"The Interagency as a Policy Market and Two Plans for the Post-Invasion Iraq Military"

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Abstract:
The conventional wisdom is that bureaucratic politics mostly causes countries to deviate from the best strategies to pursue the national interest. Competition among agencies is said to produce compromises and log-rolling that lead to inferior and often expensive policies. It is our contention that competition among agencies may produce better vetting of policies. We first address the existing approaches that focus on bureaucratic politics. We then consider the marketplace of ideas where competition is seen as a positive force. Next, we build our argument that the interagency process is a policy marketplace where competition can vary. We then apply this argument to the decision to disband the Iraq military, as there were two distinct processes— one competitive and one monopolized by one agency—that allow us to compare and contrast. We conclude with some suggestions for improved policy dynamics.

Since Allison's classic *Essence of Decision* was published,[1] scholars have sought to understand just how much damage bureaucratic politics does to foreign policy. Competition amongst government agencies is frequently cited as an explanation for countries' deviation from realist expectations of optimal reactions to foreign policy challenges.[2] Indeed, scholars have blamed bureaucratic politics for counterproductive military strategies, excessive expenditures, the failure to adapt US intelligence agencies before and after 9/11,[3] and war itself.[4] The government itself has engaged in this debate, as the phrase "whole of government" has entered our lexicon as a way to describe efforts to overcome bureaucratic politics to produce coherent foreign and defense policies, such as the intervention in Afghanistan.[5] In short, bureaucratic politics is framed as an inherent barrier to good policy making.

Our intent here is to challenge this assumption. While competition and clashes between government agencies can produce dysfunctional behavior, we argue that such competition can also be productive. When different parts of the government apparatus engage each other, the process functions as a market wherein competition leads to better knowledge about the product's (that is, the policy's) strengths and weaknesses. In other words, if there is competition, vetting takes place. But in a non-competitive market, products are often expensive and poorly made.

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[1] Allison, "Essence of Decision," *Boston: Little, Brown* 536(1971). For other important early work on the application of bureaucratic politics to foreign and defense policy, see Halperin and Kanter, *Readings in American Foreign Policy: A Bureaucratic Perspective* (Little, Brown, 1973); Rosati, "Developing a Systematic Decision-Making Framework: Bureaucratic Politics in Perspective," *World Politics* 33, no. 2 (1981); Hilsman, Gaughran, and Weitsman, *The Politics of Policy Making in Defense and Foreign Affairs: Conceptual Models and Bureaucratic Politics* (Longman Publishing Group, 1993). For early critiques, see Krasner, "Are Bureaucracies Important?(or Allison Wonderland)," *Foreign Policy*, no. 7 (1972); Art, "Bureaucratic Politics and American Foreign Policy: A Critique," *Policy Sciences* 4, no. 4 (1973); Freedman, "Logic, Politics and Foreign Policy Processes: A Critique of the Bureaucratic Politics Model," *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)* 52, no. 3 (1976).

[2] For the clearest effort in this vein, see Posen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine : France, Britain, and Germany between the World Wars*, Cornell Studies in Security Affairs (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984)., but also much of the literature on cult of the offensive: Van Evera, "The Cult of the Offensive and the Origins of the First World War," *International Security* (1984); "Why Cooperation Failed in 1914," *World Politics* 38, no. 1 (1985); Levy, "Preferences, Constraints, and Choices in July 1914," *International Security* 15, no. 3 (1990); Miller, Lynn-Jones, and Van Evera, *Military Strategy and the Origins of the First World War* (Princeton University Press, 1991). Snyder, *The Ideology of the Offensive : Military Decision Making and the Disasters of 1914*, Cornell Studies in Security Affairs (Ithaca N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1984). Jack S. Levy; Organizational Routines and the Causes of War, *International Studies Quarterly*, Volume 30, Issue 2, 1 June 1986, Pages 193–222, https://doi.org/10.2307/2600676. Recent work suggests that the histography of World War I may be quite flawed, but the point here is scholarship of the outbreak of the war greatly shaped how negatively IR scholars view the impact of bureaucratic politics, Lieber, "The New History of World War I and What It Means for International Relations Theory," *International Security* 32, no. 2 (2007).

[3] Zegart, *Flawed by Design : The Evolution of the C.I.A., J.C.S., and N.S.C.* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999); *Spying Blind : The Cia, the Fbi, and the Origins of 9/11* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2007).

[4] Betts, "Analysis, War, and Decision: Why Intelligence Failures Are Inevitable," *World Politics* 31, no. 1 (1978): 61-89. Edward Rhodes cites the military itself as holding this view, see Rhodes, "Do Bureaucratic Politics Matter? Some Disconfirming Findings from the Case of the Us Navy," ibid.47, no. 01 (1994): 1-41.

