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The Prevention of Victory: How the U.S. Government Crippled Support for the Iraq War

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Throughout the course of American history, the American people have become frighteningly familiar with war, domestic as well as abroad. A war was waged by the colonists in 1775 to spawn independence for the great country, and with almost every American generation since, there has been at least one war to define each. Especially so in the 20th and now 21st centuries, and starting with World War I, there has not been more than 20 years without a major military conflict that involved the United States of America. However, much has changed when it comes to war and America over its history; foreign policy, weapons, technology, strategy and tactics, etc. The most glaring change when it comes to war and America especially over the past half century is the level of public support. Beginning with the Korean War, Americans saw some of the first major domestic protests of military conflict, not only because the Second World War had ended just five years prior, but also due to the idea that the US was not directly threatened. Next, the Vietnam War would continue trends of public unrest and demonstration against the conflict, but at a scale never before seen in America. For the first time in history, pure malice and hatred had filled the hearts of many Americans in light of the war, who would showcase protest and furthermore show disrespect to and alienate the very people who protected their freedom and best interests. These wars received opposition from the general public for several reasons, which include issues of morality and the lack of clear military objectives. The common denominator with both of these conflicts, is the fact that none of them ended in an outright victory for the United States. Enter the 21st century, and this generation's major military conflict, the Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Focusing on the Iraq War, the trend of a lack of public support for a conflict in which the United States acts as "World Police" continues. To add to the difficulty in deciphering reasoning behind the Iraq War, President George W. Bush, Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, DSOD Paul Wolfowitz, along with members

of the CIA and countless other government officials would mishandle the events leading up to and during the course of the Iraq War. Three of these events and occurrences in the end would doom any public support for the War in Iraq. First, the search for, and inability to find Weapons of Mass Destruction rose questions about rationalizing the war in general. Next, the atrocities at the Abu Ghraib Detention facility committed by US servicemen and women as well as other government officials would raise questions about the integrity of the entire military. Finally, the Coalition Provisional Authority's De-Ba'athification strategy and the resulting Iraqi insurgency of 2004 saw a spike in American and allied casualties almost a calendar year after President Bush has declared "Mission Accomplished". This placed an infinite doubt in the American mind about the portrayal and possibility of success in Iraq. After these three devastating blows, any possible public support for the Iraq War had virtually vanished. In short, with America in an already delicate situation, the United States government's mishandling of the Iraq War, especially in these three aspects, crippled public support for the already controversial conflict, and in turn any real hope for a feasible positive outcome.

First, there is the perhaps second-most known event in this thesis that devastated public support, therefore increasing the difficulty in achieving a positive overall outcome. This is the main basis for War in Iraq[1], Saddam Hussein's alleged possession of weapons of mass destruction as well as the materials and facilities to produce more.[2] The lead up to the War in Iraq was unequivocally a public matter, with the public eye especially on the lookout for news on Saddam's possession of weapons of mass destruction. The question at hand in mid-2002, was not if Saddam Hussein ever had a nuclear weapons program, or nuclear weapons. That question had been answered starting 11 years prior, post-Gulf War that was overseen by George H.W.

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[1] Kathy Gill. "Bush Admits WMD Main Reason for Iraq: Press Ignores Admission"
[2] Kathy Gill. Bush Admits

Bush. Reports by the International Atomic Energy Agency show that Saddam had nuclear facilities, manufacturing power, and all the necessary equipment to possibly create enough uranium for a nuclear weapon.[3] Taking into account that these reports come from information gathered over seven years from 1991-1998, the question on the minds of those on Capitol Hill, as well as the public, was if Saddam still possessed this equipment and the ability to wage nuclear war. From the Bush Administration's point of view, and the intelligence being presented to them, the answer to that question was yes.[4] At the time, George W. Bush, Donald Rumsfeld, and Colin Powell among other high-ranking Bush Cabinet members were receiving mixed signals. While the UN inspections into Iraq had revealed much evidence of powerful and biological weapons, there was only trace evidence of WMDs.[5] These traces included centrifuges that with modifications could be used to create a WMD.[6] At the same time, Bush advisors like George Tenet, had briefed President Bush himself on the fact that while Iraq's foreign minister at the time Naji Sabri proclaimed Saddam had hidden poison gas in Iraq and had a nuclear program plan in place, it was not active and Iraq possessed no WMDs at that time.[7] It must be realized that while all this was going on, the general American public was not surefire against sending troops to Iraq to disarm and dismantle the Hussein regime. Quite to the contrary actually, as Gallup polls show that days after the invasion of Iraq in March of 2003, 75 percent of Americans agreed with Bush and his administration in the invasion of Iraq.[8] Even in spite of the fact that the CIA's as well as UN Inspection reports revealed little to no evidence of WMDs, and Bush's

