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Why the Neoconservative Theory of American Foreign Policy Failed to Anticipate and Prepare for a Counter-Insurgency in Iraq?

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Why the Neoconservative Theory of American Foreign Policy Failed to Anticipate and Prepare for a Counter-Insurgency in Iraq?

**Senior Project Submitted to
The Division Of Social Studies**

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INTRODUCTION

The Iraqi insurgency of 2003 represented the failure of the neoconservative vision of American foreign policy. The Invasion of Iraq was preceded by an immense political discussion that ranged from targeting 9/11 operatives to a 'War on Terror' facilitated mainly by Vice President Dick Cheney and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. At such a fragile time in American history, President Bush and his neoconservative friends Cheney and Rumsfeld, were given the chance to manage the aftermath of the biggest terrorist attack in human history. They took control and manipulated the post 9/11 narrative to fit their vision for American dominance by avoiding institutional procedures and exploiting the opportunity provided on that fateful day 23 years ago. This cabinet effectively utilized the effect and magnitude of the attacks to develop the 'War on Terror', an approach that was made very evident just nine days after, when president Bush addressed the State of the Union. "Our war on terror begins with al Qaeda, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated" (State of the Union, Bush, 2001). This was a major part of the neoconservative theory and more specifically the Bush Doctrine. It was a war the administration felt was unfinished. Bush waged his war against anyone responsible for 9/11 including Al-Qaeda but not limited to them. This was generally received well by the American public and the global community. Afghanistan was the first target and agreed upon almost unanimously. Bush could not have been more convinced that this was the response people were expecting. After all, the most powerful country in the world, with the strongest military in the world, had to come back strong, right? Retaliation to an attack that killed 3,000 civilians had to be substantial. But how substantial?

For Bush and his administration the answer included something bigger than Afghanistan, that was; Sadaam Hussein. Talk of Iraq as a potential target had been an inside development between Vice President Cheney, Defense Secretary Rumsfeld and Deputy Secretary Paul Wolfowitz. Of course Sadaam Hussein was somebody guys like them had in their sights for a while. However, this had not yet been publicly debated and Afghanistan was a far more pressing target and one American civilian supported. The neoconservative theory was first introduced in President Bush's State of the Union address following the attack on 9/11. This vision for the future of United States foreign policy was weaved in throughout his speech. He saw this as a chance to not only destroy Osama Bin Laden and al-Qaeda, but topple Sadaam Hussein and in his mind, free the Iraqi people. But, as we will see, this approach to foreign policy would have been virtually impossible to carry out without the influence and power garnered by Cheney and Rumsfeld. To them, Sadaam was the true villain behind this and with Bush's legacy hanging in the balance, it was now or never for the Bush Administration. This was the beginning of a long campaign. This paper will discuss the creation and definition of the neoconservative theory, examine Cheney and Rumsfeld's rise to power in relation to neoconservatism, and finally unveil the hole in the neoconservative theory of American foreign policy that not one of them saw coming.

Looking back, it is clear that the United States made a devastating decision to invade Iraq in 2003. But, there is value in investigating why and how the Bush administration was able to take the United States into this war. The first step in articulating how the Iraq insurgency was created is to identify who was responsible and where they came from. Neoconservatism was a new ideology with a history in post world-war II politics. The paper will discuss where the neoconservative moment came from and how it transformed into what it was in the early 2000's.

While neoconservatism did have its fair share of popularity before the 2000's, Cheney and Rumsfeld brought neoconservatism to its peak during the Bush administration. The way the two were able to gain power and influence decision making can be used to analyze the coercive power Cheney and Rumsfeld used on various occasions to avoid challenges as they presented themselves. Once President Bush was given the green light to invade Iraq, the neoconservative theory of American foreign policy was finally put to the test. The holes to the theory explains why and how the insurgency was inevitable as long as Rumsfeld and Cheney were in power.

Dick Cheney was the true mastermind behind the neoconservative influence during the Bush administration. He was the one who generated the buzz around Iraq. He was, after all, the most powerful Vice President in the history of the United States. But where did Cheney's power come from? His main source of power came from President Bush. The Bush-Cheney relationship was unique. Cheney had previously served as George H.W. Bush's secretary of defense and had gained the trust of his son inherently. Before the election in 2000, Cheney had attended high-level briefings with Bush who was impressed with his contribution and the respect he commanded from the others in the room. But it wasn't just the Son-Father connection that made Cheney so powerful in 2001, it was his leadership style that truly enabled him to be what he was. Bush delegated a substantial amount of authority to others due to his preference of big picture details. He was less interested in immersing himself in the intricate details of the issue. Bush also had a preference for the external dimensions of the job and enjoyed the social aspect of being president. This naturally gave Cheney more power to work behind-the-scenes. Their relationship made other powerful people interested in interacting with him, making him involved in the most important decisions.

Perhaps one of the most fascinating aspects of Cheney power is his perceived lack of presidential ambitions. Cheney prided himself on this and others tended to respect his selfless devotion to American politics. Cheney said that his relationship with Bush “worked in part because I made it clear that I don’t have any further political aspirations myself and I think that’s been an advantage. I think it allows the president to know that my only agenda is his agenda. I’m not worried about what some precinct committeemen in Iowa were thinking of me with respect to the next round of caucuses of 2008” (Cheney 2004). While some saw this as a good thing, others saw his lack of ambition as a way for him to devote all of his time to the current projects of the administration, and in this case the Invasion of Iraq. He was less worried about the public opinion and more focused on delivering his own agenda quietly.

When President Bush appointed Donald Rumsfeld as secretary of defense in 2001, the stage was set for the neoconservatives to run the White House. Rumsfeld was a huge part of Cheney’s success in establishing power. The two were old political partners and while they shared many views, it was what they didn’t share that made them mesh so well. Rumsfeld was aggressive and confronted opponents head on. He was sure of himself, and knew how to talk to the press. Cheney on the other hand was far more quiet. He didn’t necessarily enjoy the national spotlight and preferred to work in the shadows of the White House. Cheney and Rumsfeld were polar opposites in terms of their purpose in the administration and their aggressiveness in the social realm. Cheney was perceived as the least threatening force of neoconservatism at the time, while Rumsfeld’s press conferences made him seem desperate to gain public support. President Bush stood in the middle. He did his best to think moderately on issues and made efforts to hear both sides of the discussion. He didn’t always give Cheney and Rumsfeld what they wanted but

that almost made them even more legitimate. It made Bush appear to have control over what happened in his administration.

This paper will demonstrate how neoconservatives captured the foreign policy of the United States and fabricated evidence to wrap their policy in. It will also showcase the elements of the war that were generated as a result of the neoconservative approach to the Invasion of Iraq. It will be made clear that without Cheney and Rumsfeld, the invasion itself would have never happened.

CHAPTER I: NEO-CONSERVATISM AS A THEORY OF AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY

The neo-conservative theory of American foreign policy began with an emphasis on military intervention. Neoconservatives believed that by embracing the notion that the United States is the sole superpower in the world and should seek to preserve its hegemonic position for the indefinite future. Neoconservatives view American leadership as a staple for a peaceful world. They see American power as both beneficial to the United States and to the rest of the world. It is worth mentioning that the neoconservatives' adherence to a strategy of hegemonic dominance predates President Bush's foreign policy Doctrine of 2002. Back in 1992, a U.S. grand strategy to "prevent the emergence of a new rival" was outlined in a secret five-year Defense Planning Guidance paper (The Bush Doctrine and the Iraq War: Neoconservatives Versus Realists, Schmidt and Williams, 2008).

