Anatomy of Failure: Bush's Decision-Making Process and the Iraq War

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The Bush administration's decision-making process leading to the invasion of Iraq in 2003 has been singled out for its many shortcomings: failure of intelligence; lack of debate concerning options; an insufficient invading force; and poor postwar planning. Contrary to the administration's claim that no one foresaw the difficulties of waging a war in Iraq, many concerns about the challenges the United States would face were raised inside and outside of government. Yet, none of this information had a significant effect on the decision-making process. This paper develops a decision-making model that integrates elements from the individual to the organizational level and explains how important information was marginalized, leading to a poor policy outcome. The model illustrates how the combined effects of the president's formal management style, anticipatory compliance on the part of key players, bureaucratic politics, and the intervening variable of the 9/11 terrorist attacks contributed to a defective decision-making process.

A number of policy errors were committed relating to the Iraq war: options were not debated; intelligence was selectively used; the invasion lacked a sufficient force; a failure to anticipate an insurgency fueled by the disbanding of the Iraqi military and Ba'ath party; and poorly devised and executed postwar planning. The postwar difficulties can be measured by the financial, human, and diplomatic costs of the war. These negative results have led individuals to compare the outcome of the Iraq war with other fiascos, such as the Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961 and President Johnson's escalation of the Vietnam War (Fallows 2006:48). Thomas Ricks goes so far as to title his account of the war "Fiasco." Ricks (2006:3) argues that "the U.S.-led invasion was launched recklessly, with a flawed plan for war and a worse approach to occupation."

The planning for the Iraq war was developed by an administration with an experienced security team: U.S. Vice-President Dick Cheney, U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, and U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell. How can we explain such poor planning, given such a knowledgeable and experienced foreign-policy team? Studies about the Iraq war thus far include journalistic accounts about the military dimension or the decisions leading to the invasion by individuals close to the administration. A variety of explanations have been offered, including the personality and beliefs of the president, influence of Cheney and Rumsfeld, insularity of the White House, bureaucratic infighting,

misuse of information, failure of intelligence, lack of postwar planning, and the failure of Congress and the media. However, there are very few studies that apply a unified analytical framework to integrate many of these factors into one coherent model.

This paper develops an integrative model based on small group decision making to explain the Bush administration's Iraq war planning. We show that sufficient information about the difficulties likely to be encountered in postwar Iraq was communicated by individuals and groups inside and outside of government. We argue that the combination of executive leadership style, anticipatory compliance, bureaucratic politics, and the intervening variable of the 9/11 attacks explains the many symptoms of defective decision making that characterized the Bush administration's planning for the war.

Integrative Decision-Making Model

Rationale

Numerous explanations have been developed to explain defective policy making, ranging from individual perceptions and beliefs, groupthink, and bureaucratic politics to organizational structures. On its own, each approach can contribute to an explanation of why a certain policy was chosen or why the decision-making process failed to produce the desired results. Individually, however, these models only produce partial explanations. The processing of information, which is central to the development of policy, is shaped and influenced by a variety of different actors operating at different levels in the government. Individual leaders typically make decisions with the advice of formal and informal advisers in a group setting, and the key decision makers, in turn, deliberate in connection with a broader bureaucratic/organizational context. As Shafer and Crichlow (1996) find, to understand policy fiascos it is as important to account for the structural and behavior environment as it is to identify the information processing errors.

The integrated model presented here accounts for both the structural conditions and behavioral environment and ties them to the information processing errors. In the context of U.S. foreign-policy decision making, this means identifying the connections between the president's management style and the bureaucracies that are tasked with developing policy. The link between the president and bureaucracy machinery is the president's advisers who head the bureaucracy and are in a position to influence the president's ability to choose and process information within it. Existing models have attempted to address this challenge in different ways. The Governmental or Bureaucratic Politics model, for example, identifies how the competition among administration advisers is responsible for undesirable policy outcomes. However, this model has limitations in explaining defective decision making. First, the model assumes that the leader is an equal member of the decision-making body and consequently has no conditioning effect on the behavior of department-heads that the leader—in many cases—has chosen. A second critique is that the participant's interests in the decision-making process are not necessarily determined by bureaucratic position. In fact, a variety of interests ranging from self-interest, ideology, and loyalty to a leader can determine the preferences of an individual department-head (Welch 1992, 1998).

When leaders are not a part of the process or do not express preferences that influence the kinds of options discussed, it is reasonable that decision outcomes might not have been intended by any of the participants. But instead of conceiving of bureaucratic politics as being driven by the prerogatives of department-heads or advisers as Allison and Zelikow (1999) do, it is better to think of bureaucratic politics as a product of the nature of the leadership in a small

group. Preston and 't Hart (1999) find variations in leadership styles result in variations in "bureaucratic politics" among advisers, suggesting that the classical model identified by Allison is only one type of bureaucratic politics. Even the typology developed by Preston and 't Hart is limited in its scope; it does not fully address the implications of variations in leadership style and the politics among advisers directly involved in the decision-making process within the bureaucracy. In other words, what is left out of the model is how the "pulling and hauling" among advisers influences the functioning and impact of bureaucracies as they process the policy inputs. Hermann, Stein, Sundelius, and Walker (2001) model, which connects leadership with different small group dynamics, identifies how these interactions produce different policy solutions. Hermann's model is a valuable means of explaining the connection between policy process and outcomes but, again, it leaves unaddressed how policy is shaped and altered within the bureaucracy.

The same can be said of leadership style typologies that identify a connection between a leader's management of the policy process and the functioning of the process and process outcomes (Orbovich and Molnar 1992; Pika 1988; Crabb and Mulcahy 1986; Hermann and Preston 1994, 1999; Preston 2001; Kowert 2002; Mitchell 2005a). These models do not fully address the broader implications of the leadership style and the management of the process on the processing of information in the bureaucracy. Other models, such as groupthink (Janis 1982), are designed to explain defective decision making by connecting small group decision making and leadership. Janis identifies that leadership is one variable among many in creating concurrence seeking, but it is not clear how essential it is. However, more recent work on groupthink has found that leadership is a critical component in explaining policy fiascos (Callaway and Esser 1984; Leana 1985; 't Hart 1991, 1994; Shafer and Crichlow 1996).

Paul 't Hart, in particular, has reassessed groupthink and identified different paths toward concurrence seeking and the nature of leadership. This represents an important evolution in our understanding of how groupthink behavior undermines decision making. Once again, these models do not make connections with other important elements in an administration responsible for the processing of information. For this reason, a model that can connect the most important elements involved in the deliberation and choice of policy has the ability to provide a richer explanation of policy failures than those previously discussed.

