THE WAR LOBBY: IRAQ AND THE PURSUIT OF U.S. PRIMACY

by

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In my dissertation I argue that the invasion of Iraq was a part of a larger project by Vice President Dick Cheney and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld to reestablish the unconstrained use of U.S. military power after the defeat of Vietnam. The study presents the best evidence against the alternative explanations that the invasion of Iraq was the result of an overreaction to 9/11, the threat of Weapons of Mass Destruction, a plan to spread democracy in the Middle East, a desire to protect Israel or a plan to profit from Iraqi oil. The study also challenges the leading explanation among academics that emphasizes the role of the neoconservatives in the decision to invade. These academics argue that neoconservatives, such as Paul Wolfowitz and Richard Perle, successfully persuaded the American President, George W. Bush, and his Vice President, Dick Cheney, of the necessity to eliminate Saddam Hussein by winning an internal policy battle over realists, such as Secretary of State Colin Powell.

With their narrow focus on neoconservatives and realists, scholars have largely overlooked a third group of hawkish policy makers, the primacists. This latter group, centered on Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld and Vice President Cheney, had a long

standing goal of strengthening the U.S. military and presidential powers in order to pursue U.S. primacy. This goal manifests itself in the invasion of Iraq, a country in the heart of the geopolitically important, oil-rich region of the Persian Gulf.

I demonstrate that it was the primacists, not the neoconservatives, who persuaded the President to go to war with Iraq. Through historical process tracing, especially through a close look at the careers of the major policy actors involved and their public statements as well as declassified documents, I provide strong evidence that these leaders wanted to pursue regime change in Iraq upon taking office. The invasion of Iraq would extend the War on Terror, providing an opportunity to pursue their long-held policy of strengthening the power of the presidency and transforming the military into a high-tech and well-funded force.

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WHY IRAQ? THE WAR LOBBY

"It is my hope when this is over, we will have kicked, for once and for all, the so-called Vietnam syndrome. And the country's pulling together, unlike any time … since World War II. And that's a good thing."

President George H. W. Bush, during the Gulf War of 1991 (von Bothmer 2010, 102)

"It (the new war on terrorism) is different than the Gulf War was, in the sense that it may never end, at least not in our lifetime. The way I think of it is, it's a new normalcy…We're going to have take steps, and are taking steps, that'll become a permanent part of the way we live."

Vice President Dick Cheney, October 19, 2001(Woodward 2001)

Questions Asked: Why They Arise

Why, in 2002, did the United States invade Iraq? Who were the most important policymakers driving the decision to invade? What were the motivations of these policy makers? What did they hope to accomplish by invading Iraq?

The Iraq war is arguably the most monumental U.S. foreign policy blunder in decades, and yet it is not well understood. After exploring the question of why the United States invaded from several angles, one leading scholar laments, "to understand what happened we need to deeply and critically enter into the hopes and fears of those who took the country into war" (Jervis 2011). This scholar, similar to many others, contends that although no satisfying answer has been determined, an answer to this question may in fact be unknowable since the exploration of "hopes and fears" is often unknowable, and tends to lapse into the realm of conspiracy theories. This study recognizes that the answer could be unknowable, but contends that with close study of the abundant available evidence, much can be known. Based on a full investigation of the evidence, specifically investigation of the key decision makers—some with over three

decades of top-level political influence—as well as close examination of the evidence of each leader's specific role in this decision, a novel "best fit" explanation for the Iraq invasion is advanced herein.[1]

The invasion of Iraq is well-known to be mysterious in that most observers are aware that weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), the official or public justification for the invasion, were never found, and the evidence that supported the illusion of a possible imminent threat was heavily manipulated and massaged. Compounding the mystery is the fact that after the initial success of capturing Baghdad in a campaign that lasted a few short weeks, the U.S. campaign immediately started to go badly. The U.S. military appeared to be unprepared for the aftermath of the invasion as looters stripped many Iraqi government buildings of everything of value. Even ancient, priceless artwork from the National Museum of Iraq in Baghdad went unprotected and was subsequently looted. Iraq quickly devolved into chaos because there were not enough American troops on the ground to restore order and the Iraqi Army disbanded and blended into the population. Most Iraqis were relieved to see Saddam overthrown, but, as the months progressed, Americans not only failed to establish any significant system of government, but also failed to restore electricity and clean water. Instead, U.S. troops began to come under attack from an increasingly sophisticated insurgency. In the midst of chaos, Islamic fundamentalist fighters streamed into Iraq from various countries in the Middle East and carried out daily bombings and other acts of "terrorism." In 2006, Richard Norton, a member of the James Baker-led Iraq Study Group, was quoted as saying, "Surveying

[1] This dissertation builds on the argument first proposed in Cramer J.K. and Duggan E. (2011) "In Pursuit of Primacy," in Jane K. Cramer and A. Trevor Thrall ed. *Why Did the United States Invade Iraq?* London, Routledge. The dissertation uses related evidence to the article and is part of the same research project.

U.S. history, one is hard pressed to find presidential decisions as monumentally ill-informed and counterproductive as the decision to invade and occupy Iraq" (Silverstein 2007). The years since the invasion have made it clear that the war was not launched over WMDs, nor was the invasion designed to spread democracy or secure oil supplies. In many ways, the mystery surrounding the Iraq invasion has only deepened.

The "first cut" of history explaining the invasion of Iraq was misguided in that it was based on "spin" by the neoconservatives.[2] Journalists and scholars formed a consensus shortly after the invasion that the most important and influential group that drove the decision to invade were the neoconservatives (Packer 2005; Ricks 2006; Ferguson 2008; Mearsheimer and Walt 2007). Neoconservatives who were appointed advisers within the George W. Bush Administration, like Paul Wolfowitz, Richard Perle, Elliot Abrams, and David Wurmser, had all publicly advocated the overthrow of Saddam Hussein in the 1990s before Bush took office, and right after the invasion they gave numerous candid interviews to supporters of how everything changed on 9/11 for the top decision makers, and how they had convinced the top leaders to share their views. The scholarly consensus on how the traumatizing events of 9/11 opened up an opportunity for the neoconservatives to "sell" their plan of invading Iraq to top leaders like Bush, Cheney, and Rumsfeld followed the consistent storyline of these interviews.

Most prominently, two well-known realist scholars, John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt, adopted this basic framework to explain the invasion of Iraq. Mearsheimer and Walt argued in their book, *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy*,

[2] For a more thorough explanation of the "first cut" or the counter-theories for the Iraq War, see Cramer J.K. and Duggan E. (2011) "In Pursuit of Primacy," in Jane K. Cramer and A. Trevor Thrall ed. *Why Did the United States Invade Iraq?* London, Routledge.

that the neoconservatives led the wider "Israel Lobby" campaign to convince the top leaders that they needed to respond to 9/11 by toppling the regime of Saddam Hussein as part of a larger plan to eliminate the threat from Iraq and spread democracy in the Middle East. The weakness in their argument is the central contention that the decision to invade was truly made after 9/11, that the neoconservatives convinced Cheney to view the threat from Iraq differently, and that Cheney then in turn helped convince Bush in early 2002 that Saddam needed to go (Mearsheimer and Walt 2007: 247). The realist scholars admitted then that they did not have "the full story" but they concluded from journalistic accounts of Cheney repeatedly meeting with neoconservative scholars like Bernard Lewis, and accounts of Cheney's close relationship with neoconservatives on his staff like Scooter Libby, that somewhere in the immediate months after 9/11, Cheney was converted to supporting the plan for invading for democracy. After the conversion to this view, Cheney allegedly became a leading advocate for spreading democracy, repeatedly making references to freedom and peace in the Middle East in his speeches. Mearsheimer and Walt quote as evidence Cheney's speech on August 26, 2002, when he says, "When the gravest of threats are eliminated the freedom loving peoples of the region will have a chance to promote the values that can bring lasting peace" (2007: 255).

This investigation began from a deep questioning of the plausibility of this story. Over time it became more and more clear that it just made no sense to believe that Cheney, who had served in the Nixon, Ford, Bush Sr., and then Bush Jr. administrations, would be convinced or manipulated by the neoconservative advisers whom he knew very well and had appointed to their posts, into adopting an idealistic campaign to spread democracy after decades of patently rejecting such idealistic nation-building projects.

Cheney, a self-identified member of the oil lobby, had no history of advocating for democracy (Cheney 1999; Hayes 2007; 473). Moreover, Cheney was not sympathetic to liberal democratic principles in the United States after 9/11, given his advocacy of waterboarding, wire-tapping, military tribunals and other draconian measures. Some scholars who focused more on Cheney argued the invasion was all about oil but this study shows that while oil played a part in the decision, it does not provide a complete explanation.

Arguments Advanced: Answers Offered

This study shows how the extant explanations for the invasion are incomplete. The invasion was not about WMDs and intelligence failure, democracy, the Israel Lobby, or even primarily about oil. Instead, this study argues that Vice President Dick Cheney and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's shared vision of pursuing U.S. primacy was the driving force behind the invasion of Iraq. Rumsfeld and Cheney launched the Iraq war largely to radically reshape U.S. institutions in order to preserve and extend U.S. primacy indefinitely. This thesis also sheds new light on the role of President George W. Bush, whom most have dismissed as a "puppet" president. This thesis shows that President Bush really did play the all-important role of the "decider" for this invasion, whole-heartedly embracing the Cheney-Rumsfeld vision, while rejecting competing policy alternatives.

For Cheney and Rumsfeld, who often worked together over three decades, their vision of establishing and maintaining U.S. primacy involved seven tenets:

> **First, U.S. primacy would be greatly advanced by an effective, unilateral demonstration of American military force**.

A quick and decisive victory would strengthen America's relative power. It would send a clear signal to other nations that challenging the U.S. could likely have devastating consequences. An effective and cheap demonstration would also weaken the domestic resistance and constraints on the use of force from Congress, the media, the courts, and the public against any future military actions.

Second, U.S. primacy would be best served by shrinking the U.S. government while expanding the role of private businesses in foreign and domestic policy.

Cheney and Rumsfeld have a long history of outsourcing government services to private industry, based on their shared belief that private industry is more efficient and effective than government bureaucracy. This strong promarket ideology involves not only cutting taxes and reducing government regulation, but also providing favorable contracts and incentives to businesses to take over government roles and services. Strengthening U.S. corporate power and opening trade between the United States and other nations would also increase America's relative power.

Third, U.S. primacy requires that the President needs to have supremacy over foreign policy.

After Vietnam, Congress reasserted its power relative to the president passing the War Powers Resolution and other laws that sought to curtail the freedom of the president to use force. Cheney and Rumsfeld immediately believed these restraints on presidential power were detrimental to U.S. security interests. They felt the president needed the capability and authority to be able to work in private, secretly and efficiently, making decisions to protect America's interests without being obstructed by Congress or the courts. One goal for these primacists was to establish a series of successful precedents of the president acting unilaterally to overturn the imposed constraints on executive power that followed Vietnam.

Fourth, U.S. primacy could best be maintained by transforming the military into a well-funded, high-tech force that could act with devastating force anywhere on the globe, with few casualties.

The new American way of war championed by these primacists since the seventies was aimed at countering and overturning the dominant vision after Vietnam which came to be known as the "Powell Doctrine" which required high troop levels (overwhelming force) and was slow to mobilize both because of high troop levels and the requirement of needing full public support and a clear exit strategy *before* becoming engaged. The goal of the so-called Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) was to make American military force more usable, and less costly in lives. If this vision could be realized, then America could act quickly, with precision guided weapons and light infantry units, enforcing U.S. primacy with American military might.

Fifth, U.S. primacy required the United States to maintain regional hegemony over the Persian Gulf.

In order to remain the world's unquestioned leader as the sole superpower, the United States needed to continue to control access to the Persian Gulf and its vital oil resources for itself and its allies, and ensuring that other great powers did not step in to control these resources against the interests of the United States.

Sixth, U.S. primacy required maintaining a heightened U.S. public understanding of potential threats to the United States.

Rumsfeld and Cheney have a clear, documented history of a successful repeated pattern of intentional threat inflation. These leaders understood since the 1970s that the American public was difficult to mobilize to support ambitious foreign policy agendas, so "making clear" to the public that dangerous enemies threatened the United States was the only way they found to successfully create American public consensus on the need for high military budgets and strong presidential authority.

Seventh, maintaining U.S. primacy requires frequent foreign policy victories that demonstrate U.S. military dominance

These frequent foreign policy victories and a continuing perception of threat should lead to Republican electoral success. Reciprocally, frequent Republican electoral success will best sustain U.S. primacy. Republican electoral strategists know that the Republicans "own" the foreign policy issues—the American public in recent decades has trusted Republicans more than Democrats to protect national security. When foreign policy, rather than the economy or many domestic concerns, is the dominant issue, then Republicans tend to win. Overall, if the president is seen chiefly by the American public as a necessary strong protector against an ongoing threat, this perception should favor Republicans, who are seen as being stronger than the Democrats on defense issues and whose base generally shows more support for U.S. military action.

Cheney and Rumsfeld did not develop these seven tenets from whole cloth in the early 1970s when these two men joined forces, as will be shown below. Nor do these ideas follow directly from any one school of thought. Instead, Cheney and Rumsfeld constructed their ideology for U.S. primacy together from their shared experiences, selecting their ideas and strategies from the realists, the neoconservatives, and from the third group they are most often identified with, the assertive nationalists. None of these groups is as globally ambitious or forceful in their preference for the use of U.S. military force as the Cheney-Rumsfeld vision of U.S. primacy. Cheney and Rumsfeld pushed this bold vision for decades, and almost wholly embraced by candidate George W. Bush on

the campaign trail in 2000, well before 9/11. This study argues that to understand the invasion of Iraq, the real task is not to understand the immediate "hopes and fears" of the major decision makers right before the invasion, but instead to look at the long historical trajectory of Cheney and Rumsfeld who were the key leaders behind this policy, and then investigate their relationship with Bush and his role as president.

This study is not an investigation of a "conspiracy theory." It has the outward appearance of a "conspiracy theory" only because it finds that the publicly stated reasons for the Iraq invasion were false. The central task of this study is to uncover and put together all of the motives that have been in plain sight for decades: These primacists were not secret or insincere about their hopes and plans for U.S. primacy, but this was not the declaratory policy they used to the public. This study digs deeper than the motives expressed by Bush, Cheney, and Rumsfeld in their public speeches on spreading freedom and democracy. Instead, this study scrutinizes their public records and unearths the seven tenets of U.S. primacy described above, developed across three decades and five Republican administrations.

Methods: Piecing Together the Discoveries of the Blind Men and the Elephant

This study pieces together the vast literature on the Iraq war, the biographies and tell-all accounts of many participants in the decision making; the intelligence analyses, historical studies of U.S. empire, speeches, books, and other writings by the major players; accounts of the neoconservatives' role in the invasion; studies of the role of oil in the Iraq war; books and articles evaluating how the war was sold to the American public; declassified national security archives, accounts of military strategy, presidential studies,

and various other sources that provide evidence that can be used to answer the puzzle of: Why Iraq?

Like the classic Indian parable where a group of blind men (or men in the dark) each touch only a portion of an elephant to learn what it is like, each of these various accounts of the Iraq war decision and the decision makers has discovered and described a different part of the elephant, but each has found only one part. When they have compared notes, each has found a different piece of the answer, but each feels he is in complete disagreement with the others about the answer. Bush, Cheney, and Rumsfeld fit squarely within a long tradition of U.S. leaders who have openly discussed the stark difference between declaratory strategy and actual strategy. The declaratory strategy is the publicly declared policies such as the policy of spreading freedom and democracy, which the public finds to be morally acceptable. The actual strategy occurs when policy elites discuss and debate amongst themselves, but do not declare their policy openly because, while the policy may serve U.S. national interests in maintaining primacy, it likely would not be morally palatable to the vast public who want to pursue American interests while preserving some American moral standards. It is naïve to believe that these leaders who assume responsibility to maintain U.S. primacy in order to preserve the American way of life will conduct foreign policy in line with American moral standards. Cheney, Rumsfeld, and Bush shared a bold vision for maintaining U.S. primacy, which "won out" over all competing priorities such as spending vast resources to spread democracy.

Plan of the Study

This study proceeds in 5 parts. In Chapter II, I survey some of the most recent literature on the Iraq War, showing that a consensus has formed that Cheney and Rumsfeld were central to the decision to invade. In Chapter III, I look at the formation of the agenda for U.S. primacy, showing that Rumsfeld and Cheney had a clear set of preferences over the course of three decades. In Chapter IV, I take close look at the hopes and fears of George W. Bush, showing that Bush's political goals overlapped with the plan for U.S. primacy. In Chapter V, I will look at the invasion and occupation of Iraq, showing how the war made possible the implementation of Cheney and Rumsfeld's longstanding agenda. In the concluding chapter I will look at the implications of my findings and identify areas for further study.

CHAPTER II

THE CHENEY AND RUMSFELD CONSENSUS IN THE LITERATURE

Shortly before the invasion Dick Cheney was asked by the Saudi Foreign Minister, Prince Saud Al-Faisal, why the U.S. was determined to invade Iraq? Cheney replied, "Because it's doable"

(Simpson 2006, BBC News)

"For all these guys, they're interchangeable. They had power. Authority. They had the Vice President behind them…. What Scooter did, Cheney made possible. Feith, Wolfowitz—Cheney made it all possible. He's the fulcrum. He's the one."

CIA Analyst (Foer and Ackerman 2003)

"What I saw was a cabal between the Vice President of the United States, Richard Cheney, and the secretary of defense, Donald Rumsfeld. On critical issues they made decisions that the bureaucracy did not even know were being made."

Lawrence Wilkerson, Chief of Staff for Secretary of State Powell (Wilkerson 2005)

The Blind Men and the Elephant: Understanding All the Parts of the Agenda for U.S. Primacy

The recent literature on Iraq is in widespread agreement that Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld played a decisive role in driving the United States to invade Iraq, but disagreement continues over what exactly motivated these men to pursue the choice of invasion. In many ways scholars who study the motivations of Cheney and Rumsfeld resemble the ancient folk tale of the blind men trying, piece by piece, to describe an elephant. When they describe their findings they fall into complete disagreement. Like the elephant known only by its many parts, Cheney and Rumsfeld's agenda has many different goals that make up the whole.

The invasion of Iraq expressed seven different but interrelated goals that helped the United States assert its primacy in the world. First, the primacists wanted to demonstrate American military dominance. Second, Cheney and Rumsfeld wanted to use

Iraq to shrink the role of government and expand the role of the private sector, especially in the realm of America's war-making ability. Third, the primacists wanted to use the war in Iraq to expand legal precedents to support the presidency's monopoly over U.S. foreign policy. Fourth, the primacists wanted to transform the military by making it more mobile and technologically advanced. Fifth, the primacists wanted to use Iraq as means of establishing U.S. primacy not only over Iraqi oil but over the oil rich Persian Gulf as a whole. Sixth, Cheney and Rumsfeld wanted to create a permanent state of threat in order to lift the constraints on the use of force. Seventh, Cheney and Rumsfeld wanted to use the Iraq war to solidify power for President Bush and also the Republican Party. Most analysts have proposed hypotheses on why the Bush Administration decided to invade Iraq using only one or two of these goals. Like the blind men with the elephant, most analysts have failed to grasp the full scope of the agenda for U.S. primacy. One of the important contributions of the present study is to bring together all of the elements of the agenda for U.S. primacy.

Sending a Signal with Shock and Awe: Iraq as an Effective, Unilateral Demonstration of American Military Force

A number of analysts have noted Cheney and Rumsfeld's drive to demonstrate superior military power (Suskind 2006; Gellman 2008; Gordon and Trainor 2007; Danner 2006a; Dower 2010; Klein 2007; Gardner 2008). The primacist vision of victory in Iraq was based on the principle of a quick overwhelming use of precision guided weapons to break the will of enemy forces. In the 1990s Rumsfeld seized upon a paper written in 1996 called *Shock and Awe: Achieving Rapid Dominance* (Ullman and Wade 1996). The paper made reference to the psychological effect upon the Japanese achieved by the

bombing of Nagasaki and Hiroshima. One of the authors, Harlan Ullman, said in January of 2003 about the invasion of Iraq that was coming, "We want them to quit, not to fight, so that you have this simultaneous effect—rather like the nuclear weapons at Hiroshima—not taking days or weeks but minutes" (Gardner 2008: 166). But the demonstration model was also about sending a signal to foreign enemies that the United States could act unilaterally at any time.

A quick victory in Iraq would signal to any potential competitor nations the futility of attempting to match U.S. firepower. In spite of the United States' overwhelming conventional superiority, other nations might perceive that the United States would be constrained in the use of power by Congress, the United Nations, or the American public's aversion to war casualties. This principle seems to have emerged from Rumsfeld's longstanding relationship with an obscure Pentagon intellectual named Fritz Kraemer. Rumsfeld met repeatedly with Kraemer during his first tenure as Secretary of Defense under Gerald Ford (Colodny and Shachtman 2009: 2-5). Kraemer coined the term "provocative weakness," and in his meetings in the 1970s with Rumsfeld, warned the Secretary of Defense about the dangers of diplomacy and other soft responses to threats. In Rumsfeld's farewell address in 2006, he would pay homage to the philosophy of Kraemer saying, "It should be clear that not only is weakness provocative, but (that) the perception of weakness on our part can be provocative, as well. A conclusion by our enemies that the United States lacks the will or the resolve to carry out missions that demand sacrifice and demand patience is every bit as dangerous as an imbalance of conventional military power" (Rutenburg 2006).

This principle of signaling to enemies the strength of America's military power was also espoused by another pupil of Kraemer, Henry Kissinger. Kissinger would soften his views and thus become estranged from his tutor, but at Kraemer's death in 2003 Kissinger would say, "Fritz Kraemer was the greatest single influence of my formative years" (Kissinger 2003). Like Rumsfeld, Kissinger endorsed Iraq because he felt the United States needed to send a signal to its enemies. Asked by Bob Woodward why he had supported the Iraq War, Kissinger replied, "Because Afghanistan wasn't enough… The Iraq War was essential to send a larger message" (Danner 2006b).

The Economic Invasion of Iraq: Shrinking the U.S. Government while Expanding the Role of Private Businesses in Foreign and Domestic Policy

There is a wide body of mostly popular literature that has focused on the economic interests that benefitted from the invasion of Iraq. My argument borrows from this literature that focuses on the spoils of war, but proposes that profits were a side benefit that naturally accrued from the ideology of free markets that contributed to the decision to invade. Cheney and Rumsfeld believed that there was no separation between the interests of U.S. private corporations and the national interests.

Contract Nation: Creation of a Private Army in Iraq and on the Home Front

Their abiding belief in market solutions meant that the primacists embarked on a massive project of privatizing government services including allowing companies like Halliburton to provide support for the American invasion. Iraq became a thriving market for contractors who supplied the troops, worked on the reconstruction of the country, trained Iraqi soldiers, and even engaged in combat (Stiglitz and Blimes 2008; Scahill 2007; Verkuil 2007; Hughes 2007; Chatterjee 2009; Halliburton Watch 2011; Corpwatch

2011). The best example of this story is Pratap Chaterjee's *Halliburton's Army*, which shows that Cheney and Rumsfeld had been working together since the 1970s in pushing for more privatization in the Pentagon and higher defense budgets.

A Bush Administration of the Corporations, by the Corporations, and for the Corporations

A closely related hypothesis was that Bush Administration officials were working directly for the military-industrial-complex and the oil companies (Shorrock 2008; Begala 2002; Hartung 2003; 2011; Bryce 2004; Scheer 2008; Juhasz 2006; St. Clair 2005). The problem with these studies is that they show correlation and not causality. Just because members of the Bush Administration had close relationships with people in the industries that would benefit from the war and with the people who would often return to those industries after leaving government does not prove that they were driven to invade only by the companies themselves. What the studies do show is a powerful revolving door culture that might not have driven the decision to invade but did color the world view of the decision makers. The numbers from these studies are overwhelming: 32 members of the Bush Administration worked for weapons contractors before taking office, with 16 members having worked for Lockheed alone (Juhasz 2006); and 52 former Enron executives, lobbyists, lawyers, and major shareholders obtained key positions in the Bush Administration (Begala 2002). The corporate culture of the Bush Administration may not have driven the decision to invade Iraq, but it appears to have been a supporting factor.

Presidential Supremacy over Foreign Policy: Using the War to Strengthen Presidential Power

The studies on presidential supremacy look primarily at the role of Cheney in implementing a legal plan to give the president as much power as possible (Warshaw 2009; Savage 2007; Gellman 2008; Montgomery 2009; Mayer 2008). In the words of David Addington, Cheney's chief staff and long time business partner, "We are going to push and push and push until some larger force makes us stop (Gellman 2008: 330). Cheney's obsession with secrecy stemmed from his belief that when the American people and Congress become involved in foreign policy, the power of the nation is weakened, making it impossible for the president to make the right decisions.

A New Way of War in Iraq: Transforming the Military into A Well-Funded, High-Tech Force that Can Act with Devastating Force Anywhere on the Globe, with Lower Casualties

Some scholars and journalists have looked at how Rumsfeld fought a bureaucratic war against the Pentagon's top brass from the moment that he took office (Herspring 2008; Graham 2009; Buley 2008; Kitfield 2005; Bacevich 2005b). Rumsfeld wanted to overturn the Powell Doctrine because its high troop levels, exit strategy, and exhaustion of all diplomacy meant that wars would be infrequent and that the United States would be dangerously constrained in international relations. Rumsfeld wanted to make war lightning fast, devastating, and stealthy—impossible to achieve if war was politicized as it was under the Powell Doctrine. Other studies have concentrated on the weapons systems themselves, showing how Revolution in Military Affairs has changed warfare (Shimko 2010; Singer 2009). Perhaps the most interesting pieces on RMA were the

advocacy pieces, written to sell the weapons systems and the changes in policy and strategy that would be needed (Donnelly et al. 2000; Khalizad, White, and Marshal 1999). These reports envision a bold and more aggressive U.S. foreign policy.

