

*How did the U.S. government lead its people to war?*

## Rhetoric and Spin

### Empty Promises

**B**ush officials would often make commitments to the American public that every reasonable step was being pursued to resolve the Iraq situation.

For example, on January 19, 2003, Colin Powell said on *Face the Nation*:

The president is *trying every means not to go to war*.

Just three weeks later, America's close allies France and Germany made a proposal to triple the number of inspectors in Iraq and to send in U.N. troops. If the president were truly 'trying every means not to go to war,' this proposal should have at least sparked interest and discussion.

Yet the Bush administration did not pursue this avenue to potentially avoid war. On *Meet the Press* on February 9, 2003, Colin Powell curtly dismissed the proposal:

#### Video: BROKEN PROMISES



Another commitment the Bush administration made was that "no matter what," the U.S. would seek a vote from the U.N. Security Council to authorize military action against Iraq.

#### Video: WE'LL CALL FOR A VOTE

A Mechanism for War

Rhetoric and Spin

Epic Struggle

An 'Either/Or' World

Iraq, Al-Qaeda and 9/11

There is No Doubt

Using Uncertainty as a Tool to Generate Fear

Spinning Agreement Where There's Disagreement

Verbal Sleights of Hand

● Empty Promises

"The War on Terror"

Enemy Motives

Caves and Shadows

"Peace" and "Freedom"

War Through Rose-Colored Glasses

Abuses and Misuses of Intelligence

A Mythic Reality

Items of Note

Bush Administration Claims vs. The Facts

Yet only 11 days later, facing defeat in the Security Council, the U.S. abruptly withdrew the resolution from consideration and went to war without U.N. authorization.

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**TIM RUSSERT:** The Germans and the French have a proposal, which they talked about again today, which would put United Nation troops in Iraq, triple the number of inspectors, and give inspections a longer time. Could you accept that proposal?

**POWELL:** The issue is not more inspectors, the issue is compliance on the part of Saddam Hussein. If he complies, if he does what he's supposed to do, and tells us where the anthrax went – Where did the botulinum toxin go? Where did all the missiles go? Where is the mustard gas? Where are all of the documents you've been hiding? If he complies, then that can be done with a handful of inspectors. But if he is not complying, tripling the numbers of inspectors doesn't deal with the issue.

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*Speaking to reporters on December 31, 2002, Christmas week:*

**BUSH:** This government will continue to lead the world toward more peace. And we hope to resolve all the situations in which we find ourselves in a peaceful way. That's my commitment, to try to do so, peacefully.

[\[continue to the next section: "The War on Terror"\]](#)

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