GEORGE W. BUSH AND THE IRAQ WAR OF 2003

DECEPTION, DISCOURSE, AND THE ILLUSION OF EXPANSION

by

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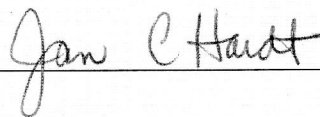
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GEORGE W. BUSH AND THE IRAQ WAR OF 2003:
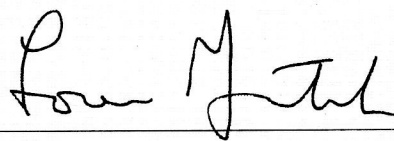DECEPTION, DISCOURSE, AND THE ILLUSION OF EXPANSION

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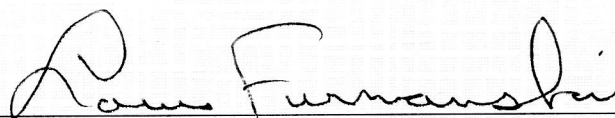
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Chapter I

Introduction

The greatest deception men suffer is from their own opinions.

-Leonardo Da Vinci, *Notebooks*

The use of deception to provoke political support for the extraordinary governmental use of force is an important theme of public diplomacy studies. John J. Mearsheimer has argued that deception, "where an individual purposely takes steps that are designed to prevent others from knowing the full truth" (Mearsheimer 2011, 15), is a practice followed by "leaders of all kinds" who consider it "a useful tool of statecraft that can and should be employed in a variety of circumstances" (Mearsheimer 2011, 99). Mearsheimer's insights into the foreign policy decision making process reflect the intellectual tradition to which he affiliates. Within that intellectual tradition, Sun Tzu, Thomas Hobbes, Niccolo Machiavelli, and Thucydides have all noted the usefulness of deception in drumming up political support. Since March of 2003, other sources have independently, critically assessed, and even lamented, the role of subterfuge practiced by the Bush administration from 2001 to 2009 (Hiebert 2003; Miller 2003; Rampton and Stauber 2003; Pillar 2006; Solomon 2015). The difference in viewpoints over the exercise of lying in foreign policy reflects an enduring puzzle about the normative status of foreign policy making. Perhaps the ideas behind these differing viewpoints of foreign policy making originate from the decision taken by the Bush administration to invade Iraq in 2003 and the utilization of what later came to be recognized as inaccurate information to bolster a narrative intended to provoke public support for the invasion of Iraq.

Not only did George W. Bush and his administration seek public support for the decision

that was made to invade Iraq in 2003, they also pursued a longstanding United States objective: to remake the world in the image of American exceptionalism. This endeavor involved the promotion of U.S. expansion through the control of Iraqi oil and the continuation of the spread of democracy. Ironically, this concept of expansionism acts as an illusion, since it is a claim that focuses on American imperialism which entails the enlargement of American democracy in regions of the world where democracy is not a viable option. To think that the Iraqi people would embrace democracy is a pipedream without rational or factual support. The Bush administration should have learned from Vietnam that you cannot hope to takeover a country and convince the populous that you are a savior, if the vast majority think you of you as an invader. As long as citizens of a particular country really don't like you being there, it doesn't matter what American ideals or democratic freedoms you may have to offer them. Thus, the Bush administration not only utilized deceitfulness in its approach to, but also became a victim of the illusion of expansion. Even though the U.S. was able to establish a foothold on Iraqi oil through the use of deceit, the invasion of Iraq resulted in the promotion of global insecurity and instability. Bush and his advisors were swayed by the idea of expansion and unable to visualize the adverse results that could follow from their actions. Either they failed to ask a simple and easy question- how will our actions affect America as well as others in the international arena- Or they may have discussed the matter and came up with the wrong answer. Or they may have only looked at the course of action they decided to pursue and how they were going to accomplish it. Assumptions were made that were not carefully explored or willfully examined, since the administration was beguiled by the illusion of expansionism. In essence, deception led to deception which resulted in significant specific ills as well as the propensity for additional problems such as the development of ISIS accompanied by blowback that would affect not only the United States but

other nations as well.

This paper will explore how the George W. Bush administration, capitalizing on public fear and paranoia generated after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, utilized flawed and biased intelligence reports to frame the U.S. position towards Iraq. The ultimate aim of the administration was to remove Saddam Hussein from power and in so doing control Iraqi oil and promote American expansion through the use of military force.

Deception, Prelude to War, and Regime Change

After the events that occurred on 9/11, along with the deaths, casualties, and monetary damages inflicted on Americans, there was a distinct fear of additional terrorist outbreaks. This fear intensified as it was accompanied by the anthrax attacks shortly thereafter which raised awareness of the threat of terrorism and the fear and public anxiety to unprecedented levels (Schorr and Boudreaux 2014). Nine days after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, President Bush stated before a Joint Session of Congress that evidence indicated that "loosely affiliated terrorist organizations known as al-Qaida" (Bush 2001) were responsible for the attacks. Bush also argued that it would be the goal of the United States and its allies to "oversee and coordinate a comprehensive national strategy to safeguard our country against terrorism and respond to any attacks that may come" (Bush 2001). The president also made very clear that the war on terror would be unceasing "until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated" (Bush 2001). In the same speech he also issued a warning to other nations that aligned themselves with terrorists by stating that "Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists" (Bush 2001).

As a result of the president's expressed directive, along with the fear that existed within the hearts and minds of the citizenry, Congress passed the USA PATRIOT Act of 2001. This

legislation enabled the government "to limit significant civil liberties in order to improve security" (Schorr and Boudreaux 2014) and created a broad definition of what constituted a terrorist. The act provided the Justice Department with the power to "detain suspected terrorists without charging them with a crime" (Hudson 2013, 338) and also enabled the FBI to have increased powers of surveillance. The U.S. was prepared to deal a crushing blow to suspected terrorists throughout the world and avoid another 9/11 in the future. The act also allowed for the pursuit and defeat of anyone or any group that could be considered a threat to America's freedom and security.

Two years following the events of 9/11, President George W. Bush addressed the American people with an issue that he described as a "grave danger" (Bush 2003). He warned his listeners of a threat concerning "Saddam Hussein's ability to wage war" (Bush 2003) in Iraq. The president explained that the U.S., along with coalition forces, was in the preliminary stages of armed efforts to disarm Hussein, who was described as "an enemy that has no regard for conventions of war or rules of morality" (Bush 2003). The commander in chief further professed that the objective of American military intervention was to eliminate Hussein's "outlaw regime that threatens the peace with mass murder" (Bush 2003) through the use of what were later referred to as weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

Shortly after informing the public of the danger that existed in Iraq, President George W. Bush presented Saddam Hussein with an ultimatum on March 17, 2003, to leave Iraq within 48 hours. Hussein decided to ignore the president's demand and continued to reside in his home country. As a result of his non-compliance, on March 20 the United States began airstrikes on Iraq then deployed ground troops through Kuwait in the south. The greatest resistance put up by Iraqi forces was around the capital city of Baghdad. However, with continued bombardment by

U.S. aircraft, followed by foot soldiers, Baghdad's international airport was taken over on April 4th, and the city itself finally fell five days later on April 9th. After a few more months of fighting, Saddam Hussein was finally captured in December of 2003 and turned over to Iraqi officials in 2004. After being put on trial for various offenses, he was convicted and later executed in December of 2006.

The ultimate goal of this invasion by the United States and coalition forces, according to the George W. Bush administration, was to capture Saddam Hussein and put an end to his reign of terror as the ruler of Iraq. In doing so, Hussein would no longer pose a threat to America and the rest of the free world through his efforts to acquire WMD. However, questions concerning several aspects of the Iraq War persist to the present day. Some of these questions will be considered in this discussion. The following specific inquiries will be deliberated: Was the primary objective of U.S. intervention in Iraq to control Iraqi oil reserves? Did the Bush administration desire to support and increase the profitability of the military industrial complex through the invasion? Did American exceptionalism contribute to the Iraq War? Did George W. Bush present factual and reliable information to the world concerning his justifications for invading Iraq? Did Bush deliberately deceive the American public, or was he simply misguided and provided with faulty information that he perceived as being authentic? Based on what was known at the time, how did Bush assess the evidence, possible benefits, and possible risks of invading Iraq? How will the experience of Iraq shape U.S. policy decisions about the future and unforeseeable choices concerning the commitment of American military forces? These questions provide an itinerary of exploration to be followed in this thesis and focus on key elements involved in the invasion of Iraq. The inquiries will be answered within the body of the text and summarized at the paper's conclusion.

Chapter Two

Justification for Deception

One who deceives will always find those who allow themselves to be deceived.

-Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*

George Bush and his attempts to justify the Iraq War of 2003 can be divided into several schools of thought. The first school of thought maintains that Bush was justified in his actions to invade Iraq due to the likelihood of WMD and the threat that Saddam Hussein posed to the United States and the free world. The second school of thought argues that Bush was not justified in his invasion of Iraq, because evidence was insufficient and too unreliable to demonstrate the existence of WMD and any threat that they presented to the United States. The third school of thought suggests that the course of action pursued by George W. Bush in Iraq to find and dispose of WMD was used as a smokescreen to hide the true intentions of his administration's efforts to control Iraqi oil, spread democracy, and promote expansionism. It should be noted that these three arguments are not mutually exclusive.

Bush was Justified in His Actions

The argument that Bush was justified in his invasion of Iraq was based on intelligence reports that Bush received concerning the existence of WMD possessed by Saddam Hussein. In July of 2002, a draft of the White Paper which was eventually distributed by the CIA in October of that year, stated that Iraq "has the expertise, facilities, and equipment to expand its WMD arsenal" and was in the process of reconstituting "prohibited WMD programs" (NIC 2002). The report went on to suggest that Iraq had accumulated of chemical and biological weapons and was developing "delivery platforms" such as Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) for "chemical and

biological agents" (NIC 2002). In presenting this view, the intelligence community stated that it

"held a 90% level of confidence" while CIA Director George Tenet expressed to the president

that the likelihood of Saddam possessing WMD was a "slam dunk" (Silberman 2015). The draft

also maintained that Iraq had never been able to explain "major gaps and inconsistencies" or

provide "credible proof" that it had disposed of and eliminated previously produced "weapons

stockpiles and production infrastructure" (NIC 2002). The problem with all of this information,

however, is that the statements generated in the NIC report only suggest a work in progress since

intelligence gathering is part of an ongoing investigatory process whose results change

periodically based on the acquisition of additional evidence or the indictment of flawed and

inaccurate information which was once accepted as factual. Based on the evidence at the time of

the disclosure there was not sufficient or reliable information to demonstrate that Saddam

Hussein had a significant number of WMD and that they would be a threat to the security of the

United States or the rest of the world.

Other information concerning Iraq and WMD was presented in the *New York Times* by

Pulitzer Prize winning journalist and writer Judith Miller. Miller reported on September 7, 2002,

that Saddam Hussein possessed both the ambition as well as the capacity for the production and

development of WMD. The information that Miller used was obtained from an Iraqi politician by

the name of Ahmad Chalabi. He was the head of an opposition group called the Iraqi National

Congress (INC), which was "a US-financed exile group with close ties to the Pentagon's civilian

leadership" (Boyd-Barrett 2004, 438). He was also obviously opposed to Saddam Hussein's

regime and was able to convince Miller that not only did Hussein have in his possession weapons

of mass destruction, but that he also had the means to produce them. Miller never directly quoted

or mentioned Chalabi as her source, or NIC estimates, but her stories persuaded many readers

that WMD did exist in Iraq and were a threat to the U.S. and other countries as well. As a matter of fact, "WMD expectations, such as they were, grew largely out of Miller's stories" (Boyd-Barrett 2004, 439).

Judith Miller's journalistic problems were that she not only failed to check her sources but she also relied on unsubstantiated claims. She trusted Chalabi to be a reputable source but did not attempt to verify the information that he provided. She made assumptions about Hussein's endeavors based on her own feelings. She claimed that she "knew how horrible he was" and that because of "what he'd done in the past" it was unimaginable "that Saddam would give up such devastating weapons or the ability to make them again" (Miller 2015). In essence, this Pulitzer Prize winning journalist took a conjectural leap and speculated that it was reasonable to assume that WMD existed because of the nature of this evil ruler. After careful examination of the content of Miller's stories that were published in one of the world's most widely read and respected newspapers, which claims to adhere to a journalistic code of "All the news that's fit to print," her reports were found to be "based on anonymous sources and hearsay, which subsequently proved false," and ended up serving "a hidden political agenda" that played "a direct role in promoting an illegal war" (Boyd-Barrett 2004, 439).

Officials within the Bush administration also shed light on whether or not evidence indicated that Iraq had WMD. Vice President Dick Cheney presented his opinion on the subject in a speech in which he stated "that there was no doubt that Saddam Hussein was amassing WMD "to use against our friends, against our allies, and against us" (Corn 2010). This assertion on the part of Cheney, however, was contradicted months earlier by the chief of the Defense Intelligence Agency who testified before Congress "that Saddam was only maintaining residual amounts of WMD (which, as it turned out, was itself an overstatement)" (Corn 2010), based on

DIA reports. Thus, not only was Vice President Cheney making an undocumented assertion about the accumulation of WMD, his view that Hussein was going to use the weapons on the U.S., or any other nations for that matter, was an allegation and not based on any type of factual information or logical analysis. To have attacked the United States with WMD would have prompted an immediate retaliatory strike by the Bush administration which would have resulted in Hussein's death or capture.

White House press secretary Scott McClellan also shaped the administration's message concerning the likelihood of the existence of WMD in Iraq. Even though McClellan was just a publicist, he was Bush's White House Press Secretary and had access to information that was pertinent to the invasion of Iraq. McClellan stated on several occasions that there were WMD in Iraq. McClellan noted that the Iraqi Survey Group (ISG), which was put in place by multi-national forces to seek and discover alleged WMD, had already "confirmed that Saddam Hussein was in violation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1441" (Stevenson 2004), which prohibited WMD use and production, and gave Hussein a final chance to comply or face dire consequences. McClellan also stated in an article published in the *New York Times* on January 24, 2004, in reference to WMD, "Yes, we believe he (Saddam) had them, and yes we believe they will be found," and eventually "We believe the truth will come out" (Stevenson 2004). A few years later, however, Scott McClellan presented the following revelation in regards to the 'truth' of his previous statements, when he recorded in his 2008 memoir, that "in the fall of 2002, Bush and his White House were engaging in a carefully orchestrated campaign to shape and manipulate sources of public approval to our advantage" (McClellan 2008, 125) which could be construed as lying.

Another key player in the Bush administration who had access to relevant information in

relation to WMD was Secretary of State Colin Powell. Powell expressed great concern for the United States when he stated that "terrorism-potentially linked to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD)-now represents the greatest threat to American lives" (Powell 2004, 22). This supposedly significant threat posed by Saddam was at first very much doubted by the Secretary. In the first part of 2001, he claimed that Saddam was not really a threat at all, since as he put it, Iraq was a "broken, weak country—[with] one-third the military force it had some 10 years ago" (LaFeber 2009, 85). Powell claimed that due to the efforts of the United States in 1991 during the first Gulf War, the U.S. had brought Iraq "down to size" (LaFeber 2009, 85). Powell initially opposed the 2003 Iraq War. But, after disagreements with other administration officials, including the president, vice president, and the secretary of defense, he "decided there was no way to avoid war," so as secretary of state, "His job was to go to war with as much legitimacy as he could scrape up" (LaFeber 2009, 89). That 'legitimacy' was presented by Powell in a speech before the United Nations in 2003. He not only reversed his previous position regarding WMDs in Iraq, but he also made a strong attempt to justify war while backing up the Bush administration officials with whom he had disagreed. His exact words were: "My colleagues, every statement I make today is backed up by sources, solid sources" (LaFeber 2009, 89). In his memoirs, Powell blames Dick Cheney for providing him with misleading and inaccurate information about Iraq's WMD capability which confirms previous reports that were presented in a biography of Colin Powell written by Karen DeYoung (Froomkin 2012).

