DECISION MAKING IN U.S. FOREIGN POLICY:
APPLYING KINGDON’S MULTIPLE STREAMS MODEL
TO THE 2003 IRAQ CRISIS

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by

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Chapter One

Introduction – Research Design

Much of the literature on foreign policy deals with solutions devised to solve problems that arise. Problems occur first, after which policies or solutions to deal with these problems are set in motion. Therefore, we assume that foreign policy making, particularly in crisis situations, is responsive to the conditions or problems that arise. The solutions devised are analyzed within the confines of the existing models in foreign policy, suggesting that decision-making is affected by one, or more, of the following explanatory variables: (1) realism and rational choice, (2) bureaucratic politics, and (3) psychology, which includes: (a) small group dynamics, and (b) cognition.

However, none of these explanatory variables address the question of preconceived agendas that decision makers bring with them when assuming office. A decision maker may have an idea that may provide a solution to a particular problem or a category of problems he would like to advance, except that its time has not come yet. The question that arises is: What are the conditions under which an idea, lurking in a decision maker’s mind, could be catapulted onto the government agenda? I argue that there are foreign-policy cases in which the presence of a preexisting solution in place, at the right time, and under the right conditions, helps the solution land on the agenda; in that sense, the solution predates the problem, and therefore, foreign-policy making can be proactive.

Preexisting solutions as a driving force in decision-making is not a new concept. John
Kingdon’s (1995:3) “multiple streams” model for domestic-policy agenda setting stipulates that preexisting solutions formulated in policy communities constitute one of three major processes that should converge to set a certain policy on the agenda. He indicates that his theory deals with ideas whose time has come (1995:1-2), provided certain processes converge. In that, Kingdon’s model is proactive, because it argues that a decision maker does not have to wait for the problem to occur to devise a solution; rather, he devises a solution first, looks for the right problem to arise, and under the right political conditions attaches his solution to that problem. Kingdon’s model provides the basis for my argument; however, this study departs from Kingdon’s in one aspect: whereas he concentrates on domestic policy, this study concentrates on foreign policy. This is an approach that is not utilized in foreign policy, and it should be, because it can potentially provide another lens through which we can more fully observe and comprehend the decision-making process.

This study argues that contrary to the conventional understanding of foreign-policy making as a responsive process to events and problems, it can be proactive in bringing preexisting solutions to the agenda that otherwise would not get there. Kingdon argues that his model is about ideas whose time has come (1995:1-2); preexisting solutions are such ideas.

Considering the emphasis on preexisting solutions, and the maneuvering of policy entrepreneurs to attach these solutions to problems, Kingdon’s model is more suitable to test the argument in this study than other domestic-policy models. For example, considering the widely applied Baumgartner and Jones’ (1993) model, punctuated
equilibrium, we realize that it focuses on problems that punctuate the equilibrium and the stability of a policy system, and cause drastic changes in that system. Or, considering Sabatier’s (1988) model, advocacy coalitions, we realize that it focuses on interest groups and how they advocate their policies based on their belief system. Neither model places the emphasis on how a preexisting solution has to be in place at the time when the problem occurs and when the political climate is ripe for change.

That is not to suggest that punctuated equilibrium or advocacy coalitions do not have concepts that overlap with Kingdon’s model. But, what they emphasize is not what this study emphasizes as the central argument, and that is the possibility, in some cases, of having a proactive, instead of a responsive, foreign-policy process.

Kingdon’s model has been primarily understood and employed as a theoretical framework for domestic-policy making across many policy domains, and at all levels of government. For example, at the local level, it explains the decision-making process that was involved in the enactment of Lexington, Kentucky’s smoke-free law (Greathouse et al. 2005), and the growth management activities of Maricopa County, Arizona (Moya 1998). At the state level, it explains the agenda-setting process in five states while establishing enterprise zones (Mossberger 2000), the health care reform initiative in the State of Maine (Oakley 2004), the change in Oklahoma’s development of alternative energy sources (Mao 2006), the formal mechanisms that states use to acquire federal resources to address water quality requirements (Morris 1999), and the 1995 change in the governance structure of the Chicago Public School Systems, which was legislated by the Illinois General Assembly (Lieberman 2002). Finally, at the federal level, it explains
how public concerns about radon and asbestos landed on the congressional agenda, resulting in the 1988 Indoor Radon Abatement Act (Scheberle 1994), the necessity of building traffic operation centers and completing the interstate highway system (Gross 2002), the policy changes that took place in the grant-making procedures of the National Endowment of the Arts (Burgess 2004), and how the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 became a law (Brown et al. 2006). In each of those domestic-policy domains the government adopted previously recommended policies or preexisting solutions after a window of opportunity opened, and the political climate changed.

Considering the preponderance of domestic-policy analysis that the above literature reveals, the question of this study is: Can we apply Kingdon’s multiple streams model to foreign policy decision-making? In particular, can preexisting solutions drive foreign policy the way they do domestic policy? If that is the case, are these solutions propelled onto the agenda as a result of a disaster or a crisis situation? Does that entail a change in the political climate? Finally, does Kingdon’s model provide an analytical approach that the other foreign policy models do not provide, and that further explains the process of decision-making?

The intent of this study is to test Kingdon’s model as a viable framework for foreign policy. To accomplish this task, it will be tested against the empirical data, and will be examined side by side with other models in foreign-policy making. Testing multiple streams against the data allows this study to look for the patterns and processes in the data to match those in the theory, suggesting that the multiple streams model fits. And, examining multiple streams side by side with other models allows this study to determine
whether it can provide another analytical approach that sheds light on an aspect of
decision-making that the other approaches do not. In that, this study argues that although
conventional models in foreign policy do explain many aspects of the decision-making
process, their explanations do not convey the whole picture. Kingdon’s multiple streams
may not necessarily complete the picture, but will bring it closer to completion. It is
another explanatory variable that furthers the explanation of government actions. The
following section reviews the literature, Kingdon’s model, and the theoretical
frameworks widely used to analyze foreign policy.

**The Multiple Streams Model**

Kingdon (1995) argues that there are three streams or families of processes that
converge in governmental-agenda setting: 1) problem recognition or the “problem
stream,” (2) formation and refinement of policy proposals or the “policy stream,” and
3) politics or the “political stream.”

The problem stream is where problems, through indicators, capture the attention of
decision makers. Kingdon (1995:109) states that conditions become problems when
action has to be taken. He further states that entrepreneurs try to highlight a problem by
highlighting its indicators (for example, members of the Bush administration highlighted
Iraq’s violation of U.N. resolutions as indicators of the ‘Iraq problem’). In that, they try
to define the problem in a way that focuses the attention of policy makers, as well as the
general public, on the issue (1995:204). However, problems do not become apparent
through indicators only, often they require an additional push by a “focusing event” such
disaster as “an event, natural or man-made, sudden or progressive, which impacts with such severity that the affected community has to respond by taking exceptional measures.” Birkland departs from this definition by arguing that disasters are always sudden, and that “a sudden event will lead to a disproportionate amount of attention to the issues revealed by the most recent disaster” (2006:10). Baumgartner and Jones (1993) argue that democratic political systems display considerable stability over long periods of time, but that stability is disrupted or “punctuated” with periods of upheavals and volatile changes. That, in turn, leads to changes in issues landing onto the agenda.

Change in policy, under these circumstances, would have to be preceded by receptivity to a change in ideas. Rasler (2000) argues that disasters or “shocks” cause a change in how the enemy is perceived, leading to a change in the level of hostilities toward that enemy. Legro (2000) adds that a change in actions or behavior depends on whether decision makers perceive that old idea structures are not adequate anymore, and that they must be replaced with a new set of ideas. Finally, Birkland (2006:20) argues, “change is more likely when ideas become more prominent after events than when they do not.” However, in his second stream, Kingdon (1995) suggests only if formed before focusing events take place, that new ideas become prominent.

The policy stream is where formation and refinement of new ideas and policy proposals take place. Policy communities, comprised of researchers, congressional staffers, academics, and interest group analysts, interact and circulate ideas in what Kingdon refers to as the “primeval soup” (1995:16). Bills are introduced, speeches are made, and proposals are drafted, in an effort to soften up the general public and the
targeted public to the newly proposed ideas. These communities have “policy entrepreneurs” who assume the role of advocates for their preferred ideas, and whose defining characteristic is their willingness to invest time and resources for the purpose of pushing their policies through (1995:122). Many ideas are generated, but only those with certain criteria survive the selection process: technical feasibility, value acceptability within the policy community, tolerable costs, public acceptance, and receptivity among elected officials (1995:131). Finally, when an opportunity is presented, a proposal or solution has to be ready; otherwise the opportunity could be lost (1995:117-24).

The political stream encompasses changes in the national mood, election results, partisan or ideological distribution in Congress and in administrations (1995:145). How politicians perceive the national mood - also known as “the climate in the country, changes in public opinion, or broad social movements” (1995:146) - affects what policies they support. A change in the administration, or in the partisan distribution in Congress, leads to emphasis on different and new priorities for the agenda (1995:162-63).

Furthermore, Kingdon suggests that proposals land on the agenda through a process of coupling of these streams. Figure 1.1 illustrates that coupling entails policy entrepreneurs taking advantage of policy windows or opportunities, in either the problem or the political stream, by attaching the problem to a preferred solution, and pushing it through a receptive political system. However, to succeed in their endeavor, policy entrepreneurs have to be prepared to act quickly when a window of opportunity opens, otherwise the opportunity may be lost before they have the chance to push their proposals through (1995:165-70).
Finally, the inference in this model is that if the government performs an action, that action is the result of a preexisting solution attached to a problem at the right political time, and pushed onto the agenda by crafty entrepreneurs.

Figure 1.1. The multiple streams model.

**The Rational Actor Model**

This framework draws on “realism,” which regards states as rational unitary actors, and as the central units in international relations. It argues that state goals and national security are what determine policy choices. State actions are determined by international politics, therefore domestic politics is not relevant. Drawing on the assumptions of
“rational choice,” decisions are made from carefully considered government options, with cost and benefit analysis for each option to maximize utility (Allison 1971; Jervis 1998; Krasner 1978; Moore and Lanoue 2003; Morgenthau 1973; Rosenau 1968; Waltz 1979).

Drawing on Schelling’s (1960) argument in The Strategy of Conflict, and on Bendor and Hammond’s (1992) criticism of this model, the concept of “strategic interaction” is added to this version of the model. In his description of this concept Yetiv (2004:31) states, “Strategic interaction assumes that because moves by one actor carry implications for the other, each actor will select a course of action that incorporates the probable choice of others. It will try to assess how its actions and the reactions of others will yield outcomes, and will try to choose that course of action that leads to the outcomes that maximizes utility.”

The inference in this model is that “if the nation performed an action of this sort, it must have had a goal of this type” (Allison 1971:5). However, this model does not consider that decision-making is not always rational, or that there are actors, other than the state, in foreign-policy making. The next approach attempts to explain how bureaucratic bargaining may influence foreign policy.

**The Governmental Politics Model**

Allison (1971) argues that foreign policy is not always made by a unified state, according to the assumptions of the rational actor model. Rather, foreign policy is made by an increasing number of bureaucracies joining the departments of State and Defense, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and the National Security Council (NSC). The different interests and perspectives of these bureaucracies and the bureaucrats working
for them, as well as the competition and the political bargaining that take place between them is what drives the decision-making process (Allison and Zelikow 1999; Drezner 2000; Halperin 1974; Nicolson-Crotty 2005).

This model assumes that the individual bureaucrat constitutes the agent or actor for government actions. A bureaucrat’s interests are defined by “Where you stand depends on where you sit” (Allison 1971:176), which means that a player’s interests depend on which bureaucracy he belongs to. Players engage in political bargaining that results in outcomes ensuring their interests and the interests of their bureaucracies. The outcome is a collage or an aggregation of proposals, rather than the prevailing of one proposal, that determines government actions. That is the opposite of what would be expected in a rational decision-making process.

The governmental politics model is criticized for not specifying the relationship between a leader and his subordinates within the bureaucracy; instead, it treats all members as equals, which is not the norm in a hierarchical organization (Bendor and Hammond 1992; Rosati 1981). Krasner (1972) criticizes this model for obscuring the power of the president, and for providing an excuse for relieving top officials of responsibility. Furthermore, whereas Allison’s model concentrates on the type of political outcomes produced by bureaucratic politics and bargaining, others suggest that we could have different understandings of the model (Welch 1998), such as the influence of multiple bureaucratic advisers (Christensen and Redd 2004), or the influence of bureaucratic minorities or the less powerful departments on the process (Kaarbo 1998).

These different perspectives further enrich the understanding of what takes place in
bureaucratic politics.

The inference in this model is that “if a government performed an action, that action was the result of bargaining among players in games” (Allison 1971:6-7). Yet, this model does not explain the impact of small-group dynamics on decision-making, nor does it explain the impact of beliefs and perceptions that shape the outlook and proclivities of an individual decision maker. The psychological approaches will explore these small units affecting the decision-making process.

**Psychological Approaches**

These approaches challenge the concept of rationality in decision-making, because they concentrate on the human factor, and on the influences that shape the different ways decision makers respond to the outside world. Two approaches will be discussed in this section: (1) groupthink explores what happens in small-group settings, and the impact the group has on the decision-making process, and (2) the cognitive approach explores the effects of beliefs and perceptions on the individual, and the impact this has on the decision-making process.

**Groupthink**

Arguably, important foreign-policy decisions are made by small groups of decision makers at the highest levels of government (Hermann and Hermann 1982; Janis 1982; ‘t Hart, Stern, and Sundelius 1997). Examining group dynamics in foreign-policy making is greatly influenced by the work of Irving Janis (1982), who introduced the theory of “groupthink” with its emphasis on *concurrence* and the pathologies that it produces.
Groupthink attempts to explain foreign policy decision-making by small groups seeking to maintain cohesion in the face of stress from external pressures (Chapman 2006). Even though small groups provide emotional support in dealing with complex problems, the emphasis on unanimity and concurrence derail the search and evaluation of all possible options, suppressing views that may be essential to the outcome, and resulting in fiascos (Janis 1982; Maoz 1990; ‘t Hart 1994).

However, in his study of the 1990/91 Persian Gulf Crisis, Yetiv (2003) questions the inevitability of fiascos, and concludes that although evidence of groupthink was present, the outcome was a success. Paul ‘t Hart (1994) criticizes groupthink for failing to explain the relationship between the eight symptoms it exhibits (Janis 1982:174-175), and revises it to include what he suggests are the different structural relationships, between leaders and subordinates, that lead to this type of decision-making. Furthermore, Schafer and Crichlow (2002) argue that while structural factors do contribute to groupthink, situational factors such as stress contribute very little, if at all, to this outcome.

Other scholars expanded on the understanding of small group decision-making by introducing types of groups with different features and different patterns of inter-group dynamics, such as leadership qualities (M. Hermann et al. 2001), rivalry and conflict (C.F. Hermann et al. 2001), coalitions and decisions rules (Hagan et al. 2001), group dynamics and political manipulation (Garrison 2001), and group styles in making decisions (Johnson and Johnson 1987).

Nevertheless, because of its far-reaching influence in the field of group-dynamics in foreign policy, this study will mainly employ the assumptions of groupthink in the
analytical framework. The inference in this model is that if a government performs an action, that action is the result of concurrence-seeking behavior of a small group of decision makers at the top of government hierarchy.

The Cognitive Approach

Cognitive approaches take into consideration the leaders’ definition of the situation, how they perceive the external world, and how they receive and transmit information, all of which affect the decisions they make. McKeown (1993:2) states, “In its most uncompromising formulation, studying actors’ definitions of the situations implies a concern with depth psychology and a biographical analysis of decision makers.”

Leaders may have long-held beliefs, and a lifetime of experiences that influence how they perceive the external world (Holsti 1962; Mowle 2003). In critiquing the rational actor model, Rosati (2000) argues that states are made up of individuals who make foreign policy. It is people and not states that act, therefore, human cognition matters, and psychological traits of decision makers often have a profound impact on policy outcomes.

In this study the cognitive approach is divided up into three organizing concepts: (1) beliefs, (2) perceptions, and (3) contextual interactions.

Some scholars attempt to understand the content of beliefs as “operational codes” that provide broad images of the external world (George 1969; Marfleet 2000; Walker 1995). Others attempt to understand the content of beliefs as “cognitive mapping” that provides a narrow set of beliefs for representation of specific situations (Axelrod 1976; Eagly and Chaiken 1993). Yet, others attempt to understand beliefs as tools for reality appraisal, or as social and psychological functions of actions (Jervis 2006). In addition, some scholars
organize beliefs into schemas that provide mental images, shortcuts, and simplifications about the other actor (Fiske and Taylor 1991), or provide personal meaning to social and historical events (Duncan 2005).

Perceptions are cognitive mechanisms, in which the mind relies on stereotyping, simple causal inferences, and historical analogies (Jervis 1976; Khong 1992; Shimko 1994) that create thought patterns to aid leaders in decision-making.

Contextual interaction entails that it is the leader’s beliefs and perceptions of contextual factors, instead of the factors themselves, which make up for the difference in a leader’s interpretation of a situation (George 1979). Hermann (1993) suggests that predominant leaders are either, context-insensitive, guided by their beliefs and predispositions, or are context-sensitive, guided by pragmatism and contextual factors. And, Keller (2005) states that different leaders have different interpretations of the same domestic constraints; some are constraint respecters, and therefore, conduct pacifistic foreign policy, while others are constraint challengers, and therefore, conduct more aggressive foreign policy.

The inference in this approach is that if the government performs an action, it is shaped by the leader’s beliefs, perceptions, and contextual interactions.

Analytical Framework

The primary goal in this study is to test the viability of Kingdon’s multiple streams being a theoretical framework for foreign-policy making. To accomplish this task multiple streams will be tested against the existing paradigms in foreign policy. The “integrated approach,” as employed by Yetiv (2004), will provide a framework to reach
that goal. He describes it as “It consists of presenting different perspectives on
government behavior, testing them against the record, integrating the resulting insights
into better explanations of government behavior,” and he adds “By testing multiple
perspectives side by side, we can see which ones are the most telling in a given case”
(2004:2-3). In addition, Yetiv indicates that this does not preclude the use of a new
approach; hence, a new analytical paradigm can be employed (2004:4). Thus, by utilizing
the integrated approach three goals are accomplished: (1) examine if and how the
different models explain the case, (2) test the new theory against the existing models and
against the record of the case, hence exploring the new analytical approach it potentially
brings to the field, and (3) gain a better understanding of the decision-making process in
general. In this analytical framework the assumptions of each of the different theoretical
frameworks will be utilized.

*The Rational Actor Model:* The assumptions of this modified version are: (1) the state has
a list of goals deemed to be in the national interest, (2) in dealing with a strategic
problem, a list of options with consequences is proposed, (3) based on rational choice,
one course of action is chosen, after cost and benefit analysis, in which the national
interest is maximized, (4) in choosing an option, strategic interaction, which entails that
any action should consider the reaction of the adversary to maximize utility, is
incorporated.

Because of the limitation that decision makers have operating under conditions of
incomplete information (Simon 1982), this study will emulate Yetiv’s (2004:32)
relaxation of the assumptions of considering all options, and will substitute it with considering options known to decision makers.

*The Governmental Politics Model:* This study employs the following assumptions from Yetiv’s (2004) application of the model: (1) a bureaucrat’s stand and interests are that of the bureaucracy he belongs to, rather than strictly the national interest, (2) decisions emanate from bargaining, compromise, and conflict generated by the different players, in a broader bureaucratic setting, (3) bargaining does not strictly take place among certain individuals at certain levels, rather, it takes place at all levels, among all groups members, including the president who pushes for his own interests, and (4) outcomes are collages, that are combinations of inputs, resulting from interactions among the different players.

*Groupthink:* Janis (1982) assumes the following antecedents as factors cultivating groupthink: (1) the presence of a cohesive group, (2) insulation from external expert information and evaluation, (3) lack of impartial leadership in group deliberations, (4) absence of a methodical process in decision-making, (5) considerable level of stress.

These antecedents lead to a concurrence-seeking (groupthink) tendency (Yetiv 2004:105) that is manifested in the following eight symptoms: (1) illusion of invulnerability among group members, (2) belief in the group’s inherent morality, (3) collective rationalization of actions, (4) negative stereotyping of the enemy, (5) self-censorship against expressing opposing views, (6) illusion of unanimity on the majority decision, (7) pressure on dissenting members, and (8) self-appointed mind-guards against external opposing views.
These symptoms result in the following defective courses of action: (1) limiting the search for alternative courses of action, (2) failure to prepare a complete list of objectives, (3) failure to reevaluate the course of action taken as far as risks and weaknesses, (4) failure to reexamine the costs or benefits of the actions not chosen, (5) failure to ask for expert advice, (6) employing selective bias towards information, and (7) lack of an alternative course of action in case the preferred decision is obstructed.

The Cognitive Approach: The assumptions that will be employed from the literature for this analytical paradigm are: (1) a decision maker is guided by his beliefs to help him appraise reality, and to establish psychological and social functions for his actions, (2) a decision maker is guided by how he perceives the outside world through stereotypes and analogies, (3) there are two types of leaders: (a) a principled leader, who is not sensitive to the domestic context in which he operates, is prone to conduct aggressive foreign policy, and (b) a pragmatic leader, who considers contextual factors, is prone to conduct a foreign policy that is more pacifistic.

The Multiple Streams Model: The assumptions of Kingdon’s model are: (1) decision makers assume office not just with preset beliefs and perceptions, but with preexisting preferred policies as well, (2) a policy window can present itself in a problem as a focusing event, or in a change in the political climate, or in both, (3) a process of softening up the public and government officials towards the policy has to precede and follow the focusing event, and (4) quick action by policy entrepreneurs, to couple the problem with the solution and the politics of the day, is imperative for agenda setting.
The assumptions of these models provide a guide to the information and data needed in this study. Comparing these assumptions to the empirical data will help determine which theoretical patterns better match the patterns in the empirical data, and therefore better explain the case. In addition, employing Kingdon’s model side by side with the other frameworks will determine whether it adds an analytical approach, providing crucial information not revealed through the other frameworks, and a better understanding of the case and of the decision-making process.

**Research Design, Methodology, and Case Selection**

Yin (2003:19) states a research design is “the logic that links the data to be collected (and the conclusion to be drawn) to the initial questions of study.” The approach for this research design will be qualitative, in which the measurements are not numerical (King, Keohane, and Verba 1994:4), the data collected are not recorded in numerical form, and the goal is to achieve deep understanding of the issues (Trochim 2001:152). Qualitative data are gathered through in-depth interviews, direct observation, or written documents and archives. In this study, data will be collected mainly from written documents and archives, such as newspapers, books, scholarly journals, websites, memos, congressional records, and other government records. Deductive reasoning will be employed, which begins with an existing theory that serves as a guide in the collection and the examination of the data (Ragin 1987:45; Yin 2003:29).

The methodology employed will be the comparative case study, which concentrates on the entirety of the case or the unit of analysis. Gerring (2004:341) describes a case study as “an intensive study of a single unit for the purpose of understanding a larger
class of (similar) units.” Yin (2003:1) describes the conditions suitable for using a case study as when “‘how’ or ‘why’ questions are being posed, . . . and when the investigator has little control over events.” He further states that a case study is applied “to examine the presumed links in real-life interventions that are too complex for the survey or experimental strategies” (2003:15). The approach will be holistic, which takes into consideration the context within which events occur, the relationship among different processes, and the manner in which “different conditions or parts fit together” (Ragin 1987:25).

The analytical strategies that link theories to observations will be “pattern matching,” and “process tracing.” Yetiv (2004:124) states, “One way to test theory is to determine significant facts and match them against the theory.” Yin (2003:116) states that pattern matching “compares an empirically based pattern with a predicted one (or with several alternative predictions). If the patterns coincide, the results can help a case study to strengthen its internal validity.” This is a particularly suitable strategy for this study because it narrows the range of possible explanations by eliminating those explanatory variables that do not match, which results in more parsimonious explanations (Mahoney 2006:362).

In addition, Gerring (2004:352) states that case studies are more useful when insight into causal mechanisms (the process by which ‘y’ causes ‘x’) is more important than insight into causal effects (the co-variation between ‘y’ and ‘x’). A causal mechanism comprises those processes and intervening variables that produce a causal effect between the explanatory variable or condition and the outcome variable. Inferring causality
through the identification of causal mechanisms is what is referred to as “process tracing” (Mahoney 2006:363). Roberts (1996:66) describes this analytical strategy as “the minute tracing of the explanatory narrative to the point where the events to be explained are microscopic and the covering laws correspondingly more certain.” The process tracing approach that this study will employ is what Bennett and George (1997) refer to as “process verification,” which “involves testing whether the observed processes among variables in a case match those predicted by previously designated theories.” In that, this study avoids the problem of spuriousness, where two variables are assumed to causally correlate when the correlation is the result of an antecedent variable (Mahoney 2006:363).

Finally, the mode of generalization in a case study will not be statistical, in which the inference is made from empirical data about a sample to the population of interest, because a case study is not a sampling unit that represents a population. Rather, it is a method that provides analytical depth as opposed to broad generalization. Therefore, analytical generalization will be sought “in which a previously developed theory is used as a template with which to compare results of the case study” (Yin 2003:32-33).

Case Selection

The Iraq War, as an aftermath of September 11, 2001 (9/11), is the single case selected for this study. The justification for using this one case is that it is a “rare and unique circumstance” (Yin 2003:45). 9/11 is the deadliest attack on American soil in history. The 1993 attack on the World Trade Center was the only other attack by a
foreign terrorist group on American soil in recent history. However, it was not of the magnitude or scale as 9/11, hence, the rarity of this disaster.

The Iraq War is the first preemptive war after 9/11. Because of the devastation in its aftermath, 9/11 became a focusing event that provided a policy window to push through the new strategy of preemption (Birkland 2006; Kingdon 1995; Shaffer 2005), justifying the pursuit of potential aggressors before they strike at home. The government’s justification for this war is that Iraq supports terrorist groups, and may supply them with weapons of mass destruction that they may use to attack the United States, therefore, Iraq poses a threat to U.S. interests in the Middle East and at home, hence it is a legitimate target in the war on terror. In that, the Iraq War becomes the testing ground for the new strategy of preemption in which the United States engages in war against an assumed future aggressor. Being the first test of this new strategy gives the Iraq War its uniqueness.

The Unit of Analysis

Yin (2003:39) states that a single case study can be holistic, in which the research design has one unit of analysis, or embedded, in which the research design has multiple units or subunits of analyses, along with the overall unit of analysis, that provide more insight into the single case.

By examining the decision to wage war against Iraq after 9/11 according to the assumptions in each foreign-policy model as well as Kingdon’s model, this study attempts to provide a more encompassing explanation of the decision-making process. In that, this study will be an embedded single case study in which the primary unit of
analysis is the decision-making process in foreign policy, and the subunits of analyses are the decision-making processes according to the assumptions of each of the above-mentioned models and approaches. More specifically, the subunits of analyses will be government action as: (1) the rational choice of the unitary actor or the state, (2) an outcome of bureaucratic bargaining, (3) a result of concurrence-seeking in a small group setting, (4) an outcome of a leader’s beliefs, perceptions, and context-sensitivity, and, (5) an outcome of a preexisting policy catapulted onto the agenda as a result of a focusing event manipulated by policy entrepreneurs.

Measurements and Data

To test each of the theoretical frameworks against the empirical data, the assumptions presented in the analytical framework for each would have to be operationalized by observable evidence from the data.

The Rational Actor Model: The assumptions of this model are summarized by concepts such as strategic problem, state goals, rational actor, value-maximizing, and strategic interactions, which are operationalized with the following evidence:

1- As evidence that there is a strategic problem facing the country, we would expect decision makers to frame the problem as posing a threat to U.S. interests. References to the dangers and the consequences of not responding to the threat would have to be articulated particularly in public (Yetiv 2004:33, 36).

2- As evidence of goals that the state has, we would expect decision makers to articulate ends – such as regime change, dismantling weapons of mass
destruction, or establishing a democratic Iraq – in public, and in private deliberations (2004:36).

3- As evidence of rationality we would expect decision makers, in public and in private deliberations, to include any plausible alternative as a solution to the problem, and to encourage any dissenting opinions, suggesting that no alternative is excluded because of intimidation (2004:147).

4- As further evidence of rationality and of value maximizing we would expect discussions of the costs and benefits of each alternative, which ultimately determine the course of action to be taken (Allison 1971:33).

5- As evidence of strategic interaction, we would expect the government to react to possible actions by Iraq, and to frame these actions in terms of costs and benefits that determine U.S. decision-making (Yetiv 2004:33).

The Governmental Politics Model: The assumptions of this model are summarized by concepts such as bureaucratic interests, decisions as outcomes of political bargaining, and decisions as collages, which are operationalized with the following evidence:

1- As evidence of bureaucratic interests at play, we would expect that bureaucrats from bureaucracies with different tasks assume different stands on the same issue, and bureaucrats from bureaucracies with similar tasks assume similar stands on the same issues (Yetiv 2004:124).

2- As evidence of political bargaining in the decision-making process we would expect to find what Allison (1971:200) describes as “intricate probing, pulling, and hauling, leading, guiding, and spurring,” among advisers. This process should
lead to promoting different recommendations emanating from the different bureaucracies, to bargaining over outcomes, and to generating conflict in the form of rivalry as an extension of structural competition (Yetiv 2004:125-26).

3- As evidence of the president’s role as a bargainer, we would expect him to argue with other decision makers about different decisions, and to compromise if faced with resistance (2004:126).

4- As evidence of decisions as collages, we would not expect the decision to convey only the president’s or any other player’s preferences. Rather, we would expect the decision to be gathered from different pieces of preferences, and from information provided by the many players involved (2004:126).

Groupthink: The assumptions in this model are summarized by such concepts as concurrence seeking, antecedent conditions, groupthink, and defective decision-making (Yetiv 2004:105), and are operationalized with the following evidence:

1- As evidence of the concurrence-seeking tendency that characterizes groupthink we expect to find no substantial challenge from decision-makers to the consensus reached on the decisions leading to war (2004:113).

2- As evidence that antecedent conditions to groupthink occur we would expect to find: (a) signs of cohesiveness in which group members are closely knit through friendships, or through sharing the same professional and social background; (b) group insulation from the broader foreign policy community, from outside expert information and advice, from the rest of the bureaucracy, or insulation by design to avoid leaks to the press; (c) lack of impartial leadership where the leader may
exert overt pressures or subtle constraints on open expression; (d) absence of a
methodical process in decision-making in which no careful consideration is taken
of the costs and benefits of each decision, or in which decision-making is ad hoc;
and, (e) considerable level of stress due to domestic pressures, such as concerns
about potential casualties and the uncertainty of the outcome or about the
economy, and stress due to low self-esteem because of previous inadequate
performances or failures (2004:106-12).

3- As evidence of groupthink we would expect to observe the following symptoms:
(a) illusion of invulnerability where group members think that failure is unlikely
or impossible due to U.S. capabilities; (b) belief in the group’s inherent morality
whose motives and actions are assumed to be just and right; (c) stereotyping of
the enemy as too evil or untrustworthy to negotiate with; (d) collective
rationalization of actions by members of the group; (e) self-censorship of the
members against expressing opposing views to the prevailing opinion during
private deliberations, even though some express misgivings in public; (f) illusion
of unanimity among members; (g) pressure on dissenting members whose
opposing views (such as Powell’s) are discouraged; and, (h) self-appointed mind
guards where external opposing views are not entertained.

4- As evidence of defective decision-making we would expect to observe some or all
of the following actions as listed by Janis (1982): (a) limiting the search for
alternatives; (b) incomplete survey of objectives; (c) failure to evaluate the risks of
the decisions made; (d) failure to reexamine the alternatives not chosen; (e) failure
to ask for expert advice; (f) employing selective bias towards information
gathering, for example only allowing or listening to information that
corroborates the intended decisions; and, (g) no serious consideration of
contingent plans if the preferred decision fails or is obstructed.

The Cognitive Approach: The assumptions of this model are summarized by concepts
such as personal beliefs, perceptions, and contextual interactions, which are
operationalized with the following evidence:

1- As evidence that personal beliefs are affecting the decision-making process, we
would expect references by the president to his personal beliefs (religious and
otherwise), in public and private deliberations, and to whether such beliefs guide
his decisions (Jervis 2006:656).

2- As evidence of the impact of perceptions on decision-making, we would expect
references, in public and private deliberations, to how the president perceives the
problem and the enemy (for example, President Reagan referred to the Soviet
Union as the ‘evil empire’), references by the president and his advisers to
analogies with previous wars and their context, and whether such perceptions
would provide guidelines to impending decisions (Yetiv 2004:146).

3- As evidence of contextual interactions, we would expect either (a) consultations
by the president with congressional leaders, references by the president to public
opinion polls on the issue, and we expect that these influences would prevent the
president from taking actions opposed by Congress or public opinion, or (b) little
or no reference to the necessity of abiding by public opinion or by congressional
legislation to guide to impending action (Hermann 1993:83).

The Multiple Streams Model: The assumptions of this model are summarized by such concepts as preexisting solutions, policy windows, political climate, policy entrepreneurs, coupling, and agenda setting, which are operationalized with the following evidence:

1- As evidence that the preexisting solution was circulating in policy arenas before 9/11, we would expect to find references to (in memos, reports, and letters), and advocacy of the proposed policy in public or private deliberations before 9/11 and before the present administration took office (Mossberger 2000:170).

2- As evidence that there was no concrete policy window, we would expect to find inadequate or fumbled attempts to deal with the Iraq issue before 9/11 (Kingdon 1995:165; Mossberger 2000:170).

3- As evidence that 9/11 is a focusing event, we would expect it to dominate the media coverage, the discussion among administration officials, public opinion, and Congress. We would expect it to focus national attention on international terrorism in a way previous terrorist attacks did not. In addition, we would expect it to change attitudes and perceptions about terrorism in a way that previous attacks did not (Birkland 2006:45-49).

4- As evidence that 9/11 opens a policy window, we would expect to see receptivity to the proposed policy, which did not exist before. This positions that policy to be acted upon by the government (Kingdon 1995:166).

5- As evidence of a change in the political climate – a possible opening of a policy window in the political stream – we would expect, as a result of the changes in the
administration and/or congressional partisan distribution, as well as in the media and public opinion, receptivity in these arenas to the Iraq War that did not exist before (1995:54,166).

6- As evidence that certain players (public officials and others) are acting as policy entrepreneurs, we would expect to find that those players who have proposed and advocated the Iraq policy after 9/11 are the same as those who circulated the solution in policy arenas before 9/11. That would indicate that they were willing to invest their time and resources to advance their preferred policy (1995:210-11).

7- These efforts by policy entrepreneurs, before and after 9/11, are evidence of their attempts to soften up the policy community and the public to their preferred solution (Kingdon 1995:127-30; Mossberger 2000:170).

8- As evidence of coupling efforts by policy entrepreneurs we would expect to observe increased rhetoric by administration officials to link Iraq, as a state that sponsors terrorism, to 9/11 and possible future terrorism, and the justification this provides for a preemptive strike against Iraq. In addition, such linkage would have to be made fairly quickly after 9/11 before the policy window closes (Kingdon 1995:211).

9- As evidence of agenda setting, we would expect to see, as a result of softening up the system, and coupling of the three streams (problems, policy, politics), that the problem of Iraq, and the proposed solution become the focus of attention in government circles (1995:3).

Finding this evidence allows us to establish that the patterns in the empirical data
match the patterns in the theoretical framework, and conclude that the latter is a fit and can explain the case.

Sources

For records of congressional hearings and bills I will use the Congressional Information Service reports (CIS index), and/or the on-line databases LexisNexis and Thomas. For media coverage I will use the on-line database LexisNexis, newspapers and magazines (hard copy and on-line). For records of political speeches I will use on-line public and government sources, such as “whitehouse.gov.” For opinion polls I will use Gallup polls and news media (NBC, CBS, ABC, Washington Post, New York Times, and so on) polls. I will buttress these records by data obtained from reports by the Congressional Research Service (CRS), the General Accounting Office (GAO), books, scholarly publications, web sites, and transcripts of programs, such as Frontline and Face the Nation.

