

**The Iraq War
and
The Misuse of Intelligence**

By

William Alexander Murdoch Fraser

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of
The University of Manitoba
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the degree of

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"In war-time, truth is so precious that she should always be attended by a bodyguard of lies."

- Winston Churchill

"There is no telling how many wars it will take to secure freedom in the homeland."

- George W. Bush

Introduction

The current Iraq conflict constitutes one of the most difficult military undertakings in which the United States has ever been involved. How the United States became entangled in Iraq, however, is not nearly as confusing as some might think. Although it may seem clouded in shadow, the road to war is actually quite clear if one follows the correct map. All the signs were present leading up to the start of the Iraq War; one simply needed to know where to look. The reason behind the war, however, is not as simple as securing the right to cheap oil or trying to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). The fact is that, like most international conflicts, there are several elements that played a role in leading the United States to Iraq. Yet some pieces have a more central role in this all-too-complicated puzzle. The Bush Administration's failure to adapt to the post-Cold War environment and its lack of faith and trust in the intelligence community are only the beginning. It will be clearly shown that the Bush Administration's misuse and manipulation of intelligence for its own political goals led the United States into Iraq completely unprepared for what it would encounter. Furthermore, it would take four years before any signs of progress would be seen as the Bush Administration would continually disregard the warnings of the intelligence community and remain entrenched with their archaic methods until an army general brought about a change in strategy that would open the eyes of the political leadership to a different path.

The President officially made his decision to go to war with Iraq only days after the planes crashed into the World Trade Centre towers and the Pentagon. This analysis explores the key issues surrounding the historic role that intelligence has played in war as

well as its misuse by the Bush Administration regarding the Iraq War. It also looks at how terrorism has become one of, if not the single most important issue to the international security environment and how this shift has affected the way security must be perceived. Furthermore, it illustrates why changes must be made not only to the way the United States fights this new asymmetrical threat, but also to the way that it thinks and theorizes about fighting this threat.

The study of how intelligence influences war is not only important for understanding how and why certain events happened in the past. It is also of the utmost importance to the study of events in the present as they are unfolding, in order to try and understand why they are happening the way that they are, and to be able to react quickly and decisively to future threats. Arguably, there is no greater current threat to international security than global terrorism and the wars that it has spawned. One way to ensure future security is to understand the failures of how the current conflict in Iraq is being fought, and to find solutions so that these costly mistakes are not repeated. That is what this analysis offers: a look back to show the historical importance of intelligence, an examination of the current failures, and a path forward to ensure that mistakes are not repeated and that victory can be achieved.

The attacks of September 11, 2001 changed the way in which the world viewed war. Prior to the attacks, war was primarily understood as a realm in which states were the only actors and terrorists existed only on the fringes, occasionally causing minor disturbances in the balance of power of the Cold War and the late twentieth century. The attacks of September 11, 2001 (hereafter 9/11) changed the face of war. New actors

became the chief priority of the world's sole superpower. Terrorists had found a way to interact at the state level. Although this amounts to a monumental shift in the way that war must now be executed, no real shift in doctrine took place in the office of the American President. No new theories were adopted to try and grapple with the new asymmetrical threats that the United States was now facing to its own land. Instead, the same old drums of war began to be heard, and the same Cold War rhetoric was being spouted once more.

But why did this happen? How was it possible to catch the United States so unprepared and execute such a deviously ingenious plan? The truth is simply that the intelligence community of the United States was stretched very thin, relied far too much on satellite imagery and signals intelligence (SIGINT) and had stopped placing value on human intelligence (HUMINT) which is gathered by its operatives through actual contact with assets in foreign countries. During the post-Cold War 1990s, when no real threat was perceived, intelligence budgets were cut as there was no longer a clear and present threat that could reach out and strike at the United States.

This does not, however, explain the actions of the United States after the attacks of 9/11. Perhaps it is simply a case of not being able to teach an old dog a new trick, and that the right-wing hawks in government simply attack all situations in the same way. Believers in the realist school of international relations would argue that no matter what the situation in the international environment, certain maxims remain valid and all relations, whether between states or a state and a terrorist organization, boil down to a struggle for power. One can definitely see the post-9/11 world in this way. Yet one would think that such a drastic shift in enemy, from a territorially bound state to a fluid

and shapeless terrorist group, would warrant a new perspective and perhaps a new way of dealing with the problems of containing and preventing future attacks.

Another problem of the post-9/11 world is the lack of trust shown from the Office of the President towards the intelligence community. The gathering and use of intelligence has always been an uncertain domain with very few absolutes. However, the misuse of intelligence and the placing of blame that occurred both prior to and in the aftermath of the attacks raises questions: ‘who told the intelligence community where to look?’ and ‘if the intelligence community warned the policy makers about a future problem, and they were ignored, who is at fault?’ These and other questions that pertain to the intelligence community will be explored further.

The attacks of 9/11 were not the result of a one-time blind-spot in the intelligence community. The attacks were possible for several reasons. Perhaps the most important reason was that the United States had seldom taken counterterrorism activities seriously, because the public does not like to hear that its government is involved in such activities. For the better part of the last half of the twentieth century, terrorism as a whole has been a blind-spot for the United States’ government, because “Americans are reluctant participants in campaigns against terrorists in peacetime.”¹ In general, Americans lean heavily towards isolationism in times of peace, as can be seen either directly prior to, and in the aftermath of, all the major conflicts of the twentieth century. Furthermore, American intelligence and military leaders have traditionally “disliked counterterrorism, which involves ‘dirty’ operations that call for dealings with unsavory types and which since the intelligence reforms of the 1970s have placed United States participants in legal

¹ Naftali, Timothy. Blind Spot: The Secret History of American Counterterrorism. Basic Books. New York. 2005. 312.

jeopardy.”² In addition to intelligence and military personnel, policymakers also do not like to be associated with counterterrorism operations because they are exceedingly difficult to explain to the American public when the details of the operations are leaked to the media. Herein lies one of the chief problems in the relationship between democracy and freedom and security; in an open liberal democratic society, little room is left for covert operations that seek primarily to protect the very rights that are being enjoyed. Since the United States’ system is based on personal freedom and the distrust of big government, it is exponentially more difficult for said government to protect its citizens in times of peace when personal liberty is at a premium. Government intrusion is not welcome even in the name of national security. Such attitudes make the United States especially vulnerable to a determined terrorist attack in times of peace.³ This particular situation was made more difficult because of the overreaching and misdeeds of the CIA and FBI in the 1960s and 1970s. The United States government through legislation made domestic intelligence gathering on potential terrorists even harder and deepened the reluctance of subsequent administrations to enlist Americans in the fight against terrorism.⁴

This is not to say that the United States is not adept at counterterrorism and therefore counterintelligence. In World War II, the United States excelled at catching enemy spies and turning them to work for the United States government. The same tactics that make for good counterintelligence are the ones that are necessary for good counterterrorism. The problem is that in times of peace, unlike during World War II, the public is not as willing to give up certain civil rights in the name of security. The most

² Ibid, 312.

³ Ibid, 312.

⁴ Ibid, 313.

obvious example is electronic civilian surveillance. Listening in on phone conversations and reading email correspondence may seem a necessary evil to the American government during times of war, but the American public rarely tolerates such activities by their government during times of peace and they would be unlikely to accept this during times of war. The goal, therefore, is to walk the fine line between gathering good intelligence and encroaching on the freedoms and liberties of civilians. But in order to understand the true importance of good intelligence, one must be able to appreciate the historically important role that intelligence has played throughout the ages, and be able to see that intelligence is growing in importance with every passing year.

The first chapter looks at the historical role intelligence has played in war and how it has grown, not only in importance, but also in sophistication. It also looks at how intelligence has become increasingly important as the destructive power of weapons and the speed of communication have increased exponentially over the twentieth century. The security environment in the United States leading up to the 9/11 attacks is also explored and the frustration of the intelligence community shown. This is to be a recurring theme as the distrust towards the intelligence community and the misuse of intelligence by the Bush Administration is central throughout the Iraq War. It will be seen that it was not a one time lapse of judgment, but a repeated offence that was made by the Bush Administration regarding its use of intelligence which was given them. If it was only the vague warnings surrounding 9/11 that were missed, some level of understanding could be shown, as the whole world was taken by surprise. But to continually be blind to the advice of the top intelligence agencies, and to twist and

manipulate their findings to pursue a political objective, goes beyond simple ignorance. The Bush Administration showed a complete lack of faith in the abilities of its own intelligence community, and in so doing, it has hurt the relationship between the intelligence community and the policymakers in the United States now and for the future.

Chapter two looks at the road travelled by the Bush Administration and events that led to its decision to go to war with Iraq. The introduction of the Bush Doctrine will be examined as well as looking at the Bush Administration's need to justify the Iraq War to the world. The second chapter will also introduce and begin to dissect the relationship between the Bush Administration and the intelligence community and will show a relationship that is strained at the best of times. The frustration of the intelligence community will begin to be evident and will continue to be a central theme.

The third chapter begins to look at the specific steps taken by the Bush Administration with regard to the actual planning of the Iraq War. The various models of war used in recent history will be explored, and the overall strategy decided upon by Secretary Rumsfeld will be discussed. Also, the fiasco of using the imminent threat posed by Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction, as well as the direct link between al-Qaeda and Hussein, will be examined. Chapter three will continue to show the strained relationship between the Bush Administration and the intelligence community as the advice and suggestions of the intelligence community are repeatedly overlooked and discredited.

Chapter four looks at the actual Iraq War, from its quick start to the plunge into a seemingly unending insurgency. The missed opportunities will be examined, as well as the early successful operations led by the CIA. The descent into a violent insurgency will

be explored thoroughly, and it will be seen that the previously feared link between Iraq and al-Qaeda would in effect be created by the United States. Chapter four will also look at the new strategy that has been implemented in Iraq since the arrival of General Petraeus, and the renewed faith in the role of intelligence in war and the positive effects that have come from this change. With this change in strategy it will be seen that there is the possibility for a positive resolution to the current conflict in Iraq and possibly better future use of intelligence by other administrations.

Chapter 1: Prelude to War

To be able to truly understand the importance of having not only good, but great intelligence, one must understand the impact that intelligence can have when it comes to making crucial decisions that affect national security. When using the term ‘intelligence’, it is to be understood as “information relevant to a government’s formulation and implementation of policy to further its national security interests and to deal with threats from actual or potential adversaries.”⁵ Intelligence can affect every aspect of government affairs, from law enforcement to economics, and from domestic to international issues. Having good intelligence is crucial to ensure that those in charge have the best and most up-to-date information with which to base their decisions. That being said, there is, or at least should be, separation between the gathering and interpretation of intelligence, and the decision makers, so as to avoid the brain telling the eyes what they should see.

The importance of intelligence in war has always been present from the earliest of battles. Sun Tzu wrote of its importance in his seventh-century work *The Art of War*. He explains that the reason why the “enlightened prince and the wise general conquer the enemy wherever they move and their achievements surpass those of ordinary men is foreknowledge.”⁶ He then describes that foreknowledge cannot be elicited from gods or spirits but only “obtained from men who know the enemy situation.”⁷ Without good

⁵ Shulsky, Abram N. and Gary J. Schmitt. *Silent Warfare: Understanding the World of Intelligence*. 3rd Ed. Potomac Books Inc., Washington D.C.. 2002. 1.

⁶ Sun Tzu. *The Art of War*. Trans. Samuel B. Griffith. Blue Heron, Vancouver. 2006. 232.

⁷ Ibid, 232.

intelligence, Sun Tzu explains, an army is a man without eyes and ears.⁸ Even today an army without good intelligence is essentially blind to all that is going on around it. The Romans also saw the need for good intelligence and had a system set up that allowed its scouts direct access to the commanders; a decision implemented by Caesar himself.⁹ Rome had three distinct varieties of intelligence collecting agents. First, the *procusatores*, who performed close reconnaissance immediately ahead of the army; second, the *exploratores*, who performed long-range reconnaissance; and thirdly, the *speculateors*, who spied within the enemy territory itself.¹⁰ The Roman army also used other available sources for intelligence such as local informers, prisoners of war, deserters and kidnapped civilians.¹¹

The problem with intelligence in early warfare was its lack of real-time importance. Because of the slow pace of travel and the barrier of great distances, useful intelligence could expire before ever reaching its destination. This remained the problem during the turbulent middle ages and into the late nineteenth century. For a long time, the most valuable intelligence was knowledge of the terrain that was being traversed by one's army. In North America, the knowledge held by Native Americans was vitally important as they were experts in both scouting and surprise attacks. Outnumbered and overpowered in terms of weaponry, the Native Americans nevertheless handed European armies shocking defeats in the woods of North America.¹² In what became known as

⁸ Ibid, 234.

⁹ Keegan, John. *Intelligence in War: Knowledge of the Enemy from Napoleon to Al-Qaeda*. Key Porter Books, Toronto. 2003. 11

¹⁰ Ibid, 11.

¹¹ Ibid, 11.

¹² Ibid, 17.

‘American warfare’, intelligence was a premium that usually determined the basis for victory or defeat.¹³

As the twentieth century began, the importance and sophistication of intelligence gathering increased dramatically along a parallel line with the increasing sophistication of technology. Since sending messages had been a slowing factor in military decisions for years, the invention of the telegraph and shortly after, the radio, was a huge leap forward. The speed and distance of communications had been greatly increased. This did, however, bring with it its own set of problems. Since most militaries had access to these types of communication devices, unless they were properly encoded, all of one’s military messages could be read by the enemy. It is for this reason that the use of cryptology in war has evolved along the same lines as communication technology. It was the use of telegraphy in war that prompted the study of ciphers to encrypt these signals.¹⁴ When radio was introduced at the turn of the twentieth century, it brought with it a jump forward in both communication as well as the need to encrypt communication. It was especially important to navies and air forces since they lacked other means of long range operational communication.¹⁵ The need to encrypt one’s own messages spurred the search for a method by which one’s own forces would be able to decipher the messages quickly and efficiently, but at the same time make the messages impossible to be broken by enemy intelligence services. This led to the creation of machine based ciphers, the first of which was created by a Dutch inventor, Hugo Alexander Koch, who then assigned

¹³ Ibid, 17.

¹⁴ Kozaczuk, Wladyslaw. Enigma: How the German Machine Cipher was Broken, and how it was Read by the Allies in World War II. Ed. And Translated by Christopher Kasparek. University Publications of America, Frederick, Md., 1984. xii.

¹⁵ Ibid. xxi.

the rights to the machine to a German, Arthur Scherbius.¹⁶ It was the Scherbius machine that led to Germany's Enigma machine that was used leading up to, and during World War II.

Since there were now ways to deliver real-time intelligence that was, if not in reality then in perception, secure from prying eyes, the desire to acquire as much intelligence as possible and the need to stay ahead of one's enemies regarding the gathering and analysis of intelligence became paramount. Intelligence, therefore, became an integral part of both politics and war in the turbulent twentieth century. During World War II, intelligence played a key role in the Allied victory over the Axis powers. The Allies were able to intercept and decrypt messages being sent by the Nazis and Japan and could therefore gain valuable intelligence as to what the enemy was doing. This also allowed the Allies to send disinformation to the enemy in a counterintelligence capacity to deceive and mislead the Axis intelligence community.

In the years that followed, intelligence continued to be of crucial importance during the Cold War. The Cuban Missile Crisis proved to be a large intelligence success for the United States, as it was a reconnaissance flight of a U2 spy plane on August 29, 1962 that captured images of the construction of ballistic surface-to-surface-missile bases.¹⁷ The real shock came when these images were compared to photographs taken in the Soviet Union two years prior and it was found that the missile sites were identical. This led to a very precarious situation between the world's two superpowers that eventually ended with the Soviet Union removing its missiles from Cuba. This crisis was

¹⁶ Haufier, Hervie. Codebreakers' Victory: How the Allied Cryptographers Won World War II. New American Library, 2003. 7.

¹⁷ Owen, David. Hidden Secretes: A Complete History of Espionage and the Technology Used to Support it. Firefly Books Ltd., Toronto. 2002. 168.

discovered and averted due to the committed efforts of the intelligence community.

Without the reconnaissance flights over Cuba and the analysis that led to the discovery of the missile sites, the Soviet Union would have been able to place missiles within one hundred and fifty miles of the United States, well within strike range, and too close for early warning systems to respond to the threat.

Spy satellites also played a major part during the Cold War in intelligence gathering. With their ability to remain in orbit and photograph the enemy without being interrupted or attacked, as was the case with reconnaissance flights, they provided another key tool to the intelligence community. They provided information ranging from the number of ballistic missiles that were present on the ground, to the number of tank divisions, as well as troop movements from one day to the next. Spy satellites could also track the movement of ships in the enemy's navy, which ships were in port, which were at sea and where, and which submarines were visible. All of this information led to a clearer picture of what the capabilities of the enemy were and also gave insight into their probable intentions.

Coming out of the Cold War, and after the first Gulf War, the United States believed that no clear and present danger existed that could lead to an attack on its own territory, and for this reason, cutbacks in both the intelligence community as well as the military began to take place. In the course of thirteen years from 1987, when signs began to point towards the fall of the Soviet Union, military spending decreased by 3.1% of the gross domestic product.¹⁸ As a result by 2000, nearly \$550 billion less was spent than in

¹⁸ Found online at : <http://www.truthandpolitics.org/military-relative-size.php#gdp> . Stats and figures used on this page were taken from <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/fy2005/db.html>

1987.¹⁹ Although many would argue that the international climate had changed significantly, these budget cuts had a direct impact on 9/11. In previous years, the United States Air Force had several fighter jets in the air at all times armed and ready to engage any enemy contacts that might pose a threat to the United States. However, starting in 1998, budget cutbacks began to whittle away at the number of planes protecting the skies of the United States. On the morning of 9/11, United Airlines Flight 175, the second plane to hit the World Trade Centre tower, passed within four minutes of the Air National Guards 177th Fighter Wing located at Atlantic City International Airport in Pomona, New Jersey. The 177th had two F-16 jet fighters, and they were both in the air at the time when the alerts went out regarding a second possible hijacked airplane heading for New York. The two fighter jets were practicing bombing runs over Pine Barrens near Atlantic City, a mere eight minutes from Manhattan. The problem was that due to budgetary cutbacks, the F-16's were no longer equipped with any type of arsenal suited for air-to-air combat and to return to base, rearm, and get airborne again would take too long.²⁰ In previous years, the United States had the tools in place to have stopped the second plane from crashing into the World Trade Tower. Since the order to shoot down any civilian aircraft not responding to radio contact was not given until after the Pentagon was hit, having the capability to shoot down the second and third planes is perhaps a moot point. Although the prospect of shooting down a plane full of civilians is not a desirable choice, it is better than having a second plane used as a terrorist weapon. However, short-sighted budgetary concerns outweighed security as the United States once again thought that it was invulnerable to attack within its own borders. On 9/11, the

¹⁹ Figures found online at : <http://www.infoplease.com/index.html>

²⁰ Bamford, James. *A Pretext for War: 9/11, Ira, and the Abuse of America's Intelligence Agencies*. Anchor Books. New York. 2004. 15.

entire United States mainland was protected by only fourteen planes spread out over seven air bases,²¹ and America learned once again that it was not immune from enemy attacks.

Taking into account the above mentioned obstacles, it is perhaps not a surprise that the attacks of 9/11 succeeded. Although there were signs that a plot to attack the United States was present, such as suspected terrorists taking flying lessons in the United States, these signs were never really taken seriously by the policy makers in the Bush Administration. The political climate leading up 9/11 also made it difficult for the intelligence community to get the attention of the Bush Administration. The world of intelligence is not one of clear signals and action based on certainty. Therefore, it is often hard to get the government to act in a specific way when there is very little that is known to be completely certain. Often times, however, educated guesses and hunches lead down the right path to averting a disaster or foiling a terrorist plot.

