



Home | U.S. | Iraq | World | Politics | SciTech | HealthWatch | Entertainment | **New: Business** | Opinion | FREE CBS Video



Feb. 13, 2005 11:03pm ET

The Early Show | CBS Evening News | 48 Hours | 60 Minutes (SUN) | 60 Minutes (WED) | All Br

IRAQ: AFTER SADDAM

• Section Front

E-mail This Story | Printable Version

SEARCH

CBS
 The

Bush Defiant Amid WMD Report

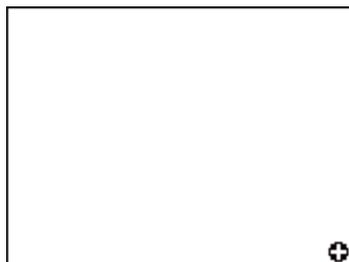
Oct. 7, 2004

- World
- War On Terror

SEARCH

Powered by YAH

FREE VIDEO
Bush Defiant On War

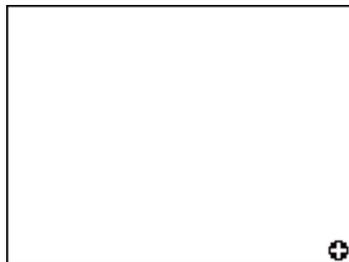


President Bush pauses as he makes a statement to reporters on the South Lawn of the White House on Thursday. (Photo: AP)

QUOTE

"Saddam Hussein still has chemical and biological weapons and is increasing his capabilities to make more."

President Bush, in October 2002 speech



1998: Iraqi al-Hussein missile on ground awaiting destruction by U.N. weapons inspectors. (Photo: AP)

(CBS/AP) Faced with a harshly critical new report, President George W. Bush conceded Thursday that Iraq did not have the stockpiles of banned weapons he had warned of before the invasion last year, but insisted that "we were right to take action" against Saddam Hussein.

"America is safer today with Saddam Hussein in prison," Mr. Bush said in a surprise statement to reporters as he prepared to fly to Wisconsin.

"Much of the accumulated body of our intelligence was wrong and we must find out why," Mr. Bush said.

Mr. Bush spoke one day after Charles Duelfer, the American weapons hunter in Iraq, presented to the Senate and the public a report that Saddam's weapons of mass destruction programs had deteriorated into only hopes and dreams by the time of the U.S.-led invasion last year. The decline was wrought by the first Gulf War and years of international sanctions, the chief U.S. weapons hunter found.

As CBS National Security Correspondent David Martin reports, Duelfer's report renders pre-war statements by Mr. Bush and his senior advisers flat wrong. Democrats saw their opening and took it.

Democratic presidential nominee Sen. John Kerry charged the report "provided definitive evidence as to why

INTERACTIVE

WMD Fallout

ENTER

Controversy surrounds the hunt for weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

Sign up
RSS F

INTERACTIVE

Postwar Iraq

ENTER

Forming a government, the insurgency, key players, background and photos.

INTERACTIVE

The Hunt

ENTER

Searching for Iraq's most-wanted people and weapons.

MULTIMEDIA

Video

President Bush remained defiant in the wake of a report stating there were never WMDs in Iraq. He defended his administration's moves to take out Saddam Hussein, John Roberts reports.

Video



1996: U.N. Weapons inspectors destroy al-Hakkan facility, which could have produced biological weapons. (Photo: AP)



Election Stories:

- [The Latest](#)
- [Rather: High Point For U.S.](#)
- [Voting In 'Triangle Of Death'](#)
- [Deadly U.K. Plane Crash](#)
- [Bush Praises Iraqis](#)
- [Blogger v U.S. Military](#)
- [GI Survives 9 Bombings](#)

Election Interactives:

- [Voting Facts](#)
- [On The Ballot](#)
- [Photo Essays](#)
- [Religions Map](#)

The Insurgency:

- [Attacks Map](#)
- [Hostages Held](#)
- [Fight For Fallujah](#)
- [Daily Photos](#)

More Interactives:

- [Fallen Heroes](#)
- [Postwar Iraq](#)
- [WMD Fallout](#)
- [Abuse At Abu Ghraib](#)

Video Archives:

- [Fallujah Fight](#)
- [War Anniversary](#)
- [Saddam Capture, Court](#)

Earth is actually round and that the sun is rising in the east."

Cheney's comments reflect a GOP strategy to use portions of the report, including abuses of the oil-for-food program, to try to move discussion away from the central conclusions on the absence of weapons of mass destruction.

What ambitions Saddam harbored for such weapons were secondary to his goal of evading those sanctions, and he wanted them primarily not to attack the United States or to provide them to terrorists, but to oppose his older enemies, Iran and Israel, the report found.

George Bush should not be re-elected president of the United States."

Speaking on the eve of the second presidential debate, Kerry said Mr. Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney "may well be the last two people on the planet who won't face the truth" about the deteriorating situation in Iraq.

Some 1,196 coalition personnel have been killed since the start of the war. Of those, 1,060 are American, 67 British and 69 are from other coalition countries. Unknown numbers of Iraqis have also died on both sides of the conflict.

Duelfer's findings contradict most of the assertions by the Bush administration and the U.S. intelligence community about Iraq's threat in 2002 and early 2003.

Mr. Bush said in October 2002 that, "Saddam Hussein still has chemical and biological weapons and is increasing his capabilities to make more." Mr. Bush also said then, "The evidence indicates that Iraq is reconstituting its nuclear weapons program."

