

**B**y the time Saddam Hussein was pulled from his hole in the ground last month, the historical revisionists already were consigning the facts of the conflict to the trash can and substituting a new mythology portraying one of the most successful campaigns in military history as a mistake and a failure. The political opponents of President George W. Bush claim to "support our troops" while at the same time they appear to thirst for some sort of U.S. defeat in Iraq. After having taunted the president for months for not finding Saddam, they were shattered by his capture.

Rep. James McDermott (D-Wash.) suggested that the timing of Saddam's capture while the Democrats were on the campaign trail was "too much by happenstance to be a coincidence." Democrat presidential front-runner Howard Dean suggested darkly that Bush had advance knowledge of the 9/11 attacks — no doubt from one of Nancy Reagan's astrologers — and former secretary of state Madeleine Albright opined that the administration probably had Osama bin Laden locked up somewhere, ready to be wheeled out when another spike was needed in the polls. She later claimed she spoke in jest, but nobody remembers anybody laughing at the time. The critics are even keeping their fingers crossed in the hope that the U.S.-led coalition of more than 50 countries never finds any Iraqi weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) that have worried three presidential administrations.

Yet the true history of the war shows that Operation Iraqi Freedom put an end to more than a decade of indecision amid the international hand-wringing about Saddam's murderous regime, its threats against its Arab, Israeli, Persian and Turkish neighbors, its sponsorship of terrorism, its plot to assassinate a former president of the United States and its non-stop quest to build an arsenal of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons.

The evidence shows that Bush's reasons for going to war against Iraq were fully rooted, as he has said all along, in successive U.N. resolutions issued since his father forged an earlier U.S.-led coalition to force Saddam from Kuwait in 1990 and 1991. The evidence had strong, unquestioned, bipartisan and international support — at least until Bush took a stand to do something about it. Then the critics emerged to criticize secret intelligence reports and to accuse political leaders of manipulating intelligence analysis, even to the point that those same critics contradicted themselves.

Within weeks after the fall of Baghdad, the United Nations ended up endorsing the U.S.-led occupation and lifted

# ***INSIGHT* Looks at The Iraq War**

By J. MICHAEL WALLER

In the welter of confused criticism, a true accounting of events leading to Baghdad shows the resolve of President Bush's policy.

sanctions against Iraq. By year's end, the world's most bitter opponents of the liberation — France, Germany and Russia — agreed to help free Iraq by taking billions of dollars in losses on loans they had made to Saddam.

But the president's domestic critics didn't take defeat as easily. By then the 2004 presidential campaign was under way. How did the Iraq War really begin? The task is to reconstruct the historical record of who knew what, when they knew it and what they did about it.

The road to Iraq began in 1990 when Iraq invaded and annexed Kuwait. The United Nations demanded an immediate withdrawal, imposed economic sanctions on Baghdad and, when Saddam would not comply, approved a resolution to use "all necessary means" to expel the Iraqi conquerors. Diplomacy failed, and a U.S.-led coalition liberated Kuwait, decimating the Iraqi military but not attempting to destroy the regime. In a U.N. cease-fire, Saddam agreed to unconditional terms spelled out in several U.N. Security Council resolutions.

These resolutions demanded an end to internal repression, the return of all prisoners from Kuwait and other coun-

tries, the renunciation of all involvement with terrorism and the termination of the permission granted to terrorists to operate within Iraq. U.N. Security Council Resolution 687, passed unanimously on April 3, 1991, recognized that Iraq had a years-long WMD program that included chemical, nuclear and perhaps biological weapons. The resolution recognized reports that Iraq "has attempted to acquire materials for a nuclear-weapons programme." The United Nations further observed the "threat that all weapons of mass destruction pose to peace and security in the area" and resolved that, as part of the cease-fire, "Iraq shall unconditionally accept the destruction, removal or rendering harmless, under international supervision, of all chemical and biological weapons and all stocks of agents and all related subsystems and components and all research, development, support and manufacturing facilities." Iraq also would "place all of its nuclear-weapons-usable materials under the exclusive control, for custody and removal, of the International Atomic Energy Agency [IAEA]."

