

Search: Web Search

Home U.S. Business World Entertainment Sports Tech Politics Elections Science Health Most Popular

Politics Video Elections White House Congress U.S. Government World Supreme Court Press Releases

Search: All News Search Advanced

Study: False statements preceded war



AP Photo: President Bush addresses the media in the Roosevelt Room of the White House in Washington,...

By DOUGLASS K. DANIEL, Associated Press Writer
Wed Jan 23, 6:43 AM ET

WASHINGTON - A study by two nonprofit journalism organizations found that [President Bush](#) and top administration officials issued hundreds of false statements about the national security threat from [Iraq](#) in the two years following the 2001 terrorist attacks.

The study concluded that the statements "were part of an orchestrated campaign that effectively galvanized public opinion and, in the process, led the nation to war under decidedly false pretenses."

The study was posted Tuesday on the Web site of the Center for Public Integrity, which worked with the Fund for Independence in Journalism.

White House spokesman Scott Stanzel did not comment on the merits of the study Tuesday night but reiterated the administration's position that the world community viewed Iraq's leader, [Saddam Hussein](#), as a threat.

"The actions taken in 2003 were based on the collective judgment of intelligence agencies around the world," Stanzel said.

The study counted 935 false statements in the two-year period. It found that in speeches, briefings, interviews and other venues, Bush and administration officials stated unequivocally on at least 532 occasions that Iraq had [weapons of mass destruction](#) or was trying to produce or obtain them or had links to [al-Qaida](#) or both.

"It is now beyond dispute that Iraq did not possess any weapons of mass destruction or have meaningful ties to al-Qaida," according to Charles Lewis and Mark Reading-Smith of the Fund for Independence in Journalism staff members, writing an overview of the study. "In short, the Bush administration led the nation to war on the basis of erroneous information that it methodically propagated and that culminated in military action against Iraq on March 19, 2003."

Named in the study along with Bush were top officials of the administration during the period studied: [Vice President Dick Cheney](#), national security adviser [Condoleezza Rice](#), Defense Secretary [Donald H. Rumsfeld](#), Secretary of State [Colin Powell](#), Deputy Defense Secretary [Paul Wolfowitz](#) and White House press secretaries [Ari Fleischer](#) and [Scott McClellan](#).

Bush led with 259 false statements, 231 about weapons of mass destruction in Iraq and 28 about Iraq's links to al-Qaida, the study found. That was second only to Powell's 244 false statements about weapons of mass destruction in Iraq and 10 about Iraq and al-Qaida.

The center said the study was based on a database created with public statements over the

ADVERTISEMENT

REPLAY

Find your version of happiness on Yahoo! Personals.

Search now.

I'M A W SEEKING A M

AGE TO ZIP

YAHOO! PERSONALS

Search

POLITICS VIDEO



[Dirty politics in South Carolina?](#)
AP



[Will Congress' Stimulus Plan Work?](#)
ABC News

» All news video



[Not so super](#)
The '08 race is so close that Super Tuesday won't crown either party's nominees.

[Kucinich ends White House bid](#)

[Giuliani's Florida win appears in danger](#)

[Unions work in Florida, as party rules keep Dem contenders out](#)

[Political Dashboard](#)

ELSEWHERE ON THE WEB

CNN.com: [GOP debaters take on Clinton more than rivals](#)

ABC News: [Clinton Defends Bill; Offers Subdued Tone](#)

McClatchy Newspapers: [Florida's primary is a mini-version of a national stage](#)

two years beginning on Sept. 11, 2001, and information from more than 25 government reports, books, articles, speeches and interviews.

"The cumulative effect of these false statements — amplified by thousands of news stories and broadcasts — was massive, with the media coverage creating an almost impenetrable din for several critical months in the run-up to war," the study concluded.

"Some journalists — indeed, even some entire news organizations — have since acknowledged that their coverage during those prewar months was far too deferential and uncritical. These mea culpas notwithstanding, much of the wall-to-wall media coverage provided additional, 'independent' validation of the Bush administration's false statements about Iraq," it said.

