

*How did the U.S. government lead its people to war?*

## Rhetoric and Spin

### Using uncertainty as a tool to generate fear

The hard intelligence and evidence to justify a war with Iraq was thin. Bush officials transformed this weakness to their advantage by recharacterizing the lack of solid evidence as a dangerous and threatening variable. They exploited the uncertainty of what was *not known* in order to generate fear in an American public that was feeling vulnerable after 9/11.

#### Video: UNCERTAINTY



A Mechanism for War

Rhetoric and Spin

Epic Struggle

An 'Either/Or' World

Iraq, Al-Qaeda and 9/11

There is No Doubt

● Using Uncertainty as a Tool to Generate Fear

Spinning Agreement Where There's

Disagreement

Verbal Sleights of Hand

Empty Promises

"The War on Terror"

Enemy Motives

Caves and Shadows

"Peace" and "Freedom"

War Through Rose-Colored Glasses

Abuses and Misuses of Intelligence

A Mythic Reality

Items of Note

Bush Administration Claims vs. The Facts

**VICE PRESIDENT CHENEY:** We have to assume there's more there

than we know. What we know is just bits and pieces we gather through the intelligence system. But nobody ever mails you the entire plan.

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**GENERAL RICHARD MYERS:** Our intelligence is always imperfect, and we usually find out that what we don't know is the most troublesome.

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**RICE:** The problem here is that there will always be some uncertainty about how quickly he can acquire nuclear weapons. But we don't want the smoking gun to be a mushroom cloud.

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**PRESIDENT BUSH:** ...No one likes war, but they also don't like the idea of Saddam Hussein having a nuclear weapon. Imagine what would happen. And by the way, we don't know how close he is to a nuclear weapon right now. We know he wants one, but we don't know.

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**RUMSFELD:** We know of certain knowledge that we know these things. We know them. We also know there's a category of things we don't know. And then we don't even know a category of things that we don't know.

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