

JANUARY 12, 2004

**SCHAKOWSKY: BUSH ADMINISTRATION'S MISSTATEMENT OF THE DAY -
WAR IN IRAQ**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) issued today's "Bush Administration's Misstatement of the Day" on the war in Iraq.

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Pre-War Intelligence:

Two days before the war, President Bush addressed the nation. □ He said on March 17, 2003: □

"Intelligence gathered by this and other governments leaves no doubt that the Iraq regime continues to possess and conceal some of the most lethal weapons ever devised." □ (President Bush, 3/17/03) However, former Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill, who served on the Bush Cabinet for two years and was a permanent member of the National Security Council (NSC), said: □ □

"In the 23 months I was there, I never saw anything that I would characterize as evidence of weapons of mass destruction," Secretary O'Neill to *Time* magazine. ([Chicago Sun-Times](#) ¹

["O'Neill: Bush lacked Iraq weapons proof," 1/12/03](#)

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Planning for War with Iraq:

President Bush stated on March 17, 2003:

"America tried to work with the United Nations to address this threat because we wanted to resolve the issue peacefully." □ □ And on March 19, 2003, the day the war began, President Bush declared: □

"Our nation enters this conflict reluctantly." Former Treasury Secretary O'Neill, however, contradicts the Bush Administration claims. □ In a

[60 Minutes interview \(1/11/04\)](#)

, Secretary O'Neill stated that during President Bush's first NSC meeting ". going after Saddam was topic "A" 10 days after the inauguration - eight months before Sept. 11". □ □

According to the [60 Minutes](#) interview transcript, O'Neill was surprised that questions such as "Why Saddam?" and "Why now?" were never asked during the first NSC meeting. He adds, "From the very beginning, there was a conviction, that Saddam Hussein was a bad person and that he needed to go. It was all about finding a way to do it. That was the tone of it. The president saying 'Go find me a way to do this.' "For me, the notion of pre-emption, that the U.S. has the unilateral right to do whatever we decide to do, is a really huge leap." ([CBS, 60 Minutes, 1/11/04](#))

[60 Minutes](#) also revealed that Wall Street Journal reporter Ron Suskind and author of "The Price of Loyalty" has obtained Bush Administration documents which show that the occupation of Iraq and post-Saddam Iraq were discussed in January and February of 2001. In addition, Suskind also "obtained one Pentagon document, dated March 5, 2001, and entitled "Foreign Suitors for Iraqi Oilfield contracts," which includes a map of potential areas for exploration. "It talks about contractors around the world from, you know, 30-40 countries. And which ones have what intentions," says Suskind.