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld also provided insight into the relationship between Saddam Hussein and WMD. In an interview with Steve Croft on Infinity CBS radio in November of 2002, Rumsfeld stated emphatically "that Saddam Hussein has chemical and biological weapons" (Rumsfeld 2002). He provided the details in March of 2003, when he stated

"We know where they are [Iraq's weapons of mass destruction]. They're in the area around Tikrit and Baghdad and east, west, south and north somewhat" (Rumsfeld 2003). The Defense Secretary went on to say that Saddam also possessed "an active program for the development of nuclear weapons" (Rumsfeld 2002). This assertion concerning nuclear weapons on the part of Rumsfeld was particularly alarming, because if Saddam did indeed have these types of devices at his disposal, that would demonstrate a greater threat to the United States and its allies. It should be noted, however, that Rumsfeld also stated in January of 2003 that Iraq did not actually have nuclear weapons available for use at that time, but that the available evidence suggested "that they have had a nuclear program that was robust" (Rumsfeld 2003). This statement implies that at one time Saddam had in his possession a robust nuclear program, but does not prove that one existed at the time of Rumsfeld's remarks. It also makes sense to assume that Saddam was going to continue to develop a nuclear program, because if that was not the case, the Bush administration would neither show or express interest in the matter. But, this is a supposition that infers capabilities from the supposed evil intent on the part of Saddam Hussein. The claim is not supported by any evidence and thus does not provide any justification for a military invasion of Iraq.

In reference to Rumsfeld's claims concerning Saddam's robust nuclear production activities, additional information is available that provides a greater understanding of the validity and significance of his assertion. The final version of the White Paper prepared by the CIA and released in October of 2002 stated that "Saddam probably does not yet have nuclear weapons or sufficient material to make any" (NIC 2002, 1). The report also went on to support Rumsfeld's position that even though Saddam did not have nuclear weapons in 2002, "he remains intent on acquiring them" (NIC 2002, 1). In order for Saddam to produce these weapons, however, the

procurement of fissionable materials would be required. According to the CIA, once these ingredients were acquired, "he (Hussein) could make a nuclear weapon within a year" (NIC 2002, 1). But, if no materials were obtained, "Iraq probably would not be able to make a weapon until the last half of the decade" (NIC 2002, 1). This last statement appears particularly speculative through the inappropriate use of the word probably because the claim concerning the potential development of nuclear weapons was clearly contingent upon whether or not the materials were acquired. The CIA had no idea when the Iraqi leader would be able to obtain the needed components, so how could it establish any reasonable timetable that would show when nuclear weapons would be available for use?

Vice President Dick Cheney also made remarks about Iraq's nuclear capabilities. He stated in September of 2002 that he knew "with absolute certainty" that Hussein had developed a "procurement system to acquire the equipment" necessary for him to "enrich uranium to build a nuclear weapon" (Mearsheimer 2011, 52). The equipment mentioned by Cheney consisted of aluminum tubes that Iraq had obtained from another nation. The problem was that the definitive purpose of the tubes could not be determined "within the intelligence community" (Mearsheimer 2011, 52). Some experts claimed "that the tubes were specifically intended for use in gas centrifuges aimed at making highly enriched uranium" (Albright 2003), while others, including those at the Department of Energy who were the most technically versed on the subject argued that they "were designed for artillery rockets" (Mearsheimer 2011, 52). Thus, the vice-president's statement when considered in light of this information in no way demonstrated "absolute certainty." Instead it appears to be an attempt to instill fear and promote support for the administration's efforts.

Former National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice also provided information related to

the existence of WMD in Iraq, specifically of the nuclear type. She expressed her sentiments in a CNN interview conducted in September 2002. Rice noted that "he [Saddam] has the infrastructure, nuclear scientists to make a nuclear weapon" (Blitzer 2002). She also indicated that after the Gulf War, U.N. inspectors found that Iraq "was far, far closer to a crude nuclear device than anybody thought, maybe six months from a crude nuclear device" (Blitzer 2002). Her position was that even if there was some degree of uncertainty regarding how quickly it would take Saddam to "acquire nuclear weapons" (Blitzer 2002), the risk was not worth waiting on, since as Rice put it, "we don't want the smoking gun to be a mushroom cloud" (Blitzer 2002). The following month, President when he used her exact words to describe the threat of nuclear devastation posed by Saddam Hussein in a speech given at the Cincinnati Museum Center in Ohio. He summed up the position by stating that "we see a threat whose outlines are far more clearly defined, and whose consequences could be far more deadly" (Bush 2002).

It should also be mentioned that information from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is most relevant to the issue of whether Saddam Hussein possessed nuclear weapons. After investigating the possibility of nuclear armaments in Iraq for two months, the IAEA was unable to find any type of evidence to indicate that Iraq was working on or planning to develop nuclear weapons. Its final report issued on January 27, 2003, concluded that after completing "a total of 139 inspections at some 106 locations…we have to date found no evidence that Iraq has revived its nuclear weapons programme since the elimination of the programme in the 1990s" (IAEA 2003). Also, in regards to the aforementioned aluminum tubes, the Agency noted that they "would not be suitable for manufacturing centrifuges" (IAEA 2003). The Bush administration ignored this evidence and "chose to publicly promote the assessment that the tubes were intended for use solely in uranium enrichment" (Hershey 2008).

More recent evidence concerning the existence of WMD in Iraq comes from documents that were obtained by the *New York Times* through a Freedom of Information Act request. According to the newspaper, between 2004 and 2011, "American and American-trained Iraqi troops repeatedly encountered, and on at least six occasions were wounded by, chemical weapons remaining from years earlier in Saddam Hussein's rule" (Becker 2014). The article was based on "heavily redacted intelligence documents" from the U.S. Army's National Ground Intelligence Center (NGIC). These documents indicate that "American troops secretly reported finding roughly 5,000 chemical warheads, shells or aviation bombs, according to interviews with dozens of participants, Iraqi and American officials" (Becker 2014). In 2006, members of "the U.S. military found 2,400 nerve agent rockets" in Iraq, which was "the largest chemical weapons discovery of the war" (Becker 2014). U. S. Army Major Jarrod Lampier, who is now retired was a witness to the discovery of the rockets. He stated that he was instructed to report that he and his troops had found "nothing of significance" (Becker 2014). This claim of insignificance obviously did not relate to the American soldiers who were injured by these hidden WMD, or the claim made by Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld that "They are weapons of mass destruction. They are harmful to human beings. And they have been found" (Hoar 2006). The *New York Times* concluded its article by noting that "chemical weapons were found during the Iraq War but the public never knew about it. Until now" (Becker 2014).

This revelation by the *New York Times* of WMD in Iraq brings up a serious question. Why was the public not informed about the discovery of these weapons? At first glance, it appears that the Bush Administration would have welcomed these findings, since they would have strengthened the claims that had been made concerning Saddam's possession of such armaments. At second glance, however, maybe the Administration decided that it was best to let

sleeping dogs lie, since it was not in the best interest of the United States to reveal this information, because in "five of six incidents in which troops were wounded by chemical agents, the munitions appeared to have been designed in the United States, manufactured in Europe and filled in chemical agent production lines built in Iraq by Western companies" (Chivers 2014). Perhaps the administration realized that it would not bode well if the American public found out that the U.S. was chiefly responsible for the design of WMD, had assisted in their construction, and then caused harm to U.S. troops. Since the invasion of Iraq ended up being a pursuit of American made weapons, cost the U.S. billions of dollars, and resulted in the loss of thousands of American lives, it is not surprising that neither George Bush nor any of his advisors wanted to discuss these issues.

Justification for Invasion was Unwarranted

The second school of thought concerning U.S. intervention in Iraq in 2003 maintains that attempts to justify the war were unwarranted since the evidence available at that time to demonstrate the existence of WMD was insufficient and unreliable. As a result, any threat that WMD posed to the United States was insufficient to justify invading Iraq. First of all, it should be noted that both the United States and Great Britain claimed that there were WMD in Iraq. As mentioned previously, the White Paper issued by the CIA was used by the U.S. to claim the existence of the weapons. The British relied on its intelligence agency MI-6 to gather information on whether or not Iraq had the armaments in question. An examination of the evidentiary claims made by the British will be considered later along with further analysis of American intelligence reports. However, before doing so, investigations by the United Nations will be appraised.

The United Nations attempted on various occasions to discover WMD in Iraq and ensure

that if any such weapons did indeed exist, that they were disarmed to prevent their use. In 1983, media outlets that Iraq had employed chemical weapons against Iran, including mustard gas. The following year it was reported that Iraq was "the first nation to use a nerve agent on the battlefield when it deployed Tabun-filled aerial bombs during the Iran-Iraq war" (Pike 1998). In 1988, it was revealed that Iraq had detonated chemical weapons against its own people in an invasion of the Kurdish city of Halabja. After Iraqi attacks on Kuwait were stopped by an international multinational coalition in 1991, the United Nations passed Resolution 687 which called for Iraq to destroy any WMD that it had in its possession along with any means that it had to produce them. Section C of this resolution also set up an investigatory organization, called the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM), to verify the existence, or absence of, these armaments.

The first group of UN inspectors went to Iraq in June of 1991 and were fired upon when they tried to intercept vehicles that were "suspected of carrying nuclear equipment" (CNN 2015). At the end of June, missile inspections began, and after Saddam finished playing cat and mouse with the inspection team for several years, inspectors left Iraq in December of 1998. In January 1999, the U.S. declared that UNSCOM "installed surveillance equipment used to spy on Saddam Hussein" (CNN 2015). In 2002, the Security Council held Iraq "in "material breach" of its obligations under previous resolutions" and decided to provide it with a "final opportunity to comply" (UN 2002) in disarming any WMD which it might have. The UN unanimously adopted Resolution 1441 which called for resumed inspections "within 45 days" (UN 2002). After inspections were conducted for a few months, Hans Blix, the head of the inspection team, stated before the Security Council, that as of February of 2003, his group had "not yet found any weapons of mass destruction in Iraq" (CNN 2015). Inspectors exited Iraq in March of the same

year, just a few days before coalition forces invaded the country. In October, David Kay, the United Nations Chief Weapons Inspector of the Iraqi Service Group, stated that his team "has found no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq" (CNN 2015). The final report of the ISG, known as the Duelfer Report, named after the head of the ISG, Charles Duelfer, was issued in 2004, and states unequivocally, "that Saddam Hussein did not possess weapons of mass destruction" (CNN 2015).

Some have speculated that the reason that WMD were not found in Iraq was because Saddam either hid them or moved them out of the country when he realized that U.S. intervention was imminent. First of all, the line of reasoning that WMD were hidden rests on the assumption that at one time or another they were already there. If their existence was never discovered, then the foundation upon which this argument is made crumbles and the point becomes speculative and moot. Even though Iraq refused to comply with UN requests for 11 of 12 documents that described its "missile, chemical, biological, and nuclear programs" (Cordesman 1999, xiv) in 1998, this could have been a political move. It is reasonable to assume that if Saddam did not have WMDs at that time, he would not have wanted this information to leak because it could make him look weak or defenseless. The Duelfer Report indicates that he had learned this from the Gulf War since he "believed WMD had deterred coalition forces from pressing their attack beyond the goal of freeing Kuwait" (Rove 2010, 337). As far as the idea that the weapons were moved, General James R. Clapper, the former director of the National Imaging and Mapping Agency, now known as the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, stated, that, based upon analysis of satellite images, that there was "a heavy flow of traffic from Iraq into Syria" (Rove 2010, 339) shortly before the United States invaded Iraq in March of 2003. This was confirmed by Saddam's deputy chief, Georges Sada, an Iraqi of ethnic Assyrian descent and

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former Chief of Staff of the Israeli Defense Forces, Moshe Yaalon (Rove 2010, 339). However, Sada was the only one of these sources who would have actually had a chance to visually witness the transport of WMDs.

Perhaps the best source on the possibility of the movement of weapons to Syria would be Charles Duelfer, who advised the CIA, and as noted earlier, was in charge of the UN investigation. His final (ISG) report issued in October 2002 indicated that "transfers to Syria were "unlikely" (quoted in Shane 2006). And, in an interview in 2006, he stated that claims expressed by "important officials in Mr. Hussein's government, with every incentive to win favor with the Americans by exposing stockpiles" (Shane 2006) failed to confirm possession and did not present any affirmations of transfer. Duelfer made it clear that during the ISG's investigation he "had seen lots of good-hearted people who thought they saw something," but "none of the reports have panned out" (Shane 2006).

In terms of the British response to the existence of WMD in Iraq, Prime Minister Tony Blair expressed to Parliament preceding the March 2003 invasion "that intelligence showed Iraq's nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons programme was "active", "growing" and "up and running" (Norton-Taylor 2013). The British government published a dossier on WMD on September 24, 2002. In the foreword of the document written by Blair, he stated with utmost confidence that "the assessed intelligence has established beyond doubt that Saddam has continued to produce chemical and biological weapons [and] that he continues in his efforts to develop nuclear weapons" (Norton-Taylor 2013). Information also came to Blair from two high-ranking individuals who were closely connected to Saddam Hussein. Both of these sources indicated "that Iraq had no active WMD" (Norton-Taylor 2013). For some reason, the Prime Minister "ignored or dismissed" these confirmed reports.

Another British claim regarding WMD came from MI6, Britain's intelligence service. This assertion maintained that during the years 1999-2001 Iraq was in the process of obtaining uranium, also known as 'yellow cake' from Niger. Information concerning this claim was obtained by the CIA and stated that "Iraq had attempted to buy five hundred tons of uranium oxide from Niger, one of the world's largest producers" (Hersh 2003). This report was part of the dossier mentioned previously that was distributed in September of 2002. President Bush also confirmed the transaction and noted in his State of the Union message, delivered on January 28th of 2003, that "The British government has learned that Saddam Hussein recently sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa." (Hersh 2003). If these reports were valid, this would demonstrate that Saddam was in the process of obtaining materials to develop a nuclear weapon. However, a statement contesting the validity of the report came out less than two months later from the Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Mohamed ElBaradei. He noted that "The IAEA has concluded, with the concurrence of outside experts, that these documents . . . are in fact not authentic" (Hersh 2003). Later, the Bush administration responded to this report by conceding that the evidence in support of the initial claim uttered by Bush in his 2003 speech was inconclusive and "attributed the error to the CIA" (Schmidt 2004).

In regards to evidentiary claims made by American intelligence related to WMD in Iraq, it should be noted that U.S. intelligence assessments during the time leading up to the 2003 invasion of Iraq were flawed and reflected numerous failures in the intelligence-gathering and analysis process. As mentioned earlier, the October 2002 CIA final report presented to President Bush argued that Saddam not only possessed WMD, but was also proficiently working on their further development. In light of these claims, the United States Senate conducted an intensive investigation of Iraqi WMD intelligence. The Senate's final report issued on July 9, 2004,

criticized the 2002 CIA report and concluded that the majority of the "key judgments in the Intelligence Community's October 2002 National Intelligence Estimate (NIE), Iraq's Continuing Programs for Weapons of Mass Destruction, either were overstated, or were not supported by, the underlying intelligence reporting" and that a succession "of failures, particularly in analytic trade craft, led to the mischaracterization of the intelligence" (USSSCI 2004). Thus, U.S. intelligence did confirm that Iraq had WMD and as a result exaggerated the potential threat that Saddam Hussein posed to the United States and the region.

Another organization that revealed information pertinent to the issue of WMD in Iraq was the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA). The DIA received evidence from the German Federal Intelligence Service (BND) from a source known then by the code-named "Curveball" whose real name was Rafid Aḥmad Alwan. Alwan was an Iraqi citizen who defected to Germany in 1999. He claimed that he was a chemical engineer who had worked in Iraq on the development of mobile, biological weapon systems. Even though BND did not consider "Curveball" a credible source on WMD, referring to him as "crazy" and "out of control" (Pleitgen 2008), information from his debriefing session was passed on to the DIA. Once the DIA had received this data, it "disseminated almost 112 reports from Curveball regarding mobile BW facilities in Iraq" (Pike 2006). The problems concerning these reports are: (1) they "did not come directly from Curveball, however, but were transferred through a "foreign liaison" (Pike 2006); (2) they were utilized by the Bush administration and mentioned by Colin Powell as credible in his February 5, 2003, speech to the UN Security Council, when in reference to Curveball, Powell stated that "The source is an eyewitness, an Iraqi chemical engineer, who supervised one of these facilities" (Pleitgen 2008); and (3) according to Alwan, "I never told anyone Saddam Hussein was producing weapons of mass destruction" (Pleitgen 2008). Author

Bob Drogin wrote a book about Curveball and the impact of the use of his supposedly factual testimony as "arguably the biggest intelligence failure in history" (Pleitgen 2008).