Organization of Study

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Chapter Two

Historical Review

On October 2, 2002, H. J. Res. 114 was introduced in the 107th Congress by the Speaker of the House of Representatives Dennis Hastert, R-Ill., authorizing the use of U.S. armed forces against Iraq. The House passed it on October 10, 2002, by a vote of 296-133. On October 11, 2002, the Senate passed it by a vote of 77-23. And, on October 16, 2002, President Bush signed it into Public Law, P.L. 107-243 (CQ Weekly Report 2002:2829). How did the decision to wage war come about? What were the determining factors that converged to allow for such a law? And, what influenced the decision-making process? The following chapters will attempt to answer these questions, so that we may have a better understanding of the process. But, first, this chapter will review the history of the events, before and after September 11, 2001, that led to the decision to wage war against Iraq.

This research is not meant to be a comprehensive study of all issues pertaining to the Middle East. Therefore, it is not about the Arab-Israeli conflict, nor is it about the oil politics in the region and its effects on U.S.-Arab relations. It is not about Middle Eastern culture, or the role of Islam as the predominant religion in the region and its impact on society and politics. Finally, it is not a detailed account of the different Iraqi groups that revolted against the Iraqi regime; therefore, it is not about politics inside Iraq in general. Rather, it is strictly about events pertaining to Iraq in the context of U.S.-Iraqi relations.
and the circumstances – in the aftermath of 9/11 – that led to the latest U.S.-Iraq war. The historical events below will be about this subject matter and not about everything else pertaining to the Middle East. Hence, the data selected for this chapter and the subsequent chapters, will be restricted to that which may prove or disprove the usefulness of the theories laid out in this study in explaining how the decision to go to war against Iraq came about.

**Iraq after the Persian Gulf War**

This section will begin with CIA assessments made shortly before the 1991 Gulf War, which will provide a glimpse of the problem that Iraq would become. In December of 1988, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) issued an intelligence assessment report stating that Iraq possessed the largest and best-equipped army in the Arab Middle East. Despite its massive foreign debt in the aftermath of the Iran-Iraq war, its oil reserves (second to Saudi Arabia’s) gave it the leverage it needed to pursue its policy goals in the region. Iraq will continue to be the most radical in the Arab World, and will continue to use terrorism against its foreign and domestic opponents. Iraq will continue to seek nuclear weapons and to stockpile its chemical and biological weapons. And, strategic considerations will lead to tensions with Kuwait over its disputed territory (CIA 1988).

Early in 1991, the CIA issued another report assessing the status of Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction (WMD) before the 1991 Gulf War. It stated that as of January 1991, Iraq’s WMD posed a serious threat to the U.S. military and interests in the region. Iraq’s stockpile of chemical weapons was the largest in the Third World. And, Iraq was ready to use chemical weapons against U.S. forces in the event of conflict over its invasion of
Kuwait. Iraq’s ballistic missiles program was the most advanced in the Arab World. Even though the international uproar over its invasion of Kuwait helped slow down its program of missile development, it did not stop it completely. Short of dismantling or destroying its missile production infrastructure, it would be difficult to stop the program (CIA 1991).

In the Aftermath of the Gulf War

Upon the August 1990 invasion of Kuwait by Iraq, the first Bush administration formed an international coalition, and in February 1991, expelled the Iraqi forces that occupied Kuwait. Even though the coalition won the war, Saddam Hussein remained in power. The United States came to the conclusion that the coalition would not support a march on Baghdad, and that having suffered a decisive military defeat Saddam would soon be overthrown by his own people. The Shiites in the south and the Kurds in the north did rise up, but the Iraqi Republican Guard brutally repressed their rebellion. Instead of removing Saddam Hussein, Washington decided to contain him. This policy called for dismantling the WMD inside Iraq (Daalder and Lindsay 2001).

Cease-Fire Agreements

Hostilities between the United States and Iraq ceased on February 28, 1991. The United Nations passed resolutions to establish three cease-fire agreements, which were periodically violated by Iraq:

- U.N. Resolution 686, passed on March 2, 1991, stipulated that Iraq should cease all hostilities against the U.S.-led coalition forces, and should appoint military commanders to meet with coalition commanders to work on the details of the
cease-fire.
- The Safwan Accords under the provision of Resolution 686 took place on March 3, 1991, in the town of Safwan, located in southern Iraq between U.S. Army General H. Norman Schwarzkopf with other coalition commanders and Iraqi military officers. The accords provided for a temporary cease-fire line, with stipulation that coalition forces would remain in southern Iraq until a permanent cease-fire went into effect.
- U.N. Resolution 687, passed on April 3, 1991, established a formal cease-fire agreement and imposed long-term requirements on Iraq. It provided a demarcation of the border between Iraq and Kuwait; called on Iraq to stop all terrorist activities; and, to remove or dismantle all of its WMD, and the programs that develop them. In addition, the resolution established restrictions on imports to Iraq except for food, medicine, and essential supplies; banned military shipments to Iraq; and banned any Iraqi exports until Iraq destroyed its WMD.

Between 1991 and 1993, Iraq was found by the U.N. Security Council to be in material breach of the provisions in Resolution 687 (CRS 1999:1-3).

Human Rights and Terrorism

Since the Gulf War, U.S. and U.N. human rights reports have maintained that Iraq has continuously violated the human rights of its own people. In 1994, the Clinton administration contemplated presenting a case against Iraq to the International Court of Justice under the 1948 Genocide Convention for abuses against the Shiite “Marsh Arabs” in southern Iraq. These violations prompted the United States and the United Nations to
provide humanitarian relief to the Kurds in the north and the Shiites in the south.

In April 1991, to protect the Kurds in the north, coalition forces began “Operation Northern Watch” mission that set up a no-fly zone north of the 36th parallel. And, on August 26, 1992, to protect the Shiites in the south, U.S. led coalition forces began “Operation Southern Watch,” declaring a no-fly zone south of the 32nd parallel, which was expanded to the 33rd parallel on September 4, 1996 (CRS 2001:5-7).

On April 15, 1995, to provide humanitarian aid to the Iraqi people, the United Nations, by Resolution 986, established the “oil-for-food” program. It was designed to alleviate human suffering by using revenues from Iraqi oil production to purchase food and medicine; but it was not in operation until December 1996. However, on November 30, 2000, Iraq stopped the export of oil when its demand to have buyers pay 50 cents per barrel to a separate account under Iraqi control was rejected by the United Nations and by oil consumers (CRS 2001:7, 2005:1-2).

Concerning Terrorism, Resolution 687 required Iraq to end support of international terrorism; yet, Iraq remained on the U.S. list of state sponsors of terrorism, and continued to build its terrorism network abroad (CRS 2001:8). Moreover, terrorists have always lived in Iraq, or have been supported by Iraq. In April of 2003, Abu Abbas, the leader of the Palestine Liberation Front, who masterminded the 1985 hijacking of the cruise ship Achille Lauro, was found to be living in Iraq, and was apprehended by U.S. forces in Iraq; between 2000 and 2003, Iraq paid $25,000 to the families of Palestinian suicide bombers; and, in August of 2002, Abu Nidal, the leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, died while living in Iraq (CRS 2003b:10).
History of Weapons Inspections

By U.N. Resolution 687, United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) along with the international Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was, to carry out immediate on-site inspections of Iraq’s biological, chemical and missile capabilities; to take possession for destruction, removal or rendering harmless of all chemical and biological weapons and all stocks of agents and all related sub-systems and components and all research, development, support and manufacturing facilities; to supervise the destruction by Iraq of all its ballistic missiles with a range greater than 150 km and related major parts, and repair and production facilities; and to monitor and verify Iraq’s compliance with its undertaking not to use, develop, construct or acquire any of the items specified above. (United Nations 1991)

Confrontations over access to weapons program facilities resulted in the following U.N. resolutions:

- Resolution 707 (August 15, 1991) required the Iraqis to allow unrestricted access to all sites and to reveal all their suppliers.

- Resolution 715 (October 11, 1991) established a long-term program to inspect the facilities of the Iraqi WMD program.

- Resolution 1051 (March 27, 1996) began the inspection of Iraq’s imports of items with dual usages (military and non-military).

- Resolution 1060 (June 12, 1996) demanded Iraq’s cooperation with inspectors.

- Resolution 1115 (June 21, 1997) warned of travel restrictions against Iraqi officials who were impeding the monitoring process.

- Resolution 1134 (October 23, 1997) threatened, once again, a travel ban against Iraqi officials, and suspended the process of sanctions review until April 1998 (CRS 2003b:1-2).
On October 29, 1997, Iraq banned the American contingency within UNSCOM from conducting inspections, upon which U.N. Resolution 1137 (November 12, 1997) was passed, imposing travel restrictions on Iraqi government officials. On November 13, 1997, Iraq expelled the American contingency. That same day, the U.S. House of Representatives passed H.R. 322, calling for a unilateral U.S. military action against Iraq as a last resort. Tensions were escalating, that by February 23, 1998, Russia and U.N. Secretary General, Kofi Annan, brokered an agreement to resume inspections of presidential sites. On March 2, 1998, U.N. Resolution 1154 was passed, warning of the severest consequences if Iraq did not comply (CRS 2003b:2).

Iraq did not comply, and in August 1998, it barred UNSCOM from inspecting sites that were inspected previously. Consequently, on August 14, 1998, the U.S. Congress passed a joint resolution, S.J. Res. 54, signed into law, P.L. 05-235, declaring Iraq in material breach of the cease-fire agreement. As a result, the United Nations passed the following resolutions:

- Resolution 1194 (September 9, 1998) required total unrestricted access to inspectors, and suspended the process of sanctions review.

- Upon Iraq’s insistence that sanctions be ended, and upon its cessation of cooperation with UNSCOM, Resolution 1205 (November 5, 1998) was passed, declaring that Iraq was in total violation of the brokered February 1998 U.N.-Iraq agreement (CRS 2003b:2).

On November 14, 1998, the United States threatened air strikes against Iraq. Iraq promised cooperation, which derailed American threats, but caused President Clinton to
openly adopt a policy of regime change in Iraq. On December 15, 1998, UNSCOM declared that Iraq did not yield any documents related to WMD, and was still blocking inspections. Shortly afterward, all U.N. inspectors left Iraq and a 70-hour (December 16-19) U.S. and British bombing campaign ensued in what was known as “Operation Desert Fox.” In an effort to ease tensions, the United Nations passed Resolution 1284 (December 17, 1999) which would suspend most sanctions if Iraq fully cooperated with the new inspections mission, U.N. Monitoring, Verification, and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC). The Secretary General of the United Nations appointed Dr. Hans Blix of Sweden to be UNMOVIC’s executive chairman, who served from March 1, 2000 to June 30, 2003. The inspectors were to determine within 60 days what WMD elimination tasks remained, and were to report to the U.N. Security Council every three months (CRS 2003b:2; United Nations 1999).

U.S. Attempts at Regime Change

Before the 1991 “Operation Desert Storm” began, the first President Bush encouraged the Iraqi people to overthrow Saddam. Encouraged by Saddam’s defeat in Kuwait, and counting on American support, the Shiites in the south and the Kurds in the north rebelled against the Iraqi regime. The Kurds benefited from the U.S.-led no-fly zone established in April 1991, and were able to set up an autonomous region in the north. However, the Shiites in the south were brutally crushed by Republican Guard forces loyal to Saddam.

After the Shiite defeat, the first Bush administration began to promote a military coup against Saddam by elements inside Iraq. The administration believed that a coup could replace his regime with a favorable government without the disintegration of Iraq.
However, others believed that this could only lead to scenarios in which the Shiites and the Kurds would be affected by outside forces in the region. Nonetheless, a failed attempted coup took place in July 1992, and U.S. policy shifted to mere support of the diverse opposition groups inside Iraq. However, the opposition suffered many setbacks that caused the Clinton administration to withdraw from actively supporting such groups.

Saddam’s obstruction of U.N. weapons inspections during 1997-98 led Congress to push for the removal of Saddam by allocating $5 million for the opposition and another $5 million to establish Radio Free Iraq (P.L. 105-704, signed May 1, 1998), to broadcast from Prague. That measure was followed by the passage of another resolution (H.R. 4655), signed into law (P.L. 105-338, the Iraq Liberation Act) on October 31, 1998. This law allowed President Clinton to allocate to opposition groups up to $97 million in defense articles and $2 million for the Radio Free Iraq. In mid November 1998, the president publicly declared that regime change is an integral part of the U.S. Iraq policy. Yet, the Clinton administration stated that the opposition was not organized enough to receive lethal military equipments or combat training (CRS 2003a:1-6).

Meanwhile, groups outside government circles were pushing for a more aggressive policy of regime change. In particular, members of the Project for the New American Century (PNAC), a neo-conservative organization, sent a letter on January 26, 1998, to President Clinton stating that the policy of containment was not working with Iraq, and that the United States should, in the short term, use military power to rid Iraq of WMD, and in the long term strive to remove Saddam and his regime from power. It was signed by, among others, Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz, John Bolton, Zalmah Khalilzad,
Richard Perle, and Robert B. Zoellick; all became involved with the second Bush administration (PNAC 1998a).

The Clinton administration did not move to readily change their policy, which prompted the PNAC to send another letter on May 29, 1998, to the Speaker of the House, Newt Gingrich, and the Senate Majority Leader, Trent Lott. It stated that the group was disappointed by the inaction of the Clinton administration concerning regime change in Iraq, to the point of abandoning the containment policy that was in place. Such abandonment was going to free Saddam from any restraints, which would cause American leadership to suffer; put U.S. troops in the Gulf region in danger; subject friends and allies to intimidation tactics by Iraq; and, cause Saddam to drive policy in the Middle East. The letter added that to effectively remove Saddam from power, the following steps should be taken:

- We should take whatever steps are necessary to challenge Saddam Hussein’s claim to be Iraq’s legitimate ruler, including indicting him as a war criminal;
- We should help establish and support (with economic, political, and military means) a provisional, representative, and free government of Iraq in areas of Iraq not under Saddam’s control;
- We should use U.S. and allied military power to provide protection for liberated areas in northern and southern Iraq, and – We should establish and maintain a strong U.S. military presence in the region, and be prepared to use that force to protect our vital interests in the Gulf – and, if necessary, to help remove Saddam from power. (PNAC 1998b)

The second letter was signed by, among others, Bolton, Khalilzad, Perle, Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz, and Zoellick.

During 1999-2000, several congressional members continued to be dismayed over Clinton’s decision not to provide lethal military equipment or combat training to opposition groups inside Iraq. Some opponents maintained that the only option to
overthrow Saddam was with U.S. military forces, which was not justified. Whereas others maintained that the containment should resume by reestablishing the inspection regime, which had been absent since December 15, 1998, when inspectors were withdrawn for the last time.

Before September 11, 2001, the second Bush administration adopted the policy of regime change within the confines of the policy established by the Clinton administration. Secretary of State Powell stressed the need to strengthen the containment policy in place, and ease the plight of the Iraqi people by introducing his plan for “smart sanctions” that relaxed U.N. restrictions on civilian products and non-military technology (CRS 2003a:6-7).

U.S. Assessment of Iraq’s Weapons and Programs

**Nuclear program** – In October of 2002, the National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) was released by the U.S. intelligence community. It claimed that Iraq tried to acquire aluminum tubes for its nuclear program; a claim that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) refuted. For its part, the Bush administration claimed that Iraq retained about 7000 scientists and engineers to rebuild its nuclear program. Moreover, in the 2002 State of the Union address, President Bush stated that Iraq tried to acquire uranium from the African country of Niger; another claim refuted by the IAEA.

**Chemical weapons** – The NIE claimed that Iraq was expanding its infrastructure, and disguising it as civilian outfits, to improve its capability for producing chemical weapons. In addition, it claimed that Iraq was maintaining substantial numbers of chemical agents.
Biological weapons – The NIE claimed that Iraq’s biological weapons program was active, larger and advanced more than it was before the Gulf War. In addition, it claimed that Iraq was in the process of building unmanned aerial vehicles that could be used to carry its weapons to their intended targets.

Ballistic missiles – The NIE claimed that Iraq had the capability to develop ballistic missiles, which would exceed the limit set by U.N. resolution 687 of 150 kilometers. In addition, Iraq might have concealed up to 12 Scud-like missiles, and produced propellants for missiles that exceeded U.N. allowed range (CRS 2003b:5-8).

Developments in the United States after 2001

President Bush assumed office on January 20, 2001. He brought with him a foreign-policy team whose members had advised him during his campaign, and who had worked closely together in previous administrations. Dick Cheney was elected as the new vice president, with I. Lewis “Scooter” Libby as his chief of staff; Colin Powell was appointed as the new secretary of state, with Richard Armitage as his chief of staff; Donald Rumsfeld was appointed as the new secretary of defense, with Paul Wolfowitz as his deputy; Condoleezza Rice was appointed as the new national security adviser, with Steven Hadley as her deputy; and, George Tenet was retained from the Clinton administration as the director for central intelligence, with John McLaughlin as his deputy.

Several in this group of decision makers had previously worked at the Pentagon. Cheney and Rumsfeld were former secretaries of defense, Powell was a former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Wolfowitz was a former undersecretary of defense, Armitage was an assistant secretary of defense, and Rice began her Washington career working for
the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the Pentagon. This military background would affect their outlook and shape their priorities in the new administration (Mann 2004:xii).

The Bush administration inherited a precarious situation with Iraq after the Clinton administration. U.N. inspections were no longer allowed, and the problem of Iraqi WMD had to be dealt with. Whereas the moderate realist Powell pushed for the use of smart sanctions that would allow humanitarian goods into Iraq and prevent goods that could have military uses (CRS 2005:9), the hawks, such as Cheney, Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz, pushed for a military option, and the overthrow of Saddam Hussein (Mann 2004:301; Woodward 2002:83).

Indicators and Forewarnings

Members of the new administration were seasoned politicians and bureaucrats who prided themselves on having years of experience in foreign policy. Therefore, they thought that they “were fully prepared to deal with security threats of the sorts they had confronted in the past” (Mann 2004:293). Several months before 9/11, Wolfowitz gave what turned out to be a foretelling commencement address at West Point. In remarking on the approaching sixtieth anniversary of Pearl Harbor he stated,

Interestingly, that “surprise” attack was preceded by an astonishing number of warnings and missed signals . . . Surprise happens so often that it’s surprising that we’re still surprised by it. . . . We live, once again, in a time of great hopes for world peace and prosperity. Our chances of realizing those hopes will be greater if we use the benefit of hindsight to replace a poverty of expectations with an anticipation of the unfamiliar and the unlikely. (U.S. Department of Defense 2001b)

Ironically, the spring and summer of 2001 brought many indicators and signals that were missed by the administration. The following is an account of some of the
forewarnings that took place during that time.

In the spring of 2001, reports of possible terrorist attacks reached its highest level since the millennium alert. At the end of March, the intelligence community disseminated an advisory warning of increased threats of Sunni extremist terrorist attacks against U.S. interests. In response, on April 13, 2001, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) directed all its field offices to use all its resources to obtain information on any current operations of Sunni extremists. In May 2001, there were reports that Bin Laden’s public profile was an indication of forthcoming attacks. There were reports indicating that attacks were planned on London, Boston, and New York. On May 16, there was a report of a phone call to a U.S. embassy warning that Bin Laden was planning attacks in the United States with high explosives. In Late May, there were reports of a possible hostage-taking plot of Americans abroad in exchange for the release of prisoners in the United States. And, there were reports of a cell in Canada planning an attack in the United States (9/11 Commission 2004:255-56).

In June and July of 2001, reports of threats seemed to increase significantly. On June 12, a CIA report indicated that Khalid Sheikh Mohammad, the Pakistani operational planner of 9/11, was recruiting terrorists to commit acts of violence in the United States on behalf of Bin Laden. On June 22, the CIA informed all station chiefs of possible al Qaeda suicide attacks on American targets. On June 25, the Counterterrorism Czar, Richard Clarke, informed Rice and Hadley that there were six different reports that indicated al Qaeda members warning of a pending attack (911 Commission 2004:256-57).
On July 27, Clarke informed Rice and Hadley that intelligence warnings about impending al Qaeda attacks had stopped, but that did not mean that these attacks would not take place. On August 3, the intelligence community declared that warnings about impending al Qaeda attacks will continue, and that there were several warnings about possible attacks in the Arabian Peninsula, Jordan, Israel, and Europe (2004:260).

During the spring and summer of 2001, President Bush asked CIA briefers if any of these threats were meant for the United States. As a result of his request, on August 6, two CIA analysts wrote a Presidential Daily Brief (PDB) that listed collected evidence about Bin Laden’s plans to strike inside the United States. The report was titled “Bin Ladin Determined to Strike in US,” and listed the following threats:

Clandestine, foreign government, and media reports indicate Bin Ladin since 1997 has wanted to conduct terrorist attacks in the U.S. . . .
The millennium plotting in Canada in 1999 may have been part of Bin Ladin’s first serious attempt to implement a terrorist strike in the US. . . .
Although Bin Ladin has not succeeded, his attacks against the US Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998 demonstrate that he prepares operations years in advance and is not deterred by setbacks. . . .
Al-Qa’ida members – including some who are US citizens – have resided in or traveled to the US for years, and the group apparently maintains a support structure that could aid attacks. . . .
We have not been able to corroborate some of the more sensational threat reporting, such as that from a [---] service in 1998 saying that Bin Ladin wanted to hijack a US aircraft to gain the release of “Blind Shaykh” ‘Umar’ Abd al-Rahman and other US-held extremists. . . . (9/11 Commission 2004:261-62).

However, none of the threats was specific enough, and after the August 6 report there was no mention to the president of any impending attacks on the United States (2004:260-62).

Meanwhile, on July 10, 2001, FBI agent Kenneth Williams of the Phoenix, Arizona office informed the FBI headquarters in Washington about eight men of Middle Eastern
descent, who were investigated for possible terrorist connections, and were enrolled in pilot training classes in Arizona. The headquarters did not pursue that lead (Eggen 2002; 9/11 Commission 2004:272). On August 15, 2001, the Minneapolis field office of the FBI apprehended Zacarias Moussaoui, of Moroccan descent, who had enrolled in classes to learn how to steer planes, but not how to land them. However, his computer was not checked, nor was there a connection made between him and the information from Kenneth Williams (Mann 2004:292; 9/11 Commission 2004:273-76).

These signals and forewarnings were unheeded. As a consequence, the events that took place later that summer surprised this administration, much like the surprise to the Roosevelt administration at Pearl Harbor sixty years ago that Wolfowitz referred to in his commencement speech (Woodward 2002:293).

A New Era

On September 11, 2001, al Qaeda terrorists flew airplanes into the World Trade Center in New York City and into the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. These attacks resulted in the death of nearly 3000 people, the worst disaster on American soil in history. On September 13, 2001, in an interview with Fox News, Wolfowitz stated, “We’re dealing with something that is much more than just one individual or one organization. . . . We have got to root out the terrorist networks. And we have got to end the support that they get from a number of states.” And, about Saddam Hussein, he stated, “He is one of the most active supporters of State Terrorism. . . . He is one of the problems. Osama bin Laden is one of the problems. . . . We are going to have to do this as a campaign and treat the problem as a whole” (U. S. Department of Defense 2001c).
On a Wednesday September 12, 2001 meeting, Richard Clarke mentioned that Wolfowitz and Rumsfeld were discussing Iraq instead of al Qaeda. The focus of the members of the Department of Defense was already shifting to Iraq. By the afternoon, Rumsfeld was already broadening the objectives in the U.S. response to include Iraq. Powell, along with his deputy Armitage, pulled back and resisted the idea. Later in the day, Rumsfeld stated that there were no good targets in Afghanistan, and that there were better ones in Iraq (Clarke 2004:30-31).

In response to a presidential tasking, Clarke’s office sent a memo to Rice on September 18, 2001, titled “Survey of Intelligence Information on any Iraq Involvement in the September 11 Attacks.” The memo indicated that there was no concrete evidence of a definite link between al Qaeda and Iraq; that Bin Laden resented the secularism of the Iraqi regime; and, that there were no confirmed reports of cooperation between Saddam and Bin Laden on WMD (9/11 Commission 2004:334).

Four days after 9/11 President Bush met with his national security team at Camp David. Wolfowitz proposed the idea of attacking Iraq, but was opposed by Powell. However, Wolfowitz kept referring to Iraq in reference to terrorism, but the president dismissed those thoughts. Rumsfeld was not nearly as focused on Iraq as his deputy was, and when a vote was taken among the principals regarding the subject of Iraq. It was 4-0 against it, with Rumsfeld abstaining (Frontline 2003; 9/11 Commission 2004:335; Tenet 2007:306; Woodward 2002:78-91).

Yet, following 9/11, the National Security Council (NSC) staff held frequent and regular meetings on Iraq. Many of these meetings were deputy committee meetings,
attended by the second in command from the various agencies. Soon, representatives from State, Defense, the Joint Chiefs, the Vice President’s office, Treasury, and CIA joined NSC staff. Those meetings were informally called “small group” meetings. In talking to those who attended, there were discussions that alluded to a hypothetical presidential decision to go to war against Iraq. They first were held around “if we attack Iraq,” then they progressed to “when we went to war” (Tenet 2007:307-09).

Throughout 2002 the issue of Iraq persisted. On Friday September 6, 2002, the president’s national security team gathered at Camp David to discuss Iraq. In preparation for the next day’s meeting, the NSC staff distributed a briefing of background information for the participants. In the front, there was a paper that listed all the benefits of removing Saddam: “Freeing the Iraqi people, eliminating WMD, ending threats to Iraq’s neighbors, and the like” (2007:317). Near the end, there was a CIA paper dated August 13, 2002, titled “The Perfect Storm: Planning for Negative Consequences of Invading Iraq.” It provided worst-case scenarios of what would happen with an Iraqi invasion. The costs were summed-up as follows: “Anarchy and the territorial breakup of Iraq; regime-threatening instability in key Arab states; a surge of global terrorism against US interests fueled by deepening Islamic antipathy toward the United States; major oil supply disruptions and severe strains in the Atlantic alliance.” However, according to Tenet (2007:318), the CIA only said that these were worst-case scenario, without necessarily pressing the issue.

The meeting on Saturday, September 7, 2002, involved a heated discussion about the usefulness of restarting weapons inspections. Powell was firmly on the side of going with
U.N. inspections. Whereas, Cheney was opposed to inspections because he believed they were futile. At that time, the president still seemed less enthusiastic about war with Iraq than his advisers (2007:319).

In early September 2002, letters were sent by Senators Richard Durbin (D-Ill), and Bob Graham (D-Fl), of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, asking the CIA to produce a National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) regarding Iraq’s WMD. They needed the information because of a looming vote on the use of force against Iraq in early October. Because of that impending vote, the process to produce the NIE, which would normally take several months to produce, was truncated to three weeks.

The NIE document was delivered to the Senate on the eve of October 1, 2002. On October 2, the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence held a closed-door hearing to discuss its contents, during which Deputy Director of Central Intelligence, John McLaughlin, and National Intelligence Officer for Strategic programs, Bob Walpole, testified on behalf of the CIA. Several Democrats asked that a few sentences from the testimony be declassified and cleared for public release. On October 7, McLaughlin signed a letter to the Senate on behalf of Tenet that contained the words they were looking for from the NIE:

*Baghdad for now appears to be drawing a line short of conducting terrorist attacks with conventional or C.B.W. [chemical and biological weapons] against the United States.*

*Should Saddam conclude that a U.S.-led attack could no longer be deterred, he probably would become much less constrained in adopting terrorist actions. Such terrorism might involve conventional means, as with Iraq’s unsuccessful attempt at a terrorist offensive in 1991, or C.B.W.*

*Saddam might decide that the extreme step of assisting Islamic terrorists in conducting a W.M.D. attack against the United States would be his last chance to exact vengeance by taking a large number of victims with him.* (Tenet 2007:335)
On June 21, 2002, the CIA wrote a paper titled “Iraq & al-Qa’ida: Interpreting a murky Relationship,” in which the CIA asserted that there was no conclusive evidence of a relationship between al Qaeda and Saddam in terms of terrorist operations. But there were enough data regarding safe haven, training, and contacts. Evidently, that conclusion did not go far enough for Wolfowitz and Scooter Libby (Tenet 2007:343-45). In late summer of 2002, the CIA set out to write another paper of what they knew the relationship was between Iraq and terrorism. It stated,

While we could not make al-Qa’ida connection, there was no doubt that Saddam was making large donations to the families of Palestinian suicide bombers and was known to be harboring several prominent terrorists, including Abu Nidal, a ruthless killer responsible for attacks on El Al ticket counters in Rome and Vienna in 1985, resulting in 18 deaths and injury to 120 people. Saddam also gave refuge to one of the individuals still being sought for the first World Trade Center bombing. (2007:346)

The President Making the Case

Meanwhile, over the next few months after 9/11 President Bush delivered several speeches, in which he referred to nations or regimes that harbor terrorists and the resolve of the United States to deal with them. And, he indicated that the nations of the world would have to choose which side of the battle they were on.

On September 20, 2001, in a speech to the joint session of Congress, President Bush stated, “We will pursue nations that provide aid or safe haven to terrorism. Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make, either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists. From this day forward, any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime” (U.S. President 2001a).
On November 10, 2001, President Bush addressed the General Assembly of the United Nations, in which he stated:

Terrorist Groups like al Qaeda depend upon the aid or indifference of governments. They need the support of a financial infrastructure and safe havens to train and plan and hide . . . . And some governments, while pledging to uphold the principles of the U.N. have cast their lot with the terrorists. They support them or harbor them, and they will find that their welcome guests are parasites that will weaken them and eventually consume them. For every regime that sponsors terror, there is a price to be paid, and it will be paid. The allies of terror are equally guilty of murder and equally accountable to justice. (U.S. President 2001b)

On January 29, 2002, delivering the State of the Union address, the president mentioned an “axis of evil” comprised of Iran, Iraq and North Korea, and he stated,

Iraq continues to flaunt its hostility toward America and to support terror. . . . We’ll deliberate, yet time is not on our side. I will not wait on events, while dangers gather. I will not stand by, as peril draws closer and closer. The United States of America will not permit the world’s most dangerous regimes to threaten us with the world’s most destructive weapons. (U.S. President 2002a)

In June of 2002, at a graduation ceremony at West Point, the president delivered a speech in which he stated, “our security will require all Americans to be forward-looking and resolute, to be ready for preemptive action when necessary to defend our liberty and to defend our lives” (U.S. President 2002b). In that, he alluded to a change in U.S. foreign policy from a strategy of containment to that of preemption.

In 2003, the president intensified his campaign for the use of military force against Iraq. On January 3, 2003, the president addressed the troops at Fort Hood, Texas. He stated that the world acted in one voice, and that the Iraqi regime was a grave threat to the United States because,

First of all, the leader of Iraq . . . Saddam has publicly proclaimed his hatred for our country and what we stand for. . . . The Iraqi regime has used weapons of mass destruction. . . . Four years ago, U.N. inspectors concluded that Iraq had failed to
account for large stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons, weapons capable of killing millions. In last month’s declaration, Iraq again failed to account for those weapons. . . . We certainly prefer voluntary compliance by Iraq. You see, the use of military force is this Nation’s last option, its last choice. . . . Saddam seals his fate by refusing to disarm, by ignoring the opinion of the world, you will be fighting not to conquer anybody but to liberate people. (U.S. President 2003a:24-25)

On February 6, 2003, one day after Powell delivered his U.N. speech, the president made remarks on Iraq’s noncompliance with U.N. resolutions. He stated that the Iraqi regime was still violating U.N. resolutions by not accounting for his WMD, by concealing these weapons, and by intimidating experts and scientists. He reiterated that Iraq would use these weapons against us. And, that Saddam had twelve years to disarm peacefully. Once again he’s been granted 90 more days to do so. With Resolution 1441 the world has spoken. America will not wait to find out what terrorists would do with WMD, because we have seen what they would do with a couple of airplanes. He finished by stating, “Saddam Hussein has the motive and the means and the recklessness and the hatred to threaten the American people. Saddam Hussein will be stopped” (U.S. President 2003c).

In February and March of 2003, President Bush delivered speeches in which he added his concern for the Iraqi people, and his resolve to help them. On February 20, 2003, the president made remarks in Kennesaw, Georgia, in which he referred to Powell’s address at the United Nations as providing evidence that Saddam had WMD, and was not complying with U.N. demands to destroy them. He added that what was not an option was “trusting in the sanity and restraint of Saddam Hussein.” He ended by stating, “Our goal is peace, and achieving peace requires resolve and action by free nations. In a more peaceful world, the American people will not live in fear, and the Iraqi people will not
live in oppression” (U. S. President 2003d:224-25).

On February 22, 2003, the president held a news conference with the president of Spain, Jose Maria Aznar. The president stated that he agreed with President Aznar, “The future of peace depends on the disarmament of Iraq.” He reiterated that Iraq continues to violate U.N. Resolution 1441, which demands not just mere progress or reduction of arms, rather, it demands immediate and complete disarmament. He revealed that in the following week, the United States with its allies will ask for another U.N. resolution to state that Iraq was not complying with 1441. He ended by asserting the United States with its allies, “will not allow the Iraqi dictator, with a history of aggression and close ties to terrorist groups, to continue to possess or produce weapons of mass destruction” (U.S. President 2003e).

On March 1, 2003, the president delivered his weekly radio address in which he stated, “The safety of the American people depends on ending this threat . . . but America’s cause is always larger than America’s security. We also stand for the advance of freedom and opportunity and hope. The lives and freedom of the Iraqi people matter little to Saddam Hussein, but they matter greatly to us” (U.S. President 2003g).

He continued by reassuring the Iraqis that even though the United States will not determine the type of government that Iraq should have, it will not allow for another dictator to replace Saddam. And, just like Germany and Japan before it, the Iraqis are capable of sustaining a democracy. The security of the United States depended on it (U.S. President 2003g).

On March 6, 2003, the president held a news conference in which he mentioned that
on March 7 the United Nations should receive an update on Iraqi disarmament. He added that Saddam publicly destroyed a few weapons, but intelligence showed that he continued in the production of more weapons, hid his WMD, and threatened his scientists if they fully cooperated with U.N. inspectors. He finished by stating that America will protect the Iraqi people, and that it wants peace. But, allowing a dictator such as Saddam to stay in power was not going to advance peace (U.S. President 2003h).

The Administration’s Debate and Campaign

In August of 2002, an on-going debate about the Iraq issue was taking place between the moderate Powell, on the one hand, advocating the need to go to the U.N. and ask for a new resolution, and the hawkish Cheney and Rumsfeld, on the other hand, who felt that working through U.N. resolutions is futile. What fueled the debate, particularly for Powell, were the statements made by Brent Scowcroft on August 4 (Face the Nation 2002), and reiterated on August 15, in the Wall Street Journal (Scowcroft 2002), claiming that attacking Iraq would start an Armageddon in the Middle East, and derail the war on terror.

Powell agreed with Scowcroft’s assessment. He noticed that the discussion in the NSC revolved around war plans (Tenet 2007:317), but not on the bigger picture of what would happen inside Iraq, the region, and the rest of the world. He set out to speak to the president about the broader issues to consider.

On August 5, 2002, Powell met with the president and Rice without the other cabinet members. He argued that an attack on Iraq would destabilize the region. Friends such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan would be overthrown because of the anger and
frustration with America. It would derail U.S. plans in the fight against terrorism. Oil prices may skyrocket, and the cost of the war could be very high. If the United States wins the war initially (which was expected), the Arabs would not tolerate American generals and troops in control of the Iraqi state. A successful military plan requires the ability to use military bases in other countries and to secure over flight rights; therefore, going-it-alone is not feasible. An Iraq war would not be as easy as the liberation of Kuwait; the military would have to cover greater distances to reach its targets, Baghdad in particular. Saddam is unpredictable, he could let loose and use his WMD. In addition, the United States did not know where Saddam was, and did not need to conduct another manhunt while it was looking for Taliban and al Qaeda leaders (Baxter 2007; Woodward 2002:331-34).