Vice President Dick Cheney, in a speech on Aug. 26, 2002, 6 1/2 months before the invasion, made similar charges: "Simply stated, there is no doubt that Saddam Hussein now has weapons of mass destruction."

On Thursday, Cheney said, "The headlines all say no weapons of mass destruction stockpiled in Baghdad. We already knew that."

He said other parts of the report were "more intriguing."

Vice presidential candidate John Edwards called Cheney's claim "amazing" and accused his Republican rival of using "convoluted logic."

"They are willing to say left is right and up is down," Edwards said while campaigning in Bayonne, N.J. "The vice president, Dick Cheney, and the president need to recognize that the



It's full throttle on the campaign trail as the Bush administration battles a new hurdle following a report that undercuts the president's rationale for war in Iraq, as Stacy Case reports.



[Video](#)

Newsweek managing editor Jon Meacham spoke to **The Early Show** about how the campaigns will respond to the final Iraq weapons report that finds Saddam Hussein had no nuclear arms.



[Video](#)

A final report concludes that there were no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq — a direct refute to the Bush administration's rationale for going to war, CBS News' David Martin reports.



[Video](#)

A report issued by the president's chief weapons-hunter concludes Saddam Hussein had no weapons of mass destruction when President Bush launched the Iraq war to disarm him, David Martin reports.



[Video](#)

President Bush made no mention of a CIA report that debunks his claims of WMDs in Iraq, while John Kerry used it as ammunition to boost his campaign, John Roberts reports.

RELATED STORIES & LINKS



[Story](#)

Bush Throws Down The Gauntlet



[Story](#)

U.N. Faces Iraq Bribe Allegations



[Story](#)

Bush Adds Iowa To Win List



[Story](#)

Iraq WMD Hunt Comes Up Empty



[Story](#)

Report: Iraq Did Not Have Any WMD



[Story](#)

Shiite Ticket Wins Plurality



[Story](#)

Report: U.S. Ignored WMD Doubts



[Story](#)

CIA Insider Says Osama Hunt Flawed



[Story](#)

Death, 'Lies' & WMDs

Mr. Bush took a similar line on Thursday.

"The Duelfer report showed that Saddam was systematically gaming the system, using the U.N. oil for food program to try to influence countries and companies in an effort to undermine sanctions," Mr. Bush said. "He was doing so with the intent of restarting his weapons program once the world looked away."

The vice president said the report concluded that the United Nations' oil-for-food program "was totally corrupted by Saddam Hussein. There were suggestions employees of the United Nations were part of the scheme as well."

"The suggestion is clearly there by Mr. Duelfer that Saddam had used the program in such a way that he had bought off foreign governments and was building support among them to take the sanctions down," Cheney said.

The new GOP strategy contained some risks to Mr. Bush: Some of the countries possibly implicated in wrongdoing in the program include U.S. allies in Iraq, particularly Poland, as well as Russia — countries the administration does not want to alienate.

On Wednesday, the former head of the U.N. weapons inspection team, Hans Blix, said: "Had we had a few months more (of inspections before the war), we would have been able to tell both the CIA and others that there were no weapons of mass destruction (at) all the sites that they had given to us."

Kerry said Thursday that Mr. Bush and Cheney have failed to recognize a deteriorating situation in post-war Iraq and "may well be the last two people on the planet who won't face the truth."

In his strongest statement yet, the Democratic presidential nominee suggested that if Mr. Bush fails to recognize the severity of problems in Iraq, then if Kerry takes office in January he will face a situation as chaotic as the Middle East in the early 1980s.

"If the president just does more of the same every day and it continues to deteriorate, I may be handed Lebanon, figuratively speaking," Kerry told reporters at a brief news conference.

Kerry made the comments as he prepared for Friday night's debate against Mr. Bush, their second encounter in the final weeks of the presidential campaign.

Duelfer's Iraq Survey Group drew on interviews with senior Iraqi officials, 40 million pages of documents and classified intelligence to conclude that Iraq destroyed its undeclared chemical and biological stockpiles under pressure of U.N. sanctions by 1992 and never resumed production.

The U.S.-led invasion pushed one of Iraq's leaders into seeking chemical weapons to defend the country. But it doesn't appear that Saddam's son Oday located any.

Iraq ultimately abandoned its biological weapons programs in 1995, largely out of fear they would be discovered and tougher enforcement imposed.

"Indeed, from the mid-1990s, despite evidence of continuing interest in nuclear and chemical weapons, there appears to be a complete absence of discussion or even interest in BW at the presidential level," according to a summary of Duelfer's 1,000-page report.

©MMIV, CBS Broadcasting Inc. All Rights Reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten, or redistributed. The Associated Press contributed to this report.



Shiite Ticket Wins

• **Keys, West Could Dominate**



Plurality
Needs Partners To
Govern; Turnout Was
60%; Secular Ticket
Trails

Grammys
• Alan Keyes' Daughter Coming
Out
• Rooney: Big Game Home
Movies
• Born In USA; Adopted In
Canada

MORE INSIDE THIS SECTION



**Unneeded Drug
Blamed For GI
Deaths**
Manufacturer Warned Of
Rare Cases Of Paranoia,
Hallucinations

• Shiite Ticket Wins Plurality
• CNN Exec Resigns Over Iraq
Remarks
• Story Of GI's Heroic Death A
Hoax
• Fallujah Attempts A Comeback

 [Back To Top](#)

-
- [Help](#) • [Advertise](#) • [Contact Us](#) • [Terms of Service](#) • [Privacy Policy](#)
• [CBS News Bios](#) • [Internships](#)

©MMV, CBS Broadcasting Inc. All Rights Reserved.