[5] Christensen and Lægreid, "The Whole-of-Government Approach to Public Sector Reform," *Public administration review* 67, no. 6 (2007); De Coning et al., "Norway's Whole-of-Government Approach and Its Engagement with Afghanistan," (2009); Saideman, *Adapting in the Dust: Lessons Learned from Canada's War in Afghanistan* (University of Toronto Press, 2016).

In this paper, we take seriously not only the negative consequences of bureaucratic politics for foreign policy, but also the positive impact competition amongst government agencies can produce. We start by examining the tendency among scholars to consider intra-governmental competition an impediment to good foreign policy. We then consider alternative theories regarding the marketplace of ideas, [6] applying the metaphor of the market to bureaucratic processes to suggest some ways in which competition amongst multiple agencies might be productive.

In comparing these two competing contentions – that bureaucratic political competition is either a positive or a negative – we consider the case of the US invasion and occupation of Iraq in 2003, particularly the policy question of what to do with the Iraqi army. This case provides us with an interesting illustration as two distinct processes played out: one where the "interagency" worked the problem and developed a plan, and one where one agency made decisions without any competition or vetting. The purpose here is not to explain the invasion of Iraq, but to use this specific policy problem—what would happen to the Iraqi army after the war—both to illuminate the benefits of competition and the dangers of agency domination, and to provide some insight into the various mistakes made during the occupation of Iraq.[7] We then conclude with implications for future work on bureaucracies as well as some recommendations for future administrations about the tradeoffs involved in regulating the interagency marketplace.

How Bureaucracies Ruin Foreign Policies

Bureaucratic politics refers to the internal rivalry, competition over resources, and jockeying for position that occurs with the bureaucracy tasked with running the government. While there are a great many features of bureaucratic politics that affect the policy-making process, our focus here is on *the effects of competition among agencies on the foreign policy making process*.

Indeed, it is a broad theme in the scholarship on bureaucratic politics and foreign policy that something inherently detrimental to the policy making process occurs when agencies

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[6] See Kaufmann, "Threat Inflation and the Failure of the Marketplace of Ideas: The Selling of the Iraq War," *International Security* 29, no. 1 (2004); Krebs and Kaufmann, "Selling the Market Short? The Marketplace of Ideas and the Iraq War," ibid., no. 4 (2005); Mueller, *Overblown: How Politicians and the Terrorism Industry Inflate National Security Threats, and Why We Believe Them* (Simon and Schuster, 2006); Cramer, "Militarized Patriotism: Why the Us Marketplace of Ideas Failed before the Iraq War," *Security Studies* 16, no. 3 (2007); Thrall, "A Bear in the Woods? Threat Framing and the Marketplace of Values," ibid.; Thrall and Cramer, *American Foreign Policy and the Politics of Fear: Threat Inflation since 9/11* (Routledge, 2009).

[7] While there have been many books on the origins of Iraq war, there has been very little scholarly work on discrete aspects of the war and the occupation. For the former, see Fallows, "Blind into Baghdad," *The Atlantic Monthly* 293, no. 1 (2004); Packer, *The Assassins' Gate: America in Iraq* (Macmillan, 2005); Gordon and Trainor, *Cobra Ii: The inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq* (Vintage, 2006); Ricks, *Fiasco : The American Military Adventure in Iraq* (New York: Penguin Press, 2006); Fallows, *Blind into Baghdad: America's War in Iraq* (Vintage, 2009); Chandrasekaran, *Imperial Life in the Emerald City: Inside Iraq's Green Zone* (Vintage, 2010). Some examples of the latter are Mitchell and Massoud, "Anatomy of Failure: Bush's Decision-Making Process and the Iraq War," *Foreign Policy Analysis* 5, no. 3 (2009); Badie, "Groupthink, Iraq, and the War on Terror: Explaining Us Policy Shift toward Iraq," ibid.6, no. 4 (2010); David, "Policy Entrepreneurs and the Reorientation of National Security Policy under the Gw Bush Administration (2001-04)," *Politics & Policy* 43, no. 1 (2015). Harvey, *Explaining the Iraq War: Counterfactual Theory, Logic and Evidence* (Cambridge University Press, 2011). Marsh, "Obama's Surge: A Bureaucratic Politics Analysis of the Decision to Order a Troop Surge in the Afghanistan War," *Foreign Policy Analysis* 10, no. 3 (2014).