A War for Oil: U.S. Regional Hegemony over the Persian Gulf

Most analysts would not argue that oil had nothing to do with the decision to invade Iraq. The largest oil consuming country in the world would not invade the country with the second largest oil reserves in the world and perhaps the least explored oil prospect in the world without any consideration of the possibilities for oil. If, in an episode of Sesame Street, Cookie Monster broke into a cookie factory, even a child would rightfully assume it had something to do with cookies. In the beginning of this project I assumed that the invasion of Iraq was entirely about oil. Certainly, Cheney coveted Persian Gulf oil and expressed great interest in American companies gaining more access to it (Cheney 1999).

But in order to pump oil out of the country the United States needed to stabilize Iraq. Rumsfeld's invasion plan did not have enough troops to secure the existing fields and pipelines much less provide the security necessary to start the large construction projects necessary to dramatically increase the flow of oil. In fact, even when the insurgency started to attack the oil pipelines, Rumsfeld refused to send troops to protect them. At one meeting National Security Council meeting in December of 2005, Rumsfeld became enraged at Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice for suggesting that protecting the pipelines should be part of the U.S. strategy (Herspring 2008). Other key players like Cheney, Bush, and Rice did place more importance on oil. Nonetheless, in

the plan for U.S. primacy, controlling Persian Gulf oil was only one among many goals for the invasion and arguably not the most important goal.

Ensuring Access: An Invasion to Protect the Flow of Oil from the Persian Gulf

One argument is that the United States invaded to ensure that the world economy continued to have access to oil from the Persian Gulf (Klare 2004; Greenspan 2007; Baker 2001; Clarke 2004; Gore 2007; Duffield 2005; 2011; Ritchie and Rodgers 2007; Pollack 2003; Bacevich 2005a; Pellitiere 2004; Everest 2004; Ahmed 2003; Clark 2005). In this argument the United States saw increasing world demand for oil with production not increasing enough to keep prices spiking. This increasing scarcity empowered Saddam who was now regarded as a destabilizing element in the world oil market. In the late 1990s Saddam encouraged OPEC to cut back on production, started to price his oil in Euros instead of dollars, and sought to undermine the U.N. sanctions against Iraq; he also signed oil contracts with the French, Russians, and Chinese. Saddam seemed to revel in thumbing his nose at the United States. In addition, Saudi Arabia was growing increasingly unhappy with the U.S. military presence, causing the military to seek out new bases. In this hypothesis, the United States invaded Iraq to stabilize Saudi Arabia, remove Saddam's threat to the oil market, and ensure that OPEC would continue to meet the world demand for oil. In addition, the United States wanted to keep its hand on the oil spigot to ensure the flow of defense contracts to protect the oil, and to ensure that oil would be priced in dollars, and thus ensure that the United States would retain its status as the world Hegemon.

Peak Oil: The Fear of a Permanent Decline in World Oil Production

In a related hypothesis, the United States invaded Iraq because it feared a peak in the world's oil production. Some geologists in the late 1990s were predicting that soon the world oil production would hit its maximum level of production and thereafter decline (Campbell and Laherrère 1998), causing a scramble for the Persian Gulf which holds over two thirds of the world's remaining oil reserves. In this scenario the former oil executives like Cheney, Bush, and Rice anticipated the coming decline and acted swiftly to preempt any competitors from challenging U.S. control over Persian Gulf oil (Phillips 2006; Roberts 2004; Klare 2008).

Oil for Profits: The Greed of the Oil Companies Drives the U.S. to Open Up Access to Iraq

In this hypothesis the Bush Administration acted to ensure that U.S. companies would have access to Iraqi oil (Bryce 2004; Juhasz 2008; Cole 2009; Rutledge 2006; Mutti 2005). In addition, American companies wanted to ensure that new Iraqi production did not cause a glut in the market, dragging down the price of oil and profits for U.S. oil companies. Some analysts who propose that neoconservatives and Israel are at the heart of the decision to invade have presented a false picture of the oil companies as status quo players who want to maintain stability in order to ensure profits (Mearsheimer and Walt 2007; Sniegowski 2008).

These Israel Lobby scholars fail to realize that the oil business was in a Darwinian state of competition in which the largest companies like Chevron and Exxon were taking over countless smaller and vulnerable companies. The international oil companies were having difficulty maintaining their oil reserves and needed to find access to new reserves

in order to keep their stock prices up and fend off takeovers. Ninety percent of oil reserves were under the control of national oil companies, with the vast majority of the oil being controlled by governments in the Persian Gulf like Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Iran. As Dick Cheney said in a speech in 1999, "While many regions of the world offer great oil opportunities, the Middle East with two thirds of the world's oil and the lowest cost is still where the prize ultimately lies. Even though companies are anxious for greater access there, progress continues to be slow" (Cheney 1999).

In one convincing study entitled, *Engaging Islam*, Middle East scholar Juan Cole shows that during the late 1990s, Cheney was working with oil lobby groups like U.S.A. Engage to drop the sanctions on countries like Iran and Libya (2009: Ch. 4). Cheney found himself thwarted by hardliners in the Clinton Administration including policy-makers with close affiliations to the Israel Lobby. After Cheney realized the futility of eliminating the sanctions regime that locked U.S. companies out of much of the oil in the Middle East, he changed tactics and began to work towards invasion.

Smoking Guns and Mushroom Clouds: Selling Saddam as an Imminent Threat

After the invasion of Iraq many scholars took a close look at the campaign to convince the American public that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) (Risen 2006; Cramer 2007; Cramer and Thrall 2009; Prados 2004; Prados and Ames 2010; Bamford 2005; Drumheller 2006; Isikoff and Corn 2006). These scholars documented that Rumsfeld and Cheney started a group in the Pentagon called the Office of Special Plans, whose members pored over raw intelligence. The OSP generated a plethora of false information about Iraq which included contacts with Al Qaeda, a nuclear weapons program, mobile weapons labs, and various other reports. These unconfirmed reports

were disseminated to various sources including the Office of the Vice President, contacts in the media like *New York Times* reporter Judith Miller, the White House, the CIA, and Congress. The intent of the OSP was to generate and sustain among U.S. citizens a heightened sense of potential threat of attack by Saddam Hussein.

Bringing Bush Back into the Equation: Frequent Foreign Policy Victories plus the Perception of Threat Ensures Electoral Success

Some scholars have focused on the use of the Iraq war to gain political capital and reelection for George W. Bush, and to ensure the positive legacy of a successful presidency (Zelizer 2009, 2010; Baker 2009; Alfonsi 2006; Moore 2004). The literature shows that Bush was not merely a puppet in Cheney's project but also had his own agenda for the invasion. This hypothesis is supported by another group of scholars who show Bush as a Machiavellian political player with an ambitious agenda to create an enduring Republican realignment (Skowronek 2008; Schier 2004; 2008; Dubose, Reid and Cannon 2003). Some analysts place Bush in the context of his family's political machine and oil interests (Bryce 2004; Phillips 2004). Bush came into office obsessed with the idea of not repeating the mistakes that his father had made (Bush 2010: Ch. 2; Newhouse 2003: 16; Kaplan 2008: 130). One of his father's chief mistakes was in squandering the high presidential approval ratings that he gained from the victory in the first Persian Gulf War.

In 1999 Bush told Mickey Herskowitz, the ghostwriter for his autobiography, "One of the keys to being seen as a great leader is to be seen as commander in chief. My father had all this political capital built up when he drove the Iraqis out of Kuwait and he wasted it. If I have the chance to invade…if I had that much capital, I'm not going waste

it. I'm going to get everything passed that I want to get passed, and I'm going to have a successful presidency" (Baker 2009: 423). Allegedly Bush's inner circle of preelection advisers was also focused on the political victory that can come from going to war, and held up Margaret Thatcher's victory in the Falklands war as an example of how a war victory can lead to political success (Baker 2009: 424) Cheney said as congressman, "Start a small war. Pick a country where there is justification you can jump on, go ahead and invade" (Baker 2009: 424). According to one official who worked under Cheney, the Vice President held the same sentiment in the Bush Administration and wanted to "do Iraq because he thought it could be done quickly and easily, and because the United States could do it essentially alone…. and that an uncomplicated, total victory would set the stage for a landslide reelection in 2004 and decades of Republican Party domination" (Unger 2007: 182).

When presidents go to war they can expect that people will rally around the flag. But wars also carry great risk if U.S. troops become bogged down in a protracted conflict. Bush gambled on the Iraq invasion in part because his father had acted prudently in not going all the way to Baghdad and had lost the 1992 presidential election. But George W. Bush was also a staunch advocate of the Revolution in Military Affairs and believed that an invasion would be quick and easy. Bush endorsed the "revolution in the technology of war" in a speech given on September 23, 1999 (Kaplan 2008: 27). Under the direction of Cheney, Bush also rejected the frontrunner for Secretary of Defense Dan Coats for his lack of enthusiasm for National Missile Defense and RMA (Kaplan 2008: 29). When Bush appointed his new Secretary of Defense, he declared that his main task would be to "challenge the status quo inside the Pentagon" (Graham 2009: 2004).

Bush was also very aware that Republicans received higher approval ratings than Democrats on issues of national security. The partisan divide among the American public opened up after Vietnam with more Republicans taking a more hard-line approach to foreign policy (Holsti 1996: 139). Over the course of three decades, the gap between Republican opinions on the use of force and those of Democrats widened. Republicans knew that taking a hard-line on foreign policy would meet with approval from their political base. Before midterm elections, Bush's political adviser Karl Rove wrote a memo to Republican congressional candidates to use the threat from the War on Terror to exploit this partisan divide. He wrote, "We can go to the country on this issue because they trust the Republican party to do a better job of protecting and strengthening America's military might and thereby protecting America" (McClellan 2008: 113).

Conclusion: A Comprehensive Agenda for U.S. Hegemony

In the culmination of their plans in the Bush Administration, Cheney concentrated on expanding the power of the executive branch and Rumsfeld focused on transforming the military. This division of labor meant that most analysts would study the two policy makers in isolation, but some of the more insightful investigations show the long history of the relationship between Cheney and Rumsfeld (Mann 2004a; Chatterjee 2009; Montgomery 2009; Klein 2007). Only by looking at their behavior over the course of three decades does the pattern of their agenda appear in sharp relief. This present investigation compiles evidence that the Iraq war had little to do with WMDs, 9/11, democracy, or Israel, and must be seen in the context of the cabal that formed between Cheney and Rumsfeld.

CHAPTER III

THE PLAN FOR U.S. PRIMACY: THREE DECADES IN THE MAKING

"Whenever his private ideology was exposed, he appeared somewhat to the right of Ford, Rumsfeld or, for that matter, Genghis Kahn."

Robert Hartman, adviser to President Ford, speaking about Cheney (Mann 2004a: 64)

In order to project American power abroad, Rumsfeld needed to change the state of the American military. Vietnam had a devastating effect on the morale and the condition of American troops. The casualty rate during Vietnam had also led to mass protests. The draft system was run by lottery and student deferments led to a perception among the American people that the draft was unjust. Protests in the 1960s were centered around the draft with many young people burning their draft cards.

Looking back many years later, Rumsfeld wrote of his experience in the 1960s, focusing in his autobiography on the protest movement. He wrote of being in Chicago in 1968 and the violence that occurred during the Democratic Convention. Even decades after the experience, Rumsfeld gave an emotional response to the unrest caused by Vietnam. If the United States wanted to use American force, it needed to have a strong morale for its troops abroad and a minimum of attention placed on these troops by the American people.

All Volunteer Force: Using the Market to Create a Usable Military

The answer was presented to Congressman Rumsfeld in a meeting that took place in 1967 at the University of Chicago. At the meeting, Milton Friedman led the discussion with a group of economists and politicians, arguing that the draft should be abolished and replaced with an all-volunteer force in the United States. Friedman argued that from the standpoint of the market, the draft was illogical, inefficient, and unjust. The meeting

obviously was a formative experience for Rumsfeld, as he would mention it frequently in writings and speeches (Rumsfeld 2011: 101; Bicksler et al. 2004: vii-xi). Writing a tribute to Milton Friedman after his death Rumsfeld would say, “I remember well the conference on the "all-volunteer" Army—Milton was so persuasive that I became an early advocate—as a young congressman, introducing legislation, testifying before the House and Senate Armed Services Committees, and then, as a young Cabinet officer in the Nixon Administration working to help achieve the all-volunteer service” (Rumsfeld 2002a). And in many ways, it would be Rumsfeld’s life project not only to abolish the draft but to use market principles to strengthen the hard power of the United States. The all-volunteer army would combine two of the most important tenets of the plan for U.S. primacy: the probusiness market approach to government and the unconstrained use of military force. Rumsfeld felt that the main obstacle to the use of force was the dramatic and divisive protests over the war in Vietnam. He noted, “I was convinced then, and remain convinced now, that if the country had a voluntary system in place during the Vietnam war, the level of violence and protest across the country would have been considerably less” (Rumsfeld 2011: 102). Rumsfeld would become one of the most outspoken political voices for the all-volunteer army and would forge a close relationship with Milton Friedman that would last a lifetime.

Ending Vietnam to Make War Safe from Democracy

The all-volunteer force was part of a larger campaign which led Rumsfeld to reestablish the United States as a strong international power using force abroad. Ironically, part of this campaign involved advocating that the United States leave Vietnam. In Rumsfeld’s thinking, the Vietnam conflict led to the United States being

constrained in its ability to use force abroad, instead drawing attention to the use of force by the media, Congress, and the American people. The high numbers of casualties and nightly news of Vietnam footage drew attention to the U.S. military. Rumsfeld, then working in the Nixon Administration, met with Nixon to encourage the President to pull out of Vietnam. In one discussion, he questioned why the President had kept the information of the invasion of Cambodia from the American people when the information was sure to leak to the press and further erode confidence in the war. Rumsfeld was also disappointed that Nixon was not accelerating the plan for Vietnamization. Leaving a substantial amount of American forces in the country created a dependency on those troops. The language of free market and economics was the basis for Rumsfeld's thinking. Ironically, Rumsfeld, one of the most hawkish members of the defense foreign policy establishment, found himself on the side of the protests in asking for the end of U.S. engagement in Vietnam. Kissinger was enraged at criticism of the war coming from within the administration. When Kissinger saw Rumsfeld at a policy meeting, he would flash him the peace symbol in order to mock him (Graham 2009: 88).

Nation-building was a government program which, much like welfare, created a dependency issue. In Rumsfeld's eyes, Vietnam needed to wean itself from government assistance. This basic logic repeated itself in the occupation of Iraq. Rumsfeld warned repeatedly that the military needed to reduce the number of troops in the occupation and Iraqi forces needed to wean themselves from a dependency on U.S. troops. Bringing down troop levels would be an ongoing theme in Iraq and was deeply embedded in the ideology of market forces that Rumsfeld tried to implement. Many observers were shocked that Rumsfeld fought against the military to keep troop levels down before the

invasion. What they didn't know is that this initial battle with General Shinseki prior to Iraq was one of many battles that Rumsfeld would fight to minimize troop levels.

General Jay Garner, the first head of the Office for Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA), requested more troops to stabilize Iraq. L. Paul Bremer, the head of the Coalition Provisional Authority, also requested more troops in the country. A year after the invasion, when it was clear that insurgency was taking place in Iraq, the neoconservatives like Bill Kristol began to criticize Rumsfeld for not having enough troops (Dorrien 2004: 178). The American military was also rising up to criticize the occupation, especially the problem with a lack of troops. But Rumsfeld ignored the facts on the ground and the cries of his critics because troop level suppression was at the core of Rumsfeld's ideology. Higher troop levels would bring more casualties, cause more Iraqi dependency on the U.S. government, and would be unacceptable to the principles of the market.

Outsourcing Government: Office of Economic Opportunity

Rumsfeld's antigovernment sentiments also manifested themselves in his position as head of the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO). Rumsfeld used the OEO to enact a privatization plan in which he brought in outside consultants, which allowed him to have more power over the bureaucracy. It also strengthened his reputation in the private sector and, of course, conformed to his ideology that private industry is superior to government programs.

The OEO was a pivotal program to Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty. Originally it included a variety of antipoverty programs like Head Start and others. During the 1968 presidential campaign, Nixon criticized OEO, and many people in the

Republican party felt that the President would simply kill the program. Nixon asked Rumsfeld to head the OEO, but he initially refused the assignment because he didn't want to be part of a program slated for termination. Nixon promised, however, that he would keep the program intact and would give Rumsfeld total control over the organization. Rumsfeld's plan for the OEO was that it "serve as a laboratory for experimental programs, not as an entity that managed larger operations in perpetuity" (Rumsfeld 2011: 125).

The OEO was also the place in which he would team up with Dick Cheney, whom Rumsfeld hired to deal with Congress but who would later become Rumsfeld's chief assistant and partner. Rumsfeld's first task upon entering office was to fire a good number of the staff. Such paring down would become one of his famous Rumsfeld's Rules: a list of axioms that he would give to all his subordinates and eventually publish in the *Wall Street Journal.* Rumsfeld wrote, "Prune—prune businesses, products, activities, people. Do it annually" (Rumsfeld 2001c). The second major task after entering office was to institute a top-down model which would eliminate free agency within the organization. One of the OEO's duties was to legally advocate for poor people within a division of the organization called Legal Services. The head of Legal Services, Terry Lezner, was told that he would have to receive approval for any lawsuits taken up in defense of the poor, a move that drew criticism from the American Bar Association (Montgomery 2009: 17). Rumsfeld backed down from this initiative, but it remains indicative of how Rumsfeld saw bureaucracy as an obstacle. He and Cheney also conducted an ideological review of all grants administered by the OEO. The third and most important step Rumsfeld took involved bringing in outside consultants from Booz

Allen Hamilton and the accounting firm Arthur Anderson. Both companies would go on to have a long history with Cheney and Rumsfeld. Arthur Anderson later worked with Halliburton when Cheney was CEO, helping the company to create offshore accounts. In a 1996 promotional video for Arthur Anderson, Cheney would thank the company, stating "I get good advice, if you will, from their people based upon how we're doing business and how we're operating over and above the just sort of normal by-the-book auditing arrangement" (Gambetta 2009: 69). Booz Allen Hamilton would come to play a role during the Bush Administration when the company was brought in to consult with the Pentagon, the CIA, and other intelligence agencies. By the end of Rumsfeld's tenure at the Pentagon, Booz Allen Hamilton had contracts with the Pentagon that equaled 3.7 billion dollars with over 10,000 employees working for the Department of Defense (Shorrock 2007).

But in the OEO, Rumsfeld's privatization plan was widely criticized and Rumsfeld found himself at odds with everyone in the bureaucracy. The pattern would repeat itself when Rumsfeld was made Secretary of Defense in the Ford Administration and, most dramatically, in the George W. Bush Administration when he fought the Pentagon to control the military. Rumsfeld's adversarial relationship with the Pentagon during the Bush Administration was hardly anything new in his career. Rumsfeld always tried to exert maximum control over every government organization of which he was a part. The OEO was training ground for what would become a template for both Rumsfeld and Cheney: first, fire the employees; second, exert control over decision making; and last, bring in outside consultants to tame the bureaucracy. Cheney justified the recruitment of outside consultants by saying, "Don found himself with a bureaucracy

that hated him. Rumsfeld was forced to seek outside help. I remember Don reciting to me the Al Smith statement, 'If I don't look to my friends for help, who do I look to, my enemies?'" (Interview with Dick Cheney, February 1, 1972, Guttman and Willner 1976: 66).

Bringing in outside consultants provided many benefits for Cheney and Rumsfeld. First, it weakened the power of government to cause harm to the market. Second, it empowered sympathetic corporate interests. Third, it built up a network of private forces for Cheney and Rumsfeld to which they could turn when they left public office. Fourth, and most importantly, bringing in outside consultants allowed maximum control over an organization.

This technique of outsourcing government was especially useful to Rumsfeld when he brought in outside consultants to formulate evidence on Iraqi intelligence. Rumsfeld attempted to go outside the regular channels of the CIA or any of the other 14 intelligence agencies, instead forming the Office of Special Plans to gather intelligence about Saddam's contacts with terrorists and its weapons of mass destruction program.

Price Controls: Do No Harm--To the Oil Market

Cheney and Rumsfeld's success with the Office of Economic Opportunity gave them a positive reputation, especially among free market advocates in the Nixon Administration. George Schultz, Secretary of the Treasury, asked Rumsfeld to head the price controls commission that would set prices on such goods as food and oil. Rumsfeld again refused the position, saying, "I don't agree with it; I don't believe in wage or price controls. I'm a market man." Schultz informed Rumsfeld that that was why he had been chosen for the position (Chatterjee 2009: 32-33).

The experience of working on price controls had an especially large impact on Cheney. Decades later, he lectured his staff in the Office of the Vice President on the evils of the government intervening in the market. According to George W. Bush, Cheney was "hard core free market. Hard core" (Hayes 2007: 311). To Cheney, price controls on oil were the worst kind of market intrusion because keeping prices down destroyed incentive for domestic oil producers to explore for and develop new projects.

One of the main problems that Cheney saw with government regulation was that, once the intervention happened, it could have dramatic staying power. After the initial price controls on oil were instituted in the Nixon Administration, they were not fully lifted until the Reagan Administration. During the Ford Administration, Cheney, Rumsfeld, and Alan Greenspan formed a plan to lift price controls on the oil market. The three men would try to convince Ford to end the price controls, to no avail (Jacobs 2010: 141).

Cheney's dogged focus on oil, and protecting the domestic oil business especially, was a constant theme throughout his career. Historians and journalists are at a loss to explain this loyalty. Some have speculated that it may have resulted from Cheney coming from the oil-rich state of Wyoming (Rutledge 2006: 62), but regardless of the origins, Cheney would be a tireless advocate for the oil business. Decades later in the 1990s as CEO of Halliburton, he worked to gain access to Middle East oil fields by American companies and advocated against unilateral sanctions imposed on Libya, Iran, and other rogue nations. He also led the Energy Commission in the Bush Administration that worked to drop government regulation from the domestic oil industry. For Cheney, the government's encouragement of conservation was a distortion of the market. Cheney

said, “Conservation may be a personal virtue but it can never solve the energy problems of the country” (Bendetto, 2001). In that same energy commission, Cheney pored over maps of Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates (Judicial Watch, 2002).

Rumsfeld as Head of NATO: The Need for Unilateral Action

After Cheney and Rumsfeld worked on the price control commission, Nixon sent Rumsfeld to Europe to head NATO, while Cheney worked as a political consultant for a private law firm (Hayes 2007: 68). As one might expect, based on Rumsfeld’s experience in the OEO, he resented having to consult with member states in NATO over U.S. security matters in Europe. The bargaining and negotiation required to do business struck Rumsfeld as unnecessary. Ken Adelman, Rumsfeld’s longtime friend and Reagan’s disarmament chief, said of Rumsfeld’s experience in NATO: “He got to know a lot of Europeans and he got to know there can be only one leader in the NATO alliance, or in the world now. There was an old saying in NATO in those times: ‘You had fifteen chimpanzees and one gorilla, and the gorilla thought he was a chimpanzee’” (Hirsh 2003: 44).

Rumsfeld’s experience in NATO would also allow him to form a close relationship with Paul Nitze. Nitze authored one of the most important Cold War documents, NSC 68. Written in 1947, the document painted a picture of the Soviet Union as a force building up its military in order to dominate the globe. This threat of Soviet global domination was repeated in 1957 when Nitze chaired the Gaither Committee, which warned the American public that the Soviet Union was building up a superior stockpile of intercontinental ballistic missiles in preparation for a first strike against the United States (Snead 1999: 2). At the time, the United States had

overwhelming missile superiority and the Soviet threat was significantly exaggerated. Rumsfeld's relationship with Paul Nitze had a profound formative effect on Rumsfeld's strategy of threat inflation which he employed throughout his career, in particular when he discussed WMDs in Iraq.

The Year of Intelligence: The Need for Presidential Power and Secrecy

At the end of the Vietnam War, Congress, the courts, the American people, and the media intruded into the presidential domain of foreign policy. Cheney and Rumsfeld wanted to cut the democratic process out of foreign policy making in order protect American interests abroad. The primacists formulated their ideology in reaction to the events of the1970s when U.S. dominance was drawn into question by its defeat in Vietnam. Hardliners viewed a series of events as major setbacks in America's relative international power. Détente accepted American and Soviet military parity in terms of nuclear weapons. The U.S. economy was in a relative economic decline compared to Japan and Germany. The presidency suffered through the embarrassment of the Watergate Scandal. The administrations of Lyndon Baines Johnson and Richard Nixon seemed to embody an imperial presidency, lacking any constraints and in the early 1970s the Democratically controlled Congress began to assert itself to curtail executive power. Congress passed the War Powers Resolution on November 7, 1973, overriding Nixon's veto.

Gerald Ford took office in the context of America's perceived decline and the ascendancy of Congress. The tensions between Congress and the President boiled over with new evidence of the executive branch's abuse of power. Seymour Hersh published an article in the *New York Times* on December 22, 1974, about the NSA spying on

American citizens. The article opened the floodgates for further revelations that the CIA had sponsored assassinations on foreign rulers, infiltrated U.S. peace groups, and carried out other forms of surveillance (Blanton, 2007). The Family Jewels were a set of the most secret and incriminating evidence from various CIA missions, the most controversial of which was confirmation from the CIA that the agency carried out assassinations. The Ford Administration met in the White House on Christmas Day 1974 to come up with a plan to mitigate the damage of the scandal. Dick Cheney, who was presidential aid at the time, endorsed a presidential inquiry and a blue ribbon panel, and summarized the advantages to the rest of the policy-makers. A panel would show leadership, heading off congressional encroachments on the executive, protecting the CIA, and restoring faith in the integrity of government to the American people (Prados 2003: 298).

The panel, appointed by President Ford, was led by Vice President Rockefeller, but the panel did not work to appease Congress. Congressional Democrats had just won a substantial number of seats in both the Senate and the House of Representatives, and many of the new Congress members won on the platform of cleaning up government after the Watergate scandal. Congress was not appeased by the Rockefeller Commission and on January 27, 1975, the US Senate established the Senate Select Committee to Study Government Operations With Respect to Intelligence Activities, headed by Senator Frank Church. The House voted to create the House Select Intelligence Committee in February 1975, headed at first by Lucien Nedze and five months later by Otis Pike.

Both Congressional investigations leaked stories to the press leading to a year of scandals that the C.I.A would dub “The Year of Intelligence.” The Ford Administration

felt that it was under siege from the investigations, the press, and the laws being passed. Cheney would later say in 2006 that he saw the 1970s as "the nadir of the modern presidency in terms of authority and legitimacy" and that restoring the power of the executive "has been a continuing theme, if you will, in terms of my career" (Walsh 2006).