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[3] PBS "Saddam Hussein's Weapons of Mass Destruction" Public Broadcasting Service
[4] , "Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the US regarding WMDs in Iraq" Global Security
4,Intelligence Commission, Global Security
5 Intelligence Commission, Global Security
6 Walter Pincus. "Ex-Iraqi Official Unveiled as Spy." The Washington Post
7 Gallup. Gallup News Service Iraq War Polls. Gallup, August 5, 2010

administration possibly having an independent agenda. Many of these reports have still yet to meet the public eye to this day in 2011, and there are new reports and intelligence that dive deeper into the actual events and decisions made leading up to the War in Iraq.

The Bush Administration knew even though their calculation of Saddam Hussein and his regime as a threat to free people everywhere, as well as his own people, that Truman Doctrine-like techniques would not work in this modern American and global society. This modern society being one that focuses on morality, diplomacy, and finding common political ground without military conflict. This modern society would not support a limited war to disarm and remove a dictator half way around the world without a direct threat. Realizing this, when any evidence, regardless of the level of real importance, came to the forefront on Weapons of Mass Destruction, the Bush Administration highlighted the fact that this "evidence" showed Iraq as a terrorist-harboring dictatorship could pose a threat to America and other free nations everywhere.

Despite these claims of evidence and knowledge of WMDs, any trace of Yellowcake Uranium had not been physically found in Iraq since 1991[9]. UN inspection teams that entered Iraq in early 2002 failed to find much evidence of any Uranium during their investigation into Saddam Hussein alleged attempt to rearm his nuclear weapons program. However, the Bush Administration did not want to base their reasoning for war completely around WMDs and nuclear materials. Bush and his cabinet also determined that Saddam Hussein obviously condoned the acts on 9/11, but that there was very little to no evidence that Saddam knew prior to that fateful day about 9/11, much less had a hand in the matter. The Bush Administration highlighted what little evidence they had. CIA reports that were declassified in April of 2007 conclude that back in 2002, when preparation for war in Iraq were fully underway, US

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[9] PBS "Saddam Hussein's Weapons of Mass Destruction" Public Broadcasting Service

intelligence suggested that there was a concrete connection between Saddam Hussein, Iraq, and the terrorist organization responsible for 9/11, Al-Qaeda.[10] The idea that the connection was concrete may have not been sitting on the strongest of foundations, but there was somewhat of a link between the two organizations[11]. The idea that is true is that Al-Qaeda sought for, and sometimes received training and materials as well as equipment to carry out their agenda as a terrorist organization from Iraq[12]. The CIA disclosed that while Saddam Hussein did not exactly agree with Al-Qaeda's agenda and purpose as a terrorist group, he was supporting the same group that committed the terrible attacks against the United States on 9/11/2001.[13] While this information was derived from varying sources with varying levels of reliability, Bush and his Administration found another route to gain public and government support for this War on Iraq and Saddam Hussein's regime.

Up to this point in the latter part of 2002, The American public saw the fact that Saddam Hussein and his regime in Iraq posed a serious threat to the United States as well free people across the world. This paired with the idea that Iraq could possibly have WMDs, as well as the fact that Saddam condoned and harbored terrorists at least connected with the organization responsible for the attacks on 9/11, allowed the idea of the invasion of Iraq to come to fruition. The Bush Administration had not lied to but manipulated the American public, ignoring intelligence that did not directly support an invasion of Iraq. They focused on the case they had built against Saddam, trying to show how important it should be to the general public that Saddam be taken out of the global picture. As Gallup polls show, this strategy had worked to the

[10] CIA. "REPORT ON THE U.S. INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY'S PREWAR INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENTS ON IRAQ." GlobalSecurity
10 CIA Report, Global Security
11 CIA Report, Global Security
12 CIA Report, Global Security

advantage of the Bush Administration, having on average 75% of the American public behind

the decision to wage war with Iraq[14], based on intelligence on WMDs that may or may not have

been present in 21st century Iraq. Then the flood gates to the real truth would start to open for all

to see and analyze.

