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Welcome to the Land of the Free

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On September 8, Susan Lindauer, a one-time congressional staffer for Rep. Peter DeFazio and Sen. Ron Wyden of Oregon [Wyden is a member of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence], and journalist, was ordered released from incarceration from the Bureau of Prisons Carswell Federal Medical Center located at the Naval Reserve Air Station in Fort Worth, Texas. Lindauer, who was never convicted of any crime, spent seven months in the prison hospital and was transferred to New York City where she spent an additional four months in prison.

Lindauer claims that from August 1996 to the outbreak of the Iraq war, she served as a back channel intermediary with the Iraqi Mission to the UN in New York and was constantly supervised by her handlers in the CIA and Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA). In March 2004, Lindauer was arrested by the FBI at her Takoma Park, Maryland home and charged with acting as an unregistered agent for the Iraqi government from October 1999 to February 2004 and engaging in illegal financial transactions with the Iraqis. Federal prosecutors also charged Lindauer with meeting Iraqi intelligence agents during a 2002 trip to Baghdad, including a meeting at the Al Rashid Hotel. Lindauer claims that she was one of three CIA assets who were covering the Iraqi Mission to the UN. She said she and the other two assets, who were also being run by the FBI, were charged with being agents for Iraq.

From the beginning, the government's case against Lindauer was unique. In his decision ordering Lindauer's release from federal custody, Judge Michael Mukasey of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York in Manhattan ruled that the government could not force Lindauer to take psychotropic drugs in order for her to stand trial in the case. In a rare departure, Mukasey commented on the government's case against Lindauer before the trial. He stated, "There is no indication that Lindauer ever came close to influencing anyone or could have." The Justice Department maintained that Lindauer attempted to influence her cousin to prevent a U.S. military attack on Iraq. Lindauer's second cousin is none other than Andrew Card, who served as George W. Bush's Chief of Staff and who is a major source for Bob Woodward's revealing book about the Bush march to war, *State of Denial*. Lindauer's father is John Lindauer, the 1998 GOP candidate for governor of Alaska, who was defeated by Tony Knowles.

In rejecting the government's request to force Lindauer to take drugs, Mukasey stated that the government's request raised humanitarian concerns since the procedure "necessarily involves physically restraining defendant so that she can be injected with mind-altering drugs."

After her release from custody, Lindauer said she was approached by an attorney who defended one-time CIA agent Edwin Wilson, who was imprisoned for 20 years after being convicted of exporting arms to Libya. Wilson was released in 2003 after a federal judge threw out perjured government evidence that suggested Wilson was not working for the CIA while he was exporting weapons to Libya. The attorney, who also represented imprisoned former Panamanian dictator Manuel Noriega, strongly advised Lindauer to remain silent after her release.

Lindauer claims that her liaisons with Baghdad proved successful for the FBI's anti-terrorism efforts. She said that her CIA-sanctioned contacts with Saddam's officials resulted in tacit agreements to have UN weapons inspectors return to Iraq and arranging for an FBI anti-terrorism task force to go to Baghdad. That task force was to have arrived in Baghdad six months before 9/11 to track terrorists known to the Mukharabat, Iraq's Stasi-like intelligence service. These agreements between the CIA/DIA and Baghdad, hammered out after the USS Cole bombing in Aden, Yemen, were made before Bush's inauguration in January 2001. Lindauer said she briefed Card on the arrangements between U.S. intelligence and Baghdad after he took over as White House Chief of Staff and continued to do so for 18 months after Bush took over the presidency. On the backchannel efforts with Iraq Lindauer stated, "Card knew what was going on."

In fact, Lindauer said Iraq passed her intelligence on the planned bombing of the USS Cole and that this was made known to Yemeni authorities. No action was taken by the U.S. Navy to prevent to act on the "actionable intelligence."

Lindauer, who said she worked as a journalist for U.S. News and World Report and Fox News Channel and as a media consultant while working as a CIA

asset in an unpaid capacity, went to Card before the war and asked him what the White House wanted from Iraq to prevent a war. Lindauer's contacts with Iraq were through the Iraqi Mission to the UN, a relationship she said she cultivated since 1993. As an asset for the CIA, Lindauer claims she was vetted, investigated, and cleared by the agency. Lindauer identifies her two CIA "handlers" as Paul Hoven and Dr. Richard Fuisz (pronounced "fuse"). Lindauer reports that Fuisz was the CIA Station Chief in Damascus during the 1980s and that she first met him in 1994. Fuisz is a most interesting character. An article in the August 10, 1998 issue of New York magazine describes Fuisz as a "a former actor, psychiatrist, pediatrician, congressional candidate, whistle-blower, and entrepreneur who declines to comment on a published report that he has intelligence ties." The article states that Fuisz was involved in a deal with then-Soviet ambassador Yuri Dubinin and Mikhail Khodorkovsky (the head of the Young Communist League and the currently jailed billionaire oil tycoon) to bring Soviet models to the fashion runways of the United States.

