

Bush And Cheney Lied About Nukes, Al Qaeda In Iraq

According to Bush's No. 1 Intel Briefer

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It's an all-too-repetitive argument about an extremely disturbing subject: Did a sitting United States President lie to the American people in order to take us to one of the most costly wars in history?

For the left the answer is and always has been clear; there's credible evidence that the intel that sent us to Iraq to seek out weapons of mass destruction and Al Qaeda was flawed, but somehow we ended up there anyway, so someone had to have lied.

To the right, it was the faulty intel itself that sent us to Iraq; George W. Bush and his administration made decisions based on what they were told.

A new piece was introduced to the puzzle Tuesday night when Michael Morrell, once acting chief of the CIA and Bush's intelligence briefer prior to the invasion, appeared on *Hardball* with Chris Matthews. For the first time, the person that actually delivered that "flawed" intel directly to President Bush told exactly what went down, and it is absolutely infuriating.

Matthews asked Morell about a specific statement made by Dick Cheney in 2003:

"We know he [Saddam Hussein] has been absolutely devoted to trying to acquire nuclear weapons. And we believe he has, in fact, reconstituted nuclear weapons."

Matthews asked the very straightforward question, "was that true?", to which Morell answered, "No. That was not true."

While Morell says the intelligence community was telling the administration that there was a good chance Saddam had chemical or biological weapons, it was the fear of the nuclear weapon coupled with the means to deliver it to the United States that was the breaking point for the American people.

As Matthews points out, "there's no coming back from that."

Other notable moments from the thirteen-minute segment include Morell admitting that the Bush Administration added Al Qaeda to the Iraq dialogue in order to "make a better case for war," and that where the intelligence community was concerned, "when we were pushed on Iraq and Al Qaeda, we pushed back."

It's been known for quite some time that the administration was determined to go to Iraq even before 9-11, but to hear the man who actually briefed the President, whose job as he puts it is to "give him the best information possible and make sure he understands it," openly admit that credible information was either skewed or ignored, and in some cases invented, is unfathomable.

Watch excerpts of Chris Matthews' Hardball segment with Bush intelligence briefer Mike Morell:

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