Starting in late 2002, even before the full-scale invasion into Iraq took place, swirling reports

and allegations that intelligence given to the Bush Administration about their lack of reliability

and actual truth came to the forefront. Not only would it come to be known that the CIA relied

heavily on accounts of detached Iraqi officials like that of Khidir Hasma, who would later be

found to be an unreliable source, the CIA also exaggerated allegations that Saddam Hussein was

in possession of at least the materials to build and equip weapons of mass destruction. [15]

Declassified CIA reports would show that it was discovered there was very little chance that

Saddam and his regime possessed the necessary financial and scientific power to revive their

nuclear and biological weapons program in a timely and dangerous manner[16].

Most of this crucial information would unfortunately reach the American public in 2003 and

2004, after the invasion and occupation of Iraq had already taken place and was underway. This

is evident in the Gallup polls at this point in time, as the 75 percent of Americans that though

invading Iraq was not a mistake, shrunk to 59 percent in a matter of seven months from March to

October of 2003.[17] This is a part of the Iraq War that the Bush Administration could not have

anticipated and were not prepared for, overwhelming public support against the War. Around the

world, as in the United States, protestors would take to the streets, speaking out against the

[14] Gallup. *Gallup News Service Iraq War Polls*. Gallup, August 5, 2010
[15] "Defector: Iraq Could Have Nukes by 2005 - CNN." Articles from CNN. July 31, 2002.
[16] Times Online. "The Secret Downing Street Memo - Times Online." The Times | UK
[17] Gallup. *Gallup News Service Iraq War Polls*. Gallup, August 5, 2010

misleading information and intelligence that the War was based on. This effect of public discomfort on the subject would not be seen at this point in time seeing as the Bush Administration had successfully built up a case of intelligence and information, and whether reliable or not, it was reliable enough to persuade Congress to approve the decision for war. However, this information coming to the forefront about the lack of credible evidence to go to war with Iraq would be compounded with more damning information coming from inside the Iraq War itself. It would not come from the battlefield or the nuclear weapons lab, but in the Abu Ghraib detention center where the American mentality and motives for the War in Iraq would be questioned domestically and abroad for a whole new set of reasons.

From the onset of the Iraq War, any one person with any background information on the subject could have guessed that one of many aspects could have gone wrong. But back in 2003, any of those educated persons would have never guessed what would go wrong and the ramifications it would have in correlation with the War itself. Starting in late 2003, the Abu Ghraib detention facility, 20 miles west of Baghdad, would become the center of American focus and for good reason. It was uncovered that United States military servicemen, CIA agents, as well as civilian contractors were given authorization to perform dehumanizing, cruel, and humiliating tortuous techniques.[18] These same individuals went above and beyond those authorizations, by abusing prisoners violently as well as sexually, even killing one detainee in the process.[19] These unspeakable war crimes committed by those servicemen and women were however only the tip of the proverbial iceberg, with the base being previous American detention facility discrepancies that would prove to be the root of the problem. In 2002, the situation at Guantanamo Bay, an infamous international detention facility ran by the United States in Cuba,

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[18] Seymour Hersh. Chain of Command: the Road from 9/11 to Abu Ghraib. New York: HarperCollins, 2004.
[19] Hersh, Command 2004

began to unravel. CIA operatives were sent to Guantanamo Bay in 2002 to interview and question detainees as well as inspect the interrogation techniques and progress being made by the facility and its servicemen. What they found was disheartening, as one CIA operative states that half of the detainees at Guantanamo "did not belong there". [20]

This detention facility issue would carry over to Abu Ghraib in 2003, and not only due to the fact that current US policy and structuring regarding detention facilities and interrogation techniques were a failure. According to statements made by former CIA officials and high-ranking White House officials, Donald Rumsfeld and the Bush Administration had endorsed "getting tough" on Iraqi detainees.[21] The hunt for Saddam Hussein had at the time been at a stalemate, and a growing insurgency required intelligence to prepare for, defend against, and attack. Rumsfeld was convinced that implementing a Special Access Program, which allowed CIA operatives access into US Military-run detention facilities, and authorized more brutal forms of torture in the name of interrogation, would help bring forth this necessary intelligence.[22] The SAP had been in place already at Guantanamo Bay, a place where Red Cross officials had already visited based on alleged unethical and illegal forms of torture and interrogation. The commanding officer at Guantanamo, Major General Geoffrey Miller, was sought out for guidance and advice on the situation in Iraq's detention centers. Rumsfeld, Bush, and the Administration were unsatisfied by the amount of intelligence coming from detention facilities and were in need of a solution.

