


# How do you ask a man to be the last man to die for a mistake?

 <p>Rockland Coalition for Peace &amp; Justice</p>	<b>Casualties of war (3/19/03 - 2/5/04), and still counting ...</b>
	• <b>U.S. soldiers</b> : 528 (died), 3000 (wounded) ( <a href="http://lunaville.org">http://lunaville.org</a> , 2/6/04) 11,000 medically evacuated ( <i>United Press International</i> , 12/19/03)
	• <b>Iraqis</b> : 5,708 - 7,356 (died, 3/20/03 - 4/30/03) 2,049 - 2,209 (died, 5/1/03 - 11/14/03) ( <i>Boston Globe</i> , 11/14/03)
	• <b>U.S. Cost</b> : 79 Billion (~\$790 per household) up to now 87 Billion (for reconstruction)

## **Bush's 'Preventive War' Doctrine Under Siege**

by Howard LaFranchi, *The Christian Science Monitor*, February 4, 2004

As questions mount around the failure to find weapons of mass destruction in Iraq and the intelligence that was used to justify going to war, one of the first casualties may be the Bush administration's doctrine of preventive war.

The failure to find weapons and the clouds over prewar intelligence are also feeding US allies' doubts on the rationale for war, and solidifying opposition to the administration's stated right to preemptive war.

Also easing tensions are recent statements by Secretary of State **Colin Powell**, first **acknowledging that weapons of mass destruction may not have existed in Iraq**, and Tuesday stating in an interview that **a clear absence of stockpiled weapons might have affected his recommendation for war**.

## **Tenet: Analysts Never Claimed Imminent Threat Before War**

by William Branigin, *The Washington Post*, February 5, 2004

**CIA Director George J. Tenet** delivered a vigorous defense today of his agency's intelligence assessments on Iraq before last year's U.S.-led invasion, saying the country had illegal missiles, as well as the ability and intent to quickly produce biological and chemical weapons. But he said **the agency never described Iraq as "an imminent threat"** in the months leading up to the March 2003 invasion,

## **Couple demand: Pull U.S. troops out of Iraq**

by Catherine Wilde, *The Journal News*, January 21, 2004

HILLBURN -Last night's State of the Union address was met with skepticism and, at times, outright disagreement from John and Eleanor DeGraw. The DeGraws are the parents of U.S. Army Spc. Matthew DeGraw, a 24-year-old who served in Iraq.

"We want to hear **when he is going to pull the troops out of Iraq**," Eleanor said before President Bush's speech began last night. ...Both she and her husband agreed that the nation's resources are being depleted at home, where they are needed, by Americans having to remain in Iraq for an indefinite period.

"And **nothing about how many of our boys have died** in the process," John DeBraw lamented.

Bush acknowledged that some Americans opposed his decision to go to war in Iraq.... His words served as a reminder that the United States **has not found any banned weapons in Iraq**, which was **Bush's justification** for going to war. "**He didn't apologize about** that, not that we expected it," Eleanor DeGraw said. "I think he danced around a lot of issues, and at times it sounded more like a re-election speech than a State of the Union address," she said. She called the speech "**insensitive to families of people in the services**."

## **The Awful Truth About Iraq**

by James Carroll, *The Boston Globe*, February 3, 2004

Since David A. Kay's testimony before a Senate committee last week, the public focus has fixed upon **mistaken intelligence that led to the American invasion of Iraq**.... In counterpoint testimony to Kay's from 33 years ago,

young John Kerry famously asked a difficult question: **"How do you ask a man to be the last man to die for a mistake?"**

As the young Kerry was surely loath to apply the word "mistake" to a conflict that had killed and maimed some of his friends, an American leader must be loath to make such an admission to the families of more than 500 dead US soldiers. Yet what they died for was clearly not the noble cause as defined by Colin Powell a year ago, nor the "freedom" of which President Bush blithely speaks. Some American leader, in profound repentance, must acknowledge the awful truth to those families: **"Your sons and daughters died for a mistake."**

Only such truth-telling at home will make possible what must be done immediately in Iraq. If our getting into the unnecessary war was wrong, our carrying it on is wrong. The US military presence in Iraq, no matter how intended, has itself become the affront around which opposition fighters are organizing themselves.

**The occupation is its source and must end.** "The day I take office as president of the United States," a true American leader would declare, "I will order the immediate withdrawal of the entire American combat force in Iraq."

**And so with American commercial interests in Iraq.** ... American companies should be barred from making profits off this "mistake" -- especially oil companies.

**Ending occupation and preventing exploitation** are, of course, corollary to the far more difficult acknowledgement a new president must make -- to griefstruck American families, to the Iraqi people, and to the world: **"What we did in Iraq was a mistake.** Innocent people died. The fabric of international order was torn. We see that and have moved to undo it. But there is no undoing the unnecessary suffering we caused. And for that we are sorry."

### **Bush proposes \$2.4 trillion budget**

by Alan Fram, *The Journal News*, February 3, 2004

President Bush proposed a **\$2.4 trillion budget** yesterday, slicing scores of programs from prisons to arts education in the face of record federal deficits and the costs of war. His budget chief warned a future request for operations in Iraq and Afghanistan could add \$50 billion.

Handcuffed by shortfalls he projects will surge to an unprecedented **\$521 billion** this year....Last year's deficit hit **\$375 billion**, the highest ever in dollar terms.

If Bush's deficit and spending projections come true, the government will **borrow 22 percent** of what it spends this year and 15 percent next year. His plan **sets aside \$178 billion** next year just **for paying interest on its debt.**

### **N.Y. City Council Passes Anti-Patriot Act Measure**

By Michelle Garcia, *The Washington Post*, February 5, 2004

New York City, site of the country's most horrific terrorist attack, Wednesday became the latest in a long list of cities and towns that have formally opposed the expanded investigatory powers granted to law enforcement agencies under the USA Patriot Act.

The New York City Council approved a resolution condemning the law, enacted by Congress six weeks after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, with a voice vote in its chambers a few blocks from the gaping hole at Ground Zero.

**"The Patriot Act is really unpatriotic, it undermines our civil rights and civil liberties,"** said council member Bill Perkins (D-Manhattan), the bill's sponsor. **"We never give up our rights that's what makes us Americans."**

The resolution criticized the Patriot Act for allowing infringements on privacy rights. Among other provisions, the Patriot Act allows investigators to see citizens' library records and eases requirements for search warrants. The council requested that Congress deliver periodic reports accounting for the information and records on New Yorkers the federal government has culled under the Patriot Act, but the measure has no means to enforce that request.

"So much is being done in the name of New York, we are saying **don't use our name to infringe on people's rights,**" said Glenn C. Devitt, an organizer with the Bill of Rights Defense Committee.

**Join Rockland Coalition for Peace and Justice** for weekly peace vigils  
at Middletown Rd. & Rt. 59 in Nanuet, **every Saturday** 1-3 pm. For info:  
**www.rocklandaction.org**, or call The Fellowship of Reconciliation at 358-4601