

**THE DECEPTIONS OF WAR:
THE COOKING OF INTELLIGENCE ON IRAQ**

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Read earlier version on the 2nd anniversary of the war [here](#)

President Bush and Vice-President Cheney are busy defending themselves against the charge that they deceived the American people about the reasons for going to war in Iraq. Sorting through my thick Iraq file, I've come up with following examples of outright deception.

- \$ Cheney continued to repeat an alleged meeting between 9/11 hijacker Mohammed Atta and an Iraqi agent in Prague in 2001, even though American and European intelligence agencies said the report was false.
- \$ The bipartisan 9/11 Commission reported that there was no "collaborative relationship" between Saddam Hussein and Al Qaeda, but Bush and Cheney blithely continued to make these charges.
- \$ Cheney claimed that Osama bin Laden requested "terror training from Iraq," but he failed to mention that Saddam's government fail to respond to that request.
- \$ On February 8, 2003, Bush claimed that "an Al Qaeda operative was sent to Iraq . . . for help in acquiring poisons and gases," but the 9/11 Report could find no evidence for this.
- \$ Even though on June 17, 2004 Defense Secretary Rumsfeld stated that Jordanian Abu Musab al-Zarqawi was "not Al Qaeda," Bush and Cheney continued to state that he was. Early in 2004 CIA chief George Tenet told a Senate committee that there was no connection between Zarqawi and Saddam let alone Al Qaeda.
- \$ The day after the 9/11 report was released Cheney claimed that Zarqawi "ran [a] poisons factory in northern Iraq out of Baghdad," but he should have known full well that Zarqawi was not in Baghdad and that this camp was not under Saddam's control. When it was taken over by U. S. troops, captured documents revealed no connection to Baghdad. Zarqawi now heads the main terrorist organization in Iraq because of the turmoil of the U.S. invasion, not because Saddam invited him there.

- \$ Before the war the Bush administration kept repeating dire predictions of Saddam's nuclear weapon capacities, but a December, 2002 report of International Atomic Energy Association stated that Saddam was telling the truth about his own nonexistent weapons program.
- \$ The Bush administration ignored the fact that the first team of UN inspectors destroyed all Iraq's nuclear facilities that they could find. Bush and Cheney also belittled the second UN team's report of no new plants, and they dismissed Joseph Wilson's report that Saddam was not buying uranium from Niger.
- \$ With regard to the aluminum tubes that Saddam had ordered, the Bush administration chose to sell the idea that they could be used to centrifuge uranium, even though experts advised that their thickness most likely indicated that they were to be used for rockets.
- \$ On December 8, 2002, former U.S. weapons inspector David Albright appeared on "60 Minutes" and stated that the aluminum tubes could not be used to enrich uranium. He concluded that Bush administration was "selectively picking information to bolster a case that the Iraqi nuclear threat was more imminent than it is, and in essence, [to] scare people."
- \$ On April 20, 2004, Bush promised the American people that he would not spy on anyone without a court order, but now we know that his government has been wiretapping American citizens since the 9/11 attack.
 - In February, 2006, former CIA official Paul R. Pillar, writing for *Foreign Affairs* stated that Iraq "intelligence was misused publicly to justify decisions that had already been made."

Bush and Cheney sometimes defend themselves by saying that they are privy to information that others don't have. At the same time they declare that Congress voted for the war on the basis of the same intelligence they had. They obviously cannot have it both ways. We now find is that most of the information not shared was contrary to the view that Saddam was a threat to the U.S.

In the fall of 2002 Bush kept telling us that we wanted to avoid a war in Iraq, but a July 23, 2002 memo detailing a secret meeting of British officials demonstrates that Bush had no desire to go to the UN, or give UN inspectors another chance to disarm Hussein. Here are the crucial passages from this memo: "Bush wanted to remove Saddam, through military action, justified by the conjunction of terrorism and WMDs. But the intelligence and facts were being fixed around the policy."

There should be no question that the Bush administration did in fact cook the intelligence on Iraq. The result has been an Iraq in far worse shape than before, the recruitment of new terrorists and insurgents where none existed before, and the unnecessary deaths of 2,100 Americans and tens of thousands of Iraqis.

Some Bush supporters have a mantra that goes something like this: "It's better to fight terrorists in Baghdad rather than to fight them in Detroit." During the Cold War millions of innocent people in the Third World died because both sides chose to fight in some else's country. When will people in distant countries stop dying because of our misguided foreign adventures?

Finally, think of how more secure our country would be if the billions spent in Iraq had been used to repair our crumbling infrastructure, protect our ports, search air cargo, and secure our nuclear and chemical plants.