

Rumsfeld's memoir highlights Iraq lies

Plain Talk By AI Neuharth, USA TODAY Founder

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[Donald Rumsfeld](#), best known and remembered as President [George W. Bush](#)'s secretary of Defense before and during the [Iraq war](#), has penned an 815-page book released this week titled *Known and Unknown*. It should remind us of how little we knew about Iraq and how Rumsfeld, Vice President Cheney, Bush and others pulled the wool over our eyes.

To refresh your memory:

- We invaded Iraq on March 19, 2003.
- Bush, Cheney, Rumsfeld and their pro-war crowd warned us Iraq's [Saddam Hussein](#) was harboring weapons of mass destruction that he might use against neighboring countries.

But they said fixing the problem would be simple. Before the invasion, Rumsfeld told troops, "It could last, you know, [six days, six weeks, I doubt six months](#)."

Cheney said the conflict would be "weeks rather than months."

Appearing on ABC's *This Week* two weeks after the invasion (March 30, 2003), Rumsfeld said, "We know [where the \(weapons of mass destruction\) are](#). They're in the area around [Tikrit](#) and [Baghdad](#) and east, west, south and north somewhat."

They still haven't been found anywhere. Because there weren't any. Now, Rumsfeld has written a book not to clarify the misinformation and mistakes made in Iraq, but to try to salvage his reputation.

In doing so, he takes some hard hits against two key administration officials who were on the right side rather than the wrong side of the many Bush misadventures — Secretary of State [Condoleezza Rice](#) and her predecessor, [Colin Powell](#).

Rumsfeld's book is worth reading. If you do, it will help you understand how and why some politicians will do almost anything to pull the wool over our eyes in order to push their pet projects.

Feedback: Other views on Rumsfeld's book

"Settling scores or not, Rumsfeld is right that Rice and Powell share the blame for the fiascos that occurred on their watch, including invading Iraq."

— *Benjamin Friedman, research fellow, [Cato Institute](#)*

"The book is a case study in denial. Everyone around him made the mistakes, never Rumsfeld (or his friend, [Dick Cheney](#)). A drab read, too."

—*Fred Kaplan, columnist, Slate; senior fellow, [New America Foundation](#)*