As the Church and Pike Committees worked to make the executive branch more transparent, Rumsfeld as chief of staff and Cheney as his chief aide worked diligently to keep the security state closed off from Congress and the American public. On May 25, 1975, Seymour Hersh published an article investigating a top-secret U.S. intelligence operation that had been spying on the Soviets using American submarines. Before leaving on a trip to Europe, Rumsfeld instructed Cheney to lead a meeting about the Hersh article. Cheney used the meeting to call for an FBI investigation and advocated calling a grand jury to prosecute Hersh on espionage charges. Cheney wanted to make an example of Hersh in order to create a chilling effect in the Church and Pike investigations. Cheney's notes from the meeting said, "Can we take advantage of it to bolster our position on the Church committee? To point out the need for limits on the scope of the investigations?" (Savage 2007: 34-35). The Attorney General, Edward Levi, was pressed by Cheney to prosecute Hersh, but Levi rejected the idea as unsound and refused to order an FBI investigation.

In another incident both Rumsfeld and Cheney advised Ford to encourage private companies like Westinghouse and ITT not to testify in front of Congress about their part in an NSA domestic wiretapping program called Operation Shamrock (Shorrock 2008:318-319). In this case, President Ford took the advice of his hardline aides and

asked the companies not to appear before Congress. Nevertheless, the companies appeared anyway embarrassing the administration and Ford reacted by creating an executive order banning the NSA from tapping domestic calls and telegrams. This incident illustrates Cheney's long, consistent support for wiretapping. Three decades later in the Bush administration Cheney maintained that a more recent NSA wiretapping program was necessary for the War on Terror and that "we have all the legal authority we need" (Lichtblau, 2006). Cheney kept his political views private, but Robert Hartmann, a close advisor and speech writer to Ford, said about Cheney, "Whenever his private ideology was exposed, he appeared somewhat to the right of Ford, Rumsfeld or, for that matter, Genghis Kahn" (Mann 2004a: 64).

Appearing on *Meet the Press* the Sunday after the 9/11 attacks, Cheney was asked about how the United States would respond to the attack. Cheney said, "We'll have to work sort of the dark side, if you will. We've got to spend time in the shadows in the intelligence world….. And, uh, so it's going to be vital for us to use any means at our disposal basically, to achieve our objectives" (Mayer 2008: 9-10). This statement by Cheney that intelligence work needed to take place outside of the democratic process was not a new idea. Cheney had an ideological bias against allowing the national security state to be exposed to the light of day.

For Cheney, the President needed every tool available to protect America's interests abroad, and transparency created by scandals curtailed the president's freedom of action. To Cheney, allowing the American public, the press, and Congress to affect the president's actions was immoral. In the Bush Administration, Vice President Cheney took his penchant for secrecy to ridiculous extremes, refusing to disclose the names of

staff members and declaring that the Vice President's office was in neither the executive nor the congressional branch of government (Duffy 2007).

The Vietnam Syndrome: Congressional Constraints on America's Use of Force

Of all the tenets of U.S. primacy, the one that was central to the primacists was that the President should be able to use force abroad in order to protect American interests. If the United States had conventional military superiority but could not demonstrate its power, then foreign countries would perceive the United States as an impotent giant. In 1973, Congress passed the War Powers Resolution, which sought to place constraints on the use of American forces abroad. The law instructed the president that he needed to notify Congress in all possible cases that troops would be put into a combat situation abroad. In addition, after 60 days, the president needed to gain congressional approval for continuing to station troops abroad. The law was intentionally written in very weak language, offering many loopholes for the president to exert U.S. power, but the primacists opposed even the largely symbolic law and even the remote possibility of Congress constraining the president's power as Commander-in-Chief.

During the Ford Administration, Congress sought to further constrain the use of American military power. In the waning days of Vietnam, North Vietnamese soldiers gained more territory, moving closer to Saigon, the capital of South Vietnam. On April 19, 1975, Ford requested from Congress $722 million in military aid for South Vietnam (Kalman 2010: 105-106). Congress rejected this request and on April 29, thousands of refugees stormed the American Embassy. From the White House, Cheney, Rumsfeld, and Ford watched the final, chaotic iconic scene of defeat as the last American helicopter took off from the roof of the American embassy. Each man was emotionally affected by

the terrible scene. Cheney would say later about Vietnam that "America didn't do enough" (Dubose and Bernstein 2006: 169).

The Mayaguez Incident: A Presidential Demonstration of American Force

A month later, Ford, Cheney, and Rumsfeld would have the opportunity to assert presidential power over foreign policy and demonstrate America's military power. In June of 1975, Ford was told that the American ship *Mayaguez* had been seized along with its crew by the Khmer Rouge, members of the Cambodian Communist Army. Cheney and Rumsfeld encouraged Ford to form a closed group to plan an attack and, in defiance of the War Powers Resolution, did not inform Congress of the coming military campaign. Eschewing diplomacy, the United States acted with overwhelming force, storming the Cambodian island where intelligence reports said American hostages were being held. The plan also included bombing the Cambodian capital Phnom Penh.

Unbeknownst to the Americans, the hostages were not on the island and instead had been released earlier that day by the Cambodians. Twenty-five Americans soldiers lost their lives, and some congressmen including condemned the attack, but the American press hailed the incident as a great victory. President Ford appeared on the cover of *Newsweek*, and the magazine proclaimed that "Ford had restored confidence in the United States after the defeat of Vietnam." In Ford's biography, he would say, "Many people's faith in their country was restored and my standing in the polls shot up 11 points" (Kalman 2010: 118). Furthermore, the Mayaguez incident served many of the important goals of U.S. primacy and taught Cheney and Rumsfeld the utility of using force. Congress was confronted with a *fait accompli* that undermined the War Powers Resolution, as Ford's approval ratings had markedly improved and America's enemies

were sent a clear signal that, despite the recent defeat in Vietnam, the United States would not hesitate to use military force.

Cheney and Rumsfeld Seek Presidential Power for Themselves

Over the course of their early political careers, both Cheney and Rumsfeld gravitated toward the power centers in business and government. In the executive branch Cheney and Rumsfeld did not just seek presidential power solely to strengthen the institution of the executive relative to Congress and the courts. They also sought to take control within the executive branch itself by undermining their opponents and accumulating more power for themselves. This pattern would manifest itself in the second Bush Administration from the moment that they took office. There Cheney and Rumsfeld knew that they would have to take control of the levers of power in order to be in a position to invade Iraq. The war in Iraq was preceded by an internal war to thwart the more moderate members of the Bush Administration, including Condoleezza Rice, George Tenet, and Secretary of State Colin Powell. In one of many examples from his time in the Bush Administration, Cheney attempted to lead National Security Council meetings, rather than allowing the National Security Advisor herself, Condoleezza Rice, to lead. Ultimately, Bush needed to intervene in order to thwart the Vice President (Swansbrough 2008: 74). In another case, Rumsfeld attempted to redesign himself as the Chief Intelligence Officer in place of CIA Director George Tenet who had responsibility for heading intelligence. Brent Scowcroft, who worked as National Security Advisor in the Ford Administration, warned Tenet that if he agreed to the plan, he would be stripped of all his responsibilities(Risen 2006: 68).

During his time in the Ford Administration, Rumsfeld wanted a cabinet position in the White House in order to position himself as a possible vice presidential candidate under Ford (Montgomery 2009: 36). Working together gave them an advantage over their adversaries in both the Ford and Bush Administrations: Their list of enemies included almost every autonomous individual in the White House, and all of the cabinet and staff not directly taking orders from them.

Enemy number one in the Ford White House was Vice President Nelson Rockefeller, a moderate Republican, who was given responsibility for much of the domestic affairs in the administration (Cockburn 2007: 27). Rumsfeld, as presidential chief of staff, and Cheney, as Rumsfeld's assistant, restricted access to Ford by controlling his presidential appointments and the flow of paper work that Ford received. Years later, Cheney admitted that he often would not give the president proposals from Rockefeller. When it became apparent to Rockefeller that Rumsfeld and Cheney were blocking his access to Ford, the Vice President protested at meetings, which Cheney verbally countered. Years later, Cheney would brag that he had many shouting matches with the Vice President (Hayes 2007: 112). Rockefeller knew that the plan was to replace him as Vice President and put in Rumsfeld as his running mate, and on occasion, Rockefeller would pop his head into Rumsfeld's office to say, "You're never going to become President" (Cockburn 2007: 27). In another arena Cheney was especially incensed about Rockefeller's initiative to encourage the conservation of energy. Cheney adamantly disagreed with the plan which Rockefeller sent to Ford and effectively killed the initiative (Dubose and Bernstein 2006: 38).

Another enemy for Rumsfeld and Cheney was Henry Kissinger, who had taken control of much U.S. foreign policy by holding a dual office as both National Security Advisor and Secretary of State. Kissinger was pursuing the policy of détente, a policy of engaging with the Soviets through direct talks and arms control agreements—a policy of restraint which both Cheney and Rumsfeld abhorred. The policy of détente may have caused a thawing of U.S.-Soviet relations and an end to the state of threat that existed between the two countries. Cheney and Rumsfeld sought to undermine Kissinger by releasing to the media a series of incriminating leaks (Dubose and Bernstein 2006: 31-32).

The Halloween Day Massacre: Primacists Take Power of the Executive

The staffing shake-up that occurred in the Ford Administration markedly improved the power of the primacists. Kissinger lost his position as National Security Adviser to one of his protégés, Brent Scowcroft. Rumsfeld gained his cabinet position by replacing Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger. Rockefeller was asked not to run as Vice President in the 1976 election, and CIA Director William Colby was replaced by George H.W. Bush. Dick Cheney assumed Rumsfeld's position as presidential Chief of Staff.

There has been a great deal of speculation about whether Donald Rumsfeld orchestrated the whole shake-up. Ford did not need any prodding to replace James Schlesinger, whose professorial, arrogant style of communication led to many clashes with the President. But Rumsfeld certainly played a part in knocking Rockefeller off the ticket which he later called "an act of cowardice." Years later, in an interview with a biographer, Ford finally conceded that Rumsfeld was the reason he dropped Rockefeller

from the ticket. Rumsfeld and Cheney had also targeted William Colby because of his disclosures in the Congressional investigations, but also because Colby refused to do an alternative intelligence estimate of the Soviet military.

Nuclear Shift: Reassessing the Cold War Threat

Rumsfeld met with Andrew Marshall, a close friend from his last tenure as Secretary of Defense. Marshall still worked for the Office of Net Assessment, an obscure office in the Pentagon started by Richard Nixon in 1972 to assess Soviet military and come up with long-term planning to counter that threat. Marshall, coming from RAND Corporation, had been working on threat assessment since the 1950s. RAND Corporation was home to Marshall, Albert Wohlstetter, and other analysts who used game theory and quantitative analysis to map out possible attack scenarios by the Soviets against the United States. These scenarios between two well-armed nuclear states did not show any way for either side to escape significant loss of life in the event of nuclear exchange. Even before the phrase "mutually assured destruction" was coined by Robert McNamara, analysts at RAND were very aware that the logical response to conflict—the use of conventional forces from either side in a nuclear exchange—made engaging in nuclear exchange unthinkable. During the 1950s and 1960s, a war between the United States and the Soviet Union was seen as possible and perhaps inevitable, but even a conventional war could escalate into a nuclear exchange.

The RAND analysts spent a great deal of time trying to break out of the "mutually assured destruction" box to find a scenario where conventional war or even a small nuclear exchange would not lead to full scale nuclear attack. Out of this thinking came the idea of "flexible response," whereby in the event of a conventional or nuclear

exchange, both sides could find a way to deescalate. Another alternative was to create a national missile defense that would focus on shooting Soviet missiles out of the sky once they were launched. Rumsfeld was exposed to all of this thinking through his affiliation with RAND in the early 1970s. Rumsfeld sat on the RAND Board starting in 1970 and developed a relationship with Marshall, Wohlstetter, and others. As soon as he entered his position as Secretary of Defense in the Ford Administration, Rumsfeld met with the RAND analysts, and used them to help him create a series of reports which he would give to members of Congress on the Soviet threat.

During Rumsfeld's tenure as Secretary of Defense, Détente and the SALT arms reduction negotiations led to widespread expectations that there was an opportunity to make spending cuts in defense. Cheney and Rumsfeld led the fight against these expectations calling for more money for defense and for improving defense technology. Rumsfeld's reports to Congress and his threat inflation of the Soviets helped the Pentagon to procure a 9 billion dollar defense increase, in spite of a severe recession that hit the country in 1974 that lasted into 1975. This was the first real defense increase in constant dollars since 1967.

Rumsfeld also spearheaded the campaign for a transformation of the military through a Revolution in Military Affairs or RMA. In February 1975, two analysts working for the Pentagon, Albert Wohlstetter and Andrew Marshall, wrote a top-secret report that introduced the principles of RMA that they had worked on in the RAND Corporation. The report imagined linking a host of new high-tech weapons into one network. Unmanned vehicles piloted with remote controls would give a complete view of the battlefield, transmitting the information through satellites using a Global

Positioning Network. Attacks would utilize precision guided missiles and bombs that would hit "less than ten feet" from their targets (Kaplan 2008: 12-15). The weapons network would give the U.S. a conventional response to a potential invasion of Europe from the Soviet Union. In other words, the report was the culmination of the RAND vision of "flexible response" that would make weapons usable again instead of being boxed in by the strategic logic of Mutually Assured Destruction. When Rumsfeld entered office as Secretary of Defense under George W. Bush, it was this same network-centric, high-tech vision that Rumsfeld was working to implement.

More Power to the Leader: Restoring Authority to the Executive Branch

In the late 1970s and in the 1980s Cheney represented Wyoming as a Congressman and continued to work for his vision of U.S. primacy, attempting to strengthen both the military and the presidency. In spite of his place in Congress Cheney still believed in presidential supremacy over foreign policy. When James Baker was appointed chief of staff in the Reagan administration in 1980, he asked the former chief of staff under Ford for advice about the job. Cheney used the meeting to warn about the dangers of the War Powers Act that was a challenge to presidential supremacy. Baker's notes from the meeting say, "Pres. Seriously weakened in recent yrs. Restore power & auth to Exec Branch---Need stronger ldr'ship. Get rid of War Powers Act-restore independent rights." The idea was marked with two double lines and six asterisks and in the margin Baker wrote, "Central theme we ought to push" (Savage 2007: 43).

In the mid-1980's Cheney again acted to protect the executive as the head of the Congressional minority report for the Iran Contra Affair. Cheney wrote in his final report that the investigation itself was unconstitutional and that Congress had no authority

to challenge the Reagan administration in foreign policy. Cheney came away from the investigation more determined than ever that Congress had no place in foreign policy decision-making and that in order to protect U.S. interests abroad the president must have complete freedom of action. In a speech given in November of 1987 Cheney outlines many of the principles of U.S. primacy:

> If you go back to the early 1970s coming out of the war in Vietnam and Watergate, Congress moved very aggressively to assert the notion that it was important to place limits on presidential power and authority, so that future Presidents would not abuse Presidential power the way it was alleged Lyndon Johnson had in the war in Southeast Asia or Richard Nixon had in connection with Watergate. The result of that was a series of legislative enactments: The War Powers Act in 1973 that limits the president's ability to commit troops overseas. The Turkish Arms embargo in 1974 that shut off the flow of arms to a key NATO ally. The Clark Amendment in 1975 that shut down what up till then had been a very successful effort to support Jonas Svimby in covert action in Angola. He's still there today and making significant military gains. But when Ronald Reagan came to power in 1980 many of us who were his supporters believed that he offered us the opportunity to correct the imbalance that had developed in the 70s between Congress and the President in the area of foreign policy and national security matters. I believe that it's absolutely essential that you recognize the President as the pre-eminent authority in foreign policy. That in the world we live in with all its inherent danger that it's impossible to talk about a reasonable national security policy, foreign policy that's carried out by 535 Secretaries of State up there on Capitol Hill. (Cheney 1987)

Congressman Cheney was also a tireless advocate for spending increases in the defense budget, backing new programs for chemical weapons, the MX missile, Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative and other high-tech programs. As Secretary of Defense under George H.W. Bush Cheney admitted that he was a strong advocate for defense saying, "As a member of Congress [I] voted for every single defense program—I never saw a defense program I didn't like" (Chatterjee 2009: 37).

During the 1980s Rumsfeld was the CEO of the chemical company G.D. Searle and sat on the boards of various corporations but he still managed to stay involved in

international security issues. He was appointed by President Reagan to act as a Middle East envoy for the State Department. Rumsfeld was sent to Iraq during the Iran/Iraq War at a time when the U.S. wanted to maintain the flow of oil from the Persian Gulf and also balance against the hostile regimes of Syria and Iran. Declassified documents from November 1983 show that the State Department was well aware of almost "almost daily" use of chemical weapons and that the weapons had also been used against "Kurdish Insurgents" (Battle 2003). Despite this violation of international law, Rumsfeld was sent to make direct contact between Saddam's regime and the Reagan administration.

Rumsfeld met with Saddam Hussein on December 21, 1983 and did not mention chemical weapons, discussing regional issues and a possible pipeline running through the Gulf of Aquaba but Iraq rejected the offer due to the pipelines proximity to Israel. Later that day he met with Iraq's Foreign Minister, Tariq Aziz, and did bring up the issue of chemical weapons but also said to Aziz that United States supported Iraq in its war with Iran and assured him of the United States' "willingness to do more" (Battle 2003). In between Rumsfeld's December and March visits to Iraq the United States publicly condemned Iraq's use of chemical weapons. Rumsfeld arrived in March, discussed Iraq obtaining credits with the U.S. Export-Import Bank, and again attempted to sell Saddam on the pipeline to Aquaba. He also conveyed an offer of assistance on the pipeline from Israel that was again rejected. Rumsfeld's diplomacy displays many of the principles of U.S. Primacy. First, Rumsfeld acts as presidential envoy strengthening the ability of the executive to act in secret, outside of the purview of Congress or the American people. Second, Rumsfeld wanted to expand the role of U.S. private interests in Iraq without any concern for Iraq's human rights violations. Third, Rumsfeld helped strengthen and

maintain U.S. regional hegemony over the Persian Gulf by balancing with Iraq against Syria and Iran. This regional domination was undertaken primarily to assure the free flow of oil from the region. In his capacity as Middle East envoy Rumsfeld did not show any radical departure from existing U.S. policy in the Persian Gulf, but Rumsfeld's participation in the policy with Iraq neatly fits into an historical pattern of advocating for principles of U.S. primacy. Rumsfeld was most likely appointed due to his ideological commitment to U.S. primacy and his experience in working to maintain it.

Cheney and Rumsfeld's consistent plan for U.S. primacy is also illustrated by the Continuity of Government plan or COG. In the early 1980s, Ronald Reagan signed into law an executive order that created the top-secret COG program that was designed to keep the government functioning in the event of a nuclear attack by the Soviet Union (Mann 2004b). Once a year 3 separate teams were taken to an unknown location somewhere in the United States to simulate a shadow government in hiding that gamed out a response to World War III. Rumsfeld and Cheney were the leaders of two of these teams and the budget for the exercises reached 1 billion dollars a year by the end of Reagan's second term. The leaders of the teams or presidents acted as the sole authority of government and the exercises failed to include a role for Congress and ignored the regular line of succession in the Constitution. Rumsfeld was particularly passionate about the exercises. According to one Pentagon official many of the other participants missed the exercises due to other priorities but Rumsfeld never missed a simulation despite sitting on the boards of various companies (Cockburn 2007, 84-88). Rumsfeld's strategy never deviated. In spite of the teams having opportunities for diplomacy Rumsfeld was always determined to launch a full scale attack against the Russians and

the Chinese. The COG program continued with a smaller budget under the Clinton administration with terrorists eventually replacing the Soviet Union as the antagonist. After the attack on 9/11, Dick Cheney carried out many of the procedures of the COG program. George W. Bush was ordered not to return to Washington and various government officials were whisked off to undisclosed locations (Mann 2004b). Cheney and Rumsfeld's participation in the COG program illustrates their belief in executive authority and also Rumsfeld's preference for using overwhelming force.

Cheney Inflates the Threat of the Soviets to Fight the Peace Dividend

In Cheney's 1989 congressional hearings to become Secretary of Defense he made clear his priorities. First, at a time when the Cold War was winding down and Congress was focused on cutting the Reagan deficit, Cheney proposed a defense budget increase to keep up with inflation. Second, Cheney made clear that he believed in executive branch power and that "sometimes having a confrontation with Congress is the right way to go" (Whittle 2010: 170-171). But Cheney's call for a defense budget increase, like Rumsfeld's similar request in 1976, came at a time of more peaceful relations with the Soviet Union. Cheney needed to inflate the threat of the Soviet Union in order to have a rationale for spending and in March 1989 Cheney cautioned that the Soviet threat was still very real saying, "There are those who want to declare the Cold War ended. They perceive a significantly lessened threat and want to believe that we can reduce our threat level of vigilance accordingly. But I believe caution is in order." (Hughes 2007). In April of 1989 in an interview on CNN, Cheney said that Soviet leader Gorbachev would fail and would be replaced by someone "far more hostile." But Cheney's stand against the Soviets went counter to the George H.W. Bush

Administration strategy of backing Gorbachev. After another TV interview where Cheney discussed Gorbachev's faults, National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft called Secretary of State James Baker and said, "Dump on Dick with all possible alacrity" (Foyer and Ackerman 2003). Undeterred, in March 1990 Cheney publicly criticized the CIA for the agency's statement that the Soviets did not want a confrontation with the United States. Cheney made the claim that the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe showed the unpredictability of events and that at any time the Soviets could become a "military threat" (Hughes 2007: 225). Robert Gates would later recall that whenever the top Bush leaders discussed the Soviet Union, it was always Cheney versus "the rest."

In spite of Cheney's rhetoric, after the fall of the Berlin Wall he realized that the diminished Soviet threat could not justify current defense outlays, and so he instructed Paul Wolfowitz to coordinate with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Colin Powell, to come up with a new security strategy. Wolfowitz was head of the Pentagon Policy Directorate, a 700-person team that normally dealt with issues such as basing rights, but Cheney empowered them to do long-term strategic planning and encouraged them to think big. Wolfowitz shared Cheney's belief in the continuing threat of the Soviet Union (Dorrien 2004: 31). Powell was an unlikely ally who had come out publicly in support of Gorbachev but like Cheney, Powell wanted to make sure that America remained the dominant military power in the world.

Cheney feared that if the Executive branch did not come up with a rationale for strategic forces abroad, then the President might lose control of the policy-making process to Congress. On February 25, 1993, after his time in office Cheney reflected on

stepped up planning for a new strategic rationale saying, "I wanted to get on top of the debate that was about to begin on the future of U.S. defense needs. I had decided with Colin and the Chiefs that we needed to lead on the debate with Congress…We would not argue that no change was needed, but instead influence the coming reallocation of resources by defining the terms of debate" (Snider 1993). In the months after the fall of the Berlin Wall, Cheney did lose control of the debate as members of Congress began to discuss what to buy with the "peace dividend." Massachusetts Senator Edward Kennedy proposed setting up a "National Needs Trust Fund" to pay for social programs (Dubose and Bernstein 2006: 90). Cheney acted as the chief opponent of the "peace dividend," often repeating the phrase "There is no peace dividend. The dividend of military spending has been 40 years of peace" (Marullo 1993: 192).

In the face of congressional calls for cuts, Cheney submitted, in January 1990, a 1991 FY defense budget and FY 92-96 program, requesting 306.9 billion dollars for 1991, a five percent growth from the previous year but a decline of two percent per year over the program when adjusted for inflation. *Business Week* wrote an article about Cheney with the headline, "Dick Cheney: The Loneliness of the Last Cold Warrior." The two percent reduction would be paid for with partial and complete base closures of one hundred military bases, 90 percent of which were located in Democrats' congressional districts, making the peace dividend contingent on economic pain in congressional districts. Congress erupted in bipartisan opposition to the defense request, and Les Aspen in the House and Sam Nunn in the Senate gave a series of speeches that gave notice to the George H.W. Bush Administration that Congress would take control of the reduction in defense unless Bush proposed something more realistic.

Cheney was ready with the new "base force" reduction in troops that had been developed by Colin Powell in coordination with Paul Wolfowitz and was presented to Congress by Cheney on June 19, 1990. The new plan was endorsed by George H.W. Bush and called for long-term cuts of 25 percent in U.S. troop levels. The plan concentrated not on the Soviet Union but on regional contingency plans that could meet potential crises. Cheney knew that new weapons systems and research would bring the total budget cuts to only 10 percent (Snider 1993). A few days later the Congressional Budget Office countered with a report that said reducing troop levels by 25 percent would also reduce the defense budget by 17 to 27 percent. Congress and the Pentagon could not come to an agreement, but the stalemate was soon overshadowed by the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait on August 2, 1990. The later troop buildup in Saudi Arabia and the looming war with Iraq illustrated the need for a strong military to meet the regional contingencies discussed in the base force plan. In October 1990 Congress and the President agreed on a modest reduction in defense outlays for FY 1991 of 298 billion, 296 billion for FY 1992, and 293 billion for FY 1993. The Gulf War not only offered a rationale for higher defense budgets but the superiority of U.S. weapons offered an endorsement of the dream of a Revolution in Military Affairs. Cheney pointed out that the success of the Patriot missiles in the Gulf War in intercepting Iraqi Scud missiles showed the importance of the Strategic Defense Initiative or National Missile Defense. In March of 1991 Cheney would say "If there was ever evidence that supported the notion for aggressively going forward with the program, it would seem to me it was watching those Scuds fly at Tel Aviv and Riyadh" (Thompson 1991).

After the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq, Cheney sought to use the crisis to delegitimize the War Powers Resolution. During the crisis, as troops were ordered to Saudi Arabia, Cheney encouraged President George H.W. Bush to ignore Congress. Congressional criticism of Bush was vocal and in an attempt to legitimize the potential war with Iraq, Bush decided to seek approval for the decision to use force to liberate Kuwait. Cheney was adamant that Congress should not be consulted saying, "In the end they don't accept responsibility for tough decisions up there" (Alfonsi 2006: 152). Bush rejected the advice of his Secretary of Defense, but the close vote in the Senate of 52 to 47 only served to solidify Cheney's belief that Congress was not to be trusted to make foreign policy decisions.