The process was to commence imme-

diately with Baghdad's total cooperation. The Security Council used the word "unconditionally" five times in the resolution. But during the next two years, the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM), created expressly to search for Iraqi WMDs, faced stonewall after stonewall by Saddam. Twice the Security Council demanded that Iraq cooperate fully on inspections. Meanwhile, the United Nations established the Northern No-Fly Zone to provide safe haven for the Kurds north of the 36th parallel and, later, a Southern No-Fly Zone to protect the Shi'as below the 33rd parallel. Iraq was practically partitioned in three. Any unauthorized Iraqi aircraft in the zones would be shot down. Any attempts to harass or threaten the U.S. and British warplanes mandated to enforce the zones would be met with lethal force. Another component of Resolution 687 was the United Nations' unanimous recognition that Iraq was a state sponsor of terrorism. The cease-fire, according to the resolution, "requires Iraq to inform the Security Council that it will not commit or support any act of international terrorism or allow any organization directed toward commission of

## The Road to Iraq — A Timeline

U.S. and Coalition

**Jan. 16, 1991**  
**Operation Desert Storm**  
U.S. bombardment of Iraq begins.

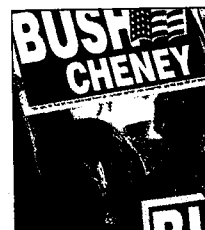
**February 24, 1991**  
**Ground war starts.**

**February 27, 1991**  
**Kuwait liberated.**

**1993**  
**Iraqi plot to assassinate** former President George H.W. Bush in Kuwait. President Bill Clinton launches cruise-missile attack on empty Iraqi intelligence headquarters.



**December 16, 1998**  
**Clinton orders** cruise missile attack on 100 suspected WMD facilities.



**November 2000**  
**President George W. Bush elected.**

**Sept. 11, 2001**  
**Attacks** on New York, Washington.



1990

1991

1992

1993

1998

1999

2000

2001

**Nov. 29, 1991**  
**U.N. approves** "all necessary means" to free Kuwait.

**1990**  
**Iraq invades** and annexes Kuwait. U.N. demands Iraq leave by Jan. 15, 1991.

**March 3, 1991**  
**Saddam Hussein** agrees to unconditional cease-fire according to U.N. Resolution 687, requiring termination of WMDs.

**April 1991**  
**U.N. establishes** Northern "No-Fly" Zone and sets up UNSCOM to search for WMDs.

**August 1992**  
**U.N. establishes** Southern "No-Fly" Zone.

**October 1998**  
**Iraq ceases** all interaction with UNSCOM.

**November 1998**  
**U.N. removes** WMD inspectors.



**1999**  
**U.N. Res. 1284** sets timetable for WMD inspections; Iraq refuses terms and rejects UNMOVIC.

**November 2000**  
**Iraq refuses** more inspections.

**March 2001**  
**Arab leaders** call upon Iraq to obey U.N.



U.N., Iraq and Anticoalition

PHOTO: JEFFREY M. HARRIS/REUTERS; WATSON/REUTERS; JEFFREY M. HARRIS/REUTERS; WATSON/REUTERS

January 20 - February 2, 2004

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such acts to operate within its territory and to condemn unequivocally and renounce all acts, methods and practices of terrorism."

That, too, was ignored. In 1993, the United States discovered an Iraqi government plot to assassinate former president George H.W. Bush and the emir of Kuwait. In retaliation, President Bill Clinton ordered a nighttime, cruise-missile attack on Iraqi intelligence headquarters. The facility being practically empty at that hour made the attack little more than a gesture, but Clinton was on record as recognizing the terrorist threat Saddam presented. That same year, Islamist terrorists attempted to blow up the World Trade Center in New York City. Clinton's CIA director, R. James Woolsey, found convincing evidence of a connection between one of the terrorists and Iraqi intelligence.

But there was widespread disagreement in the CIA about the connection, and nothing was resolved. Meanwhile, the United Nations and Iraq played a cat-and-mouse game over the "unconditional" WMD inspections, with an occasional unenforced resolution demanding Baghdad's full cooperation,

through 1995. That year, a senior Iraqi official defected with details of an ongoing biological-weapons program. Faced with the evidence, the Iraqi regime admitted to producing tens of thousands of liters of anthrax and other toxins, with U.N. inspectors convinced that Iraq may have produced four times as much and suspecting that Iraq stockpiled blister agents and nerve agents including VX.

