



New Woodward book exposes Bush's Iraq failures



Bob Woodward appears in this file photo. (AP / Elise Amendola)

CTV.ca News

Updated: Fri. Sep. 29 2006 11:06 PM ET

In his new book, veteran Watergate reporter Bob Woodward says U.S. troops and their allies are being attacked on average every 15 minutes, and the White House is lying about it. And there's much more in his portrait of George W. Bush's "dysfunctional" top advisers.

"State of Denial," Woodward's latest book on the Bush administration, will arrive in American and Canadian bookstores later this month.

According to *The New York Times*, it's a harsh attack on the White House's handling of the Iraq war. Woodward details infighting between senior officials, and alleged attempts to mislead the public about the war's progress.

During an interview with CBS's *60 Minutes*, to be broadcast Sunday, Woodward said U.S. troops are almost constantly under attack.

"It's getting to the point now where there are 800 to 900 attacks a week," said Woodward, an assistant managing editor at the *Washington Post*. "That's more than 100 a day; that is four an hour attacking our forces."

He also said Bush has sought advice on the conflict from Henry Kissinger, who served as national security adviser to Richard Nixon during the Vietnam War, and was later Secretary of State.

According to Woodward, Kissinger told U.S. President George Bush that "victory is the only exit strategy" for Iraq.

"This is so fascinating," said Woodward. "Kissinger's fighting the Vietnam War again because, in his view, the problem in Vietnam was we lost our will."

A White House spokesperson dismissed the book on Thursday, saying it was like cotton candy because it "melted on contact," and also that Woodward recycled old arguments about whether more troops are needed in Iraq.

U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld simply laughed off "State of Denial."

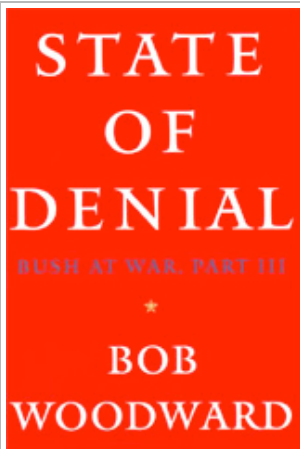
"I haven't seen the book. I haven't read his first two books yet either, so I wouldn't hold your breath on this one," Rumsfeld told reporters in Slovenia on Friday.

According to *The Times* and the *Post*, Woodward spoke to several senior government officials for the 537-page book, including Rumsfeld. But neither Bush nor Vice President Dick Cheney consented to interviews.

Among Woodward's allegations:

- Former White House chief of staff Andrew Card twice tried to persuade President Bush to fire Rumsfeld, in 2004 and 2005.
- Former National Security Council staff member Robert Blackwill pressed for more troops in Sept. 2003, but was ignored by U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. "The bottom line: we need more troops in Iraq," Blackwill wrote in a lengthy memo to Rice. He suggested 40,000 more soldiers.
- Gen. John Abizaid, the top U.S. commander for the Middle East, complained to the C.I.A. director that the war was not going as well as Rumsfeld claimed. "These bastards in Washington have no idea what they're doing," Woodward quoted Abizaid as saying in one meeting.
- Despite escalating violence, Woodward quotes Bush as saying in Nov. 2003 that "I don't want anyone in the cabinet to say it is an insurgency. I don't think we are there yet."
- At one point, Rumsfeld and Rice were on such poor terms that the defence secretary refused to return her phone calls, until Bush intervened.
- After former Secretary of State Colin Powell was removed from the administration in 2004, he said Rumsfeld should also leave. Powell apparently told a White House official: "If I go, Don should go."

- Just two months before the 9/11 attacks, on July 10, 2001, CIA director George Tenet met with Rice



The Washington Post editor's third book on the Bush administration, 'State of Denial,' comes out next week.



U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, left, and President Richard M. Nixon are shown after Kissinger was sworn in as the 56th secretary of state in the East Room of the White House in Washington, D.C., in this Sept. 22, 1973, photo. (AP Photo)

to express concern over a possible impending attack, but later felt Rice did not take his warning seriously.

- When the chief weapons inspector David Kay suggested the Iraq government may have had the ability to manufacture weapons of mass destruction without actually building any, C.I.A. Deputy Director John McLaughlin said: "Don't tell anyone this. This could be upsetting. Be very careful. We can't let this out until we're sure."
- Lt. Gen. Jay Garner, who led the first Iraq Postwar Planning Office, told Rumsfeld in June 2003 the U.S. had made three initial mistakes in Iraq: removing Baath Party members from government positions; dismantling the Iraqi military; and, the dismissal of an eager interim Iraqi leadership group.
- In May, the intelligence division of the Joint Chiefs of Staff circulated a secret document predicting that violence will continue for the rest of this year in Iraq and increase in 2007.

Woodward has written two previous books on the White House since 9/11, but both painted Bush in a relatively positive light. Columnist Dan Froomkin, a colleague at the *Post*, wrote that in "State of Denial" Woodward "comes awfully close to calling the president a liar."

Woodward is a Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter, widely respected for his coverage of the Watergate scandal, detailed in the book "All the President's Men." He wrote the book with Carl Bernstein, based on a key inside source: the mysterious Deep Throat.

Last year, that source was revealed to be W. Mark Felt, who was number 2 at the FBI when Watergate broke in the 1970s.

Woodward managed to keep Felt's identity a secret for more than 30 years, and only confirmed his source when Felt stepped forward.

With a report by CTV's Joy Malbon

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