The primary author of this document was Under Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, who served under Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney during the George H. W. Bush administration. In their advocacy of American hegemony, neoconservatives express their objection to the traditional balance-of-power politics as well. They view balance-of-power politics as unnecessary and hinders American national interests. As we will see, this view assumes that this vision of American power represents a force of democratization that all nations would support if given the opportunity to. Global democratization is so essential to global peace that neoconservatives support the use of preemptive force when necessary. Cheney was quoted saying, "If we have reason to believe someone is preparing an attack against the U.S., has developed that capability, harbors those aspirations, then I think the U.S. is justified in dealing

with that, if necessary, by military force,” (Cheney: Saddam Wants Nuclear Weapons, Fox News, 2002).

Neoconservatism first emerged as a political ideology in the late 20th century during post World War II America. The original strand of neoconservatism paid little attention to foreign policy issues focusing more of its attention on domestic issues. Neoconservatism’s earliest members were anti-communists who opposed the leftward shift to American liberalism in the 1960s. The original neocons were sociologists and political scientists who often criticized the failures of President Lyndon Johnson’s “Great Society” programs. These thinkers found outlets in journals like *Commentary* and *The Public Interest*, founded in 1965 by neoconservative pioneer, Irving Kristol. Liberals dubbed Kristol a ‘neoconservative’, in an attempt to ostracize him from the liberal movement. Some of the other intellectuals who supported Kristol rejected the label, but Kristol embraced it. He started constructing a school of thought with the purpose of defining the meaning of neoconservatism and how it differs from liberalism; this was considered the first wave of neoconservatism. (Ecumenicalism Through Constitutionalism: The Discursive Development of Constitutional Conservatism in *National Review*, Kersch, 1955-1980) Kristol describes the distinction in his autobiography, “A neoconservative is a liberal who's been mugged by reality. A neoliberal is a liberal who's been mugged by reality but has refused to press charges” (Neoconservatism’s Liberal Legacy, Kristol, 2004). This was when neoconservatives broke away from liberalism.

Neoconservatism attracted a diverse group of intellectuals. Some, for instance, were socially liberal but preferred government intervention on economic initiatives, whereas others were more conservative socially but were hesitant to interfere with economic markets. There

were also those who advocated for aggressive interventionist foreign policy and some who did not. What tied this group together was that they saw the United States as a global executive.

The second wave of neoconservatism is where we see it start to transcend the domestic policy realm and into foreign policy. This wave came in reaction to the nomination of George McGovern as the 1972 Democratic presidential candidate. Cold War liberals deemed McGovern too far to the left, particularly in foreign policy. McGovern suggested deep cuts in the defense budget, a retreat from Vietnam, and a neo-isolationist grand strategy for U.S. foreign policy. This saw new neocons breaking further away from the left-moving Democratic party. Many of them, even members of the Democratic Party, would end up working in the Reagan administration. Moreover, some original neoconservatives were what is known as Scoop Jackson Democrats. But there were differences between them. On domestic issues, Scoop Jackson Democrats remained traditionally liberal emphasizing human rights and democracy promotion, while Kristol, and his neoconservatives, were classical realists. They agreed, however, on the necessity of a hawkish foreign and defense policy against the Soviet Union. These differences were most visible at the end of the Cold War. Now that the Soviets had fallen, what would the future of American foreign policy look like?

For decades, foreign policy was surrounded by the war against communist. The neoconservative theory of American foreign policy was born out of this movement, so what were they going to do now that it's over? This was where the neoconservative party departed from Kristol. Kristol had seen the neoconservative movement as a moment in time, not a doctrine. But, other neoconservatives saw that the promotion of democracy, as a foreign policy initiative,

should be pursued. They believed that intervention was not just a tool used in the war with the Soviets, but an essential shift in the aggression of the American military in defeating enemies. Similar to those who warned the Bush administration against an Invasion in Iraq, Kristol advocated for restraint and pragmatism for post-Cold War America. His argument for this was:

“The only innovative trend in our foreign-policy thinking at the moment derives from a relatively small group, consisting of both liberals and conservatives, who believe there is an “American mission” actively to promote democracy all over the world. This is a superficially attractive idea, but it takes only a few moments of thought to realize how empty of substance (and how full of presumption!) it is. In the entire history of the U.S., we have successfully “exported” our democratic institutions to only two nations – Japan and Germany, after war and an occupation. We have failed to establish a viable democracy in the Philippines, or in Panama, or anywhere in Central America” (Was Irving Kristol a Neo-conservative?, Kristol, 2009)

Some neoconservatives followed Kristol’s rejection of the, but most of the others saw the idea of retrenching and playing a modest international role as possibly negatively affecting US interests. It’s important to point out that neoconservatism of this era were, “evangelical Christians, Jewish Straussians, avowedly secular Cold Warriors who have made a fetish of the West, conservative feminists and other family moralists (Lynne Cheney types), random imperialists, and converted liberals and socialists”. The theory attracted western exceptionalism and saw the world in terms of ‘worst case scenario’. These neoconservatives did not want to take power for granted. They hesitated to accept the terms that currently exist. They wanted more, and why wouldn’t they? At the time, other states had reason to be envious of the United States and wanted a piece of it.

Defending against those who threaten them is not only mandatory but must be a continuous effort.

The third wave, modern neoconservatism, burst on the scene in the 1990's. Following the Cold War, neoconservatives believed that the United States had to get the most out of this moment of American hegemony. Neocon, Dick Cheney was Bush Sr's Secretary of Defense during the Gulf War. This provides the proper environment for neoconservatism to influence decision making in foreign policy, and so, it provided Cheney with an opportunity to help conduct a full-scale aggressive invasion. As we know, neoconservatives believe that for the United States to maximize its power and security, it needs to be able to conduct its operations quickly, and without delay. In the case of Kuwait, this approach was effective. The United States successfully defeated Iraqi forces and Sadaam Hussein agreed to a ceasefire. The war may have been over, but the problem didn't seem to go away. Following this, Hussein's forces brutally suppressed Kurdish uprisings in Northern Iraq and Shi'ite uprisings in the south. Coalition forces failed to support the uprisings and for the next decade, Iraq would remain as a pestilent in the eyes of the modern neoconservatives.

The peak of modern neoconservatism arrived in 2000, as Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld reunited in Washington under President Bush. Neoconservatism was now on the center-stage of foreign policy. This version of neoconservatism was refined in its application to military intervention as a means to promote democracy and destroy evil. It argued that the United States is the most exceptional country in the world and viewed the spread of liberal democracy as the key to bring stability and security to the states that so desperately need it. Supporters of the

theory saw American exceptionalism as a privilege justified by their commitment to the advancement of democracy and peace. Neoconservatives view themselves as the liberators against evil by removing and freeing the people from oppressive regimes. So much so, that neoconservatives had found preemptive action to be justified, something political realists often heavily object to. Neoconservatives of this era also tended to justify their purpose for invading under the assumption that the civilian people of these regimes want the protection from the United States and the implementation of a democratic state unnaturally and, most likely, destructively.