In 1996, the U.N. Security Council twice demanded that Iraq cease violations and twice demanded full cooperation with inspectors. It did so again in 1997 — three more times. By 1998, the Clinton administration had had enough. President Clinton declared in February 1998, "One way or another, we are determined to deny Iraq the capacity to develop weapons of mass destruction and the missiles to deliver them. That is our bottom line." Albright and then-National Security Adviser Sandy Berger made similar pronouncements. Republicans on Capitol Hill criticized the administration for being weak. U.S. House Speaker Newt Gingrich accused world leaders of "incremental timidity" and called for the forcible overthrow of

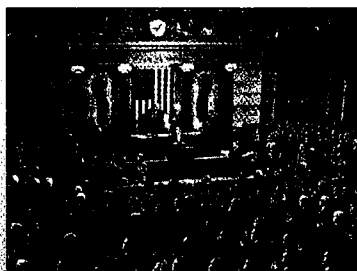
Saddam. But the Clinton administration ruled out regime change. Defense Secretary William Cohen told reporters, "It is not our goal to remove Saddam Hussein."

With that, the United Nations made more demands that Iraq cooperate with WMD inspectors. Finally, in the fall of 1998, Iraq ceased all interaction with UNSCOM. The United Nations pulled out its inspectors and, for good measure, the Security Council again voted to condemn the regime. In retaliation for Iraq's closure of weapons inspections and citing the terms of the 1991 cease-fire, Clinton ordered cruise-missile attacks on nearly 100 suspected nuclear-, chemical- and biological-weapons facilities across Iraq; British forces also attacked. A full year went by. In December 1999, U.N. Security Council Resolution 1284 replaced UNSCOM with a new group, the U.N. Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) and set a timetable for renewed WMD inspections. Iraq refused the terms and rejected UNMOVIC.

Almost another year went by. In November 2000, with the presidential election between Vice President Al Gore and

**Jan. 29, 2002**

**State of the Union** address. Bush identifies Axis of Evil: "Time is not on our side."



2002

**Sept. 12, 2002**

**At U.N.,** Bush challenges members to confront "grave and gathering danger" or step aside.

**Oct. 10-11, 2002**  
**Congressional Joint Resolution** authorizes use of force against Iraq. House, 296-133; Senate, 77-23

**Oct. 23, 2002**

**U.S. introduces** draft UN Security Council Resolution.

**Jan. 28, 2003**

**State of the Union** address. Bush says Saddam "is not disarming." Warns that U.S. will lead coalition to enforce U.N. resolutions.



2003

**April 20, 2002**

**Peace Groups** organize protests against the war on terrorism, destruction of Taliban and hunt for al-Qaeda.

**July 2002**

**At U.N., Secretary-General Kofi Annan** seeks WMD inspections under Res. 1284, which Iraq rejects.

**Nov. 8, 2002**

**Security Council** unanimously adopts Res. 1441, gives Iraq seven days to accept terms and 30 days to declare WMDs and missiles. Iraq accepts.

**Nov. 27, 2002**

**U.N. inspections** resume under UNMOVIC and IAEA.

**Dec. 19, 2002**

**Hans Blix**, UNMOVIC leader, says the Iraqi documents are "a reorganized version of a 1997 declaration" and are "not enough to create confidence."

**Dec. 7, 2002**

**Iraq hands over** 12,000 pages of documents claiming accurate, full and complete inventory of WMDs while denying it has WMDs.

**Jan. 27, 2003**

**Inspectors Report** to Security Council says "Iraq appears not to have carried out a technical acceptance, not even today, of the disarmament demands of the U.N."



January 2003-February 2, 2004

Texas Gov. George W. Bush tied up in vote-counting and a Supreme Court decision, Saddam again refused more weapons inspections. The United States underwent its own sort of regime change: in January 2001 George W. Bush took office. The Senate did not confirm his top Defense Department policy leaders until July and the president's national-security team really didn't take official shape until August. Then, on September 11, the al-Qaeda terrorists made up for the unsuccessful 1993 World Trade Center bombing, this time leveling both 110-story skyscrapers, striking the Pentagon and coming close to hitting another major target in Washington.