Throughout August and September the battle over Iraq continued within the administration. During the last week of August, Cheney made two speeches to veteran groups in which he dismissed the usefulness of more weapons inspections, and warned of the dangers of inaction (U.S. Vice President 2002a, 2002b). On the other hand, on Sunday September 1, 2002, in an interview with the BBC News Powell suggested that weapons inspections should be the first step toward disarmament. Two days later, he acknowledged that there were many differences within the Bush administration, but he downplayed it as being part of the overall debate on Iraq (Labott 2002). After much political wrangling, Powell, who insisted that the president should go to the United Nations, prevailed in that round of events. On September 12, 2002, the president went to the United Nations and asked for a new resolution to deal with Iraq (Frontline 2003; U.S.
Meanwhile, to have the justification for attacking Iraq, the administration’s legal advisers had been trying to establish a connection between al Qaeda and the Iraqi regime. Along with the administration’s legislative advisers, they believed that such a link would help the administration to bypass debates at the United Nations and in Congress. The search for a link had intensified as opposition from other members of the Security Council mounted. Russia and France had been warning against an unprovoked attack on Iraq.

Advisers were looking at U.N. Security Council Resolution 1373, passed September 28, 2002 (United Nations 2002a), and Senate Joint Resolution 23, passed September 14, 2002 (U.S. Senate 2001, Thomas), as the legal justification to mount a military campaign against Iraq. The U.N. resolution affirmed the right to self-defense against the threat of terror attacks, and the right to use all means to combat threats to global peace and security from terrorists. The Senate resolution gave the president the authority to use force against nations, organizations, and persons who helped with the 9/11 attacks (Diamond 2002).

Attempts at establishing legal justification for attacking Iraq were not the only efforts mounted by administration officials to boost their case. An all-out campaign in the media and Congress was to follow.

On September 8, 2002, several days before the president was to address the U.N. Security Council, the administration’s top advisers took to the Sunday television talk shows to argue that Saddam Hussein and his regime were threats to the international
community that must be eliminated. Rice said on CNN’s *Late Edition With Wolf Blitzer* that Saddam was not a man of peace who wants to keep to his corner of the world; and even though we did not know how close he was to developing a nuclear weapon, we should not wait until there was a chance that he could use it. She said that the president realized that we could not afford to sit idle. Cheney went on NBC’s *Meet the Press* and claimed that Saddam was developing nuclear weapons, and adding to his chemical and biological weapons. He stressed that the president had not made a decision yet. But, Saddam’s failure to comply with U.N. resolutions, his development of WMD, his attacks on Iran and Kuwait, along with the fear that he would target the United States, were causing the president to move closer in that direction. Rumsfeld went on CBS’ *Face the Nation* and claimed that when inspectors went into Iraq after the Gulf War, they found that Iraq was within six months to a year from developing a nuclear weapon; that we would not know how close the Iraqis were until we went inside the country; and that intelligence pointed out that Saddam had continuously violated U.N. resolutions. Powell went on *Fox News Sunday* and stated that there was a well-deserved doubt about the ability of inspectors to rid Iraq from its WMD. He pointed out that even though they did a thorough job after 1991, it was defectors who revealed much information about the weapons program that inspectors did not have. He said that the Bush administration believed the best way to get rid of those weapons was by changing the Iraqi regime (CNN 2002).

On Tuesday, September 10, 2002, Rice and CIA Director George Tenet went to the House of Representatives on Capitol Hill to argue the administration’s case for military
action against Iraq. House leaders mentioned that Rice and Tenet explained about Iraq’s nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. Some Democrats, such as House Minority Whip Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) said that they were not convinced by the administration’s argument, and that many factors had to weigh in, such as “‘the threat assessment, military plan, political option, cost of occupation, and what cost it is to our war on terrorism. . . . I didn’t hear anything today that outweighed other concerns – questions that need to be answered’” (quoted in Snow and Barrett 2002). Others questioned whether the push to vote on a congressional resolution was timed by the Bush administration right before the elections to exert pressure on Congress. Meanwhile, President Bush was working on his speech to be delivered at the United Nations, which he hoped would make the case for a military action against Iraq for the international audience (2002).

An important effort by the Defense Department was the testimony of Rumsfeld that was delivered on Wednesday, September 18, 2002, before the House Armed Services Committee. Rumsfeld attempted to make the case for the war against Iraq by stating the following:

- The war is to prevent attacks of greater magnitude than 9/11 because of Iraq’s WMD.
- WMD are not strictly used against combatants, but against innocent civilians. And, such regimes deliver them by using terrorist networks.
- It was Iraq that expelled the inspectors, and not the United Nations or the United States. In addition, the goal is not only mere inspections, but also disarmament.
- The Iraqi regime continues to fire missiles at American troops, and has an active
program to procure and develop WMD, including nuclear weapons.

- It is important that we send a message of unity by voting on the use of force before the U.N. Security Council votes. Because delaying a vote would send the wrong message of not supporting the president.

- A war against Iraq would not disrupt the global war on terror, because it is a part of the war on terror.

- If we wait for a smoking gun to act, we wait too long.

- Some argue that the threat of nuclear weapons from Iraq is not imminent, but we don’t know that.

- Even though other countries have WMD, Iraq is unique because it already used it against its neighbors and its people.

- The reason we want to act now is because of 9/11, which made us appreciate our vulnerabilities, the risk that we face from terrorist networks, and the connection with terrorist states that have WMD.

- Hitler made his intentions known, and acted on them. Saddam made his intentions known, and there is no reason to think he would not act on his, as well (U.S. Department of Defense 2002a).

On September 19, 2002, Rumsfeld testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee, in which he reiterated what he stated the day before at the House (U.S. Senate 2002c).

On Thursday, September 19, 2002, Wolfowitz appeared before Congress at a joint inquiry hearing on counterterrorism. He reiterated what Rumsfeld stressed the day before,
and made the point, "that if one were to compare the scraps of information that the
government had before September 11 to the volumes that we have today about Iraq’s
pursuit of weapons of mass destruction, its history of aggression and hostility toward the
United States and factor in our country’s demonstrated vulnerability after September 11,
the case that the president made should be clear.” He added, “When people threaten
openly to kill Americans, we should take them seriously. That is true of Osama bin
Laden, and it is true of the regime in Baghdad” (U.S. Department of Defense 2002d).

On January 30, 2003, Deputy Secretary of State Richard L. Armitage testified before
the Senate Foreign Relations Committee concerning Iraq. He reminded the committee
that according to UNSCOM, Iraq possessed around 25,000 liters of anthrax, which the
Iraqi regime never accounted for. He referred to Dr. Blix’s conclusion that Iraq had not
genuinely accepted disarmament in order to coexist peacefully in the world, and that the
Department of State was of the same opinion. He argued that for 12 years the
international community demanded disarmament, but Saddam never complied because
inspections were ineffective. In the fall of 2002 the president urged the United Nations to
take a stand, the result of which was Resolution 1441, putting the burden of proof back
on the shoulders of Iraq. However, there were no signs that Iraq had complied with
Resolution 1441. To those who asked for more time to be given to the inspectors, the
answer would be that Iraq was already given 12 years; and, giving more time to Iraq to
reveal its WMD was wishful thinking. He added that the president had not yet made the
decision to take military action against Iraq, but that the time was approaching. That was
the stipulation of Resolution 1441, if Saddam did not disarm peacefully, the world would
have no choice but to accomplish the task forcefully (U.S. Department of State 2003a).

On February 11, 2003, Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research, Carl W. Ford, Jr., gave a statement before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence about the current and projected threats to the United States. He asserted that Iraq had a long history of aiding terrorists in activities that violated U.N. Resolution 687. He added that Iraq has become increasingly appealing to al Qaeda because, due to the U.S. war on terror, al Qaeda had been losing bases. Saddam had granted al Qaeda secure bases, and there was no reason to think that he would not provide them with WMD. Furthermore, al Qaeda may steal WMD from Iraq. Therefore, “Iraq becomes more attractive and the terrorist threat emanating from Iraq correspondingly grows” (U.S. Department of State 2003c).

At the international level, and in preparation for his trip to the United Nations, President Bush contacted the other permanent members of the U.N. Security Council, the leaders of China, Russia and France, who were skeptical about the idea of waging a preemptive war against Iraq. In addition, on September 7, 2002, he was scheduled to meet with the British Prime Minister Tony Blair, the only member of the Security Council who supported the prospect of war, and who was expected to be the liaison between the United States and the European Union. All those efforts were important if the Bush administration was to obtain congressional approval (Pomper 2002a:2314).

Congressional Debate and Dilemma

Congress held several hearings to discuss the Iraq issue before the vote on the use of military force took place. The following were some of the statements expressed during
those hearings, and to the media, conveying concerns that congressional members had.

On July 31 and August 1, 2002, the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations held hearings to examine the threats, responses, and regional considerations surrounding Iraq. Senator Joseph Biden (D-DE), the chairman of the committee, acknowledged the problem that Iraq posed. He indicated that the president was right in his concern about Iraq, its WMD, and the possibility that he may give them to terrorist organizations such as al Qaeda. But he added that we needed to understand Saddam’s track record, and explore the options of containment, inspections, or military response. In that, the United States had to count the cost of a military response on our overall war on terrorism, and on the economy. Furthermore, he said that we had to think about our responsibility toward Iraq after Saddam, because we could not leave a vacuum in the place of the present Iraqi regime. In addition, he stated that it was important to obtain public consent, especially if we were to send thousands of troops into battle.

Senator Richard Lugar (R-IN) stated that it was important to obtain congressional authorization; just as the first President Bush did before the Gulf War. He agreed with Biden and reiterated the importance of making the case to the American public and to our allies, inside and outside the region. Furthermore, he added that preparatory work, such as diplomacy, war plans, coordination with neighboring countries, and others, had to take place first.

Senator Paul Wellstone (D-MN) was more concerned that the administration had yet to make the case for military action against Iraq. He added that we needed to explore all possible options on Iraq: The impact on fighting terrorism overall; the impact on the
economy; the legal ramification in the international arena; and the human cost such an operation could entail (U.S. Senate 2002a).

On September 24, 2002, the House Subcommittee on National Security, Veterans Affairs and International Relations, held hearings on how to prevent nuclear terrorism. Representative Dennis Kucinich, (D-OH), stated that the FBI established that there was no connection between Iraq and the anthrax attacks that took place shortly after 9/11. And, the intelligence community concluded that there was no connection between Iraq and al Qaeda. He agreed that Saddam killed and tortured his people, and obstructed U.N. sanctions and inspections. But he did not agree with those who would go to war with Iraq [the administration] without the support of the international community, without regard to the cost in troops, or to the effect of such an operation on the region, or without having a post-Saddam plan for Iraq (U.S. House 2002).

On September 25 and 26, 2002, the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations held more hearings to discuss the next steps to be taken in Iraq. Senator Biden began by stating that he was looking to the president’s effort to take the case to the American people, because foreign policy could not be sustained without the informed consent of the people. He added that Congress and the country needed a clear objective for waging war against Iraq. He stated, “The question is, again, what are we asking the American people? What are we about to commit them to, and what latitude and authority does the president need to meet those commitments?” He made reference to the letter that he, along with Senator Lugar, sent on September 10 to President Bush, in which they stated, We are pleased to learn that you intend to seek authorization from Congress prior to any use of force by the United States Armed Forces to ensure Iraq’s disarmament. . . .
Mr. President, we share your conviction that the combination of Saddam Hussein and weapons of mass destruction poses a significant threat to Iraq’s people, its region and the world. (U.S. Senate 2002b)

But they asserted that there are principles the president should embrace, such as:

First, the United States should pursue a policy that has broad international support. Such support is desirable for both substantive and political reasons. . . .
Second, we should make it clear that Iraq is the world’s concern, not just our own. . . .
In your speech to the General Assembly this week, we urge you to seek a new Security Council mandate requiring Iraq to accept an unconditional weapons inspections regime that gives inspectors the power to go anywhere, anytime. . . .
Third, we must be candid with the American people that Iraq represents a long-term commitment by the United States. (U.S. Senate 2002b)

Carl Levin (D-MI), the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, was not ready to support a preemptive strike against Iraq, if the administration did not provide definite proof that Saddam Hussein had a nuclear weapon, and that he was going to use it against the United States. He, and other skeptics in Congress, contended that the administration had only circumstantial evidence linking Iraq, al Qaeda, and 9/11. In addition, they questioned the administration’s claim that Saddam’s record was enough to warrant military action (Diamond 2002; Pomper 2002a:2316). However, such evidence was enough for supporters such as Senator Fred Thompson (R-Tenn) who claimed, “You can never be totally sure of exactly the capabilities an adversary has. . . . But you can be sure that they have the scientists, they have the know-how, they have the infrastructure, and they have the desire. . . . When you put all those things together, to me, it begins to paint a pretty clear picture” (quoted in Pomper 2002a: 2316). Senator John Warner (R-VA) stated that the president had to come to Congress, and a congressional debate was unavoidable, because general resolutions such as S.J. Res. 23 were not politically sufficient (Diamond 2002).
When the president announced that he was going to take the administration’s case against Iraq to the United Nations, members of Congress were relieved because they would not have had to make a decision before the November elections. However, Republicans were exerting pressure on Congress to take action before the U.N. vote on the issue, claiming that it would convey an image of congressional support for the president before the world.

But, leading Democrats were still uneasy about the prospects of voting in support of the president in such a manner, because that would be tantamount to congressional carte blanche for unilateral action by the United States. Furthermore, Senator Levin indicated that it would convey the message that the United Nations was irrelevant to their decision. Democrats, and moderate Republicans were at a crossroads, they did not want to give the president what amounted to an open-ended policy, yet the November elections were looming before them. With the images of 9/11 still fresh in the minds of the public, they believed the swing vote would support the popular president at that time. But the administration had yet to convince them about the merits of the war with Iraq, or to provide them with concrete evidence about Iraq’s weapons and intentions (Pomper 2002b:2352-53).

Furthermore, some congressional members were apprehensive about such a decision because it violated U.S. traditions and international law. Before 9/11 the United States implemented a strategy of containment and deterrence, and a defensive policy against aggressors, rather than an offensive policy against potential aggressors. In addition, only a few states – Great Britain, Australia and Israel – cautiously supported a military action
against Iraq, which meant that the rest of the world was not on board (Pomper 2002b:2356-57).

President Bush listened to congressional concerns, particularly concerning the consent of the international community. On September 12, 2002, He addressed the United Nations, in which he warned, “The purposes of the United States should not be doubted. The Security Council resolutions will be enforced. . . . The just demands of peace and security will be met . . . or action will be unavoidable. And a regime that has lost its legitimacy will also lose its power” (U.S. President 2002c).

The Bush Doctrine

On September 17, 2002, five days after the U.N. speech, and twenty months into his presidency, President Bush released the National Security Strategy (NSS), a thirty three-page document that articulated a major change in U.S. foreign policy, and contained what has become to be known as the Bush Doctrine. Some major elements in the NSS are as follows:

First, democracy and economic openness are foundations for domestic stability and international order. Therefore, the United States will purpose to spread freedom and democratic institutions. In that, the United States will:

Make freedom and the development of democratic institutions key themes in our bilateral relations, seeking solidarity and cooperation from other democracies while we press governments that deny human rights to move toward a better future. (White House 2002a:4)

Second, the United States will reserve the right to act unilaterally:

While the United states will constantly strive to enlist the support of the international community, we will not hesitate to act alone, if necessary, to exercise our right of
self-defense by acting preemptively against such terrorists, to prevent them from doing harm against our people and our country. (White House 2002a:6)

Third, the United States will implement a proactive foreign policy against our adversaries because:

We must be prepared to stop rogue states and their terrorist clients before they are able to threaten or use weapons of mass destruction against the United States and our allies and friends. . . . Our comprehensive strategy to combat WMD includes: proactive counterproliferation efforts. We must deter and defend against the threat before it is unleashed. (White House 2002a:14)

Fourth, the above noted element is underscored by stating that the nature of the adversary prevents us from having a reactive foreign policy, and if necessary, the United States will act preemptively:

Given the goals of rogue states and terrorists, the United States can no longer solely rely on a reactive posture as we have in the past. The immediacy of today’s threats, and the magnitude of potential harm that could be caused by our adversaries’ choice of weapons, do not permit that option. We cannot let our enemies strike first. . . . The greater the threat, the greater is the risk of inaction – and the more compelling the case for taking anticipatory action to defend ourselves, even if uncertainty remains as to the time and place of the enemy’s attack. To forestall or prevent such hostile acts by our adversaries, the United States will, if necessary, act preemptively. (White House 2002a:15)

Fifth, The United States must strengthen its military to become unchallenged, and to defeat the adversary:

It is time to reaffirm the essential role of American military strength. We must build and maintain our defenses beyond challenge. Our military’s highest priority is to defend the United States. To do so effectively, our military must: Assure our allies and friends; dissuade future military competition; deter threats against U.S. interests, allies, and friends; and, decisively defeat any adversary if deterrence fails. (White House 2002a:29)

Toward War

The president felt that if he was not going to wait for events, the only alternative was
a preemptive strategy. Yet, he was going to give the United Nations a chance and his public rhetoric toned down from regime change to ridding Iraq of WMD (Woodward 2002:349). Speaking to the nation on October 7, 2002, the one-year anniversary of the military campaign in Afghanistan, the president stated that Saddam Hussein did pose an Immediate threat to the United States, but he hoped that it would not require military action (U.S. President 2002e).

Meanwhile, Congress was still debating whether to give the president the authorization to use force against Iraq. Even though, as mentioned above, Democrats such as Senator Kennedy (D-MA) and Congressman Kucinich (D-OH) were asking for a convincing argument to wage war against Saddam, in the end Congress voted overwhelmingly – 296 to 133 in the House On October 10, and 77 to 23 in the Senate on October 11– to grant the president authority to use force against Iraq unilaterally (Woodward 2002:349-51).

On November 8, 2002, the U.N. Security Council unanimously passed Resolution 1441, and called on the Iraqi regime to declare all WMD that it had or suffer the consequences (United Nations 2002b). This was considered a diplomatic success for Powell. Saddam acquiesced, and on November 27, 2002, U.N. inspectors, under the leadership of Swedish attorney Hans Blix, began what turned out to be the final round of inspections. On December 7, 2002, Iraq submitted its report declaring that it had no WMD, which was denounced by Blix as lacking evidence, and by Powell as totally failing to meet U.N. demands (Woodward 2002:353-54).

On January 14, 2003, President Bush indicated that time was running out. But, anti-
protests began to mount at home and abroad. France indicated that there was no justification for waging war against Iraq. That declaration infuriated Powell, because it eased the pressure on Iraq, and did away with the unity that led to U.N. Resolution 1441 (2002:354-55).

Clear evidence that Iraq had WMD did not materialize. Yet, in the 2003 State of the Union address, President Bush laid out the case against Saddam Hussein, by alleging that Iraq had those weapons, and it was linked to al Qaeda (U.S. President 2003b). But it was Powell’s U.N. address, on February 5, 2003, that attempted to make a more detailed case for military action against Iraq.

In his speech Powell presented the following evidence against the Iraqi regime:

- Human sources corroborated evidence that in 2002 Iraq concealed chemical weapons at Al Musayyib chemical complex, and that cargo and decontamination vehicles were spotted at the site.
- Iraq was developing missiles with a range of approximately 620 miles, which renders countries beyond its adjacent neighbors in danger of being attacked.
- Satellite pictures indicated that Iraq had fifteen munition bunkers, four of which had chemical agents.
- Other satellite pictures indicated that thirty suspected weapons sites were cleaned up shortly before U.N. inspectors went back to Iraq.
- Informants indicated that Iraq deployed rockets with biological agents in western Iraq, and that it had eighteen trucks used as mobile biological weapons labs.
- Audiotapes indicated that telephone conversations were intercepted between
Iraqi military officers, alluding to hiding prohibited vehicles and removing references to nerve gas from written instructions, in an attempt to mislead U.N. weapons inspectors.

- Al Qaeda members were working with the Iraqi regime, and that they were in Baghdad with the approval of Saddam himself (U.S. Department of State 2003b).

In his remarks Powell concluded, “‘The issue before us is not how much time we are willing to give the inspectors to be frustrated by Iraqi obstruction, but how much longer are we willing to put up with Iraq’s noncompliance before we as a council, we as the United Nations say: Enough, Enough’” (quoted in Schweid 2003).

Of the remaining Security Council members with veto powers, only Great Britain sided with Powell’s claims. Jack Straw, the British foreign secretary, indicated that Powell made a very strong case, and that Saddam Hussein was counting on the West’s lack of nerve to confront him. On the opposing side, China, Russia and France were not swayed, and urged for continued weapons inspections (2003).

Meanwhile, American troops were building up in the Persian Gulf. On Tuesday, March 4, 2003, General Tommy Franks, who would command the war in Iraq, began two days of meetings in Washington. 200,000 American troops were already in the Persian Gulf, and in the past few days, 60,000 more were ordered to deploy. In addition, more U.S. bombers arrived in Britain in preparation for the anticipated military campaign (Jelinek 2003).

On February 24, 2003, the United States, Britain and Spain submitted a resolution to the Security Council. Recounting previous U.N. resolutions, it declared that the Iraqi regime has missed its last chance to disarm peacefully, and therefore it must be subjected
to the consequences of its actions as related in Resolution 1441; it continued to be in violation of its obligations; and in spite of U.N. warnings, it made false statements and omissions in its 12,000-page declaration issued on December 7, 2002. The resolution invoked chapter VII of the U.N. charter that allowed for the resolution to be enforced militarily.

Even though it had reserved the right to act unilaterally, for legitimacy and financial support, U.N. backing was preferred by the United States. In an effort to boost the resolution chances, it had sent some of its top officials to the member countries of the Security Council (Lederer 2003).

Speaking to U.S. governors earlier that Monday, President Bush stated that the resolution, “‘spells out what the world has witnessed the last months. The Iraq regime has not disarmed. The Iraqi regime is not disarming as required by last fall’s unanimous vote of the Security Council. . . . It’s a moment for this body . . . to determine whether or not it’s going to be relevant as the world confronts threats in the 21st century. Is it going to be a body that means what it says? We certainly hope so’” (quoted in Lederer 2003).

In opposition, France, Russia and Germany proposed an alternative plan that allowed for the peaceful disarmament of Iraq over the following five months, and reasserted that war should only be a last resort. China supported that proposal. The United States realized that getting approval for its proposal would not be easy. Eleven of the fifteen Security Council members were in favor of continued inspections (2003). On March 16, 2003, Bush, Blair, and Jose Maria Aznar of Spain held a one-day summit in the Azores to pursue a last diplomatic effort for a U.N. resolution (Lippman 2003). However, due to the
persistent resistance from countries like France and Russia, they declared on March 17, 2003, that they would let the second resolution die, which implied that war was imminent.

Other signs indicating that war was imminent followed. The United States advised Mohammad ElBaradei, head of the IAEA, to pull out U.N. weapons inspectors from Iraq; the U.S. State Department ordered nonessential personnel and all family members to leave Syria, Kuwait and Israel; Germany closed its embassy in Baghdad and advised its citizens to leave Iraq immediately; and, Britain advised all its citizens, other than the diplomatic staff, to leave Kuwait (Salem 2003).

On March 17, 2003, President Bush appeared on national television and gave an ultimatum to Saddam Hussein and his two sons to leave Iraq within 48 hours (U.S. President 2003i). Two days later, on March 19, at 1 p.m., Special Forces of the U.S. military moved inside Iraq to secure oil fields, and to stop missile strikes, especially against Israel. That evening, upon reports by the CIA that Saddam was located, the president ordered an attack on his location. At 10:15 p.m. the president appeared on television to address the nation and declare that the war against Iraq has begun (U.S. President 2003j).

What were the units and the factors involved in making the decision to use force against Iraq? Was the state as a unitary actor responsible for that decision? Were the different bureaucracies involved in foreign policy responsible? Was the president with his inner circle responsible? What impact did the president’s beliefs and perceptions have on the process? Were there other factors, such as agendas, that weighed-in on the process?
Or, was it a combination of units and factors that contributed to that decision? The next several chapters will attempt to answer these questions in some detail.
Table 2.1. Chronology of events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 20, 2001</td>
<td>George W. Bush is sworn-in as president.</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 11, 2001</td>
<td>Al Qaeda terrorists strike the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, killing approximately 3000 people.</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 20, 2001</td>
<td>President delivers an address to Joint session of Congress, delivering an ultimatum: “either you are with us, or with the terrorists.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 10, 2001</td>
<td>President delivers an address to the General Assembly, declaring that every nation that supports terrorists will pay a price.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 29, 2002</td>
<td>President delivers State of the Union address, in which he mentions “axis of evil” of Iran, Iraq, and North Korea, and warns that America will not allow dangerous regimes to threaten America.</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 7, 2002</td>
<td>President meets with Tony Blair at Camp David before he goes to the United Nations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 8, 2002</td>
<td>All-out campaign on Sunday television shows by administration officials, building the case against Iraq.</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 10, 2002</td>
<td>Rice and Tenet appear on Capitol Hill to argue the administration’s case against Iraq.</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 14, 2002</td>
<td>Senate passes S.J. Res. 23, giving the president the authority to use force against those involved in 9/11.</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 17, 2002</td>
<td>President releases the NSS, outlining the Bush Doctrine.</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 28, 2002</td>
<td>United Nations passes Res. 1373, affirming the right to self-defense against terrorist attacks, and to use all means to combat global terrorism.</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 2, 2002</td>
<td>H.J. Res. 114 is introduced in Congress authorizing the use of force against Iraq.</td>
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<td>October 10, 2002</td>
<td>House passes bill by a vote of 296-133.</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 11, 2002</td>
<td>Senate passes bill by a vote of 77-23.</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 16, 2002</td>
<td>President signs bill into PL 107-243, authorizing the use of force against Iraq.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 8, 2002</td>
<td>Security Council passes Res. 1441 calling on Iraq to declare all WMD or suffer the consequences.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 27, 2002</td>
<td>U.N. inspectors go back to Iraq for the first time since 1998.</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 7, 2002</td>
<td>Iraq submits report declaring it has no WMD.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 28, 2003</td>
<td>President delivers State of the Union address, making the case against Iraq.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 5, 2003</td>
<td>Powell delivers address at the United Nations, making the case against Iraq.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 16, 2003</td>
<td>Bush, Blair and Aznar meet at the Azores.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 17, 2003</td>
<td>Due to international opposition, Bush, Blair and Aznar withdraw request for new U.N. resolution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 17, 2003- Evening</td>
<td>President Bush issues an ultimatum to Saddam and his two sons to leave Iraq.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 19, 2003</td>
<td>President Bush announces the beginning of the military campaign in Iraq.</td>
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The foreign policy conventional approaches that will be utilized to analyze the decision to go to war against Iraq are: The rational actor model, the governmental politics model, and the psychological approaches (groupthink and cognition). The rational actor model looks into the actions of the state as a whole and into the impact of international relations on these actions. In contrast, the governmental politics model, and the psychological approaches look into the role of different domestic agents in foreign-policy making, such as bureaucracies, small groups, and individuals.

**The Rational Actor Model**

The rational actor model is a “faceless model, one that black boxes what occurs inside states, and treats states as unitary actors that make decisions in terms of rational choice” (Yetiv 2004:30). It assumes that the state speaks in one voice in terms of its foreign-policy goals and national interests, which are secured through a deliberate, rational, and unified process. It dismisses the relevance of domestic factors, and looks to events in the international arena as a decisive factor in the decision-making process. Travis (2000:252) states, “The necessity of policy development and the preclusion of policy options are often conditioned by shifts in the international setting.” Arriving at a decision takes into consideration a strategic problem; state objectives that address the problem and secure the
national interest; set of options that could achieve these objectives; cost and benefit analysis for each option that maximizes utility in terms of these objectives; and the strategic interaction between the state and its adversary, which ultimately determines the option chosen by the state (Allison and Zelikow 1999; Yetiv 2004). For an illustration see figure 3.1.

![Figure 3.1. The rational actor model.](image)

The Argument of this Section

This chapter looks through the lens of the rational actor model at the reasons why the
United States went to war against Iraq. The destruction caused by 9/11 underscored U.S. concerns that international terrorism poses a threat to its national interests. U.S. government officials concluded that international terrorism should be dealt with by confronting terrorist organizations, as well as the nations that aid and abet them. The administration argued that aid from these nations enhances the capabilities of the terrorists to conduct their operations and pose a threat to the United States (U.S. President 2002a).

After 9/11, the main national interest for the United States was homeland security. The other enduring national interest that the United States had for decades is the security of the Persian Gulf to ensure the flow of oil that fuels the global economy. The administration perceived the Iraqi regime as posing a strategic threat to its national interests because of the following reasons: (1) attacking its neighbors and its own people with WMD in the 1980’s and 1990’s; (2) disrupting U.N. inspections; (3) providing monetary aid to Palestinian suicide bombers, and providing a haven for terrorists; (4) maintaining programs for procuring and developing WMD, and possibly transferring them to terrorist organizations that could use them against the United States. Because of these reasons Iraq became a primary target in the war on terror (CRS 2002a:2-10; U.S. President 2002a, 2003b).

The United States argued that U.N. sanctions and inspections failed to deter Iraq from procuring and developing WMD. Therefore, containing the Iraqi regime by relying on those same strategies was ineffective. As for conducting covert operations to overthrow Saddam, it was deemed futile by the CIA due to the conditions of the insurgency inside
Iraq. Therefore, disarmament and regime change by use of force, instead of containment, were emphasized as objectives ensuring U.S. national interests. These two objectives were followed by a third, which was the establishment of a democratic Iraq.

What underscored that conclusion was the uncertainty of what would Saddam do with WMD if he stayed in power. His expulsion of U.N. inspectors in 1998 added to the uncertainty about the status of his weapons stockpiles. And, the unwillingness of other countries in the international arena, such as France and Russia, to abide by the conditions of U.N. sanctions and programs such as the “food-for-oil” program, exacerbated the belief by the United States that it could not rely on the world community to contain Saddam. For all of these reasons, continued containment of the Iraqi regime became considerably more costly and ineffective than using force against Iraq.

To test whether the rational actor model can help explain the decision-making process in this case, this study would have to find evidence in the data articulating the following: (1) the strategic problem, (2) the national interest of the state in terms of goals and objectives, (3) the options the state surveys to achieve its goals, (4) the costs and benefits associated with each option, and (5) strategic interaction.

The Strategic Problem

The rational actor model stipulates that the state has goals and objectives derived from its understanding of its national interests, the attainment of which is supposed to eliminate a problem that poses a threat to these national interests (Allison and Zelikow 1999:24; Yetiv 2004:30-33). Ever since the 1980’s Iraq has posed a threat to U.S. interests directly and indirectly. Between 1980 and 1988, Iraq fought a war with Iran that
jeopardized the security of the Gulf States, which is considered crucial to U.S. interests. Upon the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, the United States fought a war to liberate that country, which resulted in the death of 148 service personnel and 138 non-battle deaths, along with 458 wounded. Iraq’s WMD programs were among the most advanced in the world. During the 1991 Gulf War, Iraq launched 39 Scud missiles at Israel (a U.S. ally) and around 50 enhanced Scud missiles on U.S. targets inside Saudi Arabia. And, Iraq has been accused by the United States as a continuous violator of human rights (CRS 2003d:1-2).

In addition, Iraq’s non-compliance with U.N. resolutions after the Gulf War added to the tension between the United States and Iraq, to the extent that in 1998 the Clinton administration adopted the official policy of regime change in Iraq (P.L. 105-338, Iraq Liberation Act of 1998). Furthermore, the 1998 expulsion of U.N. inspectors by Iraq resulted in intelligence reports indicating that Iraq reconstituted its WMD programs (CRS 2003d:4-5; U.S. President 2003b).

In the 2002 State of the Union address the president outlined one of the strategic problems that faced the nation,

Iraq continues to flaunt its hostility toward America and to support terror. The Iraqi regime has plotted to develop anthrax, and nerve gas, and nuclear weapons for a decade. This is a regime that has already used poison gas to murder thousands of its own citizens – leaving the bodies of mothers huddled over their dead children. This is a regime that agreed to international inspections then kicked out the inspectors. This is a regime that has something to hide from the civilized world. (U.S. President 2002a)

He proceeded to widen the scope of the problem by placing Iraq in the company of two other countries, North Korea and Iran, and by presenting it as a threat not just to the
United States but a threat to its allies as well. He stated,

By seeking weapons of mass destruction, these regimes pose a grave and growing danger. They could provide these arms to terrorists, giving them the means to match their hatred. They could attack our allies or attempt to blackmail the United States. (2002a)

In his 2003 State of the Union address, President Bush reasserted his position on Iraq as a major threat to the United States by stating,

This Congress and the American people must recognize another threat. Evidence from intelligence sources, secret communications, and statements by people now in custody reveal that Saddam Hussein aids and protects terrorists, including members of al Qaeda. Secretly, and without fingerprints, he could provide one of his hidden weapons to terrorists, or help them to develop their own. . . . It would take one vial, one canister, one crate slipped into this country to bring a day of horror like none we have ever known. (U.S. President 2003b)

As noted in chapter two, between the two addresses the president delivered many speeches and made many remarks emphasizing the issue of Iraq as a threat facing the United States in its war on terror.

And, in an interview with Bob Woodward two years after 9/11, President Bush expressed how it has changed his mind about security for the American people, and changed how he viewed Saddam Hussein, his oppressive regime, and his capability to inflict harm on others with WMD (Woodward 2004:27).

Even before President Bush assumed office, members of his administration were advocating the issue of Iraq as a threat to U.S. national interests. In 1998, Paul Wolfowitz, along with Donald Rumsfeld and other members of the Project for the New American Century, proposed sending the U.S. military inside Iraq to get rid of the Iraqi regime (PNAC 1998a, 1998b). Wolfowitz, in particular, was pushing for a broad campaign

By articulating the perceived threat that the Iraqi regime posed to the United States, the president and his administration were focusing the attention of the nation on the next problem that should be dealt with. Iraq was portrayed as the strategic problem that threatened U.S. national interests: Homeland security and Persian Gulf security. Therefore, in order to secure these national interests, objectives were devised to eliminate the Iraqi problem.

**Objectives/Goals**

According to the rational actor model the state has goals and objectives that are considered to be in the national interest, which are threatened by the strategic problem mentioned above (Allison and Zelikow 1999:24; Yetiv 2004:30-33).

9/11 underscored the need to secure the homeland and to ensure the safety of the American people. These primary concerns became the main objectives of the Bush administration. In his 2002 State of the Union address President Bush stated, “Our first priority must be the security of our nation . . . the next priority of my budget is to do everything possible to protect our citizens and strengthen our nation against the ongoing threat of another attack.” More specifically he stated, “Our second goal is to prevent regimes that sponsor terror from threatening America or our friends and allies with weapons of mass destruction” (U.S. President 2002a).

On September 17, 2002, the White House published a document titled “The National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction,” in which President Bush reiterated
his primary goal of protecting the homeland by stating, “We will not permit the world’s most dangerous regimes and terrorists to threaten us with the world’s most destructive weapons. We must accord the highest priority to the protection of the United States, our forces, and our friends and allies from the existing and growing WMD threat.” The president reasserted his goal by stating, “Defending the American homeland is the most basic responsibility of our government” (White House 2002b).

Another strategic goal, recognized for the past three decades by every U.S. president as a vital national interest, is the security of the Persian Gulf (CRS 2003d:1). The primary goal in securing that region is to ensure that oil would continue to be produced without interruption to fuel the global economy. The reason behind U.S. concerns is that approximately 25 percent of the world’s proven reserves are found in the Persian Gulf, and, Iraq is only second to Saudi Arabia in oil production (Brezinski, Scowcroft and Murphy 1997).

In conjunction with securing the flow of oil, the United States aims to prevent any hostile country from taking over the region and controlling its resources. Vice President Cheney, indicating the administration’s concerns about oil and the control of the region, noted that Iraq had a considerable portion of the world’s oil reserves, and if Saddam Hussein did have WMD, knowing his proclivities, he would attempt to dominate the rest of the Middle East, and control a significant portion of oil reserves that the world depended on (Mann 2004:341; U.S. Vice President 2002a). President Bush conveyed this concern as well (U.S. President 2003b).

Establishing that Iraq posed a threat to U.S. national interests (homeland security and
Persian Gulf security), regime change in Iraq became the objective that would help insure these interests. However, in his September 12, 2002 U.N. speech, the president emphasized disarmament, rather than regime change to be the U.S. objective. But, the president did not rule out the latter. Later on, the administration began to emphasize the democratic transformation of Iraq. The implication was that a democratic Iraq would not attack its neighbors, and would be an example to other countries in the region (CRS 2003d:5; Mann 2004:351; Woodward 2004:41-42; U.S. President 2003b, 2003f).