After the Persian Gulf War, Cheney moved to protect American military leadership in the world by creating a new doctrine. With the fall of the Soviet Union the United States needed a new rationale for maintaining the large defense budget that would be needed to maintain American hegemony. George H.W. Bush authorized a defense review and Cheney appointed Paul Wolfowitz to manage a 700 person team and instructed him to "think big" (Dorrien 2004, 31).

On March 7, 1992 a Pentagon leaked version of the the Defense Policy Guidance plan or DPG appeared in an article in the *New York Times* (Tyler 1992). The plan laid out a policy for U.S. hegemony over every strategic area on the globe. It asserted that U.S. policy "requires that we endeavor to prevent any hostile power from dominating a region whose resources would, under consolidated control, be sufficient to generate global power. These regions include Western Europe, East Asia, the territory of the former Soviet Union, and Southwest Asia." Under the plan, the U.S. military would

increase its advantage over all possible competitors in an attempt to convince other countries "that they need not aspire to a greater role or pursue a more aggressive posture to protect their legitimate interests." In a particularly damning section the plan cited Japan and Germany as potential future competitors. The plan also asserted the United States would act unilaterally to defend "not only our interests, but those of our allies or friends, or those which could seriously unsettle international relations. Various types of US interests may be involved in such instances: access to vital raw materials, primarily Persian Gulf oil; proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles; threats to US citizens from terrorism or regional or local conflict; and threats to US society from narcotics trafficking." The plan caused an immediate diplomatic and domestic uproar. Japan, Germany, Congressmen and perhaps most importantly presidential candidates criticized the document (Dorrien 2004: 41).

George H.W. Bush and his top advisors sought to distance themselves from the embarrassing document. Initially, even Cheney did not publicly defend the document but behind closed doors he whole-heartedly endorsed it, telling Zalmay Khalizad, the main writer of the document, "You have discovered a new rationale for our role in the world" (Hoyle 2008: 50). Various Pentagon officials leaked to the press that the chief author of the document was Paul Wolfowitz and the DPG came to be known as the "Wolfowitz Doctrine." The widespread belief that the document represented the fringe beliefs of a few neoconservatives led by Wolfowitz has only been challenged recently by declassified documents released in 2008. The documents clearly show that the DPG was planned and drafted in full consultation with Colin Powell, Dick Cheney and many other Pentagon officials (Burr 2008).

In the days after the leak, Cheney rescued the plan by instructing Wolfowitz and Libby to write several more drafts. Cheney wanted to make sure that the basic principles of U.S. primacy and executive supremacy stayed in the document even as the more strident phrases were dropped. On May 19, 1992 Wolfowitz sent a memo to Cheney saying that the new draft of the DPG, "is still a rather hard-hitting document which retains the substance you liked in the February 18th draft" (Burr 2008).

The Pentagon released the final version of the DPG publicly in January 1993 as Clinton came into office. The new document retained all of the basic principles of U.S. primacy. The rhetoric about German and Japan being potential competitors had been dropped but the documented still asserted that the United States should preclude rivals from key strategic regions. It still asserted that the U.S. would act unilaterally "even when a broad potential coalition exists, leadership will be necessary to realize it." It also claimed the right of presidential supremacy over foreign policy saying "A future president will need options, allowing him to lead and where the international reaction proves sluggish or inadequate, to act independently to protect our critical interests." The new DPG also emphasized the importance of creating a Revolution in Military Affairs saying, "The Gulf War made clear the early promise of this revolution, emphasizing the importance of recent breakthroughs in low observable information gathering and processing, precision strike, and other key technologies." In order to soften the hard-line policies the document repeatedly used rhetoric endorsing democracy, treaties and international institutions- a sales approach that would also be used in the campaign to sell the invasion of Iraq two decades later.

In the Clinton administration the DPG was ignored but the principles in the document inspired the formation of a lobby group called the Project for a New American Century (PNAC). Cheney signed onto PNACs "Statement of Principles" of PNAC, which called for strong American leadership in the world and the need for a strong U.S. military. Rumsfeld was even more active in the PNAC group which was run mostly by neoconservatives like William Kristol and Paul Wolfowitz. The defining document of PNAC was a new defense review called *Rebuilding America's Defense* released in the year 2000 before George W. Bush took office. The review restates the principles in the DPG and cites Cheney as the inspiration for the new document (Donnelly et al. 2000: ii). But *Rebuilding America's Defenses* moves beyond a statement of principles and discusses specific weapons systems and an overarching plan for how to approach strategic regions. One region that received special attention was the Persian Gulf, a region that hold two thirds of the world's known oil reserves. The document states, "Indeed the United State has for decades sought a more permanent role in Gulf Regional Security. While the unresolved conflict with Iraq provides the immediate justification, the need for a substantial American force presence in the Gulf transcends the issue of the regime of Saddam Hussein" (Donnelly et al. 2000: 14). The report also strongly endorses the transformation of the military through a Revolution in Military Affairs but worries that in the absence of a crisis the country will not spend the necessary resources. The report says, "Further, the process of transformation, even if it brings revolutionary change, is likely to be a long one, absent some catastrophic and catalyzing event—like a new Pearl Harbor. Domestic politics and industrial policy will shape the pace and content of transformation as much as the requirements of current missions" (Donnelly et

al. 2000: 51). The attack on 9/11 was a stroke of luck for Cheney and Rumsfeld who needed a new Pearl Harbor to enact their plan for U.S. primacy.

This chapter on the history of Cheney and Rumsfeld clearly shows a consistent pattern of asserting the right and the necessity of the president to use U.S. military power in the world. Many scholars have documented different components of the Cheney/Rumsfeld plan for U.S. primacy (Warshaw 2009; Chatterjee 2009; Gellman 2008; Herspring 2008; Kaplan 2008; Savage 2007). But other scholars have largely ignored the role of Cheney and Rumsfeld, claiming that they are baffled by the true reason for the invasion of Iraq (Ferguson 2008; Packer 2005). These scholars often quote insiders like the neoconservatives or Richard Haas who worked in the State Department during the Bush administration. Haas in spite of being an insider can offer no insight and certainly never discusses the role of Cheney, Rumsfeld or Bush in the decision to invade. According to Haas he will go to his grave not knowing the answer (Packer 2005, 46). A curios statement given that new evidence will normally emerge about the reasons for any major war that occurs. How can Haas express so much certainty about the future historical record?

Some of the mystery has been lifted from the historical record on the Iraq invasion. Most recent scholarship has formed a consensus that Rumsfeld and Cheney played a central role in the invasion. In this chapter, I have made an argument that Rumsfeld and Cheney show a clear pattern of working toward the goal of U.S. primacy. The goal of U.S. primacy for the invasion appears to be the best fit as to why these two men wanted to invade Iraq. In the next chapter, I will explore a third key player, the role of the president and his motivation for making the final decision to invade.

CHAPTER IV

ESSENCE OF THE DECIDER: WHY GEORGE W. BUSH DECIDED TO INVADE IRAQ

"Dad had been raised to be a good sport. He blamed no one; he was not bitter. But I knew he was hurting. The whole thing was a miserable experience. Watching a good man lose made 1992 one of the worst years of my life…. As the pain began to fade, a new feeling replaced it: the itch to run for office again."

(Bush 2010, 50-51)

This chapter examines George W. Bush the man, and his apparent motivations for the invasion of Iraq.

Opening Profile

A wide array of hypotheses surround the role which George W. Bush played in the decision to invade Iraq in 2002. Most hypotheses do not give the president any agency, but rather portray Bush as having been out of his league and subject to the counsel of his more seasoned advisers and precipitating events such as the attacks of September 11, 2001. The seminal book on the presidency, *Essence of Decision*, presents an academic argument for the lack of agency seen in the executive branch of the second Bush Administration. In contrast, in the Kennedy Administration, that president's choices were circumscribed during the Cuban Missile Crisis. The book rejects the "rational actor" model for the United States, where the executive branch depict the President as subject to options presented by bureaucracies such as the CIA, the Pentagon, and the State Department, as well as subject to the internal politics of other high officials in the administration. Bush seems to typify this model of president. In his first term, Bush was relatively inexperienced with foreign policy and appointed seasoned veterans such as Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld. Bush would seem to be a prime example of

Allison's model of the executive in which the commander in chief would be subject to his advisors, events, and the limited options presented to him. But Bush did make a series of decisions both before and after he took office that made his preexisting preference to invade Iraq a foregone conclusion.

The widely held perception that Bush was driven by psychological pathos and a lack of competence is not without merit. Bush can hardly be characterized as self-reflective or as a towering intellect; nonetheless, my argument is that Bush has been "misunderestimated." This chapter presents evidence that Bush was not persuaded by his advisors to invade Iraq after 9/11 due to weapons of mass destruction or to pursue democracy, or out of psychological weaknesses, religious convictions, or naïve incompetence. The picture that emerges from a closer examination of Bush is a coldly calculating politician who wanted to use the Iraq invasion to create a successful presidency.

Bush's personal experience with running for office and his time working on his father's campaigns shaped Bush's perception of how to win elections. The younger Bush worked closely with political operatives like Karl Rove and Lee Atwater. His own loss in a 1978 Texas congressional race and his father's loss in the 1992 presidential election were definitive moments in his career, and Bush vowed that he would learn from the mistakes made during the campaigns in order to never lose an election again. Both the 1978 and 1992 elections were lost, according to Bush's logic, because he and his father had been defined as effete New England elitists, "wimps" who did not represent the conservative base of the Republican Party. For Bush, Reagan was the model of a successful president because unlike his father he presented a strong image to the country,

cut taxes, and built up the national defense. Bush adopted a masculine, cowboy persona and prided himself on making hard choices quickly and refusing to waver in those decisions.

This role as the decider meant that he was predisposed as president to use military force in his foreign policy, not as a last resort but as an opportunity to prove his strength of character. He surrounded himself with foreign policy hawks like Rumsfeld and Cheney who already had a longstanding commitment to U.S. military supremacy. As Secretary of Defense Cheney had commissioned a report in 1992 called the Defense Policy Guidance (DPG) plan. The DPG was leaked to *The New York Times* on March 7, 1992 (Tyler 1992). The radical plan caused a political firestorm as it called for U.S. military supremacy over every strategic region on the planet. It stated that U.S. strategy "requires that we endeavor to prevent any hostile power from dominating a region whose resources would, under consolidated control, be sufficient to generate global power. These regions include Western Europe, East Asia, the territory of the former Soviet Union, and Southwest Asia."

While this paper will argue that Cheney needed to explain the nuances of the plan to Bush before he took office, Bush appointed Cheney because of his hawkish reputation, loyalty to the Bush family, and his efficiency in enacting policy. The appointment of Cheney was especially telling for Bush because unlike most vice presidential choices, Cheney offered no electoral votes. Karl Rove, Bush's chief strategist, opposed the pick for this reason. Cheney also had a history of heart attacks, had cast controversial votes as a congressman, and would be perceived by many as retread from the senior Bush's administration (Bush 2010: 70). The reason that George W. chose him was to help him

implement policy. If Bush wanted a hawkish policy, he could not have selected a more able vice president.

9/11: An Opportunity to Invade

Bush had a view that one can acquire political capital by winning elections or achieving major victories, and then using one's high approval ratings to push through policy choices (Schier 2008). After the 2004 victory Bush was very candid about his political philosophy, saying, "Let me put it to you this way: I earned capital in the campaign, political capital, and now I intend to spend it" (Stevenson 2004). Politicians, especially during a campaign, can use cheap talk by pledging that they support some cause or issue, but spending one's capital implies incurring some costs by using a considerable amount of time and resources on a given issue.

This section looks at those decisions that attempted to create a change in institutional structures by building a coalition to push through the chosen policy. During the 2004 campaign, Bush pledged to support a constitutional amendment to ban gay marriage and to propose a bill to reform Social Security. After winning the election, he chose to spend his capital on Social Security reform by proposing a specific bill and organizing a series of town hall meetings to sell his plan while the ban on gay marriage received very little time and resources. While one cannot put Bush on the couch and explore his motivations, one can discern from his actions that Social Security reform was a higher priority for him than the gay marriage amendment (Kirkpatrick and Stolberg 2005).

Much of the literature on the Iraq War holds up Bush's public rhetoric as a direct reflection of his motivations and intentions (Mearsheimer and Walt 2007: 245; Desch

2008). During the 2000 election debates Bush promised that the United States would be cautious about intervening in other countries with U.S. troops saying, “I just dfiron't think it's the role of the United States to walk into a country, say, ‘We do it this way; so should you’” (PBS 2000). This humble rhetoric was immediately abandoned when Bush took office. The rhetoric had been part of the declaratory policy that Bush would use to capture votes. Within months of taking office Bush showed what his actual policy would be when he made a pronounced unilateral shift in U.S. foreign policy. Bush ignored the advice of Colin Powell by rejecting the Kyoto Agreements, abandoning the Israeli Palestinian Peace talks, making a public push to abandon the ABM treaty and the ICC treaty, and backing off from concluding an agreement with North Korea (Sullivan 2009: 141-149). The declaratory policy of humble rhetoric had been part of a plan by Karl Rove to capture the swing voters in the 2000 election. Days after the elections Matt Dowd, a Republican pollster, sent a memo to Rove showing that the swing vote center had collapsed from 24 percent of the electorate in 1980 to 6 percent in 2000 and that the swing-vote strategy had been a miscalculation (Edsall 2006: 52). This allowed Bush to drop the humble rhetoric and adopt a declaratory policy that more closely matched the actual policy of acting unilaterally. Bush moved to strengthen his base by taking a hard turn to the right.

Beyond major policy stands, motivations can also be discerned from Bush’s appointments to major positions. Bush valued loyalty above all other attributes and wanted to make sure that his appointments would carry out his favored policies. Bush appointed seasoned members of the Republican establishment like Cheney and Rumsfeld, people who had discernable reputations as policy hawks. One of his most important

decisions was to appoint Rumsfeld as Secretary of Defense. During the 1990s Rumsfeld had been a public advocate for regime change in Iraq and arguably the most vocal proponent of national missile defense. Rumsfeld had also been a well-known political enemy of his father. Rumsfeld, as chief of staff for the Ford Administration, was believed to have helped convince Ford to appoint George H. W. Bush to head the CIA where he would be out of contention for the Vice Presidency. James Baker, a close friend of the elder Bush and former secretary of state, was surprised at the younger. Bush's decision to appoint his father's political rival to such a prominent position, telling him, "You know what he did to your father" (Draper 2008: 282). The appointment of Rumsfeld sent a strong signal that Bush wanted strong defense policies and he was willing to give up the approval of his father's more cautious allies.

Alternative Hypotheses

Bush has been described by his critics as lacking in curiosity about policy details, a gut player who used his instincts to make decisions (McClellan 2008: 261). But Bush's impulse decisions showed a remarkable consistency in his career, displaying a preference for making hardline and aggressive choices. For instance, in his father's presidential campaign it was the younger Bush who convinced the elder to go negative, using attack campaign ads like the notorious Willie Horton ad that blamed Michael Dukakis for the rape and murder committed by a prison inmate on a weekend furlough program (Swansborough 2008: 7).

"A liberated Iraq," President Bush declared in a speech to the American Enterprise Institute, "can show the power of freedom to transform that vital region, by bringing hope and progress into the lives of millions. America's interests in security, and

America's belief in liberty, both lead in the same direction: to a free and peaceful Iraq" (Bush 2003). The National Security Strategy released in September of 2002 stated that it would be national policy to promote "freedom" and "the development of democratic institutions." Bush allowed Clinton's 1997 Presidential Decision Directive 56 to expire: it had created an interagency group to coordinate nation-building operations, and Rumsfeld closed the Pentagon Institute of the Army, which was responsible for training for nation building.

Bush's Oedipal Complex

Many popular hypotheses regarding President Bush's underlying motivations to invade Iraq claim that Bush was motivated by a personal psychology related to his troubled relationship with his father. The most commonly used psychological theory is that Bush was motivated by a desire to outshine his father in an unconscious Oedipal Complex. By defeating Saddam Hussein, the younger Bush would avenge himself on his disapproving father and overly cautious advisers such as Brent Scowcroft and James Baker (Unger 2007: Ch. 1; Weisburg 2008: 167-174). In this narrative, Bush's insecurities opened up the executive branch to be captured by skillful manipulators such as Dick Cheney and the neoconservatives.

Bush remained firmly rooted in the family political machine with its strong ties to oil interests and the Saudis. Bush did need to distance himself from his father publicly for electoral reasons but he often turned to his father and his realist friends when he needed help or advice. The elder Bush advised his son to appoint Dick Cheney as head of his Vice Presidential search committee, and when finally making a decision, the

younger Bush came to a decision through his frequent discussions with his father who championed Cheney for the position (Schweizer and Schweizer 2004: 478).

And when the younger Bush was seen as being too close to Israel and Ariel Sharon during the Second Intifada in early July of 2001, the elder Bush and Brent Scowcroft ran shuttle diplomacy to reassure the Saudis that the U.S. would remain sympathetic to Saudi Arabia and the rest of the Arab world. Prince Abdullah was concerned that President Bush's evangelical background placed him too close to Ariel Sharon. The elder Bush spoke repeatedly with Crown Prince Abdullah and at one point called the Saudi ruler to reassure him that his son's "heart is in the right place" (Simpson 2006: 310). The President himself sought to smooth over the troubled relationship with the Saudis by writing a letter to Abdullah. The letter promised that he would work toward the creation of Palestinian state and included the comment, "I reject this extraordinary, un-American bias whereby the blood of an Israeli child is more expensive and holy than the blood of a Palestinian child" (ibid).

James Baker also maintained close ties with the Bush Administration acting as spokesman during the 2000 election count controversy, and was appointed as presidential envoy for Iraq's debt in 2003. Baker also chaired the controversial panel of experts who were appointed by Congress to look for solutions to the occupation of Iraq. The Baker-Hamilton Iraq Study Group was backed by many of the realist thinkers who were in close relationship with his father. The media touted the group in parental terms as the adults who were coming in to fix the problems caused by the naïve Bush. According to the media the group was calling for a withdrawal of American troops (Karl and Shipman 2006; CNN 2006a).

Many stories reported that Bush ignored the Baker Group's reportedly calling for a withdrawal of troops. Neoconservative columnist David Brooks commented, "Expert and elite opinion swung behind the Baker-Hamilton report, which called for handing more of the problems off to the Iraqi military and wooing Iran and Syria" (Brooks 2007). According to the media and neoconservatives why was Bush rejecting the realist advice of his father's friends? He was adopting a plan offered by the neoconservative American Enterprise Institute called "Choosing Victory: A Plan for Success in Iraq," which called for a troop surge (Benjamin 2007). The story offers compelling proof that Bush rejected the sound advice of his father and his friends in order to pursue a policy proposed by the realists' archenemies, the neoconservatives.

The problem with this charged psychological story is that it is not true. The neoconservative plan did call for a surge in American troops but the Iraq Study Group also called for a troop surge. A caveat to recommendation number 39 said, "We could, however, support a short term redeployment or surge of American combat forces to stabilize Baghdad, or to speed up the training and equipping mission, if the U.S. commander in Iraq determines that such steps would be effective" (Baker and Hamilton 2006). Not only did Baker put the surge in the report, he also defended the plan in the Senate by saying, "The president's plan ought to be given a chance. Just give it a chance" (Fox News 2007)." The main proponent of the surge within the Baker Group was Robert Gates who had served as the senior Bush's CIA director and who would later replace Donald Rumsfeld as Secretary of Defense (Schier 2008: 148). Bush not only appointed the realist and former CIA director from his father's administration to the position of Secretary of Defense; he also followed the advice of the Baker Group and opened up

diplomatic relations with Syria and Iran. For the first time since 1979 the United States offered to station diplomats in Iran, in July of 2008. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice emphasized that the U.S. wanted a thaw in the relations, saying, "We want more Iranians visiting the United States...We are determined to reach out to the Iranian people" (MacAskill 2008). After criticizing House Speaker Nancy Pelosi for visiting Syria in April of 2007, Bush also signaled a thaw in U.S.-Syrian relations by authorizing a meeting in May of 2007 with Secretary Rice and the Syrian Foreign Minister (Cornwell 2007).

Revenge on the Man Who Tried to Kill My Daddy

In a related hypothesis, the younger Bush acts not as his father's rival but as his protector against "the man who tried to kill my daddy" (Perret 2007). In this portrait, Bush son is filled with rage against the man who humiliated and threatened his family. Saddam Hussein was captured in December of 2003, and in an interview with Diane Sawyer Bush said that when he called his father to tell him of the capture, the younger Bush "could sense a great deal of pride in his father's voice" (ABC News 2003). He also declared in the interview that Saddam should be executed, saying, "He is a torturer, a murderer, and they had rape rooms, and this is a disgusting tyrant who deserves justice, the ultimate justice" (ibid). As the above statements show, Bush did have a visceral dislike of Saddam which may have contributed to the decision to invade. However, beyond a few short statements about the 1993 attempted assassination of his father, little evidence suggests that this was the primary factor that drove the president's decision. Revenge did not completely cloud his political judgment, because after 9/11 Bush did not immediately call for the overthrow of Saddam Hussein. As stated in the previous section,

he cornered Richard Clarke and asked him to find evidence of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) that would justify the invasion. This does not disprove that the preparation and political calculation were all part of a grand design to kill Saddam Hussein, but given the lack of evidence, this single causal hypothesis does not appear to wholly account for Bush's decision.

A Born Again Crusade in the Middle East

In another hypothesis as to Bush's motives to invade Iraq, Bush is portrayed as a born again Christian who becomes swept up by the events of 9/11 and reacts to the attack by enacting a crusade against the evildoers. In this portrait Bush's religious convictions clouded his understanding of the world and led him to adopt a Manichean struggle to rid the world of terrorists (Flibbert 2006; Warshaw 2009: Ch. 5). Bush was a born again Christian but the practice of his faith and how it affected his policy decisions remains ambiguous. Unlike Bill Clinton who regularly attended church services, Bush seldom attended church as President (Lawson 2005). Bush also frequently used profanity, didn't tithe, never tried to convert anyone to Christianity, and did not raise his daughters with any religious faith (Weisburg 2008: 82). There is also evidence that many of Bush's public stories of faith were embellished and in some cases fabricated whole cloth.

One of the most often told stories about Bush's faith was of being born again and giving up drinking due to a personal conversion experience with Billy Graham. According to Bush's autobiography, *A Charge to Keep,* Graham made a weekend visit to his father's house in Kennebunkport, Maine, in the summer of 1985. In the course of the weekend Bush had many conversations with Graham about Jesus, including a walk on the beach at Walker's Point. Bush said these conversations "planted a mustard seed in my

soul, a seed that grew over the next year" (Bush 1999: 136-137). After Graham converted him to Christianity, Bush used his relationship with Jesus to become clean and sober a year later.

When Billy Graham was asked about the story on NBC with Brian Williams, he did not have any recollection of the incident (Unger 2007: 79-81). Before the 2000 election when Mickey Herskowitz, the ghostwriter who helped Bush write the book, asked him to recount the story, Herskowitz was shocked to find that Bush, like Graham, had no recollection of the conversations (Unger 2007: 79-81). The real story of how Bush was converted to Christianity took place on April 3, 1984, with an evangelical preacher named Arthur Blessit. Blessit was an unconventional preacher who became famous according to the *Guinness Book of World Records* for going on a long walk through 60 countries with a twelve foot cross on his back. During the 1960s he ran a coffeehouse called the "Jesus coffeehouse" where drug addicts would engage in a "toilet baptism"—flushing their drugs down the toilet. According to Blessit's diary and Jim Sale who was a witness to the conversion, Bush joined hands with the two men at a church in Midland Texas and gave himself over to Jesus (Unger 2007: 84-85).

The story of the Graham conversion appears to have been concocted during Bush's father's campaign for the presidency with the help of a political operative named Douglas Wead. In June 1985 Wead, a Christian evangelical, wrote a memo about how to win over the Christian vote and sent it to the senior Bush campaign. The memo stated that the key to winning the evangelical vote was to "signal early" and "do whatever …. for evangelicals early, so that it would not appear hypocritical" (Minutaglio 1999: 213). The younger Bush read the memo and was impressed with the strategy. When Wead

later visited the campaign in 1986 Bush met him and said "You're mine. You report to me" (Minutaglio 1999: 213). The two men had a fruitful relationship, working closely together arranging meetings with Christian evangelicals and crafting the campaign to win the religious right vote. In one planning session in March of 1987 Wead and Bush discussed a list of various Christian leaders. Bush played dumb and asked Wead about Arthur Blessit. Wead told him about the eccentric preacher without realizing that Bush knew all about him (Baker 2009: 400). Wead warned Bush about how to sell the conversion experience for the campaign, saying that it couldn't be seen as something too "radical or tacky" (Baker 2009: 400), telling Bush that Billy Graham would be a good choice for Bush to discuss his conversion experience. Wead said, "My point to him was that evangelicals are not popular in the media and therefore you take a risk by identifying with any of them, and Graham may be the only one you can" (Baker 2009: 400). According to Wead, this conversation planted the seed for Bush's Billy Graham story.

Bush's relationship with Jesus may have helped him to quit drinking, but political calculation also played a pivotal role. Bush quit drinking on July 7, 1986, the day after his fortieth birthday which he celebrated in Colorado Springs. Bush had been drinking with his wife and two other couples, Don and Susie Evans and Joe and Jan O'Neil (Minutaglio 1999: 209-210). Laura confronted him while he was drinking, telling him to stop, which she had done many times before. The next day, Bush woke up and told his wife that he was quitting. He also told his close friend Joe O'Neil that he was quitting. Bush's father was launching his presidential campaign that summer and the younger Bush was worried about embarrassing his father. According to Joe O'Neil, Bush "looked in the mirror and said, 'Someday, I might embarrass my father. It might get my dad in

trouble.' And boy that was it. That's how high a priority it was and he never took another drink" (Minutaglio 1999: 209-210).

