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Subject: Saddam, the Bomb and Me By MAHDI OBEIDI  
Posted by [Nodbugger](#) on Tue, 28 Sep 2004 00:31:46 GMT  
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Quote:Iraq's nuclear weapons program was on the threshold of success before the 1991 invasion of Kuwait - there is no doubt in my mind that we could have produced dozens of nuclear weapons within a few years - but was stopped in its tracks by United Nations weapons inspectors after the Persian Gulf war and was never restarted...

By 1998, when Saddam Hussein evicted the weapons inspectors from Iraq, all that was left was the dangerous knowledge of hundreds of scientists and the blueprints and prototype parts for the centrifuge, which I had buried under a tree in my garden...

Was Iraq a potential threat to the United States and the world? Threat is always a matter of perception, but our nuclear program could have been reinstated at the snap of Saddam Hussein's fingers. The sanctions and the lucrative oil-for-food program had served as powerful deterrents, but world events - like Iran's current efforts to step up its nuclear ambitions - might well have changed the situation.

Iraqi scientists had the knowledge and the designs needed to jumpstart the program if necessary. And there is no question that we could have done so very quickly. In the late 1980's, we put together the most efficient covert nuclear program the world has ever seen. In about three years, we gained the ability to enrich uranium and nearly become a nuclear threat; we built an effective centrifuge from scratch, even though we started with no knowledge of centrifuge technology. Had Saddam Hussein ordered it and the world looked the other way, we might have shaved months if not years off our previous efforts.

Better to dispatch our sworn enemies BEFORE they become unmanagable threats than have to deal with them afterwards. This is the fundamental difference in philosophy that distinguishes the resolute President Bush from the indecisive Senator Kerry.

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