahead of a critical closed-session UN Security Council meeting scheduled



for Wednesday to discuss the North Korean nuclear crisis.

The US referred the matter to the UN after Pyongyang earlier this year expelled UN inspectors from its decommissioned nuclear power plants, announced its intention to withdraw from the global nuclear non-proliferation treaty and vowed to restart a nuclear reactor capable of producing enough weapons-grade plutonium to build up to six atomic bombs by mid-year. Washington wants a UN statement condemning North Korea.

China, a permanent member of the 15-nation Security Council with close ties to the North stretching back to the 1950-53 Korean War, has so far refused to discuss the matter.

North Korea's official withdrawal from the non-proliferation treaty will crystallise a day after the Security Council meeting on Thursday.

Mr Strong said the Iraq war had created grave fears in Pyongyang.

"They paid very close attention and had a lot of concern about this . . . as evidence in their mind that the US is actually now following up and implementing its right of pre-emption against another one of the powers that was designated as a part of the axis of evil," he said.

"They believe from a variety of statements that have been made . . . that they are next on the list. They feel a real sense of threat."

In a speech in January last year setting out his foreign policy agenda, US President George W. Bush described North Korea, Iraq and Iran as an "axis of evil" for their alleged programs to develop and sell weapons of mass destruction.

The ill-feeling continues, with North Korea yesterday accusing the US of committing "genocide" in Iraq.

"The US forces (have) used such weapons of mass destruction . . . killing hundreds of innocent civilians at a time," a North Korean Foreign Ministry spokesman said.

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### **Pyeongyang laughs at criticism from U.S.**

*JoongAng Daily* - North Korea News, 5 April 2003

<http://joongangdaily.joins.com/200304/05/200304050209445809900090209021.html>

North Korea's Central News Agency said yesterday in an editorial that the U.S. sanction against Changgwang Sinyong Corp. for a missile sale to Pakistan's Khan Research Laboratories was "a laughable ploy." Production, deployment and exports of missiles were the country's "sovereign rights," the agency said.

U.S. State Department said Tuesday that sanctions had been imposed on the two entities on March 24 for an unspecified trade. Reports last year said Pakistan was bartering nuclear

technology with North Korea in return for missile technology.

Also "laughable," North Korea's Foreign Ministry said, was a recent U.S. report that detailed human-rights abuses. On both counts, the North mentioned the U.S. war on Iraq, which it said gave the United States no right to discuss the affairs of other nations.

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### **France, Russia, Germany Want UN to Play Important Role in Reconstruction of Iraq**

by Paul Miller, *Voice of America* / USIA, 4 April 2003, 17:01 UTC

<http://www.voanews.com/article.cfm?objectID=30F82CF7-8767-4AD7-9ADF941D69660B8E#>

The foreign ministers of France, Russia and Germany say the United Nations should immediately be given a key role in Iraq, starting with humanitarian assistance.

One day after clashing over the future of Iraq with U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell at a meeting in Brussels, the foreign ministers of France and Germany met with their Russian counterpart to press their view.

The three countries, which failed to prevent the U.S.-led attack on Iraq through the United Nations, want to re-establish the organization's importance. France and Russia hold veto power in the U.N. Security Council. In addition, companies from all three countries hold lucrative contracts with the Saddam Hussein government, and also want a share of reconstruction contracts.

They said the first priorities are ending the fighting and addressing what they called a humanitarian crisis in Iraq, which they said the United Nations should deal with immediately.

French Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin criticized Bush administration plans to give reconstruction contracts in Iraq to American firms.

France holds a number of lucrative contracts for oil, telecommunications and other business with the current Iraqi government, which might not be valid under a new government.

In Brussels on Thursday, Secretary of State Colin Powell said the coalition fighting in Iraq should play the leading role in rebuilding the country.

## **Russia denies discussing postwar Iraq with anyone**

*Interfax*, 4 April 2003

[http://www.interfax.ru/show\\_one\\_news.html?lang=EN&tz=0&tz\\_format=MSK&id\\_news=5630155](http://www.interfax.ru/show_one_news.html?lang=EN&tz=0&tz_format=MSK&id_news=5630155)

PARIS. April 4 (Interfax) - Russia is not holding talks with anyone on the postwar organization of Iraq, Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov said on Friday.

"We are not holding any negotiations on this subject either with the U.S. or with anyone else," Ivanov told a news conference in Paris after a meeting with the French and German foreign ministers.

"It is obvious that the war must end and the sooner the better for everyone, including the U.S. And then the issue of the postwar organization of Iraq will come on the agenda, as will the issue of the UN taking the central role in tackling these problems.