Options

In the previous section this study established that the U.S. national interests were: (1) Homeland security and the safety of the American people, (2) Persian Gulf security. These national interests were translated into the following objectives: (1) elimination of WMD and disarmament, (2) regime change in Iraq, and (3) establishing a democracy in Iraq. To accomplish these intertwining goals the administration had been discussing several options: (1) modified sanctions and renewed U.N. inspections, (2) a coup d’estat, and (3) military operations.

Secretary of State Powell championed the first option of modified sanctions and new U.N. inspections (Gordon and Trainor 2006:14). He argued early on in the administration that existing sanctions and programs such as “food-for-oil” were not effective because other countries were purchasing Iraqi oil outside the provisions of the program. Powell proposed “smart sanctions,” which would modify the existing program by allowing imports of food and medicine, and preventing imports with dual usages, military and civilian. He indicated that the benefits of these sanctions would be changing the bad
reputation that the United States was starving the Iraqi people, and depriving Saddam from materials and technology to rebuild his WMD capabilities (CRS 2003d:5-6; Tenet 2007:303). This measure was adopted on May 14, 2002, by U.N. Resolution 1409 (CRS 2003a:8).

As for renewed U.N. inspections, Powell ardently argued during a September 7, 2002 national security meeting at Camp David for the usefulness of restarting U.N. weapons inspections. That would ensure disarmament peacefully if Iraq were persuaded to cooperate, especially if it was threatened with the use of force. And, in case Saddam did not cooperate, the United States would have the justification to go to war against Iraq (Tenet 2007:318-19).

The second option or strategy that had been discussed was a covert coup d’état of the Iraqi regime, in coordination with opposition groups inside Iraq. President Bush and his administration had relaxed the requirement of regime change ever since the president’s September 12, 2002 speech at the United Nations. Yet, the administration’s involvement since the middle of 2002 with opposition groups inside Iraq suggested otherwise. The administration tried to broaden and strengthen the Iraqi opposition. In particular, it tried to establish relations with Shiite Islamist groups, ex-military groups and officers, and ethnic-based groups. Some of these groups were: Iraqi National Movement; Iraqi National Front; Iraqi Free Officers and Civilian Movement; Higher Council for National Salvation; Iraqi Turkmen Front; The Islamic Accord of Iraq; and, the Assyrian Democratic Movement (CRS 2003a:10-11).

On December 9, 2002, the administration named all of the above groups, except for
the Higher Council for National Salvation, as “democratic opposition organizations,” rendering them eligible to receive funds under the provision of the 1998 Iraq Liberation Act. In addition, the administration had encouraged meetings between these groups for coordination and support. Such efforts implied that the United States might use these groups to stage a covert coup (CRS 2003a:11).

Other than sanctions, inspections, and coup d’etat scenarios, the administration was looking into military options. Even though Powell preferred sanctions and U.N. inspections, Vice President Cheney, Defense Secretary Rumsfeld, and Deputy Wolfowitz emphasized that regime change by use of force was the only way to eliminate the threat of Iraqi WMD (U.S. Vice President 2002a, 2002b; U.S. Department of Defense 2002c, 2002d). There were three military options discussed by the administration and the military establishment: (1) large-scale invasion; (2) special operations/indigenous forces, and; (3) the middle option (CRS 2003c:2-3).

The large-scale invasion option, first briefed to the administration by Army General Tommy Franks, which he called the *Generated Start* (Gordon and Trainor 2006:36), required large-scale ground force invasion. It would involve 250,000 troops of Air Force, Army, and Marines. This option aligned with the “Powell Doctrine,” which calls for overwhelming force to be used in combat to insure victory. The special operations/indigenous forces option would require the smallest number of U.S. ground troops, and was called the *Running Start* (2006:50) by Franks. But it would require extensive dependence on the use of special operations forces cooperating with indigenous Iraqi forces that were in opposition to Saddam. In addition, this option would require extensive
use of the Air Force to destroy Saddam’s Republican Guard, command and control centers, and WMD capabilities and facilities. The middle option, called the *Hybrid* (2006:67) by Franks, would blend the first two options, and would require 100,000 U.S. troops. Instead of a large number of U.S. forces, it would focus on the diversity of attacking units (armor, airmobile, special operations, and marine); and, it would require very close coordination between Army, Marines, and Air Force (CRS 2003c:2-3).

Each of the options listed above had costs and benefits that were considered by administration officials.

**Cost and Benefit Analysis**

The administration claimed that the benefits of smart sanctions would be building international support for U.S. policy, because the old regime’s enforcement was viewed as “too punitive of the Iraqi people” (CRS 2003d:5-6). As for inspections, Powell claimed that they could insure Iraq’s disarmament peacefully without having to use force. And, should Iraq refuse to disarm, The United States would have the reason and the justification to go to war (Tenet 2007:318-19).

However, opponents to sanctions and inspections, represented by Vice President Cheney, claimed that Saddam had many years during which he circumvented sanctions, disrupted inspections, concealed weapons, and violated resolutions. He finally expelled U.N. inspectors in 1998. Because of these reasons, inspections could not guarantee that the Iraqi regime would abide by U.N. resolutions and lead to peaceful disarmament (U.S. Vice President 2002a).
The benefits to having a coup by which the Iraqi regime would be covertly overthrown was that it eliminated the need for large numbers of American troops, and therefore, the need to secure regional bases to launch operations. In addition, costs would be considerably smaller, and extended periods of time required for coordinating efforts, which would delay operations, would not be necessary. On the other hand, administration officials believed that coups alone would not suffice to cause regime change. Saddam’s tight control of the military, the security service, and the Ba’ath Party inside Iraq, as well as his experience in thwarting coups, made this option difficult to implement without the involvement of the U.S. military (CRS 2003a:12; Mann 2004:333-34). Furthermore, the CIA had already ruled out this strategy because Saddam understood how a coup worked, and he knew how to thwart one. He was too deeply entrenched with many layers of security, which made any covert operation to remove him very difficult to implement. Many Iraqis, inside and outside the country, stressed that such an operation could be accomplished only with American troops on the ground. And, according to General Frank’s assessment, no opposition group had sufficient autonomy to enable them to stage a successful coup. Therefore, if the United States launched a coup it would play into the Iraqi regime’s strength (Tenet 2007:303-04; Woodward 2004:72, 81). Furthermore, it was probable with this option that another Sunni dictator would replace Saddam, an outcome that did not coincide with the administration’s intent in Iraq as a beacon of democracy in the Middle East (Tenet 2007:304-05).

The benefit of the large-scale invasion was that it would quickly overwhelm the weakened Iraqi forces. The costs would be in the many months of preparation, planning,
and build-up. And, it would require securing staging areas and airbases, which could be
difficult considering the possible opposition of Saudi Arabia to such an endeavor (CRS
2003c:2, 4). Furthermore, Rumsfeld opposed it for being cumbersome, inefficient, and
too lengthy – the opposite of what he intended the military to be (Gordon and Trainor

The benefit of the special operations/indigenous forces was that it did not require
large staging areas for ground forces, or months of preparation. And, it had a positive
precedence in its success in Afghanistan. The risks would be in the heavy reliance on the
Special Forces having to cooperate with indigenous Iraqi forces. Depending on the Iraqi
forces’ reliability and capability, this option carried much uncertainty about their
readiness and their intra-group conflicts (CRS 2003c:2-3).

The benefit of the middle option was that it eliminated the reliance on indigenous
groups, and therefore, eliminated the uncertainty of their readiness and their intra-group
conflicts. The risk was that it would rely heavily on air power, which required securing

The overall risks of a military operation against Iraq were that it did not seem likely
that the United States could secure as large and as robust a coalition as the 1991 Gulf
War. France and Germany were not in favor of the operation before exhausting U.N.
inspections. Because Saudi Arabia was not willing to allow U.S. forces to use its bases,
the United States would have to rely on several other countries such as Bahrain, Kuwait,
Oman, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates. The cooperation of these countries
depended on the result of U.N. inspections, and on further U. N. resolutions for the use of
force against Iraq. If they were to insist on new U.N. resolutions, it could delay the start of military operations until after April, and during the hot Iraqi summer (CRS 2003c:4-5). In addition to the possible lack of support from other countries and from the United Nations, Rumsfeld presented a list of other risks that could be associated with military action against Iraq:

- It could cause problems in the rest of the Middle East such as the widening of the Arab-Israeli war; and the intervention of Syria, Iran, and Turkey; and it could cause the destabilization of friendly regimes in the region.
- It could prevent the United States from giving the attention it needs to other problems in the region and worldwide.
- The costs and damages of the war could be greater than expected.
- Post-war reconstruction could take up to ten years, with considerable demands to be imposed on U.S. leadership and resources.
- The war could be portrayed as anti-Muslim, leading to more terrorist recruitments.
- Ethnic strife among the Kurds, Sunnis, and Shia could occur.
- WMD may not be found on the ground.
- The reaction in toward preemption may deter future operations in other parts of the world.
- And, it could result in the failure by the United States to successfully manage Iraq, leading to its disintegration, to the detriment of the region as a whole (Feith 2008:333-34).
A significant benefit to military operations was the condition of the Iraqi forces. First, administration and military officials concluded that due to a decade of arms embargo military equipment were obsolete or inoperable, and army divisions were undermanned. Second, due to lack of combat training and a weak logistical support the Iraqi forces were dilapidated, and the cost of overcoming them would be minimal. Therefore, the expected utility of war was raised (CRS 2003c:7; Woodward 2004:80).

By the end of December, it was reported that Rumsfeld had essentially agreed to a plan (Cobra II) devised by Lieutenant General David McKiernan, who was the Army’s chief operation’s officer. It was the closest to Frank’s generated start (CRS 2003c: Summary; Gordon and Trainor 2006:93).

Strategic Interaction

This version of the rational actor model includes the concept of strategic interaction as first laid out by Schelling (1960), and applied by Yetiv (2004). Explaining this concept, Allison and Zelikow (1999:41) state, “Each nation’s best choice depends on what it expects the other to do. Strategic behavior seeks to influence another actor’s choice by working on his expectations of how his behavior is related to one’s own.” The anticipated reactions of the Iraqi military, the Iraqi people, and Saddam Hussein, played an important role in making the decision, which the administration perceived would maximize utility in terms of its goals.

With respect to the Iraqi military, it was perceived to be in a weakened condition due to a decade of arms embargo that considerably diminished its capabilities, and undermined its morale. Furthermore, it was anticipated that the Iraqi military would
prove unreliable, and might even defect to opposition forces if war was imminent (CRS 2003c:3, 7). Therefore, because of the expected condition and the anticipated behavior of the Iraqi military, the Bush administration and the U.S. military expected that the opposition to a U.S. military campaign would be minimal, and therefore, its expected utility would increase.

With respect to the Iraqi people, and according to General Franks, the expectation was that they would join in the campaign to rid Iraq of Saddam once they knew that the U.S. military was going to be involved (Woodward 2004:81). Furthermore, the administration believed that the Iraqi people would greatly rejoice and would readily welcome the U.S. military once victory was achieved. In his speech at the VFW 103rd National Convention, Cheney stated, “The Middle East expert Professor Fouad Ajami predicts that after liberation, the streets in Basra and Baghdad are ‘sure to erupt in joy in the same way the throngs in Kabul greeted the Americans’” (U.S. Vice President 2002a). Therefore, based on the expectation of how the Iraqi people would react, the administration calculated that public opposition in Iraq would be minimal. Therefore, the cost of a military operation would decrease, and the expected utility would increase.

With respect to how Saddam would react, administration officials expected that Saddam would not unconditionally allow the resumption of U.N. weapons inspection. Rumsfeld expressed doubts that Saddam would comply with new U.N. inspections (CRS 2002b:2). President Bush reiterated these same doubts one day after his address at the United Nations. His perception was that Saddam Hussein would not meet the conditions of U.N. Security Council resolutions (Garamone 2002). Anticipating Saddam’s non-
compliance made it easier for the president to go to the United Nations and ask for a new resolution on Iraq. In that, the Bush administration would have the justification to go to war before Congress, the American people, and the world (Mann 2004:342).

What was more concerning was the uncertainty of Saddam’s behavior once he understood that war was imminent. The Director of Central Intelligence, George Tenet, warned in October of 2002 that “‘Should Saddam conclude that a U.S.-led attack could no longer be deterred, he probably would become much less constrained in adopting terrorist actions’” (quoted in CRS 2002b:3; Tenet 2007:335). And, if he believed that he had nothing to lose because of U.S. intent on regime change, he could unleash his WMD against U.S. forces (CRS 2003c:8; Tenet 2007:335). That was what probably prompted the White House to express the intent of using nuclear weapons should Saddam unleash his WMD (White House 2002b). Such declaration could have had the effect of deterring Saddam.

Furthermore, according to McClellan (2008:143) the president and his advisers positioned themselves strategically by issuing an ultimatum for war during the president’s speech at the United Nations, and by ordering the massive military build-up in the region. This strategy caused his political opponents at home and abroad, and Saddam Hussein to be at a disadvantage,

He made the job of his political opponents extraordinarily difficult, putting those who opposed the war in a position of arguing against what was almost a fait accompli. He trapped Saddam Hussein in a shrinking box making it less and less acceptable for the dictator to continue to temporize and play games with the inspectors. He forced other countries – including those, like Russia and France, that had sometimes sided with Iraq – to make hard decisions as to whether or not they would permit a U.S.-led invasion absent a clear imminent threat.
Other Considerations

Several other conditions existed that led the Bush administration to the conclusion that the expected utility of war, even if it had to act unilaterally, was greater than the expected cost.

First, because of global conditions of anarchy (Waltz 1979, 1993), the Bush administration might have perceived that it could not count on other countries, or on U.N. personnel to abide by the stipulations of economic sanctions against Iraq. In fact, Paul Volcker, who was appointed by the United Nations to investigate corruption in the food-for-oil program, did confirm what the administration had suspected (NewsHour 2005). And, because of the futility of previous U.N. inspections, the United States could not depend on the United Nations to deter and contain Iraq. Therefore, to protect its vital interests the United States would have had to depend on itself because it could not depend on international institutions, policing forces, or laws to stop Iraq.

Second, because U.N. inspections were halted in 1998, the United States did not know the status of Iraq’s WMD, nuclear programs, or missile capabilities. The intelligence community lacked human access to penetrate the Iraqi system at that time. Any information it had was based on old intelligence and estimations (Tenet 2007:326-30). This sense of uncertainty due to lack of information was corroborated by Feith (2008: 302-03) in stating,

At the heart of the U.S. problem with Iraq was uncertainty. Even if new inspections occurred, we would not learn for sure what was happening with Iraq’s WMD programs and stockpiles. After all, Saddam was capable of prodigious denial and deception. . . . Important uncertainties would remain no matter what UNMOVIC accomplished. . . . President Bush would have to make his national security decisions despite these uncertainties.
Therefore, the United States had to make its decision under conditions of incomplete information. It calculated that time was not on its side, and it could not wait until Iraq developed a nuclear weapon (Tenet 2007:305).

Third, the United States did not have to consider the possibility of a third party coming to the aid of the Iraqi regime. Even though many Arab countries did not openly support the United States in its campaign, there was no danger of any country in the region that could challenge the United States and would fight on the side of the Iraqi regime. That was precisely what happened, as was pointed out by the Israeli National Security Adviser, Efraim Halevy (Washington Institute for Near East Policy 2003). As for members of the international community, the United States did not have to fear that any other western country would come to the aid of Iraq. The United States had established itself as the sole superpower after the fall of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War. No other country had enough vested interests in Iraq to challenge the United States militarily. Furthermore, four major western allies – Great Britain, Italy, Spain, and Australia – had joined the American campaign, which split Europe over the Iraq issue (Castle 2003), and diminished the effectiveness of the opposition. Because of all of the above reasons the expected utility of war would have been raised in the estimation of the Bush administration.

Choosing an Option

Because of the following reasons, the United States concluded that the expected utility of going to war outweighed its costs, and outweighed the expected utility of other options. Based on previous experiences, sanctions and U.N. inspections would not insure
Iraq’s disarmament. Covert operations to overthrow Saddam were futile considering his tight grip on the country. Special Forces operations in conjunction with inside groups were too uncertain, especially considering the status of these groups; and it would still require the use of the military. The expected reaction of the Iraqi military, the Iraqi people, and Saddam’s regime, in addition to the absence of a third party to aid the Iraqi regime, made the military option seem less risky. Furthermore, conditions of global anarchy, lack of reliable intelligence, and incomplete information, led to the conclusion by the administration that it could not rely on the international community to contain Iraq, and it could not wait too long before military operations would have to begin. In that, the military option maximized the administration’s utility with respect to attaining its goals and securing its national interests.

Conclusion

In chapter one this study established that as evidence of rationality we would expect that decision makers would include plausible alternatives as solutions to the problem, and would encourage dissenting opinions (Yetiv 2004:147). The above evidence suggests that several options – sanctions and U.N. inspections; coup d’état; and military operations – were considered. Whether dissenting opinions were encouraged is subject to debate because the evidence is not entirely clear on this score. Nonetheless, Powell voiced such opinions (Baxter 2007; Tenet 2007:318-19; Woodward 2002:331-34). The second evidence established for rationality was the discussion of costs and benefits of each alternative (Allison 1971:33). According to the above evidence each proposed option was viewed with its costs and benefits. And, due to the reasons discussed in the previous
section, and to the conditions of bounded rationality (see chapter one), which “recognizes inescapable limitations of knowledge and computational ability of the agent” (Allison and Zelikow 1999:20), the military option was deemed to be maximizing utility with respect to the objectives of the state. Therefore, according to the assumptions of this model – other than encouraging dissenting opinion – and in terms of the goals set by the state, which determine the value maximizing behavior of the actor, there is enough evidence of rational action (1999:19).

The assumptions in the rational actor model involve strategic problems, national interests, objectives, options, and strategic interaction, all of which deal with relations with the outside world. And all of which seem to be present in this case. Domestic politics such as the role of public opinion, bureaucratic politics, small-group politics, and the psychology of individual decision makers do not impact the decision-making process. Therefore, these areas are not elaborated on in this model. In that respect, this model is lacking in explaining the whole process in foreign-policy making. Furthermore, the rational actor model does not account for the element of surprise, or for the reality of having to make decisions quickly – as was the case after 9/11 – which undermines the deliberate rational process it proposes. Nor does it account for the notion of preexisting solutions or agendas that decision makers bring with them and attempt to push through the system. Finally, accounting for the international arena as “the factor” in foreign policy when other models do not, renders the rational actor model necessary in this process. But, discounting other factors renders it insufficient. Some of its strengths and weaknesses are summed up in table 3.1.
Table 3.1. Strengths and weaknesses of the rational actor model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
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<tr>
<td>Considers the impact of international events, which other models do not.</td>
<td>Process does not allow for surprises or unexpected events.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumptions are not too numerous. It is parsimonious, orderly, and logical.</td>
<td>Isolated from the domestic context.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does not account for bureaucratic politics, small group politics, cognition, or preexisting solutions in agenda setting.</td>
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**The Governmental Politics Model**

The governmental politics model challenges the concept of the state as a unitary actor with a unified national interest. Because it allows for different interpretations of what constitutes the national interest and the primary goals of the state, it provides a framework safeguarding against false impressions of unanimity (Preston and ‘t Hart 1999:51). Therefore, Preston and ‘t Hart conclude that “Bureaucratic politics may well be a next best route to pluralist checks and balances” (1999:54). The position bureaucrats assume is affected by how they could exert influence. Such a goal causes them to support policies that rely more fully on their organization, and on information that they can provide (Halperin, Clapp, and Kanter 2006:26-27). Allison and Zelikow (1999:255) describe this model as follows,

Outcomes are formed, and deformed, by the interaction of competing preferences. . . . The Governmental Politics Model sees no unitary actor but rather many actors as players: players who focus not on a single strategic issue but on many diverse intranational problems as well: players who act in terms of no consistent set of strategic objectives but rather according to various conceptions of national, organizational, and personal goals; players who make government decisions not by a single, rational choice but by the pulling and hauling that is politics.
The Argument of this Section

This section argues that the decision to go to war against Iraq was not the result of a rational decision-making process by a unitary actor – the state – looking to maximize the national interest, but the outcome of a process of bargaining between bureaucracies and the bureaucrats that represent them. The decision made is a collage of different opinions. As is the custom in foreign policy, the departments of Defense and State were involved in the process. The differences in their positions emanated from the differences in the interests of their bureaucracies, which they conceived to be in the national interest. Allison and Zelikow (1999:256) state, “Separate responsibilities laid on the shoulders of distinct individuals encourage differences in what each sees and judges to be important. . . . They differ about what must be done.” What is important for these organizations is that they are able to fulfill their mission by seeking to influence the decision-making process (Halperin, Clapp, and Kanter 2006:25). The different interests of these two departments made each cabinet member the advocate for these interests. However, because of his influence with the president, and his close relationship with Cheney, Rumsfeld was able to exert more influence on the decision-making process.

The Assumptions of the Governmental Politics Model

This study will utilize the four assumptions of the governmental politics model, as summarized by Yetiv (2004) while drawing on the research of Allison and Zelikow (1999).

The first assumption stipulates that where you stand is substantially affected by where you sit. This indicates that before considering the national interest, decision makers act
according to the interests of their particular bureaucracies. Therefore, the positions they hold within their respective bureaucracies determine what interests and goals they hold as priorities (Yetiv 2004:122). This assumption is countered by the argument that multiple decision makers may indeed have the same goals, particularly if we consider that they are chosen by the president because they share his views (Bendor and Hammond 1992:314; Krasner 1972:166).

The second assumption stipulates that decisions are the outcome of a process of bargaining between bureaucrats consisting of conflict, confusion, and compromise. Whereas the rational actor model assumes that decisions are made in a rational deliberate process entailing a cost-benefit analysis of the options available to maximize utility, the governmental politics model stipulates that decisions involve considerable pushing and hauling by bureaucrats to advance what they consider their interests, the interests of their organization, and their concept of the national interest (Yetiv 2004:123).

The third assumption stipulates that presidents should not be discounted in this bargaining process. They too will bargain and push in the direction of their interests and what they conceive to be in the national interest (2004:123).

The fourth assumption stipulates that the decisions arrived at are collages. They are the outcome of the interaction between the different players apart from any careful cost-benefit analysis. It is the sum of the opinions, decisions, and actions taken by players during multiple interactions, influenced by central actors that could sway the process in their direction. The collage does not reflect the decision preferred by the president; rather it is a combination of pieces of multiple choices advanced by different bureaucrats (Yetiv
Yet, depending on how expertly a decision maker exerts influence, he may affect the decision more than the others. Allison and Zelikow (1999:300) state, “The sources of bargaining advantages include . . . the ability to affect other players’ objectives in other games; . . . personal persuasiveness with other players (drawn from personal relationship, charisma).” In addition, this does not exclude the possibility that decision makers themselves are rational in the sense that their decisions are based on calculations that maximize their own utility (Bendor and Hammond 1992:304). Rather, it means that the sum-total of their opinions culminate in a decision that does not necessarily agree with the assumptions of the rational actor model (Yetiv 2004:123). See figure 3.2 for an illustration.

Figure 3.2. The governmental politics model.

Testing the Model

As mentioned above, the first assumption stipulates that decision makers assume
positions that tend to favor their bureaucracies. To test this assumption we would expect that individuals who hold positions within the same bureaucracy will likely hold the same stand on Iraq and individuals who hold positions in different bureaucracies will likely hold a different stand on Iraq (Yetiv 2004:124). Therefore, we would expect:

1- Powell and Rumsfeld to have a different stand on Iraq.
2- Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz to have a similar stand on Iraq.
3- Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz to have a closer stand on Iraq than Powell and Wolfowitz.

After 9/11, high-level quarrels between the administration’s cabinet members ensued in regards to the scope of the retaliation (CNN 2002; Halper and Clarke 2004:151). The State and the Defense Departments had different priorities stemming from the different roles that they assume. Whereas the State Department concentrated on diplomacy and coalition building with allies that faced opposition to the United States in their own countries, the Defense Department and Pentagon had to devise military options that would accomplish the goals of the president and satisfy the public (Halper, Clapp, and Kanter 2006:26; Tyler and Sciolino 2001; U.S. Department of State 2001d).

*Position of Powell*

During national security meetings Powell was reported to have urged officials to exercise caution in broadening the military campaign to include countries other than Afghanistan, namely, Iraq. Feith (2008:51) stated, “Powell with Armitage had been arguing that the U.S. response to 9/11 should focus tightly on Afghanistan and al Qaida. State officials assessed… that our allies and friends should be more comfortable with *retributive* U.S. strikes against the perpetrators of 9/11 than with a global war against
Islamist terrorists and their state supporters.” Powell argued that because of U.N.
sanctions, in place since 1991, other Middle Eastern countries had a great deal of
sympathy for the Iraqi people and what they perceived that the United States was
causing. Therefore, attacking Iraq would not meet with the support needed by the United
States in that region (Tenet 2007:303; Tyler and Sciolino 2001). When Wolfowitz
alluded to ending states with ties to terrorism (U.S. Department of Defense 2001d),
Powell forcefully responded by stating, “We’re after ending terrorism. . . . And if there
are states and regimes, nations, that support terrorism, we hope to persuade them that it is
in their interest to stop. But I think ‘ending terrorism’ is where I would leave it and let
Mr. Wolfowitz speak for himself” (Mann 2004:302; Tyler and Sciolino 2001; U.S.
Department of State 2001c). As for allies, Feith (2008:59) stated that, “Powell stressed
the importance of respecting the views of allies and friends.”

Powell was in favor of a limited military action only after exhausting other available
options, political, financial, legal, and diplomatic (Halper and Clarke 2004:151). During a
September 14, 2001 briefing he stated, “And so you have to design a campaign plan that
goes after that kind of enemy, and it isn’t always blunt military force, although that is
certainly an option. It may well be that the diplomatic efforts, political efforts, legal,
financial, other efforts, may be just as effective against that kind of an enemy as would
military force be” (U.S. Department of State 2001a). He insisted that such a campaign
would cause the coalition in Afghanistan, which the United States would like to preserve,
to dissolve. Further, he was concerned that if military operations expanded, it would be
perceived as a holy war against Islam (Tyler and Sciolino 2001).
Powell was of the opinion that Saddam was an “irrelevant individual sitting there with a broken regime” (U.S. Department of State 2001b). Therefore, he believed that the international community could still contain him through renewed inspections. He asserted that the United Nations’ goal was for inspectors to go back to Iraq, and if we wanted the international community to focus on elimination of WMD, the inspectors had to go back to Iraq (U.S. Department of State 2001e).

Position of Rumsfeld

Rumsfeld was of the opinion that Saddam never stopped adding to his stockpile of WMD (U.S. Department of Defense 2002a). He believed that inspections were never effective, and would not be effective in this conflict. In his testimony before Congress he stated, “There is a place in this world for inspections. . . . They tend not to be as effective in uncovering deceptions and violations when the target is determined not to disarm and to try to deceive. And Iraq’s record of the past decade shows that they want weapons of mass destruction and are determined to continue developing them” (U.S. Department of Defense 2002c). He advocated regime change, even if it entailed U.S. military involvement (PNAC 1998a, 1998b; U.S. Department of Defense 2002c). Expressing his disapproval of State Department position on the war, Rumsfeld would inundate the department staff with memos regarding his disagreement with their policies (USA TODAY 2002). It was the sort of rift between State and Defense that often led President Bush to have to make a choice between their diverging worldviews (Halper and Clarke 2004:152-53). In contrast to Powell regarding U.S. allies, Feith (2008:59) stated that
Rumsfeld and his team “encouraged the President to act, with due respect, to shape those [the allies’] views.”

**Position of Wolfowitz**

Having differences with Powell since the 1991 Gulf War, Wolfowitz continued to push for military action against the Iraqi regime. His campaign began before 2000 (PNAC 1998a, 1998b) and continued into the present administration. He argued that military action would obviate the dangers posed by the Iraqi regime, caused by Saddam’s unrelenting acquisition of WMD threatening the region and the United States (Tyler and Sciolino 2001; U.S. Department of Defense 2002d). Shortly after 9/11, he indicated that the old approach to terrorism would not work any longer (NewsHour 2001; Tanenhaus 2003:141; U.S. Department of Defense 2001d). His allusion to eliminating states that sponsor terrorism (U.S. Department of Defense 2001d) caused a strong negative response by Powell (U.S. Department of State 2001c). He, along with other defense officials, perceived that the severity of the 9/11 attacks would render what was perceived as a particularly hard-line policy to be considered more politically palatable (Allen and Sipress 2001).

His relationship with Rumsfeld went back many years that Rumsfeld took his advice on matters of national security (Feith 2008:71). He agreed with the secretary about Saddam’s acceleration of WMD programs, and supported the necessity of a preemptive action to prevent any future threats from the Iraqi regime. During the September 15-16, 2001 national security meetings, Feith (2008:151) stated, “Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz also wanted to sketch out the case for acting soon, in one way or another, against the threat
from Iraq.” Their accord was evident in Wolfowitz’s testimony on September 19, 2002, before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, during which he kept referring to Rumsfeld’s testimony the day before. The following are excerpts from that testimony:

“The secretary concluded . . . ‘Knowing what we know about Iraq’s history, no conclusion is possible except that they have and are accelerating their WMD programs.’” He added, “Secretary Rumsfeld concluded, and I quote, ‘I suspect that in retrospect most of those investigating September 11 would have supported preventative action to preempt that threat if it had been possible to see it coming.’” And he further added, “And the secretary then added, ‘we cannot go back in time to stop the September 11 attacks, but we can take actions now to prevent some future threats.’ And of course, that is precisely why we are here today to examine how we can all work together to prevent future threats to our nation” (U.S. Department of Defense 2002d). In quoting Rumsfeld in this manner, Wolfowitz was underscoring his agreement with him.

The above brief history details the evidence that (1) Rumsfeld and Powell disagreed on the policy on Iraq; (2) Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz agreed on the policy on Iraq; and (3) Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz held a closer position on Iraq than Wolfowitz and Powell. Therefore, on this score, we can conclude that there is evidence of the governmental politics process.

The second assumption states that decisions are made through a process of bargaining, which involves conflict, confusion, and compromise. Bargaining entails pulling and hauling in the direction of the bureaucracy that the bureaucrat represents. Yetiv (2004:125) argues, “The real question however is not whether they will do so, but
to what extent.” He suggests that we could test the extent by placing bargaining on a continuum between explanation and rivalry: (1) explanation is the effort to communicate information about, or ideas that emanate from, the player’s bureaucracy; (2) bargaining is the use of give-and-take approaches to achieve compromise such that players are inclined to assent to one option only on condition of another; (3) advocacy is the active pursuit of the interests of the bureaucracy; and (4) rivalry is an extended, structural competition (2004:125-26).

Yetiv states that to test this assumption, we would have to rely on information from meetings of the principals committee and the deputies committee. The principals committee would be what Allison and Zelikow call the *chiefs* (1999:296), which would include in this case the president, vice president, national security adviser, secretary of defense, secretary of state, and director of intelligence. And, the deputies’ committee would be that of the deputies of the principals: Hadley, Armitage, Wolfowitz, Mclaughlin, and, on occasion, Undersecretary of Defense Douglas Feith, and the CIA National Intelligence Officer for Strategic programs, Bob Walpole.

Because of the lack of government data on committee meetings for national security, this study will rely on evidence from secondary sources such as: The memoirs of George Tenet, the director of intelligence; of Douglas Feith, the undersecretary of defense for policy; of Scott McClellan, the press secretary; as well as a speech by Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson who was the chief of staff for former Secretary of State Powell; and, other accounts such as Woodward’s (2002).

An attempt at exploring the first stage on the continuum, explanation, can be found in
Tenet’s account of a September 14, 2002 meeting convened by Hadley at the White House, that included second-tier officials from the NSC, State, Defense, and CIA. “The agenda was titled, ‘Why Iraq Now?’” (Tenet 2007:319), which indicated the reason for an Iraq war was Saddam’s WMD, particularly in conjunction with his ties to terrorism. Bob Walpole pointed out that Iran and North Korea would make stronger cases for military action if these were the criteria the proponents were to use. However, Feith ridiculed Walpole’s judgment (2007:319). This account suggests that it was an effort to communicate information and ideas that emanated from the Defense Department and the National Security Council.

There is no clear evidence from the data that the proponents of war engaged in any serious bargaining, the second stage on the continuum, in which there was a give-and-take approach that caused them to assent to one option in exchange for another. However, as will be explained in the third assumption, the evidence reveals that the president did engage in some bargaining.

An attempt at advocacy, the third stage on the continuum, can be found in Tenet’s account of an August 15, 2002 meeting requested by a Pentagon group working for Feith as an opportunity to share with CIA officials what observations they had on the connection between terrorism and Iraq (Tenet 2007:346). Tina Shelton, a naval reservist in Feith’s group, gave a presentation titled “Iraq and al-Qa’ida – Making the Case.” Tenet recounted, “She started out by saying that there should be ‘no more debate’ on the Iraq – al-Qa’ida relationship. ‘It is an open-and-shut case,’ she said, ‘No further analysis is required.’ . . . One slide said that Iraq and al-Qa’ida had a ‘mature, symbiotic
relationship.’ Wrong . . . Another slide said there were ‘some indications of possible Iraq coordination with Al Qaeda specifically related to 9/11’” (2007:347). Later on, the CIA learned that this same group was making the rounds briefing officials at the White House, the NSC, and the office of the Vice President, with similar presentations (2007:348). This evidence, particularly making the rounds, is an indication that the Department of Defense was avidly seeking to make their case, which is considered an attempt at advocacy. Further, the fact that the CIA did not agree with their presentation suggests that they were determined to push the information suitable to their department.

What brought this process to the stage of rivalry were Tenet and Feith’s conflicting accounts of the contention between the CIA and Defense. Tenet claimed that during the briefings with the other departments, the Department of Defense proponents added another slide titled “Fundamental Problems with How Intelligence Community is Assessing Information,” in which they complained that the CIA “were being too picky and applying a standard of proof that we would not normally require” (2007:348). The process conveyed competition with the CIA about their procedure and analysis delineating a step beyond advocacy to rivalry. In contrast, the account by Feith was presented differently. Feith (2008:264-66) stated that Tina Shelton of the Defense Department was reviewing some intelligence data about terrorist networks from 1998, when she noticed that some information was not included in CIA assessments after 9/11. When she inquired about this issue, she was reportedly told that this was an attempt to prevent such information from reaching Wolfowitz. Her critique was that the intelligence community would “shade their information . . . through the use of ‘spin language,’” and
that “officials filtered their data . . . by ignoring reports that were inconsistent with their
theory that the Iraqi regime’s secular ideology precluded cooperation with al Qaida
religious fanatics” (Feith 2008:266). Whatever the case may have been, it seems that
there was contention between the two departments; each claiming that the other was
presenting its point of view exclusively, and stepping out of its professional boundaries,
which brought the process to the stage of rivalry.

The above data are evidence that explanation, advocacy, and rivalry were more
prominent than mere bargaining. In particular, the rivalry stage was evident in the
contention between Defense and Intelligence.

As for the principals or chiefs, former State Department Chief of Staff, Colonel
Lawrence Wilkerson stated, “What I saw was a cabal between the vice president of the
United States, Richard Cheney, and the Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld on
critical issues that made decisions that the bureaucracy did not know were being made.”
He added, “What I was seeing was an extremely weak national security adviser, and an
extremely powerful vice president, and an extremely powerful in the issues that impacted
him secretary of Defense – remember, a vice president who has been secretary of
Defense too and obviously has an inclination that way, and also has known the secretary
of Defense for a long time.” He added, “So you’ve got this collegiality there between the
secretary of Defense, and the vice president, and you’ve got a president who is not versed
in international relations. . . . And so it’s not too difficult to make decisions in this what I
call Oval Office Cabal.” He blamed much of it on National Security Adviser Rice for not
providing access for dissenting voices to the president, and probably siding with the
president, and the vice president, and the secretary of defense, and as a result, “you had this incredible process where the formal process, the statutory process, the policy coordinating committee, the deputies committee, the principal’s committee, all camouflaged – the dysfunctionality camouflaged the efficiency of the secret decision-making process” (New America Foundation 2005). What added to the influence of Rumsfeld and Cheney is the latter’s closeness to President Bush, and how well they complemented each other in their work relationship (Suskind 2006:79). McClellan (2008:85) described the nature of their relationship as follows, “Bush valued Cheney’s experience and knowledge, particularly on national security matters, and sought his counsel. . . . Bush and Cheney’s relationship was close – and substantially private. . . . Cheney heavily influenced foreign policy. . . . Bush showed Cheney great deference, especially when he designated him to take a specific task.”