The Bush Smokescreen

The third school of thought postulates that the course of action pursued by George W. Bush in Iraq to find and dispose of WMD sought to conceal his real intentions of invading that nation. The Downing Street Memo demonstrates how the Bush administration sought to justify its invasion of Iraq, even though the data did not really support specific claims. This particular memo consisted of notes that were recorded in a secret meeting on July 23, 2002. The members present at the meeting included British Prime Minister Tony Blair and his advisers along with Richard Dearlove, the head of Britain's MI-6 intelligence service. The notes were written by British national security aide Matthew Rycroft and published in *The Sunday Times* on May 1, 2005. The memo described the evidence of WMD in Iraq and the threat that Saddam posed to the nations in the region as "thin" (Manning 2005). The notes also indicate that Bush was definitely intent on the removal of Saddam Hussein from power and that "the intelligence and facts were being fixed around the policy" (Manning 2005). Even though the 'notes' failed to confirm statements that had been made by various members of the Bush administration, including the President himself, the Downing Street "Memo" noted that, "Military action was now seen as inevitable" (Mearsheimer 2011, 55).

If indeed a military invasion of Iraq led by the United States was on the horizon, the attempts to justify this plan of action could incorporate any and all means necessary as determined by the Bush administration. The decision had been made and there was no turning back. According to one source, "The Iraq war wasn't an innocent mistake, a venture undertaken on the basis of intelligence that turned out to be wrong. America invaded Iraq because the Bush

administration wanted a war. The public justifications for the invasion were nothing but pretexts, and falsified pretexts at that" (Fallows 2015). Any evidence that appeared to threaten the administration's claims could be countered by claims supported by other evidence. The president and his advisers cared less about what opponents had to say about the invasion and more about how it would be conducted and when it would occur. Riding the coattails of fear that still lingered from 9/11 along with the Patriot Act, Bush had all the smokescreens that he needed to enhance public support for the administration's dismantling and destruction of the Iraqi regime.

Throughout history up to the modern day, smokescreens have been utilized by leaders, politicians, bureaucrats, bankers, PR officials, lawyers and other personalities to divert attention away from their real objectives. A general definition of a smoke-screen is something designed to obscure, confuse, or mislead. It has also been described as a fallacy known as a Red Herring in which an irrelevant topic is presented in order to divert attention from the original issue. Whether it was the Trojan horse built by the Greeks to allow them entrance into Troy during the Trojan War, or the Gulf of Tonkin incident used by the Johnson administration to escalate the war in Vietnam, smokescreens have been viable tools to impact policy directives. In the case of the Bush administration, the objective for the 2003 invasion was to control Iraqi oil (Muttitt 2012 and Ahmed 2014). This was never mentioned to the American public. The Red Herring consisted of any reasons that the administration could devise to divert consideration from Bush's original concealed goal. Any holes that became visible in the smokescreen laid out by the president's team, would be patched by claims from advisers that took advantage of any evidence at their disposal, whether it was legitimate or not. It was all based on an "ends justifies the means" scenario, in which a desirable outcome excuses any undesirable methods taken to attain it. In Bush's case, the goal was to conceal his ultimate aim of controlling Iraqi oil.

The George W. Bush administration's 2003 invasion of Iraq was indisputably related to oil. Even though Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld stated in 2002 that the invasion of Iraq had "literally nothing to do with oil" (Muttitt 2012, xxx), his position presented a refusal along with a denial of the importance that oil has played globally in the 21st century as well as the previous one. Oil acts to grease the axle of the world's economic and political systems. Without it the world could not operate efficiently or at all. Technological adjustments have been made and could be used to reduce the reliance upon oil, but at the present time, these advancements have not materialized to a significant degree the last forty years. Since oil is not a renewable resource the U.S. is always looking for additional reserves. Oil in the Middle East has been a focal point of international interest since the first part of the 20th century. In 1980, President Jimmy Carter, in his state of the Union address, explained the policy of the United States in regards to Middle Eastern oil thus: "Let our position be absolutely clear: An attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States of America, and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force" (Jones 2012).

Move ahead a little over twenty years and that position remained relatively unchanged, except that George W. Bush decided that inside forces, such as an irrational ruler like Saddam Hussein, must also be controlled since the dominance of such a precious commodity by someone like him could threaten the Middle East and the world. The president's most important considerations were to: (1) terminate Iraqi control of oil; (2) provide a "modernized, transparent and investment-friendly energy sector" in that nation that would "be a strong exemplar to other Middle East oil and gas producing countries"; and as a result (3) "reshape the whole region's oil industry" (Muttitt 2012, xxx). Muttitt based his claims on an analysis of almost a thousand

government documents that he retrieved under the Freedom of Information Act.

The claim that the Bush administration wanted to control oil in Iraq has been given little attention by the media and therefore little attention by the American public. However, there is evidence that indicates that long before the Iraq War of 2003, oil was the primary motivating factor for invasion. First, it must be noted that in 2015, Iraq possesses the world's fifth largest oil reserves (USEIA 2015). Second, control of Iraq placed United States' military forces in that nation and provided additional security in the Middle East. The Project for a New American Century was established in 1997 to offer a strategy of rebuilding America's resources for the upcoming century and was endorsed by the Bush administration. The Project maintained that conflict in Iraq provided justification for America to maintain a permanent role in the security of the Persian Gulf region, and concluded that an extensive American force presence in the area "transcends the issue of the regime of Saddam Hussein" (Ahmed 2014). Thus, the Project's report suggested that Saddam Hussein might disrupt the oil market for a prolonged period of time. Fourth, the ultimate aim of the Bush administration was to use the military to oversee an expansive and prolonged American role in handling the reconstruction of Iraq and provide a defense of its oil fields, which would eventually be privatized along with "other supporting industries" (Ahmed 2014). As a result of the actions by the Bush administration in Iraq, "the primary motive of the war- to mobilize the production of Iraqi petroleum to sustain global oil flows and moderate global oil prices - has, so far, been fairly successful according to the International Energy Agency" (Ahmed 2014).

Additional evidence to support this primary Bush objective to stabilize the supply of world energy by controlling Iraqi oil, along with a secondary goal to benefit U.S. and UK oil companies, can be found in declassified Foreign Office files. These files indicate that "The most

important strategic interest lay in expanding global energy supplies, through foreign investment, in some of the world's largest oil reserves – in particular Iraq" (Muttitt 2012). Evidently, British Petroleum (BP) was concerned that it might be locked out of deals that the U.S. "was quietly striking with US, French and Russian governments and their energy firms" (Bignell 2011), so UK Trade Minister Baroness Symons decided to assist the oil giant by lobbying the Bush administration on its behalf. She stated that she would "report back to the companies BP, Shell, and BG (formerly British Gas) before Christmas" on her lobbying efforts (Bignell 2011). Preceding the Iraq War of 2003, the Bush administration "went to great lengths to insist it had no interest in Iraq's oil" (Muttitt 2011). After the invasion, however, several multi-year contracts were signed that "covered half of Iraq's reserves – 60 billion barrels of oil" (Bignell 2011). Dr. Abdulhay Yahya Zalloum, an international oil expert and economist with almost 50 years of experience in the oil business in the Middle East, Europe, and the United States maintains that western oil corporations "have successfully acquired the lions' share of Iraq's oil, but they gave a little piece of the cake for China and some of the other countries and companies to keep them silent" (Jamail 2012) over legal issues concerned with an Iraq Oil Law which would transform Iraq from a nationalized to a principally privatized oil market.

The military excursion into Iraq in 2003 was this century's first war concerned with oil. Other wars over this precious commodity had been fought in the twentieth century, such as the Iran-Iraq War of the 1980s and the Iraq-Kuwait War of 1990. In 2003, the United States began to control Iraq's remarkable treasure of oil which was "estimated at 330 billion barrels of proven, semi-proven and probable oil reserves" (Salameh 2015). But, the Bush administration failed to consider "an Iraqi backlash against the awarding of contracts to the large western major oil companies" (Jamail 2012). Thus, the goal of controlling oil not only awakened Iraqi opposition,

it also generated serious and deadly consequences. According to research led by Amy Hagopian of the University of Washington in Seattle, there were "405,000 deaths attributable to the war and occupation in Iraq from 2003 to 2011" (Vergano 2013). In terms of financial loss, "The war cost the U.S. economy an estimated \$6.65 trillion in running costs and also in oil price differences" and "cost the global economy (including the U.S.) some \$14.13 trillion" (Salameh 2015). These costs were compounded by the fact that the war "may have increased energy costs worldwide by a staggering \$6 trillion" (Salameh 2015). Irrationality on the part of Bush and his consultants is difficult to comprehend, but such is the case where leaders have a goal in mind and do not fully explore the potential ramifications of their actions.

Chapter Three

Deception and the Illusion of Expansion

> What the eyes see and the ears hear, the mind believes.
>
> -Harry Houdini, *Diaries*

At the beginning of the 20th century, a common viewpoint held by many American leaders and politicians was that the expansionist endeavors during the previous century were extremely important to the prosperity and security concerns of the United States. William Appleman Williams (1959), in his monumental work *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*, follows this perspective into the middle of the 20th century and examines America's unyielding quest for expansion and compares it to an American ideology which suggested that economic involvement would not only benefit the U.S., but would also confer peace and economic good fortune to nations across the globe. Andrew Bacevich discusses aspects of William's positions in his book *The American Empire: The Realities and Consequences of U. S. Diplomacy.* According to Williams, the tragedy of American idealistic policy notions is that they advance contradictory principles. On the one hand, liberty and self-determination are promoted, while on the other hand, these essential aspects of democracy are dependent upon favoring American opportunity and domination.

Williams agreed with influential historian Charles A. Beard that: (1) foreign affairs and domestic matters are "intimately connected"; (2) empires are not erected "in fits of absent-mindedness"; and (3) expansionism "complicates and deepens" instead of resolving complications (quoted in Bacevich 2002, 24). Williams argues that expansionism is an essential aspect of the history of America. This historical examination demonstrated to him that the

worldview used to guide the U.S. political agenda was simplistic in nature since "problems are solved by growth or further expansion" (Bacevich 2002, 25). Thus, the American way of life had developed and was based on a "faith in infinite progress fueled by endless growth" (Bacevich 2002, 25). However, in what Williams refers to as the Crisis of the 1890's which included such events as, (1) the 'Populist revolt' where the nation's farmers - rose up in anger; (2) Andrew Carnegie's use of Pinkerton detectives to stop workers on strike at his Homestead steel plant in 1892; (3) lengthy economic depression in 1893; and most significantly (4) since "Americans thought that the frontier was gone" (Williams 1959, 26), a new expansionist destination abroad was required to "sustain their freedom and prosperity" (Williams 1959, 26).

Williams maintained that after expansion within the continental borders of America closed, a new frontier was to be opened overseas. But after the Spanish-American War, the United States decided to abstain from assembling colonies because "the costs of pacification, administration, and defense" failed to offer a favorable "return on the dollar" (Bacevich 2002, 25). Because it already had ample territory to settle, the U.S. had never really been interested in imperialistic pursuits or the military domination of foreign inhabitants. But, after the Spanish-American War and the crises that occurred in the same decade, a change was needed to accrue the "benefits of empire without its burdens" (Bacevich 2002, 25). In essence, what was important was not to administratively control or possess other nations, but to derive commercial benefits from a sustained relationship with them.

Williams also explains the foreign policy directive that the United States decided to follow at the end of the 19th century known as the "Open Door." This edict was expressed by Secretary of State John Hay "in a series of notes in 1899-1900" (USDS n.d.). Hay initially applied this concept to the promotion of international trade and commerce related to

China. At this time the United States was doing all that it could to shut "the door on Chinese immigration to the United States" which "effectively stifled opportunities for Chinese merchants and workers in the United States" (USDS n.d.). Through the articulation of the "Open Door" policy, it became evident that America was interested in becoming involved with not only China but also other nations that resided "in East Asia at the turn of the century" (USDS n.d.). The prospect of an open door presented the United States with an advantage "in favor of American enterprise" (Bacevich 2002, 26) and could also be applied to other nations throughout the world. In his conclusion to *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* sums up Williams's view of the open door policy:

> The tragedy of American action is not that it is evil, but that it denies American ideas and ideals. This is a most realistic failure, as well as an ideological and moral one; for in failing to make the American system function satisfactorily without recourse to open-door expansion (and by no means perfectly, even then), it suffers by comparison with its own claims and other approaches (Williams 1959, 200).

These aspects of the Open Door policy were revered under the administration of George W. Bush. Bush intensified and increased U.S. military efforts around the world after 9/11. By venturing into Afghanistan and Iraq, he was able to replace "access to Asian and Chinese markets with access to Persian Gulf oil through building military bases in and around Afghanistan and Iraq" (Mahdi 2012). And, according to a former CIA analyst, Stephen Pellitiere, "Bush's War on Terror was a 'variant' of the Open Door policy to expand the US Empire" (quoted in Mahdi 2012). This notion is also supported by Burbach and Tarbell who maintain that "Bush's wars" were "aimed" at advancing "the interests of a 'petro-military complex' and to advance the Open Door policy in the 21st century" (quoted in Mahdi 2012). This practice of imperial overstretch, via the Open Door, poses a dilemma for the U.S. as explained by Andrew Bacevich when he argued that "the U.S. military will simply "drop from exhaustion," as the U.S. tries to be everywhere, all the time" (quoted in Janaro 2014). Christopher Layne (2006) also

discusses this issue in *The Peace of Illusions: American Grand Strategy from 1940 to the Present* when he notes that "current U.S. foreign policy must be understood within its Wilsonian, liberal 'open door' roots" (quoted in Weixelbaum 2009). Due to adherence to the Open Door, "the U.S. now faces the problem of political, economic, and military overstretch due to its history of restraining Third World powers that could have helped with regional stability in areas the U.S. must now expend resources to maintain" (quoted in Weixelbaum 2009).

In 1909, Nobel Peace Prize winner Norman Angell wrote a pamphlet entitled *Europe's Optical Illusion*. It was published a year later as a book entitled *The Great Illusion*. The key ideas in Angell's work are that: (1) war does not pay and is "an uneconomic venture" (quoted in Waltz [1954] 2001, 74); and (2) that scholars, international affairs experts, and the general public are victims of a 'Great Illusion' "that nations gained by armed confrontation, militarism, war, or conquest" (quoted in Miller 1995, 105). The first part of Angell's work explains why war is no longer beneficial. Since the advent of the Industrial Revolution, states have "developed an intricate international division of labour" (Knutsen 2013, 16). As a result of this condition, nations have become interdependent, and once war breaks out, not only would there be the usual destruction on the battlefield, there would also be "unprecedented economic disaster as well" (Knutsen 2013, 16). Due to international industrial ties, since capital of a productive nature has been generated throughout the world, there no longer exists an "obvious connection between a country's power and its wealth" (Knutsen 2013, 17). This interdependence does not by any means make war impossible, but it does make war "a losing and irrational proposition" (Knutsen 2013, 17). The prospect of a war is not the illusion, but rather it is the benefits that a nation foresees as a result of the war.

