

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

Bush Administration Claims vs. The Facts

Two trailers found in Mosul and Irbil in Iraq were not mobile biological weapons labs.



Administration Claims:

Two mobile trailers were found in Mosul and Irbil five weeks after the Iraq War began. During the eight months afterwards, senior Bush administration officials claimed that the trailers were mobile biological weapons production labs and served as conclusive evidence of Iraq's active weapons of mass destruction (WMD) program.

Facts:

Soon after the discovery of the two trailers, it was determined by top British, U.S. and U.N. bioweapons inspectors that the trucks housed hydrogen generation units used to fill weather balloons, rather than equipment for the production of lethal biological agents. The State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research and the CIA-appointed Iraq Survey Group also found no evidence to corroborate the claim of the existence of a mobile biological weapons program.

Overview:

By late May of 2003 – one month after the two trailers were found – both trucks were inspected and unequivocally determined by U.S. bioweapons experts to be unsuitable for biological weapons production. Notwithstanding, President Bush and senior members of his administration continued from May 2003 through January 2004 to state that the trailers were, in fact, mobile bioweapons labs.

A Mechanism for War

Rhetoric and Spin

War Through Rose-Colored Glasses

Abuses and Misuses of Intelligence

A Mythic Reality

Items of Note

Bush Administration Claims vs. The Facts

No weapons of mass destruction found

● No mobile biological weapons labs

Iraq did not seek to acquire yellowcake uranium

Aluminum tubes not for nuclear weapons

Mohamed Atta did not meet with Iraqis

Iraq did not provide training to al-Qaeda

No collaboration between Iraq and al-Qaeda

Iraq was not involved in the attacks of 9/11

The Costs of War

Timeline of
FACTS vs. CLAIMS

March 19, 2003

The U.S. launches military strikes, commencing the Iraq War.



April 29, 2003

The *Los Angeles Times*, "Truck Is Tested for Biological Agents" [\[link to source\]](#)



"American forces in northern Iraq have seized a truck that U.S. intelligence officials... said they believe could be a mobile biological weapons laboratory."

May 21, 2003

In advance of a report to be issued by the CIA and Defense Intelligence Agency, the *New York Times'* Judith Miller and William Broad report [\[link to source\]](#) [\[link to source\]](#)

"United States intelligence agencies have concluded that two mysterious trailers found in Iraq were mobile units to produce germs for weapons, but they have found neither biological agents nor evidence that the equipment was used to make such arms, according to senior administration officials.

"The six-page white paper, entitled *Iraqi Mobile Biological Warfare Production Plants*, contains a description of the three trailer units found so far in Iraq... The paper rejected theories that the two mobile production units were intended to make hydrogen gas for weather balloons..."[\[link to source\]](#) [\[link to source\]](#) [\[link to source\]](#)

May 27, 2003

The *Washington Post* (reported on April 12, 2006) [\[reported at a later date\]](#)
[\[link to source\]](#)

"A secret fact-finding mission to Iraq [known as the Jefferson Project]... had already concluded that the trailers had nothing to do with biological weapons.



"Leaders of the Pentagon-sponsored mission transmitted their unanimous findings to Washington in a field report on May27, 2003...

"Project leaders [had] put together a team of volunteers, eight Americans and a Briton, each with at least a decade of experience in one of the essential technical skills needed for bioweapons production.

" 'Within the first four hours,' said one team member, who.... spoke on the condition he not be named, 'it was clear to everyone that these were not biological labs.'

In the end, the final report – 19 pages plus a 103-page appendix – remained unequivocal in declaring the trailers unsuitable for weapons production.

"It was very assertive," said one weapons expert familiar with the report's contents.

"I went home and fully expected that our findings would be publicly stated," one member recalled. "It never happened. And I just had to live with it."

May 28, 2003

Despite field reports by the DIA-sponsored Jefferson Project the day before stating unequivocally that the labs were not used or designed for bioweapons production, the CIA and DIA jointly publish *Iraqi Mobile Biological Warfare Agent Production Plants*, a 6-page white paper stating the opposite [\[link to source\]](#) [\[link to source\]](#)

It states that:

"Coalition forces have uncovered the strongest evidence to date that Iraq was hiding a biological warfare program.



"Coalition experts on fermentation and systems engineering examined the trailer found in late April and have been unable to identify any legitimate industrial use—such as water purification, mobile medical laboratory, vaccine or pharmaceutical production—that would justify the effort and expense of a mobile production capability. We have investigated what other industrial processes may require such equipment—a fermentor, refrigeration, and a gas capture system—and agree with the experts that BW agent production is the only consistent, logical purpose for these vehicles.

"Senior Iraqi officials of the al-Kindi Research, Testing, Development, and Engineering facility in Mosul were shown pictures of the mobile production trailers, and they claimed that the trailers were used to chemically produce hydrogen for artillery weather balloons. Hydrogen production would be a plausible cover story for the mobile production units.

"The Iraqis have used sophisticated denial and deception methods that include the use of cover stories that are

designed to work.”

May 29, 2003

President George W. Bush, in an interview by Polish television station TVP [\[link to source\]](#) [\[link to source\]](#)

QUESTION: “Those countries who didn't support the Iraqi Freedom operation use the same argument – weapons of mass destruction haven't been found. So what argument will you use now to justify this war?”