From this evidence, we can conclude that because of the close relationship of Cheney to Rumsfeld they seemed to have had the same interests to advance. And, because of Cheney’s close relationship with the president, they seemed to have had considerable influence on the president. Such influence and the secrecy with which they conducted their meetings suggest that Rumsfeld and Cheney did not have to make an attempt at compromise. However, the president’s reliance on their expertise suggests that they would have had to engage in explanation, and advocacy. And, to the extent that they discredited Powell’s argument for inspections and diplomacy, that was an attempt at rivalry. The position of Rumsfeld and Cheney in this action-channel (close to the president) helped them exert enough influence to sway the decision-making process in
their direction (Allison and Zelikow 1999:300).

That is not to suggest that the opinions of Powell were never heard. Powell tried on occasions to make the case against the war to the president (Baxter 2007; Woodward 2002:331-34). The account of such attempts could be characterized as an explanation, because Powell was making clear to the president the ramifications of the war. And, it can be characterized as advocacy, because he was pushing the State Department’s concerns about alienating friendly countries in the region, and about the adverse effect on the larger war on terrorism. And, it can be characterized as rivalry because by presenting the costs of war as opposed to continued diplomacy, he was undermining the opinions of Rumsfeld and Cheney. However, the data do not provide evidence of bargaining, in which he was willing to abandon something in return for something else.

Powell was partially successful. He convinced the president to go to the United Nations, and to accept a final round of U.N. inspections; but not influential enough to prevent a war. And, for him to make his February 5th presentation at the United Nations (U.S. Department of State 2003c) suggests that by 2003 he must have reached the conclusion that war was inevitable.

This test concludes that there was an attempt at explanation, advocacy, and rivalry from both groups, which indicates that bureaucratic politics was at play.

The third assumption stipulates that the president engages in the bargaining game so that he can secure his interests. Bush’s inexperience in foreign policy, in contrast to that of Powell and Rumsfeld, caused him to rely on their expertise (New America Foundation 2005). Going back to the 2000 presidential campaign, President Bush’s inexperience in
foreign affairs was evident in interviews and debates. However, Bush counteracted it by pressing the notion that he surrounded himself with an experienced team, whose members served in different posts in previous administrations, a fact that would provide him with enough expertise in foreign affairs (Mann 2004:255). However, U.S. foreign-policy making always defers to the president as the decisive factor in this sphere. By the end of the summer of 2002, President Bush had sided with the hawks in his administration in adopting the more aggressive approach to dealing with Iraq (Halper and Clarke 2004:155). But, as was urged by some congressional members (Diamond 2002; U.S. Senate 2002a, 2002b), the president still requested Congress to pass a bill that would grant him the authority to use military force against Iraq. In addition, along with Powell, some congressional members urged the president to go to the United Nations to ask for a new Iraq resolution (Pomper 2002b; Tenet 2007:319; U.S. Senate 2002b). In going to the United Nations the president bargained with Congress to more readily obtain the resolution to use military force against Iraq.

The fourth assumption stipulates that the government action chosen is not the one that optimizes utility in terms of the national interest; rather, it is a collage that constitutes pieces of information and preferences by the different players. We might look at the decision taken as a series of actions that reflected the preferences of decision makers other than the president. We could argue that the decision to deal with Iraq consisted of:

1- The trip by the president to the United Nations to ask for renewed inspections.
2- The congressional resolution authorizing the use of force against Iraq.
3- The military campaign against Iraq.
Secretary of State Powell urged the first action. Several members of Congress urged the second action. And, the hawks – Cheney, Rumsfeld, and Wolfowitz – in the administration, urged the third action. Backed by Cheney, and accepted by Bush, the third action was perceived as the best solution for the Iraqi problem. Having settled on the last decision indicates that the hawks in the administration were able to exert enough influence on the president and swing the pendulum of decision-making in their direction. Hence, the interests of the Defense Department and the Vice President were secured.

Was the chosen option a collage? Yes, if we consider the three steps of the decision-making process noted above. But, the hawks influenced the outcome for several reasons: (1) The ability of the secretary of defense to sway the vice president’s opinion in his direction after 9/11; (2) the influence of the vice president on the national security adviser and the president; and, (3) the president’s lack of experience in foreign policy, which made his dependence on the others considerable (New America Foundation 2005).

Conclusion

Powell equated the interests of the State Department – diplomacy, preserving the coalition, appeasing friendly Arab and Western states – with the interests of the United States. Therefore, his department’s interests became a priority to him, more so than removing Saddam from power. On the other hand, Cheney, Rumsfeld, and Wolfowitz believed that the interests of the United States would only be served by removing Saddam by force. Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz, with other members of the PNAC, had written letters to administration officials and Congress urging military action against the Iraqi regime, because they were frustrated with the slow reaction that the Clinton administration had
toward Iraq (PNAC 1998a, 1998b). Once they became part of the second Bush administration, they pushed for their interests in Iraq. They were able to sway Cheney in their direction. And, because Cheney was closer to the action-channels – President Bush – than Powell, Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz were able to prevail and push for what they perceived to be in the national interest. All of the above evidence indicates that there was considerable pushing and hauling by the parties involved, but with the prevalence of the war proponents in the end. Therefore, governmental politics was at play.

The assumptions of the governmental politics process look at bureaucratic politics as an explanation of foreign-policy making. The tug of war between different bureaucracies is the main domain in this model. The game of politics behind the scenes, and the power plays that each player undertakes to insure the interests of his or her bureaucracy consume the assumptions in this model. Yet, this model does not examine other areas of domestic politics, such as the impact of public opinion, nor does it reveal what happens inside the president’s inner circle. It suggests a limited interpretation of the national interest, conveyed by each bureaucracy to reflect its own interest. It does not consider the cognition of decision makers, nor does it tackle preexisting solutions, within the context of agenda setting, as determining factors. Furthermore, it does not explain the outcome, which might have been a collage but does not convey consensus. Finally, accounting for bureaucratic politics, which other models do not, renders the governmental politics model necessary. But, disregarding other factors used by the other models renders it insufficient. Some of its strengths and weaknesses are summed up in table 3.2.
Table 3.2. Strengths and weaknesses of the governmental politics model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Considers politics in foreign-policy making.</td>
<td>Limited to bureaucratic interests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggests that foreign-policy making does not have to be rational according to the assumptions of the rational actor model.</td>
<td>Does not consider other domestic influences such as public opinion, Congress, interests groups, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheds light on politics at the level of deputy committees, not just principals committees.</td>
<td>Does not look at the international arena, the inner circle, cognition, or preexisting solutions in agenda setting, as possible factors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Has a limited concept of the national interests: that of bureaucracies. Does not fully explore the role of presidents in the process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ignores the effects of hierarchy in organizations.</td>
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**Groupthink**

Irving Janis developed the theory of groupthink to explain the impact of small group dynamics on foreign-policy making. Yetiv (2004:104) states that groupthink is a “concurrence-seeking tendency that develops particularly at an early decision-making stage.” He adds that to avoid conflict participants are usually reluctant to present dissenting points of view (2004:104). Janis (1982:9) defines groupthink as, “A mode of thinking that people engage in when they are deeply involved in a cohesive in-group, when the members’ strivings for unanimity override their motivation to realistically appraise alternative courses of action.” He (1982:12) adds, “Over and beyond all the familiar sources of human error is a powerful source of defective judgment that arises in cohesive groups, the concurrence-seeking tendency, which fosters over-optimism, lack of vigilance, and sloganistic thinking about the weakness and immorality of out-groups.”
The Argument of this Section

The rational actor model and the governmental politics model do not account for what happens between the president and the members of his inner circle. The inner circle is usually comprised of the president, his principal advisers, and, at times, their deputies. This is an important unit in the decision-making process, particularly if there is pressure applied by the president on the others, or by some members on the others. Groupthink attempts to tackle this sphere of influence, and provides a lens through which we can look at this crucial unit of decision-making that impacted the decision to use military force against Iraq.

This section argues that most members in President Bush’s inner circle had similar ideological and professional backgrounds. They had a tendency to agree with each other at the expense of a rational analysis of the options under consideration. They discouraged disloyalty, dissent, and public discord; therefore, outside expert advice was not sought. And, they did not follow methodical procedures to find solutions. Furthermore, stressful political and economic conditions added to the isolation of the group. These factors led to concurrence seeking tendencies in the group, resulting in a dysfunctional decision-making process and, arguably, a defective decision.

To test whether groupthink can adequately explain this case, this study would have to find evidence in the data articulating the antecedents of groupthink, the symptoms of groupthink, and the defective courses of action resulting from groupthink. See figure 3.3 for an illustration.
Antecedents to Groupthink

Janis (1982:176-77) argues that there are factors or antecedents that lead to symptoms of groupthink: (1) the presence of a cohesive group, (2) insulation from external expert information and evaluation, (3) absence of an impartial leadership tradition in group deliberations, (4) absence of methodical procedures in decision-making, and (5) stress among group members.

The Presence of a Cohesive Group

President Bush did not have the same background as most of the members of his inner circle. He was not involved in previous administrations, and did not espouse a neo-
conservative worldview. However, the majority of his advisers shared a common professional and ideological background. In addition, several of his advisers (Rice, Cheney, and Wolfowitz) worked in his father’s administration.

Ideologically Wolfowitz, Rumsfeld, and later Cheney, shared the same outlook. Professionally, all had some background working with the Pentagon. Cheney and Rumsfeld were former secretaries of defense, Powell was a former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Wolfowitz was a former undersecretary of defense, Armitage was an assistant secretary of defense, and Rice began her Washington career working for the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the Pentagon (Mann 2004:xiii). This military background would affect their outlook and shape their priorities in the new administration.

Several members of this group belonged to the PNAC, and to the American Enterprise Institute. Both organizations are bastions for neo-conservative thought, believing that the United States should use its unequal military power to promote its democratic values in the rest of the world. By not strengthening its military, and not confronting problems, such as Saddam Hussein and the expansion of his weapons programs, the United States allowed dangers to its interests to mount. They believe that those mounting dangers cannot be contained any longer (they point out the futility of containing Iraq within the last decade); therefore, they must be eliminated through military action, preemptively if necessary. Despotic regimes and theocracy have helped increase anti-American sentiments in the Middle East, therefore, democratization of the region – starting with Iraq – is paramount. And, they believe that the United States is hindered by multilateral institutions, such as the United Nations, that derail its efforts to
maintain security at home and in the rest of the world (Christian Science Monitor n.d.; McClellan 2008:129-30; White House 2002a). This common background created certain cohesiveness in the group, which affected the decision-making process.

**Insulation from External Expert Information and Evaluation**

Group insulation isolates the group from the broader foreign-policy community. This was brought on partially because of Bush’s style of receiving advice. Richard Clarke said that Bush “‘doesn’t reach out, typically, for a lot of experts. He has a very narrow, regulated, highly regimented set of channels to get advice’” (quoted in Haney 2005:296). He, and some of the members of his inner circle, discouraged and frowned on dissent and public discord. Emphasis on loyalty was paramount (CNN 2000; Haney 2005:296; Woodward 2002:322). In addition, the vast experience of his advisers, and the president’s lack of experience in foreign policy made him rely almost exclusively on the advice of the members of his inner circle (New America Foundation 2005).

Furthermore, secrecy in policy deliberations was the norm in the Bush inner circle. Colonel Wilkerson referred to the deliberations of inner circle members, particularly Cheney and Rumsfeld, as a “cabal” that led to a dysfunctional decision-making process (New America Foundation 2005). Conveying the secrecy with which the Bush White House operated, McClellan (2008:17) stated, “The president and his senior advisers had little appetite for outside investigation. They resisted openness, and believed that investigation simply meant close scrutiny of things they would prefer to keep confidential.” As for Cheney, McClellan (2008:145) added that it would have been difficult to know Cheney’s agenda because of his penchant for secrecy. And, as for
Rumsfeld, Feith (2008:71) observed that his management style had a “proper concern for secrecy.” Consequently, Suskind (2006:26) stated, “As America officially moved to a detailed action plan for the overthrow of Hussein, only three men would be in the know: Bush, Cheney, and Rumsfeld.” This preoccupation with secrecy was implied in the president’s words on September 15, 2001, when he told reporters at Camp David, “This is an administration that will not talk about how we gather intelligence, how we know what we’re going to do, nor what our plans are” (U. S. President 2001b). This suggests this was not a group that allowed much interaction with the larger policy arena, nor allowed evaluations and suggestions from outside experts.

Absence of Impartial leadership Tradition in Group Deliberations

The record is mixed on whether President Bush was a partial leader with an agenda to use military force against Iraq, pressuring members of his inner circle to steer in that direction, or not. According to Tenet, and as late as September of 2002, the president “seemed less enthusiastic about going to war than his advisers” (Tenet 2007:319). Feith (2008:221) stated,

Some commentators have claimed that President Bush was hell-bent on deposing Saddam Hussein, either before 9/11 or immediately after. That was not the impression I had. Our understanding was that President Bush wanted his advisers to devise every sensible way to resolve our Iraq problem short of war. At the deputies’ level, we had grappled for months with whether regime change in Iraq was a necessary goal of U.S. policy – and, if so, whether it might be achievable without war.

Finally, Colonel Wilkerson gave the impression that because of his lack of experience and lack of interest in international relations, the president was not the one leading the charge in this matter, rather, it was his advisers – Cheney, Rumsfeld, and Wolfowitz –
that were (New America Foundation 2005).

On the other hand, Richard Clarke (2004:32) claimed that the president was interested and was applying pressure from the beginning. He recalled that the day after 9/11 Bush said to him “I want you, as soon as you can, to go back over everything, everything. See if Saddam did this. See if he’s linked in anyway.” When Clarke assured the president that it was al Qaeda and not Saddam who caused 9/11, Clarke claimed that the president angrily replied, “Look into Iraq, Saddam.” According to Packer (2005:45), the Director of Policy Planning in the State Department, Richard Haass, found out in June of 2002 from National Security Adviser, Rice, that the president already made up his mind to go to war, and that there was no need to express any reservations about the matter. McClellan (2008:126) corroborated this determination by the president to go after Saddam and his regime by stating, “The campaign to sell the war didn’t begin in earnest until the fall of 2002. But, as I would later come to learn, President Bush had decided to confront the Iraqi regime several months earlier.” McClellan (2008:128) added, “Bush was ready to bring about regime change, and that in all likelihood meant war. The question now was not whether, but merely when and how.”

Finally, according to the 9/11 Commission President Bush did wonder shortly after 9/11 if Iraq was involved, but he was more focused on Afghanistan at that time. Although an account by Woodward (2004:22) was corroborated in Rice’s testimony. He indicated that during a September 17, 2001 NSC meeting, the president ordered Rumsfeld to be ready if Baghdad acted against U.S. interests with plans that included the possible occupying of Iraqi oil fields (911 Commission 2004:335).
Because the above evidence corroborates both sides of the issue, it is not entirely clear whether President Bush was the driving force behind his inner circle to wage war against Iraq, or whether it was his advisers – Cheney, Rumsfeld, and Wolfowitz, in particular – who were driving the issue.

Absence of Methodical Procedures in Decision-Making

According to Tenet (2007:305), administration officials never had a real debate about the seriousness of the Iraqi threat, nor did they seriously consider the costs and benefits of enhanced containment versus regime change by overt or covert operations. Tenet’s account suggests that there was not a methodical process of going through all the alternatives and discussing the costs and benefits of each.

This antecedent was implied, as well, in Colonel Wilkerson’s remarks to the New America Foundation (2005), in which he states,

But the case that I saw for four-plus years was a case that I have never seen in my studies of aberrations, bastardizations, perturbations, changes to the national security decision-making process. What I saw was a cabal between the vice president of the United States, Richard Cheney, and the secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld on critical issues that made decisions that the bureaucracy did not know were being made. And then when the bureaucracy was presented with the decision to carry them out, it was in such a disjointed, incredible way that the bureaucracy often didn’t know what it was doing, as it moved to carry them out.

Tenet’s and Wilkerson’s revelations were further corroborated by a Washington Post report about certain administration officials revealing that the decision to wage war against Saddam was made in an “ad hoc fashion,” and that “the process circumvented traditional policy-making channels as longtime advocates of ousting Hussein pushed Iraq to the top of the agenda by connecting their cause to the war on terrorism” (Kessler
2003). These different accounts seem to reveal a lack of a methodical process where all members were not equally involved, and all options were not equally evaluated.

**Stress among Group Members**

The summer of 2002 did not have good news in business or in overall popularity for President Bush and his administration. Washington was increasingly preoccupied with corporate scandals and a loss of confidence on Wall Street. Enron, Tyco International, and WorldCom were a few of the corporations that were being investigated for fraud and corruption in their practices that led to tremendous losses in their stocks, and left employees and investors in dire straits. The Bush administration was concerned about the impact of these scandals on the economy (Stevenson 2002; Saporito 2002).

On July 8th, the president held a news conference that was dominated by questions on corporate wrong doings instead of foreign policy and terrorism. To his dismay he was bombarded by questions regarding the sale of his stocks before declaring big losses at Harken Energy of Texas years before he became president. And, he was questioned about the effectiveness of Harvey Pitt, the chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission in dealing with corporate fraud. It was evident that the president did not relish being under such scrutiny from the media (U.S. President 2002c).

On July 9th, the president delivered a speech on Wall Street in which he called for tougher measures to deal with corporate fraud (U.S. President 2002d). Shortly afterwards, the Dow Jones fell 235 points, signaling a lack of confidence in the president’s measures and recommendations. Adding to all his troubles, on July 22nd two separate polls indicated that the president’s chances at reelection dropped considerably (Spencer 2002).
In addition to the war on terror, all these concerns about the economy, business troubles, and low opinion polls, could have easily placed the president and his administration under considerable stress.

Symptoms of Groupthink

The above noted structural antecedents lead to concurrence-seeking, or avoidance of conflict (Hermann at al. 2001), manifested in eight symptoms of groupthink: (1) illusion of invulnerability among group members, (2) belief in the group’s inherent morality, (3) collective rationalization of actions, (4) negative stereotyping of the enemy, (5) self-censorship of opposing views, (6) illusion of unanimity on the majority decision, (7) pressure on dissenting members, and (8) self-appointed mind-guards against external opposing views (Janis 1982:174-75).

**Illusion of Invulnerability among Group Members**

After 9/11, the group’s sense of invulnerability was expressed in the words of different members conveying the strength of the military and the assurance of victory. Excerpts from the president’s speeches convey that confidence. In the 2003 State of the Union Address he stated, “And if war is forced upon us, we will fight with the full force and might of the United States military – and we will prevail” (U.S. President 2003b). And, in his speech at the American Enterprise Institute, he stated, “The dangers are real, as our soldiers, and sailors, airmen, and Marines fully understand. Yet, no military has ever been better prepared to meet these challenges” (U.S. President 2003f).

Other members of the president’s inner circle were expressing the same confidence
regarding the strength of the American military. In a September 13, 2001 news briefing, Wolfowitz stated, “The United States of America will use all our resources to conquer this enemy. . . . Make no mistake about it; we will win” (U.S. Department of Defense 2001d). And, in his testimony before the House Armed Services Committee, Rumsfeld attempted to answer questions about the use of force in Iraq, in which he stated, “As the members of this committee know well, our strategy includes the ability to win decisively in one theater and be able to occupy a country, to near simultaneously swiftly defeat a country in another theater. . . . So let there be no doubt that we can do both at the same time” (U.S. Department of Defense 2002c).

All of the above evidence suggests that the Bush inner circle believed that the U.S. military was invulnerable, and could not lose.

Belief in the Group’s Inherent Morality

The evidence in the data that the inner circle of the president and his advisers believed in the group’s inherent morality and the justice of their cause was conveyed prominently in the president’s speeches, in which he viewed the struggle as that of good versus evil, with America being on the side of good, and God on the side of America (Kiefer 2002, LexisNexis). For example, on September 14, 2001, President Bush stated, “But our responsibility to history is already clear: to answer these attacks and rid the world of evil” (U.S. President 2001a). In spring of 2002, at a graduation ceremony at West Point, he stated, “We are in conflict between good and evil, and America will call evil by its name” (U.S. President 2002b). In a speech to the nation on September 11, 2002, he stated, “And our prayer tonight is that God will see us through, and keep us
worthy. . . . And our cause is even larger than our country. Ours is the cause of human
dignity; freedom guided by conscience and guarded by peace. This ideal of America is
the hope of all mankind” (U.S. President 2002e). And, in a speech before the American
Enterprise Institute, he stated, “Members of our Armed Forces also understand why they
may be called to fight. . . . They know that America’s cause is right and just: liberty for
an oppressed people, and security for the American people” (U.S. President 2003f). It is
evident that as the spokesman for his administration, the president believed in the
morality of its cause.

Collective Rationalization of Actions

The data reveal that the group used the argument of the great danger of inaction as a
rationalization for the necessity of action. For example the 2002 NSS, also known as the
Bush Doctrine, stated, “If necessary, to prevent danger, the United States will act
preemptively. . . . The greater the threat, the greater is the risk of inaction – and the more
compelling the case for taking anticipatory action to defend ourselves” (White House
2002a).

The 2002 “National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction” stated,
“Weapons of mass destruction . . . in the possession of hostile states and terrorists
represent one of the greatest security challenges facing the United States. . . . We will not
permit the world’s most dangerous regimes and terrorists to threaten us with the world’s
most destructive weapons” (White House 2002b).

In his testimony on September 18, 2002, Rumsfeld stated,
Do we believe it is our responsibility to wait for a weapon of mass destruction, 9/11? Or is it the responsibility of free people to do something, to take steps to deal with such a threat before such an attack occurs? . . . As the president warned the United Nations last week, the Saddam Hussein regime is a grave and gathering danger. . . . Our principal goal in the war on terror is to stop another 9/11 or a WMD attack that could make a 9/11 seem modest by comparison, and to do it before it happens. . . . The longer we wait, the more deadly his regime becomes. (U.S. Department of Defense 2002c)

Wolfowitz stated, “We cannot afford to wait until we have a smoking gun, for a gun smokes only after it’s been fired” (U.S. Department of Defense 2002d). The president stated, “And responding to such enemies only after they have struck first is not self-defense, it is suicide” (U.S. President 2003i). Finally, in stating that waiting for Saddam to acquire nuclear weapons would embolden him, and would make keeping a coalition against him harder Cheney asserted, “At bottom, that argument counsels a course of inaction that itself could have devastating consequences for many countries, including our own” (Vice President 2002a).

It seems from the above noted evidence that the common rationalization was that we did not do enough to stop al Qaeda and we paid the price, and we cannot afford to do the same with Iraq (Tenet 2007:305). However, Powell tried to warn the president about the negative consequences of a military action against Iraq (Baxter 2007; McClellan 2008: 144; Woodward 2002:331-34). Haass tried to express his misgivings about the decision to go to war to National Security Adviser Rice (Packer 2005:45). Senators Biden (D-De), Wellstone (D-Mn), Kennedy (D-Ma), Levin (D-Mi), and Representative Kucinich (D-Oh), were among several Democratic congressional leaders who expressed serious reservations and concerns about the decision (Diamond 2002; Pomper 2002a:2316; U.S.
Yet, in spite of these warnings, the collective rationalization for military action prevailed, and planning for war forged ahead.

*Negative Stereotyping of the Enemy*

The evidence in the speeches of the members of the inner circle reflects the negative stereotyping of Saddam Hussein and the Iraqi regime. For example, in the speech the president delivered at West Point he stated, “Containment is not possible when unbalanced dictators with weapons of mass destruction can deliver those weapons . . . . We cannot put our faith in the word of tyrants” (U.S. President 2002b). Cheney chimed in with his negative stereotyping of Saddam in his August 26, 2002 speech to the veterans of foreign wars, in which he referred to Saddam as “a murderous dictator” (U.S. Vice President 2002a).

As evidence that we could not trust Saddam, the president stated in his remarks on February 6, 2003, “Saddam Hussein was required to make a full declaration of his weapons programs. He has not done so. Saddam Hussein was required to fully cooperate in the disarmament of his regime. He has not done so. Saddam Hussein was given a final chance. He is throwing that chance away. The dictator of Iraq, Saddam is making his choice” (U.S. President 2003c). In another speech he delivered in Kennesaw, Georgia, the president stated, “Trusting in the sanity and restraint of Saddam Hussein is not an option” (2003d).

These speeches convey a picture of Saddam as an unbalanced, murderous dictator, and a tyrant that we could not trust.
Self-Censorship of Opposing Views/ Illusion of Unanimity

Secretary of State Powell is known to be a loyal soldier (Holbrooke 2005). In a 2005 interview with Barbara Walters, on ABC’s 20/20, Powell claimed that he was not bothered by other’s criticism of his loyalty to the president, and he added, “‘Loyalty is a trait that I value, and yes, I am loyal’” (quoted in 20/20 2005). It was reported that after the 2002 State of the Union address, in which the president introduced the label “axis of evil,” Powell instructed State Department officials not to openly criticize the speech, even though they were surprised at this characterization (Pfiffner 2003). Aside from being the loyal soldier, this suggests that Powell was exercising self-censorship against expressing opposing views.

In that interview with Barbara Walters, which took place after he resigned from the State Department, Powell admitted that even though the Bush administration made the connection between Baghdad and 9/11, he had never seen evidence to confirm it. Furthermore, he stated that even though he had always been a “reluctant warrior,” and hesitant about the war, once the president delivered his speech to the United Nations, he aligned himself with the president’s policy to use force against Iraq (20/20 2005; Tama 2005). Yet Powell did not express his views on these matters until after he left office, which brings us to the conclusion that, he did not readily express opposing views in public while in office.

Moreover, admitting that even though he was hesitant about the policy to use force he went along with the president’s wishes, suggests that the majority decision to use force was not entirely unanimous, and that unanimity was only an illusion. Finally, the illusion
of unanimity is also reflected in the lack of consensus on the imminence of the Iraqi threat. Contrary to the Defense Department and the White House, the State Department, represented by Powell, did not believe that the Iraqi regime represented an imminent threat (New American Foundation 2005).

_Pressure on Dissenting Members_

The one member of the group that seemingly had more dissenting views than the rest was Powell. He opposed the allusion by Wolfowitz to expanding the conflict to other nations (U.S. Department of State 2001c). Different accounts indicate that even though the campaign for the Iraq war was not revealed until the 2002 State of the Union address, planning for the war began shortly after 9/11. It was reported that during the war cabinet meeting at Camp David on September 15, 2001, Wolfowitz strongly advocated regime change by military means. However, Powell resisted by arguing that war against Iraq would unravel the coalition built for Afghanistan (Tenet 2007:303; Tyler and Sciolino 2001; Woodward 2002:84-91). On another occasion, in August 2002, Powell asked Rice to arrange a meeting with the president, during which he argued that the war would destabilize the entire Middle East. And, he argued, occupying Iraq would be perceived as hostile to the Muslim World (Pfiffner 2003; Woodward 2002:333-34). After he resigned, Powell did acknowledge that he tried to persuade the president not to go to war against Iraq (Baxter 2007). Powell’s stance on the Iraq war prompted Pentagon officials (Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz) to accuse him and his Deputy Richard Armitage “of a loss of nerve” (Hersh 2002).

Another account reveals that in a discussion that took place during a national security
meeting on September 7, 2002, Cheney, Rumsfeld, and Wolfowitz were against Powell’s opinion that Bush should go to the United Nations to ask for another resolution and for renewed inspections (Pfiffner 2003; Tenet 2007:318-19). Colonel Wilkerson claimed that in an effort to stop their opposition to the war, members of the Department of Defense were given carte blanche to apply pressure on the State Department (New America Foundation 2005). Furthermore, the fact that Powell changed his rhetoric in 2003 from resisting war to advocating war against Iraq by claiming the inspections did not work (Pfiffner 2003; U.S. Department of State 2003a), suggests that some pressure was applied by proponents to make him change his rhetoric.

All this evidence suggests that as time drew closer to the outset of the war, the pressure on Powell increased to the extent that he needed to change his rhetoric to align with the preferred policy of the majority. As for Rice, Wilkerson indicated that she was an extremely weak national security adviser who would not have been able to oppose Cheney or Rumsfeld; therefore, she couldn’t have provided balance in this group (New America Foundation 2005).

**Self-Appointed Mind-Guards against External Opposing Views**

In recounting some of the pre-war intelligence episodes that took place, the Director of Intelligence, Tenet (2007:346) claimed that a small group of Pentagon officials would share “missed intelligence” with the CIA, in which “Feith and company would find little nuggets that supported their beliefs and seize upon them, never understanding that there might be a larger picture they were missing. Isolated data points became so important that they would never look at the thousands of other data points that might convey an opposite
story.” Corroborating Tenet’s assessment concerning the selectivity of administration officials in presenting their case, McClellan (2008:132) stated that they were “quietly ignoring or disregarding some of the crucial caveats in the intelligence and minimizing evidence that pointed in the opposite direction.” And, Colonel Wilkerson recalled that the French who he claimed had, in fact, helped the United States greatly in gathering intelligence, told us “we have just spun aluminum tubes, and by God, we did it to this RPM . . . and it was all . . . proof positive that the aluminum tubes were not for mortar casings or artillery casings. . . . We were wrong” (New America Foundation 2005).

Contradicting Tenet and McClellan’s claims, Feith (2008:265-68) indicated that, in fact, it was the CIA analysts who “were not properly taking into account all the relevant information they had. She [Tina Shelton] criticized intelligence officials for shading and filtering information to defend their own preconceptions and policy preferences. . . . Shelton and her colleagues were not trying to bias intelligence assessments; they were trying to eliminate the bias already there.”

These accounts suggest that external opposing views were avoided or discounted by government officials on both sides of the issue, all in an effort to justify their point of view concerning Iraq.

Defective Courses of Action

According to Janis (1982:10), symptoms of groupthink can result in seven defective courses of action: (1) limiting the search for alternative courses of action, (2) failure to prepare a complete list of objectives, (3) failure to reevaluate the course of action taken as far as risks and weaknesses, (4) failure to reexamine the costs or benefits of the actions
not chosen, (5) failure to ask for expert advice, (6) employing selective bias towards information, (7) lack of an alternative course of action in case the preferred decision is obstructed. However, the model does not require the presence of all or even the majority of these actions as evidence of groupthink (Janis 1982; Yetiv 2004). The following is evidence of some of the above noted defective courses of action.

Employing selective bias towards information can be found in Tenet’s (2007:346) account of the type of information processed by some members of the Department of Defense, in which he stated, “Isolated points became so important that they would never look at the thousands of other data points that might convey an opposite story.” Corroborating Tenet’s claim of selective bias was the account by Seymour Hersh (2004:168-69) of a Pentagon career officer who was assigned the task of rethinking the stipulations of a study about ousting Saddam titled “What could go wrong.” The Pentagon leadership “wanted to focus not on what could go wrong but what would go right.” However, as was noted in the previous section on symptoms of groupthink, Feith (2008:265-68) contradicted Tenet’s account, claiming that it was the CIA that was employing selective bias toward information. In any case, some party in this process was.

Evidence of limiting the search for alternative courses of action could be found in Packer’s account (2005:45) of how Richard Haass found out about the war decision. Haass recalls that in the spring of 2002, he heard chatter about a decision to go to war. Finally, in June, he went to a meeting with Rice during which he began to express his doubts about the benefits of war. According to Haass, Rice interrupted by saying “‘Save your breath. The president has already made up his mind’” (quoted in Packer 2005:45). If
the president decided in June of 2002 and the war did not start till March of 2003, it suggests that the decision to go to war against Iraq was made before serious considerations were given to other alternatives. McClellan (2008:126) was left with the same impression when he found out that Bush decided to confront Iraq months before the war policy campaign began in earnest in the fall of 2002. In addition, both Rumsfeld and Cheney expressed their reservations about renewing inspections in Iraq, were of the opinion that inspections were futile, and were critical of those who advocated that alternative (U.S. Department of Defense 2002c; U.S. Vice President 2002b).

Evidence for failure to reevaluate the course of action taken as far as risks and weaknesses can be found in the words of Tenet while commenting on various national security meetings, and he stated,

In none of the meetings can anyone remember a discussion of the central question. Was it wise to go to war? Was it the right thing to do? . . . What never happened, as far as I can tell, was a serious consideration of the implications of a U.S. invasion. What impact would a large American occupying force have in an Arab country in the heart of the Middle East? What kind of political strategy would be necessary to cause the Iraqi society to coalesce in a post-Saddam world and maximize the chances of what success? . . . What might Iran do in reaction? (Tenet 2007:307)

Tenet (2007:308) indicated that there were no serious deliberations of what might follow after the initial military victory. Once again, Feith (2008:332) contradicted Tenet’s claim by stating, “weighing risks had naturally been part of the policy-making and planning processes on Iraq all along.” And he added that, in fact, Rumsfeld presented the president with a list that Feith (2008:333) called “the Parade of Horribles,” which made note of all the possible risks associated with the Iraq policy (for details, see the section on the rational actor model).
Finally, evidence for failure to ask for expert advice can be found in the president’s words, “I have no outside advice. Anybody who says they’re an outside adviser of this administration on this particular matter is not telling the truth” (quoted in Haney 2005: 296).

Even though members of the administration differ in their accounts of the process, there are enough data to suggest that there was definite evidence of defective courses of action as a result of groupthink.

Conclusion

Even though the president did not have a similar professional or social background as the rest of his inner circle, and even though it is not clear whether he initially was the driving force behind the decision, or whether it was his advisers that were, there is enough evidence in the data to suggest that groupthink was at play.

Groupthink is concerned with explaining small-group dynamics in foreign policy, and the effects it has on the decision-making process. As indicated above, it assumes that the end result is a dysfunctional process leading to fiascos. Even though it is helpful in explaining how small groups interact and influence individual members, this model does not take into consideration the following: (1) the international arena, (2) domestic politics, (3) bureaucratic politics, and (4) individual proclivities and perceptions. Just as important is the lack of consideration of the agenda-setting stage in the decision-making process, where preexisting solutions may play an important role. It does not consider how the nature of the problem or the overall political climate may impact the placement of certain issues on the decision agenda. Accounting for small-group dynamics that other
paradigms do not account for renders groupthink necessary. But, discounting other factors mentioned above in the foreign-policy process renders it insufficient. Some of its strengths and weaknesses are summed up in table 3.3.

Table 3.3. Strengths and weaknesses of groupthink

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sheds light on small group dynamics at the highest levels of government, which other models do not.</td>
<td>Assumes process ending in fiascos, which is not always the case. See Yetiv 2003 – The Gulf War.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highlights the dangers of isolation from the larger foreign-policy community.</td>
<td>Has too many assumptions to consider. Some overlap, possibly leading to confusion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctures the assumption of rationality in decision-making.</td>
<td>Cohesiveness is not the only prerequisite to groupthink. Conflict could be a factor to that end as well (see ‘t Hart 1994).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does not explain the impact of the international arena, bureaucratic politics, cognition, or preexisting solutions in agenda setting.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The Cognitive Approach**

Apart from the assumptions of the above-mentioned theories, why was President Bush so emphatic about going to war against Iraq? Did his background have any impact on his decision-making? Did his beliefs play any role in the process? How did he perceive his surroundings and the Iraq problem, and why? What of the mind-set of his closest advisers? How did it impact the decision to go to war against Iraq? The cognitive approach will attempt to answer these questions from a different perspective than the above theories because it “tries to get into the minds of the decision makers” (Yetiv 2004:58). McKeown (1993:2) states, “In its most uncompromising formulation, studying actors’ definition of the situation implies a concern with depth psychology and a
biographical analysis of decision makers.” To the proponents of the cognitive approach, it is the individual and not the state that makes decisions (Rosati 2000). Therefore, psychological traits of decision makers matter in the process.

The Argument of this Section

This section looks into an aspect of the decision-making process that the rational actor model, the governmental politics model, and groupthink do not explore. It argues that President Bush was affected by how he appraised reality through certain beliefs having to do with the Iraq issue. Some beliefs were formed to rationalize his actions and those of his administration. Certain perceptions through stereotyping of Saddam Hussein, and through analogies with World War II, further framed the problem in their minds. And, the president’s faith and upbringing had a deep impact on the process leading to the decision to go to war against Iraq.