Fuisz told Lindauer that it was the Syrian- and Bekaa Valley-based Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP-GC), led by Ahmed Jibril, and elements of Hezbollah that bombed Pan Am 103 in December 1988 in retaliation for the July 1988 downing by the USS Vincennes of an Iran Air passenger plane in the Persian Gulf. Iran's ambassador in Beirut in 1988, Ayatollah Ali Akbar Mohtashemi, who became Iran's Interior Minister, transferred \$10 million to the PFLP-GC to fashion the Toshiba cassette player into a bomb. Libya was fingered by the U.S. government in the bombing after Syria joined George H. W. Bush's anti-Saddam military coalition in 1991 and Iran remained neutral. Two Libyan intelligence agents -- Al-Amin Khalifa Fhimah and Abdel Basset Ali al-Megrahi -- who happened to be in Malta at the same time as Muhammad Abu Talb, a chief PFLP-GC suspect in the bombing, were charged and prosecuted for the Lockerbie bombing.

Moreover, Lindauer contends there was advance knowledge of the PanAm 103 bombing because the CIA was tracking heroin out of the Bekaa Valley and was aware of the plot to down the airliner. Stephen Green, a senior Drug Enforcement Administration official; John McCarthy, the U.S. ambassador to Beirut; and officials of the U.S. embassies in Moscow and Helsinki rescheduled their December 21, 1988 reservations on PanAm 103 at the last minute. Lindauer said her work as a CIA asset began in 1995 when she made initial approaches to Libya.

Fuisz's name also came up in reports in the UK's Sunday Herald concerning U.S. and U.K. weapons sales to Saddam's government.

Lindauer's other alleged CIA handler, Hoven, is reported by Washington media sources to be a long-time "information passer" among Capitol Hill and other DC circles. Lindauer said that Hoven was more interested in Lindauer's personal safety. Lindauer said she was under surveillance by elements close to Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman (the blind Egyptian sheikh who was convicted in the 1993 World Trade Center bombing and Hezbollah, as well as Israeli intelligence.

Lindauer said that after her arrest she had three choices: go to trial, plead

guilty to being an Iraqi unregistered agent, or be declared mentally incompetent. The last option could only be successful for the Bush administration if Lindauer agreed to be given psychotropic drugs. The staff at the Carswell prison hospital in Texas were prepared to testify that Lindauer was perfectly sane. The Bush administration could not accept a trial because Lindauer's intelligence contacts and Andrew Card would be called to testify. That could prove embarrassing for Bush. Lindauer is now out of prison on bail and in a legal limbo called "trial pending." Lindauer's attorney, a federal public defender, told her not to have any contact with Andrew Card because it would be considered "obstruction of justice."

Lindauer brought her concerns about pre-war intelligence on Iraq to the office of Mississippi GOP Senator Trent Lott because of contacts she had within his office. She said that within 48 hours, her case was turned over to a federal grand jury. The prosecutors never told the grand jury that Lindauer was a CIA asset.

Lindauer scoffs at the conclusion of the Presidential Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction (Robb-Silberman Commission) that the CIA was risk averse and not imaginative in dealing with the Iraqi WMD issue. The commission concluded that the CIA and other agencies were "prone to develop self-reinforcing, risk averse cultures that take outside advice badly . . . Rather than thinking imaginatively, and considering seemingly unlikely and unpopular possibilities, the Intelligence Community instead found itself wedded to a set of assumptions about Iraq, focusing on intelligence reporting that appeared to confirm those assumptions."

