

Deleted Truth: An Exercise in a Linguistic Analysis of Political Discourse

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1. Truth is a matter of linguistics, as Bolinger succinctly puts it: "Communication presupposes non-concealment between interlocutors, which logically excludes all forms of deception, not merely propositional lies. The lie, broadly conceived, is therefore a proper object of study for linguists, and a necessary one at a time when lying is cultivated as an art." (Bolinger 1973, p.539, Abstract)

Communication is the most important function of language, without which humans could not survive, not to mention the impossibility of attaining a highly civilized level of democratic existence. As an attempt at explicating the secrets of successful communication, Grice (1975) proposed the "Cooperative Principle." His postulates have been regarded as an extremely effective way of analyzing the function of verbal communication. His principle, which is also an effective way for practicing Bolinger's thesis, is made up of four maxims:

- I. Quantity. 1. Make your contribution as informative as is required.
 2. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.
- II. Quality. 1. Do not say what you believe to be false.
 2. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.
- III. Relation. 1. Be relevant.

- IV. Manner.
1. Avoid obscurity of expression.
 2. Avoid ambiguity.
 3. Be brief.
 4. Be orderly.

What is interesting here is, however, that his approach has been significant because so many people violate his principles and that these violations all the more underline the self-evident existence and importance of these principles. Examples of violating Grice's maxims will be abundantly found in the speeches of George W. Bush. It is remarkable and astonishing that official statements of a U.S. president are so packed with lies. This fact is all the more significant because lying requires continued efforts at deception. As Grice (1975, p.49) reminds us, "It is much easier, for example, to tell the truth than invent lies." Thus, the question should be, why has President George W. Bush been vigorously engaged in such a laborious task, thereby endangering democracy? It should be obvious, therefore, that if we want to analyze the functions of language, we have to explain the structure of lying, which is a voluntarily vicious example of violating the Cooperative Principle.

This task is all the more necessary now that global threat of terrorism (real or apparent) is being felt daily and that a lot of comments by 'world leaders' cause doubt as to the validity of the course they are taking. As Bolinger (1973, pp.542-43) says, there are "people who believe their own propaganda, and Chiefs of State who surely harbor such a concept as that of a little lie being part of a larger truth, on the analogy of War is Peace or what you don't know won't hurt you."

The purpose of this paper is an exercise of Bolinger's thesis by examining President Bush's speeches in terms of language used therein and pointing out his deceptive uses of language. It is always the powers that be that pose the greatest threat to our society by manipulating language, and we should pay heed to Bolinger's admonition: "...our government — that very government that is the greatest abuser of language — (Bolinger 1973, p.541).

Before proceeding to this task, however, I would like to illustrate several deceptive uses of language, first citing Bolinger (1973) and then adding some more examples.

[1] Deletion of the Performative Verb

- (1) a. America is lagging behind Russia in arms production.
 b. I think that ~
 c. My Chief of Staff informs me that ~

In (1a) there is no indication of evidence, and anyone could make such proof-free statements as much as they like without assuming responsibility. If it is the President of the United States, for instance, who makes such assertions, he would be demonstrating propaganda instead of making a responsible statement. In (1b) and (1c) there is a measure of honesty about how reliable the information is, but they still lack hard evidence. If it is a personal opinion and everyone can see that it is so, there would not be much confusion or deception, though (1c) could never be construed as just a personal opinion but could only be taken for passing the buck to his Chief of Staff in case a mistake should follow.

As Bolinger (1973) says, this type of deception is the least of deceptions since most people can muster enough skepticism to ask for proof, i.e., if people are wise and brave enough to ask for proof. It would be advisable here to take note of the teaching of General Semantics: "Find the referent (= the object a linguistic expression refers to)." This caveat is still useful and effective to avoid deception by misuse (intentional or unintentional) of language. It will be revealed that Bush is not at all eager to show referents to the American people or the rest of the world (more about this concerning weapons of mass destruction later).

[2] Deleted Agent of the Passive

- (2) endangered species (animals)

"It is when other less conspicuous things are deleted that dubious propositions are able to slip by our guard." (Bolinger 1973, p.543) What should be asked here is "Who has endangered such and such species (animals)?" The more

specific the added agent is (“by so and so”), the more sense it makes. “Endangered by people (human beings)” would not make sense, since it is always human beings that endanger other animals and this agent would be meaningless all the same.

[3] Deleted Agent in the Passive Adjective

(3) In the 5th century the known world was limited to Europe and small parts of Asia and Africa.

The question is “known to whom?” Other examples include “intelligible remark (intelligible to whom?)” and “acceptable excuse (acceptable to whom?)” This expression presupposes something, and that something reveals something about the utterer.

[4] Experiencer Deletion

(4) The need for punishment seems to have the support of history. (B.F. Skinner: *Beyond Freedom and Dignity*)

“The lack of frankness on this score (seems to whom?) makes the claim irresponsible.” (Bolinger 1973, p.544) In other words, this type of deletion is used “to disguise the sources of impressionistic assertions about the world.” Bolinger continues: “...some inept deletions are not due to attempts at concealment, but to having overlearned a rule of high-school rhetoric: if you’re a writer, make your references to yourself as few as possible. (The passive with deleted agent) works out well in scientific writing where the emphasis is on processes... But some writers carry the prescription for self-effacement to the point of ‘muddleheadedness’ instead of ‘modesty.’” An example in point is the following.

(5) It is believed that these instructions will prove easy to follow. Needless to say, “I believe that ~” is much better. Actually, instances like (4) are much more harmful when it is intended to obfuscate rather than efface oneself.

[5] Nominal Compound (or Lie of Naming)

“The act of naming, plus some favorable or unfavorable overtone in the terms selected for it, is the favorite device of the propagandist and the ultimate

refinement in the act of lying.” (Bolinger 1973, p.545) He cites Commager (1972) on the deception of the Nixon Administration during the Viet Nam War exemplified by the following.

- (6) a. protective reaction (for ‘bombing’)
- b. surgical strike (for ‘precision bombing’)
- c. pacification center/ refugee camp (for ‘concentration camp’)
- d. friendly fire (for ‘bombs on one of your own villages’)

This naming trick is most commonly employed by politicians (and other deceivers) to avert the attention of people to some other harmless shade of the reality. In U.S. war history, ‘U.S. War Department’ was changed to ‘U.S. Department of Defense’. This change of the name has made it easy for politicians to wage war in the name of defense, which is epitomized by President Bush’s invasion of Iraq in March 2003.

Some other types of possible deception may be cited.

[6] Presupposition

- (7) a. I did not know that Tom beats his wife
- b. Saddam Hussein’s weapons of mass destruction must be neutralized..

Verbs such as *know* presupposes the truth of its proposition even when the verb is negated as in (7a). This sentence surreptitiously conveys the meaning that Tom is a wife-beater. Likewise, the possessive form “Hussein’s” in (7b) presupposes that Hussein possesses weapons of mass destruction whether the presupposition is factually true or not.

[7] Vague/Ambiguous Expressions

- (8) a. We must not allow terrorists to disrupt peace.
- b. May God bless you.

Who does ‘we’ refer to? What is the definition of ‘terrorists’? And whose peace is it? These words are easy to use arbitrarily. In (8b) too, whose God is it? and who is God supposed to bless? Does He bless, for instance, only those who support the view of the utterer?

[8] Illogic

Illogic is not exactly on the same plane with the above-mentioned linguistic devices for deception. It is, rather, a cover term for logically inexact and/or factually unwarranted expressions. I use this term for convenience sake and explain what each example means as we come across such examples.

2. The materials I use for a linguistic analysis are public speeches by President George W. Bush with one exception of a speech by Vice President Dick Cheney. They are the following (The texts of the speeches were all printed out from the official website of the White House: www.whitehouse.gov).

- ① State of the Union Address (1/29/2002)
- ② Speech at Virginia Military Institute on War Effort (4/17/2002)
- ③ Address to the Nation (6/6/2002)
- ④ Remarks to the Veterans of Foreign Wars 103rd National Convention by Vice President Dick Cheney (8/26/2002)
- ⑤ Speech on Homeland/Economic Security (8/15/2002)
- ⑥ Speech at the United Nations General Assembly (9/12/2002)
- ⑦ Speech on Iraqi Threat (10/7/2002)
- ⑧ State of the Union Address (1/28/2003)
- ⑨ Speech on the Future of Iraq (2/26/2003)
- ⑩ Discussing Iraq in National Press Conference (3/6/2003)
- ⑪ Address to the Nation ("Saddam Hussein Must Leave Iraq") (3/17/2003)
- ⑫ Address to the Nation ("Declaration of War against Iraq") (3/19/2003)
- ⑬ Speech from the USS Abraham Lincoln ("The Iraqi War is Over") (5/1/2003)

In analyzing political discourse, especially that by President Bush, we must bear in mind a couple of caveats. One is that these speeches were not written by him but his speech writers such as Michael Gerson, Karen Hughes and David Frum and that for this reason his use of language is not revealed in them; rather these remarks represent the views of his advisers. However, it is needless to say that the ultimate responsibility should be assumed by the President himself. It would be much more appropriate to look

into such books as Weisberg (2001) and Miller (2002) if we really want to examine how President Bush uses his head and language.