Considering the impact of the individual on the decision-making process, cognitive influences have to be included to more fully analyze and understand why did President Bush and his administration decide to go to war against Iraq.

Assumptions of the Cognitive Approach

The assumptions of the cognitive approach that will be utilized in this study are:
(1) A decision maker is guided by his beliefs to help him appraise reality, and to establish functions of his actions, (2) a decision maker is guided by how he perceives the outside world through stereotypes and analogies, (3) there are two types of leaders: (a) a principled leader is one who is not sensitive to his domestic context, and is likely to
conduct aggressive foreign policy, and (b) a pragmatic leader is one who is sensitive to his domestic context, and is likely to conduct a pacifistic foreign policy. See figure 3.4 for an illustration.

Figure 3.4. The cognitive approach.

Beliefs

To understand beliefs, this study will draw on concepts used by Robert Jervis (2006:41). Jarvis argues that “People adopt opinions not only to understand the world, but also to meet the psychological and social needs to live with themselves and others.” He (2006: 642) adds, “many beliefs have a strong element of commitment and faith, even
when religion is not involved.” In drawing on Smith, Brunner, and White’s (1956) formulation for understanding beliefs, Jervis (2006:645) states that beliefs can be used to appraise reality. In other words, beliefs help us to understand our environment. To that end, Jervis (2006:650) states, “the world is so complex and our information processing capabilities so limited that in significant measure people must be theory driven.” These are some of the implications of beliefs as reality appraisals: (1) Acceptability is based on plausibility or general beliefs, and (2) beliefs do not change with the change in facts or circumstances.

Beliefs as Reality Appraisals

The first implication entails, “that a proposition is most likely to be accepted when it is seen as plausible – i.e., when it fits with more general beliefs” (Jervis 2006:651). The notion that Saddam Hussein continued to develop WMD was accepted as reality because it fit the general belief, based on his previous behavior of acquiring, stockpiling, and using WMD. When President Bush went to the United Nations on September 12, 2002, his speech contained a list of Iraqi violations of U.N. resolutions resulting in the disruption of weapons’ inspections. In providing these details, the president was basing the plausibility of Saddam’s future actions on general beliefs formed by his past actions. In that, the president was making the argument if Saddam had stockpiled WMD in the past, there was no reason to think that he was going to stop if left unchecked. By the same token, if Saddam used WMD against his neighbors and his own people in the past, there was no reason to think that he was not going to use them at a future date. And, if Saddam
did not fulfill U.N. resolutions in the past, there was no reason to think he was going to fulfill them in the future. The following excerpt from his speech demonstrated this point.

We know that Saddam Hussein pursued weapons of mass murder even when inspectors were in his country. Are we to assume that he stopped when they left? The history, the logic, and the facts lead to one conclusion: Saddam Hussein’s regime is a grave and gathering danger. To suggest otherwise is to hope against the evidence. . . . We can harbor no illusions . . . Saddam Hussein attacked Iran in 1980 and Kuwait in 1990. He’s fired ballistic missiles at Iran and Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and Israel. His regime once ordered the killing of every person between the ages of 15 and 70 in certain Kurdish villages in northern Iraq. He has gassed many Iranians, and 40 Iraqi villages. (U.S. President 2002f)

By recounting all the atrocities committed by Saddam Hussein, the president was making it plausible to believe that he would act the same once again.

The second implication of beliefs as reality appraisals suggests that when new evidence contradicting the conventional understanding of a situation is revealed, it does not change the conventional understanding; rather, the new evidence is interpreted in such a way to agree with conventional beliefs (Jervis 2006:651). For example, by March 6, 2003, when the president held a press conference on Iraq, U.N. inspectors had been inside Iraq searching for WMD since November 27, 2002, but nothing substantial was found. Yet, the results did not cast any doubts on the president’s beliefs about the existence of Iraq’s WMD. During that conference the president stated, “Iraqi operatives continue to hide biological and chemical agents to avoid detection by inspectors. In some cases, these materials have been moved to different locations every 12 to 24 hours, or placed in vehicles that are in residential neighborhoods. . . . These are not the actions of a regime that is disarming. These are the actions of a regime engaged in a willful charade” (U.S. President 2003g). The lack of evidence of WMD was interpreted as the result of the
willful scheme by the Iraqi regime to hide the weapons.

**Beliefs as Functions of Actions**

Jervis (2006:656) states, “In contrast to the usual method of explaining actions by the beliefs that we think generated them. . . . beliefs form to provide rationalizations for actions.” It has long been established that the Iraqi regime had continuously offered help to different terrorists and their organizations (CRS 2003b:10; Tenet 2007:345). However, a definite link between Saddam Hussein’s regime and al Qaeda was never established (Tenet 2007:342-45). Yet, the president stated in his September 12, 2002 U.N. speech that, “al Qaeda terrorists escaped from Afghanistan and are known to be in Iraq” (U.S. President 2002f). In making this connection, the president was forming the belief that, along with WMD, would provide him and his administration the rationalization to use force against Iraq. To that end, McClellan (2008:49) stated, “In the years to come, as I worked closely with President Bush, I would come to believe that sometimes he convinces himself to believe what suits his needs at the moment.”

**Perceptions**

Another element this study utilizes to test whether the cognitive approach helps explain the decision-making process is the impact of perceptions through stereotypes and historical analogies. Stereotyping provides boundaries within which we can perceive the enemy and the outside world. According to Rosati (2000:59), “The human mind perceives the world and processes information by compartmentalizing and sorting things into categories. This process often leads to stereotyping.” This process helps us to
manage our world by making generalizations. Bem (1970:8) states, “Generalizing from a limited set of experiences and treating individuals as members of a group are not only common cognitive acts but necessary ones. They are thinking devices which enable us to avoid conceptual chaos by packaging our world into manageable number of categories.”

How did President Bush perceive Saddam Hussein? We surmise from the president’s speeches that Saddam was an unreasonable tyrant and an unbalanced dictator (U.S. President 2002b), and we could not deal with him honestly and openly. In his U.N. speech the president stated,

To suspend hostilities, to spare himself, Iraq’s dictator accepted a series of commitments. The terms were clear, to him and to all. And he agreed to prove he is complying with every one of those obligations. He has proven instead only his contempt for the United Nations, and for all his pledges. By breaking every pledge – by his deceptions, and by his cruelties – Saddam Hussein has made the case against himself. (U.S. President, 2002f)

In the same speech the president recounts the instances of Iraqi non-compliance since the Gulf War. In that, the president was portraying a certain image of Saddam Hussein. And, he was stereotyping Saddam Hussein as one among the company of leaders that could not be trusted, and as one that the civilized world could not deal with.

What added to his stereotyping of Saddam as a ruthless man was the 1993 assassination attempt on the president’s father, the first President Bush, by Saddam Hussein’s men. In his U.N. speech, the president referred to that incident by stating, “In 1993, Iraq attempted to assassinate the Emir of Kuwait and a former American President” (U.S. President 2002e). In fact, that attempt on his father’s life could have galvanized the perception of Saddam in the president’s mind as an enemy that we could not deal with. In
to war for geo-strategic reasons, but there was a powerful personal element as well.”

Another element that shapes perceptions is historical analogies. Rosati (2000) states,
“These are judgments made about how much an event or situation fits a category and
how readily an association comes to mind. These heuristics help to explain the tendency
of people and policymakers to use historical analogies in world politics.” According to
Jervis (1976:217), “Previous international events provide the statesman with a range of
imaginable situations and allow him to detect patterns and causal links that can help him
understand his world.” Yetiv (2004:59) adds, “all of us draw lessons from the past to deal
with current issues.”

Often the president and his advisers made mention of Pearl Harbor and World War II
to make the analogy with 9/11 and the impending war with Iraq. Woodward (2004:24)
recounted that on September 11, 2001, President Bush wrote in his diary, “‘The Pearl
Harbor of the 21st century took place today.’” In essence, he was making the first
analogy with the events of World War II. In a 2002 speech justifying the use of force
against Iraq, Cheney stated,

We will profit as well from a review of our own history. There are a lot of World War
II veterans in the hall today. For the United States, that war began on December 7,
1941, with the attack on Pearl Harbor and the near-total destruction of the Pacific
Fleet. Only then did we recognize the magnitude of the danger to our country. . . . To
this day, historians continue to analyze that war, speculating on how we might have
prevented Pearl Harbor, and asking what actions might have averted the tragedies that
rate among the worst in human history. (U.S. Vice President 2002a)

In his testimony before the House Armed Services Committee, Rumsfeld stated,

Long before the Second World War, Hitler wrote in ‘Mein Kampf’ indicating what he
intended to do. But the hope was that, may be, he would not do what he said. And
between 35 and 60 million people died because of the series of fatal miscalculations. Today we must decide whether the risks of acting are greater than the risks of not acting. Saddam Hussein has made his intention clear. He has said in no uncertain terms that he would use weapons of mass destruction against the United States. (U.S. Department of Defense 2002c)

By making the analogy between Hitler and Saddam’s intentions, Rumsfeld was reminding members of Congress of the ramifications of appeasement, and cautioning them against inaction, and was making the case for the Iraq War.

As for Wolfowitz, Ricks (2006:16) stated, “Wolfowitz came to believe that the policy of containment was profoundly immoral, like standing by and trying to contain Hitler’s Germany. It was a comparison to which he would often return.” During an October 5, 2002 speech at Warsaw University in Poland, Wolfowitz recounted the dark days of Hitler’s ambition before World War II, when the world’s toothless warnings were hollow, resulting in Hitler’s annexation of Austria and the march on Czechoslovakia. He added that the Poles understood the consequences of making hollow warnings to brutal tyrants such as Hitler, and then he included Saddam Hussein in that group (Boyer 2004). By making the analogy between Hitler and Saddam Hussein, Wolfowitz was suggesting that we should not have been so trusting of Hitler, and we should not be trusting of Saddam.

The above evidence reveals that members of the Bush administration repeatedly made analogies with World War II events. This suggests that these analogies helped frame the problem in their minds and in the minds of the public. In effect, they conveyed the message that we could not afford to tolerate Hitler, and, we could not afford to tolerate Saddam Hussein. Inaction was not a direction that we could continue to follow because the ramifications could be grave.
The Predominant Leader

The last element in the cognitive approach that this study will utilize is the concept of the predominant leader as being principled versus pragmatic. We have established that the cognitive approach argues that the individual decision maker is important in foreign-policy making. Margaret Hermann (1993:79) introduces the concept of the individual decision maker as a predominant leader, described as one who has “the authority to commit the resources of a nation in response to a particular problem and others cannot reverse his or her decision. . . . In effect, the leader has the power to make the choice concerning how the government is going to respond to the problem.” A predominant leader is principled when he is guided by his beliefs and personality traits, and disregarding of the political context; or pragmatic when he is sensitive to contextual factors, and interested in adapting his actions to the demands of the situation. Determining a predominant leader’s sensitivity to his context helps us understand the source of his decision-making, and therefore, government actions (1993:81-83).

Considering that the War Powers Act of 1973 has not been effective in preventing presidents from engaging in hostilities, and considering that in prior conflicts rarely did the Commander-in-Chief consult with Congress prior to making the decision to introduce troops (CRS 2003e:13), makes the president of the United States, in effect, a predominant leader. Was President Bush a principled predominant leader, or a pragmatic predominant leader? The next section will attempt to determine that aspect of his make-up and shed light on the decision-making process.
President Bush’s Faith

President Bush is one of the most openly religious presidents that we’ve had in years. In *A Charge to Keep* (1999), Governor Bush mentioned faith, family, and friends, as the three important elements in his life. Of faith he stated, “I could not be governor if I did not believe in a divine plan that supersedes all human plans. . . . I build my life on a foundation that will not shift. My faith frees me. Frees me to put the problem of the moment in a proper perspective. Frees me to make decisions that others might not like. Frees me to do the right thing, even though it may not poll well” (1999:6). Attesting to the truthfulness of the president’s words, McClellan (2008:49) stated, “I know Bush, and I know he genuinely believes what he says. He isn’t the kind of person to flat-out lie.” Reflecting the importance and usefulness of religion and faith in public affairs was his first executive order as president that created the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiative in the White House. The mission of this office is to grant government funds to openly religious groups that provide social services (*Frontline* 2004). Encouraging churches to help fight social ills and solve problems is part of what he calls his compassionate conservatism (Kiefer 2002, LexisNexis). According to former White House Spokesman Ari Fleisher, “‘Faith influences the president in that it helps make up his character and his judgment, and his policy decisions are based on his character and his judgment’” (quoted in Kiefer 2002, LexisNexis).

Of family President Bush (1999:6-8) stated, “The unconditional love my parents gave all of us also freed us. . . . Once you know your family will always love you, you are free to try anything, you are free to fail. And you are free to succeed.” Love of family and
loyalty are ingrained in him, and are an integral part of his value system (CNN 2000). His family ties and friends would influence the choice of his closest advisers, and, hence, would influence how he would perceive the Iraq issue.

Other beliefs that would have impacted the president’s decisions were summed-up by McClellan’s (2008:127-28) words,

One core belief Bush holds is that all people have a God-given right to live in freedom. . . . Bush also believes that America has an obligation to use its power to lead the rest of the world toward a better and more secure future. . . . Finally, Bush was genuinely concerned to act before potential threats fully materialized. When these beliefs were combined in the post-911 environment, the result was the most consequential decision of Bush’s presidency.

*President Bush’s Conservatism*

President Bush is the product of the modern conservative movement ushered in by President Reagan. He introduced optimism to that movement. Like Reagan, Bush is a “self-described optimist.” What he adds to the movement is the religious dimension of providence, which stipulates that God will have his way. But, it also emphasizes the role of duty, and requires that we do the right thing. Providence does not guarantee quick rewards, and may not avoid difficulty and pain, but it gives hope and steers away from despair (Ceasar 2003). In his 2003 State of the Union address, President Bush stated, “We do not know – we do not claim to know all the ways of Providence, yet we can trust in them, placing our confidence in the loving God behind all of life, and all of history” (U.S. President 2003b)

Based on the above evidence, what type of a predominant leader is President Bush? His belief in a divine plan that supersedes all human plans, and in providence that
requires doing what is right suggest that he would be a principled leader who would not look to contextual factors in determining his decisions. Such belief combined with his family upbringing that, he claims, frees him to try anything, suggests that he would not be afraid to make decisions based on his conviction of what is right regardless of the consequences. Therefore, dealing with the Iraqi regime could have been perceived as doing the right thing in the war on terror regardless of public opinion or congressional reservations. The domestic context wouldn’t have mattered, especially that he viewed this issue in terms of good versus evil, and that America is on the side of good, and God is on the side of America (U.S. President 2001a, 2001c, 2002a, 2002e, 2003b; Kiefer 2002, LexisNexis).

Finally, his love of family, and his emphasis on loyalty suggest that he would view the welfare of his family as paramount. Therefore, if someone were to harm a family member his love and loyalty would propel him to act in their defense. Saddam Hussein’s assassination attempt against his father could have been perceived as a personal matter, and would have propelled him to get rid of this family foe.

Infusing these two influences into his decision-making could explain, in part, why the president was ardent about going to war. In addition, choosing advisers who were friends of his father but isolated from the broader policy community, and who held a radical worldview to council him on foreign policy could have entrenched his isolation from the domestic context, and rendered it inconsequential in his mind.

Conclusion

The above evidence indicates that the beliefs and perceptions of President Bush, as
well as the way he interacted with the context in which he operated, provide a significant lens through which we can understand important aspects of the decision-making process in this case. The cognitive approach assumes that individuals, not states, make decisions. A leader assumes office with life-long held beliefs and perceptions that shape his understanding of the world he lives in and in which he has to operate. This model does not allow for the dismissal of the psychology of the individual, nor does it assume that the individual makes decisions according to the assumptions of rationalism, as is the case in the rational actor model.

However, by placing too much emphasis on the individual, cognition undermines the importance of the system as a whole. It undermines the institutions that the decision maker has to operate within and through. It does not consider the national interest of the state, bureaucratic politics, or small-group politics to play as important a role in the process. Nor does it consider that preexisting agendas, and not just psychological predispositions, can shape decisions. Nonetheless, introducing cognition and the psychology of decision makers as important factors in decision-making renders cognition a necessary tool. But, excluding other factors mentioned above renders it insufficient.

Some strengths and weaknesses are summed up in table 3.4.

Table 3.4. Strengths and weaknesses of the cognitive approach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Penetrates a realm that other models dismiss: Beliefs, perceptions,</td>
<td>Does not consider that individual decision makers can isolate themselves from their feelings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>predispositions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides an explanation for decisions made not according to the assumptions</td>
<td>Does not examine bureaucratic politics, small-group politics, international events, or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of rationality.</td>
<td>preexisting solutions in agenda setting.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter Four

The Multiple Streams Model

The multiple streams model, developed by John Kingdon (1995), is a paradigm mostly used to analyze domestic policy issues. It stipulates that for a new policy to land on the agenda it requires the concerted effort of a group of decision makers, interest groups, or bureaucrats, known as the policy entrepreneurs, to embark on a campaign advocating their policy of interest. These entrepreneurs wait until a policy window opens through a problem capturing the attention of the public and the decision makers – sometimes with the help of a focusing event – and through a receptive political climate. Their success in coupling the solution with the problem and the political climate determines whether their preferred policy would land on the agenda. This study attempts to test whether multiple streams can be used as an explanatory tool for foreign policy, specifically the Iraq policy advocated by the Bush administration. More generally, the study inquires as to whether Kingdon’s model can add a dimension that is lacking in conventional foreign-policy models.

The Argument of this Chapter

As indicated in the previous chapter, conventional foreign-policy models explain several aspects of the decision-making process in this case. But they do not explain how the military option to achieve regime change landed on the Bush administration’s agenda
to begin with. Agenda setting is an important stage in the policy process, without which a policy or a solution may not be considered. In defining what agenda setting does, Kingdon (1995:3) states, “Out of the set of all conceivable subjects or problems to which officials could be paying attention, they do in fact seriously attend to some rather than others. So the agenda-setting process narrows this set of conceivable subjects to the set that actually becomes the focus of attention.” Ripley (1995:159) adds, “Somehow the organs of government must decide what they will pay attention to. The stage at which this decision is made in any given policy area is here called agenda setting.” This study argues that, in this case, there were elements at the agenda-setting stage that should be considered if we are to better understand the process:

1- A preexisting solution – regime change in Iraq through U.S. military force – that was circulating in foreign-policy arenas for some time.

2- A focusing event – the 9/11 terrorist attacks – that underscored the problem the United States had with the Iraqi regime.

3- A receptive political climate – a changed administration and a changed national mood – after 9/11.

4- A group of policy entrepreneurs – President Bush, members of his administration, and interest groups – who were successful in coupling the solution, the focusing event, and the political climate, which pushed the policy onto the agenda.

These elements, comprising the multiple streams model, may not be sufficient in explaining the entirety of the decision-making process for this case, but they are necessary. For an illustration of this model see figure 1.1 in chapter one.
Testing the Model

To test whether the multiple streams model is a viable explanatory tool for this case, this study would have to find the following evidence in the data:

1- The preexisting solution of using military force for regime change in Iraq before 9/11.

2- Inadequate attempts to deal with the Iraq issue before 9/11.

3- The domination of the events of 9/11 in the media, public opinion, and government circles.

4- A new policy window in a changed national mood, which is receptive to the new policy.

5- A new policy window in a new administration, which is receptive to the new policy.

6- The same players (entrepreneurs) advocating the new policy before and after 9/11.

7- Attempts by entrepreneurs at softening up the public and government circles to their policy, and at defining the issue in expedient terms.

8- Increased rhetoric by policy entrepreneurs to link the Iraq policy with al Qaeda and 9/11.

9- The new proposed policy captures the attention of governmental authorities, and moves from the governmental agenda to the decision agenda, where policy makers are ready to make a decision.

A Preexisting Solution Circulating in Policy Arenas

For multiple streams to be useful in explaining a decision-making process, the
presence of a preexisting solution is crucial. Kingdon (1995:142) states, “It is not enough that there is a problem, even quite a pressing problem. There also is generally a solution ready to go. . . . The subject with an ‘available alternative’ is the one that rises on the agenda.” As evidence that the preexisting solution – regime change through the use of military force against Iraq – was circulating in policy arenas before 9/11, it should be referred to in speeches, letters, or testimonies, before 9/11 and before the second Bush administration took office.

On September 19, 2002, President Bush sent a proposed resolution to Congress calling for a regime change in Iraq through the use of military force. Bush aides claimed that the 1998 Iraq Liberation Act (P.L. 105-338), which Congress passed during the Clinton administration, supported a similar policy, except that it only called for U.S. assistance to Iraqi opposition instead of a U.S. military campaign (CQ Weekly 2002:2463). Similarly, observers state that the president’s 2002 National Security Strategy, which alluded to preemption, was very similar to the 1992 Defense Planning Guidance prepared under the supervision of Wolfowitz (Frontline 2003). These claims convey that the Iraq policy they were proposing was not entirely new; rather, it was a variation of an already existing policy. Kingdon (1995:124) sheds light on this aspect of multiple streams when describing how new ideas evolve,

According to some current thinking, evolution proceeds not so much by mutation, or the sudden appearance of a wholly new structure, as by recombination, or the new packaging of already familiar elements. Similarly, creative activity usually involves recombination of old elements more than fresh invention of new ones. . . . So it is with the evolution of public policy ideas. Wholly new ideas do not suddenly appear. Instead recombine familiar elements into a new structure or a new proposal. . . . Change turns out to be recombination more than mutation.
The 1992 Defense Planning Guidance and the 1998 Iraq Liberation Act were not the only instruments that included familiar elements of the new Iraq policy after 9/11. The use of military force to oust Saddam Hussein was advocated as well in a January 26, 1998, open letter by the Project for the New American Century (PNAC) to President Clinton, and it stated,

The policy of “containment” of Saddam Hussein has been steadily eroding over the past several months. . . . The only acceptable strategy is one that eliminates the possibility that Iraq will be able to use or threaten to use weapons of mass destruction. In the near term, this means a willingness to undertake military action as diplomacy is clearly failing. In the long term, it means removing Saddam Hussein and his regime from power. That now needs to become the aim of American foreign policy. We urge you to articulate this aim, and to turn your Administration’s attention to implementing a strategy of removing Saddam’s regime from power. This will require a full complement of diplomatic, political and military efforts. (PNAC 1998a)

The letter was signed by, among others, Richard Armitage, John Bolton, Zalmay Khalilzad, Richard Perle, Donald Rumsfeld, and Paul Wolfowitz; all became involved with the second Bush administration.

The PNAC sent another letter on May 29, 1998, to the Speaker of the House, Representative Newt Gingrich, and the Senate Majority Leader, Trent Lott, which stressed the necessity of removing Saddam from power by stating, “We should establish and maintain a strong U.S. military presence in the region, and be prepared to use that force to protect our vital interests in the Gulf – and if, necessary, to help remove Saddam from power” (PNAC 1998b). Some of the same members – Bolton, Khalilzad, Perle, Rumsfeld, and Wolfowitz – that signed the first letter addressed to President Clinton signed this second letter to Congress.

Wolfowitz’s 1992 Defense Planning Guidance, as well as the Iraq Liberation Act, and
the two letters of the PNAC suggest that the Iraq policy of the second Bush administration was circulating in different forms and various arenas of policy communities before September 11, 2001.

Inadequate Attempts to Deal with Iraq before 9/11

Between the Gulf War and 9/11, there were several attempts by the United States to eliminate Iraqi WMD and to topple the Iraqi regime. There were calls by policy makers and interest groups to use U.S. military force to accomplish this task, but these calls were either unheeded, or military force was used on a limited scale without the involvement of ground troops. In a 2003 interview with Frontline William Kristol, who was Vice President Quayle’s chief of staff in 1991, stated that while Colin Powell convinced the president to stop short of marching on Baghdad and removing Saddam Hussein and his regime, there were those in the White House, namely Kristol, and in the Defense Department, namely Wolfowitz, who were arguing against ending the war before the removal of the Iraqi regime. Kristol and Wolfowitz were outraged weeks later when Iraqi insurgents, with U.S. encouragement, rose against Saddam Hussein but failed in toppling his regime. Instead of making every effort to aid them, the Bush administration refused to help them in their endeavor (Frontline 2003; Ricks 2006:6-7).

While calls for regime change in Iraq did not result in the overthrow of Saddam Hussein, the United States tried to contain the Iraqi regime through weapons inspections and limited military strikes. After the 1990/91 Gulf War, the United States collaborated with the United Nations to establish an inspections regime inside Iraq to monitor and stop the production of WMD. In 1997 Iraq began to increase its obstruction of U.N. weapons
inspections and to exclude U.S. personnel from UNSCOM. Tensions mounted in 1998. On August 5, Iraq announced it would no longer cooperate with UNSCOM, and banned its personnel from inspecting new facilities. Finally, on October 31, Iraq announced a total ban on all UNSCOM inspections. In return, the United States asserted that all options, including military, were on the table to deal with Iraq. After all U.N. efforts to mitigate the problem failed, the United States with British forces launched “Operation Desert Fox,” which amounted to a series of cruise missile attacks from the Indian Ocean on military targets inside Iraq. The campaign began on December 16, 1998, continued for 72 hours, and halted on December 20, 1998 (CRS 2002c:1-4). Yet, Iraq did not reinstate UNSCOM personnel to resume inspections. Instead, Iraqi air defenses tried to target U.S. and British airplanes patrolling the no-fly zones in the North and South of Iraq. As a consequence, there was a series of follow-up military actions by the United States and allied forces to stop these attacks. In 2000, allied forces struck Iraqi targets for 32 days, and for 19 days during the first 7 months of 2001 (CRS 2002c:5-6).

Administration officials were not alone in pursuing military operations and regime change in Iraq. Congress, as well, had been supportive of efforts to force Iraq to comply with U.N. resolutions and inspections. Ever since the Gulf War, Congress had appropriated funds to pay for the cost of military operations against Iraq. And, on December 17, 1998, the House of Representatives passed H. Res. 612 in support of the efforts of the military in Operation Desert Fox, and in support of regime change in Iraq (CRS 2002c:11) (see chapter 2 for more information on U.S. attempts at regime change). Yet, on September 11, 2001, Saddam Hussein was still in power, U.N. inspections had
not resumed, and as a result, Iraqi WMD capabilities were left unknown. U.S.-Iraq relations were in such disarray that Iraq was the only Middle East country that did not send condolences to the United States after the 9/11 attacks (CRS 2002c:7). Surveying the above evidence indicates that U.S. efforts in the 1990’s, and up till September 11, 2001, to be rid of the Iraqi problem did not succeed.

Domination of 9/11 Events

Kingdon (1995:96) states, “Sometimes crises come along that simply bowl over everything standing in the way of prominence on the agenda. . . . Such events demand some sort of action so clearly that even inaction is a decision.” Kingdon (1995:97) continues to explain that sometimes a focusing event causes “the emergence and diffusion of a powerful symbol. A subject is on the minds of important people anyway, and a symbol comes along to focus their attention.”

9/11 was such an event. It was the worst disaster on American soil in the history of the United States. In less than two hours three thousand people were killed, accompanied with unimaginable damage to the economy. It stunned the American public, and September 11, 2001 was forever America’s “Black Tuesday” (Nacos 2003:24). These horrific events and their aftermath dominated the media coverage. In describing this overwhelming disaster, Nacos (2003:31) states,

There was no need to count broadcast minutes or measure column length to establish the proportion of the total news that dealt with “Black Tuesday” and its aftermath. For the first five days after the terror attack, television and radio networks covered the disaster around the clock without the otherwise obligatory commercial breaks. There simply was no other news... Newsweek and Time, for example, devoted all cover stories in the eight weeks following events of September 11 to terrorism and terrorism-related themes.
Looking at the sheer number of stories in one of the leading newspapers in the country will provide an idea of the scale of the coverage. *New York Times* coverage is a good indication of the dominance of an issue in the media. For the next five days after 9/11 and beyond, news coverage was overwhelming. Table 4.1 illustrates this point.

Table 4.1. Number of stories and letters on 9/11 attacks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date (2001)</th>
<th>No. of 9/11 Stories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 12</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 13</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 14</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 15</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 16</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 23</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The numbers of articles and letters for each day demonstrates the dominance of this issue in the *New York Times* (*New York Times* 2001).

The preoccupation of Americans with the news of 9/11 was also evident in opinion polls that were conducted during that period of time. The *Los Angeles Times* conducted a telephone poll on 13-14 September of 2001, in which respondents were asked whether they were following the news of 9/11 closely. The results were that 83 percent watched “very closely,” and no one responded to the option “not closely at all” (*Los Angeles Times* 2001). These opinions did not change quickly. The Pew Research Center conducted a survey on 17-21 October 2001, in which 78 percent responded that they followed the news on terrorism “very closely” (The Pew Research Center 2001).

This preoccupation with 9/11 and terrorism accompanied heightened levels of anxiety and stress that altered the public’s behavior and outlook. A *Washington Post*-ABC survey
on September 11, 2001, revealed that 53 percent of the population changed their plans for
the rest of the day, and 47 percent were worried that they or a close relative might
become the victims of future terrorist attacks in the country (Washington Post 2001a).
Another survey by the Washington Post-ABC conducted on September 13, 2001,
revealed that 25 percent were “very worried” about airplane travel, and 35 percent were
“somewhat worried” (Washington Post 2001b). And the survey conducted by the Los
Angeles Times on September 13-14, 2001, revealed that 57 percent of the public felt that
the attacks would result in a fundamental change in the way Americans live their daily
lives (Los Angeles Times 2001).
In addition, 9/11 focused the attention of the media on people groups and concerns,
associated with terrorism, which were not that important before. As a result of these
events many more news and stories were focused on Muslims, Arabs, and Islam than
before the attacks. Table 4.2 (Nacos 2003:39) demonstrates this change of focus between
before and after September 11, 2001.

Table 4.2. Muslims, Arabs, Islam in the news before and after 9/11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABC News</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBS News</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBC News</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNN</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fox News</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.Y. Times</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>1,468</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>1,272</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>1,190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPR</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = Number of news segments/articles mentioning the search words.
Source: Compiled from Lexis-Nexis and New York Times archives using the search
words “Muslim,” “Arab,” and “Islam.”
Note: Period I = Six months before the terrorist attacks of 9/11; Period II = Six
months after the attacks of 9/11.

This obsession in the aftermath of 9/11 was fueled by fears of chemical and biological attacks in the wake of the anthrax scare that occurred. As a consequence, news coverage about possible WMD terrorism increased dramatically between the first and second months after 9/11. See table 4.3 (Nacos 2003:49) for illustration.

Table 4.3. Biological and chemical terrorism and anthrax in the news

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>B/C Terror I</th>
<th>B/C Terror II</th>
<th>Anthrax I</th>
<th>Anthrax II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC News</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBS News</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBC News</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNN</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>567</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fox News</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPR</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.Y. Times</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>729</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wash. Post</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>465</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = Number of segments/stories

Source: Compiled by retrieving transcripts and newspaper content from the Lexis-Nexis archives using the search words “biological” and “chemical” and “terrorist” for biological and chemical terror and “anthrax.”


The dominance of 9/11 events focused the nation’s attention on terrorism and on countries that support terrorism. In explaining how it impacted government officials,

Undersecretary of Defense Douglas Feith (2008:214) stated,

The 9/11 attack was a new phenomenon, and not just because it hit Americans on American soil. It was not an act of political theater; rather, it was the first successful case of terrorism of mass destruction. . . . This was why keeping weapons of mass destruction out of the hands of terrorists became, suddenly and inevitably, a far more pressing and higher-order concern than it had been before. It concentrated the minds of U.S. officials on the threat from states that both coveted WMD and supported terrorists.
As a consequence, government circles focused heavily on Iraq after 9/11. The number of articles in the Congressional Record is a good measure of government preoccupation. This study will consider the time periods of one year before and up to September 11, 2001, and one year after September 11, 2001. A good measure of the dominance of the Iraq issue would be the proportion of Iraq articles compared to the overall articles during the above-mentioned time periods. The results are summed up in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4. Percentage of increase of Iraq articles in the Congressional Record

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Congress</th>
<th>Iraq Articles</th>
<th>All Articles</th>
<th>Percentage of Iraq Articles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 12, 2000 – Sept. 11, 2001</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>4000</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 12, 2001 – Sept. 11, 2002</td>
<td>518</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The above evidence demonstrates that the percentage of articles on Iraq compared to the overall articles in the Congressional Record increased four-fold one year after 9/11 compared to one year before 9/11.

The disaster of 9/11 and the related subsequent events turned into a focusing event that captured the attention of the media, public opinion, and government circles. Birkland (2006:5) attempts to explain what the above evidence conveys by stating, “A disaster can often do in an instant what years of interest group activity, policy entrepreneurship, advocacy, lobbying, and research may not be able to do: elevate an issue on the agenda to a place where it is taken seriously in one or more policy domains.” Birkland (2006:4) also states, “The larger the disaster in terms of lives lost, property damaged, and the physical area covered (that is, the more like a catastrophe the event is), the larger the potential
influence on the political and policy world, all other things being equal.” In that, he (2006:22) says, “The September 11 attacks caused the public and elites to be much more attentive to the terrorism problem. A focusing event brings information to the attention of a broader range of people than normally consider the issue.” This explains why terrorism rose to the top of the agenda, and subsequently why Iraq, with its ties to terrorism, got there as well.

A New Policy Window in a Changed National Mood

As evidence that the 9/11 attacks became a policy window that was not previously available, the evidence would have to indicate that the public became more receptive after 9/11 to the Iraq policy of regime change through military action than before. Opinion polls are a good measure of where the public stands on an issue, and therefore an indicator of the national mood. In elaborating on the national mood Kingdon (1995:146) states,

People in and around government sense a national mood. They are comfortable discussing its content, and believe that they know the mood shifts. The idea goes by different names – the national mood, the climate in the country, changes in public opinion, or broad social movements. But common to all of these labels is the notion that a rather large number of people out in the country are thinking along certain common lines, that this national mood changes from one time to another in discernable ways, and that these changes in mood or climate have important impacts on policy agendas and policy outcomes.

In the days and weeks after 9/11, public opinion polls suggested that the public would be open to broadening the U.S. military campaign against countries that support terrorist organizations, but not directly involved in the events of 9/11. On September 25-27, 2001, the *Washington Post* conducted a national poll indicating that 54 percent strongly
supported a broader military campaign to 28 percent who supported limiting the
campaign to those groups and nations directly involved with 9/11 (Washington Post
2001c). As for specifically using the U.S. military to force Saddam Hussein out of power,
were conducted since the Gulf War, indicating the national mood. The results are
summed-up in table 4.5.

Table 4.5. U.S. military action to force Saddam Hussein out of power

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Favor Military Action</th>
<th>Oppose Military Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 15, 1991</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 5, 1991</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 17-18, 1998</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 27, 2001</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 24-27, 2002</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Comparing the results indicates that even though the international coalition against Iraq
was much stronger in 1991, and the relations with Iraq were deteriorating because of
Iraqi obstruction of U.N. inspections in 1998, the policy window was much wider after
9/11. Further, the 1998 survey indicates that in spite of the deteriorating relations with
Iraq, approximately half of the public, 49 percent, indicated that diplomacy could still
have a role in solving the Iraq issue (Washington Post 1998). This evidence suggests that
there was no definitive receptivity to the new Iraq policy before 9/11.

The Pew Research Center confirmed that trend by conducting a national survey on
January 9-13, 2002, and before the 2002 State of the Union address, in which President
Bush placed Iraq in an “axis of evil” including North Korea and Iran. The response
concerning military action against Iraq to remove Saddam Hussein from power was 73 percent in favor. The report on the survey stated, “It represents a strong endorsement of the prospective use of force compared with other military missions in the post-Cold War era” (The Pew Research Center 2002).

In summing up how Americans felt about the Iraqi regime in 2002, and as a reflection of the national mood after 9/11, Scott McClellan (2008:120), the deputy press secretary at the time stated,

The public opinion climate at the time favored the White House, since 9/11 remained fresh in the minds of Americans. . . . More than eight in ten Americans believed the regime of Saddam Hussein supported terrorist organizations intent on attacking America, and more than nine in ten believed it possessed or was developing WMD. A majority also believed – erroneously – that Saddam Hussein had been involved in the 9/11 attacks.