It was in this type of environment that CIA Director George Tenet, along with his counterterrorism chief, Cofer Black, found themselves in the months leading up to 9/11. Tenet had long been pushing for a clear counterterrorism policy that would include “specific presidential orders called findings that would give the CIA stronger authority to conduct covert action against bin Laden.”²² On July 10, 2001, Tenet and Black met to discuss the latest intelligence on Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda, specifically regarding the growing amount of signals intercepts and other TOP SECRET Intel that was pointing towards the likelihood of an al-Qaeda strike against the United States.²³ Due to the nature of the intelligence that Tenet and Black were seeing, Tenet thought it wise to

²¹ Ibid, 16.

²² Woodward, Bob. State of Denial: Bush at War, Part III. Simon & Schster. New York. 2006. 47.

²³ Ibid, 47.

involve the National Security Advisor at the time, Condoleezza Rice. It was their hope that Rice would be able to persuade President Bush to act and try to avert whatever future attack might have been in the works. Two weeks prior to contacting Rice, Tenet had spoken with Richard A. Clarke, the National Security Council's counterterrorism director, and told him "it's my sixth sense, but I feel it coming. This is going to be the big one."²⁴

Tenet, however, was having trouble convincing Bush to listen to his concerns. The main reason was Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. Rumsfeld had been trying to gain total control over the armed forces so that he could initiate his military reforms, and in so doing, had gained quite a bit of power in the Bush Administration. He also had a tendency not to listen to his advisors and this trend continued when he heard of Tenet's fears of a terrorist attack. Rumsfeld questioned all of the National Security Agency's (NSA) intercepts, as well as a great deal of other intelligence that had been gathered by the CIA.²⁵ He questioned whether all of this intelligence could be part of a grand deception by al-Qaeda to try and fool the United States. Because of Rumsfeld's doubts, Tenet had the NSA review all of its al-Qaeda related intercepts and once again they concluded that these intercepts were genuine.²⁶

At this point, Tenet became frustrated. His intelligence agency had done its job and alerted him to a real threat by a credible enemy. The problem did not lie in gathering the intelligence or in its analysis. The problem was in getting the Administration to take the threat seriously. This seems like a strange problem, since the only reason agencies like the CIA and NSA exist is to alert the government to the appropriate action. This was

²⁴ Ibid. 50.

²⁵ Ibid, 50.

²⁶ Ibid, 51.

not the case, however, with the Bush Administration. It would appear that its members placed very little faith in their intelligence agencies.

Tenet had two main points that he wanted to get across to Rice. The first was that al-Qaeda was going to attack American interests, possibly inside the United States.²⁷ This amounted to a strategic warning that required an overall plan and strategy. The second was that this threat was a major foreign policy problem that needed to be addressed immediately.²⁸ Tenet believed that the United States needed to act right away with whatever was necessary to thwart bin Laden. Black believed that if the Bush Administration had acted upon their warnings and given him five hundred million dollars in covert action funds and “reasonable authorization from the president to go kill bin Laden, he would (have been) able to make great strides if not do away with him.”²⁹ Regardless of how much Tenet and Black tried to warn Rice, Rumsfeld, and Bush himself, no immediate action was taken to try and stop whatever it was that bin Laden and his al-Qaeda network were planning.

Perhaps the terrorist threat was not taken as seriously by the Bush administration because, for the most part, every member of the administration was a Cold War expert, and not accustomed to dealing with asymmetrical threats. Also, having spent all their time dealing with state-centric problems, it is quite possible that they altogether missed the vital and important shift in the nature of terrorism that took place in the 1990s.

²⁷ Ibid. 51.

²⁸ Ibid, 51.

²⁹ Ibid, 51.

The New Terrorism

The reason why the shift in the nature of terrorism in the 1990s was missed was because in the grand scheme of foreign policy in the United States, terrorism was not a chief concern and hardly a secondary concern at best. It was, at most, a nuisance that needed to be dealt with, but not a problem amounting to any type of strategic threat that warranted wide spread analysis and attention.³⁰ Americans were more likely to die from being struck by lightning, drowning in the bathtub, or being poisoned by plants or venomous animals combined, than being killed by a terrorist.³¹ For this reason, successive United States' administrations did not spend a great deal of time or effort trying to understand and combat terrorism in the years after the Cold War. The Administration knew the *modus operandi* of terrorists and they assumed that it would not change. Terrorist attacks had always been sporadic and the damage they inflicted was always fairly limited with the death toll rarely reaching double figures.³² Terrorist groups had always wanted to inflict just enough damage as to be taken seriously, but never so much as to warrant large-scale retaliation. This is the environment in which they wished to exist, somewhere comfortably between being a pest and a problem. The understanding was that if they could cause just enough nuisance to a particular government, they would perhaps get what they desired, be it money, supplies, or political concessions.

It was in the later half of the 1990s that the nature of terrorism began to change. This change was very subtle and went unnoticed by all but a small few in the intelligence world. This is no surprise since terrorism was a fringe issue in international affairs and

³⁰ Benjamin, Daniel and Steven Simon. The Age of Sacred Terror. Random House. New York. 2002. 220.

³¹ Ibid. 220.

³² Ibid. 220.

few would spend the time required in its study to perceive a slight variation in its assumed regularity. However,

“while this new paradigm was being born, the old one of state-sponsored and national liberation persisted. The mental universe of America’s soldiers, diplomats, and bureaucrats was shaped by history... Without a thunderclap to awaken the sleeping, the recognition that there was a new breed of terrorism did not spread fast enough or forcefully enough to pierce the far reaches of the bureaucracy.”³³

Even the intelligence community was trying to grasp the shift in terrorism that was happening. It was no longer strictly liberation groups and state-sponsored terrorism that was being seen. The 1993 attack on the World Trade Centre was, at the time, the worst case of terrorism on American soil. A month earlier, a man had opened fire with an AK-47 assault-rifle on cars waiting to enter CIA headquarters in Virginia, killing two and leaving another three wounded.³⁴ Although the casualty rate of these two examples was not high, the acts themselves deviated from the long prescribed blueprint of terrorism. There was no direct political objective that fit into the neat and tidy categories of national-liberation groups or state sponsored agents. These two attacks seemed to have been simply a case of trying to kill Americans for the sheer sake of killing them. This was a dangerous shift indeed. Terrorism has always had a goal for the group committing the acts. No matter how unrealistic the goals may seem to some, the ends justify the means in the eyes of the terrorists, and terror was the tool of choice to try and achieve the desired outcome. The frightening part for those looking at the change in the face of terrorism was that it seemed that terror was no longer only the tool, but also the desired end. The 1998 attacks against the American embassies in East Africa also followed this

³³ Ibid. 221.

³⁴ Ibid. 221.

pattern, as did the attack on the *USS Cole* in October of 2000. The targets were American citizens, and no objective other than their death was apparent.

Al-Qaeda began showing up on the radar of the intelligence world shortly after the Soviet Union pulled out of Afghanistan in 1988. Osama Bin Laden decided that the organization that had been set up in Afghanistan to fight the Soviets should not be allowed to disband and he established a base of operations (al-Qaeda) as a potential general headquarters for future jihad.³⁵ Unlike his allies in other Islamic groups, who were preoccupied with local battles such as those in Egypt, Algeria, Bosnia, or Chechnya, Bin Laden was focused on attacking the United States directly. While other groups were more concerned with local gains and concerns, a new breed of terrorism was being born that was focused on the larger picture. Bin Laden and his followers saw the United States as a corrupting force in the world. In February 1998, Bin Laden issued a fatwa claiming that America had declared war against God and his messengers, and he called for the murder of any American, anywhere on earth, as the “individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it.”³⁶ He also said that there was no clear distinction between military personnel and civilians. All were equal targets in his eyes.

This form of radical Islam drew its spiritual guidance, at least in part, from the thirteenth century theologian Ibn Taymiyya. Taymiyya believed that the true way of Islam, or the path, was not to be found in the teachings of the contemporary religious scholarly establishment, since they had been corrupted and had distorted the truth by

³⁵ The 9/11 Commission Report: Final Report on the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States. Authorized Edition. W.W. Norton & Company, New York. 2004. 56.

³⁶ *Ibid.* 47.

abandoning the exclusive focus on the Quran and the teachings of Muhammad.

Taymiyya focused on commentaries that had accumulated over the years by clerics.³⁷

Taymiyya argued that by forsaking the scriptural core of Islam, and tolerating beliefs and practices that ran against the core values of Islam, the religious leaders of Islam had lost touch with the essentials of the Islamic faith.³⁸ The true path could be found through individual interpretations of scripture in the Quran, and this left the door open to picking and choosing which parts one deems as particularly important to justify one's desires and plans. Taymiyya was pre-occupied with "reestablishing the purity of Islam, and a crucial aspect of the reformation for him was restoring the place of jihad, holy war, at the center of Islamic life."³⁹ Taymiyya claimed that prayer and jihad were critical aspects "in early, authoritative narratives about Muhammad, clearly these activities were God's two essential requirements for all conscientious, able-bodied Muslims."⁴⁰ Since the goal of jihad is God's victory, anyone who is against jihad must, invariably, be against God. Also, Taymiyya was deeply affected by attacks on his people by fellow Muslims and this caused him to further twist his interpretation of Islam.⁴¹ Taymiyya wrote that "the Muslim has the right, indeed the duty, to attack not only the apostates within, but the infidel enemy without."⁴²

It is this type of logic that al Qaeda used for its spiritual guidance as well as justification for its actions. When linked with bin Laden's fatwa declaring all Americans worthy of jihad, a new kind of terrorism was born. It did not seek to persuade

³⁷ Benjamin and Simon, op.cit. 45.

³⁸ Ibid. 45.

³⁹ Ibid. 48.

⁴⁰ Ibid. 50.

⁴¹ St. John, Peter. *Nine Eleven and the Islamic Fundamentalist Terrorist Mindset. From the Great War to the Global Village: A Window on the World*. Ed. Peter St. John. Heartland Associates Inc., Winnipeg, Canada. 2005. 151.

⁴² Ibid, 152.

governments to change their policies, neither did it attempt to free a persecuted people living under a tyrannical government. Its sole purpose was to kill. Terror was the goal, no longer a means to an end, but an end in itself. When put together with its religious origins, the term 'sacred terror' was born to describe this hybrid of terrorism born in the last decade of the twentieth century. The same sacred terror would set the tone of the twenty-first century, and forever change the face of terrorism, both in how it is perceived, and how it is dealt with. No longer would terrorism be a third echelon threat. It became one of the most important security threats and foreign policy issues for the western world. Its ability to evolve and catch the United States unprepared was due to the perception that the United States could not be harmed on its own soil. All but a few missed the change in the face of terrorism. Those that did perceive the change could not get the attention of the policymakers and the administration in time to prevent 9/11. The ensuing thunderclap awoke the masses to the drastic shift that had occurred, albeit too late to stop the worst terrorist attack ever suffered on American soil.

Change in US Foreign Policy

With the initial change in terrorism having been explored, an equally important change also took place in United States' foreign policy during the 1990s. The end of the Cold War brought with it a sense of stability, and the fear of global nuclear war was no longer a major concern as the main enemy of the United States was no more. This was a major change in the international security environment as the rules that had defined the international arena for more than forty years became, if not completely irrelevant, then at a minimum, outdated. The start of the 1990s revealed that the United States did not have a clear foreign policy plan for the new environment. There was no more need to be concerned about balance of power relations as there was no one to balance. There was no real threat present and although that may seem to be a wonderful turn of events, it actually began leading towards complacency and lack of vigilance that would end with the terrorist attacks of 9/11.

With the lack of overall direction in defence and foreign policy, the United States found itself picking and choosing which international incidents it would become involved in. Previously, the United States was required to have its presence felt in all conflicts, regardless of their overall importance due to the bi-polarity of the international environment and the need to ensure that the Soviet Union did not gain allies and influence in the Cold War. But with that threat no longer present, the United States reverted, at least in part, to a posture of semi-isolationism. The United States could not, of course, be completely isolationist as it had inherited the role of policeman to the world. But it did have the option to choose which international incidents would get the majority of its finite resources and attention. This allowed certain countries to coast along without

garnering much attention from the sole superpower and this gave the impression that there was no real threat to the United States.

During this time there was no strong United States foreign policy posture. Other states and groups saw an opportunity to test the waters as to what kind of response the United States would make to disruptions in international stability. The response of the United States was one of irritation towards some and utter indifference towards others. This was not an unfathomable reaction. After every major encounter of the twentieth century, the United States has reverted to a quasi isolationist stance in international relations. So after forty-plus years of constant vigilance and keeping the balance of power intact, one could surmise that the United States would be ready for a slight break in its duties. The United States began to select which international conflicts were of interest to them and which were not. In short, the United States relaxed its vigilance.

Along with the Gulf War of 1991, several other small conflicts emerged. The majority of these were ethnic conflicts that resulted in various forms of ethnic cleansing and major humanitarian problems. The conflict in the former Yugoslavia was deemed important and the United States was involved through NATO. Other conflicts, such as in Sierra Leone, Sudan, and Rwanda, however, were not of strategic importance, and did not receive the same kind of attention. The United States did get involved in Somalia in 1992, but withdrew in 1994 after repeated attempts to enforce peace had failed. This “pick and choose” mentality emboldened certain groups around the world as the knowledge that the United States would not necessarily send the cavalry to the aid of every country where internal fighting and human atrocities were taking place. This is not to say that it is the fault of the United States for not involving itself in every and all

instances where fighting was present. This is neither possible nor advisable. However, the knowledge that it would not necessarily intervene did create an environment where rogue countries, warlords, and terrorists could test the international environment and see how far they could push before any United States reprisals. In some cases, the reprisals never came.

This is the security environment that was being created in the 1990s and terrorists saw it as an opportunity to build up their strength for an eventual attack against their enemies. These asymmetrical threats went largely unnoticed during the 1990s as almost everyone was still concerned with nation-state threats. The reason why asymmetrical warfare became the standard was simple: everyone knew that they could not beat the United States in a conventional war. In a conventional war, soldier versus soldier, tank versus tank, the United States would win every time. The United States simply overpowered everyone else, and everyone understood this. This did not mean, however, that the age of fighting the United States was over. It merely meant that a new way to attack the United States needed to be found. This is where asymmetrical warfare comes in. It pits the traditional military might of the United States against the cunning, resourcefulness, and creativity of its enemies. In other words, the enemy has to learn to use everything at its disposal, such as suicide bombings and attacks on civilians, to try and achieve the desired end without engaging the United States on the traditional battlefield. For the most part, as has been previously explained concerning the goals of sacred terror, the most sought-after goal was the death of Americans and their allies and the terror that followed the attack.

In the 1990s, terrorist attacks against the United States and its allies rose dramatically. The phenomenon of sacred terror had begun early in the decade and jihadist style terror attacks became more prevalent. Although most believe that the 9/11 attacks were the beginning of the jihad against America, in truth, it was merely the main attack, not the first. With the stage now set concerning the state of the intelligence community within the United States, the new threat of sacred terror, and the state of the international security environment having been explored, the path that led the United States to Iraq can now be explored within its proper context.

Chapter 2: The Road to War

The decision to invade Iraq and depose Saddam Hussein was not simply made in the aftermath of 9/11. Nor did the decision originate within the walls of the White House in a meeting with the President. These ideas first began to be seen in a right-wing political think tank known as the Project for the New American Century (PNAC). This think tank was created in 1997 and committed to keep the United States in its position as world leader and hegemon.⁴³ The fact that such a group exists is not at all surprising. When a nation becomes as dominant as the United States after its victory in the Cold War and the demise of its enemy, one might expect a group to emerge with the vision to ensure that this new security environment would remain the norm, and that the United States would continue in its position of dominance. What is most surprising is the roster of names that make up the founding members of PNAC. Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, and Paul Wolfowitz⁴⁴ were among the original signatories of the PNAC charter. They would also become the key architects of the War on Terror and the ensuing war in Iraq. Of the other notable original signatories of the PNAC charter include: I. Lewis Libby, Dick Cheney's former Chief of Staff; Francis Fukuyama, a neoconservative theorist who is currently the Bernard L. Schwartz Professor of International Political Economy at The Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies Johns Hopkins University; Eliot A. Cohen, who is viewed by some as the "most influential neocon in academe,"⁴⁵ and a prominent scholar of military affairs at the Paul H. Nitze School of

⁴³ Information found at The Project for the New American Century homepage: <http://www.newamericancentury.org/statementofprinciples.htm>

⁴⁴ Ibid

⁴⁵ Information found at the International Relations Center, online at : <http://rightweb.irc-online.org/profile/1100>

Advanced International Studies Johns Hopkins University and in March 2007 was selected to the post of counselor by Condoleezza Rice as her one-man think tank; Elliott Abrams, who, as a government official, organized front groups to provide private and clandestine official support for the Nicaraguan Contras, served as the president of an ethics institute despite his own record of lying to Congress and managing illegal operations, as well as demonstrating his considerable talents in public diplomacy as a political art in the use of misinformation and propaganda to ensure public and policy support for foreign relations agendas that would otherwise be soundly rejected,⁴⁶ and Zalmay Khalilzad, who headed the Bush-Cheney transition team for the Defense Department in 2000, and held the position of Counselor for Donald Rumsfeld. Khalilzad also served as a senior director on President Bush's National Security Council early in his first term,⁴⁷ ambassador to Afghanistan from November 2003 until his shift in focus to Iraq when he became the United States ambassador to that country in March of 2005 through March 2007, and subsequently the United States ambassador to the United Nations.

With so many influential members in the Bush Administration, it should perhaps come as no surprise that the ideals of PNAC were at the forefront of policy. However, it is disconcerting to think that the plans to invade Iraq were laid years prior to President George W. Bush being elected, and that the foreign policy of the world's strongest nation was being determined not by its elected president, but by a right wing think tank that has been planning its course for years. PNAC's statement of principles reads like a Presidential address to the nation.

⁴⁶ Information found online at: <http://www.commondreams.org/views05/0209-22.htm>

⁴⁷ Information found online at: http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=Zalmay_Khalilzad

“As the 20th century draws to a close, the United States stands as the world's preeminent power. Having led the West to victory in the Cold War, America faces an opportunity and a challenge: Does the United States have the vision to build upon the achievements of past decades? Does the United States have the resolve to shape a new century favorable to American principles and interests?... We are in danger of squandering the opportunity and failing the challenge.... We seem to have forgotten the essential elements of the Reagan Administration's success: a military that is strong and ready to meet both present and future challenges; a foreign policy that boldly and purposefully promotes American principles abroad; and national leadership that accepts the United States' global responsibilities... America has a vital role in maintaining peace and security in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. If we shirk our responsibilities, we invite challenges to our fundamental interests. The history of the 20th century should have taught us that it is important to shape circumstances before crises emerge, and to meet threats before they become dire.”⁴⁸

What is perhaps most striking about this statement is the language surrounding the responsibilities of the United States toward the Middle East and that if the United States falters in its responsibilities, it is in fact inviting challengers. Also, the language of preemptive war is present in the talk of shaping events before crises emerge and meeting threats before they become dire. This is perhaps not all that surprising because Paul Wolfowitz in a defense paper in 1992 outlined the importance and guidelines of preemptive war in the post- Cold War world.⁴⁹ This same language was present in President Bush's 2003 State of the Union address. He described the threat emanating from Iraq and spoke of the need to confront this problem prior to any aggressive attack against the United States or its allies. President Bush stated:

“Some have said we must not act until the threat is imminent. Since when have terrorists and tyrants announced their intentions, politely putting us on notice before they strike? If this threat is permitted to fully and

⁴⁸ Information found online. Project for the New American Century Statement of Principles, June 3, 1997. Found at: <http://www.newamericancentury.org/statementofprinciples.htm>

⁴⁹ Keegan, John. The Iraq War. Vintage Canada. Toronto. 2005. 96.

suddenly emerge, all actions, all words, and all recriminations would come too late. Trusting in the sanity and restraint of Saddam Hussein is not a strategy, and it is not an option... America will not accept a serious and mounting threat to our country, and our friends and our allies.”⁵⁰

The same language of preemptive strikes that is present in President Bush’s speech is also in PNAC’s charter. Another surprising fact is that the current foreign policies of the United States seem to be clearly hinted at, if not explicitly outlined in a policy statement by the right wing think tank years before the eventual Republican President would be elected.