The other caveat is that it is not enough to analyze his speeches only in terms of grammatical analysis. It is vitally important to see how his logic (illogic) is taking place and incorporate this perspective with linguistic analysis. The logic (illogic) of G.W. Bush and his advisers can be paraphrased in the following way:

- <1> The American Way is the Best and Right.
- <2> America is (should be) Invincible.
- <3> Military Strength is All That Counts.
- <4> America Can Violate International Law if Necessary and Act Anywhere.
- <5> Everyone/Every Country is a Friend or an Enemy.

From these assumptions, the following logical connection could be made.

The Bush Administration is right and is (should be) invincible. They can use their military forces in any way they like. Everyone is a friend or an enemy, and no criticism is allowed (anyone who criticizes them is an enemy).

And to the above five assumptions can be added

- <6> Double Standard.

3.0 Now I would like to analyze George W. Bush's speeches in terms of the language he employs and the political assumptions he embraces. The examples I cite from his speeches are numbered at the end of the example in accordance with the figures in section 2. "&" means that the example in question shows some other feature in section 2; for instance "& [5]" means the example also possesses an instance of "Nominal Compound or the Lie of Naming."

3.1 Deletion of the Performative Verb

- (9) a. As we gather together, our nation is at war, our economy is in recession, and the civilized world faces unprecedented dangers. *Yet the state of our Union has never been stronger.* (①) & [8]
- b. America is leading the civilized world in a titanic struggle against terror. Freedom and fear are at war — *and freedom is winning.* (③) & [7] <1>
- c. *The fundamentals for economic growth are sound; inflation is down; interest rates are low; productivity is high; the consumer is spending money.* (⑤)
- d. *History has put the spotlight in America. We're the beacon of freedom, we're the bastion of freedom, and we're the protectors of freedom as far as I'm concerned.* (⑤) & [5] <1>
- e. *Saddam Hussein is not disarming. This is a fact. It cannot be denied.* (⑩) & [2]
- f. Today, *no nation can possibly claim that Iraq has disarmed.* And it will not disarm so long as Saddam Hussein holds power. For the last four-and-a-half months, the United States and our allies have worked within the Security Council to enforce that council's long-standing demands. *Yet, some permanent members of the Security Council have publicly announced they will veto any resolution that compels the disarmament of Iraq. These governments share our assessment of the danger, but not our resolve to meet it.* (⑪)
- g. *The terrorist threat to America and the world will be diminished the moment that Saddam Hussein is disarmed.* (⑪)

In (9a), the assertion “the state of our Union has never been stronger” is not based on any hard evidence. The fact that the U.S. is in recession, which the President himself admits, lends further doubt to his assertion (an instance of illogic). Besides, the comparative ‘has never been stronger’ means ‘the strongest now’, which is not a proven fact. For instance, one recollects World War II. The American people were evidently far more united in their cause at that time. It would be enough to compare the situation

after World War II, which was joy and relief all over the world including Japan, with that after the Iraqi War, which is filled with doubts about the intelligence of the weapons of mass destruction among the public (more about this later) and disorder in Iraq.

In (9b), the assertion that freedom is winning is not supported by any hard evidence. Notice that 'freedom' is vague, as are such words as 'democracy,' 'liberty' and 'justice', or for that matter, 'terror.' One country's freedom can be another country's oppression as the history of colonialism shows. This doubt is all the more strengthened by the implication that America is right ('America is leading the civilized world').

In (9d), the implication of <1> "The American Way is the Best and Right" is most saliently combined with the lack of evidence of such an assertion. No one has proved that America is endowed with the monopoly of freedom, or the inalienable right of serving as the world police to enforce freedom in their own way. Perhaps it is the aftereffect of the doctrine of 'Manifesto Destiny', but it is above all about this ethnocentric claim of the U.S. that we should ask for proof before accepting such a politically naïve view.

In (9e), Bush declares, again without concrete evidence, that it is a fact that Saddam Hussein is not disarming. It may be true that Hussein is not disarming 100% of his military (This is another instance of vagueness. By deliberately using the expression 'disarm' instead of 'disarm weapons of mass destruction as defined by the UN resolutions', Bush is implying that Hussein is not committed to the disarmament itself, which is not factually true), but an assertion without evidence is a mere political gambit and is not convincing. Furthermore, he tries another trick by employing an agentless passive, "It cannot be denied." The question is 'by whom?' By deleting the agent, Bush pretends that it is an established fact. What if UN inspectors deny his assertion (at least part of it)? In fact, that is what happened (more of this later).

The first part of (9f) that no nation can possibly claim that Iraq has disarmed has the same problem I mentioned with respect to (9e). The assertion

of the second part is also misleading at best, and untrue at worst. France, for instance, proposed a prolonged UN inspection before an invasion was justified. France, Germany and Russia did not share the assessment of the danger or of the U.S. intelligence.

The truth of the assertion of (9g) is yet to be examined on facts, but the situation in Iraq and elsewhere indicates that Bush's wishful thinking has not proven right.

3.2 Deleted Agent of the Passive

(10) a. We need to know *when warnings were missed or signs unheeded* — not to point the finger of blame, but to make sure we correct any problems, and prevent them from happening again. <③>

b. Any *outlaw regime* that has ties to terrorist groups and seeks or possesses weapons of mass destruction is a grave danger to the civilized world — *and will be confronted*. (⑬) & [5] [7] <5>

In (10a), Bush does not specify the agent (“Who missed warnings?”), because to admit the fact is to admit the fault of his administration, and neglecting the warnings of the intelligence agencies proves to be a grave failure of the Bush administration concerning Iraq's alleged weapons of mass destruction (see sections 6.1 and 7).

In (10b), labeling a country an outlaw regime can be arbitrary. It is a vague term. It is up to the judgment of the person who makes such a remark, and it can have a grave consequence if uttered by an influential world leader. The quantifier ‘any’ compounds the problem. The second part, “Any outlaw regime ... will be confronted,” has no agent, thus leading to a number of speculations as to ‘by whom’ and ‘how.’ It is also utterly up to the arbitrary judgment of the person who made the remark. The assumption <5> “Everyone/Every Country is a Friend or an Enemy” echoes here, comparing an enemy to an outlaw regime and a ‘friend’ as belonging to the civilized world.

3.3 Deleted Agent in the Passive Adjective

- (11) a. The cause of peace requires all free nations to recognize new and *undeniable realities*. (①) & [6]

‘Undeniable’, which is an instance of the passive adjective, means ‘cannot be denied’. One immediately notices the lack of the agent here. “Cannot be denied by whom?” By deliberately deleting the agent, Bush assumes, and purports to convey the presupposition, that no one can deny the realities, canceling at the same time the possibility that many people in the world deny the realities Bush purports to create.

3.4 Experiencer Deletion

One characteristic of Bush’s speeches is the lack of this deletion; his speeches are full of assertions without concrete evidence, as seen in the case of [1] “Deletion of the Performative Verb”, but curiously lack this device of disguising the sources of impressionistic assertions apparently because he is trying to assert himself forcefully irrespective of the sources. A construction similar to the experiencer deletion is the “future *will*”, as in the following.

- (12) a. To achieve these great national objectives — to win the war, protect the homeland, and revitalize our economy — *our budget will run a deficit that will be small and short-term*, so long as Congress restrains spending and acts in a fiscally responsible manner. <①>
- b. *The war against terror will be long*. Yet, it’s important for Americans to know *this war will not be quick and this war will not be easy*. <②>

It is a convenient device of postponing dealing with a problem when one does not want to assume responsibility in the foreseeable future (Notice, in (12a), that Bush attributes the biggest budget deficit in U.S. history to Congress in advance).

Another similar construction is the subjunctive.

- (13) a. *If the Iraqi regime is able to produce, buy, or steal an amount of highly enriched uranium a little larger than a single softball, it could have*

a nuclear weapon in less than a year. <⑦>

- b. Failure to act *would* embolden other tyrants, allow access to new weapons and new resources, and make blackmail a permanent feature of world events. <⑦>

It is needless to say that one can assert anything ‘in the subjunctive mood’ without any mention of the source or evidence of that information.

3.5 Nominal Compound (or the Lie of Naming)

- (14) a. States like these, and their terrorist allies, constitute *an axis of evil*, aiming to threaten the peace of the world. (①) & <1> <5>
- b. Everybody knows this economy of ours faces *challenges*. (⑤)
- c. And so I called upon Congress to join me in the creation of a Department of Homeland Security...but I’m a little worried about *some of the noise I hear*. I don’t want our hands tied so we cannot do the number one job you expect, which is to *protect* the homeland. (⑤) & <6> [7]
- d. Listen, out of the evil done to *this great land* is going to come *incredible good, because we’re the greatest nation on the face of the earth, full of the most fine and compassionate and decent citizens*. (⑤) & [7] [8] <1> <6>
- e. In cells and camps, terrorists are plotting further destruction, and building new bases for their *war against civilization*. <⑥>

The naming of ‘axis of evil,’ exemplified in (14a), is one of the most widely publicized (and criticized) coinages of the Bush Administration. By calling Iraq, Iran and North Korea the axis of evil, Bush most clearly expressed the assumptions of <1> “The American Way is the Best and Right” and <5> “Every One/Every Country is a Friend or an Enemy”, and yet this labeling rests on his subjective view, and not on objective facts.