It is essential to understand how the neoconservative theory views the international system. Put simply, Neoconservatives view the international system as anarchic and inherently competitive, with states fighting for power and security. This is why neoconservatives believe it is effective to use military intervention tactics. They reject that a natural balance of power exists and tend to, hypocritically in some cases, claim that they are protecting the world from evil. I think it's important to emphasize that the neoconservatives who drove this narrative genuinely believed this approach to foreign policy was good for the international system and, more importantly, the United States. That neoconservatives weren't trying to extort other states for power, instead they were doing what's best for the country.

Neoconservatives argue that without their aggression, the international system risks descending into chaos and conflict without a chance to protect the civilians. This is the central piece of neoconservative understanding of the international system. They believe that preemptive attack is the only way to conduct a proper defense against global evil. Whether neoconservatives knew it or not, they wanted to grant themselves the power to essentially intervene anywhere they

like as long as there was valid suspicion of a threat. But in the case of the invasion of Iraq, they controlled the interpretation of what ‘valid suspicion’ meant. The post 9/11 moment enabled them to decide their own terms and prove that Iraq had connections with Al-Qaeda as well as WMD. The war was facilitated on the basis of evidence that was forged to match the ideology and present Iraq as an inevitable threat and waiting for them to attack again was not the option. The next chapter will discuss how the theory was interpreted by the Bush administration as they ‘captured’ the foreign policy of the United States post 9/11. It will be made clear that Cheney and Rumsfeld were able to control the post 9/11 narrative to accept the proposal of war.

CHAPTER II: DICK CHENEY AND DONALD RUMSFELD: NEOCONSERVATIVE VISIONARIES

The peak of neoconservatism in America arrived in 2000, as Vice President Cheney reunited with his old political partner and new Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld. Both Cheney and Rumsfeld were highly respected for their time working in Washington up to this point. Both of them gained experience working for the Ford and Nixon Administrations, as well as Cheney's time as Defense Secretary for Bush Sr.. But this time, under President George W. Bush, the two were given a substantial amount of power in foreign policy. Neoconservatism had previously theorized what foreign policy should be, but now Cheney and Rumsfeld finally had the opportunity to test it out. This was a long time coming. Over the decades prior to 2001, Rumsfeld and Cheney gained quite the momentum which led to this moment being all that more climactic. Donald Rumsfeld was a feared political figure. Having done most of his work rebuilding and reviving American legitimacy in the wake of Watergate, Rumsfeld's commitment to the United States was unmatched, but his worldview was skewed. This side of him, however, was not revealed until the Invasion of Iraq in 2003. So until then, Rumsfeld was intelligent and well respected in politics. Meanwhile, Dick Cheney grew into politics as his protégé, taking assistant jobs for Rumsfeld. Cheney was there during the Nixon and Ford administrations which had given him valuable experience, but it was the political chemistry that Cheney was developing with Rumsfeld that mattered most. They agreed politically, but differed in their preferred environments. Rumsfeld went at his opponents aggressively in a similar way to Trump. Cheney, on the other hand, was much more discreet and spent less time in the limelight facilitating operations from behind the scenes which allowed him to facilitate coercive tactics much quieter.

Donald Rumsfeld had his first gig in Washington, working in Congress during the Kennedy and Johnson years. Rumsfeld was a competitive and energetic politician. He was very direct facing his opponents head on. Over time, established himself as a hopeful congressional fellow and sparked the removal of the minority republican chair, replacing them with Gerald Ford. (Rise of the Vulcans, Mann, 2004) But, it was during the Nixon years that Rumsfeld and Cheney began their partnership. Rumsfeld had settled into his job at the Office of Economic Opportunity. Dick Cheney was a young Congressional intern and was hired by Rumsfeld to be his personal assistant. Cheney made quite the reputation as an aid to Rumsfeld.

By the time the Watergate scandal was being dealt with, Rumsfeld was working in NATO and Cheney worked at a private firm. Gerald Ford, Rumsfeld's old friend, took over the Oval Office and began the rebuilding process. Because of the scandal, the president had little power. Congress revisited all the regulations and tightened them. Ford had inherited a mess, and his first step was gathering a transition team to help with the staff transition. Returning the favor to Rumsfeld, Ford appoints Rumsfeld to head the transition team President Ford's assignment was simple, "go and view the Office of Management and Budget and the White House domestic operations and relations between the White House and the Cabinet and report back to me"(Rise of the Vulcans, Mann, 2004). Rumsfeld was an opportunist, and saw this as a time to start influencing President Ford in Washington. Without much hesitation, Rumsfeld knew who he could trust to discuss the staff transition with. Rumsfeld called up Cheney and the two began discussing the White House rebuild.

President Ford's power, as mentioned, was very limited. But, he had to find a way to begin regaining trust from Americans. Luckily, there was one man in Washington that could provide him some hope. National Security Advisor and Secretary of Defense Henry Kissinger.

He was the most popular figure in politics at the time. In fact, he was so well-liked and respected that Nixon tried leveraging his ties to Kissinger during the wake of Watergate (Rise of the Vulcans, Mann, 2004). Ford, who inherited the mess, saw people like Kissinger to be an important policymaker of his campaign. In Ford's eyes, this made Kissinger untouchable, so much so that he ordered Rumsfeld and the rest of the transition staff to, "Stay out of the National Security area". (Cheney Interview)

Kissinger's foreign policy at the time was focused on easing tensions with the Soviet Union, a policy known as détente. Ford had no intentions to interfere with Kissinger who was at the apex of his power holding titles of National Security Adviser and Secretary of State. "He and his staff controlled the flows of information and intelligence; they drafted the options papers that went to the president" (Rise of the Vulcans, Mann, 2004). Kissinger was a decorated politician and survived the Watergate scandal because of it. His service was key to Ford's public support. As well-liked as he was, Kissinger represented a roadblock to Rumsfeld and Cheney. Kissinger represented the kind of power Rumsfeld craved, but they couldn't have disagreed more on foreign policy. It was Kissinger's show, and he was adamant about easing tensions with the Soviet Union. What Kissinger didn't know was that he would soon be stripped of his power. But how? James Mann, author of *Rise of the Vulcans*, touches on this issue:

"Over the two and half years of Ford's presidency, there was remarkable transformation within the top ranks of his Administration. Henry Kissinger lost his preeminence over American foreign policy. His authority ended to an extent that would have seemed unimaginable in the summer of 1974. Moreover, the touchstone of all of Kissinger's policies, his attempt to forge a new relationship with the Soviet Union, was increasingly challenged, to the point where Ford even avoided using the word détente. Eventually,

Rumsfeld and Cheney disabled Kissinger as National Security Advisor and directed the Ford administration against a policy of detente with the Soviets. A new strain emerged in America's relations with the rest of the world, a line of thinking that questioned why or whether the United States should make deals or accommodations to Moscow. At the center of these changes were Donald Rumsfeld and his protégé Dick Cheney."

To be clear, it wasn't the policies that turned Ford against Kissinger. Instead, it was the relationship he had with Rumsfeld that was at the root of it. Even Cheney had made a reputation for himself working for Ford. This was half of the game to these two. Making relationships meant strengthening their sphere of influence within the White House. It never amounted to much due to the fact that Ford's presidency was short and lost the 1976 presidential race. But, Rumsfeld and Cheney were able to influence the president greatly during his short-lived term, something we will see again in the future.

Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld were back in office together for the first time in over 20 years. This time, they held much more powerful titles. President Bush was inexperienced when it came to foreign policy which added to the appeal of Rumsfeld and Cheney as key cabinet members. Neoconservatism as a foreign policy was dormant. It had no reason yet to leap to the forefront of the global discussion. It was business as usual for newly elected president George W. Bush. His foreign policy focused on moving away from nation building. But this would all change. Following 9/11, the Bush administration had to reorganize their foreign policy priorities. It aligned with neoconservatism and was what guys like Rumsfeld and Cheney had theorized would work. Also, President Bush didn't have the expertise necessary to conduct his own policy so this was the perfect environment for Rumsfeld, Cheney, and the neoconservative

theory of foreign policy to take over. 9/11 triggered the implementation of the Bush Doctrine written to establish the United States' approach to the foreign policy issue generated. Bush declared that "we [the United States] must build and maintain our defenses beyond challenge." He continued, "our forces will be strong enough to dissuade potential adversaries from pursuing a military build-up in hopes of surpassing, or equaling, the power of the United States".

Secondly, the doctrine established the notion that if circumstances warrant the use of preemptive war then it's justified. The 2002 National Security Strategy declared that, "we must be prepared to stop rogue states and their terrorist clients before they are able to threaten or use weapons of mass destruction against the United States and our allies and friends. . . . We must deter and defend against the threat before it is unleashed". Thirdly, the Bush Doctrine proposes the unilateral approach to foreign policy, establishing the US as the sole leader of the peace effort. The last element of the doctrine is the promotion of democracy. I'm sparing the details mostly because they've already been discussed, but it is important to realize how big of a deal the Bush Doctrine was. It established neoconservatism as a legitimate foreign policy and handed Rumsfeld and Cheney the reigns. Also, the idea that preemptive war was going to be a part of American foreign policy is very telling of the time the United States was in. 9/11 is what created the environment for the Bush Doctrine and without the effect of the attacks, neoconservatism wouldn't have been given this much control over American foreign policy.

The neoconservative vision is what fueled the United States decision to invade Iraq in 2003. But it was Cheney and Rumsfeld who drove it, swerving cabinet members and intelligence agencies effortlessly. The story of how they did it is fascinating in the sense that their case had not one piece of valid evidence to support it. It was a war between neoconservatives Rumsfeld, Cheney, Paul Wolfowitz, President Bush and realists Colin Powell, George Tenet and the CIA. It

all began on September 11th, 2001 as Americans on the ground in New York City and tv viewers across the nation were mortified by the images of the World Trade Center engulfed in flames. Vice President Cheney and National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice were transported to a bunker below the White House where Cheney conducted operations. As they sat there watching the second plane hit the World Trade Center, talks of potential responses were already underway. The CIA, headlined by director George Tenet, immediately knew that Al Qaeda leader, Osama Bin Laden, was behind the attack. The United States had been fighting him for years. The CIA was convinced, but Rumsfeld was insistent on pulling Sadaam Hussein into the conversation. He wasn't alone in this effort as Cheney and Rice were playing it safe as well, widening their scope to involve the familiar enemy in the conversation. They believed that any nation at all responsible for the attack should be involved in our counter response. An element of the neoconservative theory. Secretary of State, Colin Powell was out of the country limiting his ability to assist in the initial counter response. The country was in disarray. The CIA and the White House were under different understandings of who should be targeted and what approach should be taken. George Tenet and Cofer Black, CIA, insisted that they were ready for this war, they knew where the enemy was and they wanted it. President Bush gathered his cabinet members and met at Camp David On September 15th to discuss the response.

At Camp David, Bush, Cheney, Powell, Rumsfeld, Tenet, and Wolfowitz discussed the options. Tenet had commanded the realist approach to the situation, claiming that Al-Qaeda and the Taliban were responsible for the attack and they should be the only target. Colin Powell agreed, but little did they know, Iraq was on the minds of quite a few. Deputy Secretary of Defense, Paul Wolfowitz, was the first to insert Iraq into the conversation. Powell, along with the CIA, advised against this. On the other hand, Rumsfeld and Cheney were skeptical of the CIA's

ability to lead an attack of this significance and encouraged President Bush to allow the Pentagon to organize the operation instead. Cheney's distrust of the CIA originated years prior during Cheney's time in Congress in the 1980's and as Secretary of Defense for George H.W. Bush. During Cheney's time before the Vice Presidency, the CIA failed to predict the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Iranian Revolution, and the invasion of Kuwait by Sadaam Hussein. Furthermore, in the first Iraq War, the CIA was unable to identify Iraq's nuclear weapons facility that was apparently 9-18 months away from producing its first nuclear weapon, a memory ingrained in Cheney's mind. Nonetheless, President Bush decided that the CIA should lead the operation in Afghanistan, which served as a blow to Cheney and Rumsfeld's control of military operations. Despite this, Cheney decided that he could use this time to look ahead at the case to invade Iraq. His first step, establish an intelligence agency within the "shadows" of the Pentagon. "It must be done quietly if we wanna be successful", Cheney proposed. Cheney asks Congress to authorize the creation of a secret agency with max level intelligence clearance. Congress rejected it. Some may stop there, but Cheney was persistent and went to the Department of Justice. The Department of Justice had been at odds with Congress and so they authorized the President wartime privilege giving the President power to sign off on any bill necessary to protect the national security of the United States. Cheney got his secret intelligence agency. This agency will come to be a major part of how the Bush administration was able to pull the Invasion of Iraq off.

Before then, the invasion of Afghanistan was the first stop. Joseph Cofer Black, CIA officer and Director of Counterterrorism, assisted George Tenet in developing a CIA covert operation that would prepare for a quick invasion of Afghanistan. The CIA put together their most elite officers and recruited locals from a northern Afghanistan alliance, who had their own

distaste for Al-Qaeda, due to the assassination of their leader just two days before the 9/11 attacks. The CIA along with this alliance were ready. In fact, they waited a month in the desert of Afghanistan waiting for the assistance they needed. Meanwhile, in Washington, Rumsfeld was still sour over the CIA being given the green light by Bush and was stubbornly gatekeeping his military. Tenet had a leg-up on him since the Camp David meeting, and this annoyed Rumsfeld. Rumsfeld, however, wasn't going to cave in and let the CIA control the war effort. He had a private discussion with President Bush, claiming that, "the CIA has to work for me or this isn't going to work" (Bush's War, FRONTLINE, 2008). Bush gave it to him, and the war in Afghanistan was able to proceed. This is quite an achievement for Rumsfeld and would prove to have massive implications. In Afghanistan, Coalition forces made quick work of the Taliban and the invasion was a huge success. Rumsfeld received all the glory, as the new authority of the CIA. His popularity went through the roof, and the CIA felt robbed of their moment. The CIA had done all the dirty work, they planned the covert operation, gathered pre-invasion intelligence and acquired an alliance with the locals. All Rumsfeld did was manipulate the moment, taking the CIA and reaping all the credit. This goes to show the kind of man Rumsfeld was. He was feared, went after people head on, and used his power aggressively. He saw obstacles as opportunities to strengthen his own power, and relied on the public opinion as cover.

