

THE NATIONAL INTEREST

Published on *The National Interest* (<http://nationalinterest.org>)

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Ein Haus der Lüge

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Today's *Guardian* features [an interview with "Curveball,"](#) ^[3] the German intelligence asset who provided the bogus intelligence about biological weapons that Secretary of State Colin Powell used in his February 2003 address at the United Nations.

Curveball, whose real name is Rafid Ahmed Alwan al-Janabi, shows no remorse and says that he is pleased with the outcome. He says he lied because "I had the chance to fabricate something to topple the regime. I and my sons are proud of that and we are proud that we were the reason to give Iraq the margin of democracy." He says "I had to do something for my country."*

I have to imagine that other Iraqis may disagree with al-Janabi's cost-benefit calculation of the invasion, but it's clear that al-Janabi is representing himself as a patriotic Iraqi who lied because he thought it was what was best for the country. I think that's a respectable position.

From an American perspective, one is reminded once again of the old adage "garbage in, garbage out." Raw intelligence will tell you almost anything you want to hear. TNI's own [Paul Pillar has written elsewhere](#) ^[4] of his view that the administration's behavior before the war did not make it look as though it was engaged in an earnest and dispassionate pursuit of capital-T Truth.

That is, the larger lesson for Americans here is to ask why the administration—and [almost all of the Beltway foreign-policy commentariat](#) ^[5]—seemed so inclined to support the war, and therefore any evidence presented that justified the war, before an impartial evaluation of the body of available evidence. That question is one that continues to pique interest. Unfortunately, it will likely continue to do so for some time.

* The video mentions dispute over whether al-Janabi was really trying to influence the United States and Tony Blair to attack Saddam or whether he was trying to influence his asylum hearing, but al-Janabi denies his asylum case had anything to do with his testimony to the BND.

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