In (14b), Bush calls economic difficulties ‘challenge’ and tries to defuse the seriousness of the situation. This is an application of “political correctness”; ‘poor’ is ‘economically challenged,’ ‘fat’ is ‘horizontally challenged’

and ‘stupid’ is ‘cerebrally challenged.’ PC, however, only avoids the real issue in many cases by calling a pockmark a dimple without trying to reform the reality itself. Abused, this linguistic device can be harmful. In fact, Bush only heightened the tensions in the Korean Peninsula and the fear of an invasion into Iran.

Bush’s self-righteous attitude is most clearly seen in (14c); any criticism is ‘noise’ to him. By calling criticism a ‘noise’, he denigrates democratic principles, pretending to protect freedom on the other hand. This is a good example of <6> “Double Standard” as well. “Protecting the homeland” is vague too. In order to protect the homeland, it might be necessary to go to war. This is just how Bush’s logic (illogic) worked, because the invasion of Iraq was the first instance by the U.S. of the principle of “Preemptive Strike Deterrence.” Unintentional misuse of language may be harmful but not so critical, but intentional abuse of language can cause human misery.

(14d) is full of dubious nominal compounds; ‘this great land,’ ‘incredible good,’ ‘the greatest nation on the face of the earth,’ and ‘the most fine and compassionate and decent citizens.’ Moreover, the first part is illogically connected by the conjunction “and” with the latter part. A decent person would never employ such a self-righteous and ethnocentric self-praise in the first place. These nominal compounds lack evidential substance too, as we saw in section 3.1. And Bush’s arrogant and ignorant characterization of his war as “war against civilization” explains the detachment of world opinion.

3.6 Presupposition

- (15) a. *Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction* are controlled by a murderous tyrant who has already used chemical weapons to kill thousands of people. (7)
- b. Second, we have arrived at an important moment in confronting the threat posed to our nation and to peace by Saddam Hussein *and his weapons of terror*. (10)

As I indicated in section 1, the possessive pronoun presupposes an intrinsic relationship with the modified noun. Thus, in (15a), ‘Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction’ presupposes that Iraq has such weapons, and ‘his weapons of terror’ also presupposes that Hussein possesses such weapons. Such a presupposition has been questioned since the end of the Iraqi War (more of this later again). The point here is that presupposition, another device of verbal communication, can mislead people to a wrong conclusion based on deceptive premises.

3.7. Vague/Ambiguous Expressions

- (16) a. So long as training camps operate, so long as nations *harbor terrorists*, freedom is at risk.
- b. *May God bless you all, and may God bless America.* (②)
- c. At the same time, we realize that wars are never won on the defensive.
We must take the battle to the enemy. We will take every step necessary to make sure our country is secure, and we will prevail. (④)
 & <2> <4>
- d. It’s probably hard for you to understand why anybody would want to hurt America...Let me tell you why. *It’s because your country loves freedom...The enemy hates freedom. So long as we embrace freedom — which we will do — there’s going to be people who try to hurt us.* (⑤)
 & [8] <5>
There’s another distinction between us and the enemy: we value every life, we value every human life. (⑤) & <5> <6>
- e. It’s important *during times of war* that we be flexible to meet our needs. (⑤)
- f. *We seek peace. We strive for peace.* (⑧)
- g. *We are a peaceful people.* (⑩)

In linguistics, ‘vague’ means that the meaning of a linguistic expression (a word, or a phrase or a sentence) cannot be interpreted properly due to the uncertainties of the linguistic terms themselves. In order to interpret

such vague expressions, it is often necessary to “find the referent” or “ask for proof.” ‘Ambiguous’ means that a linguistic expression can be interpreted in more than one way. Usually ambiguous expressions are disambiguated in a context, and that is why we are usually not aware of ambiguity.

In (16a), one wonders how one should define ‘harbor’ and ‘terrorist.’ A terrorist can be a ruthless murderer in one country, but a patriot in another country. And how much protection does it take to ‘harbor’ terrorists? That an arbitrary phrase like ‘harbor’ can lead to a violation of human rights can be attested from the Vietnam War: “General (Telford) Taylor described the practice of air strikes against hamlets suspected of ‘harboring’ Vietnamese guerrillas as ‘flagrant violations of the Geneva Convention on Civilian Protection, which prohibits ‘collective penalties’ and ‘reprisals against protected persons’ and equally in violation of the Rules of Land Warfare.” (Hitchens 2001, p.30) It should be kept in mind that assertions by politicians based on vagueness and ambiguity are irresponsible and can lead to serious outcomes.

In (16b), we must wonder whose God Bush refers to, who he means by ‘you all’ and what part of the globe ‘America’ means. ‘America’ is short for ‘The United States of America’, but it also refers to North America, Central America and South America. By using ‘America’, Bush implies that the United States of America represents North, Central and South America; at least he implies that the other regions of ‘America’ do not count. It is also doubtful, from the analysis so far, that Bush includes those who criticize him in ‘you all.’ It is true that the expression “May God bless America” is a common expression used by every president, but it is also the case that uttered by President George W. Bush, it takes on a different meaning, as is evident from the discussion so far.

Who is ‘we’ in (16c)? It is a common linguistic technique to use ‘we’ when it is necessary to pretend that everyone is agreed on a stated point. In other words, this ‘we’ is employed to exclude those who protest the Iraq War and to stress the union of the American people, a common practice in politics (and other areas). It should be noted that the assumptions <2>

“America is (should be) Invincible” and <4> “America Can Violate International Law (if Necessary) and Act Anywhere” (“We must take the battle to the enemy.”)

In the first half of (16d), we see an illogical connection of “there are people who want to hurt America” and “America loves freedom” by the conjunction ‘because.’ This illogic is supported by the vagueness of “freedom”, which can mean the opposite to opposite groups. Bush seems to forget that “freedom in an American sense” may be different from “freedom in an Arab country,” or rather he seems to believe that “American freedom” is universal and that the U.S. is the only nation that has the right to practice it in an authentic way. It is as if an “enemy” does not know what “freedom” is, or an “enemy” has no right to “freedom.” This self-righteous remark belies his arrogance, which has cost the U.S. global sympathy for the atrocities of 9/11.

The overall tone of arrogance in this speech (and others) makes us wonder what Bush means by “we value every human life.”

In (16e), “during times of war” and “to meet our needs” are vague as well. In the U.S. it is the Congress that is authorized to declare war, and yet the Congress was stupid enough to relinquish this right before Bush went to war with Iraq (October 11, 2002). For another, “war” can mean anything metaphorically, such as “war on drugs” and “war on poverty.” Is “war on terrorism” a war as declared by the Congress or a metaphorical extension? In this kind of war, “to meet our needs” can also mean anything (i.e. it is vague), and the people have no way of knowing what the needs really mean. Democracy could not be guaranteed this way.

(16f) and (16g) are the clinchers. In these remarks Bush’s illogic, that war is peace, is most clearly seen. Common sense would tell anyone that in order to keep peace, political leaders are required to engage in diplomatic negotiations as assiduously as possible. In reality, however, President Bush, on dubious evidence, invaded Iraq without asking for a U.N. approval and despite worldwide protest against the invasion. This is obviously not an

act of keeping peace. As for the military history of the U.S., his assertion that the American people are a peace-loving nation is dubious, too, as seen in its history of invasions around the world, the most conspicuous of which is, of course, the Vietnam War. Other instances abound after World War II; the Cuban invasion in 1964, the invasion of Panama in 1989 (See also section 7). It should be obvious that asking for proof of a politician's political remark is essential to democratic procedures.

3.8. Illogic

- (17) a. A lot of our predecessors faced hardships and overcame those hardships, *because we're Americans*. (⑤)
- b. *The lives of Iraqi citizens would improve dramatically if Saddam Hussein were no longer in power, just as the lives of Afghanistan's citizens improved after the Taliban. ...The long captivity of Iraq will end, and an era of new hope will begin.* (⑦)

We have seen a lot of Bush's illogic so far, and I will just comment briefly on two more instances. Ordinarily, the assertion in (17a) would be appropriate for the president in difficult times; desegregation in the 1960s would be a case in point, and so was World War II. But (17a) was a prelude to the invasion of Iraq, which has been difficult to justify so far because of the questionable intelligence that prompted the war.

The first part of the assertion in (17b) has not been realized so far, either. Whether this prediction and the second part of (17b) come true or not, together with the examination of the intelligence that led to the war, the result is the stepping stone of Bush's act of war in Iraq.

4.0 The assumptions of George W. Bush, <1> to <6>, can be found everywhere and anywhere in his speeches and talks. It should be self-evident that world peace is impossible to attain through these measures, which are the exact opposite of democracy. Probably this contradiction is the biggest irony of Bush's presidency. The following remarks speak for themselves,

so I will just make a few comments.