In a letter sent to President Clinton on January 26, 1998, PNAC outlined its concerns regarding the way in which the current United States foreign policy was dealing with Iraq. PNAC stated that the policy of containment was failing and that the United States could no longer count on its Gulf War allies to continue to uphold sanctions or to punish Saddam Hussein when he blocked or evaded UN inspections.⁵¹ In his 2003 State of the Union address, President Bush stated that “The world has waited 12 years for Iraq to disarm. America will not accept a serious and mounting threat to our country, and our friends and our allies.”⁵² In the same letter, PNAC urged that United States foreign policy must undertake military action to remove Saddam Hussein from power as diplomacy is failing.⁵³ On March 19, 2003, President Bush declared that United States and coalition forces were in the early stages of military operations to disarm Iraq and

⁵⁰ President George W. Bush. *2003 State of the Union Address*. Found online at : <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030128-19.html>

⁵¹ Letter to President William J. Clinton, January 26, 1998 from the Project for the New American Century. Found online at: <http://www.newamericancentury.org/iraqclintonletter.htm>

⁵² President George W. Bush. *2003 State of the Union Address*.

⁵³ Letter to President William J. Clinton, January 26, 1998 from the Project for the New American Century.

remove Saddam Hussein from power.⁵⁴ PNAC was getting its wish. It was merely five years later than hoped for. PNAC would continue to lobby to have its policy suggestions put in place and with the arrival of President George W. Bush, and 9/11, it would become much easier. Since many of the key founding members of PNAC found themselves in the inner power circle of the newly elected President, they were in a perfect position to push their ideas and to have them implemented as policy.

The idea of a rule set is one that is laid out very clearly and precisely by Thomas P. M. Barnett in his book *The Pentagon's New Map*. It deals with the idea that the way the United States views of the world must adapt to the ever changing international environment that it finds itself in the position of having to enforce as the sole superpower.⁵⁵ The way to achieve this end is to understand and to create/promote the new rule set by which the world must now abide. According to Barnett, the reason for the rise in terrorist attacks is due to the lack of a clear rule set by which everyone is held accountable. During the Cold War, the rules that governed the international environment were very clear. Because of the monopoly held by the great powers over nuclear weapons, there were no conflicts between the two great powers. The smaller conflicts remained on the fringes as the two superpowers tried to exert subtly their influence without tipping the bipolar balance of the Cold War. These "rules" ensured that everyone understood the game that was being played and that everyone understood the dire consequences of breaking the rules. The problem with the end of the Cold War, for all its

⁵⁴ President Bush Addresses the Nation. March 19, 2003. Found online at: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/03/20030319-17.html>

⁵⁵ Barnett, Thomas P.M.. *The Pentagon's New Map: War and Peace in the Twenty-first Century*. Berkeley Books, New York. 2004.

positives, was that it left the international system with one superpower and a host of other players that wanted to get involved in the big game.

Without further overuse of the metaphor, Barnett argues that to have international stability, a strong and agreed upon rule set must be present in order to maintain international order and peace.. This is the same end that PNAC was pushing towards in the late 1990s with the group's creation. It is only logical that an American organization would want to ensure American dominance in the coming century. This was the point that PNAC was trying to make and they sent letters to President Clinton pleading that a stronger international stance be taken. PNAC also had visions of how the United States could shape the global map in order to make it more friendly, and an aggressive foreign policy was the key.

The problem with calling for a dramatic shift in policy is that it requires a great deal of work with no immediate compensation. For governments to get re-elected, results need to be seen, not only perceived. Since reelection is the primary goal, a step in the opposite direction is not good strategy. Therefore, with no great pressing need, governments tend to leave well enough alone and wait for the sound of gun fire, or in this particular case, the sound of crashing planes, to bring about a change. 9/11 drove this point home as no other event possibly could have. It made frighteningly clear the problems facing the United States. To further complicate the matter, the United States Armed Forces were having problems similar to that of the intelligence community in the lead up to 9/11, as well as in its wake.

The military was having problems with getting the Bush Administration to listen to its concerns. Since Rumsfeld had been appointed Secretary of Defense, he had systematically tried to gain complete oversight and control of all things that impacted the United States' military. The problem was that he was not surrounding himself with the most knowledgeable and experienced military advisors. Rumsfeld was surrounding himself with people he felt he could control and manipulate.⁵⁶ With Rumsfeld as Secretary of Defense, the voice of the military was not being heard. Over one million people in the United States armed forces counted on the Joint Chiefs to act as their representatives and have their best interests in mind when the possibility of going to war was being discussed by the president. The problem was that Rumsfeld picked a Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Air Force General Richard B. Myers,⁵⁷ that he could control and therefore the voice of the military was being silenced before the president could hear its concerns. Rumsfeld had created the perfect climate in which he was in total control over all things pertaining to the military. The military voice and opinions were not being heard and its experience and suggestions were not being taken into consideration when important decisions were being made. For the Bush Administration not to listen, or to reject the advice of its top military advisors when making decisions regarding the use of force, amounts to a catastrophic blunder. This mistake can now be seen as having a serious impact on how the war in Iraq has been fought since its beginnings.

⁵⁶ Woodward, op. cit. 74.

⁵⁷ Woodward, op. cit. 69.

The Path to Iraq

The attacks of 9/11 would pave the way for the United States to go into Iraq and commence a regime change operation. 9/11 spawned a reaction from the United States government that has led to countless new initiatives pertaining to security within the United States, and several foreign undertakings including the war in Afghanistan, as well as the war in Iraq. But what connection is there between a fundamental Sunni Muslim terrorist group and a mostly secular Baathist political state? The two do not seem to share the same ideology, yet the Bush Administration insisted that the two not only shared the same views and goals, but that they were working together in the 9/11 attacks. This was a major problem with the commencement of the war on terror and the war in Iraq. The advice of the intelligence community was not being taken and the Bush Administration was acting on intelligence that simply did not exist.

According to a former CIA intelligence officer, the relationship between the intelligence community and the policymakers in the United States was broken and badly in need of repair.⁵⁸ The proper relationship between policymakers and the intelligence community requires a certain amount of separation between the two, so that the policymakers are not telling its intelligence analysts what to find. The ideal situation occurs when the “intelligence community collects information, evaluates its credibility, and combines it with other information to help make sense of situations abroad that could affect U.S interests.”⁵⁹ In this type of environment, it is the intelligence officers who decide which areas and topics should get their limited time and resources, as they presumably have an understanding of the concerns of the policymakers. In this way,

⁵⁸ Pillar. Paul R.. *Intelligence, Policy, and the War in Iraq*. Foreign Affairs. Vol. 85. March/April 2006. 15.

⁵⁹ Ibid, 16.

“policymakers thus influence which topics intelligence agencies address, but not the conclusions that they reach.”⁶⁰ In the same way, the intelligence community limits itself to assessing what “is happening or what might happen overseas, avoiding policy judgments about what the United States should do in response.”⁶¹

This type of relationship is important so as not to cloud the judgment of either side in their specific duties. Both sides must be perceived as being relatively objective when it comes to making decisions, whether it is the analysts basing their decisions upon the interpretation of intelligence that has been gathered, or the policymakers making important decisions based on that intelligence. Ideally, intelligence exists in a type of vacuum, completely void of any type of bias. To place more than minimal bias on the intelligence being gathered, either by the intelligence community, by giving policy advice or by telling the intelligence community what to look for, greatly undermines the credibility of both parts in this most important equation of national security. However, the Bush Administration, in the war with Iraq, used intelligence “not to inform decision-making, but to justify a decision already made. It went to war without requesting – and evidently without being influenced by – any strategic-level intelligence assessments on any aspect of Iraq.”⁶² It was as though President Bush had made up his mind regarding Iraq prior to receiving any type of intelligence on the issue. In fact, this was exactly the case.

Only one day after 9/11, Bush asked Richard Clarke, head of CIA counterterrorism to find out if there could be any connection made between the attacks

⁶⁰ Ibid, 16.

⁶¹ Ibid, 16-17.

⁶² Ibid, 18.

and Iraq.⁶³ Clarke responded to the President's request by telling him that it was clear that al-Qaeda was behind the attack. Bush responded by saying "I know, I know, but...see if Saddam was involved. Just look. I want to know any shred."⁶⁴ It was as if Bush was convinced that Saddam was involved, or at least wanted him to be, in order to give a reason to go to war with Iraq. Six days later, Bush told his war council that he believed Iraq was involved,⁶⁵ even though this ran against all the intelligence that the United States possessed regarding the attacks. By November 21, 2001, seventy-one days after 9/11, Bush asked Rumsfeld to start updating the war plan for Iraq.⁶⁶ Against available information, President Bush had decided to go to war with Iraq and overthrow its leader Saddam Hussein.

If there were no clear ties between Saddam and bin Laden, then why go to Iraq to fight terrorism and al-Qaeda? There are several answers to this question and most of them are very logical from the American perspective. The reasons the Bush Administration were looking at for justifiable action against Iraq were to create a democratic Iraq, to secure threatening weapons of mass destruction (WMD), to overthrow a totalitarian regime, and to establish a degree of energy security for the West.

Perhaps one of the most compelling reasons to go to war with Iraq was the vision of Paul Wolfowitz, then Deputy Secretary of Defense. He suggested that a "realignment of American power and influence in the Middle East, away from theocratic Saudi Arabia (home of so many of the 9/11 hijackers), and toward a democratic Iraq, as the beginning of an effort to cleanse the whole region of murderous regimes and

⁶³ Packer, George. The Assassins' Gate: America in Iraq. Farrar, Straus and Giroux. New York. 2005. 40.

⁶⁴ Ibid, 40.

⁶⁵ Ibid, 41.

⁶⁶ Woodward, op. cit. 81.

ideologies.”⁶⁷ Although this is a strategy that is loosely based on the spheres of influence doctrine of the Cold War, it is logical for the world’s superpower to desire such an end in an incredibly volatile region of the world. However, this motive did not need any ties between Iraq and al-Qaeda, and if the Iraq campaign was to be an extension of the war on terror, a direct link needed to be present to convince not only the United States’ Congress, but also the voting public and the world. Wolfowitz’s vision might have given the United States a much broader case for the war than simply the securing of supposed WMD’s. However, relying on a complex and abstract security theory would be difficult to sell to the voting public.⁶⁸

Another reason for war against Iraq was the overthrow of a totalitarian government. Because the War on Terror can be understood as an ideological war between a radical faith based group and a secular liberal government, victory would not be easy. True victory in this sense would require that

“millions of people across the Muslim world give up their murderous political ideas. It would be a long, hard, complicated business. But the overthrow of Saddam and the establishment of an Iraqi democracy as a beachhead in the Middle East would show that the United States was on the side of liberal-minded Arabs... and against the totalitarians and their ideas. Regime change would show that [the United States was] capable of fighting for an idea – the idea of freedom.”⁶⁹

It would seem that 9/11 was simply the jolt that was needed to get the ball in motion for starting this process. Having friendly democratic states around the world is of the utmost importance to the world’s sole superpower. This is also of particular importance in the Middle East for the United States to ensure its future energy security. To help deal with this problem, Wolfowitz asked Christopher DeMuth, president of the American

⁶⁷ Packer, op. cit. 60-61.

⁶⁸ Ibid, 61.

⁶⁹ Ibid, 50.

Enterprise Institute (AEI), yet another conservative Washington think tank, to start looking at “big picture” questions concerning 9/11 and the Middle East.⁷⁰ Questions that concerned topics like “who are the terrorists?” and “where did they come from?” as well as more general topics such as how the attacks related to general Middle Eastern tensions and Islamic history.⁷¹

Wolfowitz believed that it would be best for a like-minded think tank to undertake the task of shedding some light on the whole situation for the Bush Administration. DeMuth and the AEI ultimately produced a seven page document entitled “Delta of Terrorism” for the White House.⁷² This report concluded that there was a war going on within Islam in the region, and the United States was likely in for a two-generation battle with radical Islam.⁷³ It also concluded that Iraq, being a secular state, posed no immediate threat.⁷⁴ The AEI report suggested that the most pertinent threats and areas of trouble were found in Egypt and Saudi Arabia. However, the problems in these countries were seen as intractable and not immediately possible to fix. Iran was also seen as very important since it had been successful in setting up a radical government, but again, Iran was seen as too troublesome and difficult to deal with right away. Saddam Hussein, on the other hand, was different. He was seen as weaker and more vulnerable. The AEI concluded that a confrontation with Iraq was inevitable in the long run, and Wolfowitz came to the conclusion with the AEI that Saddam would have to be deposed before the larger problems in the area could be dealt with.⁷⁵ Since the region was the main breeding

⁷⁰ Woodward, op. cit. 83.

⁷¹ Ibid, 83.

⁷² Ibid, 84.

⁷³ Ibid, 84.

⁷⁴ Ibid, 84.

⁷⁵ Ibid, 85.

ground for terrorism, it was believed that a democratic pro-United States state at the centre of the region, not including Israel, could help bring about change throughout the region.

It would appear through this analysis that Iraq is truly only an afterthought to fixing the problem of radical Islam and terrorism in the Middle East. However, the long journey must begin somewhere, and it seemed clear, at least to President Bush, that Iraq would be the starting point of bringing about change to the entire region and also bringing the War on Terror to the heart of the Middle East. However, to sell this idea to not only the American people, but also the world, the Bush Administration wanted a strong link between the existing war on terror, which was focused on al-Qaeda, and Saddam Hussein. In order to claim that the war in Iraq was an extension of the War on Terror, the Bush Administration used selected pieces of raw intelligence to try and convince the public that a valid case for war against Iraq existed.⁷⁶

The problem was that the Administration once again did not listen to its intelligence advisors and pieced together intelligence that was not completely credible or substantiated. Perhaps the best example of this came in the 2003 State of the Union address when President Bush outlined some of his key reasons for going to war with Iraq. Bush claimed that Iraq had sought and succeeded in buying large portions of enriched uranium from Africa.⁷⁷ Bush's statement was based on a conflicting and inconclusive report that Iraq had tried to purchase yellowcake uranium from Niger.⁷⁸ While this statement certainly showed the public that Saddam Hussein was taking active steps towards producing a nuclear device, the statement was fundamentally flawed. The

⁷⁶ Pillar, op.cit. 19.

⁷⁷ Ibid, 19.

⁷⁸ Woodward, op. cit. 62.

problem was that the intelligence behind the uranium purchase in Africa had been deemed non-credible by the intelligence community long before Bush ever mentioned it in his speech. Furthermore, upon hearing that the President was going to use this in an upcoming speech, the intelligence community advised the White House not to mention this, as they themselves could not confirm that Saddam had actually tried to purchase any uranium at all.⁷⁹ Also, the 2002 National Intelligence Estimate (NIE), the collective judgment of all United States intelligence agencies, stated “with moderate confidence that Iraq does not have a nuclear weapon or sufficient material to make one, but is likely to have a weapon by 2007 to 2009.”⁸⁰ The 2002 NIE also judged that even if Saddam Hussein had acquired a nuclear weapon, he was unlikely to use it against the United States unless his regime was placed in mortal danger.⁸¹

All of these factors were ignored and President Bush went ahead with the intelligence about the purchased Niger uranium in an attempt to obtain public support for the war. Instead of stating that Iraq was five years away from having a nuclear weapon, Bush said in a speech on October 7, 2002, that “facing clear evidence of peril, we cannot wait for the final proof – the smoking gun – that could come in the form of a mushroom cloud.”⁸² By ignoring the advice of the NIE, the Bush Administration “deviated from the professional standard not only in using policy to drive intelligence, but also in aggressively using intelligence to win public support for its decision to go to war.”⁸³ This is not to suggest that every bit of intelligence should be immediately acted upon and that

⁷⁹ Pillar, op. cit. 19.

⁸⁰ Woodward, op. cit. 97.

⁸¹ Pillar, op. cit. 18.

⁸² Woodward, op. cit. 97.

⁸³ Pillar, op. cit. 19.

intelligence is the only factor that should be taken seriously when making foreign policy decisions. However, it would appear that the Bush Administration's sole use for the intelligence community was to win the public's support for the war, and not to use the advice and intelligence to shape and influence the difficult decisions that were being made. The Bush Administration had also decided to make its decisions regarding going to war before they had examined the intelligence and relevant information surrounding Iraq. In effect, "the administration had boxed itself in by deciding to go to war before it knew exactly why."⁸⁴

In so doing, the Administration created the problem of having to sell the war to the public. In trying to sell the Iraq war, the Bush Administration committed a cardinal sin. Instead of intelligence helping to form and lead the direction of policy, the relationship was reversed and the policymakers started to tell the intelligence community not only where to look, but what information they wanted them to find. This backwards relationship went even further when the Pentagon's Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) would not provide the intelligence that the White House requested. Instead of listening to the expert advice of seasoned intelligence officers who worked for the DIA, the Pentagon was told to have a different group of civilians go through the "raw data on Saddam's possible ties to al-Qaeda in order to produce the desired result that the established intelligence community... would not provide."⁸⁵ When policymakers, rather than intelligence agencies, "take the lead in selecting which bits of raw intelligence to present, there is – regardless of the issue – a bias."⁸⁶ This was precisely the case with Iraq. The decision to go to war had been made without looking at the relevant intelligence on the

⁸⁴ Woodward, op. cit. 62.

⁸⁵ Ibid, 62.

⁸⁶ Pillar, op. cit. 20.

issue. Now there was the problem of having to create the desired intelligence and sell the war to the public.

Regardless of how twisted the road to war was, the course was now set. The United States, or perhaps more suitably, George W. Bush and his team of advisors, had decided to go to war with Iraq. On January 13, 2003, Bush met with Colin Powell to tell him he had decided to go to war. Powell responded with the question “You understand the consequences?”⁸⁷ Regardless of how much President Bush thought he understood, it would seem fair to assume that the ensuing war in Iraq exceeded even his worst case scenarios. The impact of Bush’s decision to go to war has had complex and severe consequences both within the United States and around the globe. The full impact will not be known for some time. Unanticipated events have caused the war to go on far longer than expected. In the next chapter, the full impact of the decision to go to war will be examined by looking at the misuse of intelligence as well as the possible future negative impacts of the Bush doctrine of preemptive war. With the decision to go to war made, convincing the public to support the war was the next step.

⁸⁷ Woodward, *op. cit.* 106.

Chapter 3: Planning For War

With the decision to go to war made, the attention of the Bush Administration focused on planning the war effort. Normally, once the decision to go to war has been made by the American government, the American people have for the most part been supportive of the decision. The Iraq war would prove slightly different, as the need to find and build a case for the war, to gain public support, was at the crux of the planning in the months leading up to hostilities. Perhaps the most significant element in planning for a war is deciding what the underlying strategy will be. In the case of the first Gulf War, this would become known as the Powell Doctrine after General Colin Powell who was then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The Powell Doctrine has several important components. Perhaps the best known element of these components was that war is to be fought with overwhelming and disproportionate force size to that of the enemy.⁸⁸ The Powell Doctrine also suggests that war is to be a last resort and military action should only take place when there is a clear and present threat from the state in question.⁸⁹ Furthermore, war should only be fought when there is a strong base of support from the public and there should be a clear purpose for war, as well as a clear exit strategy from the conflict in which the military is engaged.⁹⁰ All of these points appear to be very straightforward and one would assume that all of these factors would be in place prior to the commencement of any war.

The First Gulf War saw the Powell Doctrine applied with fervor and with great success. The United States military had a clear plan of attack and used overwhelming

⁸⁸ DuBrin, Doug. Military Strategy: Powell Doctrine: Background, Application and Critical Analysis. Found on-line at: http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/teachers/lessonplans/iraq/powelldoctrine_short.html

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid

force in driving Iraqi troops out of Kuwait. There was also strong support for the war within the United States. Since the Powell Doctrine had had such great success when it was implemented in the Gulf War of 1991, one might expect that it would be used once again when the United States decided to revisit the area twelve years later in 2003.

Although the war would take place in the same theatre of operations as the first tour in the gulf region, the circumstances were different. Regardless of the specifics of why the United States was fighting and to which ends, one might have assumed that the same underlying doctrine of war would be utilized. This, however, was not to be the case.

