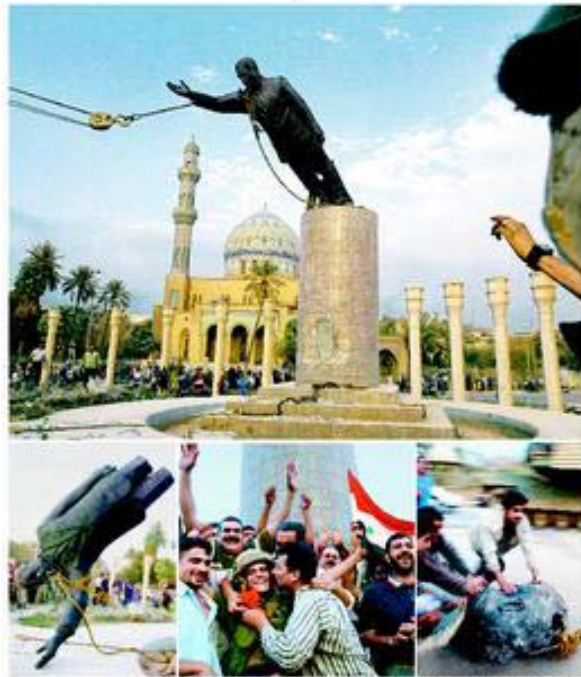


Some Examples of Portrayals of Information about Iraq

[Note: pages 17-end are optional]

“Stage Managing” the Toppling of Saddam Hussein Statue, Wednesday, April 9, 2003

U.S. FORCES TAKE CONTROL IN BAGHDAD; BUSH ELATED; SOME RESISTANCE REMAINS



A 100-TON CRANE TOOK TO THE SKY TO UNVEIL BAGHDAD, AFTER AN AMERICAN SOLDIER TOOK CONTROL OF BAGHDAD FROM THE IRAQI REGIME. THE STATUE OF SADDAM HUSSEIN WAS TOPPLED BY A CRANE AND A CROWD OF IRAQI CITIZENS. (AP/WIDE WORLD)

Hussein Statue Is Toppled — Rumsfeld Urges Caution

By PATRICK E. TYLER
SADDAM HUSSEIN'S STATUE WAS TOPPLED WEDNESDAY IN BAGHDAD, THE IRAQI CAPITAL, AS U.S. FORCES TOOK CONTROL OF THE CITY. THE STATUE WAS HOISTED BY A CRANE AND A CROWD OF IRAQI CITIZENS. THE STATUE WAS TOPPLED BY A CRANE AND A CROWD OF IRAQI CITIZENS. THE STATUE WAS TOPPLED BY A CRANE AND A CROWD OF IRAQI CITIZENS.

Bush Tunes In And Sees Iraqis In Celebrations

By JAMES M. BURNETT
WASHINGTON, April 9 — President Bush on Wednesday celebrated the fall of Baghdad, the Iraqi capital, as U.S. forces took control of the city. He praised the bravery of American soldiers and the courage of the Iraqi people.

Cheers, Tears and Looting in Capital's Streets

By JAMES M. BURNETT
SADDAM HUSSEIN'S STATUE WAS TOPPLED WEDNESDAY IN BAGHDAD, THE IRAQI CAPITAL, AS U.S. FORCES TOOK CONTROL OF THE CITY. THE STATUE WAS HOISTED BY A CRANE AND A CROWD OF IRAQI CITIZENS.

A High Point in 2 Decades of U.S. Might

By R. B. STEIN
WASHINGTON, April 9 — The fall of Baghdad, the Iraqi capital, on Wednesday marked a high point in the history of U.S. military power. It was a triumph for the United States and a defeat for the Iraqi regime.

Speed and Flexibility

By MICHAEL S. GORDON
SADDAM HUSSEIN'S STATUE WAS TOPPLED WEDNESDAY IN BAGHDAD, THE IRAQI CAPITAL, AS U.S. FORCES TOOK CONTROL OF THE CITY. THE STATUE WAS HOISTED BY A CRANE AND A CROWD OF IRAQI CITIZENS.

11 Die in Baghdad Gun Error

At least 11 people were killed in a shooting incident in Baghdad on Wednesday. The incident occurred in a crowded market area.

Marshes Could Quietly Empower

The marshes of southern Iraq could become a source of power for the Iraqi people. They could provide a base for resistance against the Iraqi regime.

A Members' List No Offer

The American people should be informed of the names of the members of the Iraqi regime. This would help them understand the nature of the regime.

Continued on Page 4

stage managing toppling of saddam hussein statue.doc

DAILY 04-10-03 DM M2 A1 CMYK

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THURSDAY, APRIL 10, 2003



A Marine looks on as American troops enter the heart of a 20-year-old Saddam Hussein's central Baghdad. The flag was never hoisted, before the street was renamed and bulldozed.

Hussein's Baghdad Falls

U.S. Forces Move Triumphantly Through Capital Streets, Cheered by Crowds Jubilant at End of Repressive Regime

On Baghdad's Streets

Iraqis Now Feel Free to Disagree

By Lawrence Sanders
Photograph by Greg DeGuire

BAGHDAD, April 10—A scene unfolded on a street in Baghdad today that many residents believe will mark the end of Saddam Hussein's 24-year rule. "I have waited for this moment for 24 years," said Majid Al-Muhammad, an elderly engineer. "You can't imagine how much we love the American people. Thank you, thank you very much."

But some Iraqis are not so sure. "I don't see how we can be free if we are not free," said a young man. "I don't see how we can be free if we are not free."

By Lawrence Sanders
Photograph by Greg DeGuire

Analysis

What Counted: People, Plan, Inept Enemy

By Thomas L. Friedman
Photograph by Greg DeGuire

Although Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld warned yesterday that the war in Iraq is not over, the U.S. military has already achieved some of its major objectives by just 21 days a war that began on March 20, 2003, and ended on March 21, 2003.



Cheering Iraqis gather to see U.S. Marines in Baghdad, where jubilation erupted after the city fell.

With the Marines Entering Baghdad

A Few Potshots, but Mostly Cheers

By Lawrence Sanders
Photograph by Greg DeGuire

BAGHDAD, April 10—Just before entering Baghdad, U.S. Marines were greeted by a hail of potshots, but mostly cheers.

By Lawrence Sanders
Photograph by Greg DeGuire

By Lawrence Sanders
Photograph by Greg DeGuire



Cheering Iraqis gathered in the heavily shelled neighborhood of Baghdad of the Iraqi army's main base as U.S. Marines entered Baghdad.

By Lawrence Sanders
Photograph by Greg DeGuire

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BAGHDAD, April 10—A scene unfolded on a street in Baghdad today that many residents believe will mark the end of Saddam Hussein's 24-year rule.

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Photograph by Greg DeGuire

INSIDE: A former FBI agent says a Chinese spy was arrested in connection with the overthrow of a Chinese government in China. P. 102

War in Iraq: U.S. troops are making progress in Iraq, including a major offensive in the north. P. 104

By Lawrence Sanders
Photograph by Greg DeGuire

By Lawrence Sanders
Photograph by Greg DeGuire

⇒ The following examine how media elsewhere placed the falling of the statue in a different context than most US media

Information Clearing House

NEWS YOU WON'T FIND ON CNN

The photographs tell the story...

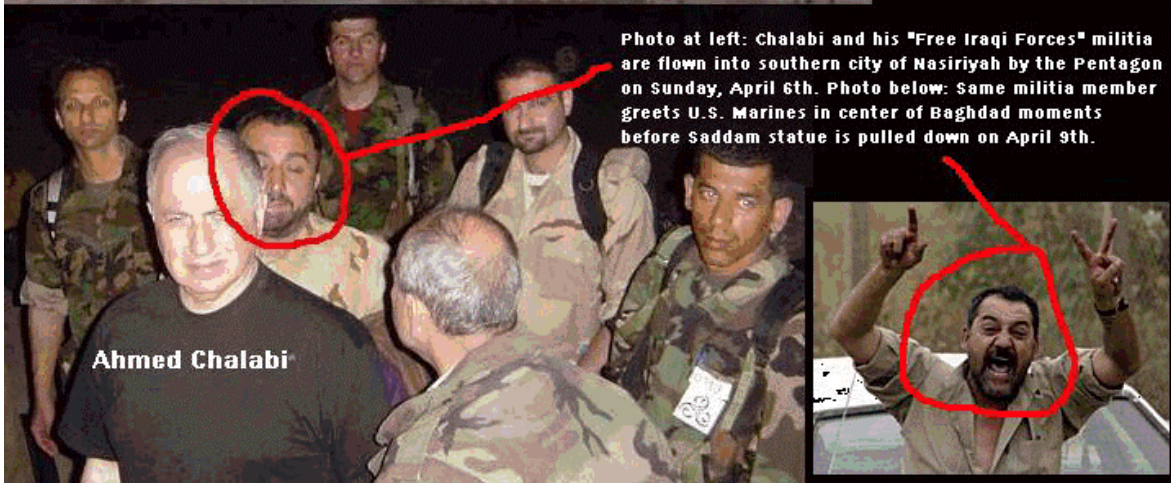
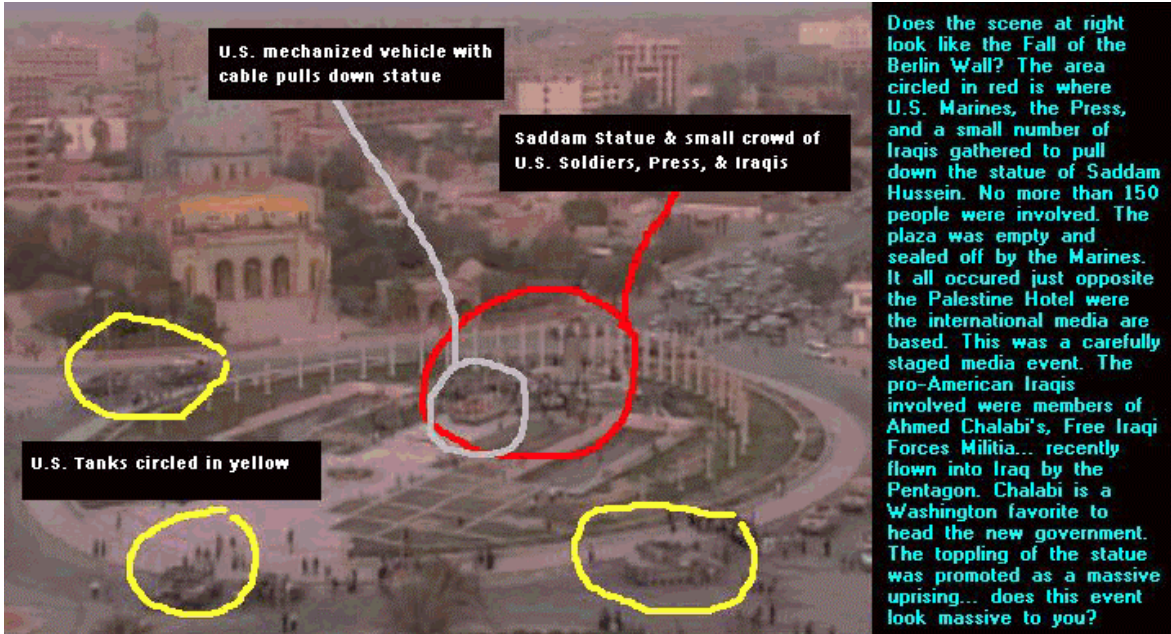
Is This Media manipulation on a grand scale?

Updated: 04/15/03

New pictures of "crowd" in the square: {Pictures below}

Yes, the occupation has begun.

04/10/03



April 6th: Iraqi National Congress founder, Ahmed Chalabi is flown into the southern Iraqi city of Nasiriyah by the Pentagon. Chalabi, along with 700 fighters of his "Free Iraqi Forces" are airlifted aboard four massive C17 military transport planes. Chalabi and the INC are Washington favorites to head the new Iraqi government. A photograph is taken of Chalabi and members of his Free Iraqi Forces militia as they arrive in Nasiriyah.