4.1 The American Way is the Best and Right

- (18) a. America will lead by defending liberty and justice *because they are right and true and unchanging for all people everywhere.* (①)
- b. *This great country will lead the world to safety, security, peace and freedom.* (③)
- c. Members of our Armed Forces also understand why they may be called to fight. They know that retreat before a dictator guarantees even greater sacrifices in the future. *They know that America's cause is right and just: liberty for an oppressed people, and security for the American people.* (⑨) & [1]
- d. When freedom takes hold, men and women turn to the peaceful pursuit of a better life. *American values and American interests lead in the same direction: We stand for human liberty.* (⑬)

Bush's self-righteous attitude is most vividly seen in these remarks. One could say it is almost obscene.

4.2 America is (should be) Invincible

- (19) a. Our progress is a tribute to the spirit of the Afghan people, to the resolve of our coalition, and to *the might of the United States military.* (①)
- b. *And our military is strong and prepared to oppose any emerging threat to the American people.* (③)

We have only to remember here that peace and democracy attained by military forces are a contradiction in terms.

4.3 Military Strength is All That Counts

- (20) a. *We are protected from attack only by vigorous action abroad.* (①) & <4>
- b. *We will plan carefully; we will act with the full power of the United States military; we will act with allies at our side, and we will prevail.* <⑦>

It is the so-called Bush Doctrine (see section 7) that most clearly represents this view. As Shribman (2002) says, “At the heart of the Bush Doctrine is the notion that the United States can take preemptive action because it has the power to do so.” This arrogant view lacks a common sense insight that American power is not only built on military power but on the power of American ideas and culture, among others.

4.4 America Can Violate International Law if Necessary and Act Anywhere

- (21) a. But some governments will be timid in the face of terror. And make no mistake about it: *If they do not act, America will.* (①)
- b. And all nations should know: *America will do what is necessary to ensure our nation’s security.* (①)
- c. We need to replace aging aircraft and make our military more agile, *to put our troops anywhere in the world* quickly and safely. (①) & <2>
- d. Against such enemies, America and the civilized world have only one option: *wherever terrorists operate, we must find them where they dwell, stop them in their planning, and one by one bring them to justice.* (④)
- e. All free nations have a stake in preventing sudden and catastrophic attacks. And we’re asking them to join us, and many are doing so. *Yet the course of this nation does not depend on the decisions of others. Whatever action is required, whenever action is necessary, I will defend the freedom and security of the American people.* (⑧) & [7] <5>

For instance, neoconservative foreign policy writer Robert Kagan calls for unilateral action by the U.S. forces in disregard of international law: “It (= the United States) must refuse to abide by certain international conventions that may constrain its ability to fight effectively in Robert Cooper’s jungle. It must support arms control, but not always for itself. It must live by a double standard. And it must sometimes act unilaterally, not out of a passion for unilateralism but, given a weak Europe that has moved beyond power,

because the United States has no choice but to act unilaterally... Europeans have complained about President Bush's 'unilateralism', but they are coming to the deeper realization that the problem is not Bush or any American president. It is systematic. And it is incurable." (Kagan 2002)

His blatant disregard of international law is in stark contrast to a critical observation by Noam Chomsky: "So, what happened in Central America and the Middle East in the 1980s in fighting the 'War on Terror'? Central America was turned into a graveyard..."

First Nicaragua went to the World Court, which condemned the United States for international terrorism, for 'unlawful use of forces,' and for violations of treaties... The United States responded by escalating the war...

After the United States rejected the World Court judgment, Nicaragua went to the UN Security Council. The United States would have been condemned by the Security Council, but the United States, of course, vetoed the resolution, which called on all states to observe international law...

In fact, in December 1987 the United Nations passed its major resolution condemning terrorism in all its forms, and called on all countries of the world to do everything they could to stamp out this terrible plague. It didn't pass unanimously. One country abstained, namely Honduras, and two countries voted against it, namely the United States and Israel." (Chomsky 2003)

Yes, Kagan is right in saying that unilateralism in disregard of international law is the American way, but we should also note it is President Bush that has escalated this unilateralism to an unprecedented form of "pre-emptive self-defense war."

4.5 Everyone/Every Country is a Friend or an Enemy

- (22) a. The men and women of our Armed Forces have delivered a message now clear to *every enemy of the United States*. (①)
- b. Every nation that joins our cause is welcome. Every nation that needs our help will have it. *And no nation can be neutral. Around the world, the nations must choose. They are with us, or they're with the*

terrorists. (②)

- c. *Those who harbor terrorists share guilt for the acts they commit. Under the Bush Doctrine, a regime that harbors or supports terrorists will be regarded as hostile to the United States.* (④)

It is a sobering scene to see a world leader demonstrate his subhuman level of intelligence and perception on such an important issue, thus alienating the rest of the world.

4.6 Double Standard

- (23) a. We have no intention of imposing our culture. But America will always stand firm for the non-negotiable demands of human dignity: *the rule of law;...* (①)
- b. There's another distinction between us and the enemy: *we value every life, we value every human life.* (⑤)
- c. If war is forced upon us, we will fight in a just cause and *by just means — sparing, in every way we can, the innocent.* (⑧)
- d. Iraq answered a decade of U.N. demands with a decade of defiance... *We want the world's most important multilateral body to be enforced.* And right now those resolutions are being unilaterally subverted by the Iraqi regime. (⑥)

There would be no need to explain the double standard of (23a). See section 4.4. As for (23b, c), we have only to see what President Bush's Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld did during the Iraqi invasion: "The coalition air war commander, Lieutenant General T. Michael Mosley, revealed this weekend that Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld had to personally sign off on any air-strike 'thought to result in deaths of more than 30 civilians,' as The New York Times reported. 'More than 50 such strikes were proposed, and all of them were approved.' ...The traditional ethic declares that a war of aggression is inherently unjust and that every civilian death caused by such a war is murder. More than 50 air raids, each with more than 30 Iraqi civilian fatalities, each expressly approved by Rumsfeld. Absolutely terri-

ble tragedies, every one. And also — more evident by the day — every one a war crime.” (Carroll 2003). Anyone could see that this is why Bush refused to participate in the International Criminal Court.

Bush had claimed that the U.S. would invade Iraq and depose Saddam Hussein because he had defied the UN resolutions for a decade, but his deceptive double standard becomes evident if we see how the U.S. responded to the UN resolutions that declared Israel’s occupation of the Palestinian territory was illegal. Take an example from the December 3, 1998 UN General Assembly declaration: “By 151 votes in favour to 2 against (Israel, United States), with 4 abstentions, the Assembly demanded that Israel, as the occupying Power, cease all practices and actions which violate the human rights of the Palestinian people. It also determined that all Israeli actions in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, in violation of the relevant provisions of the Geneva Convention and Security Council resolutions, are illegal and have no validity.” No one could believe Bush if he said, “America stands committed to an independent and democratic Palestine, living side by side with Israel in peace and security.” (Speech at the UN General Assembly, September 12, 2002). Facts (= referents) belie his words.

5. Before going on to the examination of WMD and ‘ties between Iraq and Al Qaeda’, I should mention one particular (peculiar) point concerning the press conference Bush gave on March 6, 2003. He rarely gives a spontaneous question and answer session, apparently because of his less than average linguistic skills as exemplified by Weisberg (2001), Moore (2001, pp.29–46) and Miller (2002). In this question and answer session, however, Bush did not demonstrate so many inconsistencies, contradictions or linguistic flips, but he inadvertently said, “This is a scripted...” when a reporter cut in on CNN’s John King and tried to ask a question. The meaning of this slip of the tongue becomes clear when, for instance, we check the website www.bushwatch.com for March 13, 2003: The reporters had submitted their questions in advance and had them approved by the White House staff.

This is a *sign of astounding deterioration* of the independent mind on the side of the mass media as well as intellectual decadence and neglect of duty on the President's side. According to the above-mentioned website, Bush broke the 43-year tradition by bypassing Helen Thomas, who has been asking the first question at presidential press conferences since 1960. She is said to be critical of the Bush Administration, but this pathetic effort of Bush to 'contain criticism' is nothing but a prelude to the self-destruction of democracy.

What is interesting, moreover, is that despite the prescreening of the questions, it is possible to see several discrepancies between the questions and answers. For instance, to the question that "If North Korea restarts their plutonium plant, will that change your thinking about how to handle this crisis, or are you resigned to North Korea becoming a nuclear power?", Bush answers thus:

(24) This is a regional issue. *I say a regional issue because there's a lot of countries that have got a direct stake into whether or not North Korea has nuclear weapons.*

To call something a regional issue when a lot of countries are involved in it is an instance of 'illogic.' In fact, he mentions the U.S., China, South Korea, Japan and Russia that 'have a stake.' Notice further that there is a real nuclear weapon at issue here unlike the apparent existence of such a weapon in Iraq. It is evident that Bush is trying to defuse this critical (and possibly global) issue and emphasize the situation in Iraq.

To the question that "If all these nations, all of them our normal allies, have access to the same intelligence information, why is it that they are reluctant to think that the threat is so real, so imminent that we need to move to the brink of war now?," Bush makes two interesting remarks.

