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SCHAKOWSKY: BUSH ADMINISTRATION'S MISSTATEMENT OF THE DAY - IRAQI WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) issued today's ["Bush Administration's Misstatement of the Day"](#) on Iraqi weapons of mass destruction.□ □

According to an article that appeared in today's *Washington Post*, David Kay, the head of the 1200 U.S. search team in Iraq, will report that there is *"the possibility that the Iraqi leader was bluffing, pretending he had distributed them [weapons of mass destruction] to his most loyal commanders to deter the United States from invading."*

The story also added that *"[H]ussein may have put in place a double-deception program aimed at convincing the world and his own people that he was more of a threat than he actually was. This included moving equipment and personnel, and making public statements all designed to make the world and his own people believe that they had weapons of mass destruction."*

The story quoted a senior administration official with access to the underlying data on Iraq as saying: *"He [Saddam Hussein] might have been bluffing to his own people."*

President Bush, however, proclaimed on 5/29/03 during an interview with TVP, Poland:□

"We found the weapons of mass destruction." Schakowsky said, "President Bush took our nation to war based on false pretences.□ The facts now show that Iraq did not pose an imminent threat and the Bush Administration exaggerated the dangers posed by Iraq to our nation."

**Hussein's Weapons May Have Been Bluff□
Official Is Prepared To Address Issue Of Iraqi Deception□**

By Walter Pincus and Dana Priest
Washington Post Staff Writers
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With no chemical or biological weapons yet found in Iraq, the U.S. official in charge of the search for Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction is pursuing the possibility that the Iraqi leader was bluffing, pretending he had distributed them to his most loyal commanders to deter the United States from invading.

Such a possibility is one element in the interim report that David Kay, who heads the 1,200-person, CIA-led team in Iraq, will describe before the House and Senate intelligence committees on Thursday, according to people familiar with his planned testimony.

In particular, Kay has examined prewar Iraqi communications collected by U.S. intelligence agencies indicating that Iraqi commanders -- including Ali Hassan Majeed, also known as "Chemical Ali" -- were given the authority to launch weapons of mass destruction against U.S. troops as they advanced north from Kuwait.

The intelligence prompted President Bush to say shortly before the war began last March, "We have sources that tell us that Saddam Hussein recently authorized Iraqi field commanders to use chemical weapons, the very weapons the dictator tells the world he does not have."

David Albright, president of the Institute for Science and International Security and a former United Nations weapons inspector who has been in contact with Iraqi scientists since the war, said: "The idea of deployment and the authority to launch was very solid. But it's now being looked at as possibly misinformation or that they were playing with us."

This week, the officials expect Kay to say that Hussein never abandoned his ability to develop chemical and biological weapons, and remained prepared to reconstitute his nuclear program once U.N. sanctions were lifted. Data now being collected will confirm that after U.N. inspectors left Iraq in 1998, the Iraqi leader continued to buy commercial equipment that could also be used to develop the prohibited weapons.

"It is risky to say that he was doing nothing," Albright said. "Saddam was scheming once we took the boot of economic sanctions and monitoring of his facilities off his neck."

Officials said they expect Kay to document what the U.S. intelligence community has long reported about Iraq's significant efforts to deceive inspectors, including the hiding of documents and materials related to weapons programs. In a CIA white paper issued in October 2002, for example, CIA Director George J. Tenet said, "Baghdad's vigorous concealment efforts have meant that specific information on many aspects of Iraq's WMD programs is yet to be uncovered."

At least one Iraqi scientist cooperating with the CIA has said that he and others were ordered by Hussein to record all interviews with U.N. inspectors, despite a Security Council resolution calling for inspectors to have unmonitored meetings. In addition, no technicians or scientists involved with the weapons programs were allowed to leave the country, although the resolution called for them to be permitted to go abroad with their families. None ever went.

Kay's group has also obtained what it believes to be new confirmation that the Iraqis were violating the U.N. resolution that prohibited Hussein from extending the range of his missiles and developing fuels to power them.

Kay has focused on gathering the most extensive information to date on the long-held belief that Iraq had developed sophisticated means for hiding weapons, their technical components and chemical and biological ingredients for deadly weapons.

But Hussein may have put in place a double-deception program aimed at convincing the world and his own people that he was more of a threat than he actually was. This included moving equipment and personnel, and making public statements all designed to make the world and his own people believe that they had weapons of mass destruction.

It is a theory that House intelligence committee staff and members are also exploring as they finish 19 volumes of data underlying the National Intelligence Estimate, the main intelligence document used by policymakers to decide whether to invade Iraq.

Among the possibilities the committee is exploring is whether Iraq destroyed many of its weapons and equipment before the 1991 Persian Gulf War. After the war, thousands of other weapons were collected and destroyed, along with equipment and facilities under the direction of the first group of U.N. inspectors.

In 1998, after those inspectors were withdrawn, the U.S. and British attacked for four days in December, hitting more than 100 targets associated with Hussein's missiles and weapons of mass destruction programs.

"He might have been bluffing to his own people," said a senior administration official with access to the underlying data on Iraq.

One of the most popular scenarios, barring the discovery of stockpiled weapons and equipment by U.S. teams, is that Hussein kept what amounted to "starter kits" -- precursor chemicals for biological weapons, for example, that could be developed in a matter of days.