April 9th: One of the "most memorable images of the war" is created when U.S. troops pull down the statue of Saddam Hussein in Fardus Square. Oddly enough... a photograph is taken of a man who bears an uncanny resemblance to one of Chalabi's militia members... he is near Fardus Square to greet the Marines. How many members of the pro-American Free Iraqi Forces were in and around Fardus Square as the statue of Saddam came tumbling down?

The up close action video of the statue being destroyed is broadcast around the world as proof of a massive uprising. Still photos grabbed off of Reuters show a long-shot view of Fardus Square... it's empty save for the U.S. Marines, the International Press, and a small handful of Iraqis. There are no more than 200 people in the square at best. The Marines have the square sealed off and guarded by tanks. A U.S. mechanized vehicle is used to pull the statue of Saddam from it's base. The entire event is being hailed as an equivalent of the Berlin Wall falling... but even a quick glance of the long-shot photo shows something more akin to a carefully constructed media event tailored for the television cameras.

From <http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article2842.htm>, accessed April 21, 2003

SEE Also: Media Watch: Human Beings As Feces On FOX NEWS (Broadband) A must see program from Australia's ABC **Click Here to view video if you have a Dialup Connection** **Warning:** Video Contains Graphics Depictions Of War

The Toppling Of Saddam Statue: An Eyewitness Report.

SBS TV Australia: April 17, 2003

Neville Watson Interview

After three months in Baghdad as a peace activist, Perth clergyman Neville Watson returned to Australia yesterday convinced that Iraq is on the brink of civil war. His experiences have left him deeply concerned about Australia's role in the war, and critical of the media's coverage of it. Alan Sunderland spoke to him in Perth earlier today.

ALAN SUNDERLAND: Reverend Watson, welcome to Insight. You were in Baghdad right through the bombing, the arrival of the coalition troops. So tell me, what are we to make of the scenes of Iraqi jubilation on the streets that we've been seeing here?

NEVILLE WATSON, PEACE ACTIVIST: Well, there certainly was some jubilation, but I certainly wouldn't go along with that presented by television. The one that I've seen a lot of since I've been back is the toppling of the statue of Saddam and I can hardly believe it was the same one that I saw, because it happened at only about 300m from where I was and it was a very small crowd. The rest of the square was almost empty, and when we inquired as to where the crowd came from, it was from Saddam City. In other words, it was a rent-a-crowd. Now, that piece of television has been played over and over again, but I've seen nothing of the pieces of television, for example, what happened in Mosul the other day, where the Americans opened fire on a crowd killing 10 and injuring 100 when it became anti-American. So I think the scenes of jubilation have to be balanced against the other side of the picture.

ALAN SUNDERLAND: Well, overall, you've talked on your return about your fears for the future. You've talked about the possibility of civil war. What do you base that on?

NEVILLE WATSON: Well, the reign of Saddam Hussein was a brutal one. It was one in which the community was polarised into those against Saddam and for Saddam. Now that has been removed, it's obvious as to what's going to happen. Those who were subjected to great cruelty are going to take revenge on those who did the subjecting. And I fear for Iraqi society in the next 5 or 10 years, because you remember that the Six Day War ended in 1967 but that war is still going on in Israel and Palestine today, and I fear that we have not seen the end of the war in Iraq, we've seen just the beginning of it.

ALAN SUNDERLAND: Can you see anything good coming from the current state of affairs in Iraq? I mean, after all, the Hussein regime has been deposed and we may see an end to Western sanctions soon.

NEVILLE WATSON: Without a doubt. I mean, the end of the Saddam Hussein rule is one for jubilation but the way it has been ended is one of great sorrow, because the bombing, the so-called 'shock and awe', was one of the most horrific things that I have ever seen. It was designed, as all terrorism is, to create fear by the use of violence and it amazes me that the description of 'shock and awe' was not one dreamed up by the opponents of America, it was

dreamed up by themselves, and I'd go as far to say that what we saw in the bombing of Iraq was terrorist activity. It was designed to create fear by the use of violence. And that bombing will go down in history as one of the most unjustified and most horrific that we have seen of late.

ALAN SUNDERLAND: Now we've heard our own Prime Minister John Howard being confronted today with the humanitarian impact of this war. He's acknowledged that but he says it has to be measured against the awful, terrible atrocities that happened under Saddam Hussein. Does he have a point?

NEVILLE WATSON: I have the awful feeling that neither the Americans nor the Australian authorities have any idea of the humanitarian crisis which is about to occur and I have the feeling that when it does occur, they will be running for cover. Even today, you've got Peter Cosgrove saying that we are not responsible for the anarchy. Even at this point, the Pontius Pilates are queuing up at the washbasin to wash their hands and I fear for the future and I fear that nobody is going to take responsibility for it.

ALAN SUNDERLAND: Well, on that point, John Howard today has played down a suggestion that Australia will have a major role in peacekeeping forces. Should we have a greater role?

NEVILLE WATSON: I think that's the tragedy. Australia has had a minor role in the whole thing. I mean, it wasn't included in the Azores conference because, obviously, George Bush speaks for Australia. The contribution was 2,000 compared with hundreds of thousands of the others, and the question that I was asked again and again is why is Australia involving itself with America at this point?

ALAN SUNDERLAND: So that was—it was an issue on the streets of Baghdad while you were there? People noticed that Australia was involved?

NEVILLE WATSON: Oh, very much so. I had one person, for example—once I spoke, he picked me up as an Australian straight away—and he said “Oh, Australian—people good, government bad.” And then there was one chap who said to me, he said “Australian Government fall”—and I didn't know what he meant but he said “Australian Government topple over” and when I looked up the Internet, sure enough it was the motion of no confidence in the Senate. These people know precisely what's going on and I was absolutely amazed at their understanding of Australia and its position far more than any Australian would ever know of what's going on in Iraq today—and that's one of the reasons why I went there, because where you stand really does determine what you see.

ALAN SUNDERLAND: Reverend Watson, let me ask you one final question about Australia's involvement from here on, if you like. A number of Australian companies have expressed a desire to get involved in winning some of the contracts for the rebuilding of Iraq. Would you like to see us involved in that work?

NEVILLE WATSON: I shuddered when I heard that because you will remember that this war started off with about weapons of mass destruction and when weapons of mass destruction were not used or found to this point, then it became liberation, and when liberation starts to collapse around us, we start talking about the spoils of war, and I hope that Australia will not contaminate itself by being involved in that search for the spoils of war.

ALAN SUNDERLAND: Thanks very much for your time.

From [Eyewitness Report: The Toppling Of Saddam Statue: Video & Text](#), accessed April 21, 2003

You have probably seen the photos of the statue of Saddam Hussein being toppled, and TV footage of jubilant Iraqis rolling the bronze head around, bringing back memories of so many previous popular uprisings—1989, 1956, 1953...



If there is one thing this war has taught us all, it's that we can't believe what we're told. For Donald Rumsfeld these were "breathtaking". For the British Army they were "historic". For BBC Radio they were "amazing".

A wide angle shot [above] in which you can see the whole of Fardus Square (conveniently located just opposite the Palestine Hotel where the international media are based), and the presence of at most around 200 people—most of them US troops (note the tanks and armored vehicles) and assembled journalists.

The BBC website had the honesty to say that "dozens" of Iraqis were involved, but this grain of truth was swamped by the overwhelming impression of mass joy. The radio and TV were even worse.

The masses are no doubt glad to see the back of Saddam Hussein, but was this a US Army propaganda coup.







From <http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article2838.htm>, accessed April 21, 2003

Information Clearing House

NEWS YOU WON'T FIND ON CNN

9/11 Pentagon Flag Used To Cover Saddam's Face In Baghdad

BBC: Baghdad

Paul Wood ::04/10/03: 0521GMT

We've just learned from the US marines that the US flag that was put on the face of Saddam yesterday—it was replaced by an Iraqi flag when the people shouted for that—was the flag that was flying over the Pentagon on September 11.

For a lot of the American marines, they think this war is all about defeating terrorism, they will tell you that over and over again. There is also a connection in the minds of the American public between the regime of Saddam and what happened on September 11, and apparently the flag that was draped over this face was flying over the pentagon when the plane crashed into it.

From <http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article2834.htm>, accessed April 21, 2003



A video analysis of Fox coverage as shown on Australian TV is available at the following web address:

<http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article2883.htm>

World Socialist Web Site www.wsws.org

The stage-managed events in Baghdad's Firdos Square: image-making, lies and the "liberation" of Iraq

By Patrick Martin

12 April 2003

Several photographs publicized by an antiwar web site shed light on the way the American media is manipulating images of the war in Iraq to give the false impression that the vast majority of the Iraqi people are joyfully welcoming the invasion and occupation of their country by US and British troops.

These photographs, available on the web site of Information Clearing House <http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article2842.htm> [see above] show that the toppling of a statue of Saddam Hussein in Firdos Square, given massive publicity in the US and international media April 9-10, was a stage-managed affair.

As transmitted to the world by US television and newspaper reports, the pictures from Firdos Square purported to show a mass of enthusiastic Iraqis hailing the US military and trampling on a gargantuan bronze statue of Saddam Hussein. Hours of television time and pages of newspaper coverage were devoted to these pictures, with accompanying commentary comparing the scene to the bringing down of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the liberation of Paris in 1944.

The first photograph on the Information Clearing House site is a wide-angle shot encompassing the entire expanse of Firdos Square, rather than the narrowly focused, closely cropped framing used in the mass media. It shows that the "crowd" surrounding the statue of Saddam Hussein is anything but massive, and that the square itself has been surrounded by US Abrams tanks, cutting it off from the rest of the city.

The caption supplied by the site notes that Firdos Square is across the street from the Palestine Hotel, where most international journalists based in Baghdad are located, a fact that even the *Washington Post's* TV critic noted was "either splendid luck or brilliant planning on the part of the military." Of the 200 or so assembled, the majority were journalists and American soldiers. The BBC reported that only "dozens" of Iraqis were involved.

Who those dozens were is suggested by two additional photographs published below the wide-angle photo. They show the arrival from exile of the Pentagon's handpicked Iraqi "leader," Ahmed Chalabi, in Nasiriya on April 6, accompanied by several aides, and a close-up of one of the participants in the April 9 statue demolition scene in Baghdad. It is clear from the two pictures that the man celebrating "liberation" in Baghdad was one of those accompanying Chalabi into Nasiriya three days earlier.

The significance of this should be clear: those who "spontaneously" gathered in Firdos Square included Iraqi political agents of the American military, dispatched from Nasiriya to Baghdad to serve as an appropriate backdrop for the visuals desired by Bush administration spin doctors. If not "Wag the Dog," it is at least a case of "rent a crowd." Or, as Robert Fisk of the British newspaper the *Independent* described it, "the most staged photo-opportunity since Iwo Jima."

To a critical observer, the live coverage from Firdos Square had already suggested that there was less than met the eye to the scenes of universal rejoicing. Even this small and controlled crowd fell silent and muttered its disapproval when a US Marine initially draped the statue's head with an American flag. An Iraqi onlooker supplied one of his own country's flags, and there were cheers when this replaced the Stars and Stripes.

The *Los Angeles Times* quoted one Iraqi bystander who said that while some Iraqis in the square were praising Bush in English to the American media, others were denouncing the US president in Arabic. "Today I saw some people breaking this monument," he told the *Times*, "but there were people—men and women—who stood there and said in Arabic: 'Screw America, screw Bush.' So all this is not a simple situation."

The cynical staging of "news" and manipulation of visual images in the service of gargantuan lies is typical of both the Bush administration and the US media. It is the technique of Madison Avenue applied to the justification of a program of aggression and military conquest. In their Orwellian presentation, conquest is "liberation," bombing is "humanitarian aid," and seizure of the world's second largest oil reserves is "rebuilding Iraq."

To expose Firdos Square as outright fakery is not to say that every account of Iraqis welcoming the arrival of US or British troops is equally phony. There is no doubt that millions of Iraqis hated and feared the regime of Saddam Hussein and welcomed its end, whatever their feelings about the new regime of violence that is replacing the

Ba'athist dictatorship.