compete. This is perhaps most directly articulated in Allison's *Essence of Decision,* which argues that foreign policy is essentially a suboptimal compromise resulting from bargaining among different governmental players. Allison's bureaucratic politics model focuses on those who are part of the decision-making process (as opposed to those outside the process who try to influence their decisions).[8] Within this process, individuals share power and may disagree about the most desirable outcome in a given situation. Government behavior is therefore a collage of multiple decisions, big and small, made (or not made) by multiple actors; the greater the number of actors involved in a given decision, the more complex the process becomes, and the more likely it is that the outcome will deviate from that initially envisioned by the main players. Under this model, the push and pull of different members of the decision-making process sometimes produces a result different from that which any one of them initially envisioned, and even the leader of a group's initial objective is rarely a solid predictor of outcomes.[9] It is important to note that the bargaining process that Allison sets out in Model III is competitive, rather than ideological. The competition is between groups of people, rather than between ideas; put differently, "where you stand depends on where you sit." In short, Allison's model of bureaucratic politics suggests that foreign policy is most frequently a compromise based on interests, rather a carefully and coherently formulated plan based on idea. It is perhaps best expressed in the old adage that "a camel is a horse drawn by committee."

   The idea that foreign policy is frequently a sub-optimal compromise has taken root in much of the policy-making literature. Welch argues that competition between different branches of government that have "different priorities and perspectives" tends to produce compromises. Deviation from these compromises creates infighting between the different agencies, and it requires a truly extraordinary event to unify differing opinions and produce actual policy shifts. This assumption has likewise gained traction in the scholarship on the production of military doctrine. Snyder and Van Evera both address the influence of the 'cult of the offensive' in influencing military policy. Snyder argues that it arose out of a crisis of civil-military relations while Van Evera implies that competition for resources between the military and other sectors of government was at least partly responsible for the production of this and other harmful military doctrines.'[10]

   Elsewhere, Snyder more explicitly attributes the formation of failed international policies to competition between various elements of individual governments.[11] He cites the example of Japan, whose army sought to engage in a land-based campaign against China, while its navy sought a sea-based campaign in pursuit of resources controlled by the Western colonial powers. This conflict was "resolved" by the compromise decision to pursue both, resulting in what

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[8] We address the marketplace of ideas below.

[9] The multiple actors in the process have their own preferences, and this multiplicity of players may actually distort the process such that leaders' preferences may become subjugated to those of their subordinates. Indeed, much of the work lately has applied principal-agent theory to civil-military relations to capture this aspect of bureaucratic politics—the challenges of delegation. This is not a central concern for us here as we focus on bargaining between agencies, rather than the challenges of monitoring agents. For principal-agent theory applied to US defense policy, see Avant, *Political Institutions and Military Change : Lessons from Peripheral Wars* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994); Feaver, "Crisis as Shirking: An Agency Theory Explanation of the Souring of American Civil-Military Relations," *Armed Forces & Society* 24, no. 3 (1998); Feaver, *Armed Servants : Agency, Oversight, and Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge, Mass. ; London: Harvard University Press, 2003).

[10] Snyder, "Ideology of the Offensive," and Van Evera, "Why Cooperation Failed." See Lieber, "New History," for a critique of this argument, based on newly studied archival materials.

[11] Snyder, *Myths of Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambition* (Cornell University Press, 1991).

Snyder refers to as 'multiple expansion,' simultaneously overextending the state's capabilities and encircling it with enemies. In sum, compromise is seen as leading variously to incoherence, ineffective doctrine, or logrolling, all counter to the national interest.

But not all those who see compromise as the ultimate result of bureaucratic competition see this as a negative thing. Allison himself suggests that one outcome of bureaucratic competition may be better decisions: group decision making may result in a greater degree of imagination in coming up with possible solutions to problems, and a greater readiness to identify and learn from mistakes. Hart and Rosenthal suggest that such compromise may already be the best available option. They acknowledge the inherently conflictual nature of bureaucracy, baldly dismissing the Weberian ideal of an inherently neutral bureaucracy. More radically, they suggest that this may not be such a bad thing; bad policies may be the result of a poorly defined national interest, as much as of compromise between agencies. Rather than disputing that such competition generates compromise policies, they argue that input from different agencies with different expertise may generate a better compromise; although they acknowledge the criticism that bureaucracy may slow the process of policy-making, they frame this as a trade-off between efficiency and effectiveness, and argue that although the utility of bureaucratic competition varies across issue areas, ultimately, bureaucracy provides a useful system of checks and balances against the power of any one agency.[12]

Some scholarship has questioned the idea that compromise is the only possible outcome of a bureaucratized foreign policy process. Margaret Hermann suggests that while the outcome of bureaucratic competition is sometimes compromise, at other times, one group will dominate the decision-making process.[13] She argues that there are six possible outcomes of a decision making process involving a group: one party prevails, concurrence, mutual compromise, lopsided compromise, deadlock, and fragmented symbolic action.[14] Similarly, Alexander George suggests that to achieve optimal foreign policy, the playing field among the various actors must be leveled to some degree. George contends that rather than generating sub-optimal compromise, a plurality of opinions should in fact be harnessed to generate stronger policy decisions. George's argument is prescriptive, rather than descriptive; his "multiple advocacy" model is at heart an attempt to repair what he sees as the flawed and overly centralized decision-making mechanisms of the Nixon administration. The problem for George is not competition, but poorly managed competition.[15]