Saddam's government praised the attackers — further distinguishing him from other rogue dictators. Intelligence poured in about the perpetrators, including a report from the Czech Republic where counterintelligence officers monitoring an Iraqi agent in Prague saw him meet with Mohammed Atta, the leader of the 9/11 attacks, shortly after Atta's last trip to the states. Some in the U.S. intelligence community discounted the report but the Czechs stuck by it. Either way, President Bush felt a new sense of

urgency about dealing with regimes that supported terrorism and sponsored secret WMD projects.

In his January 2002 State of the Union address, with the war against the Taliban and al-Qaeda well under way, Bush stressed as he had for months that the 9/11 perpetrators were not the only enemy in the war on terrorism. He identified Iraq, Iran and North Korea as the new "Axis of Evil," warning the public, "Time is not on our side." He unveiled his pre-emption policy that June in an address to the graduates at West Point. U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan met in July with Iraqi officials, who rejected new WMD inspection proposals. The next month, Annan repeated the offer while the White House added teeth.

Addressing the U.N. General Assembly on Sept. 12, 2002, Bush stated that case to the world, itemizing more than a decade of unenforced resolutions. He challenged the United Nations to confront "grave and gathering danger." (Electronic searches find that, contrary to the critics, the administration never said Iraq presented an "imminent" danger.) The speech sparked broader diplomatic initiatives. The Arab League

called on Saddam to abide by the U.N. resolutions. The Saudi foreign minister reinforced the Arab League separately on Sept. 15.

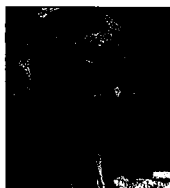
By now, with Bush requesting a formal congressional vote of approval for the use of force, the issue of Iraq was breaking out of its broadly bipartisan confines as Gore and Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) led the attack. Even in their harsh criticisms, both admitted that for years — i.e., since before the administration had taken office just 21 months earlier — intelligence backed Bush's argument. Gore admitted in a Sept. 23, 2002, San Francisco speech, "Iraq's search for weapons of mass destruction has proven impossible to completely deter and we should assume that it will continue for as long as Saddam is in power." Kennedy acknowledged four days later, "We have known for many years that Saddam Hussein is seeking and developing weapons of mass destruction."

The question, then, was what to do about it. France, Germany, Russia, many American Democrats and a smattering

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**Feb. 5, 2003**

**Colin Powell** addresses U.N. Security Council on Iraqi WMDs in violation of Res. 1441.



**March 1, 2003**

**At U.N.,** Bush challenges members to confront "grave and gathering danger" or step aside for those who will.

**March 10, 2003**

**U.S. introduces** draft U.N. Security Council Resolution. Powell gives Iraq 10 days to comply.

**March 20, 2003**

**Operation Iraqi Freedom** begins with land invasion from Kuwait.

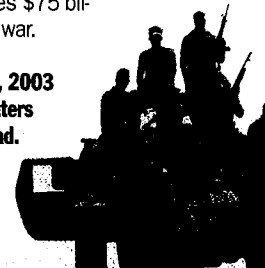
**March 30, 2003**

**U.S. Gen. Tommy Franks** says war is on schedule, while critics compare it to Vietnam.

**April 4, 2003**

**Baghdad airport seized** by U.S. forces. Congress approves \$75 billion for war.

**April 9, 2003**  
**Saddam's statue falls.**



**Feb. 22, 2003**

**U.S., U.K., Spain** submit draft resolution to U.N. Security Council authorizing force against the Iraqi regime because it "has failed to take the opportunity afforded in Res. 1441."

**March 6, 2003**

**Bush says he is ready** to attack Iraq with or without explicit UN permission.

**March 14, 2003**

**Eight of 15 UN Security Council** members support U.S. resolution, one short of needed nine votes. Resolution is withdrawn.

**March 17, 2003**

**Bush gives Saddam** 48 hours to leave Iraq or coalition will attack, saying U.N. Security Council has not lived up to its obligations.