The war in Afghanistan had left a lot of questions about what to do with the prisoners. They couldn't put them on trial or let them go, so finding a place for them was a big problem. Cheney resolved the prosecution issue by developing a secret plan without the knowledge of the National Security lawyer to authorize special military tribunals to prosecute the prisoners. Meanwhile, the Department of Defense was developing a relationship with Ahmed Chalabi, founder of the Iraqi National Congress. The INC believed that Saddam Hussein had to be

stopped and Chalabi wanted to lead the new Iraq. He was less interested in the relationship with the Americans, and much more interested in the power they could offer. Chalabi and the INC constantly fed Wolfowitz and Cheney evidence. One of those documents claimed that Sadaam Hussein was supplying weapons and training to Al-Qaeda, an unverified source that would go straight to the president. This would become the sort of information that fueled the neoconservatives to go to war. Cheney's secret intelligence agency also picked up on a huge piece of evidence that proved a connection between Saddam Hussein and the Taliban. The agency claimed that Mohamed Atta, 9/11 attacker, had met with an Iraqi agent in Prague. This, again, went straight to Cheney and to the president. Chalabi even attested that there was a photograph of the meeting. All of which would be denied by the CIA. They had Atta in Florida, the photo Chalabi mentions was never found, and the documents proving an Iraq-Taliban connection were false. But Cheney's distrust of the CIA dampened their influence and the administration took control of the narrative by taking the 'worst case scenario' approach to the CIA's findings. This triggered an internal discussion between the counterterrorism unit of the CIA and the White House on whether or not they should spread the information about Atta. Spreading this information would steer the war on terror from Afghanistan to Iraq. George Tenet argued that the CIA wasn't done getting the enemy that attacked on 9/11. The neocons said that the war had to be fought as the enemy presented itself, and if we're going to destroy terrorism we're going to have to fight multiple battles. The CIA was being outplayed by Cheney and George Tenet was the one blamed. In an effort to revive his career, he teamed up with Bush, and they quickly connected. For Bush, Tenet was just another player in Washington he could get to win his case to invade Iraq. Tenet gave up on the resistance and after considering stepping down, instead chose to join the neoconservatives in their effort to spread democracy through warfare.

The neoconservatives up to this point, have taken control of the post 9/11 moment. The war in Afghanistan was a huge success, and Bush's approval rating was over 80%. A war in Iraq was looking more and more possible. But, there still wasn't enough evidence suggesting Sadaam involvement in 9/11. Cheney and Rumsfeld became impatient. They needed any intelligence whatsoever to keep Iraq on the table. Cheney went to his secret agency and gathered a group of politically connected policy analysts to find the evidence the CIA was missing. This group had discovered that one of the HVT's captured in Afghanistan was training camp leader, Ibn al-Shaykh Al-Libi, who had information on Iraqi ties to Al Qaeda. According to Cheney, Al Libi had told interrogators that Sadaam Hussein sponsored Al-Qaeda and provided them with chemical weapons. Furthermore, the Pentagon agency heard through back channels that one of the 9/11 bombers, Mohamed Atta, was seen before the attack, talking to an Iraqi agent in Prague. This information was passed directly to the Defense Department and the Vice President. Both pieces of evidence would be denied by the CIA.

A huge part of the resistance against Bush's invasion of Iraq was Secretary of State, Colin Powell. Powell had argued against the invasion since the night of 9/11 and never swayed. In his view, things were looking grim. Powell knew that Iraq was thrown into the mix opportunistically. Neoconservatives fought realists like Powell on the basis of a 'what if' theory, claiming that (quote). Perhaps Cheney's most aggressive internal move discredited Powell's opinion in the matter. Cheney had helped the New York Times publish a story on Colin Powell with the title "Powell wants to label detainees as POWs", in reference to the captured Al-Qaeda terrorists in Afghanistan. The neoconservatives saw Powell as a credible threat to their agenda. He was about as well-respected as anyone in politics. Previously, he was a Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and served in the Vietnam War as both a decorated soldier and as an adviser to the

president. Cheney and Rumsfeld saw Colin Powell as a legitimate figure. The American people felt comfortable knowing he was here to supervise them in their foreign relations. Little did they know, he had little power once the CIA and George Tenet buddied up with the President. Powell was left out to dry. This goes to show how one-sided the White House was. This is how the neoconservatives conducted their agenda, by forging bits of unverified intel and manipulating their own cabinet members.

Invading Iraq had been on the minds of Bush, Cheney, and Rumsfeld for a variety of reasons but theorizing about a war and going to war were two completely different things. They had spent so much time after 9/11 asking themselves, ‘what would happen if... we get attacked again...Sadaam is building WMD...Sadaam has connections with terrorists’. But, at a certain point they had to decide whether they really wanted to do this or not. “You invade, you break it, you own it” (Bush’s War, FRONTLINE, 2008). However, the neoconservatives never wavered. Rumsfeld was responsible for delivering the war plan to Bush. He met with General Tommy Franks, but was displeased hearing Franks’ evaluation of the invasion. Rumsfeld pressured Franks until he spit out a potential plan. He had advised Rumsfeld that around 700,000 troops would be needed for this operation to be successful. (Bush’s War, FRONTLINE, 2008)

Rumsfeld, on the other hand, was not interested in an extensive post-war plan. This plan would have accounted for things like law and order, food, and infrastructural agriculture. Instead, Rumsfeld saw Iraq to be a quick decapitation using far less troops. Rumsfeld carved away at Franks’ pride and eventually he caved in. He accepted the terms of the war and began planning Rumsfeld’s ideal operation.

It was going to be an aggressive assault, needing only 140,000 troops taking advantage of their military advancements in technology. They would hit Baghdad hard and fast, overthrowing Saddam, and handing Iraq over on a silver platter to the INC with Ahmed Chalibi at the helm. The same group who provided the Pentagon with the intel Cheney and Rumsfeld were looking for. State Secretary Powell heavily opposed the artificial government proposed by the INC and Ahmed Chalbi. Powell feared that if Iraqis did not feel represented by the INC post-war, then uprisings would certainly take place to stop the INC . Chalibi, however, argued that Powell was the one who did not represent the people of Iraq and did not understand that eliminating Sadaam Hussein and his sons was the only way to help the Iraqi people.

Dick Cheney was skeptical about almost everything leading up to the war. His distaste for Iraq and Sadaam Hussein was heating up. His deeply rooted distrust of the CIA was a huge part of his retrieval to the “shadows” of the pentagon to build the case against Sadaam (Meet the Press, Cheney, 2002). This, along with his history chasing Sadaam, was where the weapons of mass destruction obsession stemmed from. Without being able to generate verified evidence, Cheney still claimed that “there is no doubt Sadaam has WMD”. Cheney referred back to the CIA missing Saddam's WMD in 1991 as a way to discredit the CIA analysis of the current existence of WMD in Iraq.

