



Written by [Thomas R. Eddlem](#) on April 2, 2012

“Curveball” Reiterates Confession About Iraq War Lies

On Sunday the London Independent newspaper published the words from a video confession with the Iraqi most responsible for false intelligence reports that brought the United States to war with Iraq. "We went to war in Iraq on a lie. And that lie was your lie," the interviewer said to Rafid Ahmed Alwan al-Janabi — codenamed "Curveball." Al-Janabi replied simply: "Yes."



"It was a confidence trick that changed the course of history," the *Independent* [explained](#), "with Rafid Ahmed Alwan al-Janabi's lies used to justify the Iraq war." Al Janabi's reports were the highlight of sensational reports of Iraqi mobile biological weapons laboratories in Colin Powell's (above left) [speech to the United Nations February 5, 2003](#), a speech filled with falsehoods about alleged Iraqi nuclear and biological programs that later proved to have been dormant for a decade. "My main purpose," al-Janabi said without apology, "was to topple the tyrant in Iraq because the longer this dictator remains in power, the more the Iraqi people will suffer from this regime's oppression."

Al-Janabi, who had fled Iraq after being charged for common theft, acknowledged he was simply telling the war-hungry White House what it wanted to hear. "I brought the White House team in to do the graphics" (see end of article), he [told](#) the *Independent*, adding how "intelligence was being worked to fit around the policy." Al-Janabi had fled to Germany in 1999 on a tourist visa and initially [told](#) German immigration officials the truth that he had embezzled money from the Iraqi television station where he worked, but was able to speed up the asylum process when he started weaving tales about witnessing mobile biological weapons laboratories.

The interview published in the *Independent* was not the first time al-Janabi had admitted to lying about Iraqi biological weapons programs. He also [confessed](#) to the London *Guardian* back in February of 2011 that he had lied: "I did this and I am satisfied, because there is no dictator in Iraq any more." As in the *Independent* piece this year, al-Janabi expressed no remorse for causing the war that resulted in the deaths of some 100,000 Iraqis, as well as thousands of American and British soldiers.

"I had the chance to fabricate something to topple the regime," he [told](#) the *Guardian* in a series of interviews carried out in his native Arabic and German. "I and my sons are proud of that, and we are proud that we were the reason to give Iraq the margin of democracy."



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The CIA's reliance on al-Janabi's tall tales — despite repeated BND (German intelligence agency) warnings that he was crazy and nothing he said could be verified — was the source of later controversy and was responsible for the intelligence failure in the United States. At a February 2011 press conference in Berlin to promote his memoir about the Iraq war, Germany's former foreign minister Joschka Fischer said he [told](#) American intelligence officials: "Our position was always: [Curveball] might be right, but he might not be right. He could be a liar but he could be telling the truth."

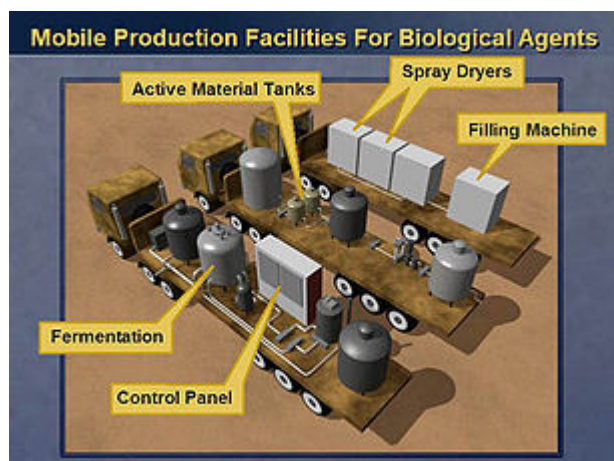
CIA Director George Tenet [admitted](#) in February 2011 that the al-Janabi situation was a "textbook case of how not to deal with defector-provided material." But he continued to deny that he or other CIA officials received any caveats about al-Janabi's reliability. Tenet continues to deny, for example, that CIA European station head Tyler Drumheller contacted him after a visit with the BND about al-Janabi in which BND officials described al-Janabi as an unreliable drunk and liar. Drumheller has insisted the phone call took place. He [told](#) the German magazine *Der Spiegel* in 2007 that he had contacted both CIA Deputy Chief John McLaughlin and CIA Director George Tenet before Colin Powell's UN speech about al-Janabi after meeting with BND officials who had expressed skepticism about al-Janabi's reliability. According to Drumheller:

I had assured my German friends that it wouldn't be in the speech. I really thought that I had put it to bed. I had warned the CIA deputy John McLaughlin that this case could be fabricated. The night before the speech, then CIA director George Tenet called me at home. I said: "Hey Boss, be careful with that German report. It's supposed to be taken out. There are a lot of problems with that." He said: "Yeah, yeah. Right. Don't worry about that."

Tenet denied in his [blog](#) that he or McLaughlin had been contacted about al-Janabi's reliability prior to the war.

For Great Britain, there has already been some political fallout from the al-Janabi admission that he lied the West into attacking Iraq. Former Labor Party official and Iraq war skeptic George Galloway [won](#) a seat in Parliament last week as an independent candidate from his self-created anti-war Respect Party. Galloway had been expelled from the Labor Party months after the start of the Iraq War for his antiwar speeches, and created his Respect Party in alliance with Trotskyite socialists.

Graphic below: Computer-generated image of alleged mobile biological weapons laboratory, presented by Colin Powell at the UN Security Council.







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