Comparing polls before and after 9/11, regarding the question of using military force to remove Saddam Hussein from power, indicates that 9/11 caused a greater public receptivity to the Iraq policy, and therefore created a wider policy window than all the other actions by Iraq in the previous decade.

A New Policy Window in a New Administration

Kingdon (1995:153-54) argues that another major component of the political stream concerns changes in the administration. In elaborating on this aspect he states,

Administrations change, bringing with them marked changes in policy agendas. . . . Agendas are changed because some of the major participants change. . . . Among the easily recognizable products of a new administration . . . is the rise to agenda prominence of some agenda items. . . . One of the most powerful turnover effects is a change of administration. . . . The administration is at the very top of the list of actors in the policy-making arena. . . . At the time of a change of administration, people all over town hold their breath in anticipation, waiting to see what the new administration’s priorities will be, what its policy agendas will look like.
The record indicates that although the majority of top policy makers during the Gulf War – the first President Bush, Defense Secretary Richard Cheney, Joint Chiefs Chairman Colin Powell, and National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft – were against going to Baghdad, there were some government officials such as Kristol and Wolfowitz of the first Bush administration who pushed for a military march on Baghdad to remove Saddam Hussein from power (*Frontline* 2003). And in 1998, some interest groups, namely the PNAC, with members such as Kristol, Wolfowitz, Rumsfeld, Khalilzad, Bolton, and Perle, forcefully lobbied with President Clinton and with congressional leaders for military action in Iraq to remove Saddam Hussein from power (PNAC 1998a, 1998b). None of these attempts was met with success. This suggests that the first Bush administration and the Clinton administration were not open to an Iraq policy beyond containment. In effect, there was no policy window with these two administrations that would have allowed for the proposed Iraq solution to be considered or placed on the government agenda.

What signaled a clear indication that a policy window opened in the political stream was that the second President Bush brought with him as members of his administration Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz, Khalilzad, Bolton, Armitage, and Perle (in an advisory position). All these policy makers were members of the PNAC – the main interest group advocating the Iraq policy in the 1990’s – and signatories of the letters that the PNAC sent in 1998 to President Clinton and to Congress, advocating military action against Iraq. As a consequence, the new Bush administration was clearly more open to instituting the new policy on Iraq because many of its members joined with the predisposition that Saddam
Hussein should be removed from power, and if necessary, American military power should be used in that endeavor (Haney 2005:297).

As for the president, the months before 9/11 indicate that he was willing to go along with Secretary of State Powell’s proposal of smart sanctions, and continue the policy of containment of the previous administration. This all changed after 9/11, in particular when President Bush characterized Iraq as part of an “axis of evil” in his 2002 State of the Union address (CRS 2003a:7; U.S. President 2002a). The president made reference to this change, two years after 9/11, in an interview with Bob Woodward (2004:27),

President Bush said, “September the 11th obviously changed my thinking a lot about my responsibility as president. Because September the 11th made the security of the American people the priority . . . a sacred duty for the president.” . . . It changed his attitude toward “Saddam Hussein’s capacity to create harm,” he said, adding that “all his terrible features became much more threatening. Keeping Saddam in a box looked less and less feasible to me. Saddam was a “madman,” the president said. “He had used weapons of mass destruction in the past. He has created incredible instability in the neighborhood.” Saddam had invaded Iran in the 1980’s and Kuwait in the 1990’s. Bush added, “the options in Iraq were relatively limited when you are playing the containment game.”

These insights suggest that, for the new policy on Iraq to land on the agenda 9/11 had to happen and change the national mood, thereby presenting a policy window. Further, a new administration bringing new members that already supported and lobbied for such a policy had to be in place as well, thereby presenting another policy window. These members were now in positions of power. Therefore, they were able to steer policy in their direction, and to lobby for setting the agenda with issues of their choosing. Hence, the prominence of the “new” Iraq policy, which was their preferred preexisting solution, came into focus.
Same Players Advocating the New Policy Before and After 9/11

As evidence that certain players were acting as policy entrepreneurs, the evidence should reveal that the same players were advocating the policy before and after 9/11. This should indicate that they were willing to invest time and resources to secure their policies (Kingdon 1995:122). In commenting on the concerted efforts of some members of the Bush administration before 9/11, Ron Suskind (2006:22) states,

Defense Secretary Ronald Rumsfeld, his deputy Paul Wolfowitz, Undersecretary for Policy Douglas Feith, and their senior nonstaff adviser, Richard Perle . . . now chairman of the President’s Defense Advisory Board. All had been pressing through the Clinton years and the first nine months of this administration for two things: transformation of the military into a leaner, high-tech, twenty-first-century fighting force; and the overthrow of Saddam Hussein.

Evidence has shown that in the 1990’s members of the PNAC had sought to bring Iraq to the attention of government circles, and to advocate the policy of regime change by using military force. The two letters, mentioned above, that the PNAC sent in 1998 to President Clinton and congressional leadership is an indication of such an endeavor. But these efforts were not strictly pre-9/11, rather, they continued after 9/11. Days after this disaster, on September 20, 2001, and before there was any official connection made with the Iraqi regime, the PNAC sent a letter to President Bush placing the Iraqi regime at the center of the war on terror. The signatories including, among others, Kristol and Perle, stated the following,

It may be that the Iraqi government provided assistance in some form to the recent attack on the United States. But even if evidence does not link Iraq directly to the attack, any strategy aiming at the eradication of terrorism and its sponsors must include a determined effort to remove Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq. Failure to undertake such an effort will constitute an early and perhaps decisive surrender in the war on international terrorism. . . . And American forces must be prepared to back up our commitment to the Iraqi opposition by all necessary means. (PNAC 2001)
Perle, one of the signatories of all three PNAC letters mentioned above, was a fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, and a member of the Defense Policy Board, an advisory panel to Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld, testified at a September 26, 2002, hearing before the House Armed Services Committee, in which he stated,

As I understand it, Saddam is demanding an inspection regime in which advance notification is required, and in which certain places are off limits to the inspectors, who would be limited in number, mobility and armament. . . . Given what we now know about Saddam’s weaponry, his lies, his concealment, we would be fools to accept inspections . . . as a substitute for disarmament. That is why, Mr. Chairman, the President is right to demand that the United Nations promptly resolve that Saddam comply with the full range of United Nations resolutions concerning Iraq or face an American led enforcement action. (Global Security Organization 2002)

Perle continued his advocacy of the campaign against Iraq in a January 25, 2003, interview with Frontline, in which he stated, “Well, I think, the relationship between the fight against terrorism and dealing with Saddam Hussein is complicated, but very clear. For one thing Saddam Hussein harbors terrorists. . . . A failure to come to grips with Iraq would gravely diminish our ability to win the war on terrorism” (Frontline 2003).

Kristol, another signatory of the PNAC letters, continued his support of the campaign against the Iraqi regime in an interview with Frontline, in which he stated, “And suddenly Iraq, and Iran and North Korea, and the ‘axis of evil,’ become as prominent as Al Qaeda, really, in the State of the Union address. I supported that. I argued for that” (Frontline 2003).

Finally, some signatories of the 1998 PNAC letters continued their advocacy of the proposed policy on Iraq as members of the new Bush administration. As officials of the new administration, Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz pushed for the campaign against Iraq in congressional hearings (U.S. Department of Defense 2002c, 2002d). According to
Undersecretary of Defense, Feith, Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz were already suggesting that Iraq was a problem to be dealt with in national security meetings as well. Recounting the September 13, 2001 meeting, Feith (2008:15) stated, “Looking beyond Bin Laden and Afghanistan, Rumsfeld mentioned Saddam Hussein’s Iraq as a threat to both the region and to the United States. Iraq, he observed, was a state that supported terrorism, and that might someday offer terrorists weapons of mass destruction to use against us.” And, in recounting the meetings that took place the weekend of September 15-16, 2001, Feith (2008:51) stated, “Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz also wanted to sketch out the case for acting soon, in a way or another, against the threat from Iraq.”

**Wolfowitz’s Role**

When speaking of policy entrepreneurs, Kingdon (1995:180) suggests that there is one person in the group who is usually more central to the promotion of the policy than the others, “when researching case studies, one can nearly always pinpoint a particular person, or at most a few persons, who where central in moving a subject up on the agenda and into position for enactment. Most observers would also identify these policy entrepreneurs as central figures in the drama.” As for the Iraq policy, evidence suggests that Wolfowitz was such an entrepreneur. Excerpts from the 2003 *Frontline* interviews with Perle and Kristol suggest that, going back to 1991-92, Wolfowitz was pushing for intervention in Iraq and for a policy of preemption. Speaking about how the Gulf War ended abruptly and the developments afterwards, Perle (*Frontline* 2003) stated, “I’m only familiar with Paul Wolfowitz’ view, and he believed then that it was a mistake to end the war, as we did under the circumstances. . . . People like Paul Wolfowitz who were quite
prescient, understood that the regions were seething with potential conflict. And he was eager to develop concepts for regional security.”

As the vice president’s chief of staff in the first Bush administration, Kristol (Frontline 2003) reflected on Wolfowitz’s stance by stating, “Well, I’m the vice president’s chief of staff and I have nothing much to say about that decision. Paul Wolfowitz is number three in the Defense Department, and I think tries a little bit to weigh in against stopping short of removing Saddam, or particularly weighs in once the rebellions begin a couple of weeks later. . . . I know that Paul Wolfowitz. . . . had argued that we should intervene.” In fact, Wolfowitz went on to oversee the writing of the 1992 Defense Planning Guidance, which is considered by some observers as the precursor for President Bush’s 2002 NSS (Frontline 2003).

In addition to being one of the signatories of the 1998 PNAC letters, Wolfowitz expressed his frustration with U.S. administrations for their lack of resolve concerning Saddam Hussein. On February 25, 1998, in a hearing before the House Committee on International Relations, he stated,

The fact is, of course as you all know, the American people would like nothing more than to see Saddam out of power. . . . He’s not there because we want him there, but he is there, I think, because we haven’t really tried hard enough to get rid of him. . . . In spite of claims from the administration and, to be fair, from prior Administrations, we have not, in my view, ever really tried serious support for the Iraqi opposition. And, again in fairness, I think the best opportunity to overthrow Saddam was, unfortunately, lost in the month right after the war [Gulf War]. (U.S. House 1998:7)

In that same hearing Wolfowitz stated, “The one effective way to cope with the weapons of mass destruction problem and these other problems is to help the Iraqi people remove him [Saddam] from power” (U.S. House 1998:16).
Further, as a member of the second Bush administration he was an avid supporter and advocate of the policy on Iraq. On May 4, 2001, he remarked before the American Jewish Committee in Washington, D.C.,

Today the tyrannical regime in Baghdad is the root cause of the most immediate dangers that we face in the Persian Gulf. Hope for Iraq and hope for peace in the region rests on the liberation of that country from the tyranny of Saddam’s regime. . . . As I have tried to make clear in this speech, we would desire nothing more, like nothing more than to see Saddam go, and I think in pursuing that goal we are also helping the Iraqi people. (U.S. Department of Defense 2001a)

As previously mentioned, these remarks were followed by interviews and congressional testimonies in which Wolfowitz advocated the removal of the Iraqi regime.

To sum up, Wolfowitz’s efforts began as a member of the first Bush administration, continued as a private citizen and as a member of the PNAC, and culminated as a member of the second Bush administration. We can conclude that he was central to the efforts to realize the new policy on Iraq.

Entrepeneurs Softening Up the Public and Government Circles

In advocating their preferred policies, entrepreneurs try to soften up their audience to be more receptive to the policies they attempt to advance. In explaining this process Kingdon (1995:127-28) states,

To some degree, ideas float freely through the policy primeval soup. But their advocates do not allow the process to be completely free-floating. In addition to starting discussions of their proposals, they push their ideas in many different forums. These entrepreneurs attempt to “soften up” both policy communities, which tend to be inertia-bound and resistant to major changes, and larger publics, getting them used to new ideas and building acceptance for their proposals. Then when a short-run opportunity to push their proposals comes, the way has been paved, the important people softened up.
We have seen how policy entrepreneurs have advocated regime change in Iraq through military force for almost a decade before 9/11. The above-mentioned accounts of Wolfowitz, Perle, and Kristol’s attempts with the first Bush administration and the 1998 PNAC letters are examples of efforts by policy advocates to cause the foreign policy communities to be more receptive to the new policy. Other mentioned attempts by Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz, Cheney, and even President Bush, in the form of congressional testimonies, interviews, and speeches were concerted efforts to soften up the public in general, and the foreign policy community in particular. Per Kingdon’s definition of this process, and according to McClellan (2008), even President Bush’s September 2002 speech at the United Nations, and Secretary Powell’s February 2003 speech at the United Nations were efforts to soften up policy communities and the larger public to the administration’s policy on Iraq. As for the president’s speech, McClellan (2008:119-20) stated,

The UN speech signaled the beginning of a stepped-up effort in the administration’s carefully scripted campaign to win broad support for a possible military confrontation. . . . Bush’s speech provided the new talking points for “educating the public about the threat.” The president, his national security team, and his other top advisers had used the UN forum as an opportunity to articulate the severity of the threat and the urgency of addressing it.

As for the secretary’s speech, McClellan (2008:56) stated,

Because of Secretary of State Colin Powell’s enormous bipartisan popularity, as well as his unquestioned honor and integrity, the White House recognized that he would be the most logical and persuasive person to help seal the case at home and abroad. So, on February 5, 2003, Powell made a special presentation before the U.N. Security Council concerning the Iraqi effort to develop and stockpile weapons of mass destruction.
Public opinion polls after 9/11 indicated receptivity to military action in Iraq more than was the case before 9/11 (see section on the national mood). A proposed policy had to be already circulating in public arenas for the public and government officials to consider it and be open to it. Because of the efforts of policy entrepreneurs, that was the case with the Iraq policy.

Issue Definition

In their efforts to soften up the public and policy arenas with regards to their policies, entrepreneurs attempt to define the issue in ways that would enhance its appeal before their target audience. Kingdon (1995:110) states that how a problem is defined may help or hurt its chances of landing on the agenda. To that he (1995:204) adds, “Entrepreneurs try to highlight the indicators that so importantly dramatize their problems. They push for one kind of problem definition rather than another.” Furthermore, issue definition according to Baumgartner and Jones (1993:16) “has the potential for mobilizing the previously disinterested.” In effect, issue definition plays a role in expanding the scope of the conflict and capturing the attention of a greater audience. As such, much hinges on how an issue or a problem is defined and therefore perceived. This brings us to Debra Stone’s concept of “symbols” used in problem or issue definition. She (1997:137) states, “Symbolic representation is the essence of problem definition in politics,” and she defines a symbol as “anything that stands for something else. Its meaning depends on how people interpret it, use it or respond to it.” Some of the strategies of symbolic representation that she uses are: (1) “narrative stories,” which provide explanations of
how the world works; and (2) “metaphors,” which suggest that there is a “likeness that is important” (1997:137-38).

In addition, Stone argues that there are two story lines prevalent in policy definition and politics. One is a “story of decline,” which ends with a prediction of crisis (1997:138), and the other is a “story of control,” which suggests that we can do something about the problem to control it (1997:142). As policy entrepreneurs, members of the Bush administration have used several strategies from Stone’s tactics for problem definition.

In providing a rationale for why the United States had to move against Iraq, Rumsfeld’s tactic could be characterized as that of Stone’s narrative story explaining how the new world we live in works. In his September 18, 2002 testimony before Congress he stated,

Today, our margin of error is notably different than was the case previously. In the 20th century, we were dealing with conventional capabilities for the most part; today, we’re dealing with weapons of mass destruction that of course tend to be used not simply against combatants, but against innocent men, women and children as well. We’re in an age of little or no warning, when threats can emerge suddenly to surprise us. Terrorist states are finding ways to gain access to these powerful weapons. And in word or deed, they’ve demonstrated a willingness to use those capabilities. (U.S. Department of Defense 2002c)

In telling this story, Rumsfeld attempted to convey an image of a different world that we live in today, in which WMD are used against civilians without warning; therefore, new ways of thinking and new policies are required. He (U.S. Department of Defense 2002c) continued by stating, “I suggest that if any of you insist on perfect evidence really are thinking back in the 20th century in a pre-9/11 context. On September 11, we were awakened to the fact that America is now vulnerable to unprecedented destruction, and
that awareness ought to be sufficient to change the way we think about our security and the type of certainty and evidence we consider appropriate.” He conveyed a very different outlook on how the world works. In that, he suggested what Legro (2000) argued that change in actions or behavior depends on whether decision makers perceive that old idea structures are not adequate anymore, and that they must be replaced with new sets of ideas, and therefore, new ways of thinking.

In that same speech, Rumsfeld also utilized metaphors to convey a likeness or a similarity between Hitler and Saddam Hussein by stating,

Long before the Second World War, Hitler wrote in “Mein Kamph” indicating what he intended to do. But the hope was that, maybe, he would not do what he said. And between 35 and 60 million people died because of the series of fatal miscalculations. . . . He might have been stopped early at a minimal cost of lives had the vast majority of the world’s leaders not decided at the time that the risks of acting were greater than the risks of not acting. Today we must decide whether the risks of acting are greater than the risks of not acting. Saddam Hussein made his intentions clear. He’s used those weapons. He’s demonstrated an intention to take the territory of his neighbors. He plays host to terrorist networks. He’s hostile to our country. . . . He has said in no uncertain terms that he would use weapons of mass destruction against the United States. He has at this moment stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons. (U.S. Department of Defense 2002c)

Underscoring these similarities between Saddam and Hitler, Rumsfeld projected a negative image of Saddam Hussein, by suggesting that if Hitler meant what he said, Saddam meant what he said. And, if we did not act we incur disastrous results just as we did in WWII. His implication was an effort to magnify the Iraqi problem.

Other administration officials used a “story of decline” as a tactic to warn against delaying military action. In remarks made on March 6, 2003, President Bush stated, “If the world fails to confront the threat posed by the Iraqi regime, refusing to use force, even as a last resort, free nations would assume immense and unacceptable risks” (U.S.
President 2003h). Cheney used the same tactic in his speech before Veterans of Foreign Wars, in which he stated, “Armed with an arsenal of these weapons of terror, and seated atop ten percent of the world’s oil reserves, Saddam Hussein could then be expected to seek domination of the entire Middle East, take control of a great portion of the world’s energy supplies, directly threaten America’s friends throughout the region, and subject the United States or any other nation to nuclear blackmail” (U.S. Vice President 2002a). In describing the consequences of allowing Saddam to become stronger Cheney presented another story of decline in which he stated,

Yet if we did wait until that moment, Saddam would simply be emboldened, and it would become even harder for us to gather friends and allies to oppose him. As one of those worked to assemble the Gulf War coalition, I can tell you that our job then would have been infinitely more difficult in the face of a nuclear-armed Saddam Hussein. And many of those who now argue that we should act only if he gets a nuclear weapons would then turn around and say that we cannot act because he has a nuclear weapon. At bottom, that argument counsels a course of inaction that itself could have devastating consequences for many countries, including our own. (U.S. Vice President 2002a)

The above evidence suggests that if we did not act against Saddam events would spiral out of control, and would signal an ominous weakening and decline of the U.S. position toward Saddam.

Stories of control were used as well to imply that the administration should do something to control the situation. To that end Rumsfeld stated, “Our principle goal in the war on terror is stop another 9/11 or a WMD attack that could make a 9/11 seem modest by comparison, and to do it before it happens” (U.S. Department of Defense 2002c). President Bush used this tactic as well when stating, “The attacks of September the 11th, 2001 showed what the enemies of America did with four airplanes. We will not wait to
see what terrorists or terrorist states could do with weapons of mass destruction” (U.S. President 2003h). This evidence indicates that administration officials intended to take control of the situation before it worsened by acting quickly and not waiting until conditions deteriorated.

Finally, how a problem is defined affects the policy image it holds. How a policy is understood is what its image conveys. A policy image carries an evaluative aspect to it, which is the policy tone, which can be positive or negative (Baumgartner and Jones 1993:25-26). A positive image enhances the prospects of a policy landing on the agenda. The president and his administration attempted to convey a positive image about the Iraq policy by portraying it as defending our national security and liberty. In fact, positive and negative images of both sides of the issue were used to enhance its chances of landing on the agenda.

Presenting the war on Iraq in a positive image, Cheney (U.S. Vice President 2002a) stated,

As for the reaction of the Arab ‘street,’ the Middle East expert Professor Fouad Ajami predicts that after liberation, the streets in Basra and Baghdad are ‘sure to erupt in joy in the same way the throngs in Kabul greeted the Americans.’ Extremists in the region would have to rethink their strategy of Jihad. Moderates throughout the region would take heart. And our ability to advance the Israeli-Palestinian peace process would be enhanced, just as it was following the liberation of Kuwait in 1991.

Wolfowitz (U.S. Department of Defense 2002b) used the same tactic when stating, “We’re talking about self defense. . . . That means that to defend ourselves and to defend our friends and allies around the world if we can help the Iraqi people to liberate themselves we will not only help them, we’ll have helped ourselves. I think that’s a key to going forward here.”
President Bush, as well, attempted to present the Iraq policy with a positive image by stating,

The safety of the American people depends on ending this direct and growing threat. Acting against the danger will also contribute greatly to the long-term safety and stability of our world. The current Iraqi regime has shown the power of tyranny to spread discord and violence in the Middle East. A liberated Iraq can show the power of freedom to transform that vital region, by bringing hope and progress into the lives of millions. America’s interests in security, and America’s belief in liberty, both lead in the same direction: to a free and peaceful Iraq. (U.S. President 2003f)

Connecting the Iraq policy to U.S. security and liberty and to U.S. national interests bestows a positive image with a positive tone on this policy and, therefore, enhances its prospects of landing on the agenda.

President Bush, as well, attempted to convey a negative image of the policy of inaction. In his September 12, 2002 speech at the United Nations he stated,

If we fail to act in the face of danger, the people of Iraq will continue to live in brutal submission. The regime will have new power to bully and dominate and conquer its neighbors, condemning the Middle East to more years of bloodshed and fear. The regime will remain unstable – the region will remain unstable, with little hope of freedom. . . . And if an emboldened regime were to supply these weapons to terrorist allies, then the attacks of September the 11th would be prelude to far greater horrors. (U.S. President 2002f)

The president’s intent was to make a connection between the policy of inaction and the consequences of less freedom in the Middle East and more danger for America. In that, he bestowed a negative image on such a course of action.

Policy Entrepreneurs Link Iraq Policy with al Qaeda and 9/11

After 9/11, administration officials began to increase their rhetoric about Iraq and Saddam Hussein in connection with al Qaeda, and, therefore, as a problem that the United States would have to deal with in connection with the war on terror. On
September 13, 2001, in an interview with Fox News, Wolfowitz (U.S. Department of Defense 2001c) stated, “We’ve got to root out the terrorist networks. And we have got to end the support that they get from a number of states.” About Saddam he stated, “He is one of the most active supporters of state terrorism. . . . He is one of the problems. Osama bin Laden is one of the problems. . . . We are going to have to do this as a campaign and treat the problem as a whole.” In the 2002 State of the Union address, the president grouped Iraq with Iran and North Korea in an “axis of evil” that the United States could no longer ignore (U.S. President 2002a). In his remarks before the U.N. General Assembly, on September 12, 2002, the president stated, “Iraq’s Government openly praised the attacks of September the 11th. And al Qaeda terrorists escaped from Afghanistan and are known to be in Iraq” (U.S. President 2002f). Rhem (2002) stated that Rumsfeld remarked on September 26, 2002, that,

The United States has “solid evidence” senior al Qaeda operatives have been in Baghdad, Iraq. . . . Intelligence agencies have confirmed contacts between Iraq and al Qaeda leaders. Rumsfeld said the two entities have discussed “safe-haven opportunities in Iraq (and) reciprocal nonaggression” agreements, among other issues. . . . “The reports of these contacts have been increasing since 1998.” . . . And have expanded to include “incredible evidence” that al Qaeda leaders sought contacts in Iraq for assistance in acquiring weapons of mass destruction capabilities.

In 2003, the president increased his rhetoric connecting Saddam Hussein and al Qaeda. In the State of the Union address he stated, “Evidence from intelligence sources, secret communications, and statements by people now in custody reveal that Saddam Hussein aids and protects terrorists, including members of al Qaeda” (U.S. President 2003b). And, in a national press conference, on March 6, 2003, President Bush said of
Saddam Hussein, “He has trained and financed al Qaeda-type organizations before, al Qaeda and other terrorist organizations” (U.S. President 2003h).

What the administration implied was that the Iraqi regime and al Qaeda were operationally allied. Along with the development of WMD, this connection in particular, and terrorism in general were presented as the argument for ousting the Iraqi leader militarily. The administration further argued that ousting Saddam Hussein would decrease the chances that al Qaeda could use WMD to conduct another major terrorist operation (CRS 2004:1).

More precisely, this connection between al Qaeda and the Iraqi regime that the administration tried to establish had three major themes: “(1) that there were contacts between Iraqi intelligence and Al Qaeda in Sudan, Afghanistan, and Pakistan dating from the early 1990’s, including Iraq’s assistance to Al Qaeda in deployment of chemical weapons; (2) that an Islamist faction called Ansar al-Islam (The Partisans of Islam) in northern Iraq, had ties to Iraq’s regime, and (3) that Iraq might have been involved in the September 11, 2001 plot itself” (CRS 2004:2).

The first theme was prominently evident in Powell’s February 5, 2003, speech at the United Nations, in which he stated,

Going back to the early and mid-1990s, when bin Laden was based in Sudan, an Al Qaeda source tells us that Saddam and bin Laden reached an understanding that Al Qaeda would no longer support activities against Baghdad. . . . We know members of both organizations met repeatedly and have met at least eight times at every senior level since the early 1990’s. . . . Iraqis continued to visit bin Laden in his new home in Afghanistan. . . . From the late 1990’s until 2001, the Iraqi embassy in Pakistan played the role of liaison to the Al Qaeda organization. . . . Ambition and hatred are enough to bring Iraq and Al Qaeda together. (U.S. Department of State 2003c)
As for the second theme in the administration’s argument, Powell stated in his U.N. speech,

Iraq today harbors a deadly terrorist network headed by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, an associate and collaborator of Osama bin Laden and his Al Qaeda lieutenants. . . . Baghdad has an agent in the most senior levels of the radical organization, Ansar al-Islam that controls this corner of Iraq. . . . From his terrorist network in Iraq, Zarqawi can direct his network in the Middle East and beyond. (U.S. Department of State 2003c)

Powell’s claims in his U.N. speech echoed the claims made in the 2002 report on global terrorism regarding groups such as Ansar al-Islam, in which the State Department stated, “it is inconceivable these groups were in Iraq without the knowledge and acquiescence of Saddam’s regime” (U.S. Department of State 2002:79).

As for the third theme in the administration’s argument, that Iraq might have been involved in the events of September 11, 2001, it was not mentioned in Powell’s U.N. speech. That is because he was one of the administration officials that had doubts about this matter (CRS 2004:3). However, claims of such a connection were reportedly leaked in an article in the Weekly Standard (Hayes 2003). Even though the Department of Defense indicated that such an article was a “harmful leak of classified information,” Vice President Cheney indicated that it was “the best source of information” on the subject (CRS 2004:4; Milbank 2004). The article referred to a Department of Defense memorandum, dated October 27, 2003, from Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, Douglas Feith, to the Senate Select Committee, in which allegations were made of several meetings that took place between Mohammad Atta, the leader of the September 11 hijackers, and the Iraqi intelligence chief in Prague, Ahmad Samir al-Ani. Allegedly, al-Ani offered to provide funds to Atta. In addition, the memo reported that Iraqi
intelligence facilitated meetings with al Qaeda in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in early 2000, during which attacks on the USS Cole, and possibly the September 11 attacks were planned (CRS 2004:7-8; Hayes 2003).

The above developments suggest an attempt by administration officials to establish a connection between Iraq and al Qaeda, and between Iraq and 9/11. In that, the argument for a regime change by military means would be strengthened.

Proposed Policy Moves from Governmental to Decision Agenda

Kingdon (1995:4) differentiates between two types of agendas: the “governmental agenda, the list of subjects that are getting attention,” and the “decision agenda, or the list of subjects within the governmental agenda that are up for an active decision.” We have seen in this study that because of the efforts of the Bush administration, the Iraq policy received much attention after 9/11, and therefore, became part of the governmental agenda. But, it also became part of the decision agenda when (1) President Bush went to the United Nations on September 12, 2002, and asked for a resolution allowing for renewed inspections, and made reference to the possibility of military action if inspections failed, and (2) when Congress passed the bill on October 10-11, 2002, and President Bush signed it into law on October 16, 2002. These latter developments were clear indications that the Iraq policy landed on the decision agenda, and was up for an active decision. That, of course, took place with the beginning of military action on March 19, 2003.
Conclusion

Does multiple streams further explain the decision-making process for the Iraq policy? Do the patterns in the model match the patterns provided in the case? Does it provide a dimension or an analytical approach that the other models do not? And, is it a necessary dimension?

With the help of process tracing the above evidence suggests that all the elements present in multiple streams – a preexisting solution, a focusing event, a changed political climate, and a group of policy entrepreneurs to connect it all together – are present in this case. In addition, the patterns with which these elements relate to each other in the model, match the patterns with which the same elements relate to each other in the case. This suggests that Kingdon’s model does explain the decision-making process for the Iraq policy. And, we would miss all these aspects of the policy process if we fail to utilize Kingdon. Furthermore, the multiple streams model provides a dimension of analysis that the other models do not, because they do not explore any of the assumptions or ingredients that make up multiple streams. Yet, these ingredients, as the evidence has shown, are present in this case and crucial to the understanding of it.

Utilizing multiple streams as a supplement to other decision-making models is useful for several reasons. Even though the solution had been proposed years before 9/11, it did not land on the decision agenda, and therefore was not up for decisive action. Simply put, there was no open policy window in the form of a compelling problem that could turn into a focusing event or in the form of a receptive political climate. Neither the first Bush administration, nor the Clinton administration was open to the suggestions of the policy
entrepreneurs. And, if they were open to such suggestions, they did not act on them. U.S. military involvement did not reach beyond air strikes against suspected targets inside Iraq. Ground troops with a sustained military campaign to accomplish regime change inside Iraq never took place in the 1990s. That changed when: (1) the 9/11 terrorist attacks occurred and turned into a focusing event of unprecedented proportions; (2) the political climate changed in the form of a new administration that brought many of the Iraq policy entrepreneurs back to government circles; (3) public opinion regarding Iraq changed after 9/11; and, (4) policy entrepreneurs largely succeeded in their attempts to couple their preferred preexisting solution to the problem and to a receptive political climate.

Because of the confluence of all these elements, policies that were not feasible before 9/11 became feasible after 9/11. Grand strategies and new ideas such as preemption and the Iraq policy that were inconceivable became a reality after 9/11. Because of that dismissing Kingdon’s model as an explanatory tool in this case would render the overall explanation as lacking an important aspect, that of agenda setting in the policy process. Therefore, the multiple streams model provides a necessary dimension in this process.

However, having established the necessity of multiple streams in this case does not mean that it has no weaknesses, just like the previous models discussed. In particular, the constraints of time in policy arenas could prove detrimental to many worthwhile policies. This becomes the case if these policies do not have advocates to push them through the system. Some of its weaknesses, as well as its strengths are mentioned in table 4.6.
Table 4.6. Strengths and weaknesses of the multiple streams model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identifies factors that lead to placing an issue on the agenda, ignored by other models.</td>
<td>Problems that solutions could be attached to may not occur for a long time. Hence, a worthy solution may be lost in the process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explains the prominence of solutions indirectly connected with the problem at hand.</td>
<td>Entrepreneurs have to work very quickly to couple streams together. The element of time can be a detriment in today’s labyrinth of policy arenas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explains long-term policy planning.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allows for the notion that policy-making is not necessarily an orderly, rational process.</td>
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</table>
Chapter Five

Conclusion

This study begins by stating that foreign policy, particularly in crisis situations, is usually responsive to the conditions that arise, and that solutions are devised after problems occur. The argument that this study makes is that foreign-policy making does not have to follow this pattern. There are cases where the solution predates the problem, rendering the process more proactive than responsive. The role of ideas as “agents of change” (Hook 2008:148) is pivotal in this argument. While explaining policy learning, Birkland (2006:20) states, “There is a relationship between ideas and policy change.” This study is about ushering innovative ideas that can change conventional thought processes, introducing new policies as solutions to new problems (Kingdon 1995).

In addition to the pivotal role of ideas, of salience are the right conditions and the right timing (Mossberger 2000:30) accompanying new ideas in this process. In his study about ideas and change in U.S. foreign aid, Hook (2008) suggests that it was the right conditions, creating the right timing, which ushered new ideas fomenting change in policies and institutions of U.S. foreign aid.

Because Kingdon (1995:1-2) states that his theory is about ideas [preexisting solutions] whose time has come, this study argues that Kingdon’s multiple streams model can provide a framework to test the argument that the foreign-policy process can be proactive. Whereas the conventional foreign-policy models explain policies formulated
after problems occur, rendering the decision-making process responsive, the multiple streams model explains policies formulated before problems occur, rendering the decision-making process proactive. In that, the role of preexisting solutions is emphasized in this case. However, Kingdon’s model is usually utilized in domestic-policy analysis. Therefore, to test its viability in the foreign-policy arena, it has to be compared to the evidence in this case, as well as to other conventional foreign-policy models. Its viability depends on its ability to provide a necessary lens or a perspective through which we can view and better understand this case, which is missing in the other models. To that end, this study suggests that an integrated approach offers an analytical framework where several models can be utilized simultaneously. The integrated approach provides a broader spectrum of analysis by (1) examining how the different models explain the case, (2) testing the new model against the evidence and the other conventional models, and (3) gaining a broader understanding of the decision-making process. Yetiv (2004:121) states, “The integrated approach suggests, we need to run reality through multiple perspectives.” Pattern matching and process tracing are the analytical strategies used in this study to compare the empirical data or the evidence with the assumptions of each model.

In reconciling the utility of an integrated approach, we can consider each conventional model as a snapshot of the process within a different unit of analysis. The rational actor model informs us how the state functions; the governmental politics model informs us how foreign-policy bureaucracies function; groupthink informs us how the small group of principals along with the president functions; and the cognitive approach
informs us how the president functions. That leaves the multiple streams model and the question of where does it fit?

The multiple streams model chronicles the inception of the policy on Iraq (to the extent that the evidence reveals) beginning during the first Bush administration, and ending in its execution during the second Bush administration. It covers a longer span of time, explaining the origins of the policy, where such an explanation is available and warranted. It provides a before and after [the problem] continuum of events that sheds more light on the agenda-setting stage of the policy process. Therefore, it provides a context revealing how issues come to the attention of decision makers in the first place, without which these issues may not come to the fore. This study further suggests that multiple streams connects all of these units of foreign-policy making by proposing themes and concepts that overlap with all these conventional approaches. It weaves a thread through these units connecting them into one policy process.

The integrated approach is similar to drawing a map that has multiple layers. Each conventional layer provides a piece of information or a theme that the others do not. The multiple streams model is the layer that connects the others together. Superimposing these layers will provide a better picture or explanation of what we are trying to understand.

The previous chapters provide an analysis of how each of the models work. The next section provides an evaluation of the findings.

**Evaluating the Models**

By utilizing the process-tracing tool for analysis, this study depicts some patterns in
the models that match the patterns in the evidence, and some that do not. In that, this study assesses the utility of each model in explaining the case, and highlights the strengths and weaknesses of each.

The Rational Actor Model

As previously mentioned, the rational actor model considers the state a unitary actor with unified national interests, translated into unified goals and objectives. The attainment of these goals eliminates strategic problems that threaten these national interests. Allison and Zelikow (1999:16) state that this model is known as the “classical model,” and is deeply ingrained in our thinking. They (1999:17) assert that the goal-directed behavior in this model indicates that actors are “intendedly rational,” a concept that would be challenged and refuted by every other model that follows.

The evidence suggests that overall the assumptions of the rational actor model were supported in this case. The Iraqi regime and its support of terrorism were determined to be the strategic problem, threatening the national interests of the state – homeland security and Persian Gulf security. The objectives securing the national interests – disarmament and regime change – were articulated. The option chosen to achieve these objectives was military operations. Strategic interaction was evident in the administration’s expectations of the reactions of the Iraqi people, the Iraqi military, and Saddam Hussein; which, in turn, helped the decision-making process.