But the reality is more complicated than the simplistic and cynical propaganda of the Bush administration and its media accomplices. First of all, the vast majority of Iraqis have not taken to the streets to hail the conquering armies of the US and Britain.

Indeed, as even some American media outlets have reported, since the Firdos Square episode of April 9, whatever euphoria might have existed in Baghdad has largely turned to fear and anger directed against the American occupiers. ABC News on Friday evening showed outraged citizens of Baghdad denouncing the US for unleashing chaos and a wave of killings and looting. Some were filmed shouting that the hellish conditions in the city proved that the US had come not to liberate the country, but rather to steal its oil wealth.

The first days of the invasion evoked fierce resistance from Iraqi soldiers and civilians alike, and far from precipitating a wave of emigration out of the country, the onset of the war witnessed thousands of Iraqi exiles returning from Jordan, Syria and elsewhere to stand and fight against the aggressors from the West.

American and British soldiers were not pelted with flowers, but faced heroic and death-defying armed resistance. It was only after Bush and Blair changed tactics, resorting to unrestrained bombing of civilian neighborhoods and the wholesale incineration of Iraqi troops, that this resistance was largely overcome.

By Pentagon figures, more Iraqis were killed in Baghdad on Saturday, April 5—the day of the Third Armored Division's drive-by killing rampage through the city—than died at the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. The total number of Iraqis killed in three weeks of war likely exceeds the 50,000 Americans killed over a 12-year period in Vietnam. This death toll is in a country whose population is less than one tenth that of the United States.

Added to this must be the long-term impact of Hussein's repressive regime (supported by the United States government until 1990), the Iran-Iraq War, the shattering defeat in the first Persian Gulf War, and the effects of 12 years of US-imposed economic sanctions, which starved Iraqi society, causing a death toll estimated by UN aid workers at between 1 million and 1.5 million, with children accounting for over half of the victims.

The result is a society that has been physically, emotionally and morally traumatized—as demonstrated by the widespread looting, not only of targets associated with the regime, such as the homes of the Ba'athist elite, but of hospitals, educational institutions, the UNICEF feeding program, and other vital elements of Iraq's social infrastructure.

If sections of the Iraqi people are now prepared to welcome the invading forces—and just how large remains to be determined—their motivation must be understood as a complex mixture of hatred of Hussein (not only for his repression and corruption, but for his failure to defend the country against invasion), relief at the end of bombing, hope for restoration of essential services, and, for some, the desire to curry favor with the new masters.

Far more Iraqis have lost a loved one to American bombs, missiles, tanks and guns, or to the US-led economic blockade, than have embraced American soldiers or shouted praise for George W. Bush. As the essential American purpose in Iraq becomes more evident—control of Iraq's oil reserves and domination, in partnership with Israel, of the Middle East—there is no doubt that popular opposition to the US occupation will intensify.

The liars and image-makers in Washington and the media understand little of the historical process and its deep impact on popular consciousness. What they cannot comprehend is the deep-seated legacy of decades of struggle against colonialism and foreign domination. Whatever the broad layers of Iraqi society may think of Saddam Hussein, they retain an abiding hatred of imperialism and a determination to resist a return to colonial domination in a new form and under new, American masters.

⇒ **The *Boston Globe* examined these events in terms of the orientations and choices of US journalists**

boston.com
WAR IN IRAQ

With coverage from *The Boston Globe*

Snap judgments

Did iconic images from Baghdad reveal more about the media than Iraq?

By Matthew Gilbert and Suzanne C. Ryan, Globe Staff

April 10, 2003, page D1

On the surface, there was no ambiguity about yesterday's statue takedown in Baghdad's Firdos Square. It was the first feel-good moment of the war in Iraq—for Iraqi citizens, for Americans unsure there are Iraqis who welcome our intervention, and, of course, for TV news.

Indeed, it was an event made in TV-news heaven, and the networks spent yesterday obsessively replaying footage of ecstatic Iraqis noosing a statue of Saddam Hussein and forcing it to the ground. And that was after the networks waited with almost comic—and no doubt ratings-generating—patience for the statue to actually keel over.

In the days ahead we'll learn whether yesterday truly marked a turning point in the hostilities. There may be difficult, even bloody, times to come. Yet the toppling of the Saddam statue was irresistible for a media that remain hungry for iconic images—moments that freeze time and eliminate shadows or complexity. Every detail of the toppling dripped with upbeat, telegenic symbolism: Marines draping an American flag on the statue, then replacing it with an Iraqi flag; the giant, avuncular-looking Hussein revealed to be hollow; Saddam taking a final bow as the statue fell; a gang pulling the statue's head chariot-like through Baghdad while its boots stood empty. It didn't hurt that, unlike most of the footage from the war so far, the scene in the center of Baghdad was bathed in warm, early-evening daylight. It was more like an impassioned afternoon sporting event than the grim, green video game we've grown accustomed to—and much easier to watch.

This kind of "liberation" footage—crowds cheering in the streets, hands waving in unison, the defacing of old symbols—is almost a convention of TV war imagery. As newscasters, experts, and US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld noted yesterday, scenes of the statue's fall recalled similarly high-profile moments after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union. There were also visual vestiges of the mayhem in Tiananmen Square.

"It's classic for TV reporting to gravitate toward iconic images," says Barbie Zelizer, author of "Journalism After September 11" and professor of communications at the University of Pennsylvania. "Images are more appealing than an interview with a man on the street. When we hear words, we are skeptical and situate ourselves against them as we decide what we agree with and what we don't. Images are simple and memorable. They work in ways that don't engage the intellect. . . . We are able to come to the core of the event much more readily with images than we can with words."

Indeed, a few miles away from yesterday's fallen statue, the message was more complex, and less happy. Gunfire still rang out elsewhere in Baghdad, a clear indication the statue revelers were only a part of the picture. And what media and government officials were calling "jubilation" in Firdos Square looked an awful lot like the looting taking place nearby. Footage of both activities showed gatherings verging on anarchy.

Yesterday's coverage of the "jubilation" also had a self-conscious and forced quality, as if the media were too eager to capture "liberation" for its daily news cycle. Whenever the cameras pulled back, they revealed a relatively small crowd at the statue. And yet many news anchors quickly shed their objectivity to celebrate the event. "If you don't have goose bumps now," gushed Fox News anchor David Asman, "you will never have them in your life."

"It was the mother of all photo ops," says Norman Solomon, coauthor of "Target Iraq: What the News Media Didn't Tell You." Solomon saw yesterday's focus on the statue as an "example of the tremendously subjective character of the media coverage in this war. . . . What was notable was how few Iraqis were there. It was almost like a lethargic

pep rally. There was scarcely a pompom in evidence. Despite the best of efforts, it had a kind of low-budget staged quality as though a movie was being shot but they couldn't get any extras."

If TV's emphasis on the statue takedown was riveting for international viewers, it must have been doubly powerful for those Iraqis who saw it. Still uncertain about whether Hussein will return to power and accustomed to one-sided coverage and propaganda, many of them must have interpreted the event as a promise that he was gone for good.

Documentary filmmaker Ken Burns says the repetition of the footage yesterday reminded him of the power of images to show us what we want to see.

"When we repeat an image over and over again," he says, "we're forgetting all the other places we could also be looking at at that moment. These images become justification, proof of what we want them to become. That's the nature of iconic images."

Matthew Gilbert can be reached at gilbert@globe.com. Suzanne Ryan can be reached at sryan@globe.com.

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From

http://www.boston.com/news/packages/iraq/globe_stories/041003_snap_judgements.htm, accessed August 15, 2003



Iraq 2003 AP



Germany 1989 Globe Staff



China 1989 AP



Soviet Union 1991 Reuters

Dynamic images, present and past: (from top) A statue of Saddam Hussein is pulled down in the center of Baghdad; a jubilant crowd climbs the Berlin Wall before it's razed; a lone protester faces down an array of tanks in Tiananmen Square; workers jump off a dismantled statue of Lenin in Riga as Latvia cedes from the Soviet Union.

⇒ **The following shows the decision by Bush administration officials to portray developments in Iraq somewhat differently in late summer 2003, after deaths of American military and other problems persisted in Iraq**

Bush Revises Views On ‘Combat’ in Iraq

‘Major Operations’ Over, President Says

By Dana Milbank and Bradley Graham
Washington Post Staff Writers
Tuesday, August 19, 2003; Page A15

President Bush, revising his earlier characterization of the fighting in Iraq, said in an interview released yesterday that combat operations are still underway in that country.

In an interview with the Armed Forces Radio and Television Service given on Thursday and released by the White House yesterday, Bush interrupted the questioner when asked about his announcement on May 1 of, as the journalist put it, “the end of combat operations.”

“Actually, major military operations,” Bush replied. “Because we still have combat operations going on.” Bush added: “It’s a different kind of combat mission, but, nevertheless, it’s combat, just ask the kids that are over there killing and being shot at.”

In his May 1 speech on the USS Abraham Lincoln, Bush declared: “Major combat operations in Iraq have ended. In the battle of Iraq, the United States and our allies have prevailed. And now our coalition is engaged in securing and reconstructing that country.” The headline on the White House site above Bush’s May 1 speech is “President Bush Announces Combat Operations in Iraq Have Ended.”

Since then, a search of Bush speeches on the White House Web site indicates, the president had not spoken of the guerrilla fighting in Iraq as combat until this interview; he had earlier spoken of the “cessation of combat” in Iraq.

A White House spokesman said Bush was not making a distinction between combat and military operations. “What the president declared on May 1 is that major combat operations were over,” he said. “He did not say that combat was over.”

The description of active combat in Iraq was one of several statements Bush made in the interview that differed with earlier administration positions as he discussed his foreign policy while visiting a military facility in Miramar, Calif.

Asked about U.S. force presence in Afghanistan, Bush said the U.S. presence is being “gradually replaced” by other troops.

“We’ve got about 10,000 troops there, which is down from, obviously, major combat operations,” he said. “And they’re there to provide security and they’re there to provide reconstruction help. But both those functions are being gradually replaced by other troops. Germany, for example, is now providing the troops for ISAF [International Security Assistance Force], which is the security force for Afghanistan, under NATO control. In other words, more and more coalition forces and friends are beginning to carry a lot of the burden in Afghanistan.”

In fact, the 10,000 troops in Afghanistan represent the highest number of U.S. soldiers in the country since the war there began. By the time the Taliban government had been vanquished in December 2001, U.S. troops numbered fewer than 3,000 in Afghanistan. And three months later, in March 2002, when the last major battle against remnants of the Taliban and al Qaeda took place in eastern Afghanistan, about 5,000 U.S. troops were in the country.

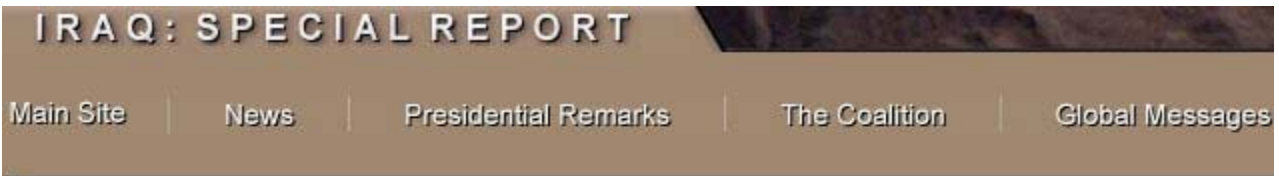
Germany has participated in the 29-nation ISAF since January 2002. The 4,600 troops in ISAF provide security only in the Kabul area, and the United States, which is not part of ISAF, has operations throughout Afghanistan.

In the interview, Bush, asked about the burden on U.S. troops in Iraq, said other nations will be providing troops. “Polish troops are now moving in and will be in, I think, by September 4th of this year, which is in two weeks—that’s a major Polish contingent,” he said. “There will be other nations going in to support not only the Polish contingent, but the British contingent.”