Charles Beard and William Appleman Williams elaborate upon Angell's analysis. Beard

argued that after WWII, there would be a "contest for empire" (Bacevich 2002, 242) and if the United States was not careful it could "succumb to the imperial temptation" and give up "its true vocation as the Great Republic" (Bacevich 2002, 242). Williams maintained that the best way to understand American power, was to view it "as a deliberate project aimed at wealth and influence and military might" (Bacevich 2002, 243). According to him, if anyone viewed the situation otherwise, that individual was the victim of a "grand illusion," which he called a "charming belief that the United States could reap the rewards of empire without paying the costs of empire and without admitting it was an empire" (Bacevich 2002, 243). The author concludes that Beard's prediction has been fulfilled, and America has become like Rome. And the "grand illusion" that Williams spoke of has survived. The question that remains is, what is the intent of policy makers in regards to the American empire's future? If they continue to believe "in myths of American innocence or fantasies about unlocking the secrets of history" (Bacevich 2002, 244), according to the author, they will probably come up with the wrong answer. In essence, the conclusion reached by these historians is that American policy makers are irrational.

The Bush administration clearly became a victim to the illusion of expansion and the benefits that it thought would be derived from that effort. Bush and his advisers only visualized advantages that would be derived from a conquest of Iraq. It saw economic gains that could be attained through the removal of Saddam Hussein and the control of Iraqi oil reserves. Vice President Dick Cheney, who was once Chairman and CEO of Halliburton, could see how invading Iraq would help him, since he would share in the profits that were generated by his company to the tune of "$39.5 billion in Iraq-related contracts" (Young 2013). President George W. Bush had corporate and political backers who were massively connected to the oil industry.

Bush was a supporter of the Carlyle Group which "is essentially a hedge fund for war-making and high tech espionage" (St. Clair 2013). Carlyle has had several executives and investors who worked at the Pentagon, the CIA, and even the State Department. After leaving their positions with these institutions, they acquired "more lucrative careers as war profiteers" (St. Clair 2013). Also, other advisers within the Bush administration had interests related to energy and oil. Based on reports from the Center for Public Integrity, "the top 100 Bush appointees collectively had most of their holdings in the energy sector" (Mandle 2002, 25).

Thus, the top two officials in the United States government, had a state of mind that considered Iraq as theirs for the taking, and saw the benefits that they would obtain as a result. The temptations of expansion led them to underestimate the costs of war in Iraq. They possessed a stovepipe perspective which limited their ability to make rational unbiased decisions concerning their actions. They were only able to see things imperfectly because their minds were clouded only by what they thought they could attain through a takeover of Iraq. They were unable to ignore this 'great illusion' due to their own self-interest and the profits that they thought would be gained.

It is very difficult to understand how the Bush administration could pursue policies that would eventually result in the loss of thousands of American lives and cost the United States trillions of dollars. There is no excuse for the mistakes that were made in Iraq. But since the Bush administration was beguiled by self-serving illusions, it is easy to see how the objectives they pursued resulted in significant harms. The president and his advisers obviously knew that there would be costs involved in the invasion of Iraq. They also knew about the perils of war and were well aware of the harms that had resulted from other conflicts that the United States had been involved in. But, this knowledge and awareness did not in any way impact the decision that

was eventually made to overthrow Saddam Hussein and take control of his country. The Bush administration pursued its policies because of the benefits that it visualized could be obtained through the use of military power. The illusion of the advantages that Bush and his advisers thought could be achieved resulted in significant disadvantages for the United States. It was as if the president was driving in a fog which was so dense that it made him unable to see the road ahead. Reasons were established to go to war with Iraq but unintended consequences were ignored. Thus, an illusion of success and benefits was promulgated that eventually promoted a multitude of realities including loss of life, monetary expense, and national security problems. A few like Dick Cheney and George W. Bush benefited from the war in Iraq, but the United States as a whole lost morally, ethically, and financially from this effort. The war that was fought in Iraq was economically and socially futile from the beginning, but the Bush administration could not see that. They only saw what they wanted to see and they only used what they wanted to in promoting and justifying their efforts. Norman Angell knew that war is never a good idea, but that nations and their leaders keep on waging battles because they are deceived into thinking that they will come out ahead. No one came out ahead in Iraq except those few individuals or corporations that made money from the production of the war itself.

Chapter Four

Discourse of Neo-conservatism and American Exceptionalism

Neo-conservatism became a popular ideology in the 1970s. The term was originated by writer and political activist Michael Harrington and was used to describe liberal scholars and political philosophers who became disillusioned with the Democratic Party. These intellectuals were in the process of advancing toward a brand new method of conservatism as a response to the Vietnam War. Their position was that the failure in that war was not the lack of American might but "the absence of American power and will" (Bacevich 2013, 70). America was regarded as weak, and due to this condition, those that depended on the United States as a guardian were threatened. According to neoconservatives (Neocons), this weakness planted the seeds of confusion in the hearts and minds of Americans as well as within the government. As a result, this "produced paralysis and demagoguery" (Bacevich 2013, 70). The goal of these neoconservatives was to repair the political and cultural harms that had been inflicted upon the country during the decade of the sixties.

After the 1970s, neoconservatives not only approved expansion of the welfare state but expressed apprehension in regards to decreased military expenditures. Neocons saw communism as an expansionist threat and stressed the need for a strong military to nullify this problem. Foreign policy issues were at the forefront of neoconservative ideology at this time. While conservatives favored détente and containment, "neo-cons pushed direct confrontation, which became their raison d'etre during the 1970s" (Global Research 2007). While many Democrats were neoconservatives in the seventies, this changed in the eighties when they became Republicans and favored the policies of Ronald Reagan, which they supported as "an avenue for their aggressive approach of confronting the Soviet Union with bold rhetoric and steep hikes in

military spending" (Global Research 2007).

When the USSR disintegrated in 1991, one might have thought that the neoconservatives would be less concerned about security threats to the United States. However, even with America's bitter rival out of the picture, complacency did not characterize their agenda. Instead, they become more adamant about their objectives and even more dedicated "to reinvent and redefine themselves" (Solomon 2015, 115). In the later part of the nineties, neocons renewed their focus on essential complementary elements: "force as the preferred policy option, black and white moralism as the preferred form of analysis, and unilateralism as the preferred mode of execution" (Solomon 2015, 115). Attention became directed toward Iraq, which was considered a significant threat to U.S. national security. Other countries such as North Korea, Russia, and China were also viewed as menaces to the United States. Neocons also thought that since U.S. military might would be degraded by spending cuts, their mission was all the more important and vital to America's well-being and continued hegemony.

Neoconservatives visualize themselves as the last bastion of hope for those that oppose dark forces that threaten liberty and security. Values that go hand in hand with the American way of life must always be protected and strengthened. Outside elements that might impinge upon these principles must be opposed for the sake of democracy. Neocons think that Western tenets are of a universal nature and see their ideology as vital to the prevention of social deterioration that will definitely result "if non-Western values gain a foothold" (Solomon 2015, 117). Western beliefs present important views that are essential to not only America's best interests, but also to other nations across the globe. Once the attacks on 9/11 occurred, neoconservative viewpoints became even more dominant. Warnings that neocons had made previously rang true. Pessimism suffused America's outlook. The questions arose: who was responsible, what was going to be the

United States' response, and was it prepared to deal with another attack? The neoconservative position became more solidified, and a push for further action against those who had planned and committed the dastardly assault became both more supported and equally justified.

Once terrorists had caused death and destruction on the American landscape on 9/11, neocon viewpoints were thrust into the limelight. According to their ideology, it was not so much a matter of what was going to be done, but it was how quick the response would be and how severe. After all, the alternative of doing nothing and idly standing by while another such horrific event took the lives of more citizens was repugnant to most Americans. President George W. Bush asked the public to be "calm and resolute" (Bush 2001) in his September 20th speech that addressed the attack. The October military incursion into Afghanistan reinforced public sentiment that the United States was going to take care of business and bring the masterminds who were behind the September 11th tragedy to justice, dead or alive. The United States had once retaliated for the bombings of the naval station at Pearl Harbor and declared war on the empire of Japan. In the case of the attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, however, a general war was declared on terror, and Al Qaeda and its leader Osama bin Laden were central targets. The objective as Bush put it was to "stop it, eliminate it," and "destroy it where it grows" (Bush 2001). The USA Patriot Act followed, and the neoconservatives had a foundation upon which they could build an aggressive course of action that would eliminate any beasts that threatened America and its allies.

Scholars such as Stephen M. Walt (2015) have noted various flaws in neoconservative thinking. First of all, neoconservatives don't subscribe to the workability of a balance-of-power approach to international affairs. They tend to believe that states are more likely to "bandwagon" (Walt 2015, 1) or align with a potential hegemon. They postulate that weak states are more apt to

be victims of bullying by stronger states and thus will never do battle against such powerful opposition. Neocons maintain that states will acquiesce to anything that the American national government tells them to do, based on the strength and security that it provides. Neocons thus concluded that once Saddam Hussein was removed from power then Middle Eastern states would show respect towards the U.S., and accompanied by America's vast military supremacy, "would quickly transform the region into a sea of docile pro-American democracies" (Walt 2015, 2). In reality, however, this has not been the case. The United States is widely regarded as cruel, inhumane, and barbaric. Democracy has not spread. On the contrary, it has been stalemated by those who are vehemently opposed to American ideals and objectives and the force that has been applied by the U.S. military to implement their establishment.

Neoconservatives also advocate as a core belief, the principle of American exceptionalism. This concept is best defined as a conviction that Americans are special and unique, particularly in comparison to other nations relative to their historical development. The exceptional nature of the United States is not only different from that of other countries, but is also superior and endows America with a specific role in the course of human events. Even though there were times in U.S. history when American exceptionalism might have been in temporary cessation or suspension, such as at the end of the Cold War, the events of 9/11 prompted a resurgence of the concept. At first, George W. Bush seemed to be having some difficulty in forming a sturdy international coalition to go against Saddam Hussein, and it appeared that the United States might have to go it alone against the Iraqi ruler, since there was so much opposition against a war with his country. However, American exceptionalists would most likely have deduced that based on this particular ideology it was perfectly all right for the U.S. to act unilaterally as a rogue warrior when the needs arise. Indeed, "advocates … believe

that what is good for the United States is good for the world" (Hickman 2011). Neoconservatives maintain that America can be thought of as a generous and kind global hegemon working to spread moral and political leadership to regions of the world that need it. But, as Christopher Layne suggests, "in international relations, benevolent hegemons are like unicorns—there is no such animal" (quoted in Rieff 2014, 29). The combination of neoconservative and American exceptionalism perspectives go hand in hand in the active pursuit of an aggressive agenda instead "of sitting atop a hill and leading by example." This would contribute to the pursuit of a policy characterized by "cowardice and dishonor" (Kristol and Kagan 1996, 31).

In the early days of George W. Bush's first term in office, his affirmation of American exceptionalism was manifested in various ways. First, he noted that it was essential that America continue to pursue its undertaking "as the vanguard of history" through transformative efforts in relation to the "global order" (Bacevich 2002, 215). These determinative endeavors would, according to Bush, assist the U.S. in the perpetuation of its dominant position as the world's leader. The course that he thought America should follow possessed a clear and distinct direction and placed the country by itself in pursuing the manifestation of historical resolution. As the president phrased it "it was simply self-evident that the United States defined the right side of history" (Bacevich 2002, 215).

The end result of this self-evident realization was freedom, which could be spread through capitalist democracy and the American way of life. As Colin Powell observed, America could be a beacon "for freedom and democracy in the world" (Bacevich 2002, 216). History would best be fulfilled through the responsible effort on behalf of the United States to carry out this admirable objective which covered all nations. Based on the idea of American exceptionalism, it was deemed essential that the U.S. would "need to lead, to guide, to help in

every country that has a desire to be free, open, and prosperous" (Bacevich 2002, 216). Bush and others in his administration like Powell, concluded that Providence dictated necessary actions on the part of America to remake the world in its desirable image.

Second, George W. Bush continued to promote the openness associated with free enterprise in both the international arena and at home. Globalization, accompanied by the advancement of enterprise that provided benefits to other nations, was a desirable goal. But what was most important to the president was America's leadership role in promoting globalization. Being able to promote technological innovations and make greater use of information through access to the Internet have assisted in the further development of fair trade practices by transcending international borders. The Bush administration maintained that "accelerating trade and strengthening democratic institutions go together" and can be regarded as "one and the same" (Bacevich 2002, 217). Thus, nations could take advantage of globalization and become better off financially while at the same time be partakers of democratic freedom. Ultimately, American exceptionalism demonstrates that America has the best way of life and should strive to make sure that other nations have the opportunity to be a part of it.

Third, Bush proclaimed that U.S. preeminence in specific areas of the world was an essential aspect of being the global leader. Richard Haass, former State Department Director of Policy Planning, argued that it was necessary to reconceive America's global character "from one of a traditional nation-state to an imperial power" (quoted in Bacevich 2002, 219). By following its exceptionalist principles, America could let its light shine and become a beacon of hope that others could follow to peace, prosperity, and freedom. The problem, however, is that some nations might choose not to follow the light, or the American values that American exceptionalists see as so dear. The answer to this problem, as seen by neoconservatists, is

military power, which can best be described by the old adage 'might makes right.' As George W. Bush stated "the advance of freedom depends on American strength" (Bacevich 2002, 219). Neoconservatives, in adherence to American exceptionalism doctrine would posit: (1) Americans are special; (2) the American way of life is the best; (3) freedom and democracy should be spread around the world to all nations; and (4) those that resist, including Iraq as well as other nations, can be persuaded, and 'see the light' through the display and use of military power (after all, it is for their own good as well as for the good of the rest of the world).

The George W. Bush administration continued to embody ideals that are a distinct part of exceptionalist thought. Bush continually stressed that America had a moral obligation to put an end to the war on terror. The concept of moral clarity was used to emphasize what constituted America's character. A part of America's heart had been broken during the events of 9/11. An important part of moral confidence was to mend that broken heart and restore America to what it was like before that horrible event occurred. A regeneration process was required, and George W. Bush envisioned that the U.S. had a moral imperative that was based on an essential mission of patriotism through the actions that his administration would take. Bush viewed retaliation as "a moral crusade or visionary quest for spreading American values" (Dolan 2004). In the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq, Bush followed a longstanding U.S. tradition involving tactics of intrusion which has seen at least one example of military intervention each year since the end of WWII. And as Robert Nisbet argues "[T]he single most powerful cause of the present size and the worldwide deployment of the military establishment is the moralization of foreign policy and military ventures that has been deeply ingrained, especially in the minds of presidents for a long time" (Dolan 2004).

Chapter Five

The Utopian Realism of George W. Bush

A president must be a clear eyed realist.

-George W. Bush, New Yorker

During the early years of the Bush Administration, the United States was thought of by many as pursuing a strategy of unilateralism. With such decisions as the refusal to endorse the Kyoto Protocol, hostility towards the International Criminal Court, and the advocacy of a National Missile Defense, critics argued that the president was placing his country in an exempt position in regards to both political and legal restraints which other nations were confronted with in their foreign relations. A heightened concern of increased American imperialism became even more apparent after the events of 9/11, due to the strong response of the U.S. in waging a war on terror. With excursions into Iraq and Afghanistan, fears grew that unilateralism would be displaced by imperialist rule. The once thought of idea that America was just a single great power out of many was undermined by Bush's dialogue directed toward everyone which focused on the triumph of good over evil and placed the U.S. as the defender of the free world.

In order to establish the particular type of international relations (IR) theory that George Bush endorsed it is necessary to explore some of the various classifications of international relations. The theory of classical realism which some scholars (Thucydides 431 BC, Morgenthau 1948) have referred to as realpolitik or power-politics, is based on the idea that the international system is anarchic in nature, and that is there is no authority over that of states to regulate their dealings with one another. Thus, states must focus look out for themselves since there exists no higher authority like a world government. This theory also puts forth the idea that sovereign

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states as opposed to international institutions, NGOs, or MNCs, are the central actors in foreign relations. States are also viewed as rational actors whose primary objective is to safeguard their own security. Realism maintains that states' self-interests create constant competition for power or security. States will work towards amassing vast resources to achieve power. They will increase their capabilities both economically and militarily. This theory fails to account for progress and change in IR and does explain how legitimacy can be established as a source of military power. Realism attempts to explain why the Bush Administration responded so aggressively after the 9/11 terrorist attacks and also notes an inability on the part of international institutions to restrain military dominance.

