

A Simile

Many supporters of the liberation of Iraq are perplexed that large stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons have not been found there, despite a careful search by the **Iraq Survey Group**, and there is no consensus among them as to the explanation.

Many scientists are perplexed that no extraterrestrial life has yet been detected despite the careful search by **SETI**, and there is no consensus among them as to the explanation.

Opponents of the liberation of Iraq who regard the former mystery as a vindication of their position are like creationists who view the latter as a vindication of theirs.

Tue, 05/18/2004 - 16:13 | [digg](#) | [del.icio.us](#) | [permalink](#)

Digging a grave

The simplest and most likely explanation is that neither exists, at least not in this universe.

Opponents of the liberation of Iraq who regard the former mystery as a vindication of their position are like creationists who view the latter as a vindication of theirs.

But this comment indicates a blindness on your part. You are taking a side-swipe at the anti-war crowd while refusing to face up to the real issues. One can still be in favour of the war on moral and strategic grounds but angry at the Bush administration for the many mistakes it made re. WMD. The anger is justified because, as a reader in the thread entitled "But The Damage Is Done" noted, the mistakes have consequences for future international action by Britain and by the US. And if corrective action is not taken, we will continue to make similar mistakes. If you do not demand accountability from the Bush and Blair governments, you are digging a grave for yourself.

by a reader on Tue, 05/18/2004 - 22:30 | [reply](#)

Timing is off

One can still be in favour of the war on moral and

strategic grounds but angry at the Bush administration for the many mistakes it made re. WMD. The anger is justified because, as a reader in the thread entitled "But The Damage Is Done" noted, the mistakes have consequences for future international action by Britain and by the US

I think your intent is true; but timing is off. Now is not the time to act on any anger one might have regarding the lack of WMD. 1st the area needs to be secured. Second, it needs to be proven that

- 1)There were never WMD
- 2)That we were lied to.
- 3)Who lied and why.
- 4)That we were lied to altered how we would have conducted this, imho, moral war, in such a way as to cause more damage. Not every lie is evil.

It seems to me the presence of Sarin could indicate we were not lied to, though that remains to be determined.

After that one can act on any anger that might result from "being lied to".

be well,
Rachel Ann

by [RachelAnn](#) on Wed, 05/19/2004 - 01:57 | [reply](#)

But an election is looming

I think your intent is true; but timing is off. Now is not the time to act on any anger one might have regarding the lack of WMD. 1st the area needs to be secured. Second, it needs to be proven that

- 1)There were never WMD

It can, of course, never be proven that there weren't any. But I think that the lack of evidence, despite repeated searches, is very telling. And we can be quite sure about some things. For example, we know that Iraq was not reconstituting its nuclear weapons program (and the author of the original post at top implicitly acknowledges this by mentioning only biological and chemical weapons). The aluminium tubes could not be used in centrifuges to enrich uranium. etc.

- 2)That we were lied to.
- 3)Who lied and why.
- 4)That we were lied to altered how we would have conducted this, imho, moral war, in such a way as to cause more damage. Not every lie is evil.

I make no claims about whether we were lied to or not. It is quite possible that evidence was inadvertently cherry-picked to support the thesis that WMD existed and that the clamour to go to war meant that contrary opinions were overlooked. Bush and Blair

would be accountable for this just as much as they are accountable if they lied. Yes, some lies are justifiable, but I don't think they were in this case (assuming we were lied to).

It seems to me the presence of Sarin could indicate we were not lied to, though that remains to be determined.

One shell, a WMD arsenal does not make.

After that one can act on any anger that might result from "being lied to".

My anger would only be intensified if we were in fact lied to. It is enough that they got it wrong. You say now is not the time for anger.

But given that we are almost sure that Iraq possessed no stockpiles of WMD and given that the US election is approaching, I think now is the time. I do not want Bush or Kerry making the same mistakes again. They have cost America dearly.

by a reader on Wed, 05/19/2004 - 02:43 | [reply](#)

Re: One shell

It's far too early to say what the significance of the two recent chemical weapons finds is. While it's certainly true that one shell does not an arsenal make, one counter-example definitely does make a refutation.

If the sarin shell is just an accidental leftover from previously-known arsenals, then it is not evidence of anything interesting. At the other extreme, if it is of a type that it has hitherto been believed Iraq did not have, as **has been suggested**, then it is significant because it proves the existence of a secret chemical weapons programme after the time when Iraq persuaded the UN that it had ended all such programmes. And the only possible reason for a new chemical weapons programme under those circumstances would have been an intention to produce chemical weapons.

As Rachel Ann says, all this remains to be determined.

If it turns out that there was indeed a class of chemical weapons being produced in Iraq of which the US had no inkling, then the CIA, FBI and US government have made a terrible mistake and should all resign. (Just kidding.)

by **Editor** on Wed, 05/19/2004 - 03:54 | [reply](#)

We don't know yet if it's Iraqi

...if it [the shell] is of a type that it has hitherto been believed Iraq did not have, as has been suggested, then it is significant because it proves the existence of a secret chemical weapons programme after the time when

Iraq persuaded the UN that it had ended all such

programmes.

How does this follow? The shell could have been manufactured elsewhere and recently imported (smuggled) into Iraq.

by a reader on Wed, 05/19/2004 - 04:23 | [reply](#)

Re: We don't know yet if it's Iraqi

a reader wrote:

The shell could have been manufactured elsewhere and recently imported (smuggled) into Iraq.

Indeed. OK you're right. The US Government need not resign after all.

by [Editor](#) on Wed, 05/19/2004 - 04:28 | [reply](#)

Grounds for war

So war was waged on Iraq based on evidence just as good as those gatered by SETI for intelligent life elsewhere in the universe? That doesn't bode well for intelligence nearby, either. Neither of the military kind nor of the cerebral kind.

by a reader on Mon, 05/24/2004 - 06:14 | [reply](#)

Grounds for terrorism

It seems to me that if the US can go to war on Iraq because "the existence of WMD have not been disproved", then Al Qaeda can terrorize the West because "the existence of Allah has not been dsproved".

by a reader on Mon, 05/24/2004 - 06:16 | [reply](#)

WMD as a Side Issue

'It seems to me that if the US can go to war on Iraq because "the existence of WMD have not been disproved", then Al Qaeda can terrorize the West because "the existence of Allah has not been dsproved".'

At best, the WMD are a side issue in the justification for war. The real issue was Saddam's dreadful behaviour toward his own people, his foreign aggression and his sponsorship of terrorism. He also certainly had illegal programmes for making WMD regardless of whether they had actually produced any or not.

by [Alan Forrester](#) on Sun, 05/30/2004 - 01:48 | [reply](#)