The Poles have agreed to send 2,400 troops to lead a multinational division including 1,640 troops from Ukraine, 1,300 from Spain and smaller units expected from Hungary, Romania, Latvia, Estonia, Slovakia, El Salvador, the Dominican Republic, Honduras, Nicaragua, Mongolia and the Philippines. The Pentagon has agreed to pay much of the cost of the Polish troops.



White House Alters Webpages About Iraq Combat



>>> When the White House published the text of and photos from Bush’s speech announcing the supposed end of the Iraq attack, the headline read: “President Bush Announces Combat Operations in Iraq Have Ended.” But on Tuesday, 19 Aug 2003, the [Cursor](#) website noticed that the headline had been changed to read: “President Bush Announces *Major* Combat Operations in Iraq Have Ended.” The word “major” had been added.

Apparently, with the quagmire resulting in at least one dead US soldier a day—not to mention even more injuries, dead Iraqis, and sabotage—that headline had proved incorrect. Therefore, straight out of *1984*, the headline was stealthily altered to make it seem as if that’s what it had always said.

We were able to recover numerous instances of the unaltered headline. At the top of the page is the original headline, as it has been preserved on the Website of [Scott Long](#), who collects photos of politicians on aircraft carriers. Under that, you’ll find the headline as it is now. More examples are below.

[original page](#) [[Scott Long mirror](#)] | [original page](#) [[MemHole mirror](#)]

[current page](#) [[White House](#)]



[Print Friendly Version](#)

President Bush Announces Combat Operations in Iraq Have Ended

The State Department often mirrors White House press releases. In this case, they still have the original version of Bush's speech.

[State Department page](#) | [MemHole mirror of State Dept page](#)



President Bush Announces Combat Operations in Iraq Have Ended

President George W. Bush on Thursday announced to the Nation that major combat operations in Iraq have ended, and our coalition is now engaged in securing and reconstructing that country. President Bush spoke from the deck of the USS Abraham Lincoln.

This screenshot comes from the Website of the Republican National Committee. Their introduction to the video of Bush's speech contains the original headline.

[RNC page](#) | [MemHole mirror of RNC page](#)

[Operation Iraqi Freedom - A White House Special Report](#)

... President Bush, **President Bush Announces Combat Operations** in Iraq Have Ended President George W. Bush on Thursday announced to the Nation that major combat ...

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/iraq/> - 27k - [Cached](#) - [Similar pages](#)

The final piece of major evidence is this screenshot from a Google search. It shows that the White House Website did indeed contain the original headline. Funny thing is, if you click on "Cached" to see Google's saved version of

the page, it says the page cannot be found.

[Google search](#) | [MemHole mirror of Google search](#)

Further mirrors of the White House-released speech with the original headline:

[CACI \(defense contractor\)](#) | [MemHole mirror](#)

[ConservativeNest.com](#) | [MemHole mirror](#)

[efreedomnews](#) | [MemHole mirror](#)

[NIE World](#) | [MemHole mirror](#)

[Royal United Services Institute](#) | [MemHole mirror](#)



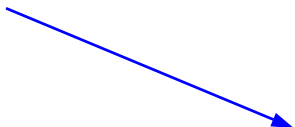
[front page](#) | [newest additions](#) | [index + search](#)

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From <http://www.thememoryhole.org/pol/iraq-combat/>

⇒ The following are **totally OPTIONAL**: a "flurry" of newspaper analyses in August 2003 questioning earlier Bush administration presentations in support of the Iraq war; these are much more critical than earlier analyses by the same newspapers, many of which supported the Iraq War



DAILY 08-10-03 MD M2 A1 CMYK

The Washington Post

SECOND EDITION 10.10.2003

IRAQ'S NUCLEAR FILE *Inside the Premier Debate*

Depiction of Threat Outgrew Supporting Evidence

By Steven G. Luke and Thomas H. Dyer

The article is based on interviews with analysts and policymakers inside the Pentagon and the State Department, and on a review of documents and briefings prepared for senior administration officials. The new information indicates a pattern of deception that has been going on since the start of the war. It is not clear how long the deception has been going on, but it is clear that the deception has been going on for a long time.

... (The article continues with detailed analysis of the nuclear file, questioning the administration's claims of a large-scale nuclear program.)

Public Policy Targeting Obesity

By Dan Gheesey

... (The article discusses legislative efforts to combat obesity, including proposals for labeling and advertising restrictions.)

Redskins Are Off, and Running

... (The article reports on the Washington Redskins' performance during the season.)

More Than 125 File in Calif. Recall Election

... (The article reports on the number of candidates who filed for the California recall election.)

Giving Up a New Life for a Gang Death

Valuable Witness Made a Fatal Turn Back to Old Friends

... (The article tells the story of a witness who turned to his former gang associates for help.)

Liberian Strife Is Traced to Turbulent Past

Some Blame Turned On Its American Roots

... (The article traces the roots of current Liberian conflict to its colonial and post-independence history.)

The World Is at His Feet

At 14, Potomac's Adu Is a Soccer Sensation

... (The article profiles a young soccer prodigy from Potomac, Maryland.)

INSIDE

Identity Crisis
More Michael Thelton political activity, career options, and more.

Waffling Senag
Mickens' waffling on the Washington region's water pollution fix.

THE POST ON THE INTERNET
www.washingtonpost.com

IRAQ'S NUCLEAR FILE : Inside the Prewar Debate

Depiction of Threat Outgrew Supporting Evidence

By Barton Gellman and Walter Pincus

Washington Post Staff Writers

Sunday, August 10, 2003; Page A01

His name was Joe, from the U.S. government. He carried 40 classified slides and a message from the Bush administration.

An engineer-turned-CIA analyst, Joe had helped build the U.S. government case that Iraq posed a nuclear threat. He landed in Vienna on Jan. 22 and drove to the U.S. diplomatic mission downtown. In a conference room 32 floors above the Danube River, he told United Nations nuclear inspectors they were making a serious mistake.

At issue was Iraq's efforts to buy high-strength aluminum tubes. The U.S. government said those tubes were for centrifuges to enrich uranium for a nuclear bomb. But the IAEA, the world's nuclear watchdog, had uncovered strong evidence that Iraq was using them for conventional rockets.

Joe described the rocket story as a transparent Iraqi lie. According to people familiar with his presentation, which circulated before and afterward among government and outside specialists, Joe said the specialized aluminum in the tubes was "overspecified," "inappropriate" and "excessively strong." No one, he told the inspectors, would waste the costly alloy on a rocket.

In fact, there was just such a rocket. According to knowledgeable U.S. and overseas sources, experts from U.S. national laboratories reported in December to the Energy Department and U.S. intelligence analysts that Iraq was manufacturing copies of the Italian-made Medusa 81. Not only the Medusa's alloy, but also its dimensions, to the fraction of a millimeter, matched the disputed aluminum tubes.

A CIA spokesman asked that Joe's last name be withheld for his safety, and said he would not be made available for an interview. The spokesman said the tubes in question "are not the same as the Medusa 81" but would not identify what distinguishes them. In an interview, CIA Director George J. Tenet said several different U.S. intelligence agencies believed the tubes could be used to build gas centrifuges for a uranium enrichment program.

The Vienna briefing was one among many private and public forums in which the Bush administration portrayed a menacing Iraqi nuclear threat, even as important features of its evidence were being undermined. There were other White House assertions about forbidden weapons programs, including biological and chemical arms, for which there was consensus among analysts. But the danger of a nuclear-armed Saddam Hussein, more potent as an argument for war, began with weaker evidence and grew weaker still in the three months before war.

This article is based on interviews with analysts and policymakers inside and outside the U.S. government, and access to internal documents and technical evidence not previously made public.

The new information indicates a pattern in which President Bush, Vice President Cheney and their subordinates—in public and behind the scenes—made allegations depicting Iraq's nuclear weapons program as more active, more certain and more imminent in its threat than the data they had would support. On occasion administration advocates withheld evidence that did not conform to their views. The White House seldom corrected misstatements or acknowledged loss of confidence in information upon which it had previously relied:

- Bush and others often alleged that President Hussein held numerous meetings with Iraqi nuclear scientists, but did not disclose that the known work of the scientists was largely benign. Iraq's three top gas centrifuge experts, for example, ran a copper factory, an operation to extract graphite from oil and a mechanical engineering design center at Rashidiya.
- The National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) of October 2002 cited new construction at facilities once associated with Iraq's nuclear program, but analysts had no reliable information at the time about what was happening under the roofs. By February, a month before the war, U.S. government specialists on the ground in Iraq had seen for themselves that there were no forbidden activities at the sites.
- Gas centrifuge experts consulted by the U.S. government said repeatedly for more than a year that the aluminum tubes were not suitable or intended for uranium enrichment. By December 2002, the experts said new evidence had



further undermined the government's assertion. The Bush administration portrayed the scientists as a minority and emphasized that the experts did not describe the centrifuge theory as impossible.

- In the weeks and months following Joe's Vienna briefing, Secretary of State Colin L. Powell and others continued to describe the use of such tubes for rockets as an implausible hypothesis, even after U.S. analysts collected and photographed in Iraq a virtually identical tube marked with the logo of the Medusa's Italian manufacturer and the words, in English, "81mm rocket."
- The escalation of nuclear rhetoric a year ago, including the introduction of the term "mushroom cloud" into the debate, coincided with the formation of a White House Iraq Group, or WHIG, a task force assigned to "educate the public" about the threat from Hussein, as a participant put it.

Two senior policymakers, who supported the war, said in unauthorized interviews that the administration greatly overstated Iraq's near-term nuclear potential.

"I never cared about the 'imminent threat,' " said one of the policymakers, with directly relevant responsibilities. "The threat was there in [Hussein's] presence in office. To me, just knowing what it takes to have a nuclear weapons program, he needed a lot of equipment. You can stare at the yellowcake [uranium ore] all you want. You need to convert it to gas and enrich it. That does not constitute an imminent threat, and the people who were saying that, I think, did not fully appreciate the difficulties and effort involved in producing the nuclear material and the physics package."

No White House, Pentagon or State Department policymaker agreed to speak on the record for this report about the administration's nuclear case. Answering questions Thursday before the National Association of Black Journalists, national security adviser Condoleezza Rice said she is "certain to this day that this regime was a threat, that it was pursuing a nuclear weapon, that it had biological and chemical weapons, that it had used them." White House officials referred all questions of detail to Tenet.

In an interview and a four-page written statement, Tenet defended the NIE prepared under his supervision in October. In that estimate, U.S. intelligence analysts judged that Hussein was intent on acquiring a nuclear weapon and was trying to rebuild the capability to make one.

"We stand behind the judgments of the NIE" based on the evidence available at the time, Tenet said, and "the soundness and integrity of our process." The estimate was "the product of years of reporting and intelligence collection, analyzed by numerous experts in several different agencies."

Tenet said the time to "decide who was right and who was wrong" about prewar intelligence will not come until the Iraqi Survey Group, the CIA-directed, U.S. military postwar study in Iraq of Hussein's weapons of mass destruction programs is completed. The Bush administration has said this will require months or years.

Facts and Doubts

The possibility of a nuclear-armed Iraq loomed large in the Bush administration's efforts to convince the American public of the need for a preemptive strike. Beginning last August, Cheney portrayed Hussein's nuclear ambitions as a "mortal threat" to the United States. In the fall and winter, Rice, then Bush, marshaled the dreaded image of a "mushroom cloud."

By many accounts, including those of career officials who did not support the war, there were good reasons for concern that the Iraqi president might revive a program to enrich uranium to weapons grade and fabricate a working bomb. He had a well-demonstrated aspiration for nuclear weapons, a proficient scientific and engineering cadre, a history of covert development and a domestic supply of unrefined uranium ore. Iraq was generally believed to have kept the technical documentation for two advanced German centrifuge designs and the assembly diagrams for at least one type of "implosion device," which detonates a nuclear core.

What Hussein did not have was the principal requirement for a nuclear weapon, a sufficient quantity of highly enriched uranium or plutonium. And the U.S. government, authoritative intelligence officials said, had only circumstantial evidence that Iraq was trying to obtain those materials.