(25) a. *Saddam Hussein is a threat to our nation. ...September the 11th should say to the American people that we're now a battlefield, that weapons of mass destruction in the hands of a terrorist organization could be deployed at home. So, therefore, I think the threat is real.*

- b. We do communicate a lot, and we will continue to communicate a lot. We must communicate. We must share intelligence; we must share ...we must cut off money together;...

The possibility that weapons of mass destruction (whatever they may mean) could be deployed in the U.S. is real, but the connection of Hussein and a terrorist organization (such as Al Qaeda) is implicitly and illogically assumed here, leading to an assertion that is not based on hard evidence (see the next section). And he only obfuscates the real question by rambling about some meaningless remarks and even talking about an irrelevant money matter.

Remember Bush's promise: "When I'm the President, we're not going to obfuscate when it comes to foreign policy." (1/7/2000) Perhaps he did not know the meaning of the difficult word.

This obfuscation is seen in the answer to the following question: "And if I may, during the recent demonstrations, many of the protestors suggested that the U.S. was a threat to peace, which prompted you to wonder out loud why they didn't see Saddam Hussein as a threat to peace. I wonder why you think so many people around the world take a different view of the threat that Saddam Hussein poses than you and your allies."

- (26) a. Well, first, I ... I appreciate societies in which people can express their opinion. That society ... free speech stands in stark contrast to Iraq.
- b. Secondly, I've seen all kinds of protests since I've been the President. I remember the protests against trade. A lot of people didn't feel like free trade was good for the world. I completely disagree.
- c. Nobody likes war. The only thing I can do is assure the loved ones of those who wear our uniforms that if we have to go to war, ... we will have the best equipment available for our troops,...

The question is a perfectly reasonable one, but President Bush avoids giving a straight-forward answer, and only talks in general terms, citing an irrelevant example again. (26c) is simply pathetic. He seems to be unaware that no one would have liked Saddam Hussein, only that the protestors did not approve

of the arrogance and unilateralism of the U.S. They were also rightly skeptical of the motives of America.

The follow-up question and answer is along the same line.

(27) Q: May I ask, what went wrong that so many governments and people around the world now not only disagree with you very strongly, but see the U.S. under your leadership as an arrogant power?

A: ...And I think you'll see when it's all said and done, if we have to use force, a lot of nations will be with us.

President Bush completely fails to respond to the question (and the meaning of 'arrogance') here. It is a consummate display of arrogance, considering that he assumes every country will follow the U.S. in its military 'crusade.'

Next comes the "This is a scripted" part, and then the question: "And as you prepare the American people for the possibility of military conflict, could you share with us any of the scenarios your advisors have shared with you about worst-case scenarios, in terms of potential cost of American lives, the potential cost to the American economy, and the potential risks of retaliatory terrorist strikes here at home?"

(28) The price of doing nothing exceeds the price of taking action, if we have to. We'll do everything we can do to minimize the loss of life.

This is, of course, not a responsible answer; it is a flight from responsibility.

Now an approximate figure of the cost of the war is known. Corn (2003a) reports: "In past weeks, the cost projections have ranged as high as \$20 billion a year for a to-be-determined number of years." If President Bush had been candid about this figure at this point in time, would the American people, with a record budget deficit hurting the U.S. economy, have been happy?

(29) Q: If you order war, can any military operation be considered a success if the United States does not capture Saddam Hussein, as you once said, dead or alive?

A: We will be changing the regime of Iraq, for the good of the Iraqi people. This answer, coming after totally irrelevant remarks and a repeated question, only evades the question. So does the next answer to the next question.

(30) Q: And if war is inevitable, there are a lot of people in this country — who listen to you say that you have the evidence, but who feel they haven't seen it, and who still wonder why blood has to be shed if he hasn't attacked us.

A: Well, Bill, if they believe he should be disarmed, and he's not going to disarm, there's only one way to disarm him. And that happens to be my last choice — the use of force.

Secondly, the American people know that Saddam Hussein has weapons of mass destruction

In retrospect, “the people who feel they have not seen the evidence” were right about their doubt, and Bush's assertion in the second half in (30) was totally deceptive.

(31) a. Q: Will you call for a vote on that resolution, even if you aren't sure you have the vote?

A: And, yes, we'll call a vote.

b. Q: No matter what?

A: No matter what the whip count is, we're calling for the vote.

This declaration of Bush proved to be false. He accused France later.

There are many more questionable remarks by President Bush, but this much would be enough. This press conference is remarkable in many ways: the prescreening of the reporters' questions by the White House infringes on the freedom of the press; the mass media is also responsible, since they cooperated with the President; despite the prescreening, Bush's answers were full of obfuscations, illogic and lack of hard evidence. In short, President Bush was unable to convince the American people and the rest of the world of the inevitability of invading Iraq. The function of language is crucial in verbal communication, but communication is destined to fail if Grice's “Cooperative Principle” were violated deliberately. One of the duties of a politician is to communicate his/her views to the public appropriately, but as for President Bush, his integrity seems to be in question more than anything else (not to mention his linguistic abilities).

6.0 In reality, mere linguistic analysis is not enough to fully understand the implications of dubious political remarks. As I mentioned in section 1, the admonition of General Semantics is effective here. We must keep in mind that in order not to be deceived by politicians, we must be on the lookout for the referent. If there is no referent in reality that the politician is supposed to refer to, then he/she is responsible for the deceptive or misleading use of language. After all, the politician (ideally the statesman) is held accountable for the consequences of his/her remarks.

6.1 Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD): A Case Study in “Find the Referent”

President Bush made a number of assertions that Iraq possessed a large amount of WMD, as seen in the following, but serious doubts had been voiced before he went to war with Iraq on March 19, 2003.

- (32) a. We’ve tried the carrot of oil for food, and the stick of coalition military strikes. But Saddam Hussein has defied all these efforts *and continues to develop weapons of mass destruction*. (⑥)
- b. Eleven years ago, as a condition for ending the Persian Gulf War, the Iraqi regime was required to destroy its weapons of mass destruction, to cease all development of such weapons, and to stop all support for terrorist groups. The Iraqi regime has violated all of those obligations. *It possesses and produces chemical and biological weapons*. (⑦)
- c. In 1995, after several years of deceit by the Iraqi regime, the head of Iraq’s military industries defected. It was then that the regime was forced to admit that it had produced more than 30,000 liters of anthrax and other deadly biological agents. The inspectors, however, concluded that Iraq had likely produced two or four times that amount.... *We know that the regime has produced thousands of tons of chemical agents, including mustard gas, sarin nerve gas, VX nerve gas*. (⑦)
- d. Eight so-called presidential palaces were declared off-limits to un-

fettered inspections. These sites actually encompass twelve square miles, with hundreds of structures, both above and below the ground, *where sensitive materials could be hidden.* (⑦)

- e. After eleven years during which we have tried containment, sanctions, inspections, even selected military action, *the end result is that Saddam Hussein still has chemical and biological weapons and is increasing his capabilities to make more. And he is moving even closer to developing a nuclear weapon.* (⑦)
- f. *The British government has learned that Saddam Hussein recently sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa. Our intelligence sources tell us that he has attempted to purchase high-strength aluminum tubes suitable for nuclear weapons production.* (⑧)
- g. *In Iraq, a dictator is building and hiding weapons that could enable him to dominate the Middle East and intimidate the civilized world.* (⑨)
- h. *Iraqi operatives continue to hide biological and chemical agents to avoid detection by inspectors. In some cases, these materials have been moved to different locations every 12 to 24 hours, or placed in vehicles that are in residential neighborhoods.* (⑩)

For instance, (32f) was criticized severely; in fact, this claim was “The most serious blunder, put forth by British intelligence and cited by President Bush in his Union of the State address.” (The Boston Globe, 3/16/03) The same article reports that Secretary of State Colin Powell acknowledged that the document was forged, “six days after top UN nuclear weapons inspector, Mohamed ElBaradei, said his team had found the documents to lack authenticity.” Many other U.S. charges came under attack, one of which is the second half of (32f). According to the same article, “ElBaradei says his teams have found no evidence that those tubes were used for anything but missile production.” In the same way, Bush administration assertions on mobile biological labs were rebutted by the UN weapons chief, Hans Blix: “No evidence of proscribed activities have so far been found.” A remark by an U.S. official that “We have firsthand descriptions of these small factories.”

(The Boston Globe, 3/16/03) loses meaning after extensive searches by the U.S. troops produced nothing of the sort after the "invasion ended." Bush cannot seem to understand that it is these dubious claims that "is one of the reasons that Security Council members have been clamoring for a set of 'benchmarks,' or tests, by which to measure Iraqi disarmaments, diplomats, say." (The Boston Globe, 3/16/03) The remark of Blix that "Without evidence, confidence cannot arise." (The Boston Globe, 3/16/03) says everything. This attitude is the basis for successful communication and responsible delivery of people in charge.

