**War in Iraq Part 2**

**Invasion and Overthrow 2003**

**Preparing for Invasion**

* The first [Central Intelligence Agency](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Intelligence_Agency) invasion team entered Iraq in July 2002, eight months before the invasion
* This team was composed of members of the CIA's [Special Activities Division](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Special_Activities_Division) and was later joined by members of the US military's elite [Joint Special Operations Command](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joint_Special_Operations_Command).
* Together, they prepared for the invasion of conventional forces by:
* Persuading the commanders of several Iraqi [military divisions](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military_division) to surrender rather than oppose the invasion
* Identifying all of the initial leadership targets during very high risk spying missions.
* Organized the [**Kurdish**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kurd)[**Peshmerga**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peshmerga)- The northern Iraqis that were allies to the United States and controlled the northern front of the invasion.
* Together this force defeated the [Iraqi army](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iraqi_army) in the north.

**Invasion**

* On March 19 at 9:34 p.m., two days after demanding that Saddam Hussein and his sons surrender and leave Iraq within 48 hours, the U.S.-led coalition began bombing Baghdad
* **Shock and Awe-** Tactic used by the U.S. Military to bomb all military targets in an effort to shock Iraqi soldiers and leaders into surrendering instead of fighting during the invasion
* President Bush outlines the purpose of invading Iraq: "to disarm Iraq, to free its people, and to defend the world from grave danger."
* On March 20th at 7:57 A.M., the first confirmed skirmish between American and Iraqi forces takes place.

**Baghdad Falls**

* After encountering little serious resistance, U.S. forces roll into central Baghdad and take control of Iraq's capital city.
* On April 9th, Marines pull down a giant statue of Saddam in downtown Baghdad amidst celebrating Iraqis.
* After an initial period of relative calm, lawlessness quickly spreads.
* Looting becomes rampant, and countless objects are taken from Iraq's national museum, which housed artifacts up to 10,000 years old.
* Sitting in the co-pilot's seat of a Navy S-3B Viking, President Bush lands May 1 on the USS *Abraham Lincoln*, an aircraft carrier stationed off the coast of San Diego.
* Dressed in a flight suit, he gives a nationally televised victory speech from the carrier's flight deck and declares that, "major combat operations in Iraq have ended."

**After "Mission Accomplished"**

* By June 2003, over 50 American troops had been killed since major combat operations were declared over on May 1.
* Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld blamed continued problems in Iraq on the last remnants of Saddam's Baathist regime.
* Months later, British military officials estimated there were 40,000 to 50,000 insurgent fighters in the country.
* An Iraqi intelligence director put the number at 200,000 insurgents, larger than the U.S. military in Iraq.
* In response questions about getting France, Germany and Russia to help deal with the U.S. forces, President Bush says that the U.S. troops are capable of securing the situation.
* To critics who think the U.S. will leave Iraq prematurely if the attacks continue, Bush claims "they don't understand what they're talking about."
* Three weeks later, Saddam Hussein's sons Uday and Qusay are killed in a battle with U.S. forces in Mosul.

**Truck Bombs and IED's show Insurgent Escalation**

* On August 19, two weeks after a bombing at the Jordanian embassy in Baghdad kills 14 people, a massive truck bomb destroys part of the United Nations headquarters in Baghdad.
* At least 17 people are killed, including Brazilian Sergio Vieira de Mello, U.N. Special Representative to Iraq.
* No group claims responsibility for the bombing and following the attack, most UN workers and other aid organizations leave Iraq because of lack of security
* In a video addressed to Iraqis, and broadcast on Al Jazeera, Osama Bin Laden congratulates followers on their efforts at jihad and denounces democracy as a deviation from Islam.
* Bin Laden calls upon Muslims and Iraqis especially to avoid supporting "American crusaders" and that "Any government set up by America will be a puppet and traitorous regime."
* He also claims that the war will drain the U.S. of its economic strength, which he points out has already begun to weaken.

**Finding Saddam Hussein**

* Using intelligence obtained by questioning bodyguards and family members, U.S. forces determine Saddam Hussein's whereabouts
* U.S forces find Hussein hiding in a one-person, eight-foot deep "spider hole" near his hometown of Tikrit, with two AK-47s, a pistol, and $750,000 in $100 bills.
* Exhausted and sporting a scruffy beard and shaggy hair, Hussein is transported to a U.S. base near Baghdad; images of his initial medical exam are released to the media.