But the Bush administration had reasons to imagine the worst. The CIA had faced searing criticism for its failures to foresee India's resumption of nuclear testing in 1998 and to "connect the dots" pointing to al Qaeda's attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. Cheney, the administration's most influential advocate of a worst-case analysis, had been powerfully influenced by his experience as defense secretary just after the Persian Gulf War of 1991.

Former National Security Council official Richard A. Clarke recalled how information from freshly seized Iraqi documents disclosed the existence of a "crash program" to build a bomb in 1991. The CIA had known nothing of it.

"I can understand why that was a seminal experience for Cheney," Clarke said. "And when the CIA says [in 2002],

‘We don’t have any evidence,’ his reaction is . . . ‘We didn’t have any evidence in 1991, either. Why should I believe you now?’ “

Some strategists, in and out of government, argued that the uncertainty itself—in the face of circumstantial evidence—was sufficient to justify “regime change.” But that was not what the Bush administration usually said to the American people.

To gird a nation for the extraordinary step of preemptive war—and to obtain the minimum necessary support from allies, Congress and the U.N. Security Council—the administration described a growing, even imminent, nuclear threat from Iraq.

‘Nuclear Blackmail’

The unveiling of that message began a year ago this week.

Cheney raised the alarm about Iraq’s nuclear menace three times in August. He was far ahead of the president’s public line. Only Bush and Cheney know, one senior policy official said, “whether Cheney was trying to push the president or they had decided to play good cop, bad cop.”

On Aug. 7, Cheney volunteered in a question-and-answer session at the Commonwealth Club in San Francisco, speaking of Hussein, that “left to his own devices, it’s the judgment of many of us that in the not-too-distant future, he will acquire nuclear weapons.” On Aug. 26, he described Hussein as a “sworn enemy of our country” who constituted a “mortal threat” to the United States. He foresaw a time in which Hussein could “subject the United States or any other nation to nuclear blackmail.”

“We now know that Saddam has resumed his efforts to acquire nuclear weapons,” he said. “Among other sources, we’ve gotten this from firsthand testimony from defectors, including Saddam’s own son-in-law.”

That was a reference to Hussein Kamel, who had managed Iraq’s special weapons programs before defecting in 1995 to Jordan. But Saddam Hussein lured Kamel back to Iraq, and he was killed in February 1996, so Kamel could not have sourced what U.S. officials “now know.”

And Kamel’s testimony, after defecting, was the reverse of Cheney’s description. In one of many debriefings by U.S., Jordanian and U.N. officials, Kamel said on Aug. 22, 1995, that Iraq’s uranium enrichment programs had not resumed after halting at the start of the Gulf War in 1991. According to notes typed for the record by U.N. arms inspector Nikita Smidovich, Kamel acknowledged efforts to design three different warheads, “but not now, before the Gulf War.”

‘Educating the Public’

Systematic coordination began in August, when Chief of Staff Andrew H. Card Jr. formed the White House Iraq Group, or WHIG, to set strategy for each stage of the confrontation with Baghdad. A senior official who participated in its work called it “an internal working group, like many formed for priority issues, to make sure each part of the White House was fulfilling its responsibilities.”

In an interview with the New York Times published Sept. 6, Card did not mention the WHIG but hinted at its mission. “From a marketing point of view, you don’t introduce new products in August,” he said.

The group met weekly in the Situation Room. Among the regular participants were Karl Rove, the president’s senior political adviser; communications strategists Karen Hughes, Mary Matalin and James R. Wilkinson; legislative liaison Nicholas E. Calio; and policy advisers led by Rice and her deputy, Stephen J. Hadley, along with I. Lewis Libby, Cheney’s chief of staff.

The first days of September would bring some of the most important decisions of the prewar period: what to demand of the United Nations in the president’s Sept. 12 address to the General Assembly, when to take the issue to Congress, and how to frame the conflict with Iraq in the midterm election campaign that began in earnest after Labor Day.

A “strategic communications” task force under the WHIG began to plan speeches and white papers. There were many themes in the coming weeks, but Iraq’s nuclear menace was among the most prominent.

‘A Mushroom Cloud’

The day after publication of Card’s marketing remark, Bush and nearly all his top advisers began to talk about the dangers of an Iraqi nuclear bomb.

Bush and Prime Minister Tony Blair conferred at Camp David that Saturday, Sept. 7, and they each described alarming new evidence. Blair said proof that the threat is real came in “the report from the International Atomic

Energy Agency this morning, showing what has been going on at the former nuclear weapon sites.” Bush said “a report came out of the . . . IAEA, that they [Iraqis] were six months away from developing a weapon. I don’t know what more evidence we need.”

There was no new IAEA report. Blair appeared to be referring to news reports describing curiosity at the nuclear agency about repairs at sites of Iraq’s former nuclear program. Bush cast as present evidence the contents of a report from 1996, updated in 1998 and 1999. In those accounts, the IAEA described the history of an Iraqi nuclear weapons program that arms inspectors had systematically destroyed.

A White House spokesman later acknowledged that Bush “was imprecise” on his source but stood by the crux of his charge. The spokesman said U.S. intelligence, not the IAEA, had given Bush his information.

That, too, was garbled at best. U.S. intelligence reports had only one scenario for an Iraqi bomb in six months to a year, premised on Iraq’s immediate acquisition of enough plutonium or enriched uranium from a foreign source.

“That is just about the same thing as saying that if Iraq gets a bomb, it will have a bomb,” said a U.S. intelligence analyst who covers the subject. “We had no evidence for it.”

Two debuts took place on Sept. 8: the aluminum tubes and the image of “a mushroom cloud.” A Sunday New York Times story quoted anonymous officials as saying the “diameter, thickness and other technical specifications” of the tubes—precisely the grounds for skepticism among nuclear enrichment experts—showed that they were “intended as components of centrifuges.”

No one knows when Iraq will have its weapon, the story said, but “the first sign of a ‘smoking gun,’ they argue, may be a mushroom cloud.”

Top officials made the rounds of Sunday talk shows that morning. Rice’s remarks echoed the newspaper story. She said on CNN’s “Late Edition” that Hussein was “actively pursuing a nuclear weapon” and that the tubes—described repeatedly in U.S. intelligence reports as “dual-use” items—were “only really suited for nuclear weapons programs, centrifuge programs.”

“There will always be some uncertainty about how quickly he can acquire nuclear weapons,” Rice added, “but we don’t want the smoking gun to be a mushroom cloud.”

Anna Perez, a communications adviser to Rice, said Rice did not come looking for an opportunity to say that. “There was nothing in her mind that said, ‘I have to push the nuclear issue,’” Perez said, “but Wolf [Blitzer] asked the question.”

Powell, a confidant said, found it “disquieting when people say things like mushroom clouds.” But he contributed in other ways to the message. When asked about biological and chemical arms on Fox News, he brought up nuclear weapons and cited the “specialized aluminum tubing” that “we saw in reporting just this morning.”

Cheney, on NBC’s “Meet the Press,” also mentioned the tubes and said “increasingly, we believe the United States will become the target” of an Iraqi nuclear weapon. Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld, on CBS’s “Face the Nation,” asked listeners to “imagine a September 11th with weapons of mass destruction,” which would kill “tens of thousands of innocent men, women and children.”

Bush evoked the mushroom cloud on Oct. 7, and on Nov. 12 Gen. Tommy R. Franks, chief of U.S. Central Command, said inaction might bring “the sight of the first mushroom cloud on one of the major population centers on this planet.”

‘Literary License’

In its initial meetings, Card’s Iraq task force ordered a series of white papers. After a general survey of Iraqi arms violations, the first of the single-subject papers—never published—was “A Grave and Gathering Danger: Saddam Hussein’s Quest for Nuclear Weapons.”

Wilkinson, at the time White House deputy director of communications for planning, gathered a yard-high stack of intelligence reports and press clippings.

Wilkinson said he conferred with experts from the National Security Council and Cheney’s office. Other officials said Will Tobey and Susan Cook, working under senior director for counterproliferation Robert Joseph, made revisions and circulated some of the drafts. Under the standard NSC review process, they checked the facts.

In its later stages, the draft white paper coincided with production of a National Intelligence Estimate and its unclassified summary. But the WHIG, according to three officials who followed the white paper’s progress, wanted gripping images and stories not available in the hedged and austere language of intelligence.

The fifth draft of the paper was obtained by The *Washington Post*. White House spokesmen dismissed the draft as

irrelevant because Rice decided not to publish it. Wilkinson said Rice and Joseph felt the paper “was not strong enough.”

The document offers insight into the Bush administration’s priorities and methods in shaping a nuclear message. The white paper was assembled by some of the same team, and at the same time, as the speeches and talking points prepared for the president and top officials. A senior intelligence official said last October that the president’s speechwriters took “literary license” with intelligence, a phrase applicable to language used by administration officials in some of the white paper’s most emotive and misleading assertions elsewhere.

The draft white paper precedes other known instances in which the Bush administration considered the now-discredited claim that Iraq “sought uranium oxide, an essential ingredient in the enrichment process, from Africa.” For a speechwriter, uranium was valuable as an image because anyone could see its connection to an atomic bomb. Despite warnings from intelligence analysts, the uranium would return again and again, including the Jan. 28 State of the Union address and three other Bush administration statements that month.

Other errors and exaggerations in public White House claims were repeated, or had their first mention, in the white paper.

Much as Blair did at Camp David, the paper attributed to U.N. arms inspectors a statement that satellite photographs show “many signs of the reconstruction and acceleration of the Iraqi nuclear program.” Inspectors did not say that. The paper also quoted the first half of a sentence from a *Time* magazine interview with U.N. chief weapons inspector Hans Blix: “You can see hundreds of new roofs in these photos.” The second half of the sentence, not quoted, was: “but you don’t know what’s under them.”

As Bush did, the white paper cited the IAEA’s description of Iraq’s defunct nuclear program in language that appeared to be current. The draft said, for example, that “since the beginning of the nineties, Saddam has launched a crash program to divert nuclear reactor fuel for . . . nuclear weapons.” The crash program began in late 1990 and ended with the war in January 1991. The reactor fuel, save for waste products, is gone.

‘Footnotes and Disclaimers’

A senior intelligence official said the White House preferred to avoid a National Intelligence Estimate, a formal review of competing evidence and judgments, because it knew “there were disagreements over details in almost every aspect of the administration’s case against Iraq.” The president’s advisers, the official said, did not want “a lot of footnotes and disclaimers.”

But Bush needed bipartisan support for war-making authority in Congress. In early September, members of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence began asking why there had been no authoritative estimate of the danger posed by Iraq. Sen. Richard J. Durbin (D-Ill.) wrote Sept. 9 of his “concern that the views of the U.S. intelligence community are not receiving adequate attention by policymakers in both Congress and the executive branch.” When Sen. Bob Graham (D-Fla.), then committee chairman, insisted on an NIE in a classified letter two days later, Tenet agreed.

Explicitly intended to assist Congress in deciding whether to authorize war, the estimate was produced in two weeks, an extraordinary deadline for a document that usually takes months. Tenet said in an interview that “we had covered parts of all those programs over 10 years through NIEs and other reports, and we had a ton of community product on all these issues.”

Even so, the intelligence community was now in a position of giving its first coordinated answer to a question that every top national security official had already answered. “No one outside the intelligence community told us what to say or not to say,” Tenet wrote in reply to questions for this article.

The U.S. government possessed no specific information on Iraqi efforts to acquire enriched uranium, according to six people who participated in preparing for the estimate. It knew only that Iraq sought to buy equipment of the sort that years of intelligence reports had said “may be” intended for or “could be” used in uranium enrichment.

Richard J. Kerr, a former CIA deputy director now leading a review of the agency’s intelligence analysis about Iraq, said in an interview that the CIA collected almost no hard information about Iraq’s weapons programs after the departure of IAEA and U.N. Special Commission, or UNSCOM, arms inspectors during the Clinton administration. He said that was because of a lack of spies inside Iraq.

Tenet took issue with that view, saying in an interview, “When inspectors were pushed out in 1998, we did not sit back. . . . The fact is we made significant professional progress.” In his written statement, he cited new evidence on biological and missile programs, but did not mention Hussein’s nuclear pursuits.

