

Rumsfeld captured thoughts in 'snowflakes'

by UPI

WASHINGTON -- Former U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld used memos to subordinates to outline how to shape public opinion on the war in Iraq, the memos show. In the memos, which he called "snowflakes," Rumsfeld revealed his dislike for media criticism and his desire to reshape opinion regarding the war, The Washington Post, which obtained the internal documents, reported Thursday. The newspaper didn't say how it obtained the memos but did report they were marked "for official use only." None were classified. In the documents, Rumsfeld argued that Muslims avoid "physical labor" and wrote about needing to "keep elevating the threat," provide an Iraq-Iran link and develop "bumper sticker statements" to rally support for the increasingly unpopular war. The memos, spanning from 2002 to his resignation in 2006, show Rumsfeld's efforts to address challenges during his tenure as Pentagon chief. Rumsfeld, whose brusque management style reportedly alienated other Cabinet members and White House staff members, produced 20 to 60 daily snowflakes, which provided the written starting point for developing policy, aides said. While Rumsfeld didn't comment, aide Keith Urbahn chided the Post, saying via e-mail, "You are running a story based off of selective quotations and gross mischaracterizations from a handful of memos -- carefully picked from the some 20,000 written while Rumsfeld served as secretary."

Copyright © 2007, by United Press International. All Rights Reserved.

Rumsfeld captured thoughts in 'snowflakes' by UPI