An integrative model that accounts for these levels of analysis is particularly important when considering decisions that occur during times of crisis. In a crisis, the decision-making body contracts, and that contraction usually means that leaders and their closest advisers comprise the main decision group. However, it would be a mistake to assume that national security advisers or a "kitchen cabinet" define the limits of those involved in decision making. Advisers at lower levels in the bureaucracies who provide the intelligence or options to their superiors are still important elements in the process. It is these individuals who often determine the scope of the options available for deliberation and in some instances determine, as in the case of the military, the capabilities that the key decision makers have at their disposal. In short, the processing of information involves not only presidents and their advisers but also the secondary group of advisers within the bureaucracy who provide inputs into deliberations. Stemming from the belief that explanations of defective decision making require an accounting of the key elements in the process of deliberation and choice, we develop an integrative model that draws on leadership, small group dynamics, and bureaucratic politics to explain how the president, his advisers, and the bureaucracy failed to adequately prepare for the Iraq War (Figure 1).
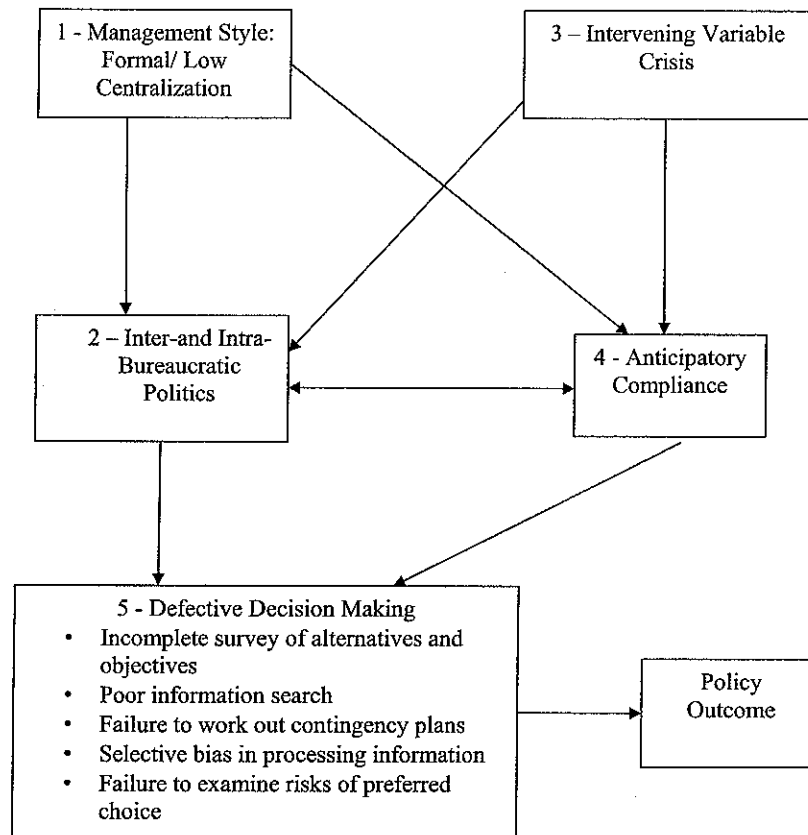
FIG 1. Integrative Decision-Making Model.

Management Style

The model begins by drawing on the basic typology developed by Johnson (1974) and George (1980) that identified three types of management styles and related decision-making processes: collegial, competitive, and formalistic. The utility of this typology is that it identifies the ways in which the choice of advisory structures produce different effects, in terms of the efficiency of decision making, morale of group members, group participation, and group polarization (Hare, Blumberg, Davies, and Kent 1996). Each of these management styles can vary, depending on the degree of centralization—the extent to which the president is in control of the process (Burke 2000; Ponder 2000; Mitchell 2005b).

Our model assumes that Bush adopted a formal style of management (Box 1, Figure 1). Several presidential and group characteristics are associated with the formal management style, which relies on a hierarchical structure. Policy options are generated among advisers, and then the president chooses among presented options at the end of the process. This type of advisory system creates conditions that have significant implications for how policy is deliberated and how the final policy is chosen. A formal structure usually has gatekeeper(s) who can play the role of honest brokers. The advantage of honest brokers is that they can represent the different perspectives in the administration to the president, ensuring that the president is exposed to all views emanating from the principal advisers. However, the disadvantage is that the honest broker is potentially in a weakened position when trying to mediate conflict among advisers. If internal policy disagreements intensify, advisers will use whatever advantages available to advance their preferences, including circumventing established procedures. Final choice might be with the president, but the development and identification of the "best" options takes place among advisers, away from the president.

An additional consideration for presidents is the degree of centralization they will exercise over the policy process. Centralization refers to the means the president uses to exercise greater control over the management of disputes and the flow of information. Centralization has different implications depending on the management style, but in a formal system it has two effects. In a highly centralized formal system, the gatekeeper screens information determined to be irrelevant or that which deviates from the president's agenda. The gatekeeper functions as a transmission belt for presidential preferences and acts as an obstacle for those seeking to gain access to the president: this is especially true for dissenters who will eventually be excluded from the process. Under low centralization, advisers have a greater degree of control over the process. The weak or nonexistent mechanisms of control do not prevent bargaining and conflict among the advisers.

A formal management style with low centralization gives advisers a greater degree of discretion when developing policy, enhancing the impact of their behavior on policy outcomes. Consequently, in this type of advisory system an explanation of the policy process must account for the dynamics taking place among advisers in response to the parameters created by the leadership's management style. The deliberations that then take place will be affected by a number of factors that are the product of interactions among advisers who all seek to influence policy. With disagreements among advisers and a competition to influence policy, two factors become important in the development of policy: the emergence of competing factions and the tactics they use to advance policy preferences and anticipatory compliance. The cumulative effect can influence the functioning of the bureaucracy and contribute to defective decision making.

Bureaucratic Politics

The formal management style creates among advisers an environment in which divisions can emerge and lead to inter- and intrabureaucratic conflict (Box 2, Figure 1). In interbureaucratic politics, the president's principal advisers compete with each other to develop policy, comparable to the traditional idea of Governmental Politics. However, contrary to Miles' Law, advisers' stances do not necessarily depend upon which bureaucracy they sit on (Miles 1978). Instead, advisers' positions depend on their group identification, which may not perfectly conform to the parochial interests of a specific bureaucracy. Bargaining and conflict among advisers create an environment in which advisers form into competing factions or subgroups, as they coalesce around preferred policies. Among these competing groups, conflict has the consequence of increasing cohesion within in-groups, while intensifying animosity toward out-groups (Kaarbo and Gruenfeld 1998). This dynamic, explained by social identity theory, creates the condition whereby the categorization of others, objects, and events is a fundamental aspect of perception. This same categorization increases perceptions of differences among groups and minimizes in-group differences (Tajfel, Billig, Mundy, and Clement 1971; Tajfel and Turner 1986; Fiske and Taylor 1991). Thus, as one's identification with a group increases, the stereotyped categorization of out-groups also intensifies.

It is at the nexus of the formation of in-groups and out-groups, which is magnified by conflict and crisis, where the negative impact on the decision-making process begins to be felt. Stereotyping is a common cognitive process, but the intensification of conflict among groups heightens this tendency, as individuals make distinctions between themselves and those they see as a threat. The process of social identification is further motivated by a need to build one's self-esteem, which under conditions of crisis or stress can contribute to an excessive belief in the group's morality and invulnerability to challenge. As Baron (2005) argues,

belief in group morality or invulnerability, characteristics associated with defective decision making in groupthink, may always exist to one degree or another in groups; the question is to what extent they become pathological and a salient characteristic of group deliberations.

These developments, however, are not the extent of the implications of this dynamic on policy deliberations. Kaarbo and Gruenfeld (1998) discuss another dimension of the development of in-group/out-group conflict: the desire to remain loyal and pass group scrutiny. This effect constrains the behavior of individuals and causes them to be more competitive in bargaining. To satisfy this need, members of an in-group or faction may resort to manipulative tactics in order advance their policy preferences. Advisers who resort to a competitive bargaining strategy may seek to manipulate group membership to keep members of the perceived out-group from participating in the process (Hoyt and Garrison 1997). Alternatively, advisers may seek to include individuals in the process who support their views, tipping the policy balance in their favor. While statutory authority, issue, and presidential preference significantly determine who participates, advisers can still make use of other tactics designed to influence the deliberation process (i.e., issue framing, leaks, and salami tactics) or interpersonal manipulation tactics (pressure, bolstering/legitimation, coalition formation, and personal appeals) (Garrison 1999).