2003

**Feb. 14, 2003**

**Hans Blix** says Iraqis will not account for bio weapons, but leaves room for more debate.

**March 1, 2003**

**Iraq meets deadline** to destroy all al-Samoud 2 missiles, but not to account for its WMDs.

**March 10, 2003**

**France, Russia** pledge to veto U.S. resolution.

**March 17, 2003**

**U.N. monitors** leave region.

**March 19, 2003**

**Deadline passes** for Saddam to leave Iraq.

**Feb. 15, 2003**

**"Peace" demonstrations** in more than 600 cities around the world, including Baghdad and Pyongyang, coincide with North Korean leader's birthday. U.S. rallies are coordinated by pro-NK group, the Workers World Party.

**Feb. 24, 2003**

**France, Germany, Russia** submit an opposing resolution calling for intensified inspections.

**March 7, 2003**

**UNMOVIC and IAEA** report to U.N. Security Council saying they need more time to verify Iraqi compliance.



**March 22, 2003**

**Massive 'antiwar' protests** in New York, London and elsewhere.



# HISTORY OF THE IRAQ WAR

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of Republicans opposed military action. Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair authored a U.N. resolution with a tough deadline for Saddam's final cooperation or, as with the United Nations' 1990 ultimatum on Kuwait, face "all necessary means." A congressional joint resolution authorized force: 296-133 in the House and 77-23 in the Senate. The United States then introduced its draft U.N. resolution and, on Nov. 8, the Security Council unanimously adopted a revised version, Resolution 1441, giving Saddam seven days to accept the terms for tougher weapons inspections and 30 days to declare all its WMD and missile programs. Iraq agreed by the deadline, and UNMOVIC and IAEA inspections resumed by the end of the month.

Bush kept up the pressure behind the recalcitrant United Nations. At a Nov. 20, 2002, NATO summit, he stated, "The United Nations has said [to Saddam] 16 different times, 'You must disarm.' And 16 times, he's said, 'Oh, of course, I will' — but never did. And so, the game's over with; we're through with that. And now

he's going to disarm one way or the other." Echoing the 1991 Security Council Resolution that called Saddam's arsenal a threat to world peace, Bush vowed, "In the name of peace, he will be disarmed." But the Iraqi regime was acting like it was cooperating without actually doing so. It handed U.N. inspectors 12,000 pages of documents, claiming an "accurate, full and complete" WMD-program inventory while denying the existence of WMDs themselves. The information didn't suit UNMOVIC leader Hans Blix, who called the documents "essentially a reorganized version" of a 1997 declaration and "not enough to create confidence" that Iraq had discontinued its WMD programs. The world had to assume that they were still under way.

Concerns heightened in January 2003 when inspectors found 11 undeclared, empty chemical warheads at an Iraqi site. Blix reported to the Security Council, "Iraq appears not to have come to a genuine acceptance, even today, of the disarmament that was demanded of it." Bush, in his second successive State of the Union address, again warned about Iraq. Even under renewed pressure with threats of force, Bush said, Saddam "is

not disarming." The president warned that the United States would lead a coalition to enforce the U.N. resolutions. A strong diplomatic drive continued, with Secretary of State Colin Powell briefing the United Nations with intelligence on WMD programs that violated the latest resolution, No. 1441.

Blix, on Feb. 14, stated that Iraq would not account for its biological weapons. That weekend "peace" demonstrations in more than 600 cities around the world, including Baghdad and Pyongyang and coinciding with North Korean leader Kim Jong-il's birthday, demanded no force against Saddam. Rallies in the United States were coordinated by a pro-North Korea group, the Workers World Party [see "Marching for Saddam," March 14-17, 2003]. Spain joined the United States and Britain in submitting a draft Security Resolution authorizing force because the regime "has failed to take the final opportunity afforded to it in Resolution 1441." France, Germany and Russia introduced an opposing memorandum for more inspections.