Bush appears too carefree about the importance of the matter. He suggested for the first time that the U.S. may not find WMD, raising "the possibility that Saddam Hussein may have destroyed, moved, or hidden his biological and chemical weapons before the war began." (The Boston Globe, 4/25/03) As the same article says, "ridding Iraq of illegal weapons and undertaking a regime change in Baghdad were Bush's twin justifications for starting the war." In fact, Bush shifted his argument for the invasion of Iraq in a speech on March 31, 2003, as The Boston Globe reported: "Shifting his argument against Iraq, Bush cited the liberation of the Iraqi people as his main justification for war, promising that US forces 'will not relent' until the population is freed from tyranny. In the past, Bush had insisted the regime must be toppled because it possesses weapons of mass destruction, an allegation he mentioned only in passing yesterday." To find and destroy WMD as soon as possible before they had been handed to terrorists should have been the sole rationale for the war, since "regime change" is an internal intervention and can be the violation of international law in the first place, as Hoffmann (2003) says flatly: "Like preventive war, forcible regime change violates international law." Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, who is responsible for military operations in Iraq, had stated a week before that "I don't think we'll discover anything, myself. I think what will happen is we'll discover people who will tell us where to go find it. ... The inspectors didn't find anything, and I doubt that we will." The U.S. intelligence should

have been accurate enough to find WMD at once when the military conflict was over.

For the record, see the remarks by high officials of the Bush administration on WMD before the invasion, as partially chronicled by Corn (2003b, p.211):

On September 13, 2002, Rumsfeld observed, "There's no debate in the world as to whether they have those weapons... We all know that. A trained ape knows that."

On December 2, Wolfowitz said, "[Bush's] determination to use force if necessary is because of the threat posed by Iraq's weapons of mass destruction."

On December 5, Fleischer remarked, "The President of the United States and the Secretary of Defense would not assert as plainly and bluntly as they have that Iraq has weapons of mass destruction if it was not true, and if they did not have a solid basis for saying it."

On December 12, Rumsfeld maintained, "It is clear that the Iraqis have weapons of mass destruction. The issue is not whether or not they have weapons of mass destruction."

On January 7, 2003, Rumsfeld commented, "There is no doubt in my mind but that they currently have chemical and biological weapons."

On January 9, Fleischer insisted, "We know for a fact that there are weapons there."

And on March 30, 2003, Rumsfeld went as far as to say: "We know where they are. They're in the area around Tikrit and Baghdad and east, west, south, and north somewhere." Needless to say, these remarks proved totally wrong.

But it was after Bush declared that "the Iraqi war is over" (5/1/03) that more serious doubts have been voiced against the assertions of (32), because of "The failure of US-led teams to find illegal weapons after visiting more than 230 suspected sites over the past 11 weeks." (The Boston Globe, 6/6/03) U.S. Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz, one of the superhawkish neoconservatives, went so far as to say that "For bureaucratic reasons,

we settled on one issue, weapons of mass destruction, because it was the one reason everyone could agree on." (The Boston Globe, 5/30/03) This is a virtual admission of deception, as Powers (2003) states: "The difficulty with this argument is the fact that international law accepts only a very narrow range of justifications for war, and chief among them is the threat posed by weapons and armies. An admission that the United States went to war for reasons having nothing to do with Saddam Hussein's weapons, or the threat he might use them, would be close to a confession that the invasion of Iraq was illegal under international law — something bound to cause President Bush personally, and the United States generally, real trouble for years to come." It goes without saying that this is another instance of Assumption <4> "America Can Violate International Law if Necessary and Act Anywhere."

Geyer (2003) criticizes the moves by these neoconservatives thus: "Most good analysts believe that these policies were set by no more than 30 to 35 of the neoconservatives who dream of American empire across the world, a total victory in Israel for the far-right Likud Party, and 'punishing' any who dare to get in their way." "In fact, their behavior is totally against all of the morality, ethics, and principles that have been at the center of the American experience as well as every one of its religions. There is a terrible feeling of the outlaw about these men and the era they have carried us into."

As for President Bush, he could only cite the discovery of two trucks that US intelligence officers said appeared to be mobile facilities for the production of biological weapons, saying, "For those who say we haven't found the banned manufacturing devices or banned weapons, they're wrong. We found them." (The Boston Globe, 5/31/03) But both the Pentagon and American weapons hunters have said they do not constitute arms. (The Boston Globe, 6/6/03) It surely does not mean Bush has 'found the referent.' Bush also changed his course of explanation, saying "Iraq had a weapons program," and he again shifted focus when asked whether US credibility was questioned in the search for WMD: "History and time will prove that the United States

made the absolute right decision in freeing the people of Iraq from the clutches of Saddam Hussein.” (The Boston Globe, 6/10/03) This remark is also a virtual admission that Iraq’s threat was not as imminent as Bush had made it out to be.

It was further revealed that the Defense Intelligence Agency, the Pentagon’s main spy unit, had stated in a report of September 2002 that “there was no definitive, reliable information” that Iraq was producing or stockpiling chemical or biological weapons. (The Boston Globe, 6/7/03 and Corn 2003b, pp.211-12) It seems to be getting more difficult for the Bush administration to substantiate its justification for the preemptive invasion into Iraq. Add to these doubts the efforts of the White House to give pressure to the ‘intelligence community’ and UN inspectors for more compatible reports: “One senior administration official said there have been complaints by CIA analysts that they felt pressured by administration policy makers who questioned them before the war about the basis for their assessment of Iraq’s weapons programs.” (The Boston Globe, 5/31/03) “Blix made his accusation of a smear campaign in an interview published Wednesday. He also said that US officials had pressured him to use more damning language when reporting on Iraq’s alleged weapons program.” (The Boston Globe, 6/12/03)

Jackson (2003) cites a lot more intelligence distortions: “*Time* quoted a senior military official who helped plan the war in Iraq but quit after seeing the White House exaggerate the intelligence. *Time* also quoted an Army intelligence officer who said Rumsfeld ‘was deeply, almost pathologically distorting the intelligence.’ *US News & World Report* detailed how Cheney’s staff fed Secretary of State Colin Powell reams of ‘evidence’ that could not be confirmed on the eve of Powell’s testimony to the United Nations... Vincent Cannistraro, a former head of CIA counter-terrorism operations, said many intelligence officials ‘believe it is a scandal.’ Cannistraro said Bush had a ‘moral obligation to use the best information available, not just information that fits your preconceived ideas.’” I agree with Cannistraro when he says that “Before the war, Bush said Saddam used ‘denial and deception’ on weap-

ons of mass destruction. Bush must now tell Americans to what level he deceived us.” It is self-evident that “if actual weapons don’t turn up — real threats ready for use — then President Bush will owe an explanation to the world,” (Powers 2003) though Geyer (2003) seems quite right when she says that “And now there are no weapons. Oh, there might be some still found — but it would be hard to argue that weapons that hard to find could have been such an imminent threat to us.”

Ackerman & Judis (2003), the most comprehensive report on the Iraq War intelligence, details the disagreements between the executive branch’s various intelligence agencies and experts, alleges a campaign to pressure the CIS for damning conclusions, and fleshes out the use of discredited or dubious information to press the case for war. For example, they report about Iraq’s procuring a kind of high-strength aluminum tube thought at first to be used to enrich uranium for a nuclear weapon, “but over time analysts at the State Department’s INR and the Department of Energy (DOE) grew troubled. The tubes’ thick walls and particular diameter made them a poor fit for uranium enrichment, even after modification. ...British intelligence experts studying the issue concurred, as did some CIA analysts. But top officials at the CIA and DIA did not.” The same was true with Iraq’s nuclear program: “CIA analysts also generally endorsed the findings of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which concluded that, while serious questions remained about Iraq’s nuclear program — many having to do with discrepancies in documentation — its present capabilities were virtually nil.” So came a political maneuver: “One way the administration convinced the public was by badgering CIA Director Tenet into endorsing key elements of its case for war even when it required ignoring the classified findings of his and other intelligence agencies.” One of the culminations was the speech by Bush on October 7, 2002: “Bush’s speech brought together all the misinformation and exaggeration that the White House had been disseminating that fall.” In short, “The Bush administration had won the domestic debate over Iraq — and it had done so by withholding from the public details

that would have undermined its case for war. ... He deceived Americans about what was known of the threat from Iraq and deprived Congress of its ability to make an informed decision about whether or not to take the country to war.” This is what happened in a ‘democratic’ country.