George W. Bush and his foreign policy advisers argued that they were supporters of realism. At the beginning of the president's first term in office in an interview with the National Review Condoleezza Rice confessed that she was "a realist" and declared that "power matters" (Kettman 2000). Donald Rumsfeld referred to his perspective on IR when he called himself a believer in "old fashioned realism" (Gertz 2000). Bush placed himself in this typology when he stated that "a president must be a clear-eyed realist" (Lehman 2002).

Despite the verbal support for realism within the Bush Administration, its actions suggest otherwise. First of all, realists see human nature as basically egoistic and self-interested to such a degree that self-interest overwhelms moral codes. In Thucydides' History of the Peloponnesian War the citizens of Athens affirm the priority that self-interest generates over moral principles. They maintain that concerns over what is right or wrong have "never turned people aside from the opportunities of aggrandizement offered by superior strength" (Thucydides 431 BC chap. 1 par. 76). George W. Bush, however, argued that good would triumph since inherent in human nature is the fact that most everyone desires the same things for each other as well as for their

families. This idea of history being driven by human desire may have much empirical support, but none of it would fit in with the position held by realists.

Second, a realist view of an anarchical system composed of sovereign states that are devoted to self-interest, competition, and mutually apprehensive behavior is compatible with the actions that were pursued by the Bush Administration. The president and his advisers placed the enforcement of global norms over the condition of state sovereignty. A push towards globalization and the spread of democratic states intent on making the most of trade agreements is a worldview to which realists subscribe. For Bush, the key objective was to integrate a group of nations that shared democratic goals and free-market pursuits built on norms with less developed and non-democratic nations. This may be an advantageous type of modern day global politics, and fits into a realist perspective.

Another predominant IR theory is liberalism. This particular school of thought has a concern with power which is overridden by both political and economic considerations. Supporters of this theory exhibit a desire for increased prosperity as well as a commitment to liberal values. Liberalism maintains that the spread of democracy, global economic connections, and international organizations will advance peace. Liberalism argues that states, international institutions, and commercial interests are the chief actors involved in international affairs. World trade and international institutions are the central facts of the liberalist approach.

Some liberals do not seem to recall that many transitions to democracy have been violent. Liberalists suggest that after 9/11 the spread of democracy became a more central part of the United States' security strategy. Liberalism cannot explain why the U.S. has been unable to work with other democratic nations through international organizations.

Classic liberalism comes from the ideas of John Locke, Voltaire, and Thomas Paine.

These philosophers supported the idea that giving people a great amount of liberty and freedom would usher in democracy, prosperity, and peace. Liberalism holds strong to the idea that hegemony, the leadership or dominance especially by one extremely powerful nation, will lead to a condition of global stability. Liberalists argue that if the global hegemon sets a good behavioral example other nations will follow its lead and demonstrate civil behavior patterns out of respect. They postulate that alliances that are informal can be promoted through cooperative efforts that are grounded in shared values.

Adherents to liberalism have also been regarded as either interventionists or non-interventionists. Former President Woodrow Wilson was regarded as an interventionist because he felt like there were times when it was necessary to remove from power those leaders who restricted freedoms of thought or behavior. According to this school of thought totalitarianism is repugnant and war is justified to cleanse the world of dictators and despots who have no concern for the rights of their subjects. Non-interventionists maintain that the spread of liberal philosophy should occur naturally and is basically historically inevitable. They argue that predominant powers like the United States do not need to do anything to spread their cause.

Some IR scholars (Keohane and Nye 1997) refer to classic liberalism as being inherently institutional since it is devoted to the spread of democratic institutions. Liberalism also maintains that the main factors in predicting the behavior of states are intentions rather than capabilities. According to liberals, states are effective in their endeavors because they tolerate preferences projected within institutions of higher learning that strive to encourage a rational position that war is non-productive among both states and individuals. Democracy is considered by liberals to be the most effective type of government to promote peace and they argue that it is obviously self-evident that people will always choose peace over war based on their ability to reason and

the idea of natural law.

The Bush Administration did advocate specific concepts that are part of liberalism. It definitely pursued institutional and liberal ideologies based on its neocon objective to transform the Iraqi government into a democracy. But the substantially aggressive and unilateral approaches it used to achieve these ends are contrary to a type of foreign policy that liberals would favor. Also, the idea that global institutions are able to deal with problems which threaten their security through their own efforts was not a position that the Bush Administration favored. And, it did not subscribe to the belief that powerful nations have to follow the majority votes of these institutions. Bush supported a hands on approach by nations to deal with issues of national security through actions by 'coalitions of the willing.'

Contrasts can be drawn between the interventionist policies of Woodrow Wilson and George W. Bush. Richard Wall from the University of Birmingham presents comparisons of the two presidents in an essay he wrote in 2008. Both presidents faced crises which prompted military action. Wilson had to deal with Kaiser Wilhelm II, the hated German emperor while Bush had the evil despot Saddam Hussein in his sights. Both cases dealt with issues concerning "national security, patriotism, the curtailment of civil liberties, and the defeat of evil by force" (Wall 2008, 2). Wilson and Bush stressed the importance of democracy and U.S. action required to promote and safeguard it, the former in response to German attacks on American ships at sea, the latter in fighting a war on terror. Differences between the two chief executives are also evident. Bush pursued a pre-emptive war as his strategy in Iraq acquired through his reliance on neoconservative ideology and fallacious attempts to draw a link between Saddam Hussein and Al-Qaeda. Wilson on the other hand took actions only after several confirmed blows had been struck by German submarines on U.S. shipping vessels resulting in the deaths of thirteen U.S.

citizens. Liberals favor diplomacy and peace. The "war of necessity" spelled out in the Bush Administration's National Security Strategy (NSS), from September 20, 2002, was contrary to these liberal principles for one, because in retrospect, the evidence of a credible and imminent threat was not established, and two, war to stop war is futile, as former President Harry Truman put it, "There is nothing more foolish than to think that war can be stopped by war. You don't 'prevent' anything by war except peace"(Keyes 1953, 69).

The next predominant IR theory to be examined in relation to George W. Bush's Iraq agenda is idealism. This theory is primarily concerned with how global political relations are formed by ideas, group values, culture, and social identities. Idealists look at individuals, primarily elites, instead of states, as their unit of analysis. They focus on the ideas and discourses of these elites to understand their actions. Chief proponents of this theory include Alexander Wendt (1992) and John Ruggie (1998). Wendt maintains that anarchy can be a structural fact concerning the world that states exist in, but that it is necessary for individual politicians and IR scholars to make decisions on the best ways to deal with anarchy. Ruggie (1998) looks at constructivist approaches to the study of IR which include "neoclassical, postmodernist, and naturalistic". He analyzes "sociological, feminist, jurisprudential, genealogical, and emancipatory constructivisms" (Ruggie 1998,) to shed light on problems related to norms and values.

Idealists are opposed to realism because of its philosophy concerned with war and the drive for military power. Idealists focus their attention on rhetoric instead of behavior. They view what leaders say as a primary indicator of their intentions. When leaders speak, according to idealists, they are held accountable for what they say and must stand behind their spoken discourse. Idealists argue that states base their actions on values rather than concerns over power.

Idealism attempts to place the concept of self-interest within a moral realm and thus attempts to be an ethical promoter of human welfare. Idealists also place great emphasis on identity and how people visualize themselves. They work to view the world as others view it to assist them in seeing where disagreements between actors might lie and understand why particular actions occurred.

Idealism does have limitations in various areas. For one thing it cannot explain the particular power structures or societal conditions that will facilitate value changes. Secondly, this theory cannot explain why human rights violations continue despite the fact that there have been intensified efforts in the fight for humanitarian norms along with a sustained commitment on the part of many nations to establish and maintain international justice. Thirdly, idealism does not have the ability to make predictions related to the content of specific ideas. And finally, the concept is limited to being descriptive about past events rather than anticipating the future.

In light of these key IR theories, George W. Bush can best be described as a utopian realist. The concept of a utopia was first coined by Sir Thomas More in his 1516 book aptly titled *Utopia*. In this work, he describes an imaginary island society located in the Atlantic Ocean. From the Greek the word signifies a "good place" that possesses extremely desirable or close to perfect qualities. Today, the idea of utopianism can best be "defined as a religious–political belief in the perfectibility of human experience" which is "deeply embedded in American religious and political tradition" (Boyle 2004, 83). This school of thought is based on the idea that Americans, from the founding of their nation have perceived their country as 'a city on a hill' set apart from others. Those that direct U.S. foreign policy have in many cases drawn from "this religious–political tradition to formulate and express their political objectives" (Boyle 2004, 83). Neoconservatives within the Bush administration integrated aspects of this utopianism

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into their agenda. Even though the president denied this, his attention to the allegation suggests that the administration took the charge seriously.

The Bush administration's adherence to utopianism can best be summarized by several arguments. First, Bush stressed religion as the guiding force behind his actions. He repeatedly declared his efforts as following the will of God by the removal of an evil ruler from power. The exceptionalism of the United States would shine like a beacon in not only promoting the safety of this area in the Middle East by stopping a madman's efforts to produce WMD but also set the stage for democracy to provide freedom and civil liberties to all Iraqis. Bush placed great value on human perfectibility and maintained that evil doers could be overcome by the power of God put into effect through the United States' military. He foresaw the possibility of a utopian world developing through the use of democratic institutions. The problem however was that Bush perceived democracy as being compatible with Middle Eastern culture and that the people who resided there would welcome the freedoms that would accompany its establishment. He failed to learn from a lesson in history where U.S. soldiers in Vietnam were not thought of as welcome saviors but rather as unwanted invaders. He assumed that after Iraq had experienced the benefits from democracy other countries in that region would welcome it. He concluded that once Iraq was transformed, Middle Eastern people would be converted to a "'single sustainable model for national success' and undertake reform in their own countries as if they were missionaries speaking the 'truth' that America has provided them" (Boyle 2004, 97). Unfortunately, the 'truth' is that instead of achieving democracy it has promoted "mistrust, hostility, and opposition, compounding the sense of degradation, indignity, and humiliation often found in the Islamic world" (St John 2005).

Second, all U.S. presidential administrations integrate at one time or another various

aspects of both realism and idealism in their foreign policy decisions. The Bush administration was no exception to this. Karl Mannheim (1936) and E.H. Carr (1939) shed light on this idea and provide insight on utopian characteristics that were on display in the administration's agenda. In his book *Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge*, Mannheim formulated his sociology of knowledge that demonstrated a difference between two wide-ranging political worldviews: ideology, which argued in favor of the status quo by marginalizing the negative aspects of society and emphasizing its positive features, and utopia, which aimed to transform the status quo by doing precisely the opposite (Mannheim 1936). In *The Twenty Years Crisis*, Carr targeted statesmen who had 'utopian' dreams of building a world that went beyond a need for power politics. He had serious doubts that any such world could ever be constructed and championed 'realism' as a theory to demonstrate why this was the case. Even though these two authors wrote in the 1930s their observations are applicable to the Bush administration because its agenda matched aspects of utopianism in assuming that the 'city on a hill' status of the United States in the international arena would endure and consistently minimize injustices that have been partially caused by America's attempts to manage the global order.

Third, Bush's foreign policy can be regarded as utopian based on the notion that several of America's longstanding allies, such as France and Germany viewed its opposition to global norms and a determined effort to secure hegemony in the Middle East as impractical and infeasible positions to defend. Former Harvard professor Judith Shklar argued that political endeavors are often referred to as 'utopian' because a substantial sum of outside observers believe that they are not feasible (Shklar 1998, 176). Based on this idea, Bush's foreign policy can be described as 'utopian' since a significant number of nations perceived his plans to fight the war on terror and remake the Middle East to be extremely impractical. This is obviously a

simplistic interpretation of 'utopianism', but it is the way in which the theory is most commonly used in ordinary conversations and, to some extent, in international relations (Boyle 2004).

George W. Bush was clearly not a realist as he once stated. He did incorporate aspects of realism in his approach to international relations. He also utilized certain characteristics that are part of the liberal school of thought. It is most reasonable to refer to Bush's position as being a form of utopian realism due to the agenda he pursued based on his political-religious ideology. His objective to spread democracy and in so doing promote freedom and civil liberties was obviously guided by his ideology. And his use of military force to accomplish this mission draws a connection between utopianism and a realist perspective. Unfortunately, Bush was unable to visualize the after effects that would occur from the invasion of Iraq. Or maybe he couldn't because according to this author those that surrounded him were able to place blinders on the sides of his eyes so that like a horse he could only focus on what was directly ahead of him, rather than what was at the side or coming from behind.

Chapter Six

Bush and the Military Industrial Complex: A Family Affair

In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex.

-Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Farewell Presidential Address*

This chapter will focus on the military industrial complex (MIC) and the connection that it shared with the George W. Bush administration in the Iraqi invasion of 2003. It will define the MIC, present a history of the institution and its association to the Bush dynasty, and examine the hypothesis that the MIC was a contributing factor in George W. Bush's decision to overthrow Saddam Hussein.

Defining the Military-Industrial Complex

In his book *The Power Elite*, C. Wright Mills provides the best definition of the MIC as "a small and unified power elite who control the means of destruction, production, and political power in American society" (Mills 1956). The reason Mill's definition is superior to others is because it describes power and influence in relation to war. Sociologist Robert Bierstedt agrees with this definition when he stresses that the MIC is "the accepted process by which other institutions--notably the military, business, and government –work together to provide the nation with the sinews of war" (Koistinen 1980). The MIC is made up of a diverse group that includes members of Congress, labor leaders, chief executives of corporations, church officials, college professors, and military personnel and their family members who are dependent on them.

The military-industrial complex is also referred to in the literature as an "Iron Triangle". The first point on the triangle consists of "the Office of the President, the National Security

Council, the Senate and House Armed Services Committees, and civilian intelligence agencies like the CIA and NSA" (Cypher 2002). The second point on the triangle is composed of military institutions which include "the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the top brass of the Air Force, Army, Marines, and Navy… 'CINC's'… and the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars" (Cypher 2002). The third point on the triangle is made up of approximately 85,000 private firms that profit from the military contracting system and use their influence over millions of defense workers in an effort to increase military defense budgets. The MIC along with its intelligence agencies, including the CIA, the NSA, the DIA, are all dependent on these hordes of private contractors. In comparison with other nations of the world, "the U.S. spent more on defense in 2012 than did the countries with the next 10 highest defense budgets combined" (PGPF 2013).

The MIC has also been referred to as the military-industrial-university complex. This term implies a connection between universities and their research efforts related to military goals and objectives. Programs on campuses that are connected to the military include ROTC, the Defense Comptrollership Program (DCP), the Military Motion Media Program (MMMP), the Military Photojournalism Program (MPP), and the Institute for National Security and Counterterrorism (INSCT). As Henry Giroux puts it "the university has become a handmaiden of the Pentagon and corporate interests, it has lost its claim to independence and critical learning and has compromised its role as a democratic public sphere" (Giroux 2008).

An offshoot of the MIC that had its roots in the 1970s has been called the petro-military complex (PMC). This is a combination of American alliances with Middle Eastern states that focuses on the common interests of oil and security. This branch of the MIC connects corporations, American diplomats, and military decision makers who view the great amount of wealth that has been accumulated by these oil producing states "as an opportunity to cement

strategic and economic ties with those countries that purchased huge quantities of American military equipment" (Hadar 2015, 137). These massive arms sales increased the profits of American munition makers as well as U.S. oil firms. The PMC exists to provide protective mechanisms for purchasers, while at the same time reaping great rewards for its members and providers.