By March 1, Iraq had met a U.N. deadline to destroy all outlawed missiles and rocket engines but missed the

**April 11, 2003**  
French, German, Russian leaders meet in Moscow to plot next move against coalition and Iraq.

**April 15, 2003**  
U.S. announces end to major fighting.

**May 4, 2003**  
Ambassador Paul Bremer takes over from Gen. Garner as civil administrator.

**May 30, 2003**  
Powell and Blair separately defend intelligence used to justify war.

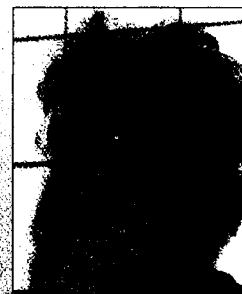
**Sept. 7, 2003**  
Bush asks Congress for \$87 billion for Iraq occupation. Calls Iraq 'front line' in war against terror.

**April 14, 2003**  
First U.S.-Iraqi joint patrols: Marines take Tikrit.

**April 21, 2003**  
U.S. sets up new civil administration in Iraq under retired Gen. Jay Garner.

**July 22, 2003**  
Uday and Qusay killed by U.S. forces in Mosul.

**December 14, 2003**  
U.S. forces capture Saddam Hussein hiding in a hole outside Tikrit.



U.S. and Coalition

2003

**April 20, 2003**  
Roundup of the head of Saddam's nerve gas program, the secret police chief, finance minister, deputy prime minister, prime minister and others within a period of a few days.

**April 25, 2003**  
U.S. arrests Farouk Hijazi, intelligence officer who met with bin Laden and allegedly is tied to al-Qaeda.



**May 12, 2003**  
U.S. arrests 'Mrs. Arthur' — suspected head of WMD programs.

**July 13, 2003**  
Provisional Iraqi Governing Council is seated as beginning of transition to Iraqi rule.

**Aug. 19, 2003**  
U.N. headquarters in Baghdad destroyed by suicide bomber after U.N. refused to offer security; two dozen die, including U.N. mission chief.

**May 22, 2003**  
U.N. Security Council approves U.S.-led coalition's 1991 sanctions.

**Oct. 16, 2003**  
U.N. Security Council unanimously backs U.S.-led coalition's new rebuilding Iraq sanctions.



U.S. and Coalition

deadline to account for its WMDs. Bush announced five days later that he was ready to enforce the United Nations' WMD resolutions with or without the United Nations. IAEA and UNMOVIC told the Security Council that they needed more time to verify compliance. Britain, Spain and the United States introduced a resolution giving Iraq 10 days to cooperate fully — for the very last time — with Security Council WMD demands.

France and Russia pledged to veto any resolution that would authorize the use of force against Saddam, working feverishly in the Security Council for votes with Mexico as an ally against the United States. On March 14 more than half the Security Council members said they would support the British-Spanish-U.S. resolution, but the eight-vote majority fell one short of the needed nine. The U.S.-led coalition decided not to call for a formal vote. Two days later Bush, Blair and the prime ministers of Portugal and Spain met in the Azores to press a final time for the United Nations to back its resolutions with the forcible disarmament of Iraq.

Britain declared the diplomatic process over on March 17, as U.N. monitors left the region. Bush, declaring that Baghdad "has used diplomacy as a ploy to gain time and advantage," gave Saddam 48 hours to leave Iraq or the coalition would attack. He brushed aside the United Nations: "The United Nations Security Council has not lived up to its responsibilities, so we will rise to ours."

With the deadline passing, war began on the night of March 19-20. Four days into Operation Iraqi Freedom, with more than 100,000 troops in harm's way, Senate Democratic Leader Tom Daschle of South Dakota pronounced the Bush policy a failure: "I'm saddened, saddened that this president failed so miserably at diplomacy that we're now forced to war; saddened that we have to give up one life because this president couldn't create the kind of diplomatic effort that was so critical for our country."

The next day, March 25, the *New York Times* warned that the U.S. Marines were "bogged down," a theme repeated until the liberation of Baghdad, along with incessant questioning about U.S. force strength, the length of supply lines and the overall strategy. As U.S. Gen. Tommy Franks, commander of U.S. Central Command, told the public on March 30 that the war was proceeding on schedule, critics back home started comparing it to Vietnam. The *New York Times* warned that the United States would endure heavy casualties in the upcoming battle for the Iraqi capital.