This becomes a critical stage in the decision-making process. It is at this point that the process envisioned and implemented by the leadership can be altered and changed, as a result of the activities of advisers, as they seek to advance preferred policy agenda. In short, the president's leadership style is refracted through deliberations with advisers, which means that it does not necessarily have a direct impact on the outcome of the process. Importantly, it draws attention to the fact that the process, and consequently the policy, develops in ways unintended by the leadership or even the advisers.

The development of in-groups and out-groups not only feeds inter-bureaucratic conflict and bargaining but is linked to intrabureaucratic politics. Interbureaucratic politics occurs among the principal advisers, while intra-bureaucratic politics occurs as these advisers engage subordinates and the bureaucracy responsible for developing policy. The leader's principal advisers who are in positions of authority and have the political power to influence others will task the bureaucracy so that the process supports their policy preferences. When influencing the bureaucracy, advisers resort to the same type of interpersonal manipulative tactics, such as pressuring subordinates, excluding individuals who are not supportive of preferred policy, and making personal appeals. The value of such manipulation of the bureaucracy is that the processing of information can be influenced to support the policy preferences of an in-group.[1]

Anticipatory Compliance

The development of group conflict within the decision-unit interacts with an overarching anticipatory compliance (Box 4, Figure 1). As 't Hart and Kroon (1997:121) argue in their reformulation of groupthink:

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[1] The bureaucratic and group conflict at the center of this model does not on its own guarantee policy will fail. There are instances where group conflict can actually be beneficial for decision making, in that it allows for a greater airing of differences and forces advocates to improve policy proposals (Moscovici and Doise 1994). Group conflict becomes pathological, depending on the characteristics of the members of the group or the policies being discussed, for example in the case of the perceived presence of internal or external threats. In one sense, it is not the presence or absence of particular variables, but the intensity of those variables that creates an impediment to a thorough processing of information.

In these groups (dominated by a strong leader or characterized by strong hierarchy), concurrence seeking is produced by tendencies for "anticipatory compliance" of the group members to a directive or loyalty-inspiring leader or to high-status members: group members know the minds of their perceived superiors, are motivated to support them, and therefore make it their business to go along with whatever they propose even without being explicitly told to do so. Anticipatory compliance is fostered by the presence of group leaders with enough prestige within the group to be able to define the issues, set the agenda, bestow important rewards and punishments on group members, and with outspoken views on what should be done in the particular situation at hand.

There is no reason to believe that all members will do this, but in a policy environment that is particularly competitive, advisers may see this as a viable way to frame or tailor their preferences to influence policy. So, while a strong hierarchy or strong leader can produce anticipatory compliance, this effect interacts with the development of intragroup conflict, leading to an intensification of anticipatory compliance as advisers seek an advantage. Conflict among subgroups creates an environment in which advisers seek to preserve concurrence, especially under pressure or times of crisis. Under these conditions, individuals may engage in anticipatory compliance with subgroup leaders as well as with the overall leader.

Intervening Variable: Crises and Threats

In examining defective decision making, specifically groupthink, scholars have addressed the extent to which situational context influences the policy process and outcomes (Janis 1982; Herek, Janis, and Huth 1987; Shafer and Crichlow 2002). This literature has focused on situational factors such as stress and time constraints, both characteristics of crises, as contributors to poor information processing. However, there is evidence that these factors are not critical to explaining defective decision making or poor policy outcomes. As Shafer and Crichlow (2002:65) note, while a factor like a crisis is not a key determinant of the direction of the policy process, a provocative situation like a crisis can contribute both to more vigilant decision making and to defects in decision making, depending on how such a crisis influences the attitudes of the participants toward the process and each other.

We argue that the impact of a crisis environment is indirect and has implications for the decision-making process as an intervening variable at the bureaucratic level and in relation to the propensity for advisers to engage in anticipatory compliance. The perception of crisis contributes to the intensification of existing pathologies in the structure of the decision-making process, most importantly group conflict and anticipatory compliance. The immediate impact of this perception is that it serves to intensify the divisions among advisers, specifically the in-group and out-group dynamic and the magnitude of the resulting symptoms. The sense of urgency and high costs cause individuals to increase their identification with their group. As the crisis enhances group tensions, advisers may be encouraged to engage in anticipatory compliance as they seek to gain advantage or support their colleagues with similar policy preferences.

Defective Decision Making

The combined effect of bureaucratic politics with anticipatory compliance creates a propensity on the part of key decision makers to develop and choose policies that have not been fully evaluated. In the model, the policy "machinery" will be influenced in such a way as to minimize the weaknesses of a preferred policy, while at the same time marginalize those of rivals. Thus, the policy

development in the administration becomes defective as many of its functions are curtailed or distorted (Box 5, Figure 1). Specifically, the policy selected does not benefit from an impartial evaluation that will identify limitations, weaknesses or the inadequacies of the chosen preferred policy. In addition, other policy proposals may be marginalized or eliminated from consideration.

Overall, the choice of a formal management style creates the conditions in which divisions emerge among members of the advisory group. The intensification of divisions among these groups alters group member's perceptions, in terms of how they view themselves and their ideas, as opposed to those in the out-group. Out-group members are seen as a threat or a challenge to the in-group's interests, and this perception drives the in-group to become more cohesive and defensive in the presence of an external challenge. The outcome of this process is the development of intra- and interbureaucratic politics. Developing alongside, but also in relation to the two forms of bureaucratic politics, is anticipatory compliance. The cumulative effect of these dynamics leads to defective decision making, and consequently limits the scope of deliberations among the principal advisers and the president. As we demonstrate in the following section, an explanation of the Bush administration's war planning would be incomplete without accounting for these variables from different levels of analysis and their particular interaction linked by small group dynamics.

Bush Administration and Iraq War Planning

Leadership and Management Style

Prior to entering office, George W. Bush held strong views about how decisions should be made and how the decision-making process should be managed. Bush explicitly wanted to approach the job of policy making like that of a chief executive officer. With an MBA from Harvard Business School, experience as CEO of two companies, witness to the inner workings of his father's presidency, and as governor of Texas, George Bush believed that the best way to formulate policy was to be surrounded by knowledgeable experts who would perform the grunt work of constructing policy. The president, of course, would be responsible for making the final decision. In short, he believed that effective management meant delegating to a group of capable and loyal advisers. Bush also believed that this delegation had to take place within an environment modeled on a corporation, where there was a clear and ordered hierarchy and the roles among actors were clearly delineated and defined. Bush's choice of management style was influenced by his inexperience.