History and Power of the Military-Industrial Complex

The earliest recorded example of the MIC in U.S. history occurred between 1862 and 1902 in naval battles fought between early versions of modern day warships. At this time, these new weapon systems posed major technological experiments for their inventors. Solutions were needed to deal with these thought-provoking issues of modern warfare. To meet these challenges, an alliance of officers from the Navy along with industrialists and members of Congress worked together to develop the naval war machine. During WWI and following the war, George H. Walker, a wealthy American banker and businessman, along with industrialist Samuel Prescott Bush, great grandfather of George W. Bush, contributed to the further development of the MIC. Walker, who was a St. Louis investor, made a substantial fortune in corporate reorganizations and war contracts. Walker was hired by railroad magnate W. Averell Harriman to oversee his Wall Street business investments that dealt with oil, shipping, aviation and manganese. Samuel Prescott Bush was the general manager and later president of Buckeye Steel Castings, which was an Ohio business that made armaments. Around 1917, Bush travelled to Washington D.C. to reorganize and become chief of Ordnance, Small Arms, and Ammunition Sections of the Federal War Industries Board.

During World War II and leading into the Cold War the MIC demonstrated the ability to capitalize on its power and influence. Prescott Bush, who was the son of Samuel Prescott Bush

and a former Senator from Connecticut, was connected to German corporations at the beginning

of World War II, and later directed several companies that were involved in U.S. war production,

like Dresser Industries. Dresser was involved in the production of "incendiary bombs dropped on

Tokyo and made gaseous diffusion pumps for the atomic bomb project" (Phillips 2004). Former

President George H.W. Bush also worked for Dresser in the oil-services division. The years

following the start of WWII, marked not only a beginning "but rather a culmination in the

process of partially integrating economic and military institutions" (Koistinen 1980, 23).

"Poppy" Bush, as he is commonly referred to today, also had as one of his most important duties

arranging "the U.S. weapons trade and secret arms deals with Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and the

mujahedeen in Afghanistan" (Phillips 2004).

H.L. Nieburg in his book *In the Name of Science* written in 1966 presents a general

consensus on the beginning of the MIC when he suggests that

> For almost three decades the nation's resources have been commanded by military needs, and political and economic power have been consolidated behind defense priorities. What was initially sustained by emergency has been normalized through a cabal of vested interests… The so-called military-industrial complex is not a conspiracy but rather a culmination of historical trends (Nieburg 1966, 380-381).

In his book *Pentagon Capitalism*, Seymour Melman maintains that the military-industrial

complex was transformed in 1960 through the use of a central control system into a state-

management. A formal central management office "within the federal government under the

Secretary of Defense" (Melman 1997, 311) took over a loose collaboration that primarily

focused on market relations using military officers, industrial managers, and congressmen. State

management evolved through the acquisition of "a formal central management office to

administer the military-industrial complex" (Melman 1970, 2). This transformation has enabled

the MIC to function more effectively and increase its power and influence.

During the Kenndey administration, Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara was

instrumental in changing the MIC into a system of state-industrial management which has focused on "military production, its organization and control" (Melman 1970, 25). Under the guise of defense and national security an alteration has been made that has affected governmental institutions in the United States. As Melman (1970, 1) explains it, "this combination of powers in the same hands has been a feature of statist societies—communist, fascist, and others—where individual rights cannot constrain central rule." By adding to the power of the MIC with administration by the Pentagon "the state-management has also become the most powerful decision making unit in the United States government" (Melman 1970, 2). Instead of the federal government serving or regulating business, it has become business or 'state capitalism.'

The overall impact of state-management is "an unprecedented ability and opportunity for building a military-industry empire at home and for using this as an instrument for building an empire abroad" (Melman 1970, 4). Any business seeks to grow and become more powerful in its efforts to increase productivity. The MIC is no exception to this rule. In the name of defense, new weapon systems are developed, troops are sent to various parts of the world, and conflicts are waged. The defense budget is adjusted at peak times to assist in "the self-powered drive toward expansion that is built into the normal operation of an industrial management" (Melman 1970, 6) to assist the MIC in its objectives. The primary problem that this industrial giant poses for democracy is "that it distorts the functioning of the political and social systems by providing resources and power to a corporate structure that is unrepresentative and virtually immune from the checks and balances of representative government" (Sarkesian 1972, vii).

Through the control of national resources, the MIC "tends to undermine democratic values, pervert republican principles and curtail civil liberties" (Hossein-zadeh 2006, 16). The rising power and influence of the MIC is accomplished "at the expense of representational

government and democratic rule" (Hossein-zadeh 2006, 16). By merging military and civilian affairs there is a tendency to drain the citizenry of basic civil liberties while influencing specific policies both nationally and internationally. In essence, a "rising political marriage between military and civilian authority also slowly undermines the traditional division of responsibility between elected officials and military professionals who advised elected officials and executed their policies" (Hossein-zadeh 2006, 16). Evidence of this merger can be found by examining appointments made during the George W. Bush administration. Bush made Peter B. Teets, the former president and chief operating officer of Lockheed Martin, the Undersecretary of the Air Force. He also appointed former general and Enron executive Thomas E. White as Secretary of the Army, Gordon England, former vice president of General Dynamics, as Secretary of the Navy, and retired general and Northrop Grumman executive James Roche as Secretary of the Air Force (Hartung and Ciarrocca 2003). Thus, the president used his authority as commander in chief to influence and affect the growth of the MIC.

The MIC showed a significant increase in power and influence under the George H.W. Bush administration "and even more under George W. Bush — with the post-9/11 expansion of the military and creation of the Department of Homeland Security" (Phillips 2004). Both presidents gave in readily to military requests in each of their administrations. Instead of pursuing a diplomatic itinerary, both George H.W. and his son "devoted too many resources to the military and often resorted to the use of power" (Goodman 2011) to accomplish their objectives. After 9/11 and as part of the planning process of the Bush administration to deal with the war on terror, the MIC saw the opportunity for growth and expansion of power. A new battlefield was on the horizon and as history indicates, the MIC has always had a "lust for new playgrounds" (Niemeyer 2008).

In 2002, during the Bush administration, the MIC utilized propaganda tactics when the possibility of an invasion of Iraq was at the forefront of military planning. The Pentagon made use of retired military officers on T.V. and radio as military analysts to deliver information to help persuade the American public of the need to invade Iraq. Many of these analysts were also lobbyists for defense contractors. This aptly titled Pentagon Military Analyst Program (PMAP), was deemed successful, and not only was it expanded to deal with other issues such as the detainment of prisoners at Guantanamo Bay, it was also adopted by other branches of the administration. However, after leaks revealed that terrorist suspects were being illegally wiretapped without warrants, the program was "suspended indefinitely pending an internal review" (Barstow 2008) most likely due to fear of litigation.

The MIC also practiced coercive techniques during the Bush administration to accomplish both domestic and foreign policy goals. Coercion can best be defined as the practice of compelling another party to act involuntarily and making use of threats and intimidation tactics such as torture to elicit an expected response. In relation to democracy, Leonardo Morlino in his book *Changes for Democracy Actors, Structures, Processes,* argues that "the military is significant for reasons that are not hard to understand: the armed forces have a monopoly on coercion" (Morlino 2012, 87). This monopoly allows the MIC, through the military to apply adverse control techniques to both individuals and states. Individuals who are deemed potential or actual terrorist threats have been subjected to torture such as waterboarding, while the United States and other countries back up diplomatic efforts with military force. Coercion is oppressive in nature and employs the Machiavellian concept of 'the end justifies the means.'

As Commander-in-Chief, George W. Bush created secret military tribunals to try foreigners who were thought to be terrorists. Many of these suspected terrorists were detained at

Guantanamo Bay in Cuba. These military tribunals denied these individuals a "basic component in American law to open and public judicial proceedings" (Hudson 2013, 339). Assumed to be enemy combatants, two American citizens were detained because they were assumed to be part of the al Qaeda terrorist organization. These individuals were placed in the custody of the military without being charged for any particular crime and were denied any rights associated with the judicial process.

Operating in secrecy, the George W. Bush administration also directed the military to exclude enemy combatants from the rules of the Geneva Convention to allow for severe methods of interrogation including "humiliation, degrading treatment, and even torture" (Hudson 2013, 339). By excluding enemy combatants from the Geneva Convention, human rights violations were permitted and encouraged among U.S. soldiers. Photographs of prisoner abuse at Abu Ghraib prison were published and became widely available across the globe. Once again the MIC, via the military, became the enforcer of repression to prevent breaches in national security at the expense of human rights violations as well as the denial of civil liberties.

Civil liberties were obviously a concern of America's founding fathers as well as its future leaders. The first president of the U.S. George Washington warned the citizenry about potential abuses of power when he stated in his farewell address that "over grown military establishments, which, under any form of government, are inauspicious to liberty, are to be regarded as particularly hostile to republican liberty" (Washington 1796). Years later in 1961, President Dwight D. Eisenhower presented his farewell address to the American people. In this speech, he too, issued a warning concerning a threat to democratic government. He referred to this threat as the military-industrial complex and described it as a union of defense contractors, congressional leaders, and the armed forces. Eisenhower stated that, "In the councils of

government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists, and will persist" (Eisenhower 1961).

Since Eisenhower's warning, the MIC's efforts have proceeded unabated in its pursuit of power and growth through monetary disbursements, especially during the Afghanistan and Iraq wars. Specific outlays to the military are listed and explained in a Congressional Research Service report from 2014, which indicates that Congressional appropriations for the time that the U.S. spent in Iraq equals $1.6 trillion. This amount includes military procedures, base support, weapons upkeep, the training of Afghani and Iraqi security forces, reconstruction, foreign assistance, embassy expenses, and veterans' health care for war efforts initiated from the 9/11 attacks through 2011. Of this amount, almost 92% are for the Department of Defense (DOD).

An analysis of defense spending since 1948 (see Appendix 1) sheds further historical light on the growth of the military industrial complex. Spikes appear on the chart that show elevated degrees of military spending (e.g. Korean War, Vietnam War, and Reagan build up). The biggest spike occurred during the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. According to this chart, the "US was spending more on its military by 2008 than it did at the height of the Cold War" (Cox 2014, 6). Also, analysis indicates that "These figures actually underestimate the total costs of defense spending in the US budget" because they do not take into account certain variables such as "foreign aid allocations that involve defense dollars" (Cox 2014, 6). One central question can be asked when viewing this data: why was military spending so high in 2008, especially in comparison to any other years during the Cold War? The reason could be that what two U.S. presidents warned the nation about has come true because "the balance of institutional and economic power has tilted aggressively in favor of the military-industrial complex, to the point

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where numerous corporate, executive branch, Congressional and bureaucratic allies are linked in favoring the maintenance of relatively high levels of military spending" (Cox 2014, 19).

By invading Iraq, the military industrial complex grew by leaps and bounds. Intrusion into this Middle Eastern country and the overthrow of Saddam Hussein "produced a vast bounty of contracts for military-industrial complex corporations" (Kellner 2005, 4). One such corporation, which was previously mentioned, was the Carlyle Group. George H.W. Bush and his Secretary of State James Baker had significant involvement with this organization. Bush was the senior advisor on the Carlyle Asia Advisory Board from 1998 to 2003. During George W. Bush's term in office, Baker was Carlyle's senior counselor and equity partner. Bush was on the Board of Directors of a subsidiary of Carlyle known as Caterair. He left the board in 1992 to run for the office of the governor of Texas. Near the end of the following year, important members of the Carlyle Group included Frank Carlucci, former Secretary of Defense and National Security advisor during the Reagan administration, and Richard Darman, former Director of the Office of Management and Budget. Contracts were also provided to Halliburton, which was also noted earlier. It is reasonable to conclude that based on the foreseeable profits generated through the opening up of petroleum development in Iraq, Vice-President Dick Cheney saw the personal reward that he and Haliburton would gain as a result of the invasion. The fact remains, however, that Cheney, along with others that were intertwined within the MIC, and those that were "corporate allies were well rewarded for his efforts, receiving multibillion-dollar no-bid contracts" (Kellner 2005, 4).

Projections for the future growth of the military industrial complex appear to be substantial if not exorbitant. Former Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz viewed larger defense appropriations after 9/11 as merely a "down payment" on the significant increases that would

occur on down the road. He saw the future of the Pentagon's war machine progressing in an innovative and advanced manner which would require an acceleration in expenditures for the engagement in "a new kind of war" (Caldicott 2004, xix). Dick Cheney predicted the longevity of this type of conflict pursued by the MIC when he suggested that it "may not end in our life-times" (Caldicott 2004, xix). Even though President Barack Obama once urged a reduction in the military budget in 2014, the "fiscal 2016 budget plan" calls "for a 7 percent increase in overall spending for defense" (Pianin 2015). Obama has also announced the need for increased emergency defense funds to assist in dealing with conflicts in Syria, Iraq, and most recently in the Ukraine, "thereby actually increasing military spending and the profits for the US military-industrial complex" (Petras 2014).

Chapter Seven

The Influence of Groupthink

You will do things in the name of a group that you would never do on your own.

-George Carlin, Last Words

In 1971, psychologist Irving L. Janis wrote an article published in *Psychology Today* which dealt with a study that examined the John F. Kennedy Administration's Bay of Pigs fiasco, unpreparedness on the part of the United States regarding the attack on Pearl Harbor, the Korean War impasse, and the escalation of the Vietnam conflict. Janis looked at all of these important events in U.S. history and related them to the concept of groupthink. Janis himself provides the best definition for the idea of groupthink as "a mode of thinking people engage in when they are deeply involved in a cohesive in-group, when the members striving for unanimity override their motivation to realistically appraise alternative courses of action" (Janis 1982, 9).

With groupthink several key components play a role in its functioning. First of all, individual group members are reluctant to express opinions that counter the consensus of the group. The avoidance of conflict becomes of paramount importance. Second, groupthink has a strong tendency to occur within groups that are amicable and demonstrate comradery within their ranks. It is generally ineffective in groups that have members who show disdain for one another through their diverse and contrary ideologies. Third, the group seeks agreement and works together to divert contrary beliefs. If a member does decide to express a viewpoint that is contrary to majority opinion, he will be ostracized or ignored. Once members of the group detect that a dissenter has been placed in the crosshairs of disfavor, they will have a tendency to be more reluctant to disagree and share or advance conflicting ideas. As a result of this

apprehensiveness groupthink will be strengthened and made more influential. Fourth, outside information can be shielded or hidden from the group to foster a consensus. Fifth, similar belief systems of group members can play an important role in the effectiveness of groupthink. This chapter will examine these particular characteristics of groupthink to see if they had an impact on the Bush Administration's decision to invade Iraq. A brief comparative historical narrative will also be presented showing how other presidential decisions have been affected by groupthink.

The failures of intelligence agencies along with discussions that advanced the Bush administration's itinerary to take over Iraq were not only evident during that particular presidency, but were also factors that played a significant role in previously mentioned White House decisions influenced by the practice of groupthink. During the planning for the Bay of Pigs invasion, JFK perceived that Cubans would view the actions of United States' supported invaders as an army of liberators who would depose the Cuban dictator Fidel Castro and provide democratic freedom to the oppressed people who inhabited that small Latin American island. The information that guided Kennedy and his group of advisers came from Cuban exiles and selective intelligence reports. Looking for information and opinions that reinforced the administration's position and disavowing dissent within the assembly of officials prompted agreement within the president's entourage. Those who thought otherwise remained quiet and acquiesced to a bias that was contrary to the actuality of the situation.

After JFK was assassinated and Johnson took over, the war in Vietnam escalated. The incoming president was furnished with little if any evidence from his advisers that would facilitate any efforts on his part to produce decisions that were unbiased. LBJ was provided with positive reinforcement concerning his directives in Indochina when he was frequently told that

America was capturing "the hearts and minds of the Vietnamese" but never informed that most people who lived there thought of U.S. soldiers "as occupiers, not liberators" (Levine 2004). Groupthink encouraged Johnson to think that actions in Vietnam were not only justified in preventing another domino from falling on the global world game board but also that the efforts in doing so would be preferred by the small Asian nation's people. Thus, it is no wonder that the president was startled by continual reports of military failure.

Just like Kennedy and Johnson had done before him, George W. Bush decided that it was necessary to remove a government from power. Aiming to stop the production of WMD, minimize terrorism, put an end to the rule of an evil despot, and eventually install democracy, the administration took action. The questions then to be asked are: Did the president and his advisers become prey to the mechanics of groupthink? Were the stories that were generated authentic or were they merely products of the practice of groupthink in which the president became the victim of those who encircled him to guard against the presentation or discussion of ideas and information contrary to the group's established viewpoints?