The estimate’s “Key Judgment” said: “Although we assess that Saddam does not yet have nuclear weapons or

sufficient material to make any, he remains intent on acquiring them. Most agencies assess that Baghdad started reconstituting its nuclear program about the time that UNSCOM inspectors departed—December 1998.”

According to Kerr, the analysts had good reasons to say that, but the reasons were largely “inferential.”

Hussein was known to have met with some weapons physicists, and praised them as “nuclear mujaheddin.” But the CIA had “reasonably good intelligence in terms of the general activities and whereabouts” of those scientists, said another analyst with the relevant clearances, and knew they had generally not reassembled into working groups. In a report to Congress in 2001, the agency could conclude only that some of the scientists “probably” had “continued at least low-level theoretical R&D [research and development] associated with its nuclear program.”

Analysts knew Iraq had tried recently to buy magnets, high-speed balancing machines, machine tools and other equipment that had some potential for use in uranium enrichment, though no less for conventional industry. Even assuming the intention, the parts could not all be made to fit a coherent centrifuge model. The estimate acknowledged that “we lack specific information on many key aspects” of the program, and analysts presumed they were seeing only the tip of the iceberg.

‘He Made a Name’

According to outside scientists and intelligence officials, the most important factor in the CIA’s nuclear judgment was Iraq’s attempt to buy high-strength aluminum tubes. The tubes were the core evidence for a centrifuge program tied to building a nuclear bomb. Even circumstantially, the CIA reported no indication of uranium enrichment using anything but centrifuges.

That interpretation of the tubes was a victory for the man named Joe, who made the issue his personal crusade. He worked in the gas centrifuge program at Oak Ridge National Laboratory in the early 1980s. He is not, associates said, a nuclear physicist, but an engineer whose work involved the platform upon which centrifuges were mounted.

At some point he joined the CIA. By the end of the 1990s, according to people who know him casually, he worked in export controls.

Joe played an important role in discovering Iraq’s plans to buy aluminum tubes from China in 2000, with an Australian intermediary. U.N. sanctions forbade Iraq to buy anything with potential military applications, and members of the Nuclear Suppliers Group, a voluntary alliance, include some forms of aluminum tubing on their list of equipment that could be used for uranium enrichment.

Joe saw the tubes as centrifuge rotors that could be used to process uranium into weapons-grade material. In a gas centrifuge, the rotor is a thin-walled cylinder, open at both ends, that spins at high speed under a magnet. The device extracts the material used in a weapon from a gaseous form of uranium.

In July 2001, about 3,000 tubes were intercepted in Jordan on their way to Iraq, a big step forward in the agency’s efforts to understand what Iraq was trying to do. The CIA gave Joe an award for exceptional performance, throwing its early support to an analysis that helped change the agency’s mind about Iraq’s pursuit of nuclear ambitions.

“He grabbed that information early on, and he made a name for himself,” a career U.S. government nuclear expert said.

‘Stretches the Imagination’

Doubts about Joe’s theory emerged quickly among the government’s centrifuge physicists. The intercepted tubes were too narrow, long and thick-walled to fit a known centrifuge design. Aluminum had not been used for rotors since the 1950s. Iraq had two centrifuge blueprints, stolen in Europe, that were far more efficient and already known to work. One used maraging steel, a hard steel alloy, for the rotors, the other carbon fiber.

Joe and his supporters said the apparent drawbacks were part of Iraq’s concealment plan. Hussein’s history of covert weapons development, Tenet said in his written statement, included “built-in cover stories.”

“This is a case where different people had honorable and different interpretations of intentions,” said an Energy Department analyst who has reviewed the raw data. “If you go to a nuclear [counterproliferation official] and say I’ve got these aluminum tubes, and it’s about Iraq, his first inclination is to say it’s for nuclear use.”

But the government’s centrifuge scientists—at the Energy Department’s Oak Ridge National Laboratory and its sister institutions—unanimously regarded this possibility as implausible.

In late 2001, experts at Oak Ridge asked an alumnus, Houston G. Wood III, to review the controversy. Wood, founder of the Oak Ridge centrifuge physics department, is widely acknowledged to be among the most eminent living experts.

Speaking publicly for the first time, Wood said in an interview that “it would have been extremely difficult to make

these tubes into centrifuges. It stretches the imagination to come up with a way. I do not know any real centrifuge experts that feel differently.”

As an academic, Wood said, he would not describe “anything that you absolutely could not do.” But he said he would “like to see, if they’re going to make that claim, that they have some explanation of how you do that. Because I don’t see how you do it.”

A CIA spokesman said the agency does have support for its view from centrifuge experts. He declined to elaborate.

In the last week of September, the development of the NIE required a resolution of the running disagreement over the significance of the tubes. The Energy Department had one vote. Four agencies—with specialties including eavesdropping, maps and foreign military forces—judged that the tubes were part of a centrifuge program that could be used for nuclear weapons. Only the State Department’s Bureau of Intelligence and Research joined the judgment of the Energy Department. The estimate, as published, said that “most analysts” believed the tubes were suitable and intended for a centrifuge cascade.

Majority votes make poor science, said Peter D. Zimmerman, a former chief scientist at the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency.

“In this case, the experts were at Z Division at Livermore [Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory] and in DOE intelligence here in town, and they were convinced that no way in hell were these likely to be centrifuge tubes,” he said.

Tenet said the Department of Energy was not the only agency with experts on the issue; the CIA consulted military battlefield rocket experts, as well as its own centrifuge experts.

Unravelings

On Feb. 5, two weeks after Joe’s Vienna briefing, Powell gave what remains the government’s most extensive account of the aluminum tubes, in an address to the U.N. Security Council. He did not mention the existence of the Medusa rocket or its Iraqi equivalent, though he acknowledged disagreement among U.S. intelligence analysts about the use of the tubes.

Powell’s CIA briefers, using data originating with Joe, told him that Iraq had “overspecified” requirements for the tubes, increasing expense without making them more useful to rockets. That helped persuade Powell, a confidant said, that Iraq had some other purpose for the tubes.

“Maybe Iraqis just manufacture their conventional weapons to a higher standard than we do, but I don’t think so,” Powell said in his speech. He said different batches “seized clandestinely before they reached Iraq” showed a “progression to higher and higher levels of specification, including in the latest batch an anodized coating on extremely smooth inner and outer surfaces. . . . Why would they continue refining the specification, go to all that trouble for something that, if it was a rocket, would soon be blown into shrapnel when it went off?”

An anodized coating is actually a strong argument for use in rockets, according to several scientists in and out of government. It resists corrosion of the sort that ruined Iraq’s previous rocket supply. To use the tubes in a centrifuge, experts told the government, Iraq would have to remove the anodized coating.

Iraq did change some specifications from order to order, the procurement records show, but there is not a clear progression to higher precision. One tube sample was rejected because its interior was unfinished, too uneven to be used in a rocket body. After one of Iraq’s old tubes got stuck in a launcher and exploded, Baghdad’s subsequent orders asked for more precision in roundness.

U.S. and European analysts said they had obtained records showing that Italy’s Medusa rocket has had its specifications improved 10 times since 1978. Centrifuge experts said in interviews that the variations had little or no significance for uranium enrichment, especially because the CIA’s theory supposes Iraq would do extensive machining to adapt the tubes as rotors.

For rockets, however, the tubes fit perfectly. Experts from U.S. national labs, working temporarily with U.N. inspectors in Iraq, observed production lines for the rockets at the Nasser factory north of Baghdad. Iraq had run out of body casings at about the time it ordered the aluminum tubes, according to officials familiar with the experts’ reports. Thousands of warheads, motors and fins were crated at the assembly lines, awaiting the arrival of tubes.

“Most U.S. experts,” Powell asserted, “think they are intended to serve as rotors in centrifuges used to enrich uranium.” He said “other experts, and the Iraqis themselves,” said the tubes were really for rockets.

Wood, the centrifuge physicist, said “that was a personal slam at everybody in DOE,” the Energy Department. “I’ve been grouped with the Iraqis, is what it amounts to. I just felt that the wording of that was probably intentional, but it

was also not very kind. It did not recognize that dissent can exist.”

Staff writers Glenn Kessler, Dana Priest and Richard Morin and staff researchers Lucy Shackelford, Madonna Lebling and Robert Thomason contributed to this report.

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Primary Source Document

Written Statement From CIA Director Tenet

The following is a four page written statement by CIA Director George J. Tenet, as submitted to The Washington Post, in which he defends the National Intelligence Estimate prepared in October under his supervision.

A great deal has been said and written about the 2002 National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) on Iraq’s Continuing Programs for Weapons of Mass Destruction. Much of this commentary has been misinformed, misleading, and just plain wrong. It is important to set the record straight. Let me make three points.

- We stand by the judgements in the NIE.
- The NIE demonstrates consistency in our judgments over many years and are based on a decade’s worth of work. Intelligence is an iterative process and as new evidence becomes available we constantly reevaluate.
- We encourage dissent and reflect it in alternative views.

* * *

We stand behind the judgments of the NIE as well as our analyses on Iraq’s programs over the past decade. Those outside the process over the past ten years and many of those commenting today do not know, or are misrepresenting, the facts. We have a solid, well-analyzed and carefully written account in the NIE and the numerous products before it.

After David Kay and others finish their efforts-after we have exploited all the documents, people and sites in Iraq-we should and will stand back to professionally review where we are-but not before.

The history of our judgments on Iraq’s weapons programs is clear and consistent. On biological weapons and missiles our data got stronger in recent year. We have had a solid historical foundation and new data that have allowed us to make judgments and attribute high confidence in specific areas. And we had numerous credible sources, including many who provided information after 1998. When inspectors were pushed out in 1998, we did not sit back. Rather, we significantly increased our collection efforts throughout the Intelligence Community. In other words, despite what many read in the media that the NIE is based on nothing-no sources, no understanding of complicated procurement networks, etc.-the fact is we made significant professional progress.

The National Intelligence Estimate remains the Intelligence Community’s most authoritative product. The process by which we produce NIEs-including the one on Iraqi weapons of mass destruction -has been honed over nearly 30 years. It is a process that is designed to provide policymakers in both the executive and the legislative branches with our best judgments on the most crucial national security issues. This process is designed to produce coordinated judgments-but not to the exclusion of differing views or without exposing uncertainties. During coordination, agencies send representatives who are actively engaged and change NIE drafts to reflect better the views of the experts in their respective agencies. It is an open and vigorous process that allows for dissent to be registered by individual agencies in the final product. Indeed, alternative views are encouraged. Finally, the NIE is reviewed by the directors of US intelligence agencies composing the DCI-chaired National Foreign Intelligence Board, including in this case, CIA, DIA, INR, NSA, DoE, and NIMA. This rigorous NIE process has served this nation well.

Building upon ten years of analysis, intelligence reporting, and inspections that had to fight through Iraq’s aggressive denial and deception efforts, including phony and incomplete data declarations to the UN and programs explicitly designed with built-in cover stories, the Intelligence Community prepared the NIE on Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction. In it we judged that the entire body of information over that ten years made clear that Saddam had never abandoned his pursuit of weapons of mass destruction.

Nuclear program. Shortly after the Gulf war of 1990-91 the International Atomic Energy Agency and the US Intelligence Community were surprised at how much more advanced Iraq’s program was prior to the war than had been judged previously. In fact, the IAEA’s 1996 report indicated that Iraq could have completed its first nuclear device by as early as late 1992 had the program not been derailed by the Gulf war. Intelligence analysts reevaluated Iraq’s nuclear program in 1994 and 1997 in light of the body of inspection revelations and seized documents and

concluded that Iraq could have a nuclear weapon within a year of obtaining sufficient material, if *unconstrained*, would take five to seven years with foreign assistance to produce enough fissile material. Those judgments, to which all agencies agreed, have remained consistent for years.

