Reports on military operations, the security situation, the transition to Iraqi sovereignty, reconstruction efforts, and U.S. prewar intelligence

This edition of Special Studies covers the war in Iraq and its aftermath. It comprises U.S. government reports and studies from U.S. military research institutions. The sources of these reports include the Department of Defense (DoD), Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR), Government Accountability Office (GAO), Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Congressional Budget Office, Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and the Strategic Studies Institute at the U.S. Army War College.

One of the first documents in the collection is a January 29, 2003, Congressional Research Service (CRS) report entitled “Iraq War: Current Situation and Issues for Congress.” This report, issued two months before the fighting started, covers the major events leading up to the war, including congressional authorization in October 2002 to use U.S. troops in Iraq. UN Security Council Resolution 1441, the UN weapons inspectors’ report of January 27, and President Bush’s State of the Union Address on January 29. It also warns about the possibility of instability in a post-Saddam Iraq due to “inter-ethnic and factional feuding.”

Several documents describe military maneuvers during Operation Iraqi Freedom. A DoD study of “The Attack on the 507th Maintenance Company in An Nasiriyah” gives an almost minute-by-minute description of an attack that led to the death of eleven U.S. soldiers and the capture of seven U.S. soldiers. It is the only report about a specific battle, but many other reports cover military actions. A paper from the Strategic Studies Institute at the U.S. Army War College, “Why They Fight,” describes the motivations for U.S. soldiers. The military is the subject of a
The collection contains papers on many other subjects, including the status of women in Iraq, human rights violations during Saddam Hussein’s regime, the impact of the war on U.S. foreign relations, and comparisons between this war and other conflicts in the Middle East, as well as other wars fought by the United States. The collection concludes with the Iraq Study Group report.

Overall, this edition offers students a wide range of timely and in-depth reports on a controversial war.