The Bush administration had exhausted the check and balances meant to steer the president towards a more moderate solution. Colin Powell was out raced, and left out of the major decision-making processes. Having exhausted all of his influence, Powell urged President Bush to go to the United Nations with the case to ensure he’s making the right decision. The president once again gathered his cabinet along with Tony Blair, British Prime Minister, at Camp

David to discuss the next steps. After intense discussions stemmed from Cheney, Blair realized how much power the vice president had in this invasion. He had a feeling the war was being fabricated with by Cheney and shaky evidence. The realists in the room demanded that Bush go to the United Nations. Neoconservatives argued that the UN had already passed 15 resolutions, none of which brought Sadaam out from his position and would waste precious time they didn't have. Blair insisted, so Bush asked "if we exhaust the United Nations, will you stand by me in war?" Blair accepted this, losing his leverage (Bush's War, FRONTLINE, 2008).

At the time, Blair and Powell thought they had at least won the short-term political battle. The United Nations could represent another roadblock to the neoconservatives and potentially stop the invasion. Blair and Powell were unable to maintain their influence, they saw this as the only way to get some back.

President Bush's speech to the United Nations alerted Iraq and Sadaam Hussein of a few demands. Bush listed off several demands Iraq must accept to stop the invasion from happening. If the Iraqi regime wishes peace, it will disclose and remove or destroy all weapons of mass destruction, long-range missiles and all related material. If the Iraqi regime wishes peace, it will immediately end all support for terrorism and act to suppress it - as all states are required to do by UN security council resolutions.

"If the Iraqi regime wishes peace, it will cease persecution of its civilian population, including Shi'a, Sunnis, Kurds, Turkmen and others - again, as required by Security council resolutions.

If the Iraqi regime wishes peace, it will release or account for all Gulf war personnel whose fate is still unknown. It will return the remains of any who are deceased, return

stolen property, accept liability for losses resulting from the invasion of Kuwait and fully cooperate with international efforts to resolve these issues as required by security council resolutions.

If the Iraqi regime wishes peace, it will immediately end all illicit trade outside the oil-for-food program. It will accept UN administration of funds from that program to ensure that the money is used fairly and promptly for the benefit of the Iraqi people.”

(United Nation Speech, Bush, 2003)

Bush claimed that if these steps are taken, it will signal to the Iraqi people that a new society is underway, discussed by the United Nations, who are planning to establish a new democratic government in Iraq. Bush went on in his speech saying, “The people of Iraq deserve it”, in reference to Sadaam’s mistreatment of them (United Nation Speech, Bush, 2003). He believed the Iraqi people would be set free by the removal of Sadaam. In the speech, he even claimed that removing Sadaam Hussein would impact geopolitics for the better. “The security of all nations requires it”. These sentiments were generally agreed upon in the international realm, but how Bush went about it was going to leave a lasting effect on the stability of Iraq. Bush had the ability to make radical phrases sound acceptable, and with revenge on the minds of most Americans, neoconservatives were able to control this aggressive American foreign policy.

On January 28, 2003 President Bush addressed the state of the union at the United Nations. In this speech, he claimed that Saddam was developing weapons of mass destruction and had a significant amount of uranium and aluminum tubes capable of creating such weapons. Additionally, he claimed that British intelligence found evidence of yellowcake in Africa. This was a bold statement to make, however, there were efforts to stop President Bush from claiming

such views so confidently. The general opinion after the speech was that the United States of America was going to war. The speech shook up international geopolitics. For example, France did not support any intervention in Iraq as well as allies Germany, Canada, and Mexico. But this wouldn't stop neoconservatives. Colin Powell made an effort to discuss the invasion with the French. But before Powell could get to the French foreign minister, he went on record at a press conference claiming that France will not support the United States in its decision to invade Iraq and military warfare was not necessary. This would serve as a huge blow to Colin Powell and his diplomacy effort. This however, would not stop President Bush and neoconservatives Cheney and Rumsfeld from proceeding.

President Bush gathered a coalition of the willing headlined by Great Britain, Poland, and of course the United States. The final stop for the administration to proceed with the war fell into the hands of Colin Powell. There was discussion on whether or not Powell was the right choice for the speech to the United Nations. But what ultimately led the administration to choose Powell was his credibility and respect he garnered from the public opinion as well as the United Nations. This speech was a difficult one for Powell. He saw the speech as the final diplomatic effort before the war could begin. Powell requested that a meeting should take place in order to prepare, and he wanted George Tenet to be in attendance. He knew that with Cheney in the room, the discussion was going to be difficult. Powell wanted Tenet there as another representative for the realist perspective. Cheney wanted the weapons of mass destruction to be the selling point of the speech. Powell asserted that this would be a mistake. But when Tenet was asked if the WMD evidence was solid, he responded with "this is ironclad" (Bush's War, FRONTLINE, 2008). With the Director of the CIA now on Cheney's side of things, there was a little Colin Powell could do. On top of that, a document provided by the INC stated that a mobile biological weapons facility

was being designed by an engineer in Baghdad. This document would become known as 'Curveball'. Precisely because the CIA did not communicate to Colin Powell that this document was an unverified source provided by one non-American distributor to the Iraqi National Congress. This document provided the last piece of evidence they needed to go after Saddam. It would be added into the speech without Powell's knowledge of its fabrication.

On February 5, 2003, Colin Powell would give his speech to the United Nations stating the reasons for the Invasion of Iraq. This would become the pivotal moment in Powell's career, putting his reputation at stake on the success of the invasion. The first reason Powell pointed to was that Sadaam Hussein was determined to get weapons of mass destruction. Secondly, Sadaam made repeated attempts to acquire high specification aluminum tubes. Thirdly, 'Curveball' was thrown into the picture, claiming the story to be true. Lastly, Powell claims that the senior Al-Qaeda operative, Al-Libi, provided information during negotiations about a connection between Sadaam and Al-Qaeda. Powell finished by saying, "Waiting is not an option. Not in a post 9/11 America" (Powell). Powell had officially proposed war on the basis of evidence that had been either disproved by intelligence agencies or provided to them by unverified non-American sources.

American Generals were questioned regarding the required forces necessary for this invasion to be successful. General Shinzeki was put on the stand to give his expert opinion on the issue. Based on his calculations, the post-war operation was going to take upwards of 700,000 troops. He predicted that the post-war environment was going to be hostile. Ethnic tensions could rise making this a multi-faceted war. Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld believed general Shinzeki was far from the mark that "it is hard to imagine needing more troops to occupy Iraq than to successfully overthrow Sadaam" (Defense Secretary Press Conference, Rumsfeld, 2003).

Rumsfeld believed that at most 140,000 troops would be needed to successfully topple Saddam Hussein and bring freedom to the Iraqi people. Despite the advice from military officials like general Shinzeki, President Bush carried on. On March 17, 2003 Bush gave Saddam Hussein and his sons 48 hours to step down and leave the country. If not, American forces would invade with Rumsfeld's war assessment. This was the last time Iraq was warned.

Bush gathered his war cabinet in the morning of the attack, confirming that the military and the CIA were ready. With about 10 hours remaining of the 48 hour window, George Tenet was given a tip about the location of Saddam Hussein. This Intel was "uncorroborated", but would be a good place to begin the air invasion (Bush's War, FRONTLINE, 2008). Tenet notified the president which sparked a heated debate on whether or not they should move on this. President Bush was hesitant and stuck to his word of 48 hours. Tenet responded by saying Sadaam could be gone by then. Bush then discusses the issue with the vice president. After all, Cheney had the last word and just minutes after the deadline, American forces started the invasion.

