

NO SENATORS KNEW

There are a number of details that make Sidney Blumenthal's latest appear to be a happy coincidence of timing. Just after Bush biographer Robert Draper reports that Bush still claims to have believed—in April 2006—that Iraq had WMD, Blumenthal comes out with an article tying up a lot of loose ends on Saddam Hussein's Foreign Minister, Naji al-Sabri, proving Bush was briefed that Saddam did not have WMD.

On Sept. 18, 2002, CIA director George Tenet briefed President Bush in the Oval Office on top-secret intelligence that Saddam Hussein did not have weapons of mass destruction, according to two former senior CIA officers. Bush dismissed as worthless this information from the Iraqi foreign minister, a member of Saddam's inner circle, although it turned out to be accurate in every detail. Tenet never brought it up again.

But I think the timing may not be so coincidental. First, on Monday, General Petraeus will get up to make his version of Colin Powell's UN speech. Petraeus will present information that is, even now, known to be false. Blumenthal's article reminds of that Powell speech prominently.