

## Rumsfeld is back... this time, on Twitter

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Ex-defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld no longer rules the Pentagon but he has launched a new operation, this time online and via Twitter.

A hate figure for opponents of the Iraq invasion and a hero to some neo-conservatives, Rumsfeld has started a Twitter account, promoting his foundation and upcoming memoir.

Since his polarizing stint as US defense secretary from 2001 to 2006, Rumsfeld has kept a low profile, and his book and online foray may represent a bid to repair his image.

RumsfeldOffice was up to 977 [followers](#) on Wednesday, a day after its launch.

"Follow us for updates on the Rumsfeld Foundation and the forthcoming memoir *Known and Unknown*," read one of the first [tweets](#) from his account.

The title of his memoir, due out January 25, plays on his famous and much-lampooned remark about what was known about Iraq allegedly providing weapons of mass destruction to terrorists.

"There are known unknowns; that is to say, there are things that we now know we don't know. But there are also unknown unknowns; there are things we do not know we don't know," Rumsfeld said at a press conference in 2002.

Published by Sentinel HC, the 704-page memoir promises "previously undisclosed details and insights about the Bush administration, 9/11, and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq," according to a description on Amazon.com.

And the account is delivered "with the same directness that defined his career in public service," it said.

The book will include new "recently declassified documents" while "thousands of pages of documents not yet seen by the public will be made available on an accompanying website."

Rumsfeld's role in the Iraq conflict and former president George W. Bush's "war on terror" have been the subject of numerous books and memoirs in the past four years, most of them highly critical.

Former generals and officials have painted him as a domineering figure who pushed for the Iraq invasion after the 9/11 attacks, ignored advice from military officers and backed harsh treatment for detainees.

The new memoir will offer Rumsfeld a chance to respond to his critics, including human rights activists in the US and Europe who have tried to get him prosecuted for alleged war crimes over the abuse of detainees at Guantanamo and at Abu Ghraib in Iraq.

Coinciding with the [Twitter](#) account, Rumsfeld's foundation also launched its website on Tuesday, describing its support for aspiring leaders in Central Asia and the Caucasus, micro-finance projects in Afghanistan and funding for charities helping military veterans and their families.

A 2009 annual report on the foundation's website, penned by Rumsfeld and his wife, touts more than half a million dollars in grants to military charities, microfinance organizations and exchange programs for "young leaders from Central Asia."

The organization's budget for 2010 is expected to be "slightly higher" than last year, the foundation's Keith Urbahn told AFP.

He said that "with proceeds from the book supporting military and veterans' charities next year, we expect our budget to go up again in 2011."

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