The initial shift away from the Powell Doctrine was seen with the introduction of the Bush Doctrine in the aftermath of 9/11. The Bush Doctrine allowed for the United States to attack its enemies preemptively if a future and perceived threat was present, or thought to become present in the near future. The United States would no longer wait for an attack to occur to prove that it was in danger from its enemies. It would seek out future threats and neutralize them before a threat came to fruition. Although this was a drastic shift, it was hinted at years earlier by Paul Wolfowitz in 1992 in a defence policy paper. Wolfowitz outlines how a preemptive strategy should work in the post-Cold War world by saying that

“following the end of Cold War hostilities, the United States should spend to maintain its military dominance in Europe and Asia, preserve its strike forces and be ready to launch pre-emptive attacks against states which, on escaping the constriction of the superpower system, were setting up as possessors of weapons of mass destruction.”⁹¹

Wolfowitz anticipated the future instability of a world lacking two superpowers, and he also saw a way for the United States to play a role in maintaining stability by becoming

⁹¹ Keegan, John. The Iraq War. 96.

the sole hegemon. To accomplish this, the United States needed to maintain its levels of military preparedness and continue to spend money on its military infrastructure.

Wolfowitz saw the danger in allowing rogue states to acquire WMD and the United States needed to be ready to intervene, even if it meant going to war prior to any act of aggression by the other state. In Wolfowitz's eyes, a future threat of an attack using any form of WMD amounted to a real threat that needed to be addressed prior to it coming to fruition. A decade later, the President of the United States would agree with this stance and a policy of preemptive war was adopted, not only by the most powerful nation, but by a nation that was beginning to see enemies around every pile of sand.

Another way that the Bush Doctrine signified a departure from the traditional stance of the United States was its invocation and use of Chapter Seven, Article 51, of the United Nations Charter. Article 51 allows for the right of individual and collective self-defence in the response to an armed attack against a member of the United Nations.⁹² The law was written for the self-defence of a state that has been attacked by another state and to ensure its safety against further and future attacks. Having been attacked on 9/11, the United States believed that it qualified as a nation under attack. Since the war was to be an open-ended war on terrorism as a whole, there was no specific state that was mentioned that it would be protecting itself against. This allowed for a very broad sweep of the brush in terms of picking and choosing which countries it deemed responsible for the attack, and therefore it felt obliged to protect itself from all possible future terrorist attacks. With this logic, the United States felt that it was legally permissible to include preemptive measures to ensure its security and safety from future attacks. Since

⁹² United Nations Charter. Chapter 7, Article 51. Found on-line at: <http://www.un.org/aboutun/charter/chapter7.htm>

terrorism is a borderless threat, with many states giving safe haven to such groups, this gave the United States a practically limitless reach in searching out and destroying such threats to its safety.

With the invocation of the Bush Doctrine, the United States went to war with Iraq; a preemptive measure to avert future possible hostilities by the Saddam Hussein regime. A strategy for this war needed to be put in place before actual logistical planning could begin. The man who set the boundaries within which the military could work was Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. Rumsfeld's decisions over military strategy in Iraq were largely influenced, not only by the role and tactics that were used earlier in Afghanistan, but also from the lessons drawn from the first Gulf War. After the Gulf War in 1991, many felt that the nature of war had fundamentally changed. Because of the extremely low casualty rates and the perceived ease with which the coalition force won its victory, it was deemed that war would never be the same. It was believed that the advanced technology being used by the United States and its allies gave such a great advantage, that no enemy with even slightly less technological capabilities would be able to keep up.

The problem, however, is that war is fluid and rarely do any strong maxims hold true over the course of time. The details of one war in isolation, although valuable and full of lessons to be learned, cannot be used to make generalizations and grand theories about the nature of war on the whole. Clausewitz put it nicely by stating "every war is rich in unique episodes. Each is an uncharted sea, full of reefs."⁹³ To draw conclusions about how the Iraq War should be fought based on the outcome of the First Gulf War

⁹³ Clausewitz, Carl Von. On War. Ed. And Trans by Michael Howard and Peter Paret. Everyman's Library, New York, 1993. 139.

would therefore be foolish. Another reason why it is dangerous to make the First Gulf War the norm to which all future wars are to be measured, has to deal with the extremely low casualty rate. As some have argued, making the Gulf War the norm will hurt future United States military actions as the aversion for casualties will become evident when the number exceeds the astonishingly low casualty rate of the Gulf War.⁹⁴ This can clearly be seen in the present Iraq War, as no casualty number seems to be low enough for the United States public.

It would seem that although there was great success in the Gulf War, no universal principles should be drawn as to how to fight future wars based on this one example. However, Secretary Rumsfeld would not forget the apparent ease with which the Gulf War was won, and this would influence his decisions concerning how the Iraq War would be planned and fought. Another war that had a large impact on how Rumsfeld would plan for the Iraq War was the war in Afghanistan in the immediate aftermath of 9/11. This may seem an obvious conclusion, as it was in fact Rumsfeld who was one of the chief architects who drew up the plans for that war. However, it was not the planning of the Afghanistan War that was so important. The conclusions that Rumsfeld drew from the experience are what are of chief concern here.

The Afghan model of war that emerged was one that had the United States replacing its own conventional ground forces with indigenous allies, while relying on United States air supremacy and small numbers of special operations forces (SOF).⁹⁵ Putting too much faith in the Afghan model of war would not be advisable, as it requires

⁹⁴ Biddle, Stephen. *Victory Misunderstood: What the Gulf War Tells Us about the Future of Conflict*. *International Security*. Vol. 21, No. 2 (Fall 1996) 143.

⁹⁵ Biddle, Stephen D.. *Allies, Airpower, and Modern Warfare: The Afghan Model in Afghanistan and Iraq*. *International Security*. Vol. 30, No. 3 (Winter 2005/06) 161.

a very specific set of conditions to work. If policy makers in the United States rely on this model and therefore decide that conventional ground forces are no longer as important, this will inhibit the ability of the United States military to fight major decisive wars as it will always have to rely on lesser skilled forces. Furthermore, the Afghan model is by no means applicable across a wide strategic spectrum. At the heart of the Afghan model is the ability of the indigenous forces to seize defended territory. For unskilled attackers, this requires the “preemptive annihilation of any skilled defenses.”⁹⁶ One must then ask what the need is for any ground forces if the enemy has already been killed. Why bother involving indigenous forces if they will serve no other purpose than take up space? While the model worked well in Afghanistan, a large part was because the enemy was also unskilled, at least in the early parts of the war. They were mainly poorly trained guerrilla fighters lacking both the training and discipline of a regular army. Since the United States could acquire targets from great distances due to the poor concealment of the untrained enemy, precision-guided missiles could take out the enemy without U.S personnel having to get in harm’s way. This did change once the well-trained al-Qaeda forces became involved in the fighting. They were trained to build proper concealments to avoid detection and did not make it easy for precision-guided attacks. When the United States’ indigenous allies faced unskilled opponents, the Afghan model worked well and no close range combat was needed. However, when the enemy proved to be well trained al-Qaeda opponents, even superior United States technology was not always sufficient to achieve victory and in certain instances, the result was failure.⁹⁷

⁹⁶Ibid. 165.

⁹⁷Ibid. 172.

Even in Afghanistan, where all the preconditions were present, the Afghan model of war had only limited success. For this reason, one could assume that its influence would be very limited, and only where the same preconditions were present. However, Rumsfeld saw a shift in the way that wars could be fought and perhaps wanted to usher in a revolution in military affairs that mirrored his image of war. The Iraq War would not follow the model of success from the Gulf War, where overwhelming numbers of superior troops were used to win a swift victory. Rumsfeld wanted a much smaller force that contained highly skilled and well-equipped soldiers. He felt that these two factors, known as force multipliers, would counteract the need for overwhelming numbers and a sustained air assault. Another force multiplier that Rumsfeld was counting on to aid in his vision of war included violence of action, which is used to produce shock in the enemy.⁹⁸ This is gained by training one's soldiers to be aggressive and employing offensive tactics in concert with weapons that allow for superior firepower over that of the enemy.⁹⁹

The final two multipliers are good planning and timely and accurate intelligence. The key to these is accurate intelligence. For planning to be successful, the proper information surrounding the objective must be present. Without good intelligence, the best laid plans can amount to little more than good intentions. Also, in war, plans must be continually updated and strategies need to be ready to adapt to new information and intelligence coming in from the various intelligence agencies. Good intelligence is at the center of successful military operations. The problem with the war in Iraq is that the voice of the intelligence community was not being listened to, and a course of action,

⁹⁸ Hamilton, Dwight. Inside Canadian Intelligence: Exposing the New Realities of Espionage and International Terrorism. Dundurn Press, Toronto. 2006. 157.

⁹⁹ Ibid, 157.

along with the justifications to back it up to the public, had already been decided upon. War was imminent. How it would be fought had been decided upon. The reason for the war now needed to be explained to the American people.

The reason for going to war with Iraq has been discussed. The issue was not specifically Iraq, but the region and militant Islam. The dilemma was that attacking this problem directly would prove extremely difficult, as the roots were sown deep into the fabric of Middle-Eastern society. With Iran, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia, the problems were far too complex for any quick changes to occur. Iraq, however, was seen as being less troublesome and a step in the correct direction was seen as possible. Saddam Hussein had long been an enemy of the United States. He demonstrated that he was a global threat with the invasion of Kuwait and remained a thorn in the American's side throughout the next decade. Since establishing a foothold in the Middle-East would lead the way to solving the greater problems of the area, it was decided that Iraq would become the starting point to a regional reshuffling and democratization. A strong case for war needed to be found to gain the support of the voting public and the international community alike.

When it comes to convincing the average person that war is necessary, nothing works better than playing on their fears. For this reason, the fact that Saddam Hussein had sought to acquire weapons of mass destruction (WMD) was used to gain support for the coming war effort. Linked to this was talk of Saddam's ties to al-Qaeda and his hatred of the United States. However, the question remained as to whether Saddam Hussein actually was a threat. Since the first Gulf War, Iraq had been contained and

isolated by the outside world. Iraq's military had shrunk in size and was using obsolete equipment. There were ill-trained troops, there was displeasure in the ranks, and a lot of absenteeism.¹⁰⁰ Iraq was clearly seen by military experts as a decaying force. Also, the strategy of containment seemed to be working. In twelve years, not a single American aircraft was shot down while patrolling the no-fly zone over Iraq. This was not due to lack of ability. Saddam Hussein had the ability to shoot them down, just not the desire.¹⁰¹ It would appear that Hussein wanted to defy, but not outright provoke, the United States where he could. His seemingly ambiguous stance towards the no-fly zones paralleled what is now known to be his handling of WMD. He got rid of his chemical and biological stocks, but refused to allow international inspections to prove that he had done so.¹⁰²

It was not only the Administration that was being fooled, if in fact they were fooled at all. The *New York Times* ran a story on December 20, 2001, of an interview with an Iraqi defector Adnan Ihsan Saeed al-Haidari. He claimed to be a civil engineer who had personally worked on renovations of secret facilities for biological, chemical, and nuclear weapons.¹⁰³ This was a huge story, and an even more important asset to the American intelligence community, but there was one small problem. Not a word of what al-Haidari said was true. In 2004, long after the invasion, the *Columbia Journalism Review* noted that “none of the weapons sites – which al-Haidari claimed were located

¹⁰⁰ Ricks, Thomas. *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq*. The Penguin Press. New York. 2006.13.

¹⁰¹ Ibid, 15.

¹⁰² Ibid, 15.

¹⁰³ Ibid, 35.

beneath hospitals and behind palaces- have ever been located.”¹⁰⁴ Although there was no intention of wrong doing at the time, Judith Miller, author of the story, would light a fire in the hearts of Americans and convince many that Iraq did indeed have WMD, and this misinformation helped to build support for the coming war in Iraq.

Along with the media, the Administration was also pushing for greater support for the upcoming war in Iraq. On August 26, 2002, Vice President Dick Cheney said “there is no doubt” that Iraq possesses WMD.¹⁰⁵ Again, the reason why WMD were chosen as the main reason for going to war was because it was believed that the public would support a direct threat to national security, like the clear threat after the Pearl Harbor attacks, as opposed to going to war to secure a geo-political region that was at war with itself. In retrospect, however, perhaps being more forthright with the real reasons behind going to war with Iraq would have been the smarter path, as support for the war has steadily declined since the revelation that there are indeed no WMD in Iraq, and that most likely, there never was a tangible threat that Iraq would acquire them for some time.

However, having chosen a potential threat that would justify preemptive action, it was now time for the Administration to sell this to the public. A key document in this process was the National Intelligence Estimate (NIE), which is a compilation of intelligence from all the American intelligence agencies and is written and put together by top intelligence analysts. The NIE was released in October 2002 and it made a drastic shift from previous statements regarding the state of Iraq’s military capabilities. It reported that Iraq had continued its chemical and biological weapons making in defiance of the United Nations and that it also had ballistic missiles that exceeded the UN’s range

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, 35.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, 49.

limits of one hundred and fifty kilometres.¹⁰⁶ It also stated that with help from abroad, Iraq could have its first nuclear weapon inside a year and by 2007 if it received no help at all. Furthermore, it stated that Iraq had reestablished its production of chemical weapons as soon as UN inspectors had left in 1998, and that they were currently working on the production of mustard, sarin, GF (cyclosarin), and VX. All four of these are incredibly lethal, and although the NIE stated that production was likely more limited than it was during the Gulf War, its ability to produce and store VX was most likely to have improved.¹⁰⁷ This was particularly alarming since VX is the most lethal of all chemical agents as well as the most stable and longest lasting.¹⁰⁸ With the proper deployment mechanism, VX can be turned into a gas, and high levels of contact and inhalation almost always results in death.¹⁰⁹ Armed with such a weapon, Iraq would pose a serious threat if it were intent on using the gas. Finally, the NIE reported that it believed that part of Iraq's chemical weapons production was being hidden within Iraq's legitimate chemical industry.¹¹⁰

The NIE also stated that all aspects of Iraq's biological weapons program, including research and development, production, and weaponization, were active and that most elements were larger and more advanced than they were during the Gulf War.¹¹¹ Among these agents were anthrax which the intelligence community reported could be deployed via bombs, missiles, aerial sprays, and covert agents.¹¹² The NIE also stated

¹⁰⁶ Taken from the National Intelligence Estimate, October 2002. Found on-line at : http://www.globalsecurity.org/intell/library/reports/2002/nie_iraq_october2002.htm

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Department of Health and Human Services: Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Found on-line at: <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/agent/vx/basics/facts.asp>

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ National Intelligence Estimate, October 2002. op. cit.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Ibid.

that it believed that chances were even that Iraq had also developed the capability to produce smallpox, as well as other biologically manufactured agents. Also, it was believed that Iraq had several mobile manufacturing facilities that could not only evade detection and were highly survivable, but that had the capability of creating the same amount of agents that Iraq possessed prior to the Gulf War.¹¹³

The big problem with the entire estimate was not whether the intelligence community had all of its figures correct, or if they had correctly surmised which chemical and biological agents were present in Iraq. The problem was that they could not assess in what type of situation Saddam Hussein was likely to use what weapons he had at his disposal. If Saddam Hussein had no intentions of using his weapons against the United States in a first strike capacity, then it could not be said that he amounted to a threat to national security and therefore the need to act preemptively would not be necessary.

There were in fact several different scenarios in which the intelligence community believed that Saddam Hussein could possibly use his arsenal. The first possibility was that he would use the weapons preemptively against American interests, United States forces, and its allies in the region to try and disrupt war preparations and to try and undermine the will of American allies for the coming war.¹¹⁴ An interesting aside is that in October 2002, the intelligence community was already certain that a war in Iraq was going to happen, and they were making preparations and intelligence decisions based on this. The second contingency was that Iraq would use its WMD after the initial crossing of United States forces into Iraqi territory.¹¹⁵ Although this was a possibility, it remained unlikely, since this would end any possibility of a diplomatic solution later on. A third

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

possibility was that Saddam Hussein would use his WMD if he felt that he had lost control over his military command. Finally, the NIE believed that the most likely scenario for use of WMD would be if Saddam Hussein felt a threat to the survival of his regime. All these scenarios encompass very different situations and there was little confidence in the intelligence community that any or all should be taken as a serious and imminent threat to national security. However, this was not the message that was being broadcast to the American public. The message that kept being repeated by the Administration was that America could not wait for the smoking gun to take action and that any perceived threat from such a state must be taken extremely seriously and be dealt with preemptively prior to the smoking gun, in the form of a mushroom cloud.¹¹⁶

The major anxiety surrounding Saddam Hussein's continuing steps towards acquiring a nuclear weapon was based on the purchase, or the attempted purchase of aluminum tubes for centrifuge to enrich uranium - the key step towards a nuclear capability. However, there were two problems surrounding the intelligence on Iraq's nuclear program, not to mention the way the Administration used the intelligence, which will be explored momentarily. The first problem was that the intelligence surrounding Iraq's possession of uranium was contradictory in nature. According to one segment of the 2002 NIE, intelligence reports from 2001 stated that

"Iraq retains approximately two-and-a-half tons of 2.5 percent enriched uranium oxide, which the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) permits. This low-enriched material could be used as a feed material to produce enough HEU (High enriched uranium) for about two nuclear weapons...Iraq has about 550 metric tons of yellowcake and low-enriched uranium at Tuwaithat, which is inspected annually by the IAEA. Iraq also began vigorously trying to procure uranium ore and yellowcake; acquiring either would shorten the time Baghdad needs to produce nuclear weapons...Niger planned to send several tons of 'pure uranium' (probably yellowcake) to Iraq. As early as 2001, Niger and Iraq reportedly were

¹¹⁶ Woodward, op. cit. 18.

still working out arrangements for this deal, which would be for up to 500 tons of yellowcake...reports indicate that Iraq also sought uranium ore from Somalia and possibly the Democratic Republic of the Congo.”¹¹⁷

When looked at independently, this section of the NIE is straight forward and it would appear that Iraq was indeed on its way to having the raw material to produce a nuclear device. However, the NIE qualifies its own conclusions. They could not confirm whether Iraq was successful in acquiring uranium ore or yellowcake.¹¹⁸ Intelligence did suggest that Iraq had shifted away from domestic mining for uranium and had instead turned towards foreign acquisition, although whether Iraq had re-established its mining for uranium recently was inconclusive.¹¹⁹

One reason why it was believed that Iraq had been successful in its attempt to acquire uranium ore or yellowcake, was due to intelligence reports surrounding Iraq’s efforts to secure the aforementioned aluminum tubes. If Iraq was seeking high quality aluminum tubes, their sole purpose would be to use them for a centrifuge to enrich uranium. The key debate surrounding the tubes in question was whether they were of high enough quality for nuclear purposes, or whether they were simply to be used in conventional rockets or missiles.¹²⁰ This debate raged between the intelligence community and the Administration, and although nothing in the world of intelligence is ever unanimous, it would appear that the position believing them to be for conventional rockets was pushed aside.

In August of 2002, Vice President Dick Cheney claimed: “We do know, with absolute certainty, that [Saddam Hussein] is using his procurement system to acquire the

¹¹⁷ National Intelligence Estimate, October 2002. *op. cit.*

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰ Ricks, *op. cit.* 90.

equipment he needs in order to enrich uranium to build a nuclear weapon.”¹²¹ Cheney went on to claim that this intelligence was based on reliable sources, one of whom was Saddam Hussein’s own son-in-law, Hussein Kamel, who had defected to Jordan in 1995 with a great deal of information on Iraq’s special weapons programs, which he had managed.¹²² In fact, Kamel had told his interrogators the exact opposite. On August 22, 1995, Kamel stated that Saddam had ended all uranium-enrichment programs at the beginning of the Gulf War in 1991 and that they had never resumed.¹²³ Furthermore, Cheney was basing this particular argument on information that was at best six years old, which in the world of intelligence, is considerably dated and therefore useless. It would also seem that Kamel was telling the truth about the lack of a nuclear program, since upon his return to Iraq, having been persuaded to return by his father-in-law, he was promptly murdered for what he had divulged.¹²⁴

The press was also pushing the story regarding the certainty of purpose of the aluminum tubes. Judith Miller of *The New York Times*, who had reported the false story of the Iraqi defector, claimed that Iraq was getting close to a nuclear weapon by its attempted purchase of “specially designed aluminum tubes, which American officials believe were intended as components of centrifuge to enrich uranium.”¹²⁵ Pushing the story of the tubes continued in the press. In an interview on *Meet the Press*, Dick Cheney said that it was now public knowledge that Saddam Hussein “has been seeking to acquire the kind of tubes needed for the production of highly enriched uranium, which is what

¹²¹ Bamford, op. cit. 319.