The NIE points out that by 2002, all agencies assessed that Saddam did not yet have nuclear weapons or sufficient fissile material to make any, but never abandoned his nuclear weapons ambitions. Moreover, most agencies believed that Iraq's attempts to obtain high-strength aluminum tubes for centrifuge rotors, magnets, high-speed balancing machines, and machine tools, as well as Iraq's efforts to enhance its cadre of weapons personnel and activities at several suspect nuclear sites indicated that Iraq was reconstituting its nuclear weapons program. Saddam's personal interest in some of these efforts was also considered. DOE agreed that reconstitution was underway, but assessed that the tubes probably were not part of the program. INR assessed that Baghdad was pursuing at least a limited effort to acquire nuclear weapon-related capabilities, but not an integrated and comprehensive approach to acquire nuclear weapons; INR was not persuaded that the tubes were intended for the nuclear program. All other agencies, including DOE, assessed that Iraq probably would not have a weapon until 2007 to 2009, consistent with the decade-old judgment of Iraq needing five to seven years to develop a weapons-grade uranium enrichment capability if freed from constraints. These judgments and the six elements upon which the reconstitution judgment was based were agreed to by those agencies during coordination of the NIE and at the meeting of the heads of all the intelligence agencies before publication.

- We note yet again that uranium acquisition was not part of this judgment. Despite all the focus in the media, it was *not* one of the six elements upon which the judgment was based. Why not? Because Iraq already had significant quantities of uranium.
- Also, it is noteworthy that although DOE assessed that the tubes probably were not part of Iraq's nuclear program, DOE *agreed* that reconstitution was underway. Obviously, the tubes were not central to DOE's view on reconstitution.

Even though the tubes constituted only one of the six elements underpinning the other agencies' judgment on reconstitution, I will discuss it briefly. We need to point out that DOE is not the only agency that has experts on the issue. CIA has centrifuge and rocket experts. The National Ground Intelligence Center (NGIC)—the US military's center for analysis of foreign conventional weaponry—has battlefield rocket experts. These experts, along with those from DOE, were involved in the NIE process and their views were recorded. All agencies agreed that the tubes *could be used* to build gas centrifuges for a uranium enrichment program, so we are talking about differences in agency views about *intent*.

- CIA, DIA, and NSA believed the tubes were intended for that purpose.
- DOE believed they probably were not part of the nuclear program and that conventional military uses were more plausible
- INR was not persuaded that the tubes were intended for use as centrifuge rotors and considered artillery rockets as the most likely purpose.
- NGIC believed that these tubes were poor choices for rocket motor bodies.

Not surprisingly, the Iraqis went to great lengths to mask their intentions across the board, including in their efforts to acquire tubes with increasingly higher sets of specifications. Thus, the fact that we had alternative views on the issue would be expected. But the NIE went to great lengths to spell out those views. Many reading these alternative views, however, almost certainly recalled how far Iraq had come in the early 1990s toward a nuclear weapon without our knowledge, making all the factors leading us to the reconstitution judgment more important.

Biological Weapons. All agencies of the Intelligence Community since 1995 have judged that Iraq retained biological weapons and that the BW program continued. In 1999 we assessed Iraq had revitalized its program. New intelligence acquired in 2000 provided compelling information about Iraq's ongoing offensive BW activities, describing construction of mobile BW agent production plants—reportedly designed to evade detection—with the potential to turn out several hundred tons of unconcentrated BW agent per year. Thus, it was not a new story in 2002 when all agencies judged in the NIE that Iraq had biological weapons—that it had some lethal and incapacitating BW agents—and was capable of quickly producing and weaponizing a variety of such agents, including anthrax. We judged that most of the key aspects of Iraq's offensive BW program were more advanced than before the Gulf war.

Chemical Weapons. As early as 1994, all agencies assessed that Iraq could begin limited production of chemical agents almost immediately after UN sanctions, inspections and monitoring efforts were ended. By 1997, the Intelligence Community judged that Iraq was protecting a breakout capability to produce more weapons and agent quickly. We further assessed in 1997, that within months Iraq could restart full-scale production of sarin and that

pre-Desert Storm agent production levels—including production of VX—could be achieved in two to three years. And so it was not a surprising story when all agencies judged in the NIE in 2002 that Baghdad possessed chemical weapons, had begun renewed production of mustard, sarin, cyclosarin, and VX and probably had at least 100 metric tons (MT) and possibly as much as 500 MT of CW agents, much of it added in the last year.

Delivery Systems. The Intelligence Community's assessment on the possibility of Iraq having a few covert Scuds has been consistent since at least 1995. As Iraq continued to develop its short-range missiles, we collected more data and by 1999 were able to begin determining that both missiles were capable of flying over 150 km. Also by 1999 we had noted that according to multiple sources, Iraq was conducting a high priority program to convert jet trainer aircraft to lethal UAVs, likely intended for delivering biological agents. Again, not a new story for the NIE to judge that Iraq maintained a small missile force and several development programs, including an UAV that could deliver a biological warfare agent.

* * * *

In sum, the NIE on Iraqi weapons of mass destruction was the product of years of reporting and intelligence collection, analyzed by numerous experts in several different agencies. Our judgments have been consistent on this subject because the evidence has repeatedly pointed to continued Iraqi pursuit of WMD and efforts to conceal that pursuit from international scrutiny. Modifications of our judgments have reflected new evidence, much of which was acquired because of our intensified collection efforts. Thus, noting that Saddam had continued to pursue weapons of mass destruction was not startling. That he probably was hiding weapons was not new. That he would seek means to improve his capabilities using alternative-use cover stories would have been expected. That we would have alternative views is respected as part of the process. We stand by the soundness and integrity of our process, and no one outside the Intelligence Community told us what to say or not to say in this Estimate.

As with any other topic addressed in an NIE, the acquisition of further evidence may confirm some of our judgments while calling others into question. Operation Iraqi Freedom obviously has opened a major new opportunity for learning about the WMD activities of Saddam Hussayn's regime. We have no doubt, however, that the NIE was the most reasonable, well-grounded, and objective assessment of Iraq's WMD programs that was possible at the time it was produced.

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Overstatement seen in Bush's case for war

Four months after Baghdad's fall, virtually all U.S. allegations about Iraq's destructive capabilities remain unproven or in dispute

By Bob Kemper
Washington Bureau
August 8, 2003

WASHINGTON—On the defensive over the failure to find weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, Bush administration officials increasingly argue that the U.S.-led war was justified because it toppled the despotic regime of Saddam Hussein and paved the way for a new era of peace and stability in the Middle East.

But the violence and strife roiling U.S.-occupied Iraq, including a vehicle bombing Thursday that killed at least 11 people in Baghdad, is emboldening critics who maintain the White House overstated its primary case for war: that Iraq posed a direct and immediate threat to the United States.

Four months after U.S. forces seized Baghdad, an in-depth look at that case shows that virtually all the administration's allegations regarding Iraq's destructive capabilities remain unproven or in dispute, according to outside experts, former intelligence analysts and a variety of foreign-policy think tanks.

There still is no clear-cut, concrete evidence that Hussein had ready-to-use chemical or biological weapons, a functioning nuclear weapons program, or direct ties to Al Qaeda, as President Bush and his lieutenants have said repeatedly since last summer.

The claim that Iraq had tried to buy uranium for a nuclear bomb in Africa turned out to be based on discredited evidence, and the Bush administration acknowledged that the allegation should not have been used in the president's

State of the Union speech.

Among other challenged allegations: that the Hussein regime had acquired aluminum tubes intended for the production of nuclear weapons; that it had functioning mobile labs to make chemical or biological weapons; that it had developed unmanned aerial vehicles capable of threatening the United States with such weapons; that it had stockpiled thousands of warheads suitable for chemical warfare; that it had built long-range ballistic missiles, and that it had direct ties to Al Qaeda and a willingness to provide weapons of mass destruction to terrorist groups.

“The misleading statement about African uranium is not an isolated issue,” Sen. Carl Levin (D-Mich.), the senior Democrat on the Senate Armed Services Committee, said recently. “There is a significant amount of troubling evidence that was part of a pattern of exaggeration and misleading statements.”

After months of predicting that Iraqi weapons of mass destruction eventually would be found, Bush now speaks little about the issue. Like his aides, the president suggests that the American people have moved beyond the question of weapons and that they support the war as a victory for the Iraqi people and a boost for the worldwide campaign against terrorism.

In a news conference last week, Bush said, “The rise of a free and peaceful Iraq is critical to the stability of the Middle East, and a stable Middle East is critical to the security of the American people.”

Bush made similar comments about Iraq’s potential before the war. But the administration’s case was based fundamentally on the threat that Hussein presented. And it was the immediacy of that threat, Bush and his aides argued, that made a swift invasion necessary.

The administration’s case was laid out in four key speeches: Vice President Dick Cheney’s address to the VFW on Aug. 26, 2002; Secretary of State Colin Powell’s appearance before the UN Security Council on Feb. 5; and two presidential addresses.

Biological, chemical and nuclear weapons

Bush said in October that Iraq had 30,000 liters of anthrax and “other deadly biological agents,” though based on accounts from UN inspectors, it could have “likely produced two to four times that amount.”

Cheney added, “Many of us are convinced that Saddam will acquire nuclear fairly soon. Just how soon, we cannot really gauge.” In March, he upped the ante, saying, “We believe he has, in fact, reconstituted nuclear weapons.”

As proof of Hussein’s ambitions, administration officials cited the story of Hussein Kamel, a son-in-law of Hussein who defected in 1995 and said that evidence of Iraq’s weapons programs was hidden on a chicken farm.

But the administration omitted a key chapter of Kamel’s story, experts said.

Kamel, who was executed by Hussein upon his return to Iraq, told UN officials that Hussein had destroyed many of his chemical and biological weapons and elements of a nuclear weapons program after the 1991 Persian Gulf war. UN weapons inspectors had destroyed other elements of the programs, Kamel said.

What Hussein held on to was the documentation that would have allowed him to restart a weapons programs practically from scratch once the UN inspections ended, Kamel said.

Aluminum tubes

In October, Bush described aluminum tubes that Iraq tried to purchase from another country as components of “gas centrifuges, which are used to enrich uranium for nuclear weapons.” In his State of the Union address nearly four months later, Bush attributed that evidence to “our intelligence sources.”

But some U.S. intelligence agencies were disputing the president’s claim even as he was making it.

The State and Energy departments said the tubes, given their size and specifications, could have been for Iraq’s legal conventional weapons programs and were not proof of Hussein’s nuclear ambitions.

The International Atomic Energy Agency, which oversees nuclear weapons inspections for the UN, announced in January that Iraq had used similar tubes for missiles.

When Powell appeared before the UN Security Council, a week after Bush’s State of the Union address, he was the first administration official to acknowledge that the information was in dispute. “We all know there are differences of opinion. There is controversy about what these tubes are for,” Powell said.

But even if the purpose of the tubes was in dispute, Powell said, “We have no indication that Saddam Hussein has ever abandoned his nuclear weapons program.”

Mobile labs

In his State of the Union address, Bush said, “From three Iraqi defectors, we know that Iraq, in the late 1990s, had several mobile biological weapons labs.” Those labs, Powell told the UN, could “in a matter of months” produce “a quantity of biological poison equal to the entire amount that Iraq claimed to have produced in the years prior to the [1991] gulf war.” Powell cited as his sources four Iraqis who said they had seen the mobile labs.

U.S. forces searching for weapons in Iraq did find two truck trailers that the administration said were mobile labs. However, three groups of experts have so far been unable to agree on the purpose of the trailers, and the State Department’s intelligence analysts disagree with the CIA’s conclusion that the trailers were mobile labs.

No evidence of biological or chemical agents was found in the truck trailers.

Warheads

Bush said in his State of the Union address, “U.S. intelligence indicates that Saddam Hussein had upwards of 30,000 munitions capable of delivering chemical agents. Inspectors recently turned up 16 of them.”

Actually, the inspectors had found 12 warheads Jan. 16. Iraq later handed over four more voluntarily.

Powell called the found warheads “the tip of a submerged iceberg.”

Powell told the UN that the Iraqis had hidden warheads and launchers “in large groves of palm trees” and moved the equipment every one to four weeks to escape detection.