PRESIDENT BUSH: “**We found the weapons of mass destruction. We found biological laboratories.** You remember when Colin Powell stood up in front of the world, and he said, Iraq has got laboratories, mobile labs to build biological weapons. They're illegal. They're against the United Nations resolutions, and we've so far discovered two. And we'll find more weapons as time goes on. **But for those who say we haven't found the banned manufacturing devices or banned weapons, they're wrong, we found them.**”

June 3, 2003

National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice on CNBC's Capital Report [\[link to source\]](#)

“But let's remember what we've already found. Secretary Powell on February 5th talked about a mobile, biological weapons capability. That has now been found and this is a weapons laboratory trailer capable of making a lot of agent that– dry agent, dry biological agent that can kill a lot of people. So we are finding these pieces that were described.”



June 15, 2003

Regarding an official British investigation into two trailers found in northern Iraq, a British scientist and biological weapons expert, who had examined the trailers in Iraq, told the Observer [\[link to source\]](#)

“They are not mobile germ warfare laboratories. You could not use them for making biological weapons. They do not even look like them. They are exactly what the Iraqis said they were – facilities for the production of hydrogen gas to fill balloons.”

June 26, 2003

The New York Times reports [\[link to source\]](#)

“The State Department's intelligence division is disputing the Central Intelligence Agency's conclusion that mysterious trailers found in Iraq were for making biological weapons, United States government officials said today.

“In a classified June 2 memorandum, the officials said, the department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research said it was premature to conclude that the trailers were evidence of an Iraqi biological weapons program, as President Bush has done.

June 30, 2003

Secretary of State Colin Powell on NBC's Today Show [\[link to source\]](#)

“I reviewed that presentation that I made on the 5th of February a number of times, as you might imagine, over recent weeks, and it holds up very well. It was the solid, coordinated judgment of the intelligence community. Some of the things that I talked about that day we have now seen in reality. We have found the mobile biological weapons labs that I could only show cartoons of that day. We now have them.”



July 10, 2003

Secretary of State Colin Powell's remarks at a press briefing in Pretoria, South Africa [\[link to source\]](#)

“One item I showed was cartoons of the mobile biological van. They were cartoons, artist's renderings, because we had never seen one of these things, but we had good sourcing on it, excellent sourcing on it. And we knew what it would look like when we found it, so we made those pictures. And I can assure you I didn't just throw those pictures up without having quite a bit of confidence in the information that I had been provided and that Director Tenet had been provided and was now supporting me in the presentation on, sitting right behind me.

“And we waited. And it took a couple of months, and it took until after the war, until we found a van and another van

that pretty much matched what we said it would look like. And I think that's a pretty good indication that we were not cooking the books."

September 14, 2003

Vice President Dick Cheney on NBC's *Meet The Press* [\[link to source\]](#)



"...On biological weapons [BW]—we believe he'd developed the capacity to go mobile with his BW production capability because, again, in reaction to what we had done to him in '91. We had intelligence reporting before the war that there were at least seven of these mobile labs that he had gone out and acquired. We've, since the war, found two of them. They're in our possession today, mobile biological facilities that can be used to produce anthrax or smallpox or whatever else you wanted to use during the course of developing the capacity for an attack."

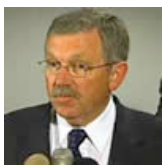
October 2, 2003

Created in June 2003, the Iraq Survey Group (ISG) was a fact-finding mission organized by the Pentagon and the CIA, consisting of 1,400 Americans, Britons and Australians charged to find weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. David Kay, head of the ISG, reports to Congress, four months after his group began a methodical search for WMD in Iraq [\[link to source\]](#)

"We have not yet been able to corroborate the existence of a mobile BW production effort."

December 2003 [\[reported at a later date\]](#)

The *Los Angeles Times* (reported on November 20, 2005) [\[link to source\]](#)



"In December 2003, Kay flew back to CIA headquarters. He said he told Tenet that Curveball was a liar and he was convinced Iraq had no mobile labs or other illicit weapons. CIA officials confirm their exchange."

January 20, 2004

President George W. Bush, in his State of the Union address [\[link to source\]](#)

"Already, the Kay Report identified dozens of weapons of mass destruction-related program activities and significant amounts of equipment that Iraq concealed from the United Nations. Had we failed to act, the dictator's weapons of mass destruction programs would continue to this day. Had we failed to act, Security Council resolutions on Iraq would have been revealed as empty threats, weakening the United Nations and encouraging defiance by dictators around the world."

January 22, 2004

Vice President Dick Cheney on National Public Radio's *Morning Edition* [\[link to source\]](#)

"In terms of the question what is there now, we know for example that prior to our going in that he had spent time and effort acquiring mobile biological weapons labs, and we're quite confident he did, in fact, have such a program. We've found a couple of semi trailers at this point which we believe were, in fact, part of that program..."

"I would deem that conclusive evidence, if you will, that he did, in fact, have programs for weapons of mass destruction."

September 30, 2004

After 18 months of exhaustive investigations, the Iraq Survey Group issues its final report [\[link to source\]](#)
[\[link to source\]](#)



"As part of its investigation into a possible Iraqi mobile BW agent production program, two mobile trailers that were recovered near Irbil and Mosul in 2003 have been examined by ISG.

"ISG has found no evidence to support the view that the trailers were used, or intended to be used, for the production of BW agents, or the filling of BW weapons.

"The information gathered, and the assessment of the equipment on the trailers, are consistent



with the theory that Iraq developed the trailers for hydrogen gas production...

“ISG judges that its Iraqi makers almost certainly designed and built the equipment exclusively for the generation of hydrogen. ISG judges that it is impractical to use the equipment for the production and weaponization of BW agent, and cannot therefore be part of any BW program.”

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