¹²² Ibid, 319.

¹²³ Ibid, 320.

¹²⁴ Ibid, 320.

¹²⁵ Ibid, 323-324.

you have to have in order to build a bomb.”¹²⁶ Similarly, on Fox News, Colin Powell talked of the specialized aluminum tubes that Iraq was trying to acquire.¹²⁷ The press took everything that the Administration said at face value and gave a considerable amount of deference towards the top Bush Administration officials.

The problem facing the Administration was that the intelligence community was not convinced that the aluminum tubes were going to be used as centrifuges in a nuclear program. The 2002 NIE stated that although Iraq was trying to acquire aluminum tubes, and that this provided compelling evidence that Iraq was trying to reconstitute its nuclear program, doubt remained. The Department of Energy attested that the aluminum tubes in question were most likely not of high enough quality to be used in a nuclear capacity.¹²⁸ However the most compelling argument against the use of the specific aluminum tubes in question is found within the NIE itself, by an addition put in by the Department of State’s Bureau of Intelligence and Research.¹²⁹

“In INR’s view Iraq’s efforts to acquire aluminum tubes is central to the argument that Baghdad is reconstituting its nuclear weapons program, but INR is not persuaded that the tubes in question are intended for use as centrifuge rotors. INR accepts the judgment of technical experts at the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) who have concluded that the tubes Iraq seeks to acquire are poorly suited for use in gas centrifuges to be used for uranium enrichment and finds unpersuasive the arguments advanced by others to make the case that they are intended for that purpose. INR considers it far more likely that the tubes are intended for another purpose, most likely the production of artillery rockets. The very large quantities being sought, the way the tubes were tested by the Iraqis, and the atypical lack of attention to operational security in the procurement efforts are

¹²⁶ Ibid, 324.

¹²⁷ Ibid, 324.

¹²⁸ National Intelligence Estimate, October 2002. op. cit.

¹²⁹ U.S. Department of State: Bureau of Intelligence and Research. Found on-line at: <http://www.state.gov/s/inr/>. The Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) is the intelligence branch of the State Department and along with being part of the official intelligence community, it provides independent analysis of events to Department policymakers, as well as ensuring that intelligence supports foreign policy and national security purposes.

among the factors, in addition to the DOE assessment, that lead INR to conclude that the tubes are not intended for use in Iraq's nuclear weapons program.”¹³⁰

The INR went even further to dispute the claims of the use of the tubes after a speech made by Secretary of State Colin Powell in February 2003. Powell stated that Saddam Hussein “remains determined to acquire nuclear weapons”,¹³¹ and this statement was based solely on the intelligence regarding the purchase of aluminum tubes which he believed, or was told to believe, would be used for centrifuge. Powell also asserted that he found it odd that the tubes in question exceeded United States requirements for comparable rockets which, it had been suggested, would be used by the Iraqi army. Two days prior to Powell’s speech, the INR had critiqued this part of his speech, saying that the aluminum tubes in question were of a similar quality to that used by a United States tactical rocket, the U.S Mark-66 air-launched 70mm rocket, which uses the same high grade (7075-T6) aluminum in question.¹³² There are enough holes in the intelligence surrounding the aluminum tubes to ensure that no strong case could be made for the nuclear linkage. Regardless, the Administration continued its emphasis on the nuclear capabilities of Iraq based on the attempted acquisition of aluminum tubes and the attempted purchase of yellowcake uranium from Niger, even though both had been described in the 2002 NIE to be “in (the) INR’s assessment, highly dubious.”¹³³

In the same way the PNAC had desired the invasion of Iraq since the late 1990s and was now pursuing this goal within the Bush Administration, there was another group that was planning for the Iraq war long before it began, and was pushing the WMD agenda as the justification for the Iraq war. The only difference was that originally the

¹³⁰ National Intelligence Estimate, October 2002. op. cit.

¹³¹ Ricks, op. cit. 90.

¹³² Ricks, 91.

¹³³ National Intelligence Estimate, October 2002. op. cit.

plan had been intended to be carried out by Israel. The three key architects of this plan were Douglas Feith, Richard Perle, and David Wurmser. Feith and Perle had been high-level Pentagon officials during the Reagan Administration, and at the start of the Bush Presidency, all three were working for various pro-Israel think tanks.¹³⁴ The idea was that the United States would distance itself from the Israel-Palestine situation and leave Israel to solve the problem as it saw fit. This would eventually lead Israel to trying to secure its regional position by attacking Iraq preemptively because of the presence of WMD in the hands of Saddam Hussein.¹³⁵ The spin inside the United States was leaving Israel to deal with the Middle East on its own, was in fact in the national interest of the United States. If Israel subsequently attacked neighboring Lebanon and Syria to halt the threat from drugs, counterfeiting, and WMD, the war would eventually lead to regime change in the entire region, with Iraq involved in this equation.¹³⁶

Feith however, did not stay away from government, and in August 2002 he was called back to the Pentagon where he created the Office of Special Plans (OSP). OSP's sole purpose was to conduct advance war planning for Iraq, with one of its most important responsibilities being the creation of a strong media strategy.¹³⁷ OSP was created to find the necessary intelligence to back up the plan to go to war with Iraq. To do so, OSP forged close ties with a parallel unit within Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's office in Israel. This Israeli unit was designed to go around Israel's intelligence agency, the Mossad, in order to provide key people in the Bush Administration with more alarmist reports about Saddam Hussein and Iraq than Mossad was prepared to authorize.

¹³⁴ Bamford, op. cit. 261.

¹³⁵ Ibid, 261-262.

¹³⁶ Ibid, 262-264.

¹³⁷ Ibid, 307-308.

¹³⁸ With the OSP having such strong ties to this Israeli unit, it was in fact getting skewed intelligence not only from its own intelligence network, but also from a similar intelligence unit in Israel. Therefore a truly clear picture of what was actually happening in Iraq was not being seen by the OSP, although this was not really the idea behind the group in the first place.

Once Feith's intelligence unit had skimmed through and selected the most negative parts of the raw intelligence regarding Iraq from both the United States and Israeli intelligence, it was sent to the OSP to be transferred into analysis and talking points for future presentations. This information was used to brief senior Administration officials who would then in turn use the "OSP's false and exaggerated intelligence as ammunition when attempting to hard sell the need for war to their reluctant colleagues, such as Colin Powell, and even allies like British Prime Minister Tony Blair."¹³⁹ The overall goal of the OSP was not simply to fight Saddam Hussein, but also to fight the "NSC (National Security Council), the State Department, and the intelligence community which were not convinced of Hussein's involvement in terrorism."¹⁴⁰

On June 21, 2002, the CIA produced a report entitled *Iraq & al-Qa'ida: Interpreting a Murky Relationship*. The report, constructed by both regional and terrorism analysts, was in truth only an exercise to see what the conclusions would be if the most forward leaning explanations of CIA intelligence turned out to be true.¹⁴¹ The note attached to the paper read in part that:

¹³⁸ Ibid, 308.

¹³⁹ Ibid, 317.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid, 317.

¹⁴¹ Tenet, George. At the Center of the Storm: My Years at the CIA. HarperColins Publishers, New York. 2007.344-345.

“This intelligence assessment responds to senior policy maker interest in a comprehensive assessment of Iraqi regime links to al-Qa’ida. Our approach is *purposefully aggressive in seeking to draw connections*, on the assumption that any indication of a relationship between these two hostile elements could carry great dangers to the United States. (emphasis added)”¹⁴²

The Middle Eastern regional specialists saw a fundamental distrust between Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden based primarily on the danger that Islamic extremism posed for the Iraqi regime.¹⁴³ While the terrorism specialists saw this as well, they discounted this fact and saw a deeper underlying relationship based on a common threat from the United States. The paper was quite clear that there were no conclusive findings regarding any type of relationship between Iraq and al-Qaeda concerning terrorist operations. However, there was enough data about safe haven, training, and contacts to raise some concern.¹⁴⁴ The report was published because of this potential threat to the United States.

It was clear that the study was biased from the beginning, since it was based on the assumption that there was a connection between Iraq and al-Qaeda. The study makes quite clear that the only reason why the exercise was being conducted, was because senior policy makers wanted to see what the CIA would find. Many who worked on the study felt that it was much too aggressive and some even complained informally to an ombudsman over the politicization of the conclusions contained within the study.¹⁴⁵

Although many analysts felt that the study had gone too far, many in the Administration felt that it had not gone far enough. Not surprisingly, two among them were Paul Wolfowitz and Scooter Libby. Furthermore, an internal Pentagon memo had

¹⁴² Ibid, 345.

¹⁴³ Ibid, 345.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid, 345.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid, 345.

been sent to both Wolfowitz and Feith saying that all attempts to discredit the *Murky Relationship* paper by the CIA should be ignored and that the conclusions and findings of the report were good.¹⁴⁶

The OSP continued to push the link between Saddam Hussein and al-Qaeda. This was not surprising, as getting public support for the war would be much easier if a link could be shown. In the late summer of 2002, Feith's small intelligence unit had completed its "study" on the links between al-Qaeda and Saddam. The problem that the CIA saw with their study was that Feith and his team lacked the big picture mentality required by good intelligence analysts. Instead, they would seize on to small bits of intelligence that supported their case and disregard other intelligence that might refute their desired end.¹⁴⁷ Feith controlled at that time the two key "analysts" who had worked on the "study" – Christopher Corney, an associate professor of Political Science at the University of Pennsylvania and Defense Intelligence Agency analyst Christina Shelton – and had them brief Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld.¹⁴⁸ After that, on August 15, Feith had Corney and Shelton present their findings to the CIA to see if they could change anyone's mind about the intelligence they had found and published in the *Murky Relationship* report. The OSP presentation was entitled *Iraq and al Qaeda – Making the Case*. During the presentation, Shelton said that there should be no more debate on the issue and that no further analysis was required. She also claimed that it was an open and shut case¹⁴⁹ and stated that Iraq and al-Qaeda had a "mature, symbiotic relationship".¹⁵⁰ a statement that CIA felt could not be further from the truth. The problem was that the

¹⁴⁶ Ibid, 346.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid, 347.

¹⁴⁸ Bamford, op. cit. 317.

¹⁴⁹ Tenet, op. cit. 347.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid, 347.

many at the CIA saw the study for what it truly was: a politicized attempt to sway the opinions of the real intelligence community.

During the presentation, CIA Director George Tenet pulled aside Vice Admiral Jake Jacoby, the head of the Defense Intelligence Agency, and a member of Feith's team, and said "This is entirely inappropriate. You get this back in intelligence channels. I want analysts talking to analysts, not people with agendas."¹⁵¹ Although the briefing at CIA was ignored, Feith continued pushing his "intelligence" report. Without any notice to the Pentagon, Feith had Corney and Shelton give their presentation at the White House to a group of senior officials in the NSC and the Vice President's office. Among those present were Deputy National Security Advisor, Stephen J. Hadley and Scooter Libby, Vice President Cheney's Chief of Staff. Added into the presentation was a slide that criticized the CIA for disagreeing with the OSP's report on the links between Iraq, al-Qaeda, and the 9/11 attacks.¹⁵²

It was at this point that the presentation was taken seriously. There is no reason why an intelligence report given at the White House should contain any intelligence that has previously been discredited. Therefore, the presentation was taken at face value. There was direct pressure coming from the Administration wondering why the CIA was not paying attention to this very startling intelligence. The top down pressure directed at the CIA began to work. On October 7, 2002, the agency's Deputy Director John E. McLaughlin, in a letter to the Senate Intelligence Committee, stated "We have solid evidence of senior level contacts between Iraq and al-Qa'ida going back a

¹⁵¹ Ibid. 348.

¹⁵² Bamford, op. cit. 317-318.

decade...Growing indications of a relationship with al-Qa'ida, suggests that Baghdad's link to terrorism will increase, even absent U.S. military action.”¹⁵³

The problem was that despite the occasional contact, there was absolutely no evidence to support the fact that the two had ever worked together on any kind of operational level. Another problem was the beginning of serious political interference in the intelligence process, so much so, that the intelligence community began to be accused by members of the Administration of trying to sabotage the President's policies, by not finding the proper intelligence to support what everyone 'knew' to be going on, whether or not there was any evidence to support the claim.¹⁵⁴ The intelligence community also began to be ridiculed publicly for its stance regarding the Iraq- al-Qaeda relationship, or lack there of. The *Washington Post* ran an article by Jim Hoagland who stated: “Imagine that Saddam Hussein has been offering terrorist training and other lethal support to Osama bin Ladin's al-Qa'ida for years. You can't imagine that? Sign up over there. You can be a Middle East analyst for the Central Intelligence Agency.”¹⁵⁵ The relationship between the intelligence community and the Administration was deteriorating quickly. With the Administration placing so much faith in Feith's OSP, there should be little surprise that intelligence was misused by the Administration for its political goals.

The Bush Administration needed to make the case for going to war seem reasonable and it needed the support of the public. Also, the United States did not want to go into Iraq on its own and therefore needed to gain the support of the international community. To do this, certain elements of the intelligence gathered on the issue needed

¹⁵³ Ibid. 318.

¹⁵⁴ Pillar, op. cit. 24.

¹⁵⁵ Tenet, op. cit. 346.

to be shared, in order to convince the average American and United States' allies that war with Iraq was necessary. In December 2002, the CIA was asked to make a public case for going to war, and on Saturday December 21, 2002, the presentation took place at the White House. The presentation was given by John McLaughlin and nothing in the presentation was new to those in attendance. After the presentation, President Bush felt underwhelmed and said that the information in the presentation was not going to convince "Joe Public" of the case to go to war with Iraq.¹⁵⁶ Bush asked Tenet if there was any additional information that could be added that might strengthen the argument for the public's perception. Tenet responded by saying that additional intelligence could be declassified and that parts of the 2002 NIE could be added to the public case for war as well. It was in this context that George Tenet used the phrase "slam dunk" that has become notorious for leading the Bush Administration to war. What he actually said was: "strengthening the public presentation was a slam dunk."¹⁵⁷ The context in which it was reported, however, gave a much different impression. The report was that Tenet said the case for Iraq having WMDs was a slam dunk. This meeting in fact took place ten months after the decision had been made and two weeks after the Pentagon had issued its first orders sending troops to the region.¹⁵⁸ Yet in an attempt to shift the blame, the CIA's Director was accused of assuring President Bush that Saddam Hussein did indeed have WMDs and that it was a "slam dunk."

Shortly after the December 21, 2002 meeting at the White House, another meeting was held between the NSC staff and members from the CIA. The purpose was to try and bolster the presentation that would be made to the public. National Security Advisor

¹⁵⁶ Ibid. 361.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid. 362.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid. 362.

Condoleezza Rice, after hearing John McLaughlin suggest that parts of the 2002 NIE be used, asked him to summarize the key components that he believed useful. After he started using the language of intelligence, such as “we assume” and “we judge that”, Rice asked if the NIE was simply filled with assertions. It was then explained that the NIE was in fact just that, an estimate. Rice then said: “You (the intelligence community) have gotten the president way out on a limb on this.”¹⁵⁹ It would seem that Rice had no notion that in fact the Administration was pushing towards a war with Iraq and that the intelligence community had been saying that the evidence simply was not there to justify that course of action so quickly. During the meeting, McLaughlin explained that the strongest WMD case for war would be to argue that the missiles Saddam possessed had a greater range than allowed by the United Nations, even though they only exceeded the allowed distance by a few tens of kilometres.¹⁶⁰ The weakest argument was that Iraq possessed nuclear weapons, or would soon have the ability to make a nuclear device. In the 2002 NIE, it was stated that the earliest Iraq could procure such a weapon would be 2007.¹⁶¹

On January 6, 2003, CIA Director Tenet again met Rice in her office. The topic of the meeting was to strengthen the Iraq nuclear case for an upcoming speech. It was repeated by Tenet that the case was weak because the intelligence was simply not there. Three weeks later, Stephen Hadley, a member of Rice’s staff at NSC, asked if the relevant parts of the 2002 NIE concerning Iraq’s nuclear program could be sent to him so he would not have to read the entire ninety pages. The CIA obliged and sent twenty-four relevant pages. Of those, White House officials took one paragraph that strengthened

¹⁵⁹ Ibid. 370.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid. 370.

¹⁶¹ National Intelligence Estimate, October 2002. op. cit.

their case, and ignored the rest of the document. This segment, concerning the purchase of yellowcake uranium from Niger, was included in President Bush's 2003 State of the Union address, even though there were questions about the accuracy of the information.¹⁶² Nevertheless, the statement was included in the speech and the first major step in convincing the world and the American people that war was necessary had been taken.

The second step would be the speech Secretary Powell gave at the United Nations Security Council on February 5, 2003. It was this speech that would persuade several countries to follow the United States into Iraq. The reasoning was that if Colin Powell supported the decision, then the evidence must be fairly strong. Secretary Powell was known for his integrity and was not seen as a pawn of the Bush Administration. Regardless of his track record, Secretary Powell has been described as the first casualty of the Iraq war because his reputation was severely tarnished as the result of his speech. The contents of Powell's speech were hotly contested in the weeks leading up to his UN address on February 5, 2003. The CIA originally believed that Powell would draw the majority of his information from intelligence presented at the White House by John McLaughlin two months earlier. However, as President Bush had said, that particular presentation had underwhelmed, and Powell's speech to the UN needed to be persuasive and alarming. To prepare for his speech, Powell travelled to CIA headquarters and met with several CIA analysts who had a clear and thorough understanding of the intelligence in question. Prior to leaving, the White House had handed him a template from which to work and Powell assumed that it was based on the intelligence presented by McLaughlin. However, not only did the contents of the White House document differ from the

¹⁶² Bamford, *op. cit.* 331

intelligence in McLaughlin's presentation, the intelligence contained within the White House document was completely unknown to the CIA and had not been cleared by the CIA for a public address.¹⁶³ Scooter Libby told Powell that the draft was written as a lawyer presenting a brief.¹⁶⁴ In other words, it was written to persuade and not as an analytical document.

Powell decided to go to CIA headquarters in an attempt to remove himself from any type of political control over the contents of his speech and it would allow him to dwell only on the facts of making the case for war. It would appear that this was a futile attempt. Upon going over the White House-suggested speech, CIA analysts continually found that the information being relied upon to make the case for war was "fragmentary, unsubstantiated, or had previously been proved wrong."¹⁶⁵ As a result, it was found that the speech basically no longer existed. This left two options. First, Powell could wait for another draft to be sent and repeat the process, or second, the CIA could help write the speech with intelligence that they believed to have a high probability of being true. Of the two options, the latter seemed much more attractive.

However, the fact that the CIA was involved in writing Powell's speech does raise some serious concerns. This was a clear crossing of the line between analyzing intelligence and interfering with policy. This maxim is one of the fundamental principles in the relationship between the intelligence community and policymakers. It was felt, however, that if the CIA did not help with the writing of Powell's speech, then the White

¹⁶³ Tenet. op. cit. 372.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid, 372.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid, 373.

House would include some intelligence that would not stand up to scrutiny and the CIA would never live down the fallout.¹⁶⁶

Regardless of the attempts to rid the speech of any unfounded intelligence, the fact remains that the world of intelligence is based on speculations and best guesses. At the time, some members within the intelligence community still held hope that preliminary elements of a WMD program might be found in Iraq. The fact that they were not, struck a serious blow not only to the CIA, but also subsequently to Colin Powell personally as his reputation began to unravel when the pillars of his UN speech began to give way under further investigation. However, the immediate impact was felt around the world. Powell's February 5, 2003 speech to the UN conjured the image of an armed Iraq ready to use its arsenal against the United States, as well as being willing to give these weapons to al-Qaeda. Convincing the UN was not of the utmost importance. From the beginning, if the UN did not side with the United States, it was clear that the United States would go to Iraq without UN support. What was more important was convincing the American people that war was necessary. As was expected by the Administration, this is exactly what happened.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid, 374.