ADVERTISEMENT

On the Net:

Center For Public Integrity: <http://www.publicintegrity.org/default.aspx>

Fund For Independence in Journalism: <http://www.tfij.org/>

[Email Story](#) [IM Story](#) [Printable View](#)

FEATURED IN YAHOO! NEWS



Election coverage and analysis from Congressional Quarterly.

[» More from Congressional Quarterly](#)

Add headlines to your personalized My Yahoo! page (About My Yahoo! and RSS)

White House News - AP

Terrorism

Iraq

[» More news feeds](#)

NEWS ALERTS

Get an alert when there are new stories about:

- Vice President Dick Cheney
- Ari Fleischer
- weapons of mass destruction
- White House press secretaries
- Secretary of State Colin Powell

Add Selected Alerts

[» More alerts](#)

RECOMMEND THIS STORY

Recommend It:

Average (8602 votes)



[» Recommended Stories](#)

Full Coverage: Bush Administration

OFF THE WIRES

[Bush visit to Africa Feb. 15-21](#) AP, 10 minutes ago

[Bush to visit Africa in February](#) Reuters, 55 minutes ago

NEWS STORIES

[Rice Rebukes Bush Envoy Who Criticized Policy on North Korea](#) at The New York Times, Jan 23

[Bush Nudges Mideast on Democracy](#) at The Washington Post, Jan 14

FEATURE ARTICLES

[Where Are the White House E-mails?](#) Time.com via Yahoo! News, Jan 24

[Text of Bush's comments on economy](#) AP via Yahoo! News, Jan 18

OPINION & EDITORIALS

[Bush's Diplomatic Amends](#) at The Washington Post, Jan 14

[Bush drills for Middle East deals](#) The Christian Science Monitor via Yahoo! News, Jan 08

Politics News

- [Clinton says she must counterattack](#) AP
- [GOP rivals depict Clinton as unworthy](#) AP
- [Campaign frustrates some gay activists](#) AP
- [Obama navigates racial minefield in S.C.](#) AP
- [Analysis: McCain, Romney jockey for top](#) AP

Most Viewed - Politics

- [Senate pressured to OK stimulus deal](#) AP
- [GOP rivals depict Clinton as unworthy](#) AP
- [Bush speech to have few new ideas](#) AP
- [Campaign frustrates some gay activists](#) AP
- [Second break in at Romney headquarters](#) AP

Politics Video

[Dirty politics in South Carolina?](#) AP - Thu Jan 24, 10:45 PM ET

[Will Congress' Stimulus Plan Work?](#) ABC News - Thu Jan 24, 9:36 PM ET

[Kucinich says he quitting White House race](#) AP - Thu Jan 24, 10:44 PM ET

[Does Clinton Have the Hispanic Vote?](#) ABC News - Thu Jan 24, 7:07 PM ET

Sponsored Links

(What's this?)

[Car Insurance Quotes Online](#)

Compare auto insurance quotes from top companies online.

www.insurance.com

[Fed Cuts Interest Rates Again](#)

Mortgage Rates Hit 26 Month Lows. Calculate Your New Mortgage Payment.

www.LowerMyBills.com

[Get a Free iPod Shuffle](#)

Complete just 1 offer and it is your's free.

www.myeasyrewards.com

Search:

All News



Search

Advanced

Yahoo! - My Yahoo! - Mail

[Home](#) | [U.S](#) | [Business](#) | [World](#) | [Entertainment](#) | [Sports](#) | [Tech](#) | [Politics](#) | [Science](#) | [Health](#) | [Travel](#) | [Most Popular](#) | [Odd News](#) | [Opinion](#)

Copyright © 2008 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. The information contained in the AP News report may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed without the prior written authority of The Associated Press.

Copyright © 2008 Yahoo! Inc. All rights reserved.

[Questions or Comments](#)

[Privacy Policy](#) - [Terms of Service](#) - [Copyright/IP Policy](#) - [Ad Feedback](#)