It is still possible that U.S. troops will find (evidence of) chemical and biological weapons, but that is not enough, as Corn (2003a) claims: “War was waged — so Bush and others said — to prevent Iraq’s WMD from being transferred to people and groups who would use them against Americans. But the war plan included no schemes to prevent that from occurring. This was a dereliction of duty. Looters beat the United States to Iraq’s nuclear facility. If Iraq had WMD, if Al Qaeda types were in Baghdad, and if these terrorists were seeking weapons of mass destruction — the fundamental claims made by the Administration — then there is a good chance the nightmare scenario Bush & Co. exploited to win support for their war has already come true.” In other words, the U.S. forces have failed to accomplish their mission. Add to the remarks by Bush and Rumsfeld above the irresponsible comment by British Prime Minister Tony Blair, the most loyal ally of Bush, that “Our first priority has got to be to stabilize the country, the second is the humanitarian situation, and the third — and we can take our time about this and so we should — is to make sure that we investigate the weapons of mass destruction,” and what picture do we have? The point should have been that “the United States and Britain could not wait one week longer before invading because it was necessary to neutralize the threat from these weapons.” (Corn 2003a)

As a coup de grace to Bush’s unwarranted claims about WMD, Gellman (2004) offers a detailed report showing that Dr. David Kay, who directed the weapons hunt on behalf of the Bush administration, reported no discoveries of WMD after intensive research and a series of interviews with people of the Iraqi science community: “A review of available evidence, including some not known to coalition investigators and some they have not made public, portrays a nonconventional arms establishment that was far less capable

than U.S. analysts judged before the war. Leading figures in Iraqi science and industry, supported by observations on the ground, described factories and institutes that were thoroughly beaten down by 12 years of conflict, arms embargo and strangling economic sanctions. The remnants of Iraq's biological, chemical and missile infrastructures were riven by internal strife, bled by schemes for personal gain and handicapped by deceit up and down lines of command. The broad picture emerging from the investigation to date suggest that, whatever its desire, Iraq did not possess the wherewithal to build a forbidden armory on anything like the scale it had before the 1991 Persian Gulf War." His report was soon confirmed by a Reuters interview with Dr. Kay: "David Kay, who led the American effort to find banned weapons in Iraq said Friday after stepping down from his post that he has concluded that Iraq had no stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons at the start of the war last year. In an interview with Reuters, Dr. Kay said he now thought that Iraq had illicit weapons at the end of the 1991 Persian Gulf war, but that the subsequent combination of United Nations inspections and Iraq's own decisions 'got rid of them'." (The New York Times, January 24, 2004)

In short, the UN sanctions and inspections had been working out fine, contrary to the claims by Bush and his cronies. And what did the U.S. and the rest of the world get out of this debacle? Stern (2003) says flatly that "America has taken a country that was not a terrorist threat and turned it into one... America has created — not through malevolence but through negligence — precisely the situation the Bush administration has described as a breeding ground for terrorists: a state unable to control its borders or provide for its citizens' rudimentary needs... As bad as the situation inside Iraq may be, the effect that the war has had on terrorist recruitment around the globe may be even more worrisome... Most ominously, Al Qaeda's influence may be growing." Scheer et al. (2003, p.119) attributes the failure on the U.S. side to the arrogance and ignorance of a small number of neocons: "The brewing debacle in Iraq is not merely a result of errors in planning or

poor decision-making. In devising their plan for Iraq, the Bush administration repeatedly and insistently dismissed the vast array of research assembled by think tanks and the warnings of its own officials in the State Department and the CIA. For a small group of men with little understanding of Iraq, warfare, or nation-building to believe that they alone knew better requires not just monumental arrogance but also a cavalier disregard for the consequences of being wrong.” Whether Bush still proves right or his critics prove right will and should be decided by facts (= referents) alone.

6.2 Ties with Al Qaeda: Another Case in Point

- (33) a. We know that Iraq and the al Qaeda terrorist network share a common enemy — the United States of America. *We know that Iraq and al Qaeda have had high-level contacts that go back a decade.* <⑦>
- b. *Evidence from intelligence sources, secret communications, and statements by people now in custody reveal that Saddam Hussein aids and protects terrorists, including members of al Qaeda.* <⑧>
- c. He (= Saddam Hussein) has trained and financed al Qaeda-type organizations before, *al Qaeda* and other terrorist organizations. (⑩)
- d. *We’ve removed an ally of al Qaeda, and cut off a source of terrorist funding.* (⑬)

Geyer (2003) states flatly that “We absolutely know there was no contact — let’s be clear: no politically or militarily important contact — between Baghdad and Al Qaeda.” According to a comprehensive report by Ackerman & Judis (2003), the Bush administration found virtually no evidence on the ties between al Qaeda and Iraq: “At the CIA, many analysts and officials were skeptical that Iraq posed an imminent threat. In particular, they rejected a connection between Saddam and Al Qaeda. According to a *New York Times* report in February 2002, the CIA found ‘no evidence that Iraq has engaged in terrorist operations against the United States in nearly a decade, and the agency is also convinced that President Saddam Hussein has not provided chemical or biological weapons to Al Qaeda or related

groups.... In speeches and interviews, administration officials also warned of the connection between Saddam and Al Qaeda. On September 25, 2002, Rice insisted, "There clearly are contacts between Al Qaeda and Iraq. ...There clearly is testimony that some of the contacts have been important contacts and that there's a relationship there." On the same day, President Bush warned of the danger that 'Al Qaeda becomes an extension of Saddam's madness.' Rice, like Rumsfeld — who the next day would call evidence of a Saddam-bin Laden link "bulletproof" — said she could not share the administration's evidence with the public without endangering intelligence sources. But Bob Graham, the Florida Democrat who chaired the Senate Intelligence Committee, disagreed. On September 27, Paul Anderson, a spokesman for Graham told *USA Today* that the senator had seen nothing in the CIA's classified reports that established a link between Saddam and Al Qaeda."

Indeed. The public have no access to 'classified reports' and the powers that be can manipulate the people anyway they like if there is no freedom of press and speech. That is why the people as well as the mass media need to 'ask for proof' of politicians and government officials. It should be kept in mind that it is a second nature of a politician to use language in order to manipulate people for political exploitation. In actuality, Bush tersely admitted, on September 17, 2003, more than two years after the 9/11 attacks, that there was no evidence linking Iraq to 9/11, although he did not apologize (See Corn 2003b, pp.203-40, and Scheer et al. 2003 on the fictitious claim of Iraq's ties to Al Qaeda and related non-claims).

7. American democracy seems to have deteriorated steadily during the Bush presidency. One symptom was the irresponsible mass media that conformed to the prescreening of their questions by the White House. Without independent-minded reporting, which the U.S. has been credited for in the past, democratic arguments among the people could not be guaranteed. Another is the irresponsible decision by the US Congress to relinquish their right to formally declare war to the President. The US Congress passed

a resolution that gives the president the right to order preemptive military actions against foreign nations even if there is no event that provokes war. But Article 1, Section 8 of the US Constitution clearly says that only Congress can declare war (“The Congress shall have power... To Declare war,...”). As The Boston Globe reports, “Congress has moved to provide Bush with powers none of his predecessors asked for or exercised. The voters may have been reluctant, but the implications may be permanent.” One of the significant implications is that “in international practice, nations that claim a right for themselves are assumed to be willing to grant that right to other nations. The Bush Doctrine is silent on this subject. But the more the United States asserts this right, the more others are going to believe that it is their right, as well.” (Shribman 2002) (The Bush Doctrine, which makes it clear that the United States will take preemptive steps against foes who threaten the nation with weapons of mass destruction, has never been approved by Congress, nor debated by Congress, according to Shribman (2002).) Another implication is that “if we did so (= just use our military power to give orders to the rest of the world), we would have perpetual war for perpetual peace.” (Vidal 2003)

The third implication can be seen in the response of the American people toward an unjustified war against Iraq. For instance, The Boston Globe reports that “Bush and Prime Minister Tony Blair of Britain have come under increased scrutiny from their respective legislatures over the veracity of prewar intelligence. However, opinion polls in the United States continue to show strong backing for the president on Iraq and do not indicate widespread concerns that the information was exaggerated.” (6/7/03) According to an ABC News/Washington Post poll (6/23/03), 63% say the Iraq War can be justified even if weapons of mass destruction are not found. What is even more surprising is that 56% of Americans would favor striking Iran to prevent it from developing nuclear arms. President Bush’s overall job approval rating is 64%. One remarkable feature of this poll (and other polls) is a very partisan showing; 56% of Democrats think the Iraq War is

not worth fighting for, while 10% of Republicans think the same, and 48% of Democrats think the war can be justified without WMD, while 77% of Republicans agree. The greatest division is seen in Bush's job performance; 95% of Republicans and 42% of Democrats approve it. This partisan discrepancy in a time of war is extraordinary (Remember Bush's message: "I'm a uniter, not a divider." March 2, 2000). Perhaps this situation is a reflection of the political atmosphere in the U.S., which is, according to Alterman (2003), that "Even most of the conservatives in Europe are to the left of the Democrats in this country." American society seems to have turned extremely conservative in the 1980s and 1990s, and this trend seems to be accelerating after 9/11.