Other stories portray George W. Bush as politically motivated and less than sincere in his faith. When Bush asked for a state by state analysis of his father's primary election prospects before Super Tuesday in 1988, he was quite happy with what he saw in Texas. He said, "This is just great! I can become governor of Texas just with the evangelical vote" (Weisburg 2008: 87). As stated earlier, Bush worked closely with Douglas Wead on his father's campaign, and in one incident Wead stayed with Bush in his hotel room in order to avoid any rumor of infidelity. A woman working on the campaign seemed interested in Bush and he wanted Wead with him so that no rumors started. Wead tried to read the bible to him but Bush was completely uninterested. Wead tried many times during the campaign to discuss Bush's personal religion but Bush resisted. Wead said, "He has absolutely zero interest in anything theological. We spent hours talking about sex…who on the campaign was doing what to whom—but nothing about God. And I tried many, many times" (Weisburg 2008: 87). Years later, during the younger Bush's presidency, Wead questioned why Bush had not invited Billy Graham to convert his hard drinking daughters to Christianity, saying that Bush's faith may have been mostly political, "I'm almost certain that a lot of it was calculated" (Weisburg 2008: 88).

Certainly the story about how Bush made the decision to run for president seems calculated for political effect. In *A Charge to Keep* Bush says that he made the decision to run for office on January 19, 1999, because he heard a sermon by Reverend Mark Craig on his inaugural day to the Texas governorship. The sermon made many

references to God calling out individuals to lead the faithful, saying that America is "starved for leadership" (Bush 1999: 9). Bush wrote that he was struggling with the decision of whether he should run, "and Pastor Mark Craig had prodded me out of my comfortable life as Governor of Texas and toward a national campaign" (Bush 1999: 13). The problem with this account was that Bush's political campaign was well under way at this point for over a year (Weisburg 2008: 80).

Many people believed that religion was important to Bush because it played such a prominent role in his election rhetoric and promises. In the 2000 election Bush called himself a "compassionate conservative" and repeatedly mentioned an ambitious plan of faith based initiatives. The center piece of that plan was to encourage charitable donations by those who did not itemize their taxes. Charitable donations were allowed for the mostly upper-tax bracket who itemized their taxes, but the new bill would offer deductions for the 85 million Americans who did not itemize their taxes (Sullivan 2004). Bush did act in the first week of taking office signing an executive order to create the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, and appointed political scientist John DiIulio to head the office. Shortly thereafter the president proposed the new law to expand charitable deductions in Congress that according to the study group, the Independent Sector, would create 80 billion dollars in new donations (Sullivan 2004).

The charitable giving legislation passed through the Senate and the House but when it came time for congressional and White House negotiators to smooth out the specifics of the bill, the deductions were put on the chopping block by fiscal conservatives who chose the death tax, marriage penalty, and the child credit over charitable giving. DiIulio was disgusted with the White House's lack of initiative and

resigned saying, "what you've got is everything, and I mean everything, being run by the political arm." The deductions were again proposed as a standalone bill later in 2003 and again passed through the Senate and House, but the White House did not expend any political capital in pushing them through the conference committee when they were held up by Congressional Democrats (Sullivan 2004). By the end of 2002, of the six "compassionate conservative" priorities, Congress had only passed one initiative: No Child Left Behind, and even that program was significantly underfunded (Phillips 2004: 146). The faith based initiatives reveal how Bush's declaratory policy on religion simply does match his actions. Bush's critics pinpointed the discrepancy between his rhetoric and his actions saying, "The president, in eloquent speeches that make headlines, calls for millions or even billions of dollars for new initiatives, then fails to follow through and push hard for the programs on Capitol Hill" (Bumiller 2003). In an impassioned speech to Congress he called for 15 billion dollars over 5 years to aid Africa, and then when Congress approved of the money, the White House asked for only 2 billion dollars of the 3 billion that were approved for the first year (Bumiller 2003).

The same disparity between the declaratory religious policy and the actual policy were evident in the 2004 campaign. During the campaign Bush ran strongly on the evangelical initiative of creating a constitutional amendment to ban same sex marriage. Many states held referendums on the issue that significantly boosted the socially conservative voter turnout and Bush's election results (Dao 2004).

Ample evidence suggests that Bush felt that God was directing him in his decision-making (Suskind 2004). Bush prayed for guidance and when he made major decisions he may have been sincere when he said that God told him to take specific

actions. But Bush's God did not tell him to follow the Christian Zionist path of declaring war on all Muslims. Many Christians advocated a war against Islam including Franklin Graham, son of Billy Graham, who on November 16, 2001, called Islam "a very evil and a wicked religion" (Robinson 2003). In November 2002, Jimmy Swaggart called the Prophet Mohammed a "pedophile," and on November 11, 2002, Pat Robertson called Muslims "worse than the Nazis" (Robinson 2003). The idea of fighting a war against Islam was also supported by neoconservatives who tried to link Islam to the War on Terror. Daniel Pipes, Michael Ledeen, David Frum, Robert Kagan, and most other neoconservatives sought to demonize the Muslim world by using such phrases as "Islamo-Fascism" and "Islamists" to describe the terrorists, but Bush never took up the phrases and actively argued against the idea of fighting an indiscriminate war against Islam (Stolberg 2006; Halper and Clarke 2004: 198-197). When Lt. Gen. William G. Boykin, the deputy Secretary of Defense for intelligence and war-fighting, in October 2003 likened the War on Terror to a Christian war against Satan and said that Muslims worshipped a "false god," Bush responded by saying that the general's remarks "didn't reflect my opinion," adding, "Look, it just doesn't reflect what the government thinks" (Jehl 2003).

Critics who present George W. Bush as religiously motivated often cite the language he used shortly after 9/11, when he said on Sunday, September 16, 2001, "This is a new kind of—a new kind of evil, and we understand. And the American people are beginning to understand. This crusade, this war on terrorism is going to take a while" (Suskind 2004). There was immediate condemnation about a potential clash of civilizations with the use of such charged rhetoric. The next day, Monday, September 17,

Bush visited the Islamic Center in Washington D.C. seeking to reassure the Muslim community by defending Islam as a peaceful religion saying, "the face of terror is not the true faith of Islam. That's not what Islam is all about" (Ford 2001). At the mosque the president also condemned the racist attacks on the Muslim and Sikh communities that occurred after 9/11 saying, "That's not the America I know. That should not and that will not stand in America. Islam is peace" (Green 2001).

Four months after the invasion of Iraq, Bush did tell a group of delegates at an Israeli-Palestinian peace conference that he was on a "religious mission" and that God told him to invade Afghanistan and Iraq, but Bush also attested that he was told by God to "Go get the Palestinians their state and get the Israelis their security, and get peace in the Middle East" (MacAskill 2005). The Christian Zionists and neoconservatives opposed the Palestinian state that Bush's God was telling him to create. Bush's discussions with God could have had a moderating effect on his behavior.

But perhaps the most conclusive piece of evidence that Bush was not on a holy war was that he did not use the War on Terror to target Muslim countries like Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, or Pakistan, even though those countries had substantive ties to the 9/11 attack and to terrorism. All of these countries could have been tied to the attacks on 9/11 but Bush was careful to not mention any of these countries in the context of the attacks. A good deal of the hijackers' money came to the United States by Western Union from contacts in the United Arab Emirates who sent money packages of $119,500, $18,000, and $42,000 in the months leading up to the attacks (Coll 2004: 564). According to the 9/11 Report, Pakistan "helped nurture the Taliban" and many in their intelligence and military services sympathized with the

terrorists and denied the irrefutable proof that A.Q. Kahn, a Pakistani scientist, was helping to proliferate nuclear weapons (Kean et al. 2004: 368). Egypt was the home state of the lead hijacker Mohammed Atta and Al Qaeda's second in command Ayman Al Zawahari. Many Islamic fundamentalists groups from Egypt had close ties to terrorists, most prominently the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and the Egyptian Islamic Group who cooperated with Al Qaeda to commit various acts of terrorism which included an assassination attempt on Egyptian President Hosni Mubarik in 1995 and the killing of 58 tourists in 1997 in Luxor, Egypt (Gunaratna 2002: 137).

But the country that had the most transparent ties to Al Qaeda was Saudi Arabia (Schwartz 2003; Baer 2003; Posener 2005). Out of the 19 hijackers on 9/11, 15 came from Saudi Arabia. Osama Bin Laden had grown up in Saudi Arabia and still retained contacts with many sympathizers in the Kingdom that included clerics, business ties, and extended family members. The ideology of Al Qaeda was rooted in the official Saudi sect of Islam: Wahhabism. Wahaabism was started by Saudi cleric, Mohammed Ibn Abdul Wahhab, in the 18th century and the country was founded in 1932 by religious fighters who were formed from a coalition of the House of Saud and the House of Wahhab. Congressional research has well documented that Saudi individuals and government sponsored charities provided substantial funding for Al Qaeda (Blanchard and Prados 2007). Unlike Iraq, the line from Saudi Arabia to the terrorists who attacked the U.S. on 9/11 could be easily drawn and this connection was attempted by the neoconservatives. After 9/11 the neoconservatives created a public campaign to abandon the longstanding alliance with Saudi Arabia and place it on a list of enemies of the United States (Hanson 2002; Glazov 2002; Gold 2003). One of the founders of the

neoconservative movement Norman Podhoretz called for a total war in the Middle East with "the establishment of some kind of American protectorate over the oil fields of Saudi Arabia" (Podhoretz 2002).

The neoconservative drum beat to target Saudi Arabia was especially apparent in David Frum and Richard Perle's book *An End to Evil* which came out in 2003. The authors not only listed the evils of Saudi Arabia—the funding, recruiting, and approval of Al Qaeda by Saudis—but charged that the U.S. policy toward Saudi Arabia "has been abject because so many of those who make the policy have been bought and paid for by the Saudis" (2003: 142). Much of the book was a thinly veiled attack on the U.S. policy of turning a blind eye to the Saudi support of terrorism.

If Bush were a Christian Zionist or relied on the neoconservatives for advice, he would have at least acknowledged the role of Saudi Arabia and other Muslim allies in the War on Terror. But Bush actively protected these Muslim regimes from the American public. In one incident, *Newsweek* reported that many Saudis had contributed money to the 9/11 hijackers including a check written by Prince Haifa, the wife of Saudi Ambassador Bandar, that was found with the belongings of one of the hijackers (Isikoff and Thomas 2002). Bush did not ask for an investigation of the Saudi money; rather, the President and First Lady Laura Bush called Bandar and Haifa to offer their consolation for the public attention that the check received (Unger 2004: 273-274). In another incident, Bush classified 28 pages from the bipartisan congressional report on the terrorist attack on 9/11. Officials reported that the 28 pages of the 900 page report contained evidence of the money trail between Saudi Arabia and the supporters of Al Qaeda (CBS News 2003).

Incompetence Theory

In the most popular hypothesis regarding Bush's underlying motives to invade Iraq, Bush is portrayed as a naïve simpleton who had neither convictions nor an understanding of the complexity of foreign policy and thus the events of 9/11 made him vulnerable to the already formulated policies of the neoconservatives (Packer 2005; Mearsheimer and Walt 2007; Galbraith 2007; Ferguson 2008). In this reading of history Bush was persuaded by the neoconservatives to adopt a plan to reshape the Middle East by creating a democracy in the heart of the region. Bush also believed the neoconservatives who convince him that Saddam held weapons of mass destruction. This hypothesis is reinforced by Bush's lack of knowledge of world affairs during the 2000 campaign. At a campaign stop prior to the New Hampshire primary Bush was unable to answer a series of questions about world leaders asked by a television reporter (Mann 2004a: 255). The charge of incompetence gains credence with the story of Bush's meeting with Saudi ambassador Prince Bandar when he was thinking of running for the presidency. According to Bandar, Bush admitted, "I don't have the foggiest idea about what I think about international foreign policy" (Woodward 2006).

The problem with this widely held hypothesis is that there is no evidence in any of the recently released national security archives that any discussion ever took place on whether the United States should invade (Prados and Ames 2010). All of the archives that have been released show that the discussions in the White House were about how the invasion would take place and planning the campaign to sell the invasion to the American people and the international community. So far no evidence has emerged that the President contemplated any other option besides war or that there were any meetings

discussing the costs and benefits of the invasion. Donald Rumsfeld confirmed the lack of deliberation about the choice for war in his memoir when he said, "While the President and I had many discussions about the war preparations, I do not recall his ever asking me if I thought going to war was the right decision" (Rumsfeld 2011: 456).

In addition, the neoconservatives did not have access to the President. The group that made decisions about how to conduct the invasion was a closed hierarchal group composed of the principals or top leaders in the Bush administration: Bush, Cheney, Powell, Rice and George Tenet (Schier 2009: 138). As Bush would say to Bob Woodward, "I have no outside advice. Anybody who says they're an outside advisor of this Administration on this particular matter is not telling the truth. The only true advice I get is from our war council (Lehman 2004: 9).

Regime Building at Home through Force of Arms

George W. Bush was strongly driven by a deep commitment to his family, but this did not make him irrational. On the contrary, being a part of the Bush family and the experiences of his father's campaigns and presidency gave the younger Bush a keen understanding of electoral politics both in Texas and in the Republican Party nationwide. Bush understood on a gut level what Stephen Skowronek argues is the central theme of the all the presidencies: their bid to create legitimacy. Skowronek says, "the presidential office in exercising its powers has an inherently disruptive political effect, and that presidential leadership is a struggle to resolve that effect in the reproduction of a legitimate order" (1997: xii).

Presidents seek to use their power like a "battering ram" to alter the existing power structure consisting of bureaucrats, Congress, interest groups, and other

Washington insiders that have built up and calcified over previous administrations. Presidents who are successful challenge the existing institutions in an attempt to create a regime involving norms, institutions, coalitions, and policy configurations. In Skowronek's model of presidential regimes the younger Bush was clearly attempting to rebuild the regime of Ronald Reagan with his tax cuts, defense build-up, deregulation, and evangelical Christian coalition (Schier 2004: 4; Scheir 2008: Chapter 1). Unlike his father Bush felt that he could act boldly battering down the existing institutional order to create a new regime and a successful presidency. The elder Bush had been unsuccessful in reconstructing the Reagan regime and was seen by many as having broken promises to the conservative cause. During his 1988 campaign he had pledged to continue Reagan's legacy saying, "Who can you trust to continue the Reagan Revolution?" (Skowronek 1997: 430).

But the son had a unique strategy for creating that legitimate order or regime. Bush saw that his father after the Gulf War victory enjoyed an 89 percent approval rating, yet his father did not capitalize on this by passing new domestic legislation. At the moment when the elder Bush should have taken bold action and solidified his regime during a recession, he appeared to vacillate and dither. After 100 hours of fighting Colin Powell asked for the fighting to stop. The Iraqi National Guard and other army units had been trapped on a stretch of road coming out of Kuwait nicknamed "the road of death." American jets mercilessly fired on and killed thousands of members of the Iraqi military, and Powell felt that it was causing a public relations disaster for the United States. Though much of the Iraqi National Guard was killed, the decision allowed many soldiers to escape. These same Iraqi units were used to put down the Iraqi rebellion of Shiites that

had been encouraged by allied forces before the invasion through the dropping of thousands of flyers asking the people to rise up and overthrow Saddam. Many of the districts in Iraq were under the control of rebel forces when the war was declared over. Worse, in a seemingly small decision with dire consequences, General Schwarzkopf failed to include helicopters in the no-fly rule enforced on Iraq after the end of official combat. Those helicopters were used by the Iraqis to put down the rebellion. Bush had been told by his advisors Brent Scowcroft and Richard Haas that there would be no Missouri moment for the end of war, referring to the signing of the terms of defeat by the Japanese on the U.S.S. Missouri to end the fighting in the Pacific at the end of World War II. But the elder Bush was attacked from the left by Al Gore during the campaign for not going all the way to Iraq (Alfonsi, 2006). He was also attacked for not protecting the Shiites who violently put down by the Iraqi National Guard that had been allowed to esc (Chapter 6) domestic legislation was passed and no vision for the future was offered beyond a vague notion of creating a "New World Order." Unlike his father, the younger Bush felt that he could make a quick, bold decision and spend his political capital to create a lasting Republican regime. But in order to do this he needed to have political capital, and like his father that meant becoming a war president.

According to Bush's ghostwriter, Michael Herskowitz, who was helping him write his autobiography *A Charge to Keep* in 1999, Bush told him his unique vision for establishing legitimacy. The President said, "One of the keys to being seen as a great leader is to be seen as a commander in chief. My father had all this political capital built up when he drove the Iraqis out of Kuwait, and he wasted it. If I have a chance to invade...if I had that much capital, I'm not going to waste it. I'm going to get everything

passed that I want to get passed, and I'm going to have a successful presidency" (Baker 2009: 423). This comment does not stand alone; the theme of his father not spending his political capital and losing his bid for reelection comes up repeatedly in the younger Bush's autobiography. He says, "Dad never spent the capital he earned from the success of Desert Storm…I learned that you must spend political capital when you earn it, or it withers and dies" (Bush 1999: 185-186). Bush also mentioned it to reporter Walter Shapiro, saying in 1999, "In the '92 campaign, the lesson was how do you spend political capital," he explained. "My dad had earned enormous capital from the Gulf War, and the proper application of political capital is very important. You have to earn it, but you also have to spend it, because capital atrophies if it's not spent" (Shapiro 2002). The theme of being a wartime president was central to the younger Bush's thinking not only before he took office but also during his presidency. According to Press Secretary Scott McClellan, Bush had a unique view of war not as a burden but as an opportunity. McClellan said in his memoir, "As I have heard Bush say, only a wartime president is likely to achieve greatness, in part because the epochal upheavals of war provide the opportunity for transformative change of the kind Bush hoped to achieve" (McClellan 2008: 131).

Deeply wounded by the defeat of his father who lost the election because he did not take bold action, the younger Bush writes, "My dad is not one to provoke confrontation. He is mild-mannered, more thoughtful than that. He could be tough when he needed to be, but he rarely ever raised his voice, and certainly never had the challenge in it that is frequently heard in mine" (Bush 1999: 182). The elder Bush did not drop the unpopular Dan Quayle as Bush claims he advised his father do and put Dick Cheney on

the ticket (Bush 2010: 49). The elder Bush raised taxes to compromise with Congress. Because of his father's weakness, "In 1992, Bill Clinton and Ross Perot and Pat Buchanan defined him and he lost in a long and miserable year" (Bush 1999: 184). But perhaps most importantly his father squandered an 89 percent approval rating by not going all the way to Baghdad as he would have if he were president.

Herskowitz said that Bush had obtained this vision of the presidency from his closest advisors who had an obsession with the rally around the flag effect that came from quick and decisive military victories. Presidents who use military action successfully get a jump in their polls. The elder Bush polls jumped to 70 percent after his decisive invasion of Panama. His campaign manager, Lee Atwater, in the 1988 election, called the invasion a "political jackpot" (Zelizer 2010: 358). Cheney too had the notion of creating a rally around the effect through decisive military action based in part on Reagan's quick victory in Grenada. As then congressman Cheney said, "Start a small war. Pick a country where there is justification you can jump on, go ahead and invade" (Baker 2009: 424).

According to one public official who had worked under Cheney when he was Secretary of Defense, Cheney as Vice President shared the younger Bush's vision of using victory in Iraq to solidify a Republican regime. The public official said in a memo, "the U.S. could do it essentially alone…and that an uncomplicated, total victory would set the stage for a landslide reelection in 2004 and decades of Republican Party domination" (Unger 2007 182). The hypothesis that Bush was a politically calculating player who seized the opportunity provided by 9/11 to further his electoral advantage was not focused on in the literature in the years after the Iraq war. But recently scholars have

begun to look at the role of electoral politics in the presidency (Zelizer 2010; Alfonsi 2006; Berinsky 2009).

Fighting the Wimp Factor; Lining up Investors in Oil and Politics

"When asked to explain his remarkably good fortune in the business world, he (George W. Bush) responded by saying he was, 'a bulldog on the pant leg of opportunity.'"

(Bryce 2004:168)

"This is an impressive crowd, the haves and the have mores. Some people call you the elite, I call you my base."

George W. Bush on the eve of the 2000 election (Raskin and Spero 2007: 195)

"I quickly tracked down a copy and was greeted by the screaming headline: 'Fighting the Wimp Factor.' I couldn't believe it. The magazine was insinuating that my father, a World War II bomber pilot, was a wimp. I was red hot"

(Bush 2010:44)

All talk is not cheap, as demonstrated by the definitive statement by George H. W. Bush about "no new taxes." When politicians make definitive promises they will suffer domestic audience costs if they don't follow through. Rhetoric that is repeated over the course of a politician's political career also has more merit as it is less liable to be employed for expedient, strategic purposes. Politicians can and often do lie but repeated policy stands over the course of their career often show a strong commitment certain issues.

This section examines the biography of George W. Bush and how his experiences predisposed him to adopt Cheney's plan for U.S. primacy. First, Bush joined the family business of blending oil, capital investments, and political campaigns. This meant that his view of government assistance of the free market coincided with that of Cheney. Bush as the first president with an MBA held a view similar to Cheney's about deregulation, privatization of government services, drastically cutting taxes, and acting as

the CEO within the government bureaucracy. The family oil businesses that were started by father and son were investment driven concerns and both men worked primarily on lining up investors for their respective companies. The businesses then served as launching points for their runs for political office where, much like their role in their companies, the politicians lined up campaign contributions. This experience in the family business of oil and politics made Bush, like Cheney, very sensitive to the needs of the domestic oil industry. The international price of oil determined the profitability of his companies, and the younger Bush's oil businesses also received funding from investors in the Middle East. This meant that in spite of Bush's lack of knowledge of the world, he did have a crude understanding of the importance of the Middle East and its effect on the United States.

Second, Bush's experience with his father's 1988 election campaign taught him the importance of attack politics and not appearing weak. This need to appear masculine made him especially open to the use of force abroad in order to win elections. Third, the election loss of his father in 1992 showed Bush that in order to have a successful presidency, he needed to capitalize on high poll numbers from war to push through a conservative agenda. The senior Bush was seen as capitulating to Congress over taxes, having no vision, and not being a true conservative in the tradition of Reagan. His cuts in the military and failure to champion the Strategic Defense Initiative compared poorly to Reagan's record of building up the national defense. He was attacked by traditional conservatives, neoconservatives, and even Democratic hawks like Al Gore, for leaving Saddam in power. In the younger Bush's mind acting multilaterally through the U.N. had closed off his father's options and left him open to criticism at home from conservatives.

Cheney's vision of using force unilaterally appeared to be a logical choice, given his father's experience.

Fourth, these events from Bush's life directly overlapped with Cheney's vision of U.S. primacy. Because of Bush's history Cheney found that selling him on the importance of unilateralism, controlling Middle East oil, promoting the free market model, securing presidential power, and transforming the military was not a difficult sale.

The Family Business of Oil and Politics

George W. Bush, like his father, worked as a politician for the interests of the oil business. They both operated as if there was no distinction between the national interests of the United States and that of the domestic oil industry. The younger Bush's career can not be understood outside the context of the elder Bush's career in politics and oil. Not only did the son follow the same career trajectory, but played a pivotal role in his father's campaigns. In contradiction to many writers who portray George W. Bush as breaking from his father's path, it appears that he was firmly planted in the Bush political machine of wealthy family contacts, powerful political friends, and monied oil interests. In his political campaigns George W. Bush lined up powerful and well connected investors, who were often friends of the Bush family, to make contributions; and in his oil career he started up a series of oil businesses and lined up well connected investors who similarly had connections to the Bush family. Some scholars have mistaken George W. Bush as a politician and not really an oil man. Michael Lind writes that "President George W. Bush and Vice President Cheney are not genuine 'Texas oil men' but career politicians," and explained Bush's behavior by saying that he was estranged from his father and a fervent Christian Zionist (Lind 2003b). But this analysis ignores the reality that George W.

Bush, his father, and Cheney were not so much "oil men" but oil politicians. They acted as political patrons of the oil companies, creating tax structures, regulations, and other government policies that were conducive to profits for the oil business. And then returning to private industry they used their relationships with world leaders and their contacts with regulators and politicians to further their interests and those of their friends in the private sector. Their campaigns received a great deal of funding from oil interests, and they appointed oil men to their administrations. While in office both Bushes worked diligently to enact policies that were friendly to the oil companies. This revolving door between oil and politics would be the defining pattern in the careers of both father and son.

With backgrounds in the Northeast, both Bushes needed to define themselves in politics as masculine Texans and not as wimpy, elite carpetbaggers. When the Bushes lost elections, it appeared to the son that this happened because the media and their opponents defined them as elitists. The younger Bush's aggressive and masculine role as the "decider" was his defining characteristic and a continuing theme in his political career.

A brief timeline of George H. W. Bush's career in oil politics sheds light on the son's career, revealing the same pattern of using family ties to line up investors and fighting off the taint of "elitist Northeasterner" identity. The myth of George H. W. Bush's career is that he worked his way up in the oil business. Daniel Yergin, the author of *The Prize,* tells the story of the elder Bush graduating from Yale in 1948 and moving to Midland, Texas, starting at the bottom of the industry as a trainee, working odd jobs until he finally "caught the fever," and formed a company with "other ambitious young

men" (Yergin 1991: 753). In truth, after he graduated from Yale, Bush moved to Cleveland, Ohio, and worked in Dresser Industries, a company in which his father Prescott Bush sat on the board (Phillips 2004: 120). Working with Dresser, Bush worked as a traveling salesman selling drill bits and eventually moved to Midland, Texas, in 1950. Wanting to start a business of his own he asked his family for financial assistance to start a company. Bush's Uncle Herbie rounded up investors in order for him to start a small company buying land leases for oil companies (ibid).