The invasion of Iraq was underway. Two bombers flying east and west dropped bombs on the city of Baghdad. Saddam Hussein was announced dead from the attack. However, one day later on March 20 Saddam Hussein appeared alive at a press conference in an unidentified bunker. Meanwhile, and Baghdad, a three week assault took place. Saddam and his National Guard disappeared and the war looked all but complete. Saddam Hussein was overthrown and the Iraqi people flooded the streets with joy. The Americans were no longer viewed as liberators. They were the source of destruction in the eyes of Iraq and its people.

CHAPTER III: THE ARRIVAL OF THE IRAQI INSURGENCY

After the three week assault on the city of Baghdad, Sadaam Hussein and his national guard disappeared underground. To Americans, the war seemed to be off to a great start. The Bush administration was ecstatic, but there was still work to be done. While Bush gave his "Mission Accomplished" speech, on the USS ABe Lincoln, they were still looking for the weapons of destruction that would justify the invasion. Specifically, Colin Powell and George Tenet had their credibility on the line. Cheney, Rumsfeld, Rice and Bush joined them in the effort to prove the existence of WMD and they were going to do whatever they could to find them. Overall, Americans we're beginning to believe that this could actually work, that the invasion would be a success and the United States is destroying terrorism. Freedom for the Iraqi people was surely a reason to invade Sadaam, but the neoconservatives outlook on the issue of Iraq was much more offensive. The administration essentially promoted a different kind of war domestically, and then in Iraq was conducting a preemptive offensive attack on unknown targets. It wasn't like the United States was defending against attacks made by Sadaam against his own people, this was why the U.S lost its Iraqi support so quickly. The US didn't have a post-war plan to secure the city and protect the civilians and after just two or three days of no authority, Iraqi civilians took to the streets and began looting and breaking into ministries and government buildings. There were only two coalition battalions in a city of 5 million people. American forces were surrounded, unable to provide assistance. To put this in perspective, Saddam Hussein had 250,000 soldiers to police Iraq. The Americans only supplied 70,000 to protect civilians and institutions that they were unfamiliar with.

Back in Washington, the neoconservatives faced some heat regarding the post-war damages. Rumsfeld responded to this issue claiming that "stuff happens, freedom is untidy.

Freedom gives people the ability to commit crimes and make mistakes and do bad things. Freedom is also what allows them to live their lives and do wonderful things. That's what's going to happen" (Secretary of Defense Press Conference, Rumsfeld, 2003)

The Neo conservative post war plan was to hand over Iraq to the Iraqi National Congress headed by Iraqi exile Ahmed Chalabi. Colin Powell opposed this idea, claiming that Chalabi did not represent the Iraqi people. This sparked a debate within the White House concerning whether to trust Chalabi or not. However, nobody was truly discussing what was best for the Iraqi people. Concerns about Chalabi didn't stop Bush from proceeding with the INC. Chalabi organized a 700 troop militia to give the Iraqi people a sense of protection during the transition. This would prove to be a massive underestimation of the Iraqi resistance. Insurgent activity began picking up as there were no signs of protection from the United States. The handover was unsuccessful and Chalabi was transferred out of Baghdad and onto a US base. The neoconservatives plan of a quick exit was interrupted.

Rumsfeld had turned to another option, General Jay Garner. Garner advocated to build Iraq its own government by planning elections, writing a constitution and gradually handing over functions to the Iraqi people. A part of this plan saw Baathist party members being employed for administrative jobs. In the midst of this, Rumsfeld hired Paul Bremer, who had previously worked with Kissinger and as Cheney's Chief of Staff, to be his envoy in Iraq. Bremer knew little about the Middle East and had massive gaps in knowledge which worked in the favor of neoconservatives who supported an exit by any means. It was clear now that the Bush administration did not have a plan to handle post war Iraq and its people. This is made evident by Bush's de-Baathification order which called to remove the party that had caused the suppression of the Iraqi people. The Bush administration believed that not removing them would represent

weakness and failure to overthrow Saddam and his regime. However, what they did not account for was the effect this would have on the Sunni Islamic group. As the minority Islamic group in Iraq they needed protection. But, the neoconservatives, however, are not focused on joining anyone's fight. They only fought the war to buy time for a handover process to be finished.

Rumsfeld then hired Paul Bremmer as political envoy to Iraq. His decision to dissolve the Iraqi military leaving hundreds of thousands of Iraqi soldiers without order left hundreds of thousands of soldiers without protection. Desperate for protection and agency, as history will tell us, they looked to the insurgency as the best option. They were well trained, owned weapons and had reason to be angry with the United States. This set up a powerful militia for an insurgency. The lack of security is what allowed the insurgents to conduct a bombings and the urban nature of the war made it so there wasn't much coalition forces could do about the insurgent suicide bombings and killings. They were fighting an unknown enemy and back in Washington the campaign was dealing with their own war

The New York Times published a story claiming that the weapons of mass destruction that the Bush administration claimed existed were not found, and that the evidence was wrong. This caught the attention of the domestic media outlets, but the White House fought back. President Bush claimed that George Tenet had fabricated evidence and influenced his administration to act on it. George Tenet resigns taking the heat for the administration, keeping the neoconservatives free from the consequences. But back in Baghdad, the insurgency was heating up. There was an increase in car bombs and killings of military personnel. However, the Bush administration refused to accept if there was indeed an insurgency. However, on August 7th 2003, the answer would become clear. Insurgency had begun targeting vital institutions capable of developing Iraq post-war like the Jordanian embassy, the United Nations building and the Red

Cross. The United States was now truly at war. The troops who were once told they would return home in September were now ordered to hold out in Iraq. In an effort to figure out a defense to the insurgency, Donald Rumsfeld had ordered military officers to viciously interrogate prisoners in Iraq. They used brutal torture methods to extract what they wanted to hear. Even so, Rumsfeld still was displeased with the intel coming from the interrogations. In Iraq, Bremmer had devised a plan to counter the insurgency, but would take a few years to work. But, before the Bush administration could begin any process of, four American contractors were killed by Iraqi insurgents and their bodies were hung for display. This made it so coalition forces, once again, were forced to stay and fight. The war in Fallujah was highly combative. Coalition forces were ultimately unable to hold them off. Tons of people were being killed in action and President Bush ultimately ordered marines to cease their fire. This was a huge win for the insurgents and the Iraqi civilians in Fallujah celebrated in the streets as if they were liberated from the enemy. At the time the US decided to leave, the security of Iraqi sovereignty was still under serious threat. To president Bush and the neocons, leaving Iraq meant admitting to the world that they were wrong. These guys were going to do whatever they could within their power to stay in this war, defeat the insurgents, find WMD in the process, and successfully hand Iraq over to Ahmed Chalabi and the INC. In another effort to find a solution, Rumsfeld removed the unqualified general Sanchez and replaced him with four star general George Casey. Casey was intelligent but never led an invasion and was about to lead the biggest one since the Vietnam War. His inexperience was useful to Bush and the neocons, because it meant they had control at the operational level. His objective was to minimize casualties, train the Iraqi security forces and then leave. Bush is later quoted talking about the approach saying, “as the Iraqi stand up we stand down” (President's Address, Bush, 2005) . On November 3rd, 2004 Casey gave the

military the green light on an attack on Fallujah. It was an intense 10 day battle, but coalition forces were able to suppress the insurgents this time around.