Bush's lack of expertise meant he had to rely on others to inform him about the day-to-day issues and to assist him in developing a base of knowledge on foreign affairs. Bush's education in foreign policy began before he took office. He was tutored during the campaign by Condoleezza Rice [U.S. National Security Advisor], Paul Wolfowitz [U.S. Deputy Secretary of Defense], Richard Perle [Defense Advisory Board member], Robert Zoellick [United States Trade Representative], and Robert Blackwill [Deputy National Security Advisor for Strategic Planning] (Daalder and Lindsay 2003). The effect of Bush's tutelage was that he was indoctrinated into the views held by his advisers. Bush's first Secretary of the Treasury, Paul O'Neil, has asserted that Bush was surrounded by a "praetorian guard" that kept the president from "honest" and "disinterested perspectives" (Suskind 2004a:293). It was not difficult for advisers that had already influenced Bush's thinking on foreign policy to anticipate the kind of policy he would be willing to accept. A high degree of secrecy magnified the ideological rigidity in the administration. Gregg and Rozell (2004:58) describes the extreme discipline imposed on the management of policy, creating an environment in which the

administration lacked openness and an unwillingness to consult (see also, Blumenthal 2006). For example, Vice-President Cheney's efforts to impede public examination of records relating to the administration's energy task force and the legal framework used to fight the war on terror demonstrate the extent to which the administration desired secrecy and insulation from criticism.

At the same time that Bush desired an orderly and hierarchically structured process, his personal decision-making process has been described as ad hoc and haphazard[2] (Woodward 2002; Frum 2003; Suskind 2004b; Draper 2007). Bush also is defined as someone who was moved more by instinct or gut inclination than logic. Woodward (2002:342), during an interview with the president at his ranch at Crawford, notes that the president spoke a dozen times about his "instincts" or his "instinctive" reactions, including his statement, "I'm not a textbook player, I'm a gut player." Once President Bush decided on the war option, he did not like to go back and reexamine a decision that had already been made. Woodward (2002:256) notes that "Bush's leadership style bordered on the hurried. He wanted actions, solutions. Once on a course, he directed his energy at forging on, rarely looking back, scoffing at—even ridiculing—doubt and anything less than 100 percent commitment. He seemed to harbor few, if any, regrets."

Bureaucratic Politics

As depicted in Figure 1, the president's management style allowed for bureaucratic infighting. Conflict within the Bush administration reverberated from top to bottom, including the deputies in each bureaucratic office. There were disagreements between Powell on one side and Cheney and Rumsfeld on the other on such issues as: treatment of prisoners at Guantanamo; Middle East peace process; North Korea; and the handling of Iraq. There also seemed to be an independent center of power in Cheney and his office. Cheney was instrumental in placing deputies in various agencies that helped to shape and limit the options to be considered. The coalition between Rumsfeld and Cheney was successful in using the bureaucracy to limit options considered and thereby influence the outcome, all of which was at Powell's expense. The bureaucratic "pulling and hauling" between Powell on one side and Cheney and Rumsfeld on the other was further reflected in the relationship among deputies and undersecretaries "Richard Armitage [U.S. Deputy Secretary of State] did battle with Wolfowitz and I. Lewis Libby [Cheney's Chief of Staff], while Grossman [Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs] butted heads with Douglas J. Feith [Undersecretary of Defense for Policy]" (DeYoung 2006:416). Participants in interagency deputies meetings found them to be frustrating and useless. Rothkopf (2005:419) cites a senior official that claimed that lower level defense officials "would come to meetings in one of two postures. Either they would say that they couldn't decide because they didn't know what the secretary wanted or they would decide and then come back later and say they had changed their minds. So in either case it was worthless."

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[2] Athough on the surface Bush's management style represented a formal one with low centralization, actual practice contained elements of an informal process. Options and different points of view were not presented during actual meetings nor did the National Security Adviser bring conflict to the president's attention. Furthermore, the president tended to be influenced by some individuals much more than others. The president's choice of management style allowed the process to evolve away from an ideal formal system, as advisors became increasingly important in driving the development of policy. At the level of the administration, much of the process was formal, but elements of informality developed among advisors who shared preferences and between the president and individual advisors. For example, Gellman (2008:325) makes it clear that Bush and Cheney had a strong partnership and that the system worked for the president since he had "made it this far without a traditional 'policy process'— without reaching down for other points of view, without inviting shades of gray to the Oval Office."

Cheney did not play the usual role assigned to vice presidents: he viewed the Bush presidency as a partnership. In a conversation with Dan Quayle about the role of a vice-president, Gellman (2008:58) reports Cheney saying, "I have a different understanding with the president." That understanding extended to Cheney's heavy involvement in such issues as the economy, energy, environment, domestic intelligence, treatment of prisoners, and national security. Cheney's strategy on many of these issues was to retain as much control and secrecy, bypassing other agencies and individuals when necessary. As Gellman (2008:244) observes, "Information was power. Cheney sought it widely and creatively and used it to shape what the president learned and when." It is not surprising that Powell remarked, "Things didn't really get decided until the president had met with Cheney alone" (Woodward 2004:392).

Division and conflict over policy within the administration devolved into the in-group/out-group process. Before Bush took office, his advisers were already divided into distinct camps even though they had not yet come into conflict with one another over Iraq policy. All of the principals were familiar with one another because of their common service in previous administrations. This meant there were preexisting personal antagonisms, as well as well-defined differences, regarding foreign policy that influenced which individuals held a particular portfolio in the administration. Mann (2004) details how the assignment of Bush's advisers was in part driven by the goal to reduce Colin Powell's influence and isolate him and like-minded deputies in the State Department. The placement of Paul Wolfowitz as Deputy Secretary of Defense and Armitage as Deputy Secretary of State intensified the acrimony between the State and Defense departments, as both men shared the same views as their immediate superiors. This marked the major dividing line on policy in the administration and would be the focal point for contesting Iraq policy.

From the start, the administration's national security apparatus was divided into two factions that would confront one another over Iraq policy. Substantively, Bush's advisers had a great deal in common in terms of their foreign-policy objectives. However, there were critical differences on the role of multilateralism and the use of force in meeting U.S. objectives abroad. Cheney, Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz, and Feith were closer in political views when compared with Rice, Powell, Armitage, and Richard Haass (director of policy planning at State). The Vice-President's Office and the civilian leadership in the Department of Defense supported a more aggressive policy toward Iraq, dating back to the beginning of the administration.

In the first eight months of the administration, meetings were held by the deputies and the principals on Iraq, but no substantial Iraq policy change was passed on to the president. The only outcome of these deliberations was that the president's advisers staked out opposing positions on the issue. Powell advocated for the implementation of smart sanctions that would limit access to weapons technology and allow goods to flow to the Iraqi citizenry. Powell was opposed by the civilian leadership in the Defense Department who believed further sanctions would not work, and more aggressive measures that would lead to the collapse of the Hussein regime needed to be enacted. Policy on Iraq was essentially deadlocked during the first 8 months of the Bush administration, as neither side was willing to compromise on its position toward sanctions and regime change in Iraq.

In the weeks following September 11th, the issue of Iraq reemerged as Wolfowitz and Rumsfeld pressed Bush to put the toppling of Saddam Hussein on the agenda. Although most of the principals believed Iraq could wait and that Afghanistan was a more pressing concern, the division among Bush's advisers remained. Powell and the State Department saw no need to focus on Iraq, fearing such an approach would not generate international support. At that moment Bush agreed with Powell, but a little over a month later he directed Rumsfeld and Tommy Franks,

U.S. Commander in Chief for Central Command, to begin reviewing and developing a plan for war. In his instructions, the president made it clear that at this early stage the only advisers to be involved should be Franks and Rumsfeld. No other parties were informed of the president's decision until December 28 when Franks briefed members of National Security Council (NSC) on Iraq war planning.

