

Governor Bush told Houston Journalist: If Elected. “I’m Going to Invade Iraq”

By [Sherwood Ross](#)

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Two years before the 9/11 attacks on America, George W. Bush told a Houston journalist if elected president, “I’m going to invade Iraq.”

Bush made the comments about starting an aggressive war to veteran Houston Chronicle reporter Mickey Herskowitz, then working with Bush on his book “A Charge To Keep,” later brought out by publisher William Morrow.

This disclosure was uncovered by Russ Baker, an award-winning investigative reporter when he interviewed Herskowitz for his own book, “Family of Secrets” (Bloomsbury Press) about the Bush dynasty. However, Baker says, when he approached The Washington Post and The Los Angeles Times with the potentially devastating story to President Bush prior to the 2004 presidential election, they declined to publish it.

In a new book, “Media In Crisis”(Doukathsan), Baker quotes Herskowitz as telling him: “He (Bush) said he wanted to do it(invade Iraq), and the reason he wanted to do it is he had been led to understand that you could not really have a successful presidency unless you were seen as commander-in-chief, unless you were seen as waging a war.”

Bush told Herskowitz that his father (President George H.W. Bush) knew that from Panama and (President Ronald)Reagan knew that from Grenada and...(UK Prime Minister)Maggie Thatcher knew this from the Falklands.”

According to Baker, Bush told Herskowitz, “The ideal thing was a small war, and this is why Bush said nobody was going to be killed in Iraq because he thought it would be small war.”

Bush co-authored his book “A Charge To Keep” with Karen Hughes. In his introduction to the work, Bush wrote, “I thank Mickey Herskowitz for his help and work in getting the project started.”

Baker said he believed if a major daily ran his Herskowitz interview it “could have changed the election” but “I could not get it published.” The story was turned down by both The Los Angeles Times and The Washington Post. He described the Post as “scared because of the Dan Rather thing, and they said to me, ‘What do you have in the way of evidence?’” Baker replied, “Here’s a tape of Mickey Herskowitz, who’s published 20-some books, long-time journalist of the Houston Chronicle, friend of the Bush family, telling me this story.” The Post said, “It’s not enough. In this climate, we need Bush on tape saying this.” Expressing his disappointment over the rejection, Baker said, “Well, that standard has never applied anywhere.”

The story about Bush's comments to Herskowitz is one of many about the frustrations journalists face in getting the truth to the public that appear in "Media In Crisis." The book contains the comments of five Pulitzer Prize-winning journalists, among others, and officials of various journalism foundations, as well as veteran broadcasters. The book also covers the economic woes of daily newspapers and their future, the rise of Internet bloggers and other news-purveying media, the quality of reporting, and the quality of instruction in journalism schools.

Publisher Doukathsan Press is affiliated with the Massachusetts School of Law at Andover, where a "Media In Crisis" conference was held last March upon which the new book is based. The cost of "Media In Crisis" is \$15. To obtain a copy, send check or money order to Ms. Rosa Figueiredo at Massachusetts School of Law, 500 Federal Street, Andover, Mass. 01810. #

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