"We are concentrating our main efforts now on having the hostilities come to a halt and having the acute humanitarian problems that have arisen in Iraq due to the war addressed." [RU EUROPE EEU EMRG IQ MEAST ASIA VIO POL DIP FR DE WEU US GB] as aw

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## **Indo-Russia naval exercise not linked to Iraq war: Moscow**

*Zee news*, 4 April 2003

<http://www.zeenews.com/links/articles.asp?aid=90142&sid=TOP>

Moscow, Apr 04: The joint Indo-Russia naval exercise in the Indian Ocean next month are not linked to the US-led war in Iraq, defence minister Sergei Ivanov said today.

India and Russia had planned wargames of their navies "much before" the Iraq war, he said in the Belarus capital Minsk, *Itar-Tass* reported.

Russia is sending its several warships of the Black Sea and pacific fleets, and three nuclear submarines of the northern fleet to the Indian Ocean for the first time since the break up of the USSR.

During defence minister George Fernandes' Moscow visit in January, the two countries had agreed to hold their first ever-joint naval wargames in May.

The Russian Defence Minister declined to comment on the local media reports about presence of tactical nuclear missiles on board of the battleship sailing to the Indian Ocean.

"No military ever comments on this," Ivanov said.

According to the Russia-US agreement, ships are not allowed to carry tactical (short-range) nuclear missiles in peacetime.

## **Turkish military settles in along Iraqi border**

by Jon Hemming, *swissinfo SRI*, 3 April 2003

<http://www.swissinfo.org/sen/Swissinfo.html?siteSect=143&sid=1738619>

ZAKHO, Iraq (Reuters) - Turkish soldiers could be seen settling into Turkish villages and fields across the Iraqi border to keep a close eye on events which Ankara fears could tear at the fabric of Turkish unity.

Ankara is worried there could be moves to create a Kurdish state in northern Iraq, which it says would reignite armed Kurdish separatism in south-eastern Turkey.

U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell said in Ankara on Wednesday he saw no cause for Turkey to send troops into northern Iraq. Washington was confident no Kurdish state would emerge and Turkish Kurd "terrorists" would not flourish.

Turkey, for now, appears to have accepted the assurance. But its vast army clearly remains at the ready lest the chaos of war raise the ghosts haunting military and political leaders.

Troops ready to set up a buffer zone within Iraq dig in amid arable fields where farm workers gouge water channels below sunny skies. From the Turkish side the area is closed to all except [sic] the military, villagers and essential services.

Beside a Turkish village near the Habur border gate, drivers used mechanical diggers to build up soil embankments to shelter heavy armour along a fastflowing river dividing the two lands.

Local witnesses in Turkey said tanks, rocket launchers and artillery equipment were ranged behind embankments already completed. Children played nearby, chasing each other in front of small stone village houses.

"It looks like the soldiers are here to stay. They have connected up the water and electricity supply," a local landowner told *Reuters* by telephone.

For villagers life is continuing as before.

"Our life in the cotton and wheat fields goes on normally side-by-side with the soldiers. They have set up a volleyball pitch and they are playing there now," a tractor driver said.

"We've been asked not to sow crops on some fields because they said armoured vehicles would be passing through," a farm worker said.

Powell visited Ankara to repair damage to relations done by Ankara's refusal to allow U.S. troops to attack Iraq from Turkish soil. He said U.S. troops airlifted into northern Iraq had stabilised the situation there and he saw no cause for Turkey to send its troops to the region.

The United States fears any fresh deployment of Turkish troops could lead to conflict with local Kurds and disrupt the war effort. The issue was central to Powell's talks in Ankara.

## **U.S. Armoured Vehicles**

Powell said he had agreed with Ankara on measures to ship supplies through Turkish territory to U.S. forces fighting in northern Iraq.

The Turkish military said more than 200 U.S. military Hummer vehicles, stockpiled in Turkey ahead of the war, had been moved into northern Iraq. Witnesses saw a convoy of some 25 long lorries crossing into Iraq through Habur early on Wednesday.

Around seven km (four miles) to the north of the border gate, soldiers have built a temporary steel bridge across the Habur River, reinforced with concrete on both banks and protected by a gendarmerie guard post, local witnesses said.

Alongside a tent camp near the frontier, soldiers played volleyball on a newly laid out pitch. The tents were erected to accommodate a possible flow of refugees from across the border, but Turkish troops are now using them.

Memories of 500,000 refugees flooding to Turkish frontiers in the 1991 Gulf War die hard here.

There were still no signs of refugees in northern Iraq. People who fled the towns of Zakho and Dohuk to villages in the mountains when the war began have returned to their homes.

In one area of the Turkish military camp in Habur, an officer conducted a training exercise for a group of soldiers lined up on a parade ground in front of dozens of trucks, tanks and communication vehicles.

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