By directing Rumsfeld to work on an invasion plan, Bush gave an advantage to the pro-war faction in the administration. This meant that Powell and the State Department were further hamstrung in trying to influence the policy process. The Defense Department deliberately marginalized Powell and worked with the president to give him a policy that fit his overall beliefs. Powell was concerned that the president and those in the administration advocating the use of force did not appreciate the difficulties involved in overthrowing Hussein. They were, in his view, underestimating the danger of the country descending into civil and religious conflict (Mann 2004). In effect, Powell had become isolated in the administration; he had little ability to discuss his views with the president on the planning and use of force in Iraq.[3]

Much evidence exists to suggest that bureaucratic politics influenced the planning for the war. Relations between Rumsfeld and the Joint Chiefs of Staffs were marked by conflicting views and goals. One such area of disagreement was the size of the invading army. War games projected a size of 400,000, but Rumsfeld wanted a lighter, more mobile force to fit with his new vision for the armed forces. General Shinseki, the Army Chief of Staff, was the major proponent of a large invading force. On February 25, 2003, Shinseki testified to the Senate Armed Services Committee that postwar efforts would require several hundred thousand troops. Two days later, Wolfowitz rejected Shinseki's estimates in testimony before the House Budget Committee. Cheney also rejected the need for such high estimates on March 16, 2003, on NBCs "Meet the Press," and stated that "my belief is we will, in fact, be greeted as liberators." As the example above illustrates, the tendency of key members of the administration was to reject any information that contradicted their vision or weakened the case for war. Those who criticized the administration's plans were attacked as disloyal and undermining the invasion.

Bureaucratic politics also extended to the post-invasion phase of the war. There was the initial belief that the American occupation of Iraq would be short (Diamond, 2005). When looting became a problem, the military said it was not its job to stop it. However, as early as December 5, 2002, Rumsfeld was apprised of the need to plan for Postwar Iraq by Steve Herbits, a consultant in Rumsfeld's office, who complained that the planning was poor, and added that interagency fighting between State and Defense was bad (Woodward 2006). On January 13, 2003, Rumsfeld decided to take away postwar planning, termed Phase IV, from Central Command and bring it under his control. President Bush signed National Security Presidential Directive 24 on January 20, 2003, to set up an Iraq postwar Planning Office (Garner's office) that would be responsible for all planning. The appointment of retired Army Lieutenant Jay M. Garner to head postwar efforts and to keep this office under the control of the Pentagon made reconstruction more difficult and locked out the State Department that had been working on postwar planning through the Future of Iraq Project. Armitage

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[3] It can be argued that Powell tried to inject some caution into the decision to go to war during his meeting with the president and Rice in August of 2002 in which he warned the president about the dangers of war. It is at this meeting that Powell brought up the Pottery Barn rule by saying, "You break it, you own it." During the meeting, Powell was successful in convincing the president to seek a solution through the United Nations. However, in the end, it was Powell who went along with the president's decision and the one who made the case for war at the United Nations. Powell did not see his role as telling the President what to do. He respected the chain of command and limited himself to playing the role of a Secretary of State. DeYoung (2006:396) quotes Powell saying, "I'm the Secretary of State, not the defense secretary or the chairman of the Joint Chiefs or the national security adviser."

further claimed that the Pentagon conducted its own foreign policy, often undercutting State (DeYoung 2006).

Infighting between the departments of Defense and State was again illustrated by the disagreement between Garner and Rumsfeld on the appointments of individuals to head the various Iraqi ministries after the removal of Hussein's regime. In fact, as the administration began to organize the staff for postwar governance, ideological commitment and loyalty were the key determinants for selection (Galbraith 2006). Rumsfeld wanted all individuals to be named by the Department of Defense and applied pressure on Garner to comply. When Cheney's office found out that Garner had individuals from the Department of State on his team, they requested that Garner fire them. According to Woodward (2006), Powell got into a big fight with Rumsfeld over this issue. The Department of Defense did everything it could to protect its influence when it came to the control of postwar Iraq.

The idea of the administration, as far as one can tell, was to use Ahmed Chalabi, an American-educated mathematician who left Iraq in 1958, and his group, the Iraqi National Congress (INC), as the caretaker government, modeled after Afghanistan. Feith makes it clear that on March 10, the president signed on to the idea of creating an Iraq Interim Authority (IIA) that his office had been pushing. Feith (2008:413) states, "The IIA was the official U.S. policy for post-Saddam governance of Iraq, a plan developed through the interagency process and approved by the president."[4] Feith, Wolfowitz, and the Department of Defense preferred training, arming, and using Iraqi externals led by Ahmed Chalabi's INC as a transitional government after Saddam was overthrown, but State and CIA opposed such an idea—this was the basic problem among the different agencies. Feith (2008) also highlights the lack of cooperation between Central Command (CENTCOM) and the newly created Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance, headed by Garner.[5] After Garner held a press briefing at the Pentagon on March 11, 2003, at which he said he had no plans for hiring members of the INC, Feith and Wolfowitz both called him to express their discontent and told Garner not to speak to the press anymore. Shortly afterward, Garner was replaced by L. Paul Bremer as the new authority in Iraq.

Bremer did not have high regard for the leadership of the external Iraqis. He believed that power should be handed over to a representative authority in Iraq after elections had been held. Bremer's op-ed piece in the *Washington Post* on September 8, 2003, setting seven steps for Iraqi sovereignty, was not cleared with Rumsfeld or others at the Department of Defense. In fact, the plan resembled the State Department's vision for handing over power to the Iraqis.[6] Within five days of his arrival in Iraq, Bremer made two major decisions (contrary to Garner who had been working to recruit the Iraqi army in the reconstruction of the country) that did not seem to be coordinated with the Bush administration. Order Number 1 called for the de-Baathification of Iraqi society, and Order Number 2 disbanded the Iraqi army and security forces. Bremer was under the impression that he was simply following orders from above. In his book, Bremer (2006:40) said to his staff, "The White House, DOD, and State all signed off on

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[4] This strategy was pushed by the Department of Defense and Feith's office. Furthermore, it was being put together in April 2003, after the war had started.

[5] After military operations ended, there was a realization on the part of Franks (2004:524) that Garner's team was "underfunded" and "understaffed."

[6] Rumsfeld later intervened via several meetings with Bremer in October 2003 to ultimately convince him and the rest of the administration that an interim constitution was enough for CPA to hand over authority to an interim government by the end of June 2004.

this." Bremer (2006:57) also makes it clear that his order to dissolve the Iraqi military and security forces was communicated to Rumsfeld and the president.[7] There seems to have been no interagency review of this decision. Bremer was supposed to report to Rumsfeld, but Feith (2008) suggests that Bremer also thought he was the president's man in Iraq, and that he had to answer to the president, not Rumsfeld.

