

State of Denial – Bush at War, Part III by Bob Woodward.
Simon and Schuster 2006.

State of Denial is the third book that Bob Woodward has written about the presidency of George W Bush, the previous two being Bush at War and Plan of Attack.

The Bush who smirks from the cover of State of Denial stands in front of applauding soldiers against the backdrop of the Stars and Stripes, yet the content of the book within details more convincingly than ever all the reasons why increasing numbers of US soldiers are questioning their service in Iraq and the judgement of their commander in chief.

State of Denial, as superbly written and well-informed as experienced readers of Bob Woodward's other books will expect, demonstrates not only the almost criminal ignorance and negligence with which the current US administration has prosecuted the war in Iraq, but also its wilful refusal to learn the lessons from its mistakes and make corrections that would have improved the situation overall and saved lives.

Woodward shows an American president who seems incapable of realising that he has thrown his country – and mine – into a disastrous, and probably illegal, war that will undoubtedly bequeath to the world at large, and the West in particular, a decades long campaign of vicious Islamist terrorism and may well, in the long run, bring about the collapse of America's position as the world superpower.

As a documentation of a disaster in the making, as it unfolded, State of Denial cannot be bettered.

Rabbi Dr Charles H Middleburgh