Lindauer said she and her CIA handlers did all the things the commission contended were not done. Lindauer claims her two major contacts in Saddam's government were Iraqi Foreign Minister Najji Sabri Ahmad Al-Hadithi and Deputy Foreign Minister Dr. Said Hassan. Lindauer said she met her primary contact, Dr. Hassan, in New York while he was Iraq's ambassador to the UN. Lindauer's stated relationship with Najji Sabri seems to have much merit. In March of this year, NBC News reported that it was Sabri who was CIA director George Tenet's "source who had direct access to Saddam and his inner circle." Former CIA officer Tyler Drumheller told 60 Minutes in April of this year that a "very senior Iraqi official" gave the CIA information on Iraqi WMDs. 60 Minutes confirmed that official was Sabri. Sabri declined the CIA's offer to have him defect to the United States. There were contacts between Sabri and the CIA through the French government prior to the outbreak of the war. Sabri now teaches journalism in Qatar. Lindauer's claims of CIA-sponsored contacts with Sabri and Hassan are thus borne out by the facts.

As far as imaginative ways to deal with Iraq, Lindauer said she studied Islamic mysticism (Sufi'ism) to a great degree before talking to Iraqi officials. She claims that this established a common baseline in her dealings with both Iraqis and in a previous CIA-sponsored mission, with the Libyans. Lindauer also claims the CIA set in motion a scheme of "plausible deniability" in her dealings with Iraq. She said the CIA told her to accept Iraq's financing of her 2002 trip to Baghdad, for which she was reimbursed for \$5000 by Iraqi officials. Lindauer said her CIA handlers said that if she used her own money to go to Iraq, the Iraqis would "jerk her around" as an emissary of the United States government. Lindauer then told the Iraqis that they would have to pay for her trip to Iraq. She also said the CIA absolutely did not want Lindauer to travel under the auspices of any non-governmental organization (NGO) or

anti-sanctions group. Lindauer said the CIA was emphatic about "not mixing with people in the peace community."

Lindauer said she was successful in making contact with an Iraqi who had potential to serve as an agent or double agent for the CIA. The diplomat wanted to bring his family to the United States from Iraq. She said the diplomat, after returning to Iraq from the United States, was successful in setting up arch-terrorist Abu Nidal, who lived in a wealthy suburb of Baghdad after being expelled by Libya. Paying the diplomat \$1000 in money from a \$10,000 fee she received from Saddam's government, the gambit seems to have been worth it. On August 16, 2002, Abu Nidal was assassinated by a Mukhabarat hit squad of 30 men (working for the Mukhabarat's feared assassination unit -- Office 8) after Saddam's government was "tipped off" Nidal was conspiring with Saudi Arabia and Kuwait in a plot to oust Saddam. Reportedly "found" in Abu Nidal's house were "classified" U.S. documents on a U.S. military attack on Iraq.

Lindauer claims that the US Intelligence Community was operating adequately before the Iraq war. She said the CIA and DIA were ensuring rogue regimes like that of Iraq were behaving responsibly. However, she said that although there were backchannels between the CIA and Baghdad, "no one in the Bush administration trusted Saddam." After her trip to Baghdad and her determination that Iraq possessed no WMDs, Lindauer said she passed this information to Fuisz, whose next door neighbor in McLean, Virginia just happened to be Secretary of State Colin Powell. Lindauer insists that her report on no Iraqi WMDs was passed directly to Powell. Lindauer claims that after Powell criticized top people at the CIA for their pre-war intelligence he was chiefly responsible for having her indicted and sent to jail.

Lindauer supported former UN weapons inspector Scott Ritter's contention that the inspection process successfully identified suspected targets that turned out not to be weapons-related. Lindauer said she was working to get UN weapons inspectors back into Iraq. She also maintains that Iraq was one of the U.S.'s best sources on anti-terrorist information regarding such groups as Dawa, Al Qaeda, and other Islamist fundamentalist groups.

We can add Susan Lindauer's name to a long list of U.S. and foreign intelligence and law enforcement agents and assets who were done in by the neo-con cabal that continues to rule Washington. It is a long (and most assuredly incomplete) list indeed: Valerie Plame Wilson, Joseph Wilson, Sibel Edmonds, Russ Tice, Kenneth W. Ford, Jr., Greg Ford, Dave DeBatto, Bunnatine Greenhouse, Robert Isakson, William Baldwin, Rory Mayberry, Gen. Jay Garner, Gen. Janis Karpinski, John Kokal, Dr. Gus Weiss, Paul O'Neill, John O'Neill, Dr. David Kelly, Katharine Gun, Danish Major Frank Grevil and the list goes on . . . after George W. Bush's denial that he is responsible for the deaths of a three quarter million Iraqis, it is clear that the retribution of a trial will one day be brought down on Mr. Bush -- whose name is now synonymous with other grotesque human rights violators of our recent era -- Milosevic, Pinochet, Suharto, Marcos, Hitler, Tojo, and Stalin.

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