Bremer's orders proved to have disastrous consequences for the rebuilding of Iraq and contributed to the rise of an Iraqi insurgency movement against U.S. forces. When Garner returned from Iraq he met with Rumsfeld and told him about the negative impact of Bremer's decisions. But Rumsfeld never communicated that information to the president. When Garner met with the president, he portrayed a positive picture of events in Iraq. In an interview with Woodward (2006), Garner said that it was not his place to tell the president what he thought about Bremer's decisions; he told Rumsfeld and expected that Rumsfeld would relay that information to the president. Up until July 2003, Bremer had been sending his reports to Rumsfeld and counting on Rumsfeld or the Pentagon to relay such reports to the NSC, but Rumsfeld was holding on to the reports. As Woodward (2006:236) states, "Rumsfeld was throwing his weight around, and the rest of the NSC was just too weak to do anything about it." The whole interagency process seems to have broken down. The president was not really in charge of resolving conflicts; the picture that emerges is one of disorganization and disarray.[8] Feith (2008:245) states:

> Looking back on the interagency decision-making process, I am struck by its lack of clarity. On issue after issue, where there were disagreements they were not brought to the surface to be presented to the President for decision.
> Rather, basic disagreements were allowed to remain unresolved—as long as a degree of consensus could be produced on immediate next steps.

Anticipatory Compliance

The role of the National Security Adviser is important in relation to Bush's delegation. Bush relied on Condoleezza Rice to play the role of an honest broker that would manage the flow of information and ensure that the president knew the views of all of his advisers. However, Rice's conduct contributed to the problems the administration would confront because she proved to be ineffective in managing conflict among the other principals (Thomas 2002; Burke 2005)[9]. As Mabry (2007) notes, this contributed to the "muddled" and ineffective management of the process, including the planning for the occupation of Iraq.

Rice's tendency to figure out and articulate what the president wanted to say contributed to a process where she would engage in policy making by

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[7] Feith (2008:433) claims that he "missed some important communications at this time—for example, how Rumsfeld responded to Bremer's May 19 memo on the dissolution."

[8] Gellman (2008) depicts Rumsfeld as having little respect for the office of the National Security Adviser and provides many examples of Rumsfeld deliberately refusing to attend NSC meetings called by Rice.

[9] Rice did not consistently play the role of honest broker nor was she fully a partisan advocate. In John Burke's (2005) in-depth analysis, he observes that Rice's role as National Security Advisor varied throughout the administration. In the period after September 11th, Rice played the traditional role of an honest broker and focused on ensuring the quality of the decision-making process, while complementing these duties as personal counselor to Bush. This depiction matches Woodward's account of Rice in *Bush at War*. Burke further explains, however, that the brokerage role diminished during Iraq war planning. Rice failed to represent doubts about intelligence to the president and was in favor of the war. For example, Rice did not seem to question or challenge plans being presented by the military and did not press the planners about questions regarding force structure and postwar preparations. Thus, Rice can be seen as a passive advocate for the war.

simply reflecting Bush's views. This dynamic is very much in line with the model and demonstrates a propensity for Rice to engage in anticipatory compliance. As Powell noted, she tended to tell the president what she thought he wanted to hear, not what he needed to hear (DeYoung 2006). Armitage also told Rice that NSC was "dysfunctional" and that it did not play the expected role of resolving disputes among the principals (DeYoung 2006:477). McClellan (2008:144) states that the president's foreign-policy advisers did a poor job of educating the president on the consequences of war, and that Rice was "more interested in accommodating the president's instincts and ideas than in questioning them or educating him." This observation also is supported by Feith (2008:250) who argues that there were interagency disagreements, but that Rice "worked to spare the President having to decide between clear-cut, mutually exclusive options... Rice relied on her practice of bridging or blending key elements of the views of several interagency players—an approach that tended to paper over, rather than resolve, important differences of opinion."

Rice was not the only individual in the administration to engage in this anticipatory behavior. In fact, it was widespread both among the principals and at the lower levels of the administration. Within the administration as a whole, there was a consensus that Saddam Hussein had to be removed from office. The president took a strong position on this issue, despite not having a specific plan for doing so. In response to a question regarding Saddam Hussein and his development of weapon of mass destruction (WMD) during the 2000 campaign, Bush claimed that he would "take him out" and in a later interview stated that the administration "will deal with him in a way that he will not like" (Lemann 2001). Prior to September 11th, the president expressed his dissatisfaction with the existing Iraq policy, but believed he could use other means to deal with the threat from Iraq (Woodward 2004:12).

The president revealed his policy preference in November 2001, when he instructed the Secretary of Defense to begin planning for an invasion of Iraq, but not tell anyone, to prevent leaks (Woodward 2004:3). Bush's position was bolstered by the views of Cheney, Rumsfeld, and Wolfowitz who shared a similar set of beliefs, but who also were the types of prestigious leaders within the executive branch that could define issues and mete out rewards and punishments in support of preferred policies. Subordinates, in the Defense Department in particular, would in turn anticipate the preferences of these individuals and alter their approach to policy accordingly.

It becomes clear from the different accounts about President Bush's decision to go to war that at no time was there a serious reconsideration of the president's decision or discussion of other options. Accounts support the idea that the NSC met regularly to discuss the military planning but not the pros and cons of war. Powell recalled there was not a "moment when we all made our recommendations and [Bush] made a decision" (DeYoung 2006:429). Many sources note that the principals' meetings had an agenda but no debates or conclusions. Even when the issue of the invasion of Iraq was brought in front of the NSC in December of 2001, DeYoung (2006:375) notes, "They did not discuss the rationale or advisability of an attack." This observation also is supported by Tenet's account of the meetings in which he states, "In none of the meetings can anyone remember a discussion of the central questions. Was it wise to go to war? Was it the right thing to do? The agenda focused solely on what actions would need to be taken if a decision to attack were later made" (Tenet 2007:308).

The decision to go to war was made by the president early on and, due to anticipatory compliance on the part of the principals, most of the discussions that ensued at later meetings were related to the execution of the president's

preferred choice.[10] Feith (2008:238) states that "the starting point for all the agencies was recognition that Saddam was a threat. No one in any top-level inter-agency meeting disputed that Saddam had dangerous WMD programs and con-nections to terrorist groups. No one asserted that the risks of leaving Saddam in power were manageable through diplomacy and, therefore, on balance, accept-able. And no one argued that Saddam could be removed from power without military action."

The net effect of anticipatory compliance was the failure to fully examine the consequences of the chosen option. The administration was reluctant to consider the possible negative consequences for fear that it might weaken the case for war and because it contradicted its outlook and confidence. For example, Rumsfeld dismissed calls for a larger invading and occupying force and the need to plan for postwar problems that were likely to arise. McClellan (2008:122) states that in the administration's campaign to sell the war "none of the possible unpleas-ant consequences of the war—casualties, economic effects, geopolitical risks, dip-lomatic repercussions—were part of the message." Diamond (2004) attributes this behavior to the confidence and ideology of the administration. The adminis-tration's unwavering support for its preferred option held even after Powell's meeting with the president in August of 2002, in which he pointed out the com-plications and potential pitfalls of the invasion.

Intervening Variable: 9/11 Terrorist Attacks

The 9/11 attacks put the administration in a crisis mode. After the attacks on the United States, the president perceived the threat from Iraq in a new light. This led him to a stronger, more rigid position on Iraq than he had held before 9/11. Iraq was viewed as a problem but not a danger prior to 9/11, and most of the administration's focus was on domestic policy. After 9/11, the prospect of Saddam Hussein armed with WMD "became much more threatening," and the previous policy of containment seemed limited in its effectiveness (Woodward 2004:27). Bush's newly formed perception meant that advisers like Wolfowitz, who very early advocated for toppling the Hussein government, would find sup-port for their points of view. More importantly, Bush's inexperience pushed the president to rely more heavily on the advice of his vice-president at the expense of other agencies or principals. These advisers would gain an advantage over others inside or outside the administration that cautioned an alternative approach. In fact, anticipatory compliance occurred quite easily because Bush had been steeped in a foreign-policy perspective that reflected a subset of his advisers' preferences. Those individuals, notably in the State Department and CIA, that did not fully support the plan to invade Iraq or raised questions that exposed weaknesses in the plan were seen as undermining the administration's ability to deal with the immediate threat.