However, U.S. forces have found no other warheads since major fighting was ended May 1.

None of the warheads that have been found was filled with a chemical agent. The 29,984 other warheads remain unaccounted for.

Long-range missiles

The United Nations limited Iraq’s ballistic missiles to a range of about 90 miles after the 1991 Persian Gulf war, a range considered adequate for Iraq to defend itself but short enough to prevent Hussein from posing a serious threat to neighbors in the Middle East.

But when Bush described Iraq’s missile capability, he said Hussein “possesses ballistic missiles with a likely range of hundreds of miles—far enough to strike Saudi Arabia, Israel, Turkey and other nations—in a region where more than 135,000 American civilians and service members live and work.”

Powell, making his case to the UN, said that Iraq was building ballistic missiles that could fly 620 miles or more.

UN inspectors before the invasion did find Iraqi missiles that could have exceeded the UN’s limit. But inspectors found no evidence of a missile that could fly 620 miles or more. U.S. forces have found no missiles with that extended range.

Unmanned aerial vehicles

Another delivery system developed by Iraq, administration officials said, was unmanned aerial vehicles—drones equipped with sprayers that Powell said “are well-suited for dispensing chemical and biological weapons.”

Bush first mentioned the drones in his national address last October.

“We’ve also discovered through intelligence that Iraq has a growing fleet of manned and unmanned aerial vehicles that could be used to disperse chemical or biological weapons across broad areas,” Bush said. “We’re concerned that Iraq is exploring ways to use these UAVs for missions targeting the United States.”

But outside experts were quick to discount the use of drones for such a mission. The vehicles identified by the administration could not possibly reach the United States from Iraq. They would first have to be smuggled into the U.S. or a neighboring country to be used against a target in the U.S., experts said.

Ties to Al Qaeda

Perhaps the most hotly disputed administration claim, apart from the alleged uranium purchase, is Bush’s insistence that Iraq had deep, longstanding ties to Al Qaeda, the terrorist network responsible for the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.

“We know that after Sept. 11, Saddam Hussein’s regime gleefully celebrated the terrorist attacks on America,” Bush said last October. “Iraq could decide on any given day to provide a biological or chemical weapons to a terrorist group or individual terrorists. Alliance with terrorists could allow the Iraq regime to attack America without leaving any fingerprints.”

A variety of experts in the United States and Europe have disputed that assertion, noting that Al Qaeda’s militant religious underpinnings put it in conflict with Hussein’s largely secular rule and that such an alliance was unlikely

and unproven. Experts noted that no further evidence of such a connection has been found since the war.

Al Qaeda operatives are thought to have fled Afghanistan for a remote area in northwest Iraq, but outside experts said Hussein exercised little or no control over that region. Moreover, while the Bush administration could point to individual terrorists who have passed through Baghdad, there is no definitive proof that Hussein was aware that they were there or had any direct contact with them, experts said.

“I believe the Bush administration did not provide an accurate picture to the American people of the military threat posed by Iraq,” said Greg Thielmann, who until recently worked in the State Department’s intelligence unit and reviewed the Iraqi intelligence.

“Some of the fault lies with the performance of the intelligence community,” he said, “but most of it lies with the way senior officials misused the information they were provided.”

A variety of outside experts said the Bush administration, while not intending to mislead the American public, overplayed the hand dealt it by its own intelligence analysts and in some instances may have coerced intelligence officials to focus on information that backed the case for war.

While intelligence analysts presented much of the information in qualified terms, Bush and his aides presented it as unambiguous fact. What intelligence agencies projected as worst-case scenarios were presented by Bush as the most likely outcomes.

“There is no doubt in my mind that Saddam Hussein was a threat to the United States security and a threat to peace in the region,” Bush said last week during a White House news conference.

“In order to placate the critics and the cynics about intentions of the United States, we need to produce evidence,” he added. “And I fully understand that. And I’m confident that our search will yield that which I strongly believe, that Saddam Hussein had a weapons program.”

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Nation/World

Powell's case shows holes

Point by point, a look back at 'thick' file of the case presented against Iraq

By CHARLES J. HANLEY

The Associated Press

On a Baghdad evening last February, in a stiflingly warm room high above the city's streets, Iraqi bureaucrats, European envoys and foreign reporters crowded before television screens to hear the reading of an indictment.

In a hushed U.N. Security Council chamber in New York, Secretary of State Colin Powell unleashed an 80-minute avalanche of allegations: The Iraqis were hiding chemical and biological weapons, were secretly working to make more banned arms, were reviving their nuclear bomb project. He spoke of "the gravity of the threat that Iraq's weapons of mass destruction pose to the world."

It was the most comprehensive presentation of the U.S. case for war. Powell marshaled what were described as intercepted Iraqi conversations, reconnaissance photos of Iraqi sites, accounts of defectors, and other intelligence sources. Since 1998, he told fellow foreign ministers, "we have amassed much intelligence indicating that Iraq is continuing to make these weapons."

In the United States, Powell's "thick intelligence file" was galvanizing, swinging opinion toward war.

But in Baghdad, when the satellite broadcast ended, presidential science adviser Lt. Gen. Amer al-Saadi appeared before the audience and dismissed the U.S. case as “stunts” aimed at swaying the uninformed.

Six months after Powell’s Feb. 5 appearance, the file does look thin. Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld told U.S. senators last month the Bush administration had no “dramatic new evidence” before ordering the Iraq invasion. “We acted because we saw the existing evidence in a new light through the prism of our experience on Sept. 11,” he said.

The U.S. military, since overrunning the country, has found no weapons of mass destruction, and President Bush’s credibility has come under attack because his State of the Union address cited a British report that Iraq tried to buy uranium from Niger. That allegation, which Powell left out of his own speech, has been challenged by U.S. intelligence officials.

How does Powell’s pivotal indictment look from the vantage point of today? Powell has said several times since February that he stands by it, the State Department said Wednesday. Here is an Associated Press review of major elements, based on both what was known in February and what has been learned since:

Satellite photos

Powell presented satellite photos of industrial buildings, bunkers and trucks, and suggested they showed Iraqis surreptitiously moving prohibited missiles and chemical and biological weapons to hide them. At two sites, he said trucks were “decontamination vehicles” associated with chemical weapons.

But these and other sites had undergone 500 inspections in recent months. Chief U.N. inspector Hans Blix, a day earlier, had said his well-equipped experts found no contraband and no sign that items had been moved. Nothing has been reported found since.

Addressing the Security Council a week after Powell, Blix used one photo scenario as an example and said it could be showing routine as easily as illicit activity. Norwegian inspector Jorn Siljeholm told AP on March 19 that “decontamination vehicles” U.N. teams were led to invariably turned out to be water or fire trucks.

Audiotapes

Powell played three audiotapes of men speaking in Arabic of a mysterious “modified vehicle,” “forbidden ammo,” and “the expression ‘nerve agents’”—tapes said to be intercepts of Iraqi army officers discussing concealment.

Two of the brief, anonymous tapes, otherwise not authenticated, provided little context for judging their meaning. It couldn’t be known whether the mystery vehicle, however “modified,” was even banned. A listener could only speculate over the cryptic mention of nerve agents. The third tape, meanwhile, seemed natural, an order to inspect scrap areas for “forbidden ammo.” The Iraqis had just told U.N. inspectors they would search ammunition dumps for stray, empty chemical warheads left over from years earlier. They later turned four over to inspectors.

Powell’s rendition of that third conversation made it more incriminating, by saying an officer ordered that the area be “cleared out.” The voice on the tape didn’t say that, but only that the area be “inspected,” according to the official U.S. translation.

Hidden documents

Powell said “classified” documents found at a nuclear scientist’s Baghdad home were “dramatic confirmation” of intelligence saying prohibited items were concealed this way.

U.N. nuclear inspectors later said the documents were old and “irrelevant”—some administrative material, some from a failed and well-known uranium-enrichment program of the 1980s.

Anthrax

Powell noted Iraq had declared it produced 8,500 liters of the biological agent anthrax before 1991, but U.N. inspectors estimated it could have made up to 25,000 liters. None has been “verifiably accounted for,” he said.

No anthrax has been reported found. The Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), in a confidential report last September, recently disclosed, said that although it believed Iraq had biological weapons, it didn’t know their nature, amounts or condition. Three weeks before the invasion, an Iraqi report of scientific soil sampling supported its contention it destroyed its anthrax at a known site, the U.N. inspection agency said May 30.

Bioweapons trailers

Powell said defectors told of “biological weapons factories” on trucks and in train cars. He displayed artists’ conceptions of such vehicles.

After the invasion, U.S. authorities said they found two such truck trailers in Iraq, and the CIA said it concluded they were part of a bioweapons production line. But no trace of biological agents was found on them, Iraqis said the equipment made hydrogen for weather balloons, and State Department intelligence balked at the CIA's conclusion. The British defense minister, Geoffrey Hoon, has said the vehicles aren't a "smoking gun."

The trailers have not been submitted to U.N. inspection for verification. No "bioweapons railcars" have been reported found.

'Four tons' of VX

Powell said Iraq produced four tons of the nerve agent VX. "A single drop of VX on the skin will kill in minutes. Four tons," he said.

Powell didn't note that most of that four tons was destroyed in the 1990s under U.N. supervision. Before the invasion, the Iraqis made a "considerable effort" to prove they had destroyed the rest, doing chemical analysis of the ground where inspectors confirmed VX had been dumped, the U.N. inspection agency reported May 30.

Experts at Britain's International Institute of Strategic Studies said any pre-1991 VX most likely would have degraded anyway. No VX has been reported found since the invasion.

'Embedded' capability

"We know that Iraq has embedded key portions of its illicit chemical weapons infrastructure within its legitimate civilian industry," Powell said.

No "chemical weapons infrastructure" has been reported found. The newly disclosed DIA report of last September said there was "no reliable information" on "where Iraq has—or will—establish its chemical warfare agent-production facilities." It suggested international inspections would be able to keep Iraq from rebuilding a chemical weapons program.

'500 tons' of agent

"Our conservative estimate is that Iraq today has a stockpile of between 100 and 500 tons of chemical weapons agent," Powell said.

Powell gave no basis for the assertion, and no such agents have been reported found. An unclassified CIA report last October made a similar assertion without citing concrete evidence, saying only that Iraq "probably" concealed precursor chemicals to make such weapons. The DIA reported confidentially last September there "is no reliable information on whether Iraq is producing and stockpiling chemical weapons."

Chemical warheads

Powell said 122-mm chemical warheads found by U.N. inspectors in January might be the "tip of an iceberg."

The warheads were empty, a fact Powell didn't note. Blix said on June 16 the dozen stray rocket warheads, never uncrated, were apparently "debris from the past," the 1980s. No others have been reported found since the invasion.

Deployed weapons

"Saddam Hussein has chemical weapons. ... And we have sources who tell us that he recently has authorized his field commanders to use them," Powell said.

No such weapons were used and none was reported found after the U.S. and allied military units overran Iraqi field commands and ammunition dumps.

Revived nuclear program

"We have no indication that Saddam Hussein has ever abandoned his nuclear weapons program," Powell said.

Chief U.N. nuclear inspector Mohamed ElBaradei told the council two weeks before the U.S. invasion, "We have to date found no evidence or plausible indication of the revival of a nuclear weapons program in Iraq." On July 24, Foreign Minister Ana Palacio of Spain, a U.S. ally on Iraq, said there were "no evidences, no proof" of a nuclear bomb program before the war. No such evidence has been reported found since the invasion.

Scuds, new missiles

Powell said "intelligence sources" indicate Iraq had a secret force of up to a few dozen prohibited Scud-type missiles. He said it also had a program to build newer, 600-mile-range missiles, and had put a roof over a test facility to block the view of spy satellites.

No Scud-type missiles have been reported found. In the 1990s, U.N. inspectors had reported accounting for all but

two of these missiles. No program for long-range missiles has been uncovered. Powell didn't note that U.N. teams were repeatedly inspecting missile facilities, including looking under that roof, and reporting no Iraqi violations of U.N. resolutions.

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