The biggest culprit of the deterioration of American democracy is, of course, President George W. Bush, on whom ultimate responsibility lies, whoever may have advised him in whatever way. His worst liabilities are his less than average linguistic abilities and his arrogant rhetoric. For instance, The Boston Globe reports Britain's somber response to Bush's 'cowboy talk', citing such phrases as "President Saddam Hussein of Iraq had 'craw-fished' out of previous agreements with the United Nations," "Hussein is 'stiffing the world,'" "he was going to 'smoke'em (= The Taliban) out," and "Osama bin Laden must be taken 'dead or alive,'" and quoting The Guardian as saying "...such language feeds the image overseas of Mr. Bush as a hopelessly inarticulate, trigger-happy cowboy." (9/7/02) Two of representative opinions cited in Alterman (2003) are as follows: "Clinton's 'I feel your pain' worked well in the international arena, too, much better in any case than Bush's 'I don't give a damn what you think.'" (Serge Halimi, leftist editor of *Le Monde diplomatique*) "American leftists don't appreciate what Clinton did. He was the thinking person's American Dream. Alive, unpretentious, he played the sax. For seven years in Europe, it was suddenly unbelievably cool to be American. Bush, on the other hand, is the American nightmare: a spoilt frat boy who doesn't know or care about the rest of the world." (Susan Neiman, head of the Einstein Forum in Potsdam)

This American arrogance was underway before 9/11, as exemplified in the following: "The talk of the divorce between Europe and the United States was under way when 9/11 hit and served to remind both sides how many things they held in common, compared with the relatively trivial matters — or so it seemed — that tore them apart. The Continent overflowed with spontaneous symbols of what Schröder called 'unconditional solidarity.' ...But the Bush Administration's response quickly dissipated virtually all the sympathy the tragedy inspired. As Jacques Rupnik, a former advisor to both French President Jacques Chirac and Czech President Vaclav Havel, puts it 'Americans are fond of saying, "The world changed on September 11." But what has changed is America. The extraordinary moral self-righteousness of this Administration is quite surprising and staggering to Europeans.' (Alterman 2003) "The case for disarming Saddam and even removing him from power is a strong one. But the arrogance and ineptitude of the Bush administration have alienated our allies and dissipated the good will that flowed to the US after the Sept. 11 attacks. Indeed, Bush should have been building relations of trust and co-operation abroad even before Sept. 11. Instead, he scorned the international accords on global warming, the international criminal court, a treaty on the use of land mines, a resolution against the use of child soldiers, and funds for family planning overseas. It is little wonder that US credibility is at a low web." (The Boston Globe, "The Last, Last Chance", 3/17/03)

There are signs, however, that the American people are beginning to realize the situation they have been thrown in by the Bush administration. One such sign is provided by the Washington Post-ABC News poll mentioned above. The survey found nearly seven in 10 think Bush "honestly believed" Iraq had weapons of mass destruction, but that 54 percent thought Bush exaggerated or lied about prewar intelligence. The poll also shows that 48 percent of Americans believe the war was worth fighting and that fifty percent said the war was not worth it. The same partisan discrepancy has been continuing: "Three in four Democrats said Bush either lied or ex-

aggerated about what was known about Iraq's weapons, while an equally large majority of Republicans said the president did neither."

Recent polls show the American public have become more sober over the Iraq War. A CNN/USA Today/Gallup survey (5/11/04) found that Bush Job Approval has dropped to a record low 46% while Disapproval has reached the majority (51%). The percentage of the people who think it was worth going to war in Iraq is now 44% (76% in April, 2003), and that of those who think it was not worth it is 54% (19% in April, 2003). 44% think it was a mistake to send troops to Iraq, while 54% do not think it was a mistake. These figures have significantly dropped since May, 2003, when the percentage points were 23% and 75% respectively. Another poll, CBS News Poll, shows the same tendency (5/24/04). Bush Job Approval has dropped to a new low of 41% (64% in May, 2003) and Disapproval is now 52% (29% in May, 2003). Only 34% approve of Bush's handling of Iraq War while 61% disapprove of it (72% and 20% in May, 2003, respectively). And 37% think the war is going well for the U.S., while 60% think it is going badly (60% and 36% in July, 2003, respectively).

In concluding this paper, I would like to take a brief look at President Bush's "honesty about prewar intelligence." In order to contain criticism of unfound WMD, his dubious military record, and other matters, Bush agreed to an hour-long interview with Tim Russet on NBC TV (February 7, 2004). Russet's questioning was lukewarm, but Bush's answers were full of obfuscation and deception (i.e., there was no referent), as criticized by Sirota et al (2004). To take a few examples from them:

Bush's claim: "I expected to find the weapons [because] I based my decision on the best intelligence possible."

Fact: WHITE HOUSE REPEATEDLY WARNED BY INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY. The Washington Post reported this weekend, "President Bush and his top advisers ignored many of the caveats and qualifiers included in the classified report on Saddam Hussein's weapons." Specifically, the President made unequivocal statements that Iraq "has got chemical weapons"

two months after the DIA concluded that there was “no reliable information on whether Iraq is producing and stockpiling chemical weapons.”...

Bush’s claim: “We looked at the intelligence.”

Fact: WHITE HOUSE IGNORED INTELLIGENCE WARNINGS. Knight Ridder reported that CIA officers “said President Bush ignored warnings” that his WMD case was weak. And Greg Thielmann, the Bush State Department’s top intelligence official, “said suspicions were presented as fact, and contrary arguments ignored.” Knight Ridder later reported, “Senior diplomatic, intelligence and military officials have charged that Bush and his top aides made assertions about Iraq’s banned weapons programs and alleged links to al-Qaeda that weren’t supported by credible intelligence, and that they ignored intelligence that didn’t support their policies.”

Bush’s claim: “The international community thought he had weapons.”

Fact: INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TOLD WHITE HOUSE THE OPPOSITE. The IAEA and U.N. both repeatedly told the Administration it had no evidence that Iraq possessed WMD. On 2/15/03, the IAEA said that, “We have to date found no evidence of ongoing prohibited nuclear or nuclear-related activities in Iraq.”...

Bush’s claim: “I believe it is essential that when we see a threat, we deal with those threats before they become imminent. It’s too late if they become imminent.”

Fact: ADMINISTRATION REPEATEDLY CLAIMED IRAQ WAS AN “IMMINENT THREAT.” The Bush Administration repeatedly claimed that Iraq was an imminent threat before the war — not that it would “become imminent.” Specifically, White House communications director Dan Bartlett was asked on CNN: “Is [Saddam Hussein] an imminent threat to US interests, either in that part of the world or to Americans right here at home?” Bartlett replied, “Well, of course he is.”...

Bush’s claim: “Iraq had the capacity to make a weapon and then let that weapon fall into the hands of a shadowy terrorist network.”

Fact: ASSERTION BELIES PREVIOUS INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENT.

This assertion belies the 2002 National Intelligence Estimate which told the white House that Iraq would most likely only coordinate with Al Qaeda if the U.S. invaded Iraq...

It is astonishing that the President of the United States should be able to express such a series of falsehoods before the American public (and the rest of the world). Add to this the disclosure by former Treasury Secretary Paul H. O'Neil that "President Bush showed little interest in policy discussions in his first two years in the White House, leading Cabinet meetings 'like a blind man in a roomful of deaf people.'" (The Washington Post, 1/10/04) and that "From the very first instance, it was about Iraq. It was about what we can do to change this regime. Day one, these things were laid and sealed... It was about finding a way to do it. That was the tone of it. The president saying 'Go find me a way to do this.' For me, the notion of pre-emption, that the U.S. has the unilateral right to do whatever we decide to do, is a really huge leap." (www.CBSNEWS.com, 1/11/04), and we get a picture very similar to "Dr. Strangelove." This is no longer a matter of whether Bush told lies or not. It is, as Lakoff (2003) points out, a matter of a betrayal of trust: "If the real rationale for the Iraq War has been self-interested control — over oil resources, the regional economy, political influence, and military bases — if it was not self-defense and not selfless liberation, then President Bush *betrayed the trust* of our soldiers, the Congress, and the American people. Mere lying is a minor matter when betrayal is the issue." We should add that he betrayed the trust of the rest of the world as a world leader as well.

One final point: The international community has been horrified to learn that detainees, the majority of them innocent citizens, had been sexually abused and tortured systematically at the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq. Defense Secretary Rumsfeld admitted the abuse charges and apologized to the 'mis-treated' Iraqi people at the U.S. House and Senate hearings on May 6, 2004 (The New York Times, May 7, 2003). This moral failure on the part of the American troops (and apparently the British troops) is undoubtedly a logical consequence of repeated international law violations by the Bush Admin-

istration, as we saw in section 4.4. Specifically, Hersh (2004) reports that Rumsfeld had approved of a secret torture program, ignoring the Geneva Conventions. When Bush talks about freedom in Iraq guaranteed by the U.S. forces, we should look for a referent justifying that claim (“Show us proof!”). When what we see is nothing but chaos such as the prison abuse, we can only conclude that his claim is false.

Repeated falsehoods by the U.S. administration reminds one of the Vietnam War. In fact, the analogy between Iraq and Vietnam seems to be getting more substantial day by day, as argued, for instance, by St John (2004) and Gray (2004). Besides, there are two far more complicating factors involved in Iraq — religion and oil.

Senator Robert Byrd was never more right when he said on the U.S. Senate floor (April 29, 2004): “The mission in Iraq, as laid out by President Bush and Vice President Cheney, has failed. Even more disturbing, the disdain for international law, and the military bombast of this cocky, reckless Administration have tarnished the beacon of hope and freedom which the United States of America once offered to the World.”

President Bush and his cronies have abundantly demonstrated that corruption of language mirrors corruption of the mind and that corruption of the mind is reflected in corrupt language.

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