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[20] Seymour Hersh. Chain of Command: the Road from 9/11 to Abu Ghraib. New York: HarperCollins, 2004.
[21] Hersh, Command 2004
[22] Hersh, Command 2004

The SAP also gave Special Forces operatives the authorization to hunt down and capture high-profile Taliban and Al-Qaeda members in order to interrogate them.[23] The Secretary of Defense would be to blame for the creation of this program, and it is stated that Rumsfeld had long desired to implement Special Forces soldiers into a "man-hunt", as well as act in spite of the senior Generals at the Pentagon.[24] These Generals were apparently not acting aggressively enough, according to Rumsfeld, and in turn the SOD came up with a way for an aggressive plan of action that did not require the authorization of those same Generals at the Pentagon. Rumsfeld could never have seen what would come of his SAP, and the ramifications the Special Access Program that would shake the very core of the American people and the Iraq War.

In January of 2004, Specialist Joseph Darby of the 372nd Military Police Company would turn in two compact discs to the Army's Criminal Investigation Command that would effectively change the face of the Iraq War forever. Darby had been away on leave in November 2003 when there had been a shooting incident, and when Specialist Charles Graner of the 800th Military Police Brigade was asked by Darby if there had been any pictures taken, Graner in turn handed him two CDs.[25] These Compact Discs, which Darby discovered to contain over 200 photographs depicting US military policemen as well as other civilian contractors and intelligence officers abusing Abu Ghraib detainees, were turned into the Army's CID.[26] The almost unspeakable pictures, which blur out only faces and genitalia, show a disturbing view of what was happening overseas. From the public point of view, there was no progress that had been reported on the Iraq War since it was declared an accomplished mission more than a calendar year prior. Now, after uncovering the fact that Iraq had no WMDs and the US Government had declared war over

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[23] Seymour Hersh. "Annals of National Security: Torture at Abu Ghraib." The New Yorker. May 10, 2004.
[24]Seymour Hersh. "Annals of National Security: Torture at Abu Ghraib." The New Yorker. May 10, 2004.
[25] Seymour Hersh. Chain of Command: the Road from 9/11 to Abu Ghraib. New York: HarperCollins, 2004.
[26] Hersh, Command 2004

dubious intelligence from the CIA, the American public would have to deal with another horrid fact. The fact that the US Armed Forces had committed war crimes against humanity, very similar to crimes committed by the recently-disposed leader of the nation we were now occupying.

Before Darby had even asked for the inside scoop on the time he was on leave, there had been more than two dozen visits from the Red Cross, interviewing detainees, and even drawing up multiple reports outlining detainee unrest and foul play as early as November 2003.[27] High-ranking military and government officials were not interested in making too much noise regarding this matter, cognizant of the devastating nature it could have. With regards to the ignorance and negligence of these earlier reports, several high ranking military officers testified to the Senate Armed Services Committee that these reports "became lost in the Army bureaucracy and were not adequately addressed."[28] But how could that be? How could we ignore the fact that even though all detainees at Abu Ghraib were criminals if not terrorists, no human should endure such torture? It would be revealed that another high ranking military officer, Brigadier General Janis Karpinski, the commanding General of the 800th MP Brigade, went as far as to isolate certain detainees away from Red Cross representatives during their interviews out of "military necessity".[29] This same commanding officer claimed later that she was not directly liable for what occurred at Abu Ghraib.[30] Karpinski stated that her brigade was enabled by her superiors, who collaborated with contractors and the CIA. These collaborators allegedly shunned Kapinski from interrogation rooms and cells during "interviews."[31] How could Red

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[27] Seymour Hersh. Chain of Command: the Road from 9/11 to Abu Ghraib. New York: HarperCollins, 2004.
[28] Hersh, Command 2004
[29] Seymour Hersh. "Annals of National Security: Torture at Abu Ghraib." The New Yorker. May 10, 2004.
[30] Hersh, Abu Ghraib 2004
[31] Hersh, Command 2004

Cross reports get lost in translation? How could nothing have surfaced before now? With a suspected military cover-up, the submission of this evidence from within (and a leak of information to the press), the United States military and government was now forced to take action.