After working for three years in the business, the senior Bush teamed up with Hugh and Bill Leidtke forming Zapata Petroleum in 1953, where his primary job in the company was again lining up investors, mostly from the Northeast (Karaagac 2004: 90). As Bush would recall later when he was working with Zapata, he was "stretching paper" or turning over debt and renegotiating with creditors (Phillips 2004: 122). After achieving considerable success in the oil business, George H. W. Bush ran for the Senate in 1964. Bush built up a name for himself by rounding up campaign contributions, this time mostly from oil and gas industry insiders in Texas like John Connally, the Bass family, Marin Allday, Hugh Roy Cullen, contacts who would become long time contributors to his campaigns. Bush outspent his opponent 7-1 (Bryce 2004: 80-83). He was defeated by Democrat Ralph Yorborough who succeeded in branding the elder Bush as a carpetbagger and a Yankee (ibid). In 1966 Bush was elected to the House of Representatives and set about working in Washington for the oil business. Considerable political momentum had been built up in the early 1960s to overturn or modify the oil depletion allowance, a significant tax break for the oil companies that cost the country an estimated two billion dollars a year in 1962 dollars, possibly the largest single-interest tax

preference at that time (Bryce 2004: 90). Bush was also concerned about a push to overturn the quota system of 20 percent on foreign oil that had been established by Eisenhower in 1959 to protect the domestic oil industry. By 1969 the non-oil state representatives had gathered enough votes to overturn the depletion allowance and the quota system, so on November 12, 1969, Bush arranged for David Kennedy, Nixon's Treasury Secretary, to come to his house in Houston to talk with a group of oil men about the oil policies (Bryce 2004: 94). After the meeting Bush wrote a letter thanking Kennedy for the meeting and saying, "I also appreciate of your telling them how I bled and died for the industry. That might kill me off in the Washington Post but it darn sure helps in Houston" (Yergin 1991: 754). In February 1970 Nixon supported the continuation of the depletion allowance and the quota system and on April 5, 1972, the oil business rewarded Nixon with a suitcase full of $700,000 in campaign contributions from the oil and gas industry, delivered to him by a Pennzoil jet. The dependence of the oil business on favorable government policies and the need by politicians like Bush and Nixon for campaign contributions creates a natural environment for corruption.

The lengths to which George H. W. Bush would go to protect the domestic oil industry was shown when he was vice president under Ronald Reagan. As vice president, Bush would ultimately attempt to undermine the top priority of the Reagan Administration's foreign policy in order to make sure that the domestic oil industry would remain profitable. The dramatic story of how oil prices affected the Cold War in the United States was chronicled in Peter Schweizer's book *Victory*. The Reagan Administration's top foreign policy goal was to undermine the Soviet Union and roll back communism throughout the world. In early 1983 the Treasury Department

concluded a secret study on oil pricing that proposed that lowering the price of oil from $34 a barrel to $20 barrel would lower U.S. energy costs by $71.5 billion per year, acting as a huge transfer of income to American consumers (Schweizer 1996: 140-142). According to the report the lower prices would also have a "devastating effect on the Soviet economy." The report calculated that for every one dollar drop in the price of oil the Soviet Union would lose $500 million to $1 billion a day in hard currency (ibid). The Soviets were in desperate need of hard currency due to the high cost of the invasion of Afghanistan. A drop in oil price would be a win-win for the U.S. in the Cold War. Saudi Arabia, the world swing producer, was the only country capable of putting two to five million barrels a day on the world oil market to bring down the price. National security advisor William Clark, defense secretary Casper Weinberger, and CIA director William Casey made sure that the president understood the report and according to Bill Clark, Reagan "was fully aware that energy exports represented, the centerpiece of Moscow's annual hard currency earnings structure. He likewise understood the benefits to the U.S. economy of lower, stable oil prices" (Schweizer 1996: 140-142).

Throughout his first term Reagan cultivated a close relationship with the country of Saudi Arabia which at that time felt particularly vulnerable to the military threat from Iran. Reagan spent considerable political capital pushing the deal through Congress to sell AWACS spy planes to Saudi Arabia (Schweizer 1996: 94). In April of 1984 Iran was threatening oil shipments in the Persian Gulf and wanted U.S. stinger missiles to deter the threat. Congress was threatening to block the sale of the missiles, so Reagan invoked emergency procedures to bypass Congress and shipped 400 stinger missiles to Saudi Arabia on May 28, 1984 (Schweizer 1996: 190). In early 1985 the U.S. Air Force

established in Saudi Arabia a program called Peace Shield, the most technologically advanced air defense system outside of NATO (Schweizer 1996: 203). While all of these weapons systems were never explicitly sold as a quid pro quo for a lowering of oil prices, according to Secretary of Defense Weinburger, "one of the reasons we were selling all those arms to the Saudis was for lower oil prices" (Schweizer 1996: 203). Weinburger and CIA director Casey both raised the subject of lowering oil prices with the Saudis on repeated occasions and on February 12, 1985, Ronald Reagan made a personal appeal to King Fahd telling him that lower oil prices would strengthen the U.S. and weaken their mutual enemies (Schweizer 1996: 219). The Saudis had their own reason for increasing production. The Saudi defense of high prices meant that oil production in the Kingdom was 2 million barrels a day in 1985, down from 10 million barrels in 1981. The Saudis had lost considerable market share, oil revenues were off by $70 billion, and other countries like Norway and the other OPEC countries were free riding off of Saudi production discipline (Schweizer 1996: 232). In August 1985 the Saudis increased production from 2 million barrels to 6 million barrels a day and by late fall production had increased to 9 million barrels a day. The production had a delayed effect but the price plummeted from $30 a barrel in November 1985 to $12 a barrel five months later. The Soviet economy was devastated as they lost nearly half their earnings (Schweizer 1996: 243). According to Don Regan, White House chief of staff, Reagan was very aware of the devastating effect on the Soviet economy. Reagan pored over raw intelligence reports on the Soviet economy and was quite happy at what he was reading (Schweizer 1996: 245).

By early 1986 both the Reagan Administration and the Saudis had reaped huge benefits from the free fall in oil prices. The Saudis had recaptured a large share of the market and their earnings were up by a third. Besides the Soviets the only interest that was hurt by the drop in the oil price was the American domestic oil industry centered in Texas. Low world oil prices have a threefold negative effect on the American oil industry. First, due to high drilling costs some oil wells lose profitability and need to be shut down. Second, producers lose market share to African and Persian Gulf producers who have lower production costs. Third, American producers lose profits on wells that are continuing to produce. American producers can be financially devastated by the cycles of high and low prices. High oil prices can lead to conservation which can have a deleterious long term effect especially if prices take a sudden downturn. Also, many oil projects take considerable time and money to begin to produce oil. If projects start when prices are high and later drop, then companies will have invested millions of dollars for an unprofitable well. This is especially true in the case of offshore drilling. As one representative from Chevron Corporation said at a Congressional hearing in 2007, "The process of bringing new energy supplies to the market place from leasing through exploration, development and construction can take a decade or more. Companies invest billions of dollars years before there is any income from production, and assume all this risk" (Senate Hearing 2007: 37). These sunken cost investments mean that American oil companies often talk about price stability and they rely on politicians to provide tax breaks and other incentives to take the risk out of investments. American companies have higher exploration and drilling costs because in the United States the easier-to-access oil in many cases has already been tapped. American companies have been drilling in Texas

for decades and thus they must often dig deeper and explore further off shore, assuming greater risk. In the Persian Gulf the oil is much easier to access and therefore involves lower production costs. Oil companies in the U.S. rely on OPEC to provide price stability by increasing production when prices are high and decreasing production through quotas when prices get too low. Saudi Arabia with considerable reserves that it can swing on or off the market generally sets the price of oil. Thus, the American relationship with Saudi Arabia is extremely important to American oil companies. Politicians like George H. W. Bush who have a strong relationship with the Saudi leaders are an essential asset for American oil companies.

This dynamic of dependency on oil politicians is illustrated by how the senior Bush attempted to manipulate the oil market. On April 1, 1986, Vice President Bush gave a press conference in which he emphasized price stability in the oil market saying, "I happen to believe, and always have, that a strong domestic U.S. industry is in the national security interests, vital interests of this country" (Yergin 1991: 756). The vice president had clearly gone rogue to protect the oil industry in contravention to official U.S. policy. The response from a White House spokesman was swift saying, "The way to address price stability is to let the free market work" (Yergin 1991: 756). But Bush would not be silenced by the White House; days later he took a trip to the Persian Gulf and in a private meeting with King Fahd threatened that if price stability were not achieved the United States would be forced to use quotas or tariffs against foreign oil (Schweizer 1996: 261). When Reagan heard about Bush lobbying for higher prices, he was furious and according to an ambassador in the region, "He gave Bush a real dressing down" (Schweizer 1996: 261). Vice President Bush's trip to Saudi Arabia may not have

had any effect on the price of oil. The Saudis were already worried about the possible financial costs of a low oil price. They were also concerned about the security risk from countries like Egypt and Iraq who might take action against Saudi Arabia due to the pain caused by low prices (Yergin 1991: 758). But regardless of the real causality in the price of oil, this story illustrates two very important points. First, the oil business has very little to do with the "free market." Governments like Saudi Arabia and the United States often seek to manipulate the price of oil, and security concerns can often play a greater role than supply and demand in the market. Second, some politicians from Texas and other oil producing states do not see any difference between the interests of the United States and the oil companies.

Learning Attack Politics: The 1988 Presidential Election

Bush was fiercely loyal to his father and his family name, both of which he saw as under political attack with the claim that he was elitist and less than "masculine." Bush's father was a cautious decision maker who was uncomfortable with confrontation and the rough and tumble nature of electoral politics. Bush saw himself as the opposite of his father, acting as the "loyalty thermometer" ready to confront individuals from his father's staff, the media, or anyone else who was threat to the family's image. Working for his father's political campaigns, Bush made quick decisions, not bothering to second guess himself, and earned a reputation as a hatchet man who would do his father's dirty work. As the elder Bush said about his son, "He could go to people and save me the agony of having to break the bad news to them" (Hatfield 2002: 78).

Bush's career in politics—working for his father's campaigns and running for office himself—taught him the importance of appearing strong and masculine, making

quick and resolute decisions. A reoccurring story in the Bush family legacy is noted by many of his biographers and received a prominent place in both of Bush's autobiographies, *A Charge to Keep* and *Decision Points*. At the beginning of his father's run for presidency in October 1987, Bush was working on the campaign, screening reporters who wanted interviews with the candidate. Bush allowed an exclusive interview by *Newsweek* reporter Margaret Warner. The magazine came out with a cover story entitled "Fighting the Wimp Factor" with a picture of the elder Bush at the wheel of his motorboat. The story inside speculated on whether this nonconfrontational elite New Englander could relate to the average working American. The younger Bush was filled with rage and called *Newsweek* to cut them off from the campaign. Campaign manager Lee Atwater called up *Newsweek* to tell them that it was not the case and that they were not "cut off" (Minutaglio 1999: 224-225). But Bush's reaction to the incident shows how much it bothered him. Years later when he wrote his first biography he said, "My blood pressure still goes up when I remember the cover of *Newsweek*" (Bush 1999: 181). When he wrote about the story again in his most recent autobiography he still says, "I was red-hot" (Bush 2010:44).

When Bush was confronted by a reporter regarding the negative campaign ads about Massachusetts' weekend furlough program and Governor Dukakis riding on the tank, Bush took the opportunity to define his father as true Texan and Dukakis as New England wimp. He said, "Texans want a Texan for president not someone born in Massachusetts. I don't think it's strident. I think it's a misadjective. I would say strong. My issue is issue clarification" (Forbes 2008)

George Bush Senior felt very uncomfortable with the negative campaign tactics When looking at the private statements made by George W. Bush about his decisions to use force abroad one is struck by the decisive and hypermasculine nature of the statements. Shortly after the attacks of 9/11 while Bush was riding in his presidential limo he told Dick Cheney by phone, "We're going to find out who did this, and we're going to kick their ass (Kessler 2003: 139). Later at the White House when Donald Rumsfeld mentioned that international law did not allow for acts of retribution, Bush shot back, "I don't care what the international lawyers say, we're going to kick some ass" (Clarke 2004: 24). After the decision had been made to invade Iraq, Bush did not seem at all interested in weapons inspections, negotiations, or any kind of diplomatic solution to Saddam's regime. On May 1, 2002, Bush became incensed while talking to White House press secretary Ari Fleisher about questions from Helen Thomas, a well known White House press representative. Thomas had repeatedly questioned Fleisher about why Bush was going to overthrow Saddam. Bush unleashed a string of expletives at Fleisher, ending his tirade with, "Did you tell her I'm going to kick his sorry motherfucking ass all over the Mideast?" (Isikoff and Corn 2006: 3). Bush's passionate decision to overthrow Saddam was rooted in his conception of his political past. Bush believed that in order to succeed in politics one must create an image of strength and be willing to make quick and aggressive decisions. For Bush there was no deliberation about the costs and benefits of invading Iraq; rather, he made a series of decisions in his career that reveal a willingness to use force.

CHAPTER V

THE IRAQ INVASION: U.S. PRIMACY IMPLEMENTED

"When, later in the discussion, Secretary Rumsfeld noted that international law allowed the use of force only to prevent future attack and not for retribution, Bush nearly bit his head off. 'No,' the President yelled in a narrow conference room, 'I don't care what the international lawyers say, we are going to kick some ass.'"

Richard Clark (2004:24)

"It reminds me of Vietnam. Here we have some strategic thinkers who have long wanted to invade Iraq. They saw an opportunity and they used the imminence of the threat and the association with terrorism and the 9/11 emotions as a catalyst and justification. It's another Gulf of Tonkin."

General Anthony Zinni (Elliot 2003a)

Introduction

This chapter will show that, for Cheney and Rumsfeld, the invasion of Iraq was the culmination of their three decades of planning for U.S. primacy. These primacists were clearly the driving force behind the invasion, but George W. Bush ultimately needed to act as the decider, giving the final consent. Bush was persuaded that the plan for U.S. primacy would further his political goals of achieving reelection and having a lasting legacy of a successful presidency. When the primacist agenda became unpopular with the American public and started to destroy Bush's ability to govern, the president pulled back from using hard power, fired Rumsfeld, and ultimately marginalized Cheney and his neoconservative allies in the administration.

The chapter will also show that the other hypotheses for why the Iraq invasion took place are inadequate in explaining why the U.S. invaded; these hypotheses are also inadequate in explaining the way in which the invasion took place and how the country was occupied. The threat of weapons of mass destruction, as discussed in detail in Chapter II, was part of a coordinated campaign of threat inflation, a model that Cheney

and Rumsfeld had perfected over the course of their careers. Democracy was also not a motivating factor for the agenda, and this chapter will show that Rumsfeld gave little thought to nation building; rather, he actually sought to destroy the Iraq state in order to implement his economic agenda. The neoconservatives and the Israel Lobby initially did support the invasion, but they quickly realized that low troop levels did not stabilize the country and, as a result, they ultimately strengthened the position of Israel's chief enemy Iran. The neoconservatives broke with Rumsfeld, criticizing his plan for Iraq and calling for a new plan for the occupation. The primacists, however, designed the invasion and thus achieved many of their goals.

First, shock and awe was the means to demonstrate American force with the use of precision guided weapons for which Rumsfeld and Cheney had been advocating their whole careers. Second, their free market probusiness ideology was furthered both by opening up Iraq for foreign investment and the proliferation of contractors in Iraq. Third, the continuation of the War on Terror in Iraq allowed Cheney to create more precedents of presidential power. Fourth, the campaign to transform the military had stalled before 9/11 and would not have been as successful unless Rumsfeld could have a state of war with a large enough target like Iraq. Fifth, Iraq provided a central and valuable base for regional hegemony over the oil reserves in the Persian Gulf. Sixth, Iraq provided an opportunity to continue the threat inflation that was essential to shoring up the support of the American people and enacting all of the other tenets. Seventh, a quick victory in Iraq was seen as an opportunity to boost Bush's polls and to assure his reelection.

Cheney, Rumsfeld, and Bush: Unilateral Action from the Start

The conventional wisdom that 9/11 changed U.S. foreign policy is based on two misguided beliefs: first, that Bush had committed himself to a noninterventionist-realist foreign policy during the campaign; and second, that he relied on Colin Powell to guide U.S. foreign policy before the terrorist attack. Scholars often cite the many statements made by Bush during the 2000 campaign about the U.S. maintaining a humble foreign policy. During his second campaign debate on October 11, 2000, Bush said, "I just don't think it's the role of the United States to walk into a country (and) say 'We do it this way; so should you.'" (Transcript 2000). This humble rhetoric was immediately abandoned when Bush took office. Within months of taking office, Bush made a pronounced unilateral shift in U.S. foreign policy. Bush ignored the advice of Colin Powell by rejecting the Kyoto Agreements, abandoning the Israeli-Palestinian peace talks, making a public push to abandon the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty and the International Criminal Courts (ICC) Treaty, and backing off from concluding an agreement with North Korea (LaFeber 2009: 153-178; O'Sullivan 2009: 141-149). The humble rhetoric had been part of a plan by Karl Rove to capture the swing voters in the 2000 election. Days after the elections, Matt Dowd, a Republican pollster, sent a memo to Rove showing that the swing-vote center had collapsed from 24 percent of the electorate in 1980 to 6 percent in 2000, and that the swing-vote strategy had been a miscalculation (**Edsall 2006**). This freed Bush to form a new political strategy of strengthening the base by taking a hard turn to the right.

Thomas Rick, in his book *Fiasco*, quotes neoconservative analyst Patrick Clawson, who says that, before 9/11, "Those who wanted to go to war lost, and those

who supported ‘smart sanctions’ won”(Ricks 2006: 28). But before 9/11, Powell’s influence was continuing to wane and smart sanctions failed in June of 2001 in the United Nations Security Council due to a threatened Russian veto (Traynor 2001). Bush had expended no political capital on selling smart sanctions and often publicly referred to the existing sanction structure as Swiss cheese (Simons 2002). Powell was a strong advocate for smart sanctions and a continued policy of containment of Iraq, but Bush did not back his plan. As early as February 9, 2001, Powell was forced to concede, saying, “I will be concentrating on the U.N. part of the policy, as opposed to the United States bilateral relationship with respect to Iraq and other activities in the Gulf and with the Iraqi opposition”(Powell 2001).

Powell never developed a personal relationship with the President and was perceived by many in the administration as an outsider with his own agenda (Woodward 2002: 12-14). This led to Powell and his people being actively excluded from decision making. “The State Department representatives always had the feeling that ‘the real business was being done somewhere else,’ one official recalled, ‘someplace we weren’t invited.’”(DeYoung 2006: 335). Powell acknowledged in later interviews with his biographer Karen De Young that, before 9/11, he was losing many battles and he told his people in the State Department to keep their powder dry. But in the early days of September 2001, Powell was ravaged in the press by a series of articles replete with disparaging leaks from administration officials (Avant 2005; Philadelphia Inquirer 2001; Time 2001). Powell realized that he was not winning the power struggle against Cheney and Rumsfeld, and said, “The fact of the matter is, that was a really bad time.” (DeYoung 2006: 337).

Shrinking Government, Protecting Oil and Power: Cheney and Bush Push their Agenda

When Bush and Cheney took office, they wasted no time pushing their agenda of U.S. primacy. There was wide-spread speculation after the close election and the bitterly partisan recount that Bush would start his political term by offering concessions to the Democrats in Congress. Both Bush and Cheney rejected this idea. Cheney said, "That simply wasn't an acceptable proposition." (Hayes 2007: 309)

Like Reagan in 1980, Bush's first item on his presidential agenda was tax cuts. What separates Bush from Reagan is that after the administration passed its first round of taxes, it used its strong foreign policy approval ratings to push through more tax cuts. Bush's father had failed to capitalize on the Persian Gulf War to push through any domestic agenda and had been attacked on the economy by both Bill Clinton and Ross Perot. To Bush, the tax cuts were a political tactic to shore up the base, but to Cheney, they were an article of faith based on an ideology that shrinking government and strengthening private industry was the right thing to do.

Cheney also moved quickly to form an energy commission, finally having the opportunity to do what he had desired to accomplish in the Ford Administration: reduce government regulation and coordinate domestic energy policy with foreign policy. Cheney met with oil, coal and energy experts to formulate a plan for government to boost domestic energy production. At the same time, he instructed the National Security Council to "to coordinate foreign policy with the seizing of oil fields" (**Mayer 2004**). Cheney looked at maps of Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates that included oil fields, pipelines, and other energy infrastructure. When Congress asked him for

transcripts, notes and a list of participants at these meetings, Cheney refused to cooperate and claimed executive privilege. The case went all the way to the Supreme Court, and Cheney was finally allowed to keep the records from the meetings closed. In this way, the energy commission served three separate goals of U.S. primacy: planning for regional control of the Persian Gulf, strengthening presidential power, and shrinking government interference in private industry.

Rumsfeld Goes to War—Against the Pentagon

By the time Rumsfeld started his job at the Pentagon, his pattern of handling organizations had been well established. In his time at the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), he had brought in a group of loyal outsiders and fired or marginalized any power base that opposed him. This method of clearing away opposition was easier in a small organization like the OEO than it would be as the head of the Pentagon, one of the largest and most powerful bureaucratic bodies in the world. But Rumsfeld had a clear agenda and specific focus: to overturn the existing power structure in order to transform the military.

When Rumsfeld started his position in the Pentagon, he had two items that occupied much of his time: military transformation and the threat of a sneak attack. As discussed earlier, Rumsfeld wanted to make a leap in weapons systems technology that would leave potential rivals so far behind technologically that they would not even aspire to challenge the United States. In order to do this, Rumsfeld needed to take on four branches of armed services to cut back on the level of troops. Rumsfeld said at the beginning of his tenure, “No longer will each service bring unique capabilities to the table, but all will now provide the same capability—the capability to identify and attack

with PGMs (Precision Guided Missiles) at a great distances" (Kagan 2003). His other related obsession was in preparing for the possibility of a surprise attack. Rumsfeld passed out copies of the book *The Pearl Harbor: Warning and Decision* by Roberta Wohlstetter (Woodward 2002). The book gave a painstaking historical look at how the United States failed to prepare for the threat of a Japanese attack at Pearl Harbor. The book, written in 1962, had a profound effect on Rumsfeld; consequently, the possibility of another "Pearl Harbor" was included in his Space Commission report.

The Space Commission, headed by Rumsfeld in the late 1990s, examined the use of weapons in space, based on a possible threat of an attack (Rumsfeld 2001d). The problem with trumping the threat of an attack from space was that no other country in the late 1990s had even begun to put weapons into space. This lack of a threat did not stop Rumsfeld from saying that a Pearl Harbor-type attack in space could happen soon and therefore the country must be prepared for accelerating the placement of U.S. weapons in space. A new Pearl Harbor was interconnected with the need for military transformation. The Project for a New American Century (PNAC) military review, *Rebuilding America's Defenses,* outlined the steps needed to transform the military, such as putting weapons in space, substantially increasing the military budget, and other measures; however, this review lamented that the American people would not allow for this plan unless there was an attack: "Though the need for a military transformation is obvious, the American public is unlikely to endorse a plan in the absence of a New Pearl Harbor."

As with Cheney's energy report, Rumsfeld immediately put together a team to write a Quadrennial Defense Review. Rumsfeld met with Andrew Marshall, who was still working in the Office of Net Assessment that had been created in 1972 to conduct

long-term military planning against the Soviet Union (see discussion on Marshall in Chapter III). In January of 2001, Rumsfeld saw the opportunity to finally implement the plan for a Revolution in Military Affairs for which both he and Cheney had been pushing since the early 1970s. Rumsfeld told Marshall to make a wish list of weapons systems, and put him in charge of creating the Quadrennial Defense Review. The Review concentrated on precision guided weapons that could strike anywhere in the world in a matter of minutes. One of the systems, "Prompt Global Strike," would take out nuclear warheads from the tips of intercontinental ballistic missiles and put conventional weapons in their place. The Review also championed National Missile Defense and weapons in space, the two programs pushed by commissions that Rumsfeld had chaired. The RMA programs focused on the same goal that RAND had in the 1950s and 1960s, which was to break out of the box of mutually assured destruction where U.S. military might would be deterred from freedom of action. The programs that Marshall and Rumsfeld were proposing were also extremely expensive. In order for Rumsfeld to fund these programs, the Pentagon would have to reprioritize its budget from relying on troop-heavy conventional force to a light brigade high-tech force. In order to free up funding for these technology advances existing Pentagon programs would have to be cut. Rumsfeld immediately targeted the Department of the Army, proposing a cut of 40,000 troops.

Rumsfeld knew that he would face resistance to cuts in existing programs, and so he sought to eliminate top military officials from decision-making as much as he could. During the Clinton Administration, Secretary of Defense William Cohen had built a positive relationship with the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the heads of the four branches of

armed services: Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines. Cohen conferred weekly with this group of officers in a meeting called "The Tank." Rumsfeld, however, broke with this tradition and never went to a meeting of "The Tank." Rumsfeld also refused a request to meet with the head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. General Eric Shinseki requested a meeting with the Defense Secretary early in the administration and four months later, in May of 2001, the General was still waiting (Richter 2001).

Instead of relying on the military for support, Rumsfeld relied on a small group of civilian appointees that he had chosen. Rumsfeld worked closely with Stephen Cambone, his special assistant, with whom he had worked on the National Missile Defense Commission in the 1990s. Cambone was placed in charge of the panels that proposed ideas for the Quadrennial Defense Review. Cambone would later be put in charge of cutting defense programs, which put him in the military officers' direct line of fire. One three-star general said about Cambone, "If we were being overrun by the enemy and I had one bullet left, I'd use it on Cambone" (Blumenthal 2004).

Rumsfeld also relied on his Deputy Assistant Defense Secretary Douglas Feith, a staunch neoconservative. Feith was sent to meetings with military officers with no authority to make any decisions, and at these meetings he would speak at length about decisions that never occurred. Eventually the military brass realized that Feith was being used by Rumsfeld to waste their time and exclude them from power. As with Cambone, the antagonism between Feith and the military leadership quickly became toxic. Tommy Franks would later say about Feith in his autobiography, "He's the stupidest motherfucker on the planet" (Franks and McConnell 2004).

Rumsfeld Tries End Runs around Obstacles

By the summer of 2001, Rumsfeld's problems with the military officers had spilled into the press, as sources from the military began to leak criticism to the media. The *Washington Post* ran a story that Rumsfeld might be replaced and the most likely replacement was Les Aspin, Secretary of Defense under Clinton. On September 10, 2001, Rumsfeld struck back at the military, giving a speech that declared war on the Pentagon bureaucracy; it was a thinly veiled attack on the military itself. Rumsfeld said, "The topic today is an adversary that poses a threat, a serious threat, to the security of America. This adversary is one of the world's last bastions of central planning. Perhaps the adversary sounds like the Soviet Union, but that enemy is gone: our foes are more subtle and implacable today. You may think I'm describing one of the last decrepit dictators in the world. But their day, too, is almost past, and they cannot match the strength and size of this adversary. The adversary's closer to home. It's the Pentagon Bureaucracy" (Rumsfeld 2001a).