Chapter 4: The War

The Iraq War was planned to start on March 20, 2003. This was the deadline the United States had given Iraq to surrender its WMD to the United Nations weapons inspectors. This ultimatum was more of a formality than anything else, as it was well known that Saddam Hussein had no intention of giving anything to the UN team. The plans for the Iraq war had been agreed upon and the time for the commencement of the war was fast approaching. As the maxim goes, the best laid plans for war are good until the first shot is fired, and this remained true for the Iraq War, although for slightly different reasons. Just forty-eight hours prior to the deadline, the CIA received high priority intelligence claiming to know when and where Saddam Hussein was going to be in the next twenty-four hours.¹⁶⁷ The problem was that the United States had given a firm deadline to the world as to how long it would wait before it began its war with Iraq. Weighing heavily against this was the strong belief that if Saddam Hussein could be killed early on in the war, then the rest of the regime, politicians and soldiers alike, would lay down their arms and the war would in effect be over before it ever got started. This was not an unrealistic assumption. Many within the Baath Party feared Saddam Hussein more than the American military. Saddam was known for regularly killing many of his top aides out of fear that one might become too powerful and overthrow him. On other occasions, Saddam had entire families killed for one party member's betrayal or even the appearance of betrayal. This was a punishment far worse than being killed on the field of battle. For this reason, if the intelligence community became aware of Saddam's whereabouts, the CIA needed to be prepared to strike.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid, 391.

The intelligence had come from a CIA operative working in Iraq. Although the HUMINT coming out of Iraq was small, the quality and importance of the intelligence being gathered by CIA operatives was extremely valuable. The overall impact of HUMINT cannot be replaced by SIGINT, and real-time intelligence can have a most drastic impact on the way wars are fought. This was believed to be that type of intelligence. The CIA had long been working with Iraqis in an attempt to subvert Saddam's regime by gaining allies in positions of influence. In February 2002, the CIA resurrected the Northern Iraq Liaison Element (NILE) which consisted of teams of CIA officers who had historically encamped with the Kurds in northern Iraq.¹⁶⁸ The goal of the NILE was to subvert Saddam's regime wherever possible. One group of Iraqis working with the CIA brought in four different Iraqi military officers a week for debriefing. This was an extremely valuable exercise as it gave the United States sensitive Iraqi military information.

One specific CIA asset and member of the NILE worked as a communication officer to provide communications for top Iraqi officials. It was this asset that passed intelligence to the CIA on the whereabouts of Saddam Hussein on March 18, 2003. The CIA source noticed an interesting occurrence concerning the status of the communication switchboard. When all the communication functions were working properly, the lights on the board were all green and this was generally the norm. If communications in a certain area went down, then the light in that section would turn red to alert those monitoring communications that there was a problem. The CIA source noticed a pattern occurring in the areas where communications seemed to temporarily go down. The day after identifying the problem in question, the CIA source would hear that Saddam had

¹⁶⁸ Ibid, 386.

been visiting the precise area where the communications had previously not been working. It appeared that Saddam's personal security forces cut the communications in the area in which he would be travelling to prevent any potential disloyal military personnel from revealing his whereabouts to any of Saddam's enemies.¹⁶⁹

Having discovered a pattern of potentially important significance, the NILE member contacted his CIA handler and informed him of the communication outage and the location. On the morning of March 19, 2003, the lights still indicated that Dora Farms, an estate owned by Saddam's wife, was likely to hold a meeting of top Iraqi military personnel, and most likely Saddam's two sons and Saddam himself. The CIA, seeing the immediate importance of this intelligence, called the Pentagon and in a very short period of time CIA Director Tenet and Deputy Director McLaughlin were briefing Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld with the intelligence report. Tenet and Rumsfeld both saw an opportunity and called the White House to arrange an emergency meeting with President Bush.¹⁷⁰

The problem with such intelligence reports was that it was impossible to know whether the information was credible or if Saddam was trying to root out his enemies with an elaborate deception. Another possibility that came into the mind of the President was that Saddam had moved an orphanage to the estate in the hopes that it would be destroyed and severely cripple the United States' global support for the upcoming war effort. A further complication was that an additional piece of intelligence arrived during the meeting with the President that said the meeting would be taking place in a *malja*,

¹⁶⁹ Ibid. 391.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid, 392-393.

Arabic for basement.¹⁷¹ This was significant as it removed the use of cruise missiles as the only weapon and meant that manned bombers would be required.¹⁷² Since the war had not officially started, the Iraqi air defence system was somewhat still intact and this meant that B-2 stealth bombers would have to be used. After weighing all the options, President Bush ordered the strike. At the last moment, General Tommy Franks removed the villa associated with Saddam's wife from the target list as it was believed that the villa would be full of women and children. Several hours later, over forty cruise missiles and many bombs from the stealth bombers hit the target. The next day intelligence reports started to come in. Although the lights on the communication board had been red, Saddam had never been present. Many top Iraqi military leaders were in attendance, but the main target had never been there.¹⁷³ The attempt to cut the head off the proverbial snake had failed and the war began as scheduled.

The work that the CIA had been doing in the lead up to the war did not, however, end with the unsuccessful attempt at killing Saddam Hussein. One of the most important prewar objectives in southern Iraq had been to get two Iraqi divisions out of the fight before any shots were fired. The CIA, through its assets in Iraq, had sent a message to these two specific divisions, the 51st Mechanized and the 11th Infantry,¹⁷⁴ informing them that the United States would provide them with a clear sign of when the war was to begin. In reciprocation, they asked that they simply lay down their arms, remove their uniforms, and walk away from the field of battle.¹⁷⁵ The sign was unmistakable. At the peak of Mount Jebel Sinam in southern Iraq, napalm and artillery were fired. As the United

¹⁷¹ Ibid. 393

¹⁷² Ibid. 393.

¹⁷³ Ibid. 395.

¹⁷⁴ Keegan, op. cit. 143.

¹⁷⁵ Tenet, op. cit. 396.

States' military forces advanced, they found abandoned weapons, equipment, and Iraqi military uniforms. The prewar subversion efforts of the CIA had, at least in this particular instance, been a tremendous success.

The strategy for the main push into Iraq consisted of a brief air campaign that was timed to coincide precisely with the initial ground attack. The reason why the air campaign did not need to be as drawn out as in the Gulf War was a simple matter of advancement in technology. In the Gulf War, only ten percent of all munitions delivered by air, either air-dropped bombs, air-launched missiles, sea or land-launched cruise missiles, had been 'smart'.^{176 177} In the Iraq War, the percentage of bombs finding their targets jumped dramatically to seventy-five percent and the vast majority of these were either laser guided or guided by global positioning satellites (GPS).¹⁷⁸ The use of 'smart bombs' avoids the need for large scale aerial bombardment which was used in, and prior to, the Gulf War in 1991. Smart bombs also significantly reduce the possibility of civilian casualties as the missiles and bombs rarely waver from their designated target.

The initial air campaign was followed closely by the commencement of the ground attack. General Tommy Franks inserted several Special Forces teams past the frontline defences to secure the key bridges along the Euphrates River in order to ensure that when the ground forces arrived, they could cross without being slowed down.¹⁷⁹ The Special Forces teams were also dispatched with the task of locating the Scud Missile

¹⁷⁶ Keegan, op. cit. 142.

¹⁷⁷ *What's New With Smart Weapons*. GlobalSecurity.org. 2006. Found online at: <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/systems/munitions/intro-smart.htm>. Smart bombs, or Precision Guided Munitions (PGM), are bombs or artillery shells that are equipped with a terminal guidance system which contains sensor equipment that guides the specified ordinance in the last phase prior to impact.

¹⁷⁸ Keegan, op. cit. 142.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid*, 145.

firing areas known as 'Scud Pans'. Scud missiles need a very firm base in order for their propulsion to be sufficient to get them into the air. Since there is not an abundance of this type of land in Iraq, the sites could be deduced with relative certainty. This endeavour proved to be very productive as very few of Saddam's Scud missiles were launched against coalition forces and none against surrounding countries.¹⁸⁰

The main theme of the ground offensive focused on speed and precision. This allowed the logistical brilliance of the American military to truly shine as the speed at which they made their way through Iraq was astounding. However, it would also be this speed that would come back to hurt the Coalition Forces after the initial ground war had finished. One of the main reasons for quickness was due to the relatively small number of troops that were committed to the war effort. For Operation Desert Storm there were approximately 325,000 troops sent to Iraq.¹⁸¹ Yet in 2003, the initial number of soldiers sent to Iraq was a mere 130,000.¹⁸² Although this number would increase to 160,000 in December 2005, the number of soldiers would fall back to 127,000 by June 2006.¹⁸³ The number of soldiers was less than half of what General Zinni had requested in his Desert Crossing invasion plan.¹⁸⁴ The Iraqi force was also considerably smaller than it had been in 1991, although there were still 400,000 Iraqi soldiers in the field.¹⁸⁵ Perhaps what was more important was the fact that Iraq also had tens of thousands of irregular or guerrilla fighters waiting to join the war. Taking into consideration the fact that the number of soldiers was significantly less than in the Gulf War, it is easy to see why speed was of the

¹⁸⁰ Ibid, 145.

¹⁸¹ Department of the Navy: Naval Historical Record. Found online at <http://www.history.navy.mil/wars/dstorm/dsjan1.htm>

¹⁸² Us Forces Order of Battle. Found online at: http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/iraq_orbat.htm

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Ricks, op. cit. 117.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid, 117.

utmost importance. The American military was ordered to advance at the “highest possible speed, brushing aside resistance and halting to fight only when absolutely necessary.”¹⁸⁶ The general axiom being tested was the theory that in war, speed kills. Rumsfeld believed that a small quick surge would decapitate the Iraqi military and political system. What really happened was that speed simply bypassed the enemy, leaving him in a position to flank the Coalition Forces and greatly draw out the length of the war.

There were two main pushes into Iraq from Kuwait at the beginning of the Iraq War. The first was by the 3rd Infantry Division which pushed up the Euphrates valley and was the western edge of the Coalition force moving towards Baghdad. Their route took them through the towns of Samawah and Najaf and lastly Karbala, sixty miles south of their final destination, Baghdad.¹⁸⁷ At the same time, the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force pushed out of Kuwait and followed Route 1, passing through the towns of Jalibah and Nasiriyah before splitting into two groups. One followed Route 1 straight into Numaniyah, while the second group swept west to the town of Diwaniya before rejoining the rest of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force in Numaniyah.¹⁸⁸

Numaniyah lay just to the south east of Baghdad, while Karbala was to the south west. This gave the American force two distinct angles from which to strike into Baghdad. The initial distance from the Kuwaiti border to Baghdad is approximately three hundred and fifty miles. Since speed was to be the primary means, securing the country as they advanced was not possible. The United States military, however, did not leave its flanks completely unprotected. The task of securing the southern towns of Iraq fell to the

¹⁸⁶ Keegan, *op. cit* 145.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid*, 145.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid*, 145.

soldiers of the 82nd Airborne and the 101st Air Assault Divisions.¹⁸⁹ Also, the British 1st Armoured Divisions had the task of capturing and securing the city of Basra, the second largest in Iraq, and the closest city to the Kuwaiti border.¹⁹⁰

The American Forces were to avoid fighting as much as possible on their way to Baghdad. It was believed that if Saddam Hussein could be killed and the Baath Party effectively removed from power the war would end quickly. For this reason, it was believed that a larger force was not necessary. Rumsfeld still thought that a small specialized force could accomplish the desired end and this new approach to modern warfare would bring about a change in the way that wars of future would be fought.

Besides rushing to Baghdad, one of the most important early goals of the war was to seize the gas-oil separation plants as well as the pumping stations undamaged. The first of these locations lay just inside the Kuwait border, and next to the Kirkuk-Mosul oil fields in Kurdistan, the Rumalia oil fields are the richest in Iraq. The Rumalia oil fields contain approximately one thousand wells which occupy an area fifty miles long to the south of Basra.¹⁹¹ The oil fields were seen as a key factor in the post-war reconstruction of Iraq and for this reason they were a high priority. The most productive field pumped over two million barrels a day with a value of approximately \$40 million a day.¹⁹² The task of securing the oil fields fell to the 1st Battalion, 7th Marines. It was feared that Saddam would set fire to the oil fields as he had done in the Gulf War. However, this did not occur. The capture of the oil fields went smoothly because the Iraqi 51st Mechanized Division, which had mostly deserted prior to any fighting, dropped their weapons and

¹⁸⁹ Ibid, 145.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid, 145.

¹⁹¹ Ibid, 146.

¹⁹² Ibid, 146.

fled after a brief encounter with the 1st Battalion, 7th Marines.¹⁹³ With the oil fields secure, the Marines could continue north towards Baghdad.

It was believed that many of the Iraqi soldiers would decide to lay down their weapons and leave the field of battle once the fighting started and that Baghdad would prove to be where the Republican Guard would make their stand against Coalition Forces. This proved not to be the case. The town of Naisriyah was chosen as a location where a productive resistance could be staged.¹⁹⁴ Along with members of various militia groups loyal to Saddam were *fedayeen* fighters, many of which were not Iraqi but had come to fight against the United States from various other Arab nations. This encounter proved to be interesting for two reasons. First, many of the *fedayeen* fighters were not Iraqi, and therefore lacked the local knowledge of the area to mount a serious resistance. Second, but perhaps more interesting, the Marines had no desire to stop and fight and simply wanted to bypass the city, secure the bridges and clear the way for the supply convoy on their way to Baghdad. The quickest route was through the town of Nasiriyah, so it was decided that the town would have to be cleared of the hostile forces. Nine days of intense fighting ensued. Following the Marines on this particular route to Baghdad was Task Force Tarawa and it was not until the last days of March that they were able to secure the city to make it safe for the supply columns to follow the Marines towards Baghdad.

A similar situation was encountered in Samawah by the 325th Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division. Samawah had several bridges needed to cross the Euphrates. These would ensure that the supply lines could pass quickly towards Baghdad. Samawah

¹⁹³ Ibid. 148.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid, 149.

needed to be cleared block by block as the local resistance was organized by a four star Republican Guard General, Karim Handany.¹⁹⁵ Although these two instances slowed down the advance, the American forces had achieved a pace of advance that was unmatched in military history - far outpacing the German advance towards Moscow in the summer of 1941.¹⁹⁶ Another factor that aided in the swift approach towards Baghdad were tactical mistakes made by the Iraqi military. These mistakes would cost them dearly, not only in personnel, but also in morale - an element that cannot be ignored in war. While the American army was waiting out a sandstorm at the end of March 2003, the Iraqis saw an opportunity. Qusay Hussein, Saddam's son, sent three elite Republican Guard divisions to move south of Baghdad to confront the American forces before they arrived at the capital.¹⁹⁷ This was a most costly mistake, as all three divisions were destroyed by American bombers before they got close to engaging the waiting American ground troops.¹⁹⁸

With the passing of the sand storm, the assault on Baghdad formally began. On April 3, 2003, Iraq's international airport was taken on the west edge of Baghdad. Two days later, a convoy of armoured vehicles and tanks commenced 'thunder runs' into the city.¹⁹⁹ The 'thunder run' was built around twenty-nine tanks that sped their way through the lines of Iraqi defenders and severely disoriented them so that their resistance failed. Two days later, a second 'thunder run' made its way through to the center of Baghdad up the left bank of the Tigris River and stopped at Saddam Hussein's presidential palace

¹⁹⁵ Ibid. 160.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid, 186.

¹⁹⁷ Ricks, op. cit. 125.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid, 125.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid, 125.

complex. Having secured the area around the complex, the American military forces stayed and thought, if only for a brief moment, that they had taken Baghdad.

Although some may find this hard to believe, it is not a long stretch to see why the United States military as well as the Administration believed that the war had been won and that the majority of the fighting was over. From the outset, very little resistance was found on the path to Baghdad. There were two distinct waves of desertion among the Iraqi military. Some shed their uniforms and weapons prior to seeing any type of threat, while others waited just long enough for the fight to begin against the coalition forces before they decided to leave the fight and simply go home. A testament to the lack of fighting was that once Baghdad had been initially pacified, the United States had zero prisoners of war.²⁰⁰ One of the first decrees made by the occupying force was to disband the army, which also allowed any battlefield detainees to go home and join the majority of the Iraqi military who had already done so of their own accord. For this reason, it was believed that the vast majority of the Iraqi military did not truly support Saddam and therefore would accept his removal from power and not put up a strong resistance to the American occupying force. What the United States did not anticipate was that its actions would in turn create an insurgency that would rage against them and be a far worse problem than fighting the elite Republican Guard.

²⁰⁰ Keegan, *op. cit.* 205.

The Insurgency

The insurgency in Iraq is not an easy topic to dissect. There were several factions vying for power, all of whom saw the United States as an unwelcome occupying force and not as liberators, as may have first been the sentiment of some. The first problem was that the overall goal of the mission was extremely difficult. Removing Saddam Hussein from power was not the difficult part of the mission. Bringing about regime change in Iraq proved to be the difficult task. The United States, in one month's time, moved from Kuwait, travelled over three hundred and fifty miles through hostile territory, and took control of the presidential palace, displacing the center of power and rendering the government of Iraq powerless. This was all the time that was required to bring about the fall of the Saddam Hussein government. Baath Party members and human rights violators were the only people that were detained after the surge to Baghdad and they were still being sought to ensure that a process of de-Baathification could take place.²⁰¹ All of this was precisely planned and executed extremely well. As stated by the Director of Central Intelligence, George Tenet "the plan to capture the country scored at least an eight. Unfortunately the plan for 'the day after' charitably was a two. The war, in short, went great, but peace was hell."²⁰²

The reasons are not hard to find. There was simply no in-depth planning of what to do once the fighting was over. There was no single person who was put in charge of figuring out how to govern Iraq once the military goals had been achieved. This was not due to lack of time or lack of warning. Mere days before Colin Powell's speech to the UN, he asked President Bush if he was absolutely sure of his course of action. He then

²⁰¹ Ibid. 205.

²⁰² Tenet, op. cit. 399.

said “You understand the consequences... You know that you’re going to be owning this place?”²⁰³ The implication was that the United States was going to have to govern Iraq until it was in a state where it could once again govern itself. The problem was that no one was looking at this aspect of the war effort. It seemed that all the attention was being spent on convincing the world that the war was necessary, manipulating and politicizing the intelligence surrounding Iraq, and planning the military operations that would remove Saddam Hussein from power. The task of governing Iraq slipped off the radar. In World War II, the United States started planning for post-war Europe years before the war was over. This time, the same was being asked of the State Department, but the time frame had been cut down to a mere five weeks.²⁰⁴ Originally, the defeated Iraqi army would be used in the reconstruction of Iraq. It was believed that an idle army would be dangerous. In the end, the disbanded army was even worse.

By disbanding the army upon the fall of the Baghdad, the United States effectively put four hundred thousand men out of work and placed them in a situation ripe for recruitment into anti-American organizations. Although the initial logic of disbanding the army was sound, the long term implications must not have been thoroughly examined or appreciated. It would seem prudent not to want a standing enemy army of four hundred thousand to retain their weapons. However, with the majority of those involved with the war (the intelligence community aside) believing that there was a strong link between Iraq and al-Qaeda, it should have seemed dangerous to have that many disaffected armed men in a position of unemployment. Not only was there a defeated sentiment among the soldiers, but also a sense of being humiliated

²⁰³ Woodward, op. cit. 106.

²⁰⁴ Woodward, op.cit. 108.

through the disbandment of their military forces. This could not possibly have garnered favourable sentiments towards American and Coalition Forces. It created an environment where anti-Western groups could recruit members into their organization with the promise of being able to fight back. The police and security forces of Iraq suffered a similar fate and this strongly exacerbated the problem.