One of the consequences of the 9/11 attacks was the Bush Doctrine, with its emphasis on preemption. The 9/11 attacks were considered an act of war, and the implication of this new environment was reflected in the president's 2002 State of the Union Address, in which he stated:

> 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.

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[10] The president's preferences were consistent with individuals in the Department of Defense and with Vice-President Cheney. As a result, these actors were eager to follow the president's lead because it helped to advance their own agendas.

Feith (2008:18) points out that the 9/11 attacks forced the United States to reconsider the nature and danger of the threats the United States faced: "Long-standing concerns—weapons of mass destruction in irresponsible hands; threats from the regimes of Iraq, North Korea, Iran, and other so-called rogues states; political instability in the Middle East; narco-trafficking—all took on a new appearance and greater urgency after 9/11." The administration adopted an encircled mentality, forcing states to choose whether they were "with us or against us." The war on terror, in the eyes of individuals such as Cheney, Rumsfeld, and Wolfowitz, provided an opportunity to get rid of Saddam Hussein. This goal became more acceptable after 9/11, given the strong support from the public, Congress, and the media.

Defective Decision Making

The combined effect of bureaucratic politics and anticipatory compliance can lead to various symptoms of defective decision making, including poor information search, selective bias in processing information, incomplete survey of alternatives and objectives, failure to examine risks of preferred choice, and failure to work out contingency plans (Box 5, Figure 1). All of these symptoms mirror the groupthink model discussed in Janis (1982). As previously discussed, the effects of anticipatory compliance explain errors such as poor information search and selective bias in processing information. In other instances, it is the combined pressures that come from bureaucratic politics and anticipatory compliance that account for the results of other errors. In the case of Iraq, the defects can be categorized according to the use or misuse of information and the bias in contingency planning.

Use and Misuse of Information:

Many observers have accused the Bush administration of misrepresenting the intelligence on Iraq. This is best reflected in the Downing Street Memo,[11] which reported the understanding of the head of British intelligence, after talking with Tenet and others that intelligence was being fixed around policy (Danner 2005). In putting the intelligence together to make the case against Iraq in front of the United Nations, Powell's aide, Wilkerson, observed: "What we were all involved in—groupthink isn't the right word—it was a process of putting the data to points in the speech rather than challenging the data itself" (DeYoung 2006:445). Once it became apparent that the Bush administration was set on war to remove Saddam Hussein, intelligence was used to strengthen the case. For example, Cheney in his speech to the Veterans of Foreign Wars on August 26, 2002, stated, "there is no doubt that Saddam Hussein now has weapons of mass destruction." These assertions were not backed up by hard intelligence. What is surprising is that after Cheney's speech, other administration officials fell in line with Cheney's assertions, even Rice and Bush (Ricks 2006).

Pillar (2006:18) argues that in its prewar planning, the Bush administration "used intelligence not to inform decision making, but to justify a decision already made." For example, the National Intelligence Estimate in September 2002 was based more on opinion than facts: it overstated the case for war and was not based on good intelligence. Tenet (2007:327) in his book admits that in the five-page summary of the National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) report the

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[11] The memo refers to a secret document containing the notes of British Prime Minister Tony Blair's meeting with his senior foreign and security policy officials dated July 22, 2002. In that meeting Sir Richard Dearlove, the head of British military intelligence, reported on his conversations with George Tenet, head of CIA, and other senior administration officials that Bush wanted to remove Saddam Hussein through force. Dearlove added that intelligence was being used to justify Bush's decision. For a copy of the memo, see http://www.nybooks.com/articles/18034.

"key judgment is written with language that, especially on chemical and biological weapons, is too assertive and conveys an air of certainty that does not exist in the rest of the paper." The errors and misrepresentations were all in favor of making the case for war. As far as war planning was concerned, Ricks (2006:73) concludes, "What is remarkable is that again and again during the crucial months before the invasion, such warnings from experts weren't heeded—or even welcomed. Almost no Middle Eastern experts inside the military were consulted on the war plan, in part because the plan was produced on a very close hold basis that involved few people, and even then only parts of it were shown to most of those involved." For example, during the spring of 2002, the CIA devised a program for 30 U.S.-based Iraqi scientists to go back to Iraq and interview their families about Iraq's WMD program. All 30 individuals reported that Iraq's WMD programs had been destroyed or abandoned (Risen 2006). However, none of this information found its way to the intelligence community or the administration.[12]

The perception of the principals and deputies was that President Bush disliked hearing bad news or criticism. As a result, individuals were not willing to risk providing such news for fear of being labeled pessimistic or disloyal. Even when unwanted news did reach the president, his tendency was to simply hold onto his beliefs and not accept the reality of the situation (Draper 2007). The most disturbing aspect of all is that the president did not ask any probing questions during briefings; he simply accepted what individuals told him. He gave the appearance that he was not in control. He relied on principals like Rumsfeld to deal with the details, a mark of the management style he chose. As Woodward (2006:226) comments, "The whole atmosphere too often resembled a royal court, with Cheney and Rice in attendance, some upbeat stories, exaggerated good news, and a good time had by all."

Contingency Planning:
One of the more damaging charges against the administration is the perceived lack of postwar planning in Iraq. However, as Ricks (2006:79) notes, there was postwar planning, with at least three groups inside the military and one at the State Department. When it came to the challenges that the United States was likely to face in postwar Iraq, many groups inside and outside of the government were quick to point out the dangers. If information existed about what could go wrong in the post-invasion phase, why did not the administration do something about it? The answer to this question is tied up with the effects of anticipatory compliance and bureaucratic politics, particularly problems related to vested interests, infighting, and a lack of coordination (as discussed in the previous section on Bureaucratic Politics). The bureaucratic disagreements and infighting contributed to the failures that marked the post-invasion period of the war. Feith (2008:277) concludes that although postwar planning existed, "The teamwork did not develop, however. Nor were the old divides transcended."

Postwar planning, generally defined as Phase IV, was executed badly due to interagency conflicts or lack of clear goals. Although General Franks spent over a year planning for the war, he did not concentrate on postwar planning. Most of the planning for the war centered on Phases I–III—not many details on how to implement Phase IV—except that it would take longer than the destructive phases of the war. For example, in his briefing with Rumsfeld on February 1, 2002, Franks (2004:366) states, "As stability operations proceed, force levels

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[12] Months before the invasion of Iraq, the United States had information from the UN inspectors that contradicted their claims about aluminum tubes and alleged nuclear sites, and Australian intelligence also informed the United States that its previous information about Iraq trying to purchase U.S. electronic maps was wrong (Gellman 2008).

would continue to grow—perhaps to as a many as two hundred and fifty thousand troops, or until we are sure we've met our end-state objectives." Feith (2008) argues that Franks did not adequately plan for postwar scenarios, and that he refused to see such planning as his job.

