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Kay Testimony Impeaches Bush

By [Robert Scheer](#), [AlterNet](#)

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Can we *now* talk impeachment?

The rueful admission by the chief U.S. weapons inspector David Kay that Saddam Hussein did not possess weapons of mass destruction or the means to create them raises the prospect that the Bush administration is complicit in the greatest scandal in U.S. history. Yet, we hear no calls for a broad-ranging investigation of the type that led to the discovery of Monica Lewinsky's infamous blue dress.

In no previous instance of presidential malfeasance was so much at stake, in preserving both constitutional safeguards and national security. This egregious deception, which lead us to war on the basis of phony intelligence, overshadow previous scandals motivated by greed, such as Teapot Dome, or partisanship, such as Watergate. What is more, the White House continues to dig itself deeper into a hole by denying reality even as its lieutenants, one-by-one, find the courage to speak the truth.

A year after using his State of the Union Address to paint Iraq's allegedly vast arsenal of WMD as a grave threat to the U.S. and the world – and even citing forged documents in those "16 words" about African uranium sales – Bush spent this month's State of the Union defending the war because "had we failed to act, the dictator's weapons of mass destruction programs would continue to this day." Bush said officials were still "seeking all the facts" about Iraq's weapons programs, but noted that weapons searchers had already identified "dozens of weapons of mass destruction-related program activities."

Vice President Dick Cheney in interviews with USA Today and the Los Angeles Times echoed this rhetorical fudging – last year "weapons," this year "programs" – declaring that "the jury's still out" on whether Iraq had WMD. Cheney declared, "I am a long way at this stage from concluding that somehow there was some fundamental flaw in our intelligence."

But a mere three days after the State of the Union Address, Kay quit and told the world what the Bush administration had been denying since taking office: That Saddam Hussein's regime was but a weak shadow of the semi-fearsome military force it had been at the time of the first Gulf War; that it

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had no significant chemical, biological or nuclear weapons programs or stockpiles still in place; and that the U.N. inspections and Allied bombing runs in the 1990s had been much more effective than their critics had believed at destroying the remnants of these programs, which simply eroded into dust.

"I'm personally convinced that there were not large stockpiles of newly produced weapons of mass destruction," Kay told the New York Times. "We don't find the people, the documents or the physical plants that you would expect to find if the production was going on. I think they gradually reduced stockpiles throughout the 1990's. Somewhere in the mid-1990's the large chemical overhang of existing stockpiles was eliminated. The Iraqis say they believed that [the UN inspection system] was more effective [than U.S. analysts believed it was], and they didn't want to get caught."

The maddening aspect of all this is that we haven't needed – although his is a welcome, if belated, breath of honesty – David Kay to set the record straight. The evidence of the Bush administration's systematic abuse of the facts and its own intelligence has been out there for all who wanted to see it for nearly two years. That's why 23 former intelligence and foreign service employees of the United States government – including several who quit in disgust – have been willing to speak out in Robert Greenwald's shocking documentary "Uncovered." The story they tell is one of an administration that decided to go to war for reasons that smack of empire-building, and then constructed a false reality in order to sell it to the American people. Is that not an impeachable offense?

After all, the President misled Congress into approving his preemptive war on the grounds that Iraq's weapons of mass destruction threatened our very survival as a nation. If we hesitated and allowed the UN inspectors who were on the ground in Iraq to do their job, a mushroom cloud over New York – to use Condoleezza Rice's imagery – might well be our dark reward. Now David Kay – who, it should be remembered, originally defended the war and dismissed the work of the UN inspectors – has spent \$900 million dollars and the time of 1400 weapons inspectors to discover what many in the CIA and elsewhere had been telling us all along. Are there to be no real repercussions for such a devastating official deceit?

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