The subsequent insurgency that plagued the American military in Iraq was the result of short-sightedness and poor planning. Not wanting to face the immediate threat of a return to fighting, the United States instead broke up the only groups present in Iraq that could successfully rebuild the infrastructure of the country. Instead of an armed military that was united by a single focus, there was now a plethora of groups all fighting both the United States and each other in a struggle for power and in an effort to kill as many Americans as possible in the process. This was tragic, as there was a short window of hope at the end of the fighting to make a difference in Iraq. Polls suggested that eighty percent of Iraqis supported the actions that removed Saddam Hussein from power.²⁰⁵ Support was absolute in the Kurdish north and after brief fighting in the Shi'a south, the British succeeded in restoring order and gained the support of the inhabitants.²⁰⁶ This environment suggested, if only briefly, that Iraq would be able to rebound from the oppression of the Baath party and shed its status as a rogue state. Sadly, another misstep by the Administration would cut short this possibility and ignoring more intelligence reports would cause a dramatic shift in the course of the war.

²⁰⁵ Keegan, op. cit. 207.

²⁰⁶ Ibid, 207-208.

The decisions of Paul Bremer, Director of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance in post-war Iraq would prove to help the insurgency truly grab hold in Iraq. Bremer reported directly to Donald Rumsfeld and wielded authority over Iraq's civil administration. Bremer arrived in Iraq on May 12, 2003, with orders to rid it of all traces of Baathism.²⁰⁷ The idea was to give power back to the people as quickly as possible in a top-down structured democracy. The problem was that Bremer cut out the very people that would be necessary to make this transition possible. Bremer's first order of business was to rid Iraq of all elements of Baathism, especially the top ranking party officials. Bremer's order stated that "Senior Party Members are hereby removed from their positions and banned from future employment in the public sector."²⁰⁸ In addition, any person who held a job in the top three management layers of any ministry, government-run corporation, university, or hospital, who was a Baath party member, would be deemed a senior party member and therefore fired.²⁰⁹ The problem was that this would effectively get rid of all the people that were needed to run the country.

Jay Garner, the man that Bremer replaced, told him that this move would cause more problems than it would solve. Garner took this information to the CIA station chief in Iraq and informed him of the plan. The CIA station chief urged Bremer to reconsider his plan, informing him that if he did this, he would drive thirty to fifty thousand Baathists underground.²¹⁰ He continued by saying that these were the people "who know where the levers of the infrastructure are from electricity to water to transportation... Take

²⁰⁷ Ricks, *op. cit.* 158

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 158-159.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 159.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 159.

them out of the equation and you undercut the operation of this country.”²¹¹ Bremer, however, would not be convinced. Shortly after this encounter, the CIA station chief was relieved of his duty in Baghdad and replaced by a junior CIA officer. In 2005, he would leave government service out of frustration.²¹² On May 16, 2003, Bremer authorized Coalition Provisional Authority Order Number One which placed as many as eighty-five thousand people out of work. Combined with the members of the armed forces and police force who had also lost their jobs, the number of people now out of work and disaffected with the Provisional Authority in Iraq now numbered around half a million.

The problem was that the delicate situation of Iraq was simply not understood. The CIA had done a great deal of work on analyzing the potential problems of post-war Iraq. It understood that the main concerns would be to provide peace, food, water, electricity, and jobs. The problem was that it also assumed that the Bush Administration had a plan worked out to address these issues, when in fact, it had not. In January 2003, the CIA produced a paper explaining the several difficult aspects of dealing with a post Saddam Iraq. It stated that Iraq was unlikely to split apart into regional satellite regions, but that there was a strong chance that the deeply divided society would engage in violent conflict with each other if the Coalition Forces did not prevent them from doing so.²¹³ With regional tensions already high and fighting going on between Sunni and Shi’a in Iraq, as well as the involvement of the Kurds, it was clear to the CIA that these three groups would need to be held at bay to ensure that they did not engage each other. The CIA also feared that ex-Baath Party members could possibly forge alliances with terrorist factions or independently engage in guerilla warfare against the provisional

²¹¹ Ibid. 159.

²¹² Ibid. 159.

²¹³ Tenet, op. cit. 424.

government.²¹⁴ Since this was a fear raised by the CIA well before the war began, one would have thought that strides would have been taken to ensure that ex-Baath Party members did not feel compelled to follow this route. Having them all relieved of their jobs was certainly not the way to achieve this goal.

The main fear of the CIA was that the war in Iraq would increase the influence of political Islam and would attract many angry recruits to extreme Islamic organizations.²¹⁵ Bremer's order exacerbated the problem by ensuring that approximately half a million angry people were available to be recruited to these organizations. Along with this crisis emerged a general sense of lawlessness created by the lack of police and security personnel in Baghdad. Waves of vandalism and looting took place in the wake of the war. Mobs of people ransacked government buildings taking anything that could be carried away, including piping and window frames.²¹⁶ Perhaps the most upsetting aspect of this was not that looting and vandalism were taking place, but the uninterested stance of Defense Secretary Rumsfeld over what was happening by responding to a question concerning the riots with "Stuff Happens!"²¹⁷ Rumsfeld also explained that just because some kids were stealing items from government buildings did not mean that there was no plan to deal with post-war Iraq. The problem for Rumsfeld was that that was exactly what the troops on the ground in Iraq were saying. By standing idly by and watching Baghdad slip into anarchy, the United States lost many of the gains that it had worked so hard to achieve. Since the American personnel were not providing any real service in the wake of the war, it appeared with every passing day that they were an occupying force

²¹⁴ Ibid. 424.

²¹⁵ Ibid. 425.

²¹⁶ Ricks, op. cit. 135.

²¹⁷ Ibid. 136.

and not the liberators they claimed to be. It also gave another message to the Iraqi people. Since they were not interceding to stop the chaos, the perceived message that was being received was either that the United States did not care or that they could not do anything to stop what was happening. Either way, the situation quickly spun out of control.

Prior to taking an in-depth look at the groups that account for the most significant threats to long-term stability, the hunt for Saddam's hidden weapons will be discussed. From the very beginning, the task of finding the WMD was going to be difficult, and not because there was nothing to find in the first place. The reason why was that, from the beginning, there was no real plan for how to go about dealing with the suspected sites. The top military intelligence officer for the war in Iraq, Army Major General James Marks, was assigned to deal with the issue. On October 4, 2002, Marks met with several WMD and regional experts at the Pentagon. His goal for the meeting was trying to work out how to deal with the WMD situation in Iraq. Marks was presented with the Top Secret Weapons of Mass Destruction Master Site List (WMDMSL) which contained nine hundred and forty-six locations where there was suspected WMD activity.²¹⁸ Marks, being a man of action, wanted to know exactly who would be dealing with the WMD sites when they came across them during the course of the war. This question garnered no response. He then asked when finding a site, what action the soldiers should take? Should the location be destroyed, guarded, tested, or simply rendered useless for future use? Once again, Marks was given no answer to his query.

In an attempt to attack the situation from a different direction, Marks asked if the list of WMD sites was prioritized and if certain sites had more value than others. The

²¹⁸ Woodward, op. cit. 93.

only response he could get was that of the nine hundred and forty-six sites, one hundred and twenty of these were deemed to have top priority.²¹⁹ There seemed to be no understanding of the issue of ranking the sites. No direction was given as to who exactly was going to be dealing with the WMD sites, although Marks was informed that there were specific units who specialized in this area, but they had not been informed of their upcoming mission.²²⁰ Marks never did get many answers from the supposed military advisors at the Pentagon. He left the meeting wondering why no one had thought that his questions were valid and realized that the Pentagon was not going to be of much help in this aspect of the Iraq campaign.

In May 2003, Tenet met with President Bush regarding the hunt for WMD in Iraq. Bush explained that he had recently had a meeting with both Paul Bremer and General Tommy Franks, the Commanding General of United States Central Command who oversaw the military actions in Iraq. In this meeting, when Bush asked them who was in charge of finding the WMD sites, they both pointed at each other. As a result of this confusion, Bush told Tenet that he was now in charge of the hunt.²²¹ The problem was that a great deal of time had been wasted. The majority of the fighting in Iraq had come to an end almost two months before and only then would the search begin for the main reason for going to war in the first place. The largest problem was that there had been two months worth of looting and vandalism of government buildings. Also, many Iraqis had set out on a deliberate mission to destroy records and potential evidence that could have helped in the search. Iraqi government files were being seized by groups such as the Iraqi National Congress which greatly reduced the validity of any files that would

²¹⁹ Ibid. 95.

²²⁰ Ibid. 94.

²²¹ Tenet, op. cit. 401.

later be found.²²² Regardless of the difficulties, the CIA was now in charge of trying to save the credibility of the United States by finding the weapons of mass destruction that Bush had claimed to be the reason for war.

The person Tenet placed in charge of the mission was David Kay. As a former weapons inspector for the United Nations, Kay had the skills required for the job at hand as well as having spent time in Iraq. Kay was promised that there would be no interference in his search and that he would be left to do the job for which he had been trained. After three months in Iraq, Kay returned to the United States to report to Congress on his findings. On October 2, 2003, Kay testified before Congress that it appeared as though Saddam had deliberately deceived the UN inspectors prior to the war. Kay had found evidence that Saddam intended to develop WMD and that he had some capacity to do so, and that he believed another six to nine months was required to reach a definitive conclusion.²²³ Although Kay had discovered dozens of WMD related activities, including designs for a missile with a range of over a thousand kilometres, as well as documents and equipment related to the enrichment of uranium buried outside a scientist's home, no stockpiles of WMD were found.²²⁴ This was the only message that was heard around the globe. Although Kay had said that it would take an additional six to nine months to complete the search, he left his post in December. Kay would then say in an interview that there were no stockpiles of WMD to be found in Iraq and that the intelligence community had gotten it almost all wrong.²²⁵

²²² Ibid, 402.

²²³ Ibid, 404.

²²⁴ Ibid, 405.

²²⁵ Ibid, 408.

The man who would replace Kay and continue the hunt for WMD was Charles Duelfer, another former UN weapons inspector with experience in Iraq. Duelfer would continue to lead the Iraq Study Group (ISG) in their search for the hidden stockpiles of weapons. In April of 2004, Duelfer met with Tenet to discuss the findings of the ISG. With the full support of Tenet, the ISG released the complete findings, leaving nothing classified, which is a somewhat uncommon move. Tenet, however, wanted absolute transparency on the issue, regardless of the findings. Duelfer explained that Saddam wanted the world to think that he had the capability to produce and use WMD for two very important reasons. The first was to deter groups within Iraq that Saddam felt posed a mortal threat to his regime.²²⁶ The second was to deter Iran, who Saddam viewed as the main regional enemy to his secular government.²²⁷ The ISG report concluded that Saddam had cheated consistently on UN sanctions. However “on the critical issue that had been the justification for the war, the report concluded that Saddam did not possess stockpiles of biological, chemical, [or] nuclear weapons.”²²⁸ It was now clear that the reason for going to war had been grossly exaggerated by the Administration and that the selective intelligence to support this decision had been guided and used to convince the public.

This aspect, however, was quietly pushed aside. The blame was put entirely at the feet of the intelligence community. Even though it had warned the Administration to disregard certain pieces of intelligence and despite the fact that it was a fabricated intelligence group, the OSP, that “found” the most damning and convincing intelligence about Saddam Hussein’s WMD program, the blame still returned to the CIA. There was

²²⁶ Ibid. 414.

²²⁷ Ibid. 414.

²²⁸ Ibid. 415.

an immediate inquiry into the failures of the CIA conducted by the Senate Intelligence Committee that focused on their actions prior to the war.²²⁹ The fact that the Administration blamed its own politicized intelligence as the cause for starting a preemptive war seems ludicrous. What is worse is the fact that the Senate Intelligence Committee's investigation into the Administration's use of intelligence, which is the true crux of the matter, was postponed until after the 2004 elections and then quickly disappeared from everyone's agenda.²³⁰

The problem in Iraq quickly turned from finding the WMD stockpiles, to establishing order and controlling the insurgency that was spiraling out of control. Several different groups emerged to try and further disrupt the stability that was necessary to lay the ground work for an Iraqi government. With so many disaffected former government employees, there were scores of people from which to recruit into these organizations. There were four main groups fighting both against the American military as well as against each other. The most notable group was al-Qaeda. Although it represents a smaller portion of the overall violence in Iraq, its acts are some of the more spectacular, including suicide attacks, large bombings, and the targeting of prominent religious and political figures.²³¹ Although there were a mere thirteen-hundred foreign al-Qaeda members in Iraq, they recruited many to their cause and al-Qaeda in Iraq is now largely run by Sunni Iraqis. The main goals of al-Qaeda in Iraq were to "instigate a wider sectarian war between Iraq's Sunni and Shia, and driving the United States out of

²²⁹ Danner, Mark. The Secret Way to War: The Downing Street Memo and the Iraq War's Buried History. New York Review of Books, New York. 2006. 24.

²³⁰ Ibid, 24.

²³¹ Baker, James A. and Lee H. Hamilton. The Iraq Study Group Report: The Way Forward – A New Approach. Random House Inc., New York. 2006. 4.

Iraq.”²³² By creating a greater rift between the Sunni and Shia population in Iraq, al-Qaeda could also cause more difficulty for the United States in trying to quell the insurgency. This also further entrenched the United States in Iraq, and ensured that it remained a target for attack. All of these factors in turn drove more people towards the more extremist positions as the tolerance for the United States being in Iraq decreased with every passing day.

Another set of groups in Iraq that actively participated in the insurgency were the Shiite militias. These groups were diverse in affiliation as some are connected to the government while others act only in specific regions of the country. The main targets for the Shiite militias are Sunni Arab civilians, although there is also a fair amount of internal fighting between different Shiite organizations.²³³ There are also some that feel that even the interim Iraqi government placates the United States too much and thus target Iraqi government officials.²³⁴ Perhaps the most influential and dangerous Shiite group in Iraq is the Mahdi Army led by Moqtada al-Sadr. Al-Sadr is a Shiite cleric whose family has long opposed United States interference in the Middle East.²³⁵ The Mahdi Army is centralized around the northeast area of Baghdad which has become known as Sadr City.²³⁶ The Mahdi Army also targets Sunni Arab civilians.

Prior to the insurgency taking a strong hold in Iraq there was a brief moment when it appeared that the United States would achieve all of its political and military goals. In the fall of 2003, the remaining Baath loyalists made a push to try and

²³² Ibid, 4.

²³³ Ibid, 5.

²³⁴ Ibid, 5.

²³⁵ Al-Sadr's Goups, GlobalSecurity.org. Found online at:
<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/para/al-sadr.htm>

²³⁶ Baker and Hamilton, op. cit. 5.

accomplish a double objective. First, they wished to severely hurt the American occupying force in November, the month in which Ramadan took place. Second, they wanted to attract members to their cause by appearing as if they were winning the battle against the Americans.²³⁷ The problem for the Baath guerrillas was that they lacked the numbers required to be successful in their plans. With only five thousand fighters, an offensive operation would cost them a great deal in personnel whom they could not afford to lose. Their hope was that the image of the American force being killed in large numbers would display an image of a crumbling power and rally others to take up their cause. Unfortunately for the Baathist guerrillas, the offensive did not have the desired effect and the counteroffensive by the Americans all but crushed their movement. Coupled with the intelligence about the group that was being gathered by the CIA, the United States military, Army, Special Forces, and CIA troops, were conducting constant raids on Sunni Baath sanctuaries. On December 14, 2003, because of a series of bribes paid to senior Baath party officials, Saddam Hussein was captured. Saddam's capture effectively broke the Baath resistance and opened a window of opportunity for establishing democracy in Iraq.

By March 2004, Iraq seemed to be under control and mostly violence free. The Shiites, largely backed by Iran, had aligned themselves with the United States and the Sunni leadership was starting to discuss their future role in Iraq. The overall strategic situation in the area also seemed promising. Most of the Arab governments in the region had aligned themselves with the United States and al-Qaeda was feeling pressure from

²³⁷ Freidman, George. America's Secret War: Inside the Hidden Worldwide Struggle Between America and its Enemies. Broadway Books, New York. 2004. 312.

intelligence agencies all over the globe.²³⁸ The problem was that the original deal that had been set up to bring stability to Iraq was no longer favorable to the United States. At the heart of the compromise was the fact that the new Iraqi government would be largely Shiite controlled. This was a steep price to pay since the Shiites in Iraq were supported by Iran, which as previously mentioned, is at the top of the United States list of radical Islamic countries that need to be addressed in the region to bring stability. The reason why the deal in question was made was simple. The United States could not handle the insurgency in Iraq if both the Sunni and the Shiite sects decided to rise up at once and focus their attacks against the occupying Americans. Therefore, in the fall of 2003, little violence from organized Shiite militias was targeted against the United States and little at all in general. At the time, the price for stability was inexpensive and well worth paying.

However, when the Americans managed to root out the remaining Sunni Baath loyalists, and the senior Sunni officials decided to negotiate with the Americans, the idea of handing Iraq over to an Iran backed Shiite majority suddenly did not sound so appealing. It was at this point that the United States began to reevaluate its position with regard to post-war Iraq and the post-war government. Instead of giving control over to the Shiite majority, the idea of giving regional control to governors in the Kurdish north and the Sunni west, along with veto power, did not sit well with the Shiite majority.²³⁹ They had thought that they would be able to rule over the whole of Iraq since they were the ethnic majority. In effect, the United States was changing its plans in mid stride to suit its needs based on the new security environment in which it now found itself.

²³⁸ Ibid, 316.

²³⁹ Ibid, 317.

The original plan looked very promising for bringing stability to Iraq. All the pieces were in place, and the key players, the Iranian supported Shiite majority and militias, were ready to cooperate with the United States. The problem would be the long-term costs to the United States in having an Iranian controlled government in Iraq. The fact that the United States reneged on the power sharing agreement shows that stability in Iraq, although important, was not the most essential part of the American long-term strategic plan for the region. The United States did, however, believe that it could bring about stability in Iraq without handing the country over to the Iranian supported Shiite's.

They made three crucial assumptions that would change the face of the war forever. First, the United States assumed that the Sunni guerrilla insurgency had been completely broken. Second, they assumed that the Shiites, having seen what happened to the Sunni guerillas, would not rise up and would simply deal with the altered plans. Finally, they assumed that al-Qaeda, led by Zarqawi, would be furious with the cooperation of the Shiites and would target them to further increase their dependency on the United States.²⁴⁰ Although the third assumption did in fact come to be, the first two did not. The window of opportunity closed.

What followed was a time of utter chaos. The insurgency took a firm hold of Iraq and the United States was not prepared. With an already small military force in Iraq, the United States did not have the necessary number of soldiers to contain the growing insurgency. One element that would have greatly helped would have been the Iraqi military or police force. In retrospect, the disbandment of these two groups greatly hurt the ability to fight the insurgents. Another problem was the connection between Iraqi Sunnis and al-Qaeda. The relationship that the Bush Administration had claimed existed

²⁴⁰ Ibid, 317-318.

prior to the war, now became a reality. The Sunni insurgency joined forces with the al-Qaeda jihadists who had similar goals. They began targeting Iraqi Shia and Kurdish civilians with a clear goal in mind. They wanted to create a civil war that would prevent the emergence of a democratic government in which they would be the minority.²⁴¹ In this they were successful, as fighting between Sunni and Shia sects in Iraq became more entrenched with every passing month.

²⁴¹ Packer, *op. cit.* 310.

A Strategy for Victory

The insurgency in Iraq continued to spiral out of control through the end of 2006 and into the dawn of 2007. With every passing month since the insurgency took hold in Iraq, the two primary camps back in the United States simply shouted louder and louder at each other. Those that were calling for an end to the war wanted the troops home as soon as possible, while those that supported the war wanted more military might put into Iraq. The problem is that both arguments were flawed. The cut-and-run strategy would in fact embolden the terrorists as President Bush has recited on countless occasions whenever the idea of leaving Iraq has been brought up. If the United States simply decides to leave the region, it would show that the United States is incapable of fighting an asymmetrical threat within the confines of an urban center. However, adding more troops to try and occupy Iraq would not help either, as this was not the desired end goal. The United States never wanted to occupy Iraq. The United States wanted a western friendly nation in the Middle East.