Before getting into specific impacts that groupthink posed for the Bush Administration's policy directives that focused on Iraq, it should be noted that George W. Bush knew very little about foreign policy. This shortcoming on his part caused him to realize the importance of the need for advice from others who knew much more about the subject. While he was still Governor of Texas, he admitted to Condoleezza Rice that he didn't "have any idea about foreign affairs" (Johnson 2009, 476). He actually used Rice as his tutor to help him learn about foreign affairs. Bush made a trip to the Middle East in the latter part of 1998 and described the condition there as chaotic. He maintained that the U.S. should distance itself from the region and not get involved there. Bush did express concern about Saddam Hussein and WMD in his early days in

office. This is no surprise, however, since his dad had already had dealings with the Iraqi leader who had tried to assassinate him in 1993 (Teplitz 1995, 570). At the beginning of his first term in office Bush asked his advisers to find information that linked Saddam with the terrorist attacks on 9/11. He was obviously interested in establishing a connection between the Iraqi leader and Al Qaeda, and his advisers provided details which influenced his decision to invade Iraq and take down its infamous leader. By seeking information to support objectives he was intent on accomplishing he encouraged groupthink syndromes that would lead the United States into war.

Within the Bush Administration various individuals integrated their ideas and perspectives related to Iraq that contributed to groupthink. These advisers worked together to advance this process and discouraged discussion that promoted contrary positions. Chief among those who brought groupthink to the forefront was Vice President Dick Cheney. Cheney possessed a great deal of government experience. He was White House Chief of Staff under Gerald Ford, a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from Wyoming, and Secretary of Defense under George H.W. Bush. Considering his efforts alongside George W. Bush he has been referred to by some as "the most powerful vice president in history" (Danner 2014; Baker 2013). Cheney was very assertive in presenting his views to Bush, his advisers, and the public. In 2002, he emerged as the administration's 'voice' when he advocated a regime change in Iraq. His real influence in regards to groupthink is indicated in dialogue he had with the president concerning WMD in July of 2002. During this meeting which took place several months before the invasion of Iraq actually began, Cheney expressed to the president that he needed to proceed with war efforts at that time, due to the existence of a chemical weapons plant in the northern part of Iraq. Even though Bush said no at the time, he later changed his mind and began efforts to

overthrow Saddam in September of 2003. Bush became another president who fell victim to the influence of groupthink and by so doing contributed to the loss of human life and U.S. dollars.

Another influential factor of groupthink in the Bush Administration was White House Senior Adviser Karl Rove. He developed a strong relationship with the elder Bush as a member of the College Republicans in Washington. He later assisted George W. Bush in his victorious campaign for the governorship of Texas in 1994. Rove's work in the Bush Administration has caused some people to call him the "most influential presidential aide in history" (Conan 2005). Others have gone so far as to claim that Rove was actually "Bush's brain" (Moore and Slater 2004) because he called the shots and guided Bush in many of the important decisions that he made as president, including the contentious course of action taken in Iraq. Rove's biggest contribution to groupthink was that he was able to control information that would be given to the president like he later limited the public from knowing about the WMD that had been found to harm U. S. soldiers in Iraq. Former senior adviser to vice president Dick Cheney, Dave Wurmser confirms this idea when he noted that "in 2005-2006, Karl Rove and his team blocked public disclosure of these (findings) and said "Let these sleeping dogs lie, we have lost that fight so better not to remind anyone of it" (Lake 2014). Bush's press secretary Scott McLellan provides further confirmation of Rove's impact on the president when he indicates that not only did he provide direction in meetings on a vast array of policy and strategy issues "his views were given great weight and deference" and an "all-encompassing role in governing" (McLellan 2008, 80). Rove's sphere of influence not only controlled the content of the information that Bush would be given, but it also presented data that demonstrated what 'Bush's brain' conceived as the best route that the president needed to follow.

Sometimes within the groupthink environment, there will be dissenting opinions in

regards to the group's consensus. However, the impact of this disagreement can in many cases be limited by the group itself. For example, Secretary of State Colin Powell expressed concern over the idea of an Iraq-al Qaeda relationship. He was doubtful about the veracity of intelligence estimates. He bitterly argued with Dick Cheney about this matter and became so agitated and pressured that he ended up referring to the Vice President and his supporters, which included his chief aide I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul D. Wolfowitz, and Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Douglas J. Feith as the "Gestapo" office (Hamilton 2004). With so many in the administration opposing him, Powell also fell victim to groupthink. When the president asked the Secretary to present his case to the UN in February of 2003, he agreed. This has been referred to as "the Powell buy-in" (Hamilton 2004) by Dan Bartlett who was Bush's White House communications director. When overwhelmed by the group's majority opinion, individuals will sometimes acquiesce, such was probably the case with Colin Powell.

Another dissenter within the Bush administration was Secretary of the Treasury Paul O'Neill. Unlike Powell, however, he refused to buy in to Bush's agenda. O'Neill was a member of the National Security Council and voiced disagreement with the group's position on invading Iraq and Saddam's supposed possession of WMD. He was the most skeptical individual in the president's cabinet. He questioned the claims made by other administration officials and reflected that during the almost two years that he served "I never saw anything that I would characterize as evidence of weapons of mass destruction" (quoted in Dickerson 2004). He also maintained that there was nothing in the intelligence that could be described as 'real evidence'. In retrospect, the former treasury secretary recalled meetings in which he described the President as "a blank slate rarely asking questions or issuing orders" and "like a blind man in a roomful of deaf people" (quoted in Dickerson 2004). To compound the situation he argues that Bush's

advisers and confidants constituted "a praetorian guard that encircled the president" (quoted in Levine 2004). This analysis of Bush provides a perspective which demonstrates that he was in an ideal position to fall prey to groupthink. Unlike Colin Powell, however, Paul O'Neill did not buy in to the rhetoric that was present in the Bush Administration's objectives regarding Iraq. When he attempted to interject his countervailing opinions, his comments would be shut down before he could get into the heart of the discussion. His voice was finally silenced when he was fired over tax policy disagreements with the president in 2002. Thus, groupthink was advanced through the removal of an opposing voice, and plans for Iraq continued unabated.

Groupthink can be combatted by independent analysis which can be related to the issue under consideration. An example of this would take place when intelligence agencies examine information and then make well founded arguments in support of their observations. These organizations have the ability to sort out the best evidence available to them while at the same time excluding what is determined to be speculation. Unfortunately, preceding the invasion of Iraq, this process became subverted because the Pentagon utilized its own intelligence agency, the DIA, and bypassed the more independent CIA. As a result, the CIA sacrificed some of its independence due to pressure that was placed on it by the White House, and only "delivered a partial view of the information it held" (Levine 2004). Thus, the intelligence reports that the Bush Administration were given, instead of dealing a blow to groupthink actually "gave credence to sources the CIA had historically (and apparently correctly) discounted, and downplayed cautions the CIA had (correctly) emphasized in the past" (Levine 2004) and reinforced groupthink in furthering the cause for war in Iraq.

With a commitment expressed early on in the Bush Administration, groupthink was allowed to bloom and spread like a poisonous plant. Whoever came in contact with the message

emphasized by Bush or one of his close advisers like Cheney or Rumsfeld either accepted the idea or rejected it. Those that chose acceptance became intertwined with the group and solidified the importance of the pursued objective. These loyalists helped to push the group in a direction that was based on consensus and oblivious to a careful examination of the evidence. Those that disagreed with the group were either discarded, ignored, or changed their minds and decided for one reason or another to support the group's position. A parallel to this behavior can be seen in the mob violence that resulted in thousands of lynchings that occurred in the United States between 1882 and1968. The process involved with lynching demonstrated "how a crowd can do things which it is extremely improbable that the individuals would do or consent to, if they were taken separately" (Sumner 1906, 20).

In conclusion, recent revelations by George H.W. Bush demonstrate the impact of groupthink. In his forthcoming biography the former chief executive argues that the mistakes that were made during his son's administration had a lot to do with the company that he chose to keep. Dick Cheney had been secretary of defense under Bush Sr., and Condoleezza Rice had advised the elder commander in chief on Russian affairs. Both Cheney and Rice along with Donald Rumsfeld and Colin Powell were part of George W. Bush's administration who called themselves "the Vulcans" in reference to the Roman god of fire. Whereas Bush Sr. had pursued multilateralism and diplomatic methods related to security and foreign policy, his son advocated unilateralism and a dangerous response to the "war on terror" after 9/11. The effect of the Vulcans on George W. Bush as evidence of groupthink is described well in Bush Sr.'s remembrances that "Cheney and Rumsfeld used their enhanced power to poison the flow of information to the president's desk and its supposed weapons of mass destruction" (Borger 2015, 2). With dubious evidence presented by his trusted advisers as being the 'truth,' the president

went along with the Vulcans to further their aspirations based upon an illusion that was identified as the group's correct decision. Irving Janis provides a warning for this type of behavior when he notes, "In this era of atomic warheads, urban disorganization and ecocatastrophes, it seems to me that policymakers should collaborate with behavioral scientists and give top priority to preventing groupthink and its attendant fiascos" (Janis 1971, 13).

Chapter Eight

Fear, Paranoia, and Delusions of Grandeur

Fear is the mind-killer.

-Frank Herbert, *Dune*

The United States has by far the strongest military of any nation in the world. The U.S. devotes more of its budget to defense than the next seven countries combined. These seven nations include China, Russia, Saudi Arabia, France, the UK, India, and Germany. In 2013, America spent $711 billion for defense compared to China's $143 billion. In terms of firepower, no other nation can come close to the strength and power that the U.S. military has at its disposal. Even though America has for many years been regarded as the dominant military superpower in the world, events such as 9/11 still brought fear into the minds of countless Americans. At first, most Americans were victims of shock. They were totally and completely surprised that such a tragic event could occur in their homeland. This shock was followed almost immediately by worry that another such attack would happen at any time. As a result, stores closed, schools dismissed their students, churches conducted special services, people began stocking up on basic necessities, airplanes did not fly and fear was evident. Along with this fear came paranoia. Since it became public knowledge very quickly after the attacks that the perpetrators were from the Middle East, many Americans became worried and apprehensive about their Muslim and Arab neighbors.

One consequence of this fear was attacks on Muslim Americans. Before 9/11 according to the FBIs Uniform Crime Reports hate crimes against Muslims occurred at the rate of twenty to thirty a year. Soon after the September 11th terrorist attacks, violence directed toward Muslims in

the United States "skyrocketed some 1,600%" (SPLC 2012). Some Americans retaliated against

Muslims, holding them responsible for the deaths that their fellow Muslims had committed. A

gas station owner in Mesa, Arizona, by the name of Balbir Singh Sodhi was shot and killed by

Frank Silva Roque who thought Sodhi was an Arab. In response to these acts of violence

George W. Bush gave a number of speeches that attempted to convince the general public that

Muslims and Arabs were friends of America, not foes. Bush indicated that the terrorist attacks

were not characteristic of the Islamic faith and that an essential tenet of the religion was the

pursuit of peace not violence. He stressed that, "These terrorists don't represent peace. They

represent evil and war" (Bush 2001). However, even with repeated conciliatory remarks on the

part of the president, fear and paranoia about additional assaults like the ones that devastated the

World Trade Center and the Pentagon continued to darken the minds of many Americans.

For many months after 9/11, additional terrorist strikes against the U.S. were still

visualized as genuine and frightening prospects on the horizon. When information generated by

the Bush administration and the media in regards to Saddam Hussein and Iraq was received by

the citizenry, this bleak situation was compounded. With the possibility of WMD or nuclear

devices in the hands of a madman like Saddam, as well as the distinct possibility that he was tied

to Al-Qaeda, many Americans became more alarmed. A few months before the United States

invaded Iraq, "69 percent" of Americans believed that Saddam "was involved in the September

11 attacks" (Glaser 2013). Through its efforts to link the Iraqi ruler with the terrorist organization

behind the horror of September 11th, the Bush administration was able to convince two thirds of

Americans that an evil doer who threatened their country should be brought down to pay for his

part in fomenting terror.

The Bush administration's propaganda campaign intensified fear among Americans after

9/11 and bolstered public support for the invasion of Iraq. By including Saddam Hussein as a henchman involved with Al-Qaeda, he became a target of the war on terror. With Americans in support of his removal, the president was provided with greater impetus to invade Iraq. Conversely, when presidents do not have support for items on their agenda they are much more reluctant to follow their intended course. With plans to conquer Iraq laid out by his advisers and Congress in support of a joint resolution to use U.S. armed forces against Iraq, military officers were more than ready to follow the directions of their commander in chief. Citizen acquiescence concerning the invasion provided positive reinforcement to the administration's efforts. Power and support was granted to George W. Bush to do whatever he thought was needed to deal with Iraq.

In his book, *After the Rubicon: Congress, Presidents, and the Politics of Waging War,* Douglas Kriner examines the influence of Congress and public opinion upon the activities and agendas of various presidencies. He looks at activities that occurred in the Clinton administration as well as during both of the Bush administrations. George W. Bush argued that the function of Congress during war was funding, not determining how to position troops. Presidents Reagan, George H.W. Bush, and Clinton are all cited as presidents who deployed American troops abroad without congressional authorization. According to the author, once troops are in the field, the president's position is strengthened, which enables him to significantly change the present system by altering "the political playing field on which Congress and other actors must act to challenge his policies" (Kriner 2010, 7). Three case studies that involve inter-branch struggles between the president and the Congress are examined by Kriner (2010). These studies focus on the Reagan administration's invasion of Grenada in 1983, the Bush-Clinton involvement in Somalia in 1992, and George W. Bush's invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003.

Analysis of these events indicates that even though Congress may not be able to legally force the president to give up on his preferred course of action, it can still "influence the president's strategic calculus" (Kriner 2010,35), through public debate, legislative proposals, and congressional hearings.

Kriner also deals with the logic of congressional actions in the military arena. The author maintains that in order to comprehend the influence of Congress concerning military endeavors, one must examine "under what conditions members of Congress are willing and able to use these tools at their disposal" (Kriner 2010, 233). Referring to the idea of a cost-benefit analysis, Kriner argues that the only time that a staunch partisan opponent of the president will duel and attempt to change his military strategy is when expected benefits outweigh the potential costs. Kriner examines factors that can influence the quantity of "binding legislative initiatives" and the quantity of congressional investigative hearings that challenge "the president's conduct of military affairs in a given month" (Kriner 2010, 239). These include "factors that influence individual members' votes on these initiatives" (Kriner 2010, 239). These prototypes demonstrate that partisanship is the key component that influences whether or not and at what time Congress will use the above mentioned tools to contest presidential military strategies.

George W. Bush did not have to worry about Congress or the public interfering with his plans to invade Iraq. Congress voted 99-1 in favor of the USA PATRIOT Act, and strongly supported the 2003 invasion. Kriner's theories that suggest congressional acceptance of presidential policies based on the composition of Congress at the time were confirmed during Bush's excursion into Iraq. At the time of the event the Republicans controlled the House and, even though there was a nominally controlled Democratic Senate, Bush continued to ride the "post-9/11 tidal wave of popularity" (Kriner 2010, 272). In essence, these factors, along with

Bush's "institutional advantages at the conflict initiation stage, as predicted by theory, was presidential ascendance" (Kriner, 2010, 273).

Power and backing that were bestowed upon the President of the United States of America obviously assisted him in his efforts to take over Iraq, but they also impacted Bush in a psychologically deleterious way through the delusions of grandeur. These delusions fostered in George W. Bush a false belief that his actions were justified despite any significant contradictory evidence which might be revealed. Bush also believed in himself as grandiose, that is that he was superior to others in various ways, and that with his grand strategy in Iraq and continued noble efforts to win the war on terror, his preeminence would be demonstrated and visible for the entire world to see. This condition that Bush suffered from is best described by Swiss psychiatrist and psychotherapist C.G. Jung when he noted that:

> [An inflated consciousness] is incapable of learning from the past, incapable of understanding contemporary events, and incapable of drawing right conclusions about the future. It is hypnotized by itself and therefore cannot be argued with. It inevitably dooms itself to calamities that must strike it [and others within its sphere of influence] dead. (Jung [1944] 2014, 480-481).