In his speech, Rumsfeld did not just attack the military; he also laid out the free market solution to the problem, saying that "governments can't die, so we need to find other incentives for bureaucracy to adapt and improve." Rumsfeld also made clear that the stakes in this internal struggle were a "matter of life and death, ultimately every American's." The speech was a powerful articulation of many of the points of U.S. primacy. It presented as an article of faith that government must shrink and be replaced as much as possible by the private sector. It also used threat inflation against members of the military themselves, espousing that, in the worst case, Rumsfeld's bureaucratic

enemies could cost the lives of all Americans. It also laid the groundwork for the transformation in the military that would come from a Revolution in Military Affairs.

In a 2002 *Foreign Affairs* article, Rumsfeld would reiterate many of these same principles, emphasizing the role of the private sector, high-tech weapons, and the use of special forces and private contractors. He wrote, "We must promote a more entrepreneurial approach: one that encourages people to be proactive, not reactive, and to behave less like bureaucrats and more like capitalists" (Rumsfeld 2002b). Rumsfeld's new way of war would also help to strengthen Cheney's primary goal of strengthening the President. Special forces acted on orders from the President and often worked in secret outside of Congressional oversight. Congress also lacked any formal method of monitoring private contractors who were not subject to the Freedom of Information Act. As Deborah Avant documented in her book *The Market for Force*, the use of private contractors tends to tip the balance of power to the presidency at the expense of Congress (2005).

Help Is on the Way: Cheney and Rumsfeld Try to Start a Cold War with China

During the 2000 election, Cheney had promised the military that "help was on the way." (Cheney 2000). But the American public would not support a military buildup unless there was a clear enemy. If the primacists needed a state of war to implement their domestic agenda, one would expect them to look for opportunities for a crisis or war regardless of the enemy. The incident with the American spy plane that ran into a Chinese fighter jet in July 2001 was just such an opportunity. The American plane went down into Chinese territory and the Bush Administration asked for the release of the crew members and the return of the plane that held sophisticated technological equipment

(Hersh 2010). According to Powell's chief assistant Lawrence Wilkerson, during White House meetings on the affair Cheney and Rumsfeld pushed for a rejection of diplomacy and a show of force (Real News 2010). Wilkerson said that Bush rejected this hardline strategy against the Chinese because he feared the economic repercussions of a new cold war with China. The Bush family had strong ties with China from George H.W. Bush's experience as ambassador to China during the 1970s. A cold war with China might also have a negative effect on the U.S. economy and, subsequently, the 2004 election. China had significant holdings of U.S. treasury bonds and also played a powerful role in the U.S. economy, exporting products for the market.

The incident with China's spy plane demonstrates two of this study's primary contentions: first, that Cheney was looking for any international crisis to enact his plan for U.S. primacy; and second, that Bush truly was the decider and that any action taken by the United States would have to be approved by the President. Bush decided on a strategy of using Colin Powell as his negotiator, and Powell in turn enlisted the help of his close personal friend, Saudi Ambassador Prince Bandar Al Saud. In the end, Bandar and Powell secured the release of the American soldiers, but without the spy plane and its advanced technological equipment. Bush also sent a letter of apology to the Chinese that expressed condolences for the Chinese pilot who lost his life. To the hardliners like Cheney and the neoconservatives, the deal represented a terrible case of appeasement.

For Cheney, the negotiations represented a defeat on many different levels. The apology signaled weakness to foreign countries. It was also an opportunity for a permanent state of war with a significant enemy that could challenge U.S. hegemony not only in East Asia but also in the Persian Gulf. But the successful denouement to the

crisis represented a victory for Powell whom Cheney and Rumsfeld both were trying to marginalize within the Bush Administration. The neoconservatives were particularly galled to see Bush revert to a realist stance reminiscent of his father's position, and also to use the Saudis in the negotiations. Archneoconservative William Kristol wrote a scathing article in the *Weekly Standard* criticizing Bush's handling of the incident.

Bush did not want to appear weak and, perhaps in response to the criticism, he delivered a speech in which he said that the United States would militarily defend Taiwan's right of independence (Sanger 2001). This statement could have been interpreted as overturning the United States' longstanding policy of recognizing only one China. China immediately protested and Brent Scowcroft, Bush Senior's closest friend and former National Security Advisor, went to China to reassure leaders that the president's statement did not mean a change in policy.

The China incident illustrates many important points concerning the Iraq War. The primacists wanted to use any crisis as an opportunity to implement their agenda. For the United States, with military and economic interests all over the globe, confrontations and crises were almost inevitable, especially in the volatile Middle East. While 9/11 represented an extreme case, Cheney and Rumsfeld might have had other opportunities to implement their agenda. As McGeorge Bundy, National Security Adviser for Lyndon Baines Johnson said of about the bombing of Pleiku, an incident that brought the United States further into Vietnam, "Pleikus are like streetcars: if you miss one, another will come along shortly" (Appy 2003: 9). The incident also illustrates that Bush was essential to the decision to invade Iraq. Bush wanted to appear strong but his interests never broke with those of his family. Unlike the incident with China, 9/11 and the subsequent

invasion of Iraq represented an easy victory that would protect his family interests and potentially help his chances of reelection. Rising tensions with China, a country that held almost a trillion dollars in U.S. securities, might have a disastrous effect on the American economy and therefore on Bush's reelection chances.

9/11: Opportunity for Permanent War

On September 11, 2011, and in the days and weeks thereafter, it became clear that the attacks would be used to push the agenda for U.S. primacy and expand the War on Terror to Iraq. Bush, Cheney, and Rumsfeld all made decisions that pushed their primary agenda. Bush wanted to become a war president and consequently made a series of decisions that expanded the War on Terror. Cheney wanted to create a series of legal precedents that would expand the authority of the president. Rumsfeld used the War on Terror to push for his dream of being able to strike anywhere on the planet with precision-guided weapons. All three put the invasion of Iraq on the agenda.

After the attacks, Bush reacted quickly to the opportunity. There was no pressure needed from the neoconservatives, Cheney, or anyone else in the administration. Bush seized on the opportunity to act quickly and decisively. This was the moment that he had been waiting for: the unimagined opportunity to lead the country into war. On the morning of the attacks, as his limousine sped away from the Florida elementary school that he had been visiting, Bush set the agenda on the secure phone line with Dick Cheney. He told Cheney, "We're going to find out who did this, and we're going to kick their ass" (Kessler 2003:139). Later in the day, Rumsfeld asked Bush whether attacking Afghanistan was against international law. Bush said, "I don't care what the international lawyers say. We're going to kick some ass." He also made it clear on 9/11 that he now

saw himself as war president and that the any other priorities would be ignored, saying, "This is what we're about now" (Kessler, 2003).

Bush's public decisions in the next few weeks reflected these private and aggressive statements. Presidential scholar Thomas Langston documented the many steps that President Bush took that widened the conflict and made war with Iraq inevitable (Langston 2007: 155). First, on September 11, Bush said that the nation was "going to war" and that the U.S. would not distinguish between terrorists and states that support them. On September 15, he informed General Hugh Shelton that he was going to defer action against Iraq until after he hit Al Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan. On November 12, he asked the military to begin planning for an attack on Iraq.

Cheney also saw 9/11 as an opportunity to push his primary agenda, taking away all constraints on presidential authority. On the day of the attacks, Cheney's lawyer and partner in the presidential project, David Addington, evacuated from the White House, was on his way out of the city when Cheney called him from the White House secure bunker and ordered him to come back to the White House (Montgomery 2009: 122). In the days after the attack, Cheney and Addington worked on a series of executive orders and legislation. For example, on September 12, House Speaker Dennis Hastert was presented with authorization for the President to use all necessary force against any threat. Congress ultimately rejected this blank check for the use of force, citing the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution as an example of a similar, imprudent decision by Congress. On September 15, Cheney gave Bush the executive order to treat prisoners of war in Afghanistan as enemy combatants, and the President signed it.

Rumsfeld immediately saw the War on Terror in the context of his program for precision-guided missiles and the RAND agenda of having a usable military force that was not deterred by nuclear weapons. On the day of the attacks, Rumsfeld said that the United States should hit Iraq instead of Afghanistan because "there aren't enough targets in Afghanistan" (Clarke 2004). As the War on Terror continued, Rumsfeld continued to see the terrorists through the prism of his plan for precision-guided weapons. In October of 2001, Rumsfeld said that the challenge for the United States regarding the terrorists was "to project yourself forward. You have to ask yourself, 'Were that to occur anywhere in the world, what would you want to have done? What would you as a society want to have done to avoid that?'" (Shanker 2001).

Iraq and the Mushroom Cloud: A Well-Practiced Model Inflates the Iraq Threat

In the beginning of the Bush Administration and in the months after 9/11, the CIA, the NSA, and other intelligence agencies had no significant evidence that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction or any contact with Al Qaeda. But Rumsfeld and Cheney knew from their experience with Team B, the National Missile Defense Commission, and other threat inflations that the intelligence agencies could be pressured, intimidated and ultimately marginalized. The steps necessary for threat inflation had already been tested and refined.

First, rather than rely on autonomous bureaucracies like the CIA, Rumsfeld and Cheney appointed their team from outside the existing intelligence community. As with the Office of Economic Opportunity decades earlier, outsourcing would allow for direct control for the primacists. And as with Team B, the tight-knit and zealous neoconservatives could be trusted to build the case from raw intelligence. Rumsfeld

created the Office of Special Plans, bringing in neoconservatives like Michael Maloof, Bill Luti, and Abram Schulsky, and putting them under the control of Douglas Feith in the Pentagon. The information flowed freely between the neoconservatives in the Office of the Vice President and the Pentagon, and Cheney was kept informed of every bit of information.

Second, the Office of Special Plans would cherry pick isolated bits of non-verified intelligence points, ignoring any countervailing information, and then string them together in an invincible chain of circular reasoning. In other words, the information points led to possibilities that were treated as certainties and then put together in a series of events that would lead to the worst possible outcome. For instance, the aluminum tubes which were intercepted on their way to Iraq and which the State Department and the Department of Energy asserted could not be used to enrich uranium were proof that Saddam was constructing a nuclear weapon. Given that Saddam had a nuclear program, he could be mere months away from having a usable weapon. Saddam was also irrational and would not be deterred by the United States' nuclear weapons. Saddam had a strong working relationship with Al Qaeda, and therefore he would give these nuclear weapons to the terrorists. Finally, those terrorists could strike at any time with a nuclear weapon in the United States. All of the assertions were questionable if not patently false, but the edifice of possibility was enough to justify stamping out the threat. But perhaps the worst thing about these worst case scenario reports was that they were propagating all over Washington. When CIA Director George Tenet saw the presentation by Feith and his subordinates in the Office of Special Plans on August 15, 2002, he said the report was

"crap" (Tenet 2007: 347). But the "crap" was filtering up to Rumsfeld, Cheney and even to President Bush, and was being used in public statements and speeches.

Third, much of the evidence of weapons of mass destruction and contacts with terrorists were provided by secondhand accounts of Iraqi émigrés. In 1972, Andrew Marshall, from the Office of Net Assessment, had first used Soviet émigrés whom the intelligence agencies rejected. Rumsfeld and the neoconservatives would come to use émigrés in the Team B assessment on the Soviet military. Team B's accounts were treated as highly dubious by the CIA because the émigrés were often given side deals like money and American citizenship. In the case of Iraq, the émigrés were provided by Ahmed Chalabi and the Iraqi National Congress, which had both been lobbying for the overthrow of Saddam and which both stood to benefit if the Americans gave them control over the Iraqi government.

Fourth, as with the Team B report, the raw intelligence would be leaked directly to sympathetic members of the press. In the case of Team B, journalist Robert Novak would write columns about the Soviet threat. In the case of Iraq, the most important conduit for the Office of Special Plans was Judith Miller from *The New York Times*. Miller would write a series of six front-page articles about the proof of Saddam's weapons and contacts with Al Qaeda, getting much of her information from Chalabi and then verifying it with her neoconservative contacts in the Bush Administration. Rumsfeld also coordinated his campaign for war with a group of retired military officers who worked as pundits on network and cable news shows. These officers, who also sat on the boards of various weapons contractors, met in the Pentagon with Rumsfeld to plan the message they would convey. They then appeared on their respective shows to report

the coordinated message as their expert opinion. Rumsfeld rewarded these "message force multipliers" after the invasion by giving them trips to Iraq where they could meet with active military officers like General David Petraeus. These trips provided them with an excellent way of gathering new information on weapons systems that the U.S. military might need and their respective weapons manufacturers could make.

Fifth, politicians like Bush, Cheney, and Rumsfeld asserted that there was irrefutable evidence of an Iraqi nuclear program and cited the media as corroboration for the statements. In one instance, Cheney's office leaked the information of the aluminum tubes to Judith Miller, who then wrote a front page article in *The New York Times*, citing sources provided by the Iraqi National Congress and confirmed by "high level officials." Cheney went on the television news program, *Meet the Press*, asserting that Iraq had a nuclear program and citing as evidence Judith Miller's article that had come out that morning (Isikoff and Corn 2006: 36).

Sixth, raw intelligence was also disseminated by a network of think tanks, committees, and public relations firms who would present the media with ready-made stories complete with witnesses, experts, and information. Think tanks like the American Enterprise Institute, the Hudson Institute, and the Brookings Institute employed experts available for press interviews. Committees and lobby groups like the Committee for the Liberation of Iraq, the Committee on the Present Danger, and the Project for a New American Century were also used to coordinate information with both the media and politicians. The Iraqi National Congress worked closely with Rendon Corporation, a public relations firm, and Bendor Associates, another public relations firm, set up interviews and articles for many prominent neoconservatives like Richard Perle and

James Woolsey. In one particularly egregious incident, Oprah Winfrey interviewed a member of the Iraqi National Congress. On the same show, Oprah also interviewed Judith Miller from *The New York Times* and Kenneth Pollack from the Brookings Institute. Pollack was promoting a book called *A Threatening Storm*, which detailed the threat from Saddam Hussein. When one woman in the audience questioned the believability of these opinions, Oprah shot down the woman, saying, "Oh, we're not trying to propaganda-- show you propaganda...We're just showing you what is" (Moyer 2007).

Finally, the information and stories generated by the media and politicians were used to pressure intelligence agencies to endorse stories about WMDs and Al Qaeda. International scholar Robert Jervis asserted in his book *Why the Intelligence Failed* (2010) that, through his personal investigation in the CIA, he found no evidence that intelligence had been politicized, or in other words, shaped to conform to political demands. Jervis admits that after Rumsfeld came out with the National Missile Defense Commission Report in the 1990s, the CIA changed its estimates on North Korea and Iran, instead adopting a more hardline view that conformed to the report. The Rumsfeld Commission Report was an outside estimate by a commission mandated by Congress, but it still had an effect on intelligence.

The Office of Special Plans delivered reports throughout Washington, and those reports were used by both the media and the top officials in the White House. Yet, according to Jervis, the CIA did not politicize its intelligence. Vice President Cheney made eight separate trips to CIA headquarters and used intelligence from the Office of Special Plans to question intelligence officials about Iraq and weapons of mass

destruction (Hoyle 2008). According to many CIA officers, the intelligence was in fact politicized. Mel Goodman, a CIA intelligence officer during the run-up to the war, said that promotions were based on cooperation with the Bush Administration. Paul Pillar, the CIA officer who wrote the White Paper on Saddam's weapons of mass destruction that was presented to Congress, said that the reports reflected politics and were not an accurate picture of the facts. Tyler Drumheller, the CIA chief for Europe, asserted that of course the CIA had politicized the intelligence (Drumheller 2006). Drumheller had called George Tenet to warn him about the notorious witness "curveball" whose false stories of Iraq's mobile weapons labs had wound up in Colin Powell's presentation to the U.N.

Shock and Awe: Rumsfeld's Dream of a Demonstration Model Realized

The invasion of Iraq, particularly the first night with explosions in Baghdad, fulfilled many of the goals of U.S. primacy. It sent a signal to enemies in the oil-rich Persian Gulf that the United States was the regional hegemon and that no one was safe from a strike that could happen anywhere at a moment's notice. China, Russia, and other major potential rivals were put on notice that their conventional military forces were technologically backward compared to those of the United States. The United Nations and NATO were also put on notice that America did not need international support. America could handle a major conflict on its own. The invasion also signaled to the American military that the traditional troop-heavy Powell Doctrine was no longer needed. The speed of the victory also led to a significant five to ten point spike in Bush's approval ratings (Zelizer 2010). The quick and decisive attacks also strengthened the President's propensity to use force. If American troops could sweep to victory and

overthrow a regime in a matter of weeks, then the Congressional War Resolution, with its 60-day window for approval of an action, was less significant if not meaningless. In the heady days after the invasion, the primacists believed that the domestic and international constraints on the use of America's military had been lifted. The Vietnam Syndrome was now truly dead.

For the primacists, and in particular Rumsfeld, the invasion of Iraq was the culmination of a three-decade dream to use precision-guided weapons in a massive demonstration model of American power. Even the name of the weapons display—"Shock and Awe"—was conceived years before the invasion. When Rumsfeld was interviewed in April of 1999 about Clinton's bombing of Kosovo, Rumsfeld referred to the name: "There is always a risk in gradualism. It pacifies the hesitant and the tentative. What it doesn't do is shock and awe and alter the calculations of the people you're dealing with" (Meserve 1999).

After the successful invasion was complete, the advocates of military transformation felt vindicated. The day that Baghdad fell was, according to Cheney, "Proof positive of the success of our efforts to transform the military" (Herspring 2008: 58). Stephen Cambone, also overjoyed, observed, "What you see in Iraq in its embryonic form is the kind of warfare that is animating our desire to transform the force" (Harnden 2003: 346).

Shock Therapy: Bremer Imposes a Free Market

Rumsfeld took control of the occupation of Iraq and, in much the same way that he treated the Office of Economic Opportunity in 1969, Iraq became a lab for the implementation of free market principles. The primacist principles that government

needed to shrink and that private industry creates a much freer and better society were played out to their full extent in Iraq. The Iraqi Baathist society under Saddam Hussein was a strong state in which the government controlled much of the industry. Rumsfeld did not want to build the new Iraq on top of the old society. He wanted to completely dismantle the state and use private industry to build up the society *sui generis*.

Many scholars have claimed that the central problem with the American involvement in Iraq was that Rumsfeld failed to develop an adequate plan for Iraq because he and the neoconservatives had an overly optimistic vision of Iraq easily becoming a democracy (Ricks 2006; Packer 2005). A related view holds that the plan for Iraq turned into chaos because of infighting between Rumsfeld's Pentagon and Colin Powell's State Department (Ferguson 2008). Yet another view of the administration was that initially Bush and the top leaders did not view nation building as important, but after 9/11, the administration fully embraced the concept of creating democracies in the Middle East. All of these hypotheses are incorrect. There was in fact a plan for Iraq, and there was no ambiguity about who was in charge of the occupation. In January of 2003, Rumsfeld asked for full authority of the occupation, which Bush made official (Gordon and Trainor 2007: 171). Powell knew that the occupation of Iraq would be messy and he knew that the State Department did not have the resources to deal with it. Therefore, according to Gordon and Trainor, he was happy to give the job over to the Pentagon.

After Rumsfeld gained control of the occupation, he still did not embrace the concept of nation building. On February 15, 2003, Rumsfeld gave a speech called "Beyond Nation Building," in which he rejected the entire idea of creating an Iraqi government (Dower 2010: 352). Rumsfeld appointed Colonel Jay Garner to head the

Organization for Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA) to manage the occupation. Gardner had worked with Kurdish rebels in Northern Iraq after the First Persian Gulf War and he had excellent neoconservative credentials, having cosigned a letter by the Jewish Institute for Security Affairs (JINSA) condemning the Palestinian for using lethal force (Lind 2003b).

But, in spite of his background, Garner's appointment immediately caused problems for Cheney and Rumsfeld. In one planning session on Iraq, Garner found that Tom Warrik knew far more than anyone else in the room about the problems and intricacies involved in occupying and rebuilding the Iraqi society. After the meeting, Garner asked to be a part of the team and discovered that Warrik worked for the State Department and had helped formulate a plan for occupying Iraq. The State Department started drafting the *Future of Iraq Project* in December of 2001, finishing the project in time for the invasion of Iraq. The plan has since been declassified and can be read in full (Hassen, 2006).

Using the best available intelligence, the State Department mapped a district-by-district plan for Iraq divided into various categories that included local government, power plants, oil infrastructure, security, and many other categories. White had worked with Iraqi émigrés, area specialists, and other professionals who wrote hundreds of pages about the problems that might confront occupiers and about possible solutions to those problems. Garner was surprised to hear about the plan and asked White to join ORHA in order to tap his expertise. The two men worked well together until Garner received a call from Rumsfeld telling him to drop White from the team. When Garner tried to appeal the decision, Rumsfeld informed him that the decision had come from "higher up." It would

have been uncharacteristic of Bush to become involved in the personnel decisions of a bureaucracy, and so the logical deduction is that Cheney wanted to make sure that there were no rogue elements in the occupation.

Problems continued for Garner as he voiced his opinion that the Americans should hold elections in Iraq and turn over power to an Iraqi government as soon as possible. Cheney and Rumsfeld could not dismiss Gardner before he left for Iraq without causing public relations problems, but on the day Gardner arrived in Baghdad, he received a call from Rumsfeld saying that he was being replaced by L. Paul Bremer. This time hardliners Scooter Libby and Paul Wolfowitz carefully vetted the candidate to make sure that his views did not deviate from their own. Bremer met with Rumsfeld before he left for Iraq and discussed the agenda for the country.

In the weeks between Garner's dismissal and Bremer's arrival, ORHA worked on a plan to stabilize Iraq. The lack of American troops, a strategy upon which Rumsfeld insisted, had created a security vacuum which led to looting throughout the country. As American troops invaded Iraq, most of the 400,000 Iraqi Army soldiers chose not to fight, instead disbanding and blending back into the population. The police and other municipal workers also stopped showing up to work. In the midst of the chaos, Garner worked with officers from the Iraqi Army who organized the reformation of Iraqi military units. Garner also worked with Baath officials to help organize the reconstruction and local elections. Garner was particularly adamant about holding elections and told the BBC in an interview on March 18, 2004, "My preference was to put the Iraqis in charge as soon as we can, and do it with some form of elections….I thought it was necessary to rapidly get the Iraqis in charge of their destiny" (Leigh 2004).

When Bremer arrived in Iraq, he informed Garner that the Iraqi Army would not be called back and that Bremer would not work with any members of the Baath Party. Bremer also called off the local elections that had been planned by Iraqis. Bremer quickly appointed an interim Iraqi government called the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) and gave himself dictatorial powers to make laws and veto any law proposed by the CPA. The edicts or orders were binding laws that could not be overturned by the CPA. In his 13 months in office, Bremer would give 100 orders that would be enforced by the U.S. military and the Iraqi government. United Nations Special Envoy Lakhdar Brahimi declared that Bremer was the new "Dictator of Iraq" (Juhasz 2006: 197). CPA Order Number 1 barred Baath officials from participating in the government. Bremer would later claim that he wanted to keep low-level Baath officials in the government, but the cuts included most civil servants and even teachers, policemen, and doctors. Order Number 2 officially disbanded the Iraqi Army, putting 400,000 heavily armed men out of work.

Those two orders had the effect of clearing away any legitimate opposition to Bremer and the American occupation. They also created a pool of educated and well-armed members of the old regime who were very sympathetic to the insurgency. However, in the months after those two orders were given, the country erupted in chaos, and journalists and scholars tried to assess who had been responsible for the fateful decisions. In one of the more popular and yet convoluted explanations, Charles Ferguson's documentary film and book *No End in Sight* (2008) presents a picture of a confusing chain of command in which no one could be sure about the origin of the two orders. Ferguson conducts extensive interviews with former members of the Bush

Administration and attempts to trace the disastrous decision to disband the Iraqi Army. Ferguson maintains that the final decision was made by Walter Slocombe who was a Senior Advisor for the Coalition Provisional Authority.

The truth is that the first two orders were not arbitrary or based on whims of low-level officials. Ferguson and other scholars present a picture of the Bush Administration with no plan for post-conflict Iraq. Bremer and other Bush officials have been portrayed as incompetent officials adapting to unforeseen crises. In point of fact, there was a plan for post-conflict Iraq that laid out most of Bremer's orders, and the plan was completed by a company called Bearing Point and was given to the Bush administration February 21, 2003, in time for the March invasion (Juhasz 2006, 195). The official contract for the plan was not signed until July 24, 2003 but the contract entitled, "Stimulating Economic Recovery, Reform and Sustained Growth in Iraq" was virtually unchanged from the February contract. The contract was designed to turn Iraq into a completely free market, completely wiping away the state-centered pre-invasion economy; the contract stated, "It should be clearly understood that the efforts undertaken will be designed to establish the basic framework for a functioning market economy; taking appropriate advantage of the unique opportunity for rapid progress in this area presented by the current configuration of political circumstances….Reforms are envisioned in the areas of fiscal reform, financial sector reform, trade, legal and regulatory reform and privatization" (UAID 2003, 46-47).

This complete overhaul of the Iraqi economy would have been difficult to implement in the presence of significant political opposition to the reforms, but Bremer's first two orders essentially wiped away any political opposition. Most of Bremer's

further orders were designed to implement Bearing Point's plan to create a completely open market in Iraq. Order Number 12 suspended all "tariffs, custom duties, import taxes, licensing fees and similar surcharges for goods entering or leaving Iraq" (Coalition Provisional Authority Order 12, 2003a). Order Number 17 granted full immunity from Iraqi laws to Coalition military forces and all foreign contractors (Coalition Provisional Authority Order 17, 2003b). Order Number 37 replaced Iraq's progressive tax structure with a flat tax, which had long been the dream of fiscal Republican conservatives like Jack Kemp, Steve Forbes and Phil Graham (Coalition Provisional Authority Order 37, 2003c). Order Number 39 called for the privatization of all state-owned businesses, allowed for 100 percent ownership by foreign firms, and allowed the unrestricted transfer abroad of any capital from Iraqi companies (Coalition Provisional Authority Order 39, 2003d). Order Number 40 allowed for 50 percent foreign ownership of any Iraqi bank, and was later amended by Order Number 94 which allowed for 100 percent foreign ownership of all Iraqi banks (Coalition Provisional Authority Order 94, 2004).