Unknown to the public, the war was

having favorable effects that reached far beyond Iraq. Sometime during the month of March, Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi secretly reached out to the British government and, later, to the United States, offering to stop all his WMD programs, submit them to international inspections and destroy them. He would later hint that the Iraq war motivated him to make the pre-emptive offer. Once again, the naysayers would be proved wrong. On April 1, mild-mannered Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, blasted "bogus" news reports about the weakness of U.S. forces. The Iraqi military and Republican Guard collapsed; Baghdad fell on April 9.

Within two days, French, German and Russian leaders met to plot their next move against the coalition and the new free Iraq. Coalition forces apprehended top regime officials, including the heads of the nerve-agent and anthrax programs. On April 17, after free Iraqi leaders met under U.N. sponsorship to form a provisional government, Bush called on the United Nations to remove the 1991 sanctions against Iraq. France said no. More evidence of state-sponsored terrorism surfaced: the capture of Abu Abbas, wanted by the United States for his 1985 hijacking of an Italian cruise ship, and the arrest of Iraqi intelligence officer Farouk Hijazi, who had met with Osama bin Laden and allegedly was liaison to al-Qaeda.

Satisfied with the war's progress, Bush made a dramatic landing on the deck of the returning aircraft carrier *USS Abraham Lincoln* on May 1 and proclaimed that major combat operations were over. The rest of the world now was coming around to the U.S. position. Diplomacy was winning in almost every capital but Paris, Berlin and Moscow. By then, 45 countries were part of the coalition, with Australian, British and Polish combat troops on the ground and other nations providing covert support. The U.N. Security Council passed a resolution supporting the U.S.-led occupation and ending the 1991 economic sanctions.

Late May and June saw a change in the political tide back home for Bush and Blair, whose political opponents leaked stories to the press alleging that they used faulty, false or biased intelligence to justify war. One of the most dramatic was the allegation that Bush's State of the Union message was based on phony information about uranium from Niger, an unsubstantiated charge that nevertheless had legs that the opposition used to browbeat both leaders and the war. Over the summer, billionaire George Soros and others met with former Clinton officials, including former American

Civil Liberties Union figure Morton Halperin, to finance a strident anti-Bush campaign [see "Soros Resolves to Bring Bush Down," Dec. 9-22, 2003]. Former vice president Gore, in an Aug. 9 speech, itemized Bush's reasons for attacking Iraq and said, "Now, of course, everybody knows that every single one of these impressions was just dead wrong." It was a contradiction from his own statements only 10 months earlier.

After Bush asked Congress in September for an additional \$87 billion for the war and reconstruction effort, Sen. Kennedy alleged that the justification for invading Iraq was "made up in Texas," adding, "This whole thing is a fraud." That was dangerous talk in wartime and other Democrats knew it. Combined with misleading reporting that focused attention on terrorist and guerrilla attacks, the rhetoric was a volatile mix. Returning from Iraq, Rep. Jim Marshall (D-Ga.), wrote an important piece in the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, saying that such reporting was emboldening the terrorist enemy and "killing our troops."

Kennedy and others seemed not to care. On Oct. 16, Kennedy accused the White House of giving "trumped-up reasons" for going to war and for telling "lie after lie after lie." The U.N. Security Council apparently thought otherwise, voting unanimously to back an Anglo-American resolution on rebuilding Iraq. But Democratic leaders, now in a pitched battle for the 2004 presidential election, already were in overdrive. On Nov. 7, Fox News discovered a private memo by a senior Democratic member of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence that laid out a plan, already in the works, to use the sensitive panel for bipartisan attacks on the president and his reasons for going to war. The staffer's boss, Sen. Jay Rockefeller (D-W.Va.) publicly defended his staffers and refused either to renounce the memorandum or identify the authors [see "Democrats Subvert War Intelligence," Jan. 6-19]. Senate Republicans huffed and puffed but took no real action.

But the American servicemen fighting in Iraq forged ahead despite the backstabbing back home. On Dec. 14 they captured Saddam Hussein, hiding in a hole outside Tikrit. Before Bush and Blair could comment to the public, French President Jacques Chirac and German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder issued statements lauding the capture. Later, the United States secured pledges from major countries that had picked the losing side to eat billions of dollars in bad loans to Saddam.

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