Bush perceived himself as a savior, whose mission it was to free the world from evil doers like Saddam Hussein. In so doing, God's creatures could reside within a safer and more secure environment, and the country that was once under the dominion of a wicked and maniacal despot would be able to pursue democracy and all the freedoms and liberties that accompany it. Bush's thoughts were driven by an ideological construct that his efforts would be directed and aided by his Creator. In speaking before a group of Amish in 2004, he stated that "God speaks through me" (Levy 2010). He also indicated to a gathering of Palestinian ministers in 2003 that God had directed him to attack the nation of Iraq. With encouragement from the Almighty, George W. Bush could do no wrong in pursuing the invasion of Iraq. And, with significant

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reassurance from mortals, his megalomania was intensified while his collective unconscious became his guide.

Bush's delusions of grandeur interfered with his rational thought processes and affected his thinking and leadership in regards to decisions made during his administration. Being led by God contributed to an unconscious endeavor to fulfill his role not only as president, but also as the leader of the free world. A spiritual goal was at the forefront of his ambitions to do the Lord's bidding, and physical directives were necessary to accomplish that type of objective. Thus, in his mind, his power was elevated and two fold in nature. He not only possessed the immense power of the presidency as commander in chief of the mightiest nation on Earth, he also perceived that he had been given the power and guidance of Jehovah. No other person on earth was as powerful as he was. And, even though he knew that the military incursion into Iraq would result in the loss of American lives, he could not doubt the decision that God had made for him to lead America into battle against this small Middle Eastern nation. Any conclusions that Bush received from intelligence sources or his advisers concerning any ills that would result from removing Saddam from power, were either ignored or not even considered. Bush relied on God to direct him and was provided with encouragement from his team. Thus, his mission was even more solidified and became of paramount importance.

Bush's religious background helps to explain the delusions of grandeur that afflicted him. Bush was raised in Midland, Texas, and attended the First Presbyterian Church where his father taught Sunday school. After moving to Houston in 1959, George W. became an altar boy and served communion at St. Martin's Episcopal Church. He stated that during his time at St. Martin's, "I felt the first stirrings of a faith that would be years in the shaping" (Bush 1999, 19). While attending Phillips Academy in Andover Massachusetts, he served in the chapel as a lay

deacon. When Bush attended Yale, he became disenchanted with the liberal professors there and never went to chapel and also began to drink excessively. He was arrested for a DUI in 1976 while on vacation in Maine. During the eighties, the former president experienced an evangelical conversion and accepted Jesus as his personal Lord and Savior. He later commented that after meeting with Billy Graham in 1985, his life changed forever and "I searched my heart and recommitted my life to Jesus Christ" (Aikman 2004, 226).

If George W. Bush had recommitted his life to Jesus, his actions regarding the invasion of Iraq twenty years after his confession did not seem to show it. It seems extremely inconceivable, based on His teachings, that Jesus would have approved of the over 4000 American deaths or the loss of approximately 500,000 Iraqi lives that occurred during that conflict, especially since Jesus himself condemned murder and instructed his followers to "love thy neighbor as thyself" in Mark 12:31. Perhaps the former president was still adhering to the Law of Moses and the teaching of "eye for eye, tooth for tooth" from Deuteronomy 19:21. Ignorance of a fulfillment of the law as expressed by Jesus, became a part of the delusional thinking used by Bush to justify his actions in Iraq. This perspective is attributed in Jeremiah 5:21 to those "without understanding; which have eyes, and see not" and probably best explained in the words of Quaker Minister Thomas Chalkley's writings when he noted in 1713, "There are none so blind as those who will not see. The most deluded people are those who choose to ignore what they already know" (Chalkley 1713).

Francis Fukuyama, Senior Fellow at the Center on Democracy, Development and the Rule of Law at Stanford University examined Bush's leadership style and concluded that it consisted of a dual nature. First, since Bush had an inner voice guiding him in the pursuit of the right thing to do, that could be conceived as an "essence of strong character" (Fukuyama 2006,

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60). However, secondly, a "problem is that bad leadership" which incorporates "stubbornness", and "the willingness to flout conventional wisdom" can possess "a lack of common sense" and "the inner voice can become delusional" (Fukuyama 2006, 60-61). Such was the case with Bush which "led to administrative failures" (Pfiffner 2007, 8).

Scholars have also examined the aspect of hubris in relation to George W. Bush's desire for conquest and power over Iraq and Saddam Hussein. Hubris is a key characteristic of grandiose delusions and denotes over confidence and exaggerated pride. Bush first developed hubris "after only a little more than 2 years in office" (Owen and Davidson 2009). Psychologist James Hillman, who guided studies at the Jung Institute in Zurich, Switzerland, maintains that under normal conditions hubris is generally limited through the use of self-control with character acting as "a guiding force" (Hillman 1999, 178). Following the tragic events of 9/11 and the Bush/Cheney sponsored war on terror, the power of the president was massively strengthened. And as sociologist Daniel Bell puts it, Bush displayed modern hubris in waging a war with a "refusal to accept limits" which placed an "insistence on continually reaching out" to pursue "a destiny that is always beyond: beyond morality, beyond tragedy, beyond culture" (Bell 2006, 48-49). Dr. Justin A. Frank, a clinical professor in the Department of Psychiatry at George Washington University Medical Center did a psychological case study of Bush and concluded that he had developed "megalomania" with "delusions of persecution and omnipotence" (Frank, 2005, 215,109,206). Bush was dedicated to the creation of a new regime that could override international law and use whatever means that were necessary to bring evil doers to justice. Methods were devised to get around the Geneva Convention and to use torture to hinder Al-Qaeda's efforts. It mattered not that other nations failed to come to his assistance because he was sure that by being on the path of righteousness with the power of the United States of America

behind him, victory was certain. Unfortunately, there was "an acknowledged association between hubris and incompetence in Iraq" (Owen 2006, 549) and the delusions of grandeur that the leader of the free world suffered from ended up resulting in the deaths of thousands of human lives.

Chapter Nine

Conclusions

This is the way the world ends, not with a bang but a whimper.

-T. S. Elliot, *The Hollow Men*

At the outset of this analysis of the Bush administration's intrusion into Iraq in 2003, several questions were posed. The final part of this essay will review and explain what this research has uncovered in response to those questions.

Question One: Was the primary objective of U.S. intervention in Iraq to control Iraqi oil reserves? Contrary to denials by any member of the Bush administration or confirmation reports in the Western media, the answer to this question is a resounding yes. In 2002, a year before the invasion, the Bush administration put forth a plan for Iraq through the State Department that brought together "influential Iraqi exiles, U.S. government officials, and international consultants associated with the major oil companies" (Swartz 2008, 55). Some of the exiles later came to be a part of the newly U.S. established Iraqi government. Basically this group established a "draft framework for Iraq's oil policy" and formed the foundation for the Bush administration's energy scheme "to capture… new and existing oil fields in Iraq" (Swartz 2008, 61).

Question Two: Did the Bush administration desire to support and increase the profitability of the military industrial complex through the invasion? Yes. War, and increased military mobilization which resulted in the control of Iraqi oil benefited the MIC, defense contractors, corporations, Dick Cheney, George W. Bush, and the many advisers in his administration who had investments in the energy sector. This combination of companies, agencies, and lobbyists

encouraged to fight the war on terror makes the system initially referred to by Eisenhower pale in comparison. The war in Iraq represented "perpetual profits for a new and larger complex of business and government interests" (Turley 2014).

Question Three: Did American exceptionalism contribute to the Iraq War? This question can also be answered in the affirmative. The war was a part of Bush's continuing war on terror declared after 9/11. U.S. foreign policy became a matter of good vs evil, a distinct characteristic of American exceptionalism which is "an informal ideology that endows Americans with a pervasive faith in the uniqueness, immutability and superiority of the country's founding liberal principles, and also with the conviction that the USA has a special destiny among nations" (Patman 2006, 964). This philosophy was a major part of the Bush doctrine and his national security agenda concerning the invasion of Iraq. In essence, it ended up casting "a long shadow on the discourse legitimizing and justifying America's war in Afghanistan and Iraq" (Spencer 2014).

Question Four: Did George W. Bush present factual and reliable information to the world concerning his justifications for invading Iraq? The answer to this question is negative. Bush relied on speculative and spurious information concerning the existence of WMD and the relationship between Saddam Hussein and al Qaeda. The Pentagon's Institute for Defense Analyses study on Iraq concluded in 2007 that it had "found no "smoking gun" (i.e., direct connection) between Saddam's Iraq and al Qaeda" (IPP 2007, 1). The only evidence of WMD concerned those that were designed in the United States and sold to Saddam Hussein during the Reagan administration to help the Iraqi leader wage war against Iran (Kessler 2013). The point to be made here is that the Bush administration stressed that Saddam was actively producing WMD which included nuclear devices. This was an assertion with no basis in fact.

Question Five: Did George W. Bush deliberately deceive the American public, or was he simply misguided and provided with faulty information? Based on the evidence, Bush and his advisers gave misleading and deceptive statements related to the war in Iraq based on what intelligence agencies and the administration knew at the time that the claims were made. A report prepared for Representative Henry A. Waxman by the United States House of Representatives Committee on Government Reform found evidence of 237 misleading statements made by various Bush advisers and the president himself (HRCGR 2004, ii).

Question Six: Based on what was known at the time, how did George W. Bush assess the evidence, possible benefits, and possible risks of invading Iraq? Plans for the invasion were begun shortly after 9/11 when the president met on numerous occasions with General of the Army Tommy R. Franks and his military advisers "to plan the U.S. attack on Iraq even as he and administration spokesmen insisted they were pursuing a diplomatic solution" (Hamilton 2004, 1). The evidence was fixed around the policy directive. Bush relied primarily on his advisers and the evidence that they presented him to decide a course of action to follow in Iraq. He became a victim of groupthink which resulted in an irrational and dysfunctional decision-making outcome in total disregard for the both short and long term economic ills and negative consequences.

Question Seven: How will the experience of Iraq shape U.S. policy decisions about the future and unforeseeable choices concerning the commitment of American military forces? With the establishment of the Bush doctrine, the United States entered into new unchartered territory, a war on terror and a more militarized approach to making a larger footprint in the Middle East. The Bush administration decided that terror should be fought using terrorist methods of torture such as waterboarding to help prevent another 9/11. Under the Obama administration the fight against terror continues unabated with the continued use of drones and sustained detention of

prisoners at Guantanamo. There is much concern that what George Bush initiated will never come to an end. Considering the recent growth of ISIS, this idea seems like a reasonable assumption. Recently, CIA director John Brennan shed light on the future of U.S. efforts against terrorism when he stated that "if we were not as engaged against the terrorists, I think we would be facing a horrendous, horrendous environment" and in relation to the future "is going to be something, I think, that we're always going to have to be vigilant about" (Zenko 2015).

In conclusion, the George W. Bush administration decided to invade Iraq in 2003. The public was provided justifications for the attack: (1) Saddam Hussein possessed WMD which threatened the U.S. and the world; (2) the Iraqi leader was connected to Al-Qaeda, the organization responsible for the horrifying events that occurred on September 11th; (3) Saddam was in the process of developing nuclear armaments; and (4) the administration was still pursuing peace on the eve of the invasion. This research has discovered that all of these rationales used for war were deceptions. They, along with fear generated after the 9/11 attacks were used by the administration to garner support for the removal of a despot and in so doing take control of the most precious commodity on earth, petroleum.

Even though the primary motivation for war was oil there were other contributory factors that came into play in George W. Bush's excursion into Iraq. These include: American exceptionalism, which portrays America as uniquely and exceptionally qualified to lead the world; neoconservative ideology that promotes the active use of government power in pursuit of conservative domestic and foreign policies; the military industrial complex which plays an integral part in the pursuit of both types of policy directives; and groupthink, which made victims of Bush and his advisers as they deliberated on their objectives. Bush also suffered from delusions of grandeur which made him think that what he was doing had to be right, especially

since he was guided by God.

George W. Bush also fell victim to a great illusion that leaders throughout history have succumbed to when they contemplated armed conflicts with other nations. He could not understand that war does not pay and was beguiled by his own self-interest and that of his advisers who could only see the benefits that would be derived from their actions. Bush and his consultants were well aware of what the consequences of wars have been throughout history. But they ignored the immediate costs as well as potential future effects that have adversely impacted the United States today. In the name of God and democracy with the prize of oil dangling before their eyes they conducted a regime change in Iraq which has brought infinitely more harm on America and the world than benefits. As a classified National Intelligence Estimate indicated in 2006, "the Iraq war has made the overall terrorism problem worse" and "Islamic radicalism, rather than being in retreat, has metastasized and spread across the globe" (Mazzetti 2006, 1).

Why the Bush administration did what it did and how it went about it will be scrutinized by historians and political scientists for many years to come. Perhaps, American leadership can learn from the tragedy of the 2003 invasion of Iraq and prevent another such episode from occurring. John F. Kennedy provides hope in a speech given at Amherst College in memory of his friend, the famed poet Robert Frost, when he said "men who question power make a contribution" because "they determine whether we use power or power uses us. I look forward to a great future for America - a future in which our country will match its military strength with our moral restraint, its wealth with our wisdom, its power with our purpose" (quoted in Schlesinger 1963, 117).

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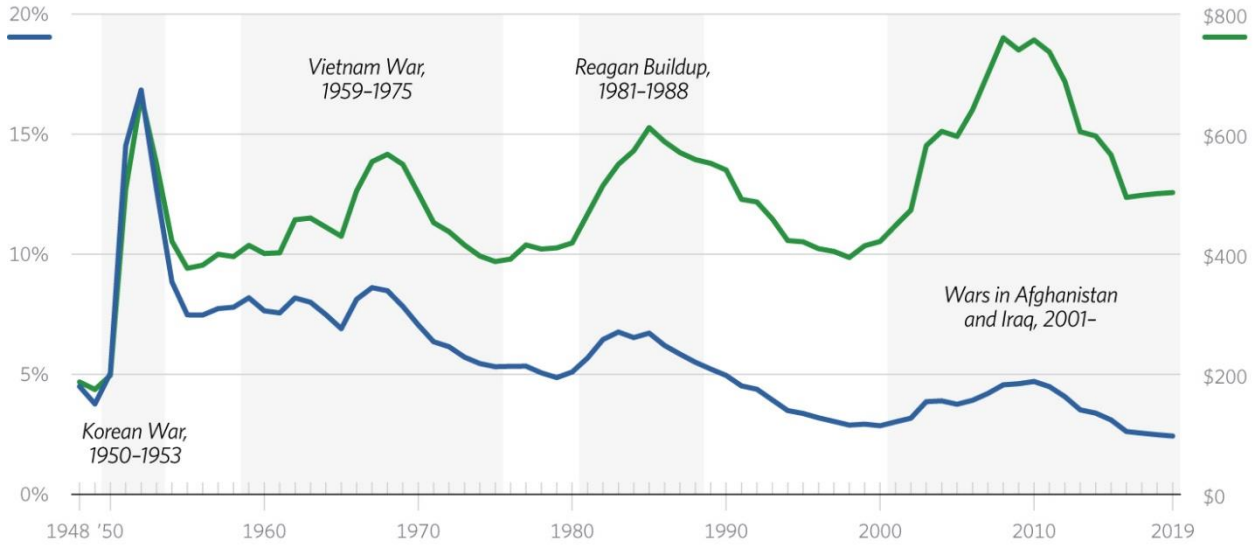
CHART 2

Historical Defense Spending

AS A PERCENTAGE OF GDP

DEFENSE BUDGET IN CONSTANT FY 2015 DOLLARS

Vietnam War, 1959–1975

Reagan Buildup, 1981–1988

Korean War, 1950–1953

Wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, 2001–

Sources: U.S. Department of Defense, *National Defense Budget Estimates for FY 2015*, April 2014, http://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/Documents/defbudget/fy2015/FY15_Green_Book.pdf (accessed January 16, 2015), and Heritage Foundation calculations.

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