In the end, the authorization of barbaric torture techniques for the sake of intelligence gathering would allow the subsequent elaboration of those authorizations by soldiers and civilians contractors. Also, many of these soldiers and contractors had little or no experience with interrogation or detention prior.[32] Once these atrocities of Abu Ghraib had come to the attention of US Government, and the rest of the United States, the Army would lead an investigation into the matter, asking Major General Antonio Taguba to head the investigation and write the official report. Over the next several weeks, General Taguba and his staff worked tirelessly, interviewing each and every detainee, as well as each and every soldier and contractor. In his report, Article 15-6: Investigation of the 800th Military Police Brigade, Taguba outlines each discrepancy that had occurred at Abu Ghraib, with his evidence being the testimony of tortured prisoners, as well as the damning testimony of a handful of US military servicemen. While the fifty-six page report is the most reliable source of information regarding the torture at Abu Ghraib, days before portions of it were to be released in an article by Seymour Hersh, there would be a 60 Minutes special on Abu Ghraib on national television in prime time. Pictures of the disturbing events that occurred at Abu Ghraib had hit the internet, and were broadcast on CBS for the nation, as well as the world to see. The public eye did not see a secret government program that almost encouraged brutal torture, an outlandish break in the chain of command, or a deficiency in leadership. What the public saw were Americans in military fatigues unmercifully

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[32] Seymour Hersh. Chain of Command: the Road from 9/11 to Abu Ghraib. New York: HarperCollins, 2004.

dehumanizing defenseless inmates. The result is the fact that 73% of Americans polled

proclaimed that the abuses depicted by the CBS program were unjustifiable under any

circumstance.[33] No longer was just the Bush Administration under the microscope, but the Army,

along with the entire military's code of conduct and overall image as a whole. To make matters

worse, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Richard Myers denied the alleged

systematic abuse claims. In an interview with ABC News in 2004, Myers claimed: "We review

all the interrogation methods. Torture is not one of the methods that we're allowed to use and that

we use. I mean, it's just not permitted by international law, and we don't use it."[34] The fact that

the government was the most responsible party in the Abu Ghraib scandal and still denied that

fact to the public would only further deteriorate support. The overall effect that this event would

have on this nation and the war is best stated by Senator John Warner. He was the chairman of

the Armed Services Committee and a loyal GOP member who said in a May 11th, 2004 hearing:

"The damage done to the reputation and credibility of our nation and the armed forces has the

potential to undermine substantial gains and the sacrifices by our forces and their families and

those of our allies fighting with us in the cause of freedom…"[35]

It became quite clear that this was a major problem for the Bush Administration and a

positive outcome of the war in Iraq. The American people felt now that after seeing these

photographs and hearing the Abu Ghraib story, that the Taliban, Al-Qaeda, and Saddam Hussein

were not the only "bad guys" capable as well as guilty of the inhumane. Not since the My-Lai

Massacre of the Vietnam War had the American public been so up-in-arms about the actions of

their fellow countrymen in time of military conflict. The American people were outraged by

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[33] "Poll: 73 Percent Say Iraqi Abuse Unjustified - CNN." May 10, 2004.
[34] "Former Iraq Prison Commander on "Despicable" Acts." ABC News. May 3, 2004.
[35] Seymour Hersh. Chain of Command: the Road from 9/11 to Abu Ghraib. New York: HarperCollins, 2004.

what they knew at the time, which was that United States citizens illegally tortured and abused unarmed prisoners of war. With the release of countless books, articles, and other forms of research surfacing to this day, many of which were used in this thesis, the outrage has grown. Many CIA, FBI, Military and other government officials have begun to help uncover many of the mysteries surrounding the Abu Ghraib scandal and the Secret Access Program, most of them giving information in exchange for the promise of anonymity. These anonymous sources are out on the internet and in every library across the nation for anyone interested enough to read, and with that, among other reasons, support for the War in Iraq has decreased even further.

The My Lai Massacre, in which between 400 and 500 Vietnamese civilians were killed by US Armed Forces, prompted domestic as well as worldwide heightened opposition to US involvement in the Vietnam War. In 1968, when the war was at its height, this devastating blow to support for a war that was already protested worldwide would prove to be fatal. Several shifts in policy on Vietnam and subsequent action taken were undoubtedly contributed to by the lack of any substantial support for the war, from the general population or on Capitol Hill. Several years later in 1975, the US would disgracefully depart from Vietnam and suffer the first outright defeat in combat in United States history. Not many know this fact better than the author of Article 15-6, General Taguba, who had been interviewed by Seymour Hersh for the New Yorker, a man that was partly responsible for uncovering My Lai. Gen. General Taguba was asked during a presentation at Salve Regina University about whether Abu Ghraib and its effect on public opinion or support had a role in a the declining amount of progress made in Iraq. His answer was a profound "Yes, of course."[36] He alluded to My Lai comparisons, as well as the idea that public support is a driving factor in any war, because support for the war means support for those who

