



# **The Iraqi Perspectives Report: Saddam's Senior Leadership on Operation Iraqi Freedom from the Official U. S. Joint Forces Command Report**

*Kevin M. Woods, Michael R. Pease, Mark E. Stout*

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The overthrow of Saddam Hussein's regime opened up one of the world's most secretive governments to outside analysis. This Pentagon study takes advantage of the once-in-a-generation opportunity to delve deeply into Saddam's decision-making processes. A declassified version of the full "U.S. Joint Forces Command" report, the work is the result of a two-year study conducted by a small team of professionals led by Kevin Woods from the Joint Center for Operational Analysis to determine what drove the Iraqis to do what they did. Based on dozens of interviews with senior Iraqi military and political leaders and thousands of captured Iraqi documents, the work goes a long way towards revealing the inner workings of the regime and, in particular, Saddam's perspective of the conflict. Knowing what motivated Saddam's actions allows for a fully developed history of the war and an opportunity to get closer to the "ground truth." The release of this report has prompted news stories around the world and been the source of much debate over the role played by Russian intelligence sources in supplying information to Saddam. With the book's publication, readers have a chance to examine material themselves. They will find a portrait of a self-delusional leader who didn't take the Americans seriously - the idea that the United States would attack all the way to Baghdad was ludicrous to Saddam - but who forbade his own military to train for war, fearing they would overthrow him. Readers also will find Baath Party officials and military officers so fearful of being the bearer of bad news that once combat operations got underway they reported one success after the other right up to the time Baghdad fell. Such a substantive investigation of Saddam's leadership and its effect on the Iraqi military decision-making process goes a long way towards revealing the inner workings of that closed regime and the lessons to be learned from that knowledge.

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