All of these orders led to extreme economic hardship with a high unemployment rate and high prices for goods. Under Saddam Hussein, the government subsidized gasoline prices, redistributing to the people some of the benefits of the oil business. In the new system, prices skyrocketed and, in a country with the second largest oil reserves in the world, cars lined up at gas stations because of a lack of fuel. The oil price spike and rapid inflation for other essential goods including food often led to protests and violence. The upheaval due to this quick economic transition was not, however, unexpected. Bremer had outlined the expected results of globalization policies in a paper titled "New Risks in International Business" that he wrote in November of 2001 (Bremer

2001). Bremer told multinational corporations that "the painful consequences of globalization are felt long before its benefits are clear." He also warned about price spikes in goods much like the ones that Iraq would experience two years later due to his orders. The paper noted, "Privatization of basic services, for example, almost always leads to price increases for those services, which in turn often lead to protests or even physical violence against the operator." Bremer was an expert on the effects of globalization due to his work with Marsh and McLennan's Crisis Consulting Practice that specialized in risk assessment for multinational firms doing business in "crisis environments" (Juhasz 2006: 191).

Bremer's background as a consultant for multinational companies, along with his written work, make it highly likely that he was chosen to head the CPA because his ideology of the benefits of free markets coincided with the belief of Rumsfeld, Cheney, and the neoconservatives that shrinking government and strengthening private industry was essential to good policy. Rather than the chaos of Iraq being blamed on incompetence or a lack of planning, the problems in Iraq appear to stem from a cost benefit analysis made by Cheney and Rumsfeld. Perhaps the extent of the chaos was not expected, but the planners of the war can hardly be called naïve or incompetent. The widespread belief that Cheney, Rumsfeld, and the neoconservatives were believers in democracy who thought that U.S. soldiers would be greeted with candy and flowers does not have any merit. Cheney and Rumsfeld were implementing the same ideology that they had used with the Office of Economic Opportunity in 1969, but on a grander scale. In their minds, government bureaucrats, whether in America or Iraq, were a part of the problem, and replacing bureaucrats with private industry should be carried out whenever

possible. The implementation of unregulated capitalism in Iraq was carried out because Rumsfeld and Cheney did a cost benefit analysis, wagering that the long-term benefits of a free market would certainly outweigh whatever temporary problems might be caused by the destruction of the Iraqi state.

Contracting a Private Army: Rumsfeld Changes the Way America Goes to War

Another misunderstood cost benefit analysis was Rumsfeld's insistence on going into Iraq with as few troops as possible. Low troop levels enabled the implementation of many of the most important tenets of the agenda for U.S. foreign policy. First, low numbers of troops meant that many of the military services for the soldiers would need to be filled by private contractors, shrinking the role of government and increasing that of private industry. Second, it also meant that troops could not be used for any form of "nation building," instead freeing them up to create demonstration models in other countries. As Condoleezza Rice said during the 2000 campaign, "We don't need to have the 82nd Airborne escorting kids to kindergarten," (Elliot 2003b). Third, fewer troops meant freeing up more of the budget for the Revolution in Military Affairs. Health costs, pensions, benefits, care, feeding and other costs of fielding a large army would mean less money for precision-guided missiles.

Fourth, private contractors were hired and administered through the Executive Branch. Private contractors were not subject to the Freedom of Information Act and no congressional oversight was attached to their use; thus, contactors could perform duties in secret without congressional approval. As Deborah Avant documents in her book, The Market for Force, private contractors tip the balance of power between the president and Congress to the Executive Branch (Avant 2005). Fifth, low troop levels led to fewer

soldiers being killed. For instance, if drivers from contractor Kellogg Brown and Root drove supply trucks across Iraq instead of U.S. soldiers and were killed, they did not show up on lists of American casualties. And if those truck drivers were Third Country Nationals (TCNs), then large numbers of casualties from this group would very likely be ignored by the American media and therefore the American public. In 2008, Halliburton/Kellogg Brown and Root estimated that 35,000 of the total 47,000 employees in Iraq on company payroll were TCNs (Chatterjee 2009: 142). As Vietnam demonstrated, high casualties can have a disastrous effect on presidential approval ratings. In his autobiography *Known and Unknown* (2011) Rumsfeld constantly refers to Vietnam and the American public losing its will to fight. Rumsfeld perceived that sustaining the American war effort in Vietnam was impossible if Americans saw too many casualties. Rumsfeld calculated that in order to sustain America's long-term will to fight in Iraq, troop casualties had to be kept to a minimum; low numbers of casualties would also help to keep Republicans in power in Congress and maintain the public's approval of Bush.

Sixth, more private contractors—and fewer troop deaths—made possible the long-term occupation of Iraq. In order to maintain regional hegemony in the Persian Gulf, the United States needed to have a significant military presence. In the beginning of his autobiography, Rumsfeld tells his version of the temporary U.S. deployment of troops to Beirut. At the time, Rumsfeld was an envoy in the Middle East under the Reagan Administration, and he first met with Saddam in Iraq and then went to Lebanon. Throughout the troop deployment, many members of Congress called for the troops to return home. After a terrorist car bomb killed 300 Marines in Beirut, American troops

were called out of the war zone. Then American ships in the Mediterranean Sea ineffectually shelled Hezbollah positions, signaling to other nations that the United States was weak. To Rumsfeld, everything about the mission in Beirut was a failure. American troops arrived in Lebanon with no offensive mission to carry out, instead sitting in the embassy waiting to be attacked. Congress encroached on the decision-making authority of the President. The entire fiasco demonstrated that the Vietnam War Syndrome still weakened American global power and that Americans lacked the will to fight. After returning to the United States, Rumsfeld cautioned that the U.S. was unprepared for instability in the Persian Gulf that "could make Lebanon look like a taffy pull" (Bacevich 2005b: 191). The implication of his mission to the Middle East was clear: the United States could not show the same kind of weakness in the vital region of the Persian Gulf that it had in Lebanon. If the United States was to maintain its global primacy, it needed to change the way it waged war.

Given that troop levels and contractors were tied, in the mind of Rumsfeld, so directly to every tenet of U.S. primacy except for threat inflation, one would expect Rumsfeld to spend a great deal of political capital on keeping the troop levels down. This was definitely the case. Abundant evidence shows that before the invasion, Rumsfeld fought tooth and nail to keep troop levels down and, even after the Iraqi insurgency was in full swing, Rumsfeld tried to bring troops home. The most public fight between Rumsfeld and the Army over troop levels took place in February of 2003. When the head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Eric Shinseki, was asked at a Congressional hearing how many troops would be needed for an invasion of Iraq, the General said, "Something on the order of several hundred thousand."

Bush Goes Soft on Cheney: Bush Fires Rumsfeld in Spite of Cheney's Opposition

During his first term, Bush gave Cheney and Rumsfeld license to enact their plan of U.S. primacy, but in his second term, this agenda became unpopular with the American public. To Bush, U.S. primacy was a means to achieve a successful presidency. When Cheney's agenda started to jeopardize Bush's poll numbers and therefore his presidential legacy, Bush acted with backbone as "the Decider." He took back the presidency from the primacists and began to enact policies such as opened diplomatic relations with Iran and Syria that were anathema to the hardline strategy for U.S. primacy.

In the middle of his second term, Bush's approval ratings dropped precipitously to a new low of 34 percent. Respondents to a CBS News political poll cited the war in Iraq among other issues for their declining views of Bush (Roberts, 2006). In the same poll, Cheney's numbers had dropped to an 18 percent approval rating. Bush must have realized that Cheney and Rumsfeld's comprehensive plan for U.S. primacy could potentially destroy his presidential legacy. Congressman Jack Murtha, Fox News Commentator Oliver North, and many retired generals attacked Rumsfeld and asked the president to drop him from the administration. Senator John McCain took the step of publicly calling for George W. Bush to fire Rumsfeld. Bush took criticisms of Rumsfeld as a challenge to his presidential authority and at a press conference made it clear that he was the decider: "I hear the voices, and I read the front page, and I know the speculation. But I'm the decider, and I decide what is best. And what's best is for Don Rumsfeld to remain as the Secretary of Defense" (CNN 2006b). But within the White House, even Bush was very aware that Rumsfeld was a liability and opposed Bush's plan for a surge.

As to be expected, Rumsfeld refused to support any plan for more troops in Iraq, despite many groups including neoconservatives and other hardliners supporting a surge. Rumsfeld saw a surge through the same prism he had viewed the American troops during the Vietnam war three decades earlier: it would created a dependency. Instead, he wanted to speed the transition of building up Iraqi forces and turning over authority to the Iraqi government. Rumsfeld said publicly, "At some moment if you've got your hand on the bicycle seat, you have to let it go" (Woodward 2008). Cheney supported more troops in Iraq, yet at the same time he supported keeping Rumsfeld in his position as Secretary of Defense, since without Rumsfeld in the Pentagon, the plan for U.S. primacy would be jeopardized (Hayes 2007: 515). The Pentagon and intelligence agencies were being privatized and the RMA programs that Cheney had always wanted were being implemented. Clearly, Cheney's loyalty to Rumsfeld and the agenda on which they had worked for decades were more important to the Vice President than stabilizing Iraq or Bush's poll numbers and resulting legacy.

In the 2006 midterm election, the Republicans lost many of their seats when most Democratic candidates ran on an antiwar platform, criticizing Rumsfeld's handling of the war in Iraq. In spite of Cheney's opposition, Bush finally acted after the election, asking for Rumsfeld's resignation. On November 8, 2006, Rumsfeld's departure became public. Cheney remained bitter about Bush's abandonment of his friend. A month after Rumsfeld left, Cheney was asked in a closed session with his aides whether he agreed with the decision. He responded, "Absolutely not," revealing a strong disagreement between the Decider and the Vice President (Hayes 2007: 517).

Thank God for the Decider: Bush Ignores Cheney and Refuses to Bomb Iran, Syria, and Others

The decision to invade Iraq was a risky decision for which Bush has been widely criticized, but not enough credit is given to the President acting with backbone against the plan for a full scale war against all opponents of the United States' presence in the Middle East. Now that Bush is out of office, more has been revealed about the push for a wider war. According to former Prime Minister Tony Blair, in his autobiography, *A Journey*, Cheney "would have worked through the whole lot, Iraq, Syria, Iran, dealing with all their surrogates in the course of it -- Hezbollah, Hamas, etc." (Blair 2010: 407).

In 2007, Cheney and the neoconservatives made a strong push for the administration to confront Iran about its nuclear program and alleged support for Iraqi insurgents. In a closed White House meeting in July of 2007, Cheney called for a demonstration of American force, advocating a bombing of Quds forces within Iran on the border of Iraq (Strobel, Walcott and Youssef 2007). As Bush's last term came to a close, Cheney's advocacy for bombing Iran became more strident, but Bush refused to make the decision in favor of Cheney's recommendation. A year out of office in August 2009, Cheney said, "I was probably a bigger advocate of military action than any of my colleagues" (Phillips 2009).

Cheney was not alone in advocating the bombing of Iran. Neoconservative founder Norman Podhoretz met with Bush in the White House in September of 2007 and told Bush that if he bombed Iran, he would prevent another Holocaust. After the meeting, Podhoretz was convinced that "George Bush will not leave office with Iran having acquired a nuclear weapon or having passed the point of no return." George Bush

could have given the order at any time to bomb Iran but, in spite of the pressure from Cheney and the neoconservatives, he still made the decision to act with restraint. This dynamic of Bush acting in opposition to Cheney and the neoconservatives weakens theories that the president was a puppet of his vice president or powerless against the pressure from the neoconservatives or the Israel Lobby.

Leaving a Man on the Battlefield: Bush Makes More Decisions

Cheney's number one priority was to empower the presidency, giving the office the ability to carry out foreign policy decisions without any encroachment by Congress. When Congress's Special Counsel Patrick Fitzgerald prosecuted Cheney's personal aide Scooter Libby, Cheney became enraged and focused his attention on the issue in his final year in office.

Of all the decisions that soured Bush and Cheney's relationship, the most acrimonious was Bush's refusal to pardon Libby. When Bush first took office, he came out strongly against the pardon of fugitive financier Marc Rich, who was forgiven by the outgoing Bill Clinton in the final day of his presidency (CNN 2001). Scooter Libby had been Marc Rich's personal attorney and had made the case for pardoning Rich. Bush was likely aware that the media would seize on the irony of pardoning Marc Rich's former lawyer. George W. Bush was also most likely keenly aware of the criticism and cost to his father's legacy of pardoning former Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger and other participants in the Iran-Contra affair at the end of the senior Bush's presidency.

In Bush's autobiography, he spoke with bitterness about the Special Counsel investigation of his father over the Iran-Contra Affair. The final report for the Iran-Contra investigation was released during the 1992 presidential campaign. According to

the autobiography, the elder Bush was climbing in the polls, but when the report came out, the polls dropped and never recovered (Bush 2010). For George W. Bush, congressional investigations needed to be handled politically, mitigating the harm that they could cause to his legacy and allowing him retain political capital. For Cheney, congressional investigations needed to be fought as a matter of the highest principle, and as much political capital as possible needed to be spent to protect the office of the presidency. This put the two men on a collision course in final days of the presidency.

Bush moved away from Cheney's agenda starting in 2006. According to a well informed adviser for Bush, the President turned away from Cheney's agenda because it had become "politically unsustainable." The aide went on to say, "It wasn't so much a repudiation of Cheney or Cheneyism but a practical judgment that the previous approach simply wasn't working" (Calabresi and Weisskopf 2009). In other words, Bush was not ideologically driven to implement Cheney's agenda for U.S. primacy, and when the agenda stopped being politically advantageous, it was summarily dropped.

Bush made the strategic decision to protect himself by hiring Fred Fielding as White House Counsel to replace Harriet Miers in January of 2007 (Allen 2007). Fielding was the consummate insider with unrivaled experience in defending presidents against investigations and scandals. Fielding had defended Richard Nixon during Watergate and had worked for Ronald Reagan as his top lawyer, most importantly during the Iran-Contra Affair. One longtime friend of Fielding said, "Freddy isn't afraid of anyone. He will slit your throat with a razor blade while he is yawning" (Calabresi and Weisskopf 2009). Fielding made the legal decision to commute Libby in 2007 but also wrote that Libby had been guilty of perjury. This decision had the effect of closing off the

possibility of pardon on legal grounds. At a White House meeting on the pardon in mid-January 2007, Cheney tried to take the prosecution out of the legal framework, instead painting it as a political decision. Bush rejected the political language and pushed it back into the legal context, saying, "Did the jury get it right or wrong?" Cheney had been outmaneuvered by Bush, and he was quite bitter about it. A day after the inauguration, in an interview with a conservative magazine, Cheney said that he disagreed with the President's decision not to pardon Libby. Neoconservatives were even more adamant, saying that Bush "had left a soldier on the battlefield, language Cheney had used throughout the debate over the pardon" (Calabresi and Weisskopf 2009).

In President Barrak Obama's first year, Bush rarely made public statements and he never criticized Obama about his decisions. Cheney, on the other hand, gave regular interviews and made countless public statements. Cheney provided the American public with a regular report card on how Obama was handling Cheney's agenda of U.S. primacy, regularly warning that a softening of American foreign policy would lead to another terrorist attack. He criticized the decision to close the prison at Guantanamo but praised Obama for putting more troops in Afghanistan. For Cheney, his life's work involved strengthening the power of the presidency, demonstrating American military force abroad, transforming the military and accomplishing the other tenets of U.S. primacy. If Obama created legal constraints on the power of the president to use force abroad, then Cheney's legacy would have been weakened.

CHAPTER VI

LESSONS FROM THE IRAQ INVASION

"In our system it is hard to overstate the centrality of the president. Others advise. The Congress can block. But he is the key decision maker. I've seen presidents who didn't fully realize this even as they were entering office. And often I read commentaries about what is happening in our government, they underplay the responsibility the president has either through his actions or through is decisions not to intervene."

Colin Powell (Rothkopf 2009: 146)

In this project I have made two central arguments. First, the study argues that primacists Cheney and Rumsfeld were the driving force behind the invasion. Cheney and Rumsfeld used the invasion of Iraq to wipe away the domestic and international constraints on the use of American military power in order to preserve and extend U.S. primacy permanently in the international system. The primacists have a long history of advocating and working for this agenda of U.S. primacy, and seized on the opportunity of 9/11 and the perceived weak target of Iraq to implement their ideology. Second, this study finds that George W. Bush was not manipulated by the primacists, the neoconservatives, or by his own irrational beliefs, but ultimately made a conscious decision to implement the strategy of U.S. primacy for his own political gain. In conclusion, I will look at the invasion of Iraq in the context of the theoretical study of war and explore the policy implications of U.S. primacy.

The Theoretical Implications of My Arguments

Systemic Level Explanation: The Unconstrained Unipolar Power

The invasion of Iraq offers a good example of how a hegemon acts in the absence of international constraints. After the fall of the Soviet Union no state was in a position to challenge the dominant military power of the United States. Realists have noted that

states will often respond to the allure of power and gain when there are no counter-balancing states. Powerful states with an abundance of security expand their interests to regions that were once seen as peripheral. Contested territories that were once seen as tangential to the hegemon may be viewed as necessary to maintain the status quo and ultimately the survival of the unipolar state. The realist scholar John Mearsheimer in his book *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* explains that in the international state of anarchy countries find it difficult to "determine how much power is enough for today and tomorrow, great powers recognize that the best way to ensure their security is to achieve hegemony now, thus eliminating any possibility of a challenge by another great power" (2001: 35).

The problem with this explanation is that the United States was in a unipolar position starting in 1989 and in spite of this often acted with restraint, deferring to allies and hesitating to use military force. Under the presidency of Bill Clinton, the United States acted erratically with no discernable grand strategy. At times it committed troops on humanitarian missions like Somalia and at other times it ignored humanitarian tragedies like the genocide in Rwanda. In a state of unipolarity the hegemon has opportunities to assert its dominance but the international system does not dictate whether the hegemon will act on those opportunities. For this reason most analysts recognize that unipolarity helped make the invasion possible, but most scholars argue that one must look beyond systemic level theories to understand the case.

Domestic Level Explanations

Most theorists have looked at the Iraq War in the context of the American political system. Many theorists have proposed that the United States has a unique

history and political system that was isolated from the diplomacy and realpolitik of Europe. Americans see their liberal democratic values as morally superior and seek to universalize those values by imposing them on other countries. In this explanation it is the United States' overweening morality that caused the country to endeavor on a crusade to spread democracy in the Middle East. In another domestic explanation, the U.S. was captured by special interests in oil or Israel that pushed the U.S. to invade Iraq. These explanations assert that invading Iraq was clearly not in the national interest and therefore analysts must take not of elites that pushed the war for parochial interests.

Individual Level Explanations

In individual level explanations analysts look closely at the personality of a leader and attempt to find the personal motivation or pattern in their life. This method is popular among journalists who have taken an investigative approach to Cheney, Bush, Rumsfeld or one of the neoconservatives like Richard Perle or Paul Wolfowitz. While many biographies have added to the pool of knowledge about the decision-makers, many of the explanations suffer from too narrow a focus. For instance, as unprecedented as Cheney's power was in the Office of the Vice President he needed the cooperation of many other members of the Bush administration to implement his ideology.

My Explanation: The Key Individuals Clear Away the Domestic Constraints

In my explanation, I concentrate on Cheney, Rumsfeld and Bush who engage in a project to cut all of the other domestic actors out of the decision to invade. Rumsfeld declares war on the Pentagon and attempts to marginalize the officers. Cheney engages in a similar campaign against Congress, working with his legal counsel and neoconservative allies to keep Congress isolated from the executive office and ultimately

from decision-making. Bush astutely uses patriotism to attack any of his domestic opponents and all three individuals use threat inflation to sell the imminent danger of Saddam to increase their power and sell the invasion to the American public. The primacist agenda for U.S. primacy weakens institutions that would normally check the president's ability to make unilateral decisions. In other words, the primacist plan for privatization, presidential power, lightning-fast war, and threat inflation makes individual level analysis more important for scholarly research. As my analysis of the Bush administration shows, perhaps the most important factor that kept the U.S. from bombing Iran was the personality of George W. Bush.

Mission Accomplished? What Are the Policy Implications of the Invasion of Iraq?

In the preceding chapters, I demonstrated how Iraq was the culmination of a three-decade agenda of U.S. primacy. Iraq in this project has been the dependent variable that was driven by the independent variable of the primacists and their ideological vision. But in considering the policy implications of this war, it is helpful to treat Iraq as the independent variable and see how it affected the seven goals for U.S. primacy. Or in other words was the invasion of Iraq everything that Cheney and Rumsfeld hoped it would be?

No More Low Hanging Fruit: A Demonstration of the Democratization of Violence

The demonstration model of unilateral force was designed to signal that the United States could strike unilaterally at a moment's notice. Initially the plan of shock and awe appeared to be quite successful, toppling the regime of Saddam Hussein in weeks. The quick victory may have contributed to diplomatic overtures being sent out to the United States from both Iran and Libya. But the effect of shock and awe dissipated

over time and America's high-tech military was challenged by an insurgency armed with low tech small arms like improvised explosive devices, machine guns, and rocket propelled grenades. Defensive realists have long noted that small arms have made conquest difficult (Van Evera 1999: 164). Rumsfeld's faith in the Revolution in Military Affairs led him to perceive that offense was dominant and that conquest would be easy. The failure of the demonstration may serve to constrain the use of American force in the future.

Privatizing America's War-Making and Intelligence

Arguably the most successfully executed goal in the plan for primacy has been the creation of a private army of workers to support and even fight with American soldiers. By September 2007 there were 180,000 contractors in Iraq, far outnumbering the 163,000 American military personnel (Lardner 2007). The use of private contractors means little congressional oversight and has further tipped the balance of power in the federal government in the direction of the president. Private contractors also mean fewer American casualties as companies like Halliburton hire most of their workers from the Third World. Since 2001, more than two thousand contractors have been killed and more than fifty thousand injuries have been reported in Iraq and Afghanistan (Stillman 2011). In addition, American intelligence has fully embraced the contractor revolution, with some 70% of the intelligence budget going to private contractors (Shorrock 2008: 363). This outsourcing of intelligence could have profound effects if private companies are ordered to manufacture intelligence by politically interested actors in the government.

The Imperial Presidency Confirmed: Barak Obama Fails to Roll Back the Power of the Executive

The continuation of the War on Terror in Iraq allowed Cheney to entrench a series of precedents which place more power in the hands of the president. When Obama, a former constitutional law professor, took office many civil rights lawyers had high expectations that he would restore transparency and roll back some of the legal precedents set by Cheney and David Addington. When Obama announced the closing of the prison at Guantanamo, it served to reassure the American public that foreign policy would no longer be carried out on the "dark side."

However, despite his initial promises Obama's policies have been more closely aligned with the idea of the imperial presidency. In January of 2011 Cheney praised Obama for not closing Guantanamo and also embracing the use of unmanned aerial vehicles (Elliot 2011). After giving words of praise to whistleblowers in the campaign, Obama's Department of Justice has been relentlessly pursuing leaks, using the Espionage Act to press criminal charges far more ruthlessly than previous administrations (Mayer 2011). Arguably Obama's most important decision that reinforced the imperial presidency was to take military action against Libya without asking for authorization from Congress. After promising to act within the constraints of the War Powers Resolution to ask for permission to use force after 60 days of the bombing attack, the deadline passed and Obama extended the bombing for another 90 days unilaterally (Felzenburg 2011).

A State of Permanently High Military Budgets: The Preservation of the Revolution in Military Affairs

One of the main goals of the primacists was to protect the military budget. Rumsfeld as Secretary of Defense in the 1970s protected the military budget from potential downsizing from détente. As when the Berlin Wall fell, Cheney testified in Congress against the idea of enacting a "peace dividend." As shown previously, the War on Terror and the Iraq invasion helped Rumsfeld enact his dream of military transformation. The permanent state of war helped justify a substantial increase in defense spending, the largest since the defense build-up of the Reagan Era (Tyson 2007). This influx of money allowed Rumsfeld to increase funding for high tech weapons. Obama came into office and kept the defense budget at approximately the same level in 2009 (Kaplan 2009). In spite of publicly announced defense cuts and the cutting of programs like the F-22 fighter jet, defense spending under Obama has remained steady and has even increased as a percentage of discretionary spending (Sirota 2011). The primacy plan has empowered and enlarged the sector of the economy that directly benefits from war.

The Persian Gulf: New Permanent Military Bases

During his campaign Obama had promised to withdraw American troops from Iraq, but months after taking office it was clear that the plan was to withdraw the troops from combat. The United States still has thousands of troops in Iraq but has withdrawn them to large bases that are relatively isolated from major population centers. The bases in Iraq and continuing military presence in the Persian Gulf were important goals for U.S. primacy.

Threat Inflation: Maintaining the War on Terror

The public consensus that comes from threat has dissipated since 9/11. A level of threat has been difficult to maintain in the absence of another major terror attack. Obama has not engaged in the same kind of threat inflation as occurred with the Office of Special Plans or even the Rumsfeld report. The Obama administration most likely does not see the political advantage in selling the threat of Al Qaeda to the American public. Threat inflation is hard to maintain and seems to be the specialty of primacists and neoconservatives.

Electoral Success through War

The presidency of Obama shows that democratic presidents can also expect a rally around the flag effect due to foreign policy victories. Obama's presidential approval ratings rose significantly due to the assassination of Osama Bin Laden. The bombing of Libya has also solidified Obama's credentials as commander in chief. The Obama administration is fighting three separate wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Libya. This state of war during a democratic presidency helps to continue the primacist goals of U.S. primacy.

Living in Cheney's World

Obama has confirmed most of the tenets of U.S. primacy. The idea of the demonstration model does not have the appeal after fighting in two simultaneous guerilla wars against low tech enemies. The threat level also does not have the same power over the American people. But the revolution in military affairs continues with a very large defense budget. Perhaps, Obama has not been as unilateral in his use of presidential powers, but keeping the legal precedents from the Bush administration means that the

next president could expand on the Cheney legacy. My dissertation has also shown that Cheney, Rumsfeld and to a lesser degree Bush were not incompetent actors. Their plan, although not widely known, has been implemented almost in its entirety.

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