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[36] Maj. Gen,. Antonio Taguba Presentation, Salve Regina University September 19, 2011 (See Appendix A)

orchestrated it, or those who did not.[37] Furthermore, those who orchestrate and who are against orchestration are elected by the public, so it goes without saying that the members of the Senate, House of Representatives, and the Bush Administration value what the view of the public. Regardless of how the American public's view was valued, the release of those horrific pictures and the reasons behind them to the public had brought the support rate for the war in Iraq to its lowest at that time, 44%.[38] Many high ranking military and government officials mark this as a turning point in the war, and most certainly not in the favor of Coalition forces.[39]

Lastly, the American public would become aware of a deteriorating situation on the battlefield in Iraq, with the rise of a growing Iraqi insurgency in late 2003 and 2004. On May 1, 2003, President George W. Bush gave a now infamous speech in which he stated: ""In the Battle of Iraq, the United States and our allies have prevailed."[40] In what now is evident as a premature celebration, the President was criticized for several elements of the event, starting with the fact that it was generally unnecessary and expensive. It is also common knowledge that even though the US military had defeated Iraq's conventional military forces, there were multitudes of radical insurgents led by former Hussein regime leaders that either supported Saddam or simply opposed American occupation of Iraq, or both. In fact, despite the declaration that "major military operations in Iraq were complete," the total number of United States casualties would nearly double from 2003 to 2004[41], leaving many Americans to wonder if the mission in Iraq really was accomplished, or if that was even possible. These facts help make clear the fact that something had to be done about the rising insurgency in Iraq. Knowing this, the amount of troops on the

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[37] Taguba Presentation 2011
[38] Iraq." Gallup.Com - Daily News, Polls, Public Opinion
[39] Hersh, Seymour M. Chain of Command: the Road from 9/11 to Abu Ghraib. New York: HarperCollins, 2004.
[40] "Text Of Bush Speech - CBS News." - CBS News. March 2003.
[41] Burnam, Gilbert. The Human Cost of Iraq. Report. 2006.

ground in Iraq was profoundly insufficient; however, lack of support for the war eliminated any immediate possibility for a surge in troop levels. Ironically, from the beginning Donald Rumsfeld had been advised by high-ranking military officers and government officials that the amount of troops America he had proposed to deploy to Iraq in 2002 were "insufficient".[42] The troop level at the time of invasions was around 80,000, with Rumsfeld and the Bush Administration willing to send only tens of thousands more if necessary. Most high ranking military decision-makers knew this was wishful thinking, and they estimated a successful invasion, overthrow, and occupation of Iraq would take somewhere between 400,000 and 500,000 troops.[43] Regardless of the level of troops thought necessary to be successful in terms of invasion, liberation and occupation, the United States still had to mount an offensive against the new stronger Iraqi insurgency. But where did this substantial increase in Iraqi insurgent groups come from? Unfortunately, most of the blame would fall on the shoulders of American policymakers, especially those of the CPA, Coalition Provisional Authority, which decided the members of former dictator Saddam Hussein's political party, the Ba'ath Party, were to be shunned. Starting May 16, 2003, The CPA disbanded the remaining Iraqi Army, which was comprised of mostly Ba'ath Party members, and required that all employees in the public sector who were loyal to the same party be removed, among other orders. [44] With no means of an income in a time of turmoil and civil unrest, most Ba'ath party members joined the Iraqi insurgency out of financial necessity, and the need to provide for their families.[45] Only anger came from former Iraqi militarymen at their collective loss of work, and in an interview with an

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[42] Strother, Roger. "Post-Saddam Iraq:The War Game." November 4, 2006.
[43] Strother, Post-Saddam, 2006.
[44] CPA. Coalition Provisional Authority Order Number 1 De-Baathification of Iraqi Society. By Paul L. Bremer. Baghdad, 2003.
[45] Chandrasekaran, Rajiv. Imperial Life in the Emerald City: inside Iraq's Green Zone. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006.

Iraqi soldier, author Rajiv Chandrasekaran asked: "What happened to everyone there (Iraqi militarymen)? Did they join the new army?" The soldier replied, "They're all insurgents now. (Paul) Bremer lost his chance"[46] The soldier is of course referring to Paul Bremer, Administrator of the CPA during this tumultuous period in the Iraq War. Bremer will forever be remembered for his implementation of De-Ba'athification, which would prove to be the one of the sole reasons for the growing Iraqi insurgency. This strengthened and newly-motivated insurgency would be to blame for the inability of American and Coalition forces to claim swift victory in Iraq, and furthermore to blame for America's now nearly nine-year expenditure in Iraq.[47] Public opinion of Bremer and the CPA's ill-fated plan is evidently negative, as an astounding thirty-five percent of Americans believed the Iraq War had a negative effect on American life, in October of 2004, as opposed to fifteen percent just one month before the implementation of De-Ba'athification by the CPA.