After Fallujah, it was clear the United States was in a multilateral war and unable to remove themselves. The big issue new conservatives failed to identify was how intense the Sunni-Shia Civil War would be. When the administration tried to team up with majority organizations, it would lead to uprisings and bombings. This would then lead to a Shia response of a much higher level of force. This is what gave the United States such a difficult time because not only did they have to rely on one or the other for assistance, but were also subjected to the narrative of the insurgency being developed by the neoconservatives. In 2005, the violence in Iraq continued. In January, the Shia majority won a legislative election, but ninety percent of Sunni's didn't vote. A huge part of this was because of the rise in tensions between the two groups because of the invasion. On top of that, the administration's decision to support the majority Shia group, led to the boycotting and combining of both US and Shia targets. The neoconservatives were not interested in doing what was necessarily best for Iraq. They were the ones who went in and overthrew the regime, then the people had to reorganize it themselves. The handoff had been extremely unsuccessful and to add to the displeasure, the Iraqi Intelligence Commission concluded in its report saying that the prewar intelligence regarding WMD was wrong. This was a massive blow to the Bush administration. Colin Powell had risked his reputation on the existence of WMD and Rumsfeld and Bush had openly claimed the story to be true. Bush responded in an effort to protect the administration by accepting the responsibility of going to war on faulty evidence but the decision was justified regardless. By 2006, we started to see a serious shift in American foreign policy. It was clear that the neoconservative strategy had

failed. President Bush had lost confidence in his military and began the search for a new strategy. Bush would replace Rumsfeld in the aftermath of the 2006 congressional elections.

This marked the end of the neoconservatives reign of United States foreign policy. The Iraqi insurgency defeated the neoconservative vision for Iraq, and proved that theory and assumptions do not belong in foreign policy. Cheney, Rumsfeld and Bush had exhausted the U.S. military and continuously ignored the signs of an insurgency until a civil-war was sparked and the people of Iraq turned to violence as their only means for protection. The insurgents not only revolted against the Shia, but also against U.S involvement in the post-war development of a new democratic Iraqi government.

CONCLUSION

President Bush did play a huge role in the establishment of the neoconservative theory into U.S foreign policy, but it was really Cheney and Rumsfeld who drove the agenda. President Bush was young and eager to show Americans that they should have no reservations about the power and freedom of the United States. In 2001 after 9/11, this is what the American public needed to feel and so Cheney and Rumsfeld took the foreign policy opportunity and ran with it. They were the true masterminds behind the war effort and significantly influenced Bush's decision making. This paper worked to provide readers a close examination of neoconservative theory as it relates to the creation of the Iraqi insurgency. The Bush administration, headlined by Cheney, Rumsfeld and President Bush, shared a neoconservative vision for a post 9/11 United States. Cheney and Rumsfeld had unprecedented power within the White House, and were able to bring a country to war based on unverified intelligence using coercive tactics. The war, despite initial success, would turn out to be the exact opposite of what the Bush Doctrine claimed neoconservatism aimed at. It turned into a long, tumultuous war, fighting enemies in an urban setting with little support from the local population. The insurgents had the geographical advantage. Meanwhile, Coalition forces sparked a civil war between the Sunni and Shia muslims. Another major flaw in neoconservatism is found in the assumption that non-democratic regimes want the United States to help or represent them or that the United States regime change is going to be accepted and obeyed. Rumsfeld and Cheney believed that they were going to be able to hand over a country, as significant as Iraq, seamlessly to a non-elected organization after the invasion.

As we know, the neoconservative vision for Iraq was a political fantasy created by the Bush administration. Cheney and Rumsfeld manipulated the post 9/11 moment to push the United States into a 'War on Terror'. This sparked tensions in the White House, realists and neoconservatives wrangled with each other, and the attack on 9/11 was the turning point. It gave the executive power of the United States more power than ever, and the neoconservatives wanted to capture the moment. Their idea of the moment involved invading Iraq with little to no verified intelligence, bringing Sadaam Hussein to justice. However, the neoconservative theory of foreign policy failed to predict the Iraqi insurgency. The main reason for this was that the Bush administration's ideology was what drove the invasion, not the security interests of the Iraq people. The neoconservative ideology was successful in bringing Americans to war, but failed to successfully address the threat posed by Iraq. The theory did not account for the future of Iraq, and instead argued that the Iraqi people were responsible for building their own democratic government. This theory seemingly disregards the importance of the people to overthrow their leader themselves. Is that not the most important block of foundation for regime change? In any successful revolution, the revolutionaries are responsible, not an outside force that fails to protect and secure the stability of their cities. Essentially, the neoconservative theory "captured" US foreign policy. It took it and filled it with post 9/11 policies that turned the U.S. military into a regime wrecker. The theory dominated the global discussion by over exaggerating the threat Sadaam posed to American interests. This moment teaches us that in times of crisis and destruction, it is important for the United States that any action taken in response should be a collaborative global effort. The ideology leaves room for that possibility, but it was Cheney and Rumsfeld who didn't trust the primary institutions of our own government.

Another implication from the post-war discussion is whether or not this problem could emerge again? Now, I don't think there is a chance that something of this caliber will happen again, however the potential for an ideology to take over foreign policy is one we should watch out for. Allowing the president to get war-time privileges in response to terrorist attacks exaggerates the capabilities of other states. Additionally, it is important to question whether or not neoconservatism can generate the same amount of approval it did before 9/11? But, it wasn't neoconservatism that got Bush his approval. Any administration after 9/11 would have invaded Afghanistan and received public support. When it came to Iraq, however, that was solely a vision held only by neoconservatives and wouldn't have happened if Gore had been elected in 2000. If Bush had not selected Cheney and Rumsfeld, we could safely expect the president to listen to the CIA. But Cheney had a personal vendetta against the CIA that dated years back. On top of that, Colin Powell, Secretary of State, would have more power within another administration. However, both the CIA and Powell supported an invasion of Afghanistan. So, we can confidently say that an invasion of Iraq was really only possible under the supervision of Cheney. This understanding brings us to the final implication of the Iraq invasion.

The legitimacy of the United States in international affairs took a hit once the invasion was deemed unsuccessful and fraudulent by reporters and media. What is the United States power for good? The United States military is the biggest deterrent on the face of the earth. Cheney and Rumsfeld decided that using it aggressively would steer the globe away from evil. However, this clearly wasn't the case in 2003. In 2003, the United States were on the brink of gaining the trust of the Iraqi people, but other than military forces, there were no visible reasons why the Iraqi people should be hopeful of a new government. As the war brewed on, the United States moved further away from their goals. More chaos ensued and the decision to invade was

looking rather regretful. In 2006, the United States turned away from Rumsfeld's operational approach and began the rebuilding process. This ended up creating the conditions for ISIS to take over and the rest is history. At one point, neoconservatives had risen to the highest level of power that the White House has ever seen and dominated the political discussion, developing a campaign to destroy Sadaam Hussein. But it all came crashing down as the dust seemed to settle and the Iraqi insurgency would be an unstoppable force that exposes the truth of the neoconservative theory of foreign policy.

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