Most of the planning for the post-invasion phase was poor and lacked coordination and leadership. War gaming by the CIA pointed out the dangers of civil disorder and chaos. According to Fallows (2006), some officials from the Defense Department attended some of these earlier sessions held by the CIA; when their superiors found out, they were told not participate. The belief was that postwar planning was not conducive to war plans. Woodward (2006:99) reports that in a memo dated October 15, 2002, Rumsfeld listed 29 things that could go wrong in Iraq (defined by Feith (2008:33) as "Parade of Horribles"), and he went over it with the president and NSC. Furthermore, in December 2002, Powell asked the intelligence agency of the State Department to prepare a memo titled "The Perfect Storm" detailing what could go wrong in Iraq (DeYoung 2006:459). The memo outlined all of the major challenges of Iraq that had already been cited by other reports. Iraqi experts warned about the long-term U.S. commitments and costs in a July 31, 2002, Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing that led some members of Congress to ask some questions. When Representative Ike Skelton, in a private exchange with the president on September 4, 2002, asked what he would do with Iraq once we got it, Bush replied, "we've been giving some thought to it" (Ricks 2006:59). But it does not seem that there was follow-up to this memo or planning for these scenarios. Information that did not fit the administration's case for going to war was likely to be dismissed or discredited.

The Future of Iraq Project, coordinated by the State Department, brought together Iraqi exile groups to work on political and economic reconstruction of the country, producing multiple volumes. Warnings against the demobilization of the army and de-Baathification were included in the report (Phillips 2005). However, Feith (2008:377) who had a negative view of the Project since it conflicted with his own office's plan for using Chalabi and the INC, observed that the Future of Iraq Project produced only "concept papers" and "although State shared the reports around the government, no State official ever presented them to the Deputies, Principals, or NSC as a State Department proposal or plan for postwar Iraq." In the end, Garner was advised by Rumsfeld to ignore the work of the Future of Iraq Project (Phillips 2005:128).

Outside of government, many nongovernmental organizations were consulted by government agencies but not heeded. For example, on January 30, 2003, the International Rescue Committee warned publicly of the collapse of law and order in Iraq after the war unless U.S. forces acted immediately to prevent it (Fallows 2006). A report by the Council on Foreign Relations with the Baker Institute for Foreign Policy emphasized the need for U.S. troops to switch from combat to peacekeeping troops if they wanted to maintain law and order in Iraq after the war. In November 2002, Middle East experts met at the National Defense University to discuss Iraq after Saddam. The report concluded that occupying Iraq and establishing security would be a major task for the United States and international community (Ricks 2006:72). The Strategic Studies Institute at the Army War College provided a more realistic assessment of U.S. challenges when it cited the American conquest of the Philippines as an accurate picture for what the United States might encounter in Iraq. At the end of December 2002, the Army War College issued its own report titled "Reconstructing Iraq: Insights, Challenges, and Missions for Military Forces in a Post-Conflict Scenario." The second part of the report discussed the difficulties of a long occupation and the challenges U.S. forces would face, and advised against disbanding the army and the Baath party.

The rehearsal and planning conference by Garner on postwar planning in Iraq on February 21–22, 2003, left two questions unanswered: who was going to take charge the day after the fighting stopped; and whether the United States could rely on the Iraqi political process to provide the basics. A 20-page report, summarizing the conference, identified several concerns: level of forces, funds for postwar operations, danger of imperial takeover, future of Iraq government, and law and order in Iraq (Woodward 2006:125). When Garner met with the president and his advisers at the White House to brief him on February 28, 2003, he told the group that his team could not be responsible for some of the postwar tasks. According to Woodward (2006), no one asked any question about who would do them. Garner told the president that he planned to use the Iraqi army for postwar reconstruction and nobody objected. He also warned them about the dangers or problems that might be encountered after the invasion. Again, no questions were raised. In other words, there was no real serious discussion about postwar planning.

Conclusion

The Bush administration was aware of warnings and reports that highlighted the dangers the United States was likely to face in Iraq. However, there was little effort to seriously account for these perspectives among key players in the administration. In this research, we have sought to explain the decision-making process of the Bush administration relating to the war in Iraq. We developed a model that suggests that the mistakes committed by the administration, particularly with respect to postwar planning, can be explained by the dynamic interaction among individual, small group, and bureaucratic influences.

Consistent with some of the literature on groupthink and leadership style, we argued that an explanation of the Bush administration's decision making must begin with an explanation of the president's management style. Bush delegated authority to his advisers and took a limited role, personally or by way of an honest broker, in managing the process. Bush's choice of a formal management style with low centralization had two important effects on decision making among his advisers. First, it created an environment in which his advisers engaged in anticipatory compliance: they presented Bush with policy options that he would readily accept and that fit with preexisting beliefs. We have presented much evidence to suggest that Rice failed to fulfill her role as the National Security Adviser in Bush's cabinet. Anticipatory compliance also applied to the deputies within each department. Consequently, the president was not aware of the many conflicts between departments and was not presented with information that contradicted his preference.

The second implication of Bush's management style was that it allowed for the formation of in-groups and out-groups and bureaucratic politics. As a result, his advisers competed with one another to advance their preferred policy positions. The Bush administration was split internally regarding how to deal with the Hussein regime. The identification with a particular faction and policy preference led to an intensification of stereotyping of those who held opposing views. The result was that the groups developed a level of animosity toward one another that produced an environment in which there was a willingness to disregard the perspective of others. Bureaucratic infighting, particularly between State and Defense, was most evident in postwar planning. To question the problems associated with postconflict planning or the dangers of a postwar environment was perceived as challenging the preferred policy of invading Iraq.

The division within the administration not only led to bureaucratic infighting among the principals, but also had implications for the lower levels of the bureaucracy. Efforts were made to ensure that the bureaucracy develop policy in

such a way as to support the prerogatives of one faction over another. This was particularly evident in the Department of Defense, where many steps were taken to marginalize or silence those who raised questions regarding the consequences of an invasion.

The interaction of the president's management style, anticipatory compliance, and bureaucratic politics within the administration produced a series of defects in the policy-making process. In trying to defend their preferred policy positions and ensure there was an absence of opposition or criticism, the actions of the principals led to an incomplete survey of objectives and alternatives, poor information search, bias in processing information, and failure to work out contingency plans. The accumulation of these defects contributed to a lack of serious discussion of postwar planning.

As we have suggested, explaining the administration's postwar planning myopia requires a multi-level approach. Explanations that favor one approach, although useful, fail to fully account for a policy outcome. Previous explanations about the Iraq war have not fully captured the extent to which the processes influencing the policy were integrated (Haney 2005; Cashman and Robinson 2007). Our model advances the theoretical work conducted by Preston and 't Hart (1999), for example, who identify how the choice of management style can influence consensus seeking or conflict, depending on the context. It also builds upon Hermann et al. (2001) who construct a general model that develops a connection between leadership and small group interaction. However, their model does not fully address the nature of interaction between advisers and what it means for the functioning of the policy process.

A number of scholars have highlighted the connection between leadership style and the occurrence of groupthink, some of whose antecedents and symptoms are found in the model presented here ('t Hart 1994; 't Hart and Kroon 1997). However, while these studies single out the importance of how leadership can lead to concurrence seeking, they do not explain how this dynamic operates in the context of bureaucratic politics. Although the behavior of advisers is influenced by the leadership, at the same time they also exert an independent effect on policy in terms of bureaucratic competition. The model we have developed addresses some of the gaps in the existing literature by effectively identifying the interaction among leadership style, small group decision making, broader bureaucratic processes, and their impact on policy making.

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