Since both of these options seemed to lead towards failure, a third direction needed to be taken. Perhaps the smartest decision made by the Bush Administration since it decided to go to war with Iraq came when General David Petraeus was given overall command in Iraq in February 2007. General Petraeus was an excellent choice as he had just concluded writing a field manual for the United States Army titled *Counterinsurgency*.²⁴² As stated in the preface, it had been over twenty years since the

²⁴² Petraeus, David, and James F. Amos. *Counterinsurgency*. Field Manual No.3 -24. Marine Corps Warfighting Publication No. 3 -33.5. 15 December, 2006. Found Online at: <http://www.fas.org/irp/doddir/army/fm3-24.pdf>

Army had written a field manual dealing exclusively with counterinsurgency and more than twenty-five years since the Marine Corps had done so.²⁴³

The forward explains that :

“The Army and Marine Corps recognize that every insurgency is contextual and presents its own set of challenges. You cannot fight former Saddamists and Islamic extremists the same way you would have fought the Viet Cong, Moros, or Tupamaros; the application of principles and fundamentals to deal with each varies considerably.”²⁴⁴

Although this seems like a very straightforward and obvious statement, the United States had not changed the way it fought insurgencies and was doing a poor job until General Petraeus took over command in Iraq. With the publication of the *Counterinsurgency Field Manual*, the way asymmetrical war would be fought became known as the Petraeus Doctrine. It is not surprising to those that know the history of General Petraeus, that he would be the one to write the Field Manual that would be adopted by the United States Army and Marine Corps on fighting asymmetrical war. He received a PhD from Princeton in international affairs, writing his doctoral thesis on lessons learned from the war in Vietnam.²⁴⁵ With such a background, Petraeus seemed to be the perfect candidate to take over all military decisions in Iraq.

One distinction that is very clear in the *Counterinsurgency Field Manual* that differs from the previous doctrine applied in Iraq, is the focus and acknowledged importance of intelligence. While it has been previously stated that good intelligence is an important factor in war, Petraeus takes the idea one step further by stating that “this maxim applies especially to counterinsurgency operations; the ultimate success or failure

²⁴³ Ibid, 2.

²⁴⁴ Ibid, 2.

²⁴⁵ Sennott, Charles M. *The Petraeus Doctrine*. The Boston Globe. January 28, 2007. Found Online at: http://www.boston.com/news/education/higher/articles/2007/01/28/the_petraeusDoctrine/

of the mission depends on the effectiveness of the intelligence effort.”²⁴⁶ This must have been one of the most reassuring things the intelligence community read upon publication, as it finally had a General in charge who not only understood what was necessary to win the war in Iraq, but who also had the support to do what he saw as necessary from the Bush Administration.

For Petraeus, the role of intelligence is crucial in fighting the insurgency in Iraq. Chapter three in the *Counterinsurgency Field Manual* deals with the role of intelligence. It describes counterinsurgency as an

“intelligence-driven endeavor. The function of intelligence in COIN (counterinsurgency) is to facilitate understanding of the operational environment, with emphasis on the populace, host nation, and insurgents. Commanders require accurate intelligence about these three areas to best address the issues driving the insurgency. Both insurgents and counterinsurgents require an effective intelligence capability to be successful. Both attempt to create and maintain intelligence networks while trying to neutralize their opponent’s intelligence capabilities.”²⁴⁷

Ideally, the bulk of intelligence work is done prior to going to war in order to achieve “Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield (IPB).”²⁴⁸ The main purpose of IPB is to achieve a true understanding of not only the operational environment, but also to know what techniques need to be incorporated into predeployment training in order to have combat ready troops when it comes time to engage the enemy.²⁴⁹ The goal of IPB is for “commanders and their subordinates not to be surprised by what they encounter in

²⁴⁶ Petraeus and Amos, 57.

²⁴⁷ Ibid, 57.

²⁴⁸ Ibid, 58. Intelligence preparation of the battlefield is the systematic, continuous process of analyzing the threat and environment in a specific geographic area. Intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB) is designed to support the staff estimate and military decision-making process. Most intelligence requirements are generated as a result of the IPB process and its interrelation with the decision-making process.

²⁴⁹ Ibid, 58.

theater.”²⁵⁰ While going forward one can hope that this will now be the case, the troops in Iraq had to learn on the ground and apply General Petraeus’ ideas well into the war. Regardless of the late start, it can be seen that the renewed interest and importance of preparation and trust in the importance of intelligence gathering has brought with it positive gains in Iraq.

Coupled with the renewed importance of intelligence was the idea that understanding the roots of the insurgency was paramount to its defeat. Simply put, “knowing why an insurgent movement has gained support ... is essential in designing a counterinsurgency campaign.”²⁵¹ As described by Derek Harvey, a retired military intelligence colonel and General Petraeus’ Iraq expert, the insurgency in Iraq was two sided. First, the Sunni were leaderless, determined to fight, and opposed to accepting their demoted status within Iraq. Secondly, the Shia were beginning to assert their power and were not inclined to make any type of concessions where their new found power was concerned.²⁵² A way forward needed to be found. General Petraeus employed a grassroots type movement that started at the regional level, sometimes even the neighborhood level, to bring about stability, instead of trying to implement a nation-wide policy that would surely fail.

An example of this type of plan can be seen by the positive outcome in Ameriya and the western part of Mansour, on the western edge of Baghdad. The commander of the 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment of the 1st Cavalry Division was Lt. Col. Dale

²⁵⁰ Ibid, 58.

²⁵¹ Robinson, Linda. Tell Me How This Ends: General David Petraeus and the Search for a Way Out of Iraq. Public Affairs. New York. 2008. 79-80.

²⁵² Ibid, 112-113.

Kuehl,²⁵³ and his battalion was eager to see if they could implement some of the new counterinsurgency initiatives to make “the area a model and advance the oil-spot approach of making progress one neighborhood at a time.”²⁵⁴ The approach worked, although it happened slowly. Kuehl started by making local contacts and identifying those in the area who held influence. Kuehl placed a very high value on HUMINT and the only way to gain a good understanding of the region was to start by talking with those that inhabited the neighborhood. Kuehl discovered that in the predominantly Sunni region of Ameriya, the mainly Shia Iraqi army was not trusted to bring security to the region. Since the goal is to gradually phase out the need for the American military and transfer the duties of providing security to the Iraqis, some middle ground needed to be found.

This would come in the form of a group led by Abu Abid that would come to be known as the Knights of Ameriya.²⁵⁵ During the worst periods of the insurgency, Ameriyans had been closely allied with the nationalist Sunnis who were made up primarily of former Hussein regime members who were now jobless and outcasts within Iraq. Due to these factors, the region had been the perfect spot for al-Qaeda to make alliances with the locals.²⁵⁶ However, the extreme rules that began to be imposed by the al-Qaeda insurgents began to take its toll on the Ameriyans who soon realized that an alliance with al-Qaeda was not in their best interest as they had naively thought.

²⁵³ Ibid, 218.

²⁵⁴ Ibid, 218.

²⁵⁵ Ibid, 217-249.

²⁵⁶ Ibid, 231.

The strict rules were

“reminiscent of the Taliban rule in Afghanistan... The al-Qaeda-affiliated insurgents attacked a dozen or more women who were out in Ameriya’s streets without *hijabs*, or headscarves, and burned their faces with acid. They threw boiling water on women whose legs were not covered... They kidnapped some of the local residents, some for money and some to force into action as suicide bombers.”²⁵⁷

On May 29, 2007, Lt. Col. Kuehl was informed by a local, Sheikh Walid, a contact that had been acquired through the use of HUMINT in the area, that a group of local Iraqis were going to attack the al-Qaeda fighters that had kidnapped two Ameriyans.²⁵⁸ The call was more of courtesy, as no American involvement was either requested or wanted. The group simply did not want the Americans to interfere and retaliate against the Ameriyans in their attempted rescue. Kuehl responded by saying “Be careful.”²⁵⁹

Although the risk was high, it was felt by both Kuehl and Petraeus that the gamble was well worth it. A successful local Iraqi-led attack against al-Qaeda would show others in Iraq that their country was not lost and that there were still those in Iraq willing to fight for its security. The group from Ameriya announced their uprising and declared that al-Qaeda was no longer welcome in Ameriya, which al-Qaeda had claimed as its capital in the region.²⁶⁰ They painted graffiti on the walls declaring that al-Qaeda was no longer welcome, and when the al-Qaeda insurgents showed up to cover it up, the Ameriyans set off a bomb killing the al-Qaeda fighters.²⁶¹ The counter attack came on May 31, when al-Qaeda insurgents attacked the local mosques with rocket-propelled

²⁵⁷ Ibid, 231.

²⁵⁸ Ibid, 231.

²⁵⁹ Ibid, 232.

²⁶⁰ Ibid, 232.

²⁶¹ Ibid, 232.

grenades (RPG) and machine gun fire.²⁶² Another of Kuehl's local contacts, Sheikh Khaled, quickly called Kuehl to ask for assistance from the Americans in the area. The problem was that technically the Ameriyans were an illegally armed insurgent group themselves. When Kuehl contacted his immediate superior, Col J.B. Burton, Commanding Officer, 2nd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, Burton immediately replied "Absolutely... We have local Iraqis willing to take charge of their own situation against a common enemy. Why the heck not? Let's embrace these guys."²⁶³

Kuehl sent two companies of soldiers to help the Ameriyans. The gamble paid off. In the "first week of the new alliance the Iraqis killed ten al-Qaeda fighters and captured fifteen others."²⁶⁴ The Americans were very impressed by the display of local knowledge and the intelligence skills that the group had, which were far better than what had been seen in the Iraqi Army.²⁶⁵ On June 8, 2007, Petraeus asked Kuehl's battalion operations officer, Maj. Chip Daniels, to Camp Victory, which was Petraeus' headquarters in Iraq. While out for a run, Petraeus asked what was happening in Ameriya. Daniels informed Petraeus that the Baghdad Patriots, the name the group of Ameriyans had adopted, were accompanying the battalion's soldiers to help identify al-Qaeda safe houses and fighters in the neighborhood.²⁶⁶ The battalion was in turn supplying the Baghdad Patriots with food and fuel and helping attend to the wounded in the area, but were not giving them any weapons or ammunition.²⁶⁷ Daniels informed Petraeus that "We've killed or captured more AQ in this last week than in all the weeks

²⁶² Ibid, 232-233.

²⁶³ Ibid, 233.

²⁶⁴ Ibid, 235.

²⁶⁵ Ibid, 236.

²⁶⁶ Ibid, 238.

²⁶⁷ Ibid, 238.

combined since we arrived.”²⁶⁸ Petraeus told Daniels “Do *not* stop! Do not stop what you are doing... You are doing the right thing and now is the time to take risks... Do not let our army stop you... Do not let the Iraqi government stop you.”²⁶⁹ Petraeus understood that there were those that would not agree with the United States Army partnering with a local militia group. Petraeus believed in the “population-security counterinsurgency approach rather than turning over responsibility to the Iraqis. He was intent upon changing the dynamic in Iraq.”²⁷⁰

The positive effects of the alliance continued throughout the summer of 2007. By August, the monthly Improvised Explosive Device (IED) attacks had gone from thirty-five in May to only two.²⁷¹ Also, Iraqi civilian deaths in Ameriya declined from an average of twenty-six a month to a miniscule zero point six by the end of 2007.²⁷² Kuehl’s battalion also used its own funds to hire locals to begin repairs on the streets and curbs of Ameriya, and eventually the battalion persuaded Baghdad to take over garbage collection and the ministry of electricity began to repair the damaged and destroyed transformers and power lines.²⁷³ Although these success’ are only in one region of Baghdad, the microcosm can show that perhaps success is possible if the proper strategies are followed. Petraeus fully backed Kuehl in his use of a variety of counterinsurgency strategies, including “skillful diplomacy that had won the confidence of the local leaders and population and cemented an alliance with indigenous fighters. They had exploited all

²⁶⁸ Ibid, 238.

²⁶⁹ Ibid, 238-239.

²⁷⁰ Ibid, 239.

²⁷¹ Ibid, 242.

²⁷² Ibid, 234.

²⁷³ Ibid, 243-244.

of this for intelligence to target and diminish enemy forces, and had begun to revive the neighborhood's economic, political, and social life.”²⁷⁴

Petraeus' model for counterinsurgency has seen very positive results in the area of Ameriya. Although this is only a small piece of greater Iraq, it can be seen that where the proper use of HUMINT to develop local contacts is coupled with the grassroots desire to control their own fate, Iraqi's and Americans can work together to bring about positive changes in Iraq. This process is not quick. It took the better part of a year to cultivate the proper environment in Ameriya. However, with the drastic drop in attacks and civilian deaths, the gains appear to be worth the costs. The lesson of Ameriya also showed the rest of Iraq that a time will come when the United States will no longer be there for security, and that Iraqis are capable of defending themselves.

Similar gains were seen in other areas around Baghdad. In the south, Col. Ricky Gibbs commanded the 4th Brigade, 1st Infantry Division. Similar to Kuehl, Gibbs found Iraqis who were willing to help with securing the area. Gibb's battalion commander, Lt. Col. Jim Crider described to Gen. Petraeus at the start of 2008 what had been done in the area.²⁷⁵ Crider described the process of his soldiers going door to door to try and find locals willing to help identify the insurgents.²⁷⁶ Also, much like the practice in Ameriya, Crider “dispensed \$230,000 in microgrants, which enabled some 120 shops to reopen, installed generators, strung new high- and low-tension wires, and hired sewage pumping trucks.”²⁷⁷ There were beginning to be positive signs coming out of Iraq for the first time since the insurgency took hold in 2005.

²⁷⁴ Ibid, 249.

²⁷⁵ Ibid, 310.

²⁷⁶ Ibid, 311.

²⁷⁷ Ibid, 311.

The decline in violence that began in the later stages of 2007 was the first since the start of the war. although it remains to be seen if the gains will remain, the situation in Iraq is no longer one of utter chaos and hopelessness. It is now at least possible that the war in Iraq will have an agreeable finish as opposed to either a quick retreat akin to Vietnam or a protracted occupation lasting for the foreseeable future. The main reasons for the gains being seen in Iraq are due to the change in strategy implemented by General Petraeus and his team. One of the most important changes in strategy was the incorporation of “more precise counterterrorism measures enabled by better intelligence.”²⁷⁸ Soldiers began carrying notebook computers “full of photographs around the neighborhood to learn who was whom. The most precious commodity was the intelligence that came from the population and the volunteers as they began to trust the Americans who lived among them.”²⁷⁹ The fusing of HUMINT with TECHINT allowed for “continuous operations to dismantle Al-Qaeda cells faster than they could regenerate.”²⁸⁰

Gen. Petraeus had brought about a change that a year earlier none had thought possible. By refocusing the need for a counterinsurgency strategy based heavily on the need for good intelligence, the war in Iraq was no longer hopeless. Petraeus created an opportunity for the Obama Administration to “bring the war to a soft landing.”²⁸¹ Perhaps this is the best gift that former President Bush could have possibly given President Obama. He placed a general in charge that had a vision for victory and not just a plan of exit. It is now up to President Obama to seize the opportunity created by

²⁷⁸ Ibid, 324.

²⁷⁹ Ibid, 325.

²⁸⁰ Ibid, 325-326.

²⁸¹ Ibid, 345.

General Petraeus to bring about a positive end to the Iraq war for both the United States and Iraq.

Conclusion

As has been seen with the Iraq War, if anything can bring about American defeat in an asymmetrical war it will be the lack of good HUMINT.²⁸² The United States needs to place HUMINT at the forefront of its intelligence collection priorities in order to win the Iraq War. With the introduction of the Petraeus Doctrine, the shift in military mentality has begun, and one can hope that under President Obama that it will continue. The lack of quality human intelligence in the post 9/11 era has its roots in the military culture of the Cold War. Military decision-makers found it much easier to look at satellite photos and charts showing the exact strength and location of enemy troops rather than putting faith in a brief on local attitudes towards the insurgents and the likelihood of terrorists receiving support and weapons from a certain state. That being said, in order to properly fight insurgents and terrorists, human intelligence and its analysis must receive the same kind of support that it has received from Gen. Petraeus over the last eighteen months in Iraq, and this support must trickle back to the political leadership in Washington.

Finding where the insurgents store their weapons caches is of vital importance, because seizing these will slow the number of attacks against both civilian and military targets, as has been seen in both Ameriya and the southern edge of Baghdad. Determining which local leaders and religious figures are most likely to cooperate and help stop the violence is also of the utmost importance, as having local support from the key Iraqi figures for the American troops will help bring about more support from the

²⁸²Corum, James S.. Fighting the War on Terror: A Counterinsurgency Strategy. Zenith Press. St. Paul MN, 2007.

civilian population. All of these factors will help slowly to turn the tide in Iraq. The change has started, and positive signs are beginning to be seen.

It is important to understand that even with the implementation of the Petraeus Doctrine, the Iraq War will not end quickly. The United States is well past the point of a quick and decisive victory. However, the change in strategy must be allowed the time that is needed to bring about a lasting peace in Iraq. Since 9/11, the United States has been pushed and stretched in ways its political leadership could not foresee. At the beginning of the Iraq War, the way in which the United States was fighting was creating more problems than it was solving. By using the same methods used during the Cold War, the United States was proving to the insurgents and to the terrorists coming to Iraq that it was unable to adapt and truly understand the nature of the new asymmetrical threat that it was facing. The United States also needed to stop making it easy to want to join the fight against them. The Obama Administration's decision to close the prison at Guantanamo is a step in that direction. Whether unforeseen consequences of this decision, such as the release of actual terrorists or the release of created terrorists due to their wrongful imprisonment, will hurt the United States in the near future remains to be seen.

The importance of understanding how the United States got mired in Iraq with no easy plan for victory is crucial. It not only helps to give perspective on how important it is to win the war, but it will also help shed light on ways to win other wars in the future. The Iraq War is one laden with missed opportunities and mistakes by the political leadership from the very beginning. The Bush Administration had done a poor job from

the start, from the reasons given for getting involved in Iraq, to allotting military resources, and setting priorities once the war had begun. For these reasons, an in-depth study of the Iraq War is crucial to understanding how to move ahead. It has been shown that the misuse of intelligence and not listening to the intelligence community is largely to blame for many of the mistakes that have transpired in Iraq, but also going back prior to the attacks of 9/11. For this reason, it is imperative that the role of the intelligence community, and specifically that of human intelligence collection and analysis, regain its proper place in helping to guide the decisions of the political elite. As has been made clear, HUMINT can no longer be secondary to SIGINT when trying to fight an insurgency that blends in with the local population.

The role of intelligence in war is perhaps more important now than it has ever been. Since insurgents and terrorists cannot be fought on the traditional battlefield, other means need to be used to try and bring the fight to them. Through the use of HUMINT, the United States can attempt to locate insurgent weapon caches, find terrorist safehouses, and determine the whereabouts of the leaders of the terrorist organizations as they plan future attacks. Only by using and placing trust in the intelligence community, and training its troops in intelligence tactics and operations, as is suggested in Petraeus' *Counterinsurgency Field Manual*,²⁸³ can the United States hope to win the Iraq War. In so doing, the United States can try and bring stability to Iraq, and can focus its full attention on what has been dubbed a clash of civilizations that may last more than a generation. Only through listening to the intelligence community can the United States hope to understand the ideology that drives radical Islam and therefore help bring peace to Iraq, and optimistically, help stabilize the region as a whole.

²⁸³ Petraeus and Mason. op. cit. 57-58.

The role of intelligence in war has increased in importance with every passing battle. From the earliest of times, wise commanders have been able to see the benefits that good and timely intelligence can have for securing victory on the battlefield. With the shift in threat from a state to a borderless asymmetrical group, intelligence is now the key component in the fight against the new type of enemy that the United States is fighting. The decision to go to war must be driven by good intelligence, and the threats must be understood prior to deciding upon the process by which the war is to be fought. With intelligence restored to its proper place in the decision-making process, the policy-makers will have the tools necessary to make informed decisions concerning going to war. As the eyes and ears of national security, the intelligence community must have a voice in the policy-making process. Hopefully the lessons of the recent past will not be repeated by the Obama Administration, and the recent success in Iraq will prove that the role of intelligence in war is now more important than ever before.

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