However, a rise in US and Allied casualties in general, and the strengthening of the already growing insurgency by De-Ba'athification, were not the only sparks for planning an offensive on Fallujah. On March 31st, 2004 a group of private contractors from Blackwater, an organization that provides private security, were ambushed and killed by hand grenades and small arms fire while providing security for a food delivery truck.[48] Their mutilated bodies were then dragged through the streets of downtown Fallujah, surrounded by hundreds of jubilant Iraqi civilians and insurgents. The bodies were then set ablaze and their charred remains were hung on a bridge looking over the Euphrates River.[49] The next day, the video made by insurgents that documented

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[46] Chandrasekaran, Rajiv. Imperial Life in the Emerald City: inside Iraq's Green Zone. New York: Alfred Knopf, 2006.
[47] Chandrasekaran, Emerald City, New York 2006
[48] "Contractors - The High-Risk Contracting Business | Private Warriors | FRONTLINE | PBS." Public Broadcasting Service. April 2004.
[49] Contractors, Frontline, PBS April 2004

the attack and abuse of the corpses, was circulated through every news website and televised news program around the globe for all to witness. More concern about US involvement was the result, but for new reasons and not just the integrity and effectiveness of the regular United States military was in question over Abu Ghraib and the so-called accomplished mission. Now, the regulation and security of private contractors overseas was in question, and the American people wanted justice for the four slain American who had been so inhumanely dismembered and disgracefully murdered in the streets of Fallujah.

  Less than four days after the attacks on Blackwater security guards, a battle plan for the fight for Fallujah had been drawn up. Brigadier Gen. and deputy commander of US forces in Iraq Mark Kimmitt promised an "overwhelming" response and claimed, "We will pacify that city."[50] On April 6, 2004 the United States military had surrounded the city of Fallujah and began their assault on estimated 12-24 groups of "hardcore" insurgents.[51] The battle began to unravel over the course of the next week, caused by a virtual stalemate due to the high death toll of Iraqi civilians and a growing desire from the American public for more diplomatic solutions. Paul Bremer, Administrator of the Coalition Provisional Authority of Iraq, announced a cease-fire, and a handing over of security and military operations in Fallujah to the Fallujah Brigade, a group of Iraqi citizens supposedly siding with the US-led coalition. On May 1, all US servicemen had withdrawn from the city of Fallujah and all responsibility had been handed over to the Fallujah Brigade, which had been armed with US weaponry. This Fallujah Brigade would eventually succumb to the pressure of loyalist insurgent groups that remained in Fallujah, allowing the United States' sworn enemies to wield weaponry in battle paid for by the American

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[50] McCarthy, Rory. "Uneasy Truce in the City of Ghosts." The Guardian. April 23, 2004.
[51] "Second Battle of Fallujah: Urban Operations in a New Kind of War." Interview by Patrecia Hollis. US Field Artillery Magazine, March/April 2006.

taxpayer.[52] Besides the Fallujah Brigade risk, the American public as well as the rest of the

world was in an uproar over the alleged use of incendiary bombs by US forces in the Battle of

Fallujah. At first, the US government denied any such use of biochemical weapons, stating that it

had not broken the Chemical Weapons Convention, which prohibits the use of WP, or Willie

Petes, for its lethal qualities.[53] However, it was uncovered in the March/April 2005 issue of the

Army's Field Artillery Magazine that soldiers who fought in the First Battle of Fallujah admitted

to the effectiveness of the WP's when other explosives were ineffective. This further displaced

the trust of the government by the American people, as they had been lied to directly about

operations in Iraq several times already.

Despite the controversy surrounding the use of incendiary weaponry against Iraqi forces, the

United States and coalition forces had bigger issues at hand. As a result of Fallujah never falling

to American forces in the First Battle of Fallujah, the insurgents' main commander, Abu Musab

al-Zarqawi, gained unprecedented recognition in Iraq among the numerous insurgent groups.

This emergence of a singular militant leader alluded to the possibility of a union between the

many insurgent groups, which would prove to be a tactical and strategic nightmare for Coalition

forces in the future. This, paired with the collapse of the Fallujah Brigade led to the need for

another attempt at overtaking control of the city as Iraqi insurgents had virtually overrun the city

during the Coalition forces seven month absence. With a second shot at taking the city of

Fallujah, United States armed forces participated in the heaviest urban combat scenario since the

battle of Hue during the Vietnam War.[54] Coalition forces swept the city of Fallujah from north to

south, knocking down doors and facing the enemy in close quarters in the streets, securing the

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[52] Kessler, Glenn. "Weapons Given to Iraq Are Missing." Washington Post: Breaking News, World, US, DC News & Analysis. August 6, 2007.

