



11350 Random Hills Road, Suite 800, Fairfax, Virginia 22030 Phone (703) 934-6101 Fax (703) 352-3678

fff@fff.org www.fff.org

The Ten Planks of the “Freedom” Manifesto **by Jacob G. Hornberger**

Now, tell me if I have this right: It doesn't really matter whether President Bush and his associates lied about Saddam Hussein's "weapons of mass destruction" or exaggerated the danger — even though the reason that most Americans supported the war was the threat of imminent attack from such weapons — because the war on Iraq has brought "freedom" to the Iraqi people.

Three months after the invasion, which killed or maimed thousands of innocent people, including more than 100 American GIs, here's the "freedom" that Iraqis are now celebrating:

1. The Iraqi people are now living under [direct military rule](#), with foreign military commanders ruling by decree.
2. Democratic elections are prohibited, and political rulers are [being selected](#) by military commanders.
3. Iraqi citizens are being required to [turn in their weapons](#) to the military authorities.
4. There is a mandatory 11 p.m. [curfew](#), enforced by soldiers.
5. There are [warrantless searches](#) of homes and [warrantless seizures](#) of criminal suspects; these are conducted not by the police but by army troops.
6. Occupation troops are [killing demonstrators](#) and [suspected criminals](#) without a trial or due process of law.
7. The military authorities are continuing Saddam Hussein's system of [government-run schools](#) for the nation's children, albeit with new forms of official indoctrination.

8. The military authorities are continuing Saddam Hussein's system of [monetary central planning](#), even to the extent of inflating the currency by printing quantities of Iraqi money with Saddam's photo on it.

9. There is [military censorship](#) and [regulation](#) of the media and [a ban](#) on anti-military speech and activity.

10. The military commanders are continuing Saddam Hussein's and his Ba'ath Party's [socialist policies](#) of public ownership of the means of production, [central planning](#) of economic activity, and [welfare](#).

(Did I also mention that [widespread looting](#) continues across the country, which, according to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, is also a part of Iraq's new "freedom," albeit an "[untidy](#)" part?)

Wow! So all this is "freedom"? Please, remind me again — what exactly is tyranny? And would someone mind telling me how "freedom" in Iraq is different, in principle, from political conditions, say, in Burma?

Of course, it's not surprising that Washington officials would consider omnipotent power over people's lives and fortunes, albeit in a more benign form than other military dictatorships, to constitute "freedom."

But what's disquieting about all this is that so many Americans, after having been frightened into supporting the president's invasion of Iraq on the basis of his deceptive claims about Saddam Hussein's "weapons of mass destruction," are now blindly believing his claim that the Iraqi people are free.

Even more disquieting, however, is the possibility that, under the right circumstances (such as a big terrorist attack in the United States arising out of the war on Iraq), our "freedom"-loving fellow citizens might eagerly embrace efforts by the president and Pentagon to "free" us.

Mr. Hornberger is founder and president of The Future of Freedom Foundation.

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