Further, this model relies on rationalism to guide decision makers while selecting their choice. Yetiv (2004:147) states, “Most versions of rationality regarding any actor view the failure to compare options as compromising rational behavior.” Black boxing
domestic factors in foreign-policy making, the evidence in chapter three indicates that
decision makers did consider the options that were presented, with cost and benefit
analysis. However, Yetiv (2004:147) also states that a careful comparison of the
alternatives suggests that dissenting opinions are not discouraged. On this score, the
rational actor model does not provide a clear picture of the extent to which dissenters
were given the opportunity to present their case. There is evidence that Powell expressed
his objections (Baxter 2007; Woodward 2002:331-34), but no clear evidence the extent to
which he was discouraged from doing so, or the extent to which his opinions were
seriously considered. The question becomes was there a real debate concerning the pros
and cons on the merits of the policy? The record is mixed on this score (see Feith

As for its strengths, first, the rational actor model introduces the importance of
international events as a determining factor in the decision-making process; a factor that
other models ignore. It connects foreign policy to its target, the outside world. Second,
the assumptions in this model are parsimonious and efficient, minimizing confusion. It
connotes an orderly, precise, and logical process. And order is meant to simplify matters.
It assumes that the state is a unitary actor that has national interests, translated into goals
and objectives. The attainment of these goals eliminates a strategic problem that threatens
the national interests. Options are devised to reach these goals, and choice is made to
maximize utility with respect to the national interest. Rationalism is utilized to provide
normative guidance in this process. And, domestic politics is disregarded as irrelevant.
This list is efficient and systematic.
As for its weaknesses, first, the decision-making process in this model is assumed to be a systematic, step-by-step survey of the goals and options, rational endeavor. Such an assumption does not leave room for unexpected circumstances that may change the context or the assumptions of policy making. In describing the impact of 9/11 on policy making, Birkland (2006:45) states, “It was a rare event, it caught both the public and many (but not all) elite policymakers by surprise. . . . It revealed vulnerabilities across a wide spectrum of policy areas.” Unexpected disasters, such as the 9/11 terrorist attacks, add factors that have the potential to overhaul the entire decision-making process, and lead to decisions that do not necessarily maximize utility for the state.

Second, dismissing the domestic context in foreign-policy making is considered by some to be a weakness or a drawback of the rational actor model. Scholars have linked foreign policy to such domestic factors as presidential approval (DeRouen 1995; Ostrom and Job 1986), and the economy (DeRouen 2000; Fordham 1998). Farnham (2004:441) argues, “domestic politics frequently influences foreign policy through a process of decision making that grows out of the decision maker’s awareness of the requirements for effective action in the political context.” Dismissing its influence does not render domestic politics less of a factor; rather, it hinders the proper analysis of the case.

Third, to the extent that the rational actor model dismises domestic politics, as well as bureaucratic politics, small-group dynamics, cognition of decision makers, and preexisting solutions, it truncates the understanding of the scope and the limitations of the decision-making process. In this respect, it is insufficient because it dismisses many of the factors that shape and impact the process.
The Governmental Politics Model

The governmental politics model considers the competition between bureaucracies in an attempt to secure their interests as the main factor in foreign-policy making. Allison and Zelikow (1999:256) state, “The leaders who sit atop organizations are no monolith. Rather, each individual in this group is, in his or her own right, a player in a central, competitive game. The name of the game is politics.” To that end, and contrary to the rational actor model, it introduces politics as an integral aspect of foreign-policy making.

Some elements of the governmental political model were more evident than others. There was evidence that the bureaucrats who worked in Defense (Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz) assumed the same position on the issues (PNAC 1998a, 1998b; U.S. Department of Defense 2002c, 2002d), in opposition to those who worked in State (Powell) (Tenet 2007:303; Tyler and Sciolino 2001). There was evidence that explanation, advocacy, and rivalry were more present than mere bargaining. And, there was evidence that the president bargained and, therefore compromised, by going to the United Nations (Pomper 2002b; Tenet 2007:319; U.S. Senate 2002b). However, the evidence of the decision as a collage is not clear. In chapter three this study concludes that the only way to look at government action as a collage is if we consider the three steps that were taken: (1) the president going to the United Nations for renewed inspections, (2) Congress passing a resolution, and (3) the administration deciding on a military campaign in Iraq for regime change. On the other hand, considering that the last decision was the one that the government chose in the end, favoring the option chosen by Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz, and Cheney, casts some doubts on the decision as a collage. Bush
went to the United Nations and asked for a resolution for new inspections. Yet, evidence in chapter three indicates that Bush suspected Saddam was not going to comply with new U.N. resolutions (Garamone 2002). But by appealing to the United Nations, Congress was appeased, and a congressional resolution was guaranteed. Yetiv (2004:123) states, “Typically, as the notion of a collage suggests, the final decision is not an intended outcome of the group and will not reflect the preferred option of any one individual or leader.” Therefore, knowing the position of the president or any other influential leader is “rarely a sufficient guide for explanation or prediction” (Allison and Zelikow 1999:258).

But as has been suggested in chapter four, the Iraq policy was, in fact, the preferred policy of Rumsfeld, Cheney, Wolfowitz, and later Bush; throwing doubts at the notion of a collage. The governmental politics model does explain the conflict, pulling, and hauling that took place to secure the choice of military action, but does not convincingly convey that the decision was a collage.

As for its strengths, first, as mentioned above, the governmental politics model allows for the notion that politics is an integral aspect of the process. This case study reveals that competing preferences of different bureaucracies played a prominent role in the decision-making process. A case in point is all the politicking that took place between the State Department and the Department of Defense (see chapter three, section on governmental politics) leading up to the Iraq war. Politics usually involves power plays securing a particular interest for the winner. Because of his closeness to the vice president who was close to the president, Rumsfeld was able to prevail and secure what he perceived as the national interest [his organization’s interest] in this case. In that, the national interests
translated into specific goals were not so unified, nor was the state a unitary actor.

Second, in relation to the first strength, is that this model makes room for the possibility that decision-making does not have to be rational, precise, and logical, as is presumed in the rational actor model. Politics often involves bargaining and rivalry (the latter being more the case in this study). The systematic setting of goals, options, and value maximizing choice for the state is replaced by the value maximizing choice for the winner. The evidence in this case points to that end. Rationalism does not necessarily guide the process.

Third, more than any other perspective utilized in this case study this model sheds light on politics taking place at the deputies’ level (Yetiv 2004:122), and not just the principals’ level. This suggests that subordinates from different departments often engage in just as much pulling and hauling and political games as principals do, particularly if they agree on policy with their superiors. This is important because it could potentially add to the conflict, and further complicate the situation (see chapter three for details). This is more clearly explained in this perspective than the others.

As for its weaknesses, first, even though it introduces the concept of bureaucratic politics in foreign policy, the governmental politics model only looks at the process through that lens. It excludes other areas of domestic politics such as the electorates, Congress, interest groups, or the press (Ball 1974:79; Bendor and Hammond 1992:315-16; McKeown 2000:72, 84). In criticizing this model for ignoring the domestic context and cognitive aspects of individuals, Rosati (1981:251) states that the decision-making process should not only be about bureaucratic structures, rather, it should expand to
include the decision context within which bureaucracies operate, environmental factors, and the “beliefs, personalities, and modes of thinking” of the decision makers. In addition, small-group dynamics, preexisting solutions, as well as international factors are ignored in this model as well. Hence, just as the rational actor model limits the understanding of the scope of the processes involved, so does the governmental politics model.

Second, the national interest is reduced to that of bureaucracies, considerably limiting it in the process. It excludes the notion that decision makers can rise above bureaucratic politics. Some argue that it obscures the role of the president who represents the whole country, and therefore, should be able to determine the national interest for the entire country. In that, it eliminates the responsibility that should be assumed by the president (Krasner 1972, Art 1973).

Third, Halperin, Clapp and Kanter (2006:85) state “Individuals’ perspectives are further affected by whether their subordinates pull them in different directions or press them in a single direction.” On that basis, Bendor and Hammond (1992:316-17) argue that this model ignores the effects of hierarchy in decision-making, a notion not considered in this model. They suggest that the structure of the organization affects the decision-making process. Considering the rules of the game, how an organization is structured, placing certain bureaucrats in certain positions close to action-channels inside the organization, can impact the sequence of decisions, and ultimately which policies are adopted.
Groupthink

Groupthink is a theory that provides a lens inside the inner circle of advisers that surround the president. Janis (1982:9) states, “Groupthink refers to a deterioration of mental efficiency, reality testing, and moral judgment that results from in-group pressures.” The pressures applied for concurrence, as well as the stressful conditions from the outside, cause the small group to isolate itself from the broader policy community, resulting in a dysfunctional decision-making process.

Many of the elements necessary to produce groupthink are present in this case. However, the evidence on a strong partial president is mixed. Some suggest that, soon after 9/11, Bush was leading the charge against Iraq (Clark 2004:32; McClellan 2008:126; Packer 2005:45). Others suggest that he was not leading the charge; rather, it was Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz, and Cheney who where (Tenet 2007:319; New America Foundation 2005; Feith 2008:221). The evidence is mixed as well to whether the pro-policy [Defense] group did not expose themselves to external opposing views. Some evidence indicates that they did not (Tenet 2007:346; McClellan 2008:132), while other evidence indicates that, in fact, it was the anti-policy group [CIA analysts] who were not open to external opposing views (Feith 2008:265-68). Finally, evidence is mixed as to whether the policy was reevaluated. Some evidence indicates that it was (Feith 2008:332), while other indicates that it was not (Tenet 2007:308). However, the inference we get from Janis (1982) is that not all the elements of groupthink have to be present in order for the model to be valid and of use (Yetiv 2004:138). In spite of some mixed evidence on some aspects of the theory, there is enough evidence in the data to indicate
that groupthink was at play.

As for its strengths, first, as previously mentioned, groupthink sheds light on the workings of the inner circle of advisers that surround the president. Other models utilized in this study do not tackle this realm, or unit of analysis in the process. Evidence of secrecy, pressure on dissenters, insulation, as well as other elements of groupthink was found to have impacted decision-making in this case. In expounding on this area groupthink is unique, and adds a beneficial and necessary dimension to the process.

Second, groupthink highlights the dangers of isolating the inner circle from the larger policy community. New ideas and sound advice are not considered if they do not emanate from within the group, resulting in a selective biased process, ending in fiascos. It is a valid cautionary statement regarding this type of decision-making. It reinforces the salience of checks and balances in governmental actions.

Third, assumptions in groupthink such as lack of requiring methodical procedures, close-mindedness, pressure toward uniformity, incomplete survey of alternatives, and selective bias (just to mention few), shed light on cases where rationality does not explain the policy process. They refute the notion of exhausting all options with cost and benefit analysis, and encouraging all dissenting opinions; all are assumptions that lend to rationality.

As for its weaknesses, first, groupthink assumes that decision-making in such a manner always results in failure or fiascos. Yet, Yetiv (2003) demonstrates that such an end is not inevitable. In his discussion of the Gulf War, he argues that even though there was evidence of groupthink, nonetheless, the result was a successful war. It reinforces the
cautionary note that Janis (1982:195) himself makes about assuming a misplaced cause-effect relationship between a failed policy and the performance of the group. He contends that there could be some intervening factors that contribute to the outcome.

Second, the assumptions in groupthink are too numerous. It assumes five antecedents, leading to eight symptoms, resulting in seven defective courses of action. Some of these assumptions could easily overlap, such as the antecedent “insulation from external expert information and evaluation,” and the defective action “failure to ask for expert advice.” Another example would be the symptom “self-appointed mind-guards against opposing views,” and the defective action “employing selective bias towards information.” Such overlap could reduce clarity and cause confusion.

Third, whereas Janis argues that cohesiveness is what leads to groupthink, there are cases in which conflict, rather than cohesion, leads to groupthink (‘t Hart 1994). This case study is an example where some members of the group [Powell versus Rumsfeld and Cheney] had conflicting worldviews. Yet, there is ample evidence that groupthink was at play.

Fourth, it ignores the role of bureaucracies, the international arena, cognition, and preexisting solutions in agenda setting, as possible factors in decision-making. In effect, it restricts the understanding of the process.

The Cognitive Approach

The cognitive approach argues that it is individuals, not states that make decisions in foreign policy; therefore, in this process, the psychology of the individual matters (Rosati 2000). How a decision maker perceives his environment, and the frame of mind he brings
with him into office affect the decision-making process. Cottam (1977:320) states that decision makers are “far too important to be treated as manifestations of their role. They are the individuals who define the situation, and the manner in which they do so will determine the choice alternatives they can perceive.”

The evidence on cognition in chapter three reveals that the president did rely on his faith to frame the problem in his mind as that of good versus evil. His perception of Saddam Hussein as a Hitler-type, and 9/11 as Pearl Harbor (Woodward 2004:24) provided him with points of reference in assessing the dangers of the problem, as well as the costs and benefits of the solution. And, his predisposition as a principled leader helped him minimize the role of the political context in his thought process, and therefore his decision-making. Furthermore, evidence indicates that Bush was not the only member of his administration that invoked the images of World War II in his public campaign. Chapter three chronicles the references to that end made by Cheney (U.S. Vice President 2002a), Rumsfeld (U.S. Department of Defense 2002c), and Wolfowitz (Boyer 2004), the main advocates of the policy on Iraq. The evidence this study uses indicates that these analogies were clearly made in public. But there is uncertainty as to whether they were made in private meetings of national security. To the extent that these analogies were used in public, they helped in softening up their targeted audience, shaping the national mood, and affecting policy. However, because we do not know whether they were used in private, makes it unclear whether analogies actually helped frame the issues in the minds of the decision makers. Nonetheless, the evidence is clear that the president’s beliefs were more of an indication of what framed the problem in his mind, as indicated
in his public speeches, and corroborated by insiders such as Ari Fleischer (see Kiefer 2002, Lexis Nexis), and McClellan (2008). Overall, cognition played a significant role, particularly for the president, in shaping policy in this case.

As for its strengths, first, in penetrating the realm of individual cognition, this approach delves into the area of beliefs, perceptions, and predispositions that a decision maker brings with him to office. As such, it illuminates an aspect impacting the decision-making process, which other models do not. Therefore, the cognitive approach is a necessary lens through which we can better understand why some decisions are made. In this study, President Bush’s beliefs in divine providence and the will of God, his upbringing that gave him the predisposition to do what he thought was right regardless of opinion polls, and his negative perception of Saddam Hussein and the Iraqi regime, all affected his evaluation resulting in the decision to conduct military operations in Iraq and seek regime change. Without this knowledge, understanding this case would be significantly hampered.

Second, utilizing this approach challenges the notion that foreign-policy making has to be rational. Entering the realm of beliefs, and perceptions discards the notion that all decision-making is a systematic exercise of setting goals, options, and making value-maximizing choices, void of personal proclivities. Bumiller (2004) suggests that to Bush the Iraq issue had a personal element to it. Looking at extreme cases, leaders throughout history, such as Hitler, Stalin, and Saddam Hussein, made decisions that did not subscribe to rationalism, or logic. Utilizing the cognitive approach illuminates salient elements in their decision-making processes.
As for its weaknesses, first, the cognitive approach ignores the notion that a decision maker can dissociate himself from his beliefs and emotions. However, considering that a president is surrounded by a group of advisers who provide advice on all matters pertaining to government, it is improbable that a president, on occasion, would not relinquish his beliefs and assume others’. President Bush was not in favor of going to the United Nations to explain his case and ask for a new resolution facilitating a new round of inspections. However, upon the advice of Powell, and against his wishes and those of Rumsfeld and Cheney, he listened to Powell and went to the United Nations. Congressional considerations have an impact as well. Against the wishes of Rumsfeld and Cheney, Bush listened to the request made by Senators Biden and Lugar, and asked for a congressional resolution for the war. By the same token, electoral considerations have an impact on the decision maker as well.

Second, just as the other models are insufficient because they look only at one angle of decision-making, the same can be said about cognition. It does not consider bureaucratic politics, small-group dynamics, international events, or preexisting solutions. Therefore, cognition is restrictive because it limits the understanding of the scope of the decision-making process.

The Multiple Streams Model

The multiple streams model is a conventional domestic-policy model, not usually utilized in foreign-policy analysis. It emphasizes the importance of preexisting solutions, as well as the coupling efforts of policy entrepreneurs that bring together these solutions with problems and political systems, in setting agendas (Kingdon 1995).
All elements that comprise multiple streams seem to be supported by evidence in this study. Chapter four demonstrates that the preexisting solution, the focusing event, the change in the political climate, the policy entrepreneurs, and their coupling strategies, were present in this case. Further, as pointed out previously, the evidence demonstrates that there was a clear change in receptivity to the new policy on Iraq after the 9/11 events that was not present before 9/11. Halperin, Clapp, and Kanter (2006:100) state, “In the September 11 terrorist attacks, the uncertain environment itself became more of a factor in forcing policy issues to the fore.” They (2006:101) further add, “The terrorist attacks of 9/11 allowed officials to argue that the premises for previous decisions had changed and that a reexamination was in order. Often in such cases, participants seek the chance to put forward solutions that they have already developed.” The 9/11 events coupled with the change in the administration created the conditions and the right timing to push the preexisting “new” policy onto the agenda (Kingdon 1995). If it were not for the confluence of these events, the efforts of the entrepreneurs would have been in vain. In fact, these policy entrepreneurs tried for a decade before 9/11 and before the arrival of the Bush administration to push the policy through to no avail.

None of the other models explains the formulation of the Iraq policy before 9/11; the import of 9/11 as a policy window that ushered in the new policy; the import of coupling efforts by policy entrepreneurs; or the necessity for the confluence of these factors to affect the necessary change in policy. This is telling of the usefulness and the necessity of the multiple streams model in explaining this case.

As for its strengths, first, it highlights factors, ignored in other models, such as
focusing events, policy windows, political climates, policy entrepreneurs with their coupling efforts that lead to the placing of problems and their proposed solutions on the agenda. These factors introduce a whole new perspective in analyzing this case, and shed light on aspects of the process not considered before in foreign policy. Second, it provides an explanation connecting a problem to a solution, where the connection is not clear (Mazarr 2007:12). In this case study it explains how Iraq was connected to 9/11 when the Iraqi regime was not directly involved. Third, it sheds light on the efforts for long-term planning to place an issue on the agenda. In this case, efforts by entrepreneurs to place regime change through military action began a decade before the 9/11 events. This proved to be crucial knowledge in understanding this case. Fourth, it allows for the notion that foreign-policy making is not necessarily rational and systematic, as the rational actor model would argue. Mossberger (2000:32) states that in multiple streams “the absence of a logically ordered sequence of steps, with a goal directed, problem focused search, would signal the presence of organized anarchy,” rather than rational choice. It is the right timing, rather than the determination of goal-oriented policy makers, which couples solutions to problems (2000:30).

As for its weaknesses, first, because of the limited time span attached to policy windows, solutions have to be ready. In agenda setting, the attention directed to issues is severely restricted by time and space, or competing issues (Cohen 1995; Jones 1994; Light 1999; Wood and Peake 1998). Therefore, policy entrepreneurs have to act quickly to couple the solution to the problem and the political climate, before opportunities are lost. Noting how complicated and circuitous government channels have become, the
necessary speed could be detrimental in today’s policy arenas. Some policies may need more time to be pushed through than what the policy window allows.

Second, a solution lurks in policy communities, waiting for a problem to be attached to. As a result, a worthy solution or a policy that could be beneficial may be lost if entrepreneurs are not able to attach it to a problem, or a focusing event does not occur highlighting the problem (Mazarr 2007:20).

Puncturing the Claim of Rationality

Drawing from Jones (2001), Birkland (2006:11) states, “People seek to be as rational as possible; social scientists often find the many ways in which people deviate from this intended rationality particularly interesting.” Each of the theories that followed the rational actor model punctured holes in the claims of rationality in this case study. This is important because the rational actor model with its rational agents has always been considered the classical model that affected much of the thinking in foreign policy, and the model to compare others to (Allison and Zelikow 1999:16). This section will discuss the basis for deflating the claim of rationality.

The evidence presented in the governmental politics model looks inside the black box and indicates that there was considerable politicking taking place between different bureaucracies to attain their goals. At the principals’ level the Department of Defense and the White House [Rumsfeld and Cheney] challenged the State Department [Powell]. And, at the deputies’ level, the Department of Defense challenged the CIA. The more politics that enters the process, the less rational the process is. Therefore, we can conclude the stronger the evidence that bureaucratic politics plays an important role in the decision, the
weaker the evidence supporting the rational actor model, and the less useful it becomes.

The evidence in groupthink looks inside the black box at the small group of advisers surrounding the president. It reveals that there was no methodical procedure in which cost and benefit analysis took place (New America Foundation 2005; Tenet 2007:305), and there was some pressure applied on the dissenting State Department (New America Foundation). The evidence creates uncertainty with respect to the rational behavior of the state, presented in the rational actor model. Therefore, the stronger the evidence supporting groupthink, the weaker the evidence supporting the rational actor model, and the less useful is the rational actor model in explaining the case.

As for the cognitive approach, evidence indicates that President Bush in particular, relied on his personal beliefs, perceptions, and predispositions to frame the problem and make decisions. To that end, rational behavior in the decision-making process would have been compromised. Therefore, the stronger the evidence for cognition, the less explanatory the rational actor model becomes.

Finally, the multiple streams model punctures another hole in the bubble of rationality by disregarding the goal-oriented, value-maximizing orderly process of the rational actor model, and highlighting preexisting solutions, with emphasis on timing and confluence of factors that Cohen, March, and Olsen (1972:1) call “organized anarchy.” The more the evidence indicates that this model fits (which is the case in this study), the less the utility of the rational actor model.

In summation, if we do not delve inside the black box, there is enough evidence that rationality in decision-making did take place. However, the more we look inside the
black box, the more evidence we find that punctures holes in the assumption of rationality. Looking at the above discussion, the conclusion could be that the rational actor model is not that useful in analyzing this case. However, as is explained in the section on layered thinking, it is useful in the early stage of identification. It adequately identifies the strategic problem, national interests, goals, and options.

Having surveyed the strengths and weaknesses of the many models utilized in this section brings us to the question of how does this study justify using several models simultaneously. The next section will attempt to answer this question.

**Layered Thinking**

Analyzing foreign-policy decisions is usually accomplished by utilizing one analytical approach to explain a case. This study utilizes several analytical approaches simultaneously, compares them against the empirical evidence, and finds that each approach has aspects that can adequately explain the decision to go to war in Iraq. That begs the question how is it that all these explanations prove to be useful in this case? Drawing on Yetiv’s (2004:209) concept of layered thinking, this study finds a possible answer to the above question. Yetiv (2004:210) defines it as that which,

Explores sequential decision-making in a conventional manner, but also seeks to explain different time periods of decision-making with different perspectives. . . . Using multiple perspectives in this manner does not mean that the perspectives would apply only to a particular time period within a broader case, but rather that perspectives or aspects of them may be most insightful at particular junctures in an event.

This study would add to Yetiv’s layered thinking that the multiple streams model is the one approach that runs through the different sequences analyzed by the different
approaches. It covers the policy process from the beginning to the point where the issue is placed on the agenda. Furthermore, it traces the origins of the policy a decade before 9/11, giving credence to the concept of preexisting solutions in this case.

To that end, the rational actor model is most useful at the stage of identifying and articulating the problem and the issues connected with it; the cognitive approach is most useful in the evaluation stage; the governmental politics model and groupthink are most useful at the stage of formulating the response to the problem or making the choice; and the multiple streams model runs through all these sequences (identification, evaluation, making the choices) and acts as the glue that binds all these stages together in one policy process. In addition, it explains how the policy was initiated, without which there might not have been a new policy in Iraq. If entrepreneurs did not push for their policy in the decade before 9/11, and if they did not ascend to power in 2000 and bring their solution to the attention of President Bush and the nation, there might not have been a new policy to identify and discuss.

Identification: The Rational Actor Model

Yetiv (2004:210) states that in the early stages of the decision-making process policy makers ask the following questions, “What is the problem the country faces? What are the facts of the situation? Who are the players involved or potentially involved? What are the national stakes for the country?” In chapter three this study details how the president began to identify and articulate to the nation the strategic problem facing the United States in its war on terror, that of the Iraqi regime under Saddam Hussein (U.S. President 2002a, 2003b; Woodward 2004:27). The president, joined by members of his
administration, tried to identify the problem as they saw it (NewsHour 2001; U.S. Department of Defense 2002b, 2002c; U.S. Vice President 2002a, 2002b), based on the events during the previous decade and on NIE intelligence reports. Iraq was identified as a player in international terrorism, and therefore, the next target in the war on terror. National interests were identified as that of homeland security (U.S. President 2002a; White House 2002b), and Persian Gulf security for the uninterrupted flow of oil (U.S. President 2003b; U.S. Vice President 2002a). To secure these national interests, objectives were identified as the elimination of WMD and disarmament, regime change in Iraq, and establishing democracy in Iraq (U.S. President 2003b, 2003f). To accomplish these objectives, several options were identified: modified sanctions and renewed U.N. inspections (Gordon and Trainor 2006:14; Tenet 2007:318-19), coup d’etat (CRS 2003a:10-11), and military operations (U.S. Department of Defense 2002c, 2002d; U.S. Vice President 2002a, 2002b). Costs and benefits for new sanctions and inspections (Tenet 2007:318-19; U.S. Vice President 2002a), coup d’etat (CRS 2003a:12; Mann 2004:333-34; Tenet 2007:303-05; Woodward 2004:72, 81), and military operations (CRS 2003c:2-7; Feith 2008:333-34; Gordon and Trainor 2006:91-93; Woodward 2004:80) were identified. Finally, the expectations from the Iraqi military (CRS 2003c:3, 7), the Iraqi people (Woodward 2004:81; U.S. Vice President 2002a), and Saddam Hussein (CRS 2002b:2; Garamone 2002) were identified as well.

Hence, this study concludes that identification of the strategic problem, national interests, goals, options, costs and benefits, and expectations took place. Therefore, at this stage the rational actor model proves to be useful.
Evaluation: The Cognitive Approach

Yetiv (2004:211) suggests that after the stage of identification, decision makers look into the meaning of all the facts, evaluating them through the lens of their cognition shaped by their backgrounds and experiences. In chapter three, in the cognitive approach section, this study suggests that Bush’s beliefs, perceptions (and those of some members of his administration), and predispositions helped in shaping the decision to go to war against Iraq. Bush’s appraisal or evaluation of Saddam’s future behavior was based on Saddam’s past behavior. Therefore, he believed that since Saddam built WMD, attacked his neighbors and his people, and violated U.N. resolutions in the past, he was going to act in the same manner in the future (U.S. President 2002f). His cognitive abilities helped Bush evaluate what Saddam’s future intentions were going to be.

Another aspect of cognition that helped Bush and his administration officials evaluate the situation in a manner that led to the Iraq War was the perception they had of Saddam Hussein shaped by stereotypes and analogies. Saddam was perceived as an unreasonable tyrant that couldn’t be trusted (U.S. President 2002b). The fact that Saddam attempted to assassinate the first President Bush would have helped to entrench this perception, and would have added a personal perspective to the issue (Bumiller 2004; U.S. President 2002e). Drawing analogies of Saddam to Hitler in World War II, made by the president and members of his administration, would have bestowed a sense of urgency and a negative tone of the policy of inaction (Boyer 2004; U.S. Department of Defense 2002c; U.S. Vice President 2002a; Woodward 2004:24).

Finally, what helped the president’s evaluation of the situation was (1) his
predisposition shaped by his faith that freed him to do the will of God regardless of the consequences (Bush 1999:6), and his family’s encouragement not to be afraid of failing (1999:6-8); (2) his conviction of having to do the right thing as he saw it (Ceasar 2003); and, (3) his belief that all people had a God-given right to live in freedom, and that America had an obligation to better the world (McClellan 2008:127-28). All these factors would have helped him evaluate the situation independent of the input of the larger policy community or public demands.

Based on the above survey of how beliefs, perceptions, and predispositions could have helped Bush and his administration evaluate the issue at hand, the cognitive approach proved to be useful in providing a meaning to the facts presented before them.

Making the Choice: The Governmental Politics Model and Groupthink

Analyzing the Gulf War, Yetiv (2004:210) argues that the governmental politics model and groupthink help explain how the president and the national security adviser executed their will “in a complex political setting composed of competing and overlapping bureaucracies and diverse individuals with their own views.” This study argues that the struggle, in this case, was about whose vision was going to prevail, State and its supporters or Defense and its supporters? It was about who was going to provide the choice that the president was going to adopt. Therefore, it was in governmental politics and in small group dynamics that the choice to use the U.S. military for regime change was made.

Evidence in chapter three indicates that from the outset Powell, for many reasons, was not in favor of military operations in Iraq at that time (Baxter 2007; Tyler and
Sciolino 2001; Woodward 2002:331-34). He was in favor of exhausting all other options before using the military (Halper and Clarke 2004:151). On the other hand Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz did not believe that inspections were going to be effective (U.S. Department of Defense 2002c). They, Wolfowitz in particular, believed that new approaches to terrorism were required (NewsHour 2001; U.S. Department of Defense 2001d). What tipped the scale in favor of Defense was Rumsfeld’s close relationship to Cheney, who enjoyed a close and confidential relationship with the president (McClellan 2008:85), more than Powell did.

As for groupthink, the heads of the departments of State and Defense, as well as the vice president, were all part of the inner circle of principals surrounding the president. Therefore, the conflict between the bureaucracies would have extended to the inner circle. The insulation of the group, coupled with the president’s lack of experience in foreign policy, guaranteed that the president would not seek advice from the larger policy community (CNN 2000; Haney 2005:296; New America Foundation 2005; Woodward 2002:322). What further helped Rumsfeld and Cheney secure their influence with the president was their penchant for secrecy in conducting their affairs (Feith 2008:71; McClellan 2008:17, 145; New America Foundation 2005). Along with other antecedents of groupthink, the above evidence led to symptoms of groupthink, such as the illusion of invulnerability among group members (U.S. President 2003b, 2003f; U.S. Department of Defense 2001d, 2002c), belief in the group’s inherent morality (U.S. President 2001a, 2002b, 2002e, 2003f), collective rationalization of actions (U.S. Department of Defense 2002c, 2002d; White House 2002a, 2002b), negative stereotyping of the enemy (U.S.
President 2002b; U.S. Vice President 2002a), among others. These symptoms led to defective courses of action such as limiting the search for alternative courses of action (McClellan 2008:126; Packer 2005:45). All put together tipped the scale in favor of the choice for military action in Iraq.

This evidence in chapter three indicates that making the choice was not a unanimous process, and that there was no unified state as an actor at that stage of the process. Rather, it was the politics between State and Defense, and the pressure to concur inside group dynamics that helped secure the choice made by the president. Hence, at the stage of choosing an option governmental politics and groupthink were more insightful than the rational actor model.

Making the Connection: The Multiple Streams Model

The multiple streams model represents the agenda setting stage in the policy process. Mazarr (2007:9) states, “an agenda-setting approach views national decisions as arising from a more complex, swirling interplay of issues, context, politics, policy advocates, and events.” This study suggests that this model provides a more encompassing perspective, covering a longer span of time from the inception of the policy to its placement on the agenda. Whereas the other perspectives deal with the problem after its occurrence, this perspective connects events before the problem, to the problem, to events after the problem occurs. It provides a context by explaining the reasons a decision maker would consider a policy. It is at the agenda-setting stage in the policy process where government officials decide what issues they will pay attention to (Ripley 1995:159). After Afghanistan, the Bush administration could have targeted Iran or Syria, both supporters
of terrorism, at odds with the United States, and so far, non-nuclear powers. Yet, the
decision landed on Iraq. That begs the question as to why? The answer is that policy
entrepreneurs play a pivotal role in bringing issues to the attention of policy makers
(Kingdon 1995; Mazarr 2007). This is what happened in this case. If it weren’t for the
coupling efforts of entrepreneurs such as Wolfowitz, Perle, and Rumsfeld, Iraq might not
have been the next target after Afghanistan.

In addition, this model connects the different stages presented by the other models
together, offering a more encompassing perspective to the policy process. This section
looks at whether the multiple streams model is the layer that connects the other layers
together by examining whether the concepts comprising this theory run through the
others as well.

First, this study suggests that the problem highlighted by the focusing event in
multiple streams is the strategic problem identified in the rational actor model. The latter
states that there usually is a strategic problem threatening the national interest. In multiple
streams, it is the problem that the preexisting solution would eliminate. In this case, it is
the Iraqi regime.

Second, this study suggests that the concept of a preexisting solution proposed by
policy entrepreneurs is the option chosen in the rational actor model. The choice that the
state makes is the preexisting solution that entrepreneurs advance during national security
deliberations. Allison and Zelikow (1999:16) state, “Policy means the realization in a
number of particular instances of some agent’s objectives. These concepts identify
phenomena as actions performed by purposeful agents.” In this case, the choice was
using U.S. military forces to accomplish regime change in Iraq; a solution purposefully advanced by Rumsfeld, Cheney, and Wolfowitz.

Third, this study suggests that the concept of a receptive political climate can be found in the cognitive approach by ushering in a leader with beliefs, perceptions, and predispositions amenable to the new policy. It can also be found in governmental politics where new heads of organizations, with certain proclivities, incorporate the new policy as their bureaucracies’ interest. This was the case with the Department of Defense [Rumsfeld], and the White House [Cheney], advocating regime change through military means, a policy that was not up for decisive action in the previous administrations.

Fourth, this study suggests that the concept of policy entrepreneurs runs through the governmental politics model, in which the bureaucrats working to secure the interests of their bureaucracies are, in effect, the entrepreneurs working to that end. It also runs through groupthink, where, in this case, dominant members of the group can be considered entrepreneurs attempting to secure their goal. And, it runs through the cognitive approach in which the president pushing for his policies can be considered an entrepreneur.

This discussion suggests that concepts in multiple streams run through the other perspectives, connecting the different units of analysis in each. It gives the process a more encompassing approach.

**Implications for Policy-Making and Future Research**

Some normative implications can be deduced from this study that can be summarized as follows:
1- The bigger the focusing event, the bigger the policy window that opens to usher in new grand strategies and new unprecedented policies. Because the bigger the focusing event, the more lives are impacted, and the greater the swing in public opinion in favor of change.

2- The bigger the focusing event the more the executive branch is empowered to institute change and the lesser the power of Congress to stop that change. Because disasters on the scale of 9/11 cause public opinion to rally around the president, as the only elected official representing the entire nation, hampering efforts by members of Congress opposing the president.

3- The bigger the focusing event, the less that partisanship counts in formulating policy in Congress, because congressional members desire to maintain reelectability by complying with wishes of their constituents. This is what happened in the 2002 congressional elections. Even though the Democrats held a majority, the Senate, including Democrats, voted for the war resolution in compliance with wishes of their constituents to support the president.

4- The more that we look inside the black box, the less rational that the policy process becomes. Opening the black box reveals that politics, group-pressure, personal traits, perceptions, and intended agendas, all play a role in decision-making. Including all these factors dismisses the notion of an orderly goal-oriented process with a unitary actor at the helm, and punctures a hole in the claim of rationality.
5- The less the cohesiveness within the small group, the more important outside influences become. Because lack of cohesion allows for infiltration of outside factors and players that could impact the decision-making process in ways that undermine the assumptions of groupthink.

6- The stronger the evidence supporting cohesiveness, as in Janis’ groupthink, the weaker the evidence for governmental politics. Politics erodes cohesiveness because each player would be pulling for his interests.

7- The stronger the president’s determination the less likely that governmental politics plays a prominent role in the process. A president’s resolve should, theoretically, overcome conflict between departments. That was not clear in this case because the evidence is mixed on whether Bush was leading the charge in this policy or his advisers were.

As for future research, the multiple streams model opens the door to infuse agenda setting perspectives in foreign-policy making. Conventional perspectives begin their analysis at the time problems occur. If it is not a clear case of cause and effect, not much thought is given as to how a problem comes to the attention of government circles. Multiple streams can play a role to that end in such cases. Further, multiple streams opens the door to reexamine some of the foreign-policy events that took place in the past, in the light of preexisting solutions, focusing events, political climates, policy windows, and policy entrepreneurs. A different perspective may lead to different conclusions.
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