[53] Reynolds, Paul. " White Phosphorus: Weapon on the Edge." BBC News - Home. November 16, 2005.

[54] Katzman, Joe. "The Battle of Fallujah: A Comprehensive Briefing" Winds of Change.NET. November 16, 2004.

city within one week. Relief came with the news of a tactical victory for the Coalition, but it became bittersweet with the realizations of the battle's aftermath. The American public would feel relief as well in the fact that the lives of 4 Americans who had been unmercifully slain in the streets of Fallujah seven months prior, but there was a catch. As a result of a resounding defeat, the Iraqi groups of insurgents and their commanders became more unwilling to fight open battles against the coalition, their strength and advantage in combat against the insurgents. In turn, there was a substantial escalation of independent attacks on Coalition forces on a smaller scale, using the element of surprise and the cover of other Iraqi civilians. To add to this unfortunate circumstance, evidence of use of incendiary weaponry by the United States was well documented as with the First Battle of Fallujah, technically violating the Fourth Geneva Convention by using biochemical warfare against Iraqi insurgents.[55]

Overall, De-Ba'athification along with two of the largest battles over the course of the Iraq War had numerous implications on the War in Iraq. Subsequently, the pair of battles and the CPA's policy has had a profound effect on American support for the War in Iraq. De-Ba'athification showcased another catastrophic, and arguably fatal, strategic and nation-building failure. The blame being rightfully placed on the shoulders of Paul Bremer and the US government furthered the distrust of the Bush Administration's handling of the War in Iraq. Also, the subsequent strengthened Iraqi insurgency that led to the First Battle of Fallujah had placed doubt in the minds of Americans and the rest of the world due to the lack of measurable victory or accomplishment. Also, the first battle sparked doubt that Iraqi collaborators would have the ability to occupy any area with an insurgent threat once American and Coalition forces were absent. The second battle also revealed several facts to the American public. First, that their

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[55] Reynolds, Paul. " White Phosphorus: Weapon on the Edge." BBC News - Home. November 16, 2005.

government was not afraid to withhold information from them in order to protect their own image. Then, that future combat interactions with Iraqi insurgent groups would most likely not be in an open battlefield such as with the Battles of Fallujah.

In closure, it is clear that the mishandling of these three separate but equally disastrous events leading up to and also during the course of the Iraq War by the US government dismantled the American public's support, and with it, the possibility for victory. First, the exposure of the Bush Administration and CIA's exploitation of dubious intelligence in order to justify the invasion of Iraq destroyed the American public's ability to trust the White House's real reasons for war. Next, the exposure of American inhumane abuse and torture of Iraqi, Taliban, and Al-Qaeda enemies at the Abu Ghraib detention facility simply shocked the American people. It prompted a distrust of all levels of leadership in the Military as well as a disdain for Bush Administration's creation of the Special Access Program, which promoted a disruption in the military's chain of command as well as inhumane, and ultimately ineffective torture tactics. Finally, the fatal mistake made by Paul Bremer and the CPA to implement De-Ba'athification that led to a larger and stronger Iraqi insurgency, which caused Coalition casualties to nearly double in one year. This only heightened the level of opposition to the Iraq War by the American people, a level that would only continue to rise to the present day. With the proposed departure from Iraq announced by President Barack Obama slated for December 31, 2011, and no guarantee of a long-term stable democratic government in Iraq, the world is left to wonder the possibilities. If many mishandlings by the Bush Administration and the United States government had not occurred, would Americans still have opposed the war? And if not, would America have successfully implemented a long-term, deep rooted democratic government in Iraq in a much hastier The answer to both questions, according to this research and study, is yes.

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Appendix A

<u>Maj. Gen. Antonio Taguba Visit and Presentation to Salve Regina Campus Septermber 19, 2011</u>

Maj. Gen Taguba came to Salve Regina's campus in Newport, Rhode Island in September to commence a series of presentations by Salve Regina graduates on ethics. His presentation dealt with the morality and ethical issues of the torture at Abu Ghraib in 2003 and 2004. His presentation did not particularly pertain to my thesis of proving the damage done to public support and therefore the war, but in a question and answer period, I had the privilege of asking him a question. I asked whether he believed Abu Ghraib had impacted public support and whether that had an impact on the outcome of the war. Maj. Gen. Taguba, as stated in my thesis, said "Yes, of course."