Nevertheless, the mainstream scholarship on bureaucracy and foreign policy overwhelmingly asserts that bureaucratic competition leads to compromises and these compromises are suboptimal. Our aim in this paper is to explore whether this is, in fact, the case. We build on this insight further below, after we consider the marketplace of ideas. Before arguing that bureaucratic competition may actually have a positive impact on policy, we would examine a more recent but parallel debate—the marketplace of ideas.

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[12] Paul and Rosenthal, "Reappraising Bureaucratic Politics," *Mershon International Studies Review* 42, no. 2 (1998); Rosenthal, "Reappraising Bureaucratic Politics," ibid.

[13] Hermann, "How Decision Units Shape Foreign Policy: A Theoretical Framework," *International Studies Review* 3, no. 2 (2001): 50-53.

[14] Ibid., 72.

[15] George, "The Case for Multiple Advocacy in Making Foreign Policy," *American Political Science Review* 66, no. 3 (1972).

The Failed Marketplace of Ideas

In the aftermath of the Iraq invasion, scholars sought to explain the decision. One set of answers focused on "the marketplace of ideas," the public debate over policy which, in theory, helps weed out bad ideas and promotes good ones. We contend, however, that what ultimately shapes policy outcomes is a different, though related market: the marketplace of policy. The two markets—of ideas and of policy-making—are similar in that they share the assumption that competition leads to better policy, but while the marketplace of ideas exists in the public sphere, competition in the policy marketplace takes place within the government itself.

Nevertheless, because the two are linked, we begin our discussion of the policy marketplace with the well-developed debate about the marketplace of ideas. Kaufmann helped launch this debate, arguing that democracies tend to have fewer problems with threat inflation because: the "marketplace of ideas helps to weed out unfounded, mendacious, or self-serving foreign policy arguments because their proponents cannot avoid wide-ranging debate in which their reasoning and evidence are subject to public scrutiny."[16] There can be some variation; some limits on the market are temporary while others are permanent, and the impact of the "countervailing forces" can vary based on their own competence. But, overall, the structural features that advantage the executive mean that the market is never very competitive and thus bad ideas become bad policies in democracies more often than we might expect.

Kaufman argues that in the case of Iraq the market clearly failed, since the executive branch's monopoly of intelligence and authoritative position in the political system meant that it essentially had its thumb on the scales compared to other actors in the system like the media.[17] Cramer makes a somewhat different, though related, argument, that the marketplace of ideas did not function as it should because of a dynamic of militarized patriotism which silenced the opposition, though she contends that this is an idiosyncratic feature of the American political system due to the Cold War, rather than inherent feature in democracies.[18] And others have argued that that Kaufmann is too pessimistic as the dynamics which caused the marketplace of ideas to fail were temporary. Krebs and Lobasz argues that the impact of 9/11 on the marketplace of ideas was powerful but temporary, and that the market did correct in the medium run.[19]

The key challenge for Kaufmann's argument is that he mis-specifies how the marketplace of ideas works. As Drezner points out, the most important policy-making pathways do not involve the public at large, but the connections between the "ideas industry" of academics and think tanks, and those in policy-making positions.[20] What matters most is not whether an idea has a fair hearing in the public sphere but whether the relevant actors within the policy process are aware of these ideas, have it inform their stances, and then play a role in shaping the policies.

Nevertheless, the marketplace of ideas debate has two useful aspects. First, the idea that competition among different advocates leads to the vetting of policies—that the strengths and weaknesses become clearer—is important for our approach. Second, markets can and do fail in the absence of competition. But our focus is not on the marketplace of ideas in the public sphere, but rather the policy marketplace within the government: the interagency.

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[16] Kaufmann, "Threat Inflation," p. 5.
[17] Kaufmann, "Threat Inflation," p. 8.
[18] Cramer, "Militarized Patriotism."
[19] Krebs and Lobasz, "Fixing the Meaning of 9/11: Hegemony, Coercion, and the Road to War in Iraq," *Security Studies* 16, no. 3 (2007). Krebs, "Selling the Market Short?"
[20] Drezner, *The Ideas Industry* (Oxford University Press, 2017).

The Interagency as a Market

When one works in Washington, DC for one of the departments involved in the making of US foreign and defense policy, one will often hear that an issue will be resolved in "the interagency." This refers to a meeting or series of meetings where representatives of different agencies will discuss the policy issue, make recommendations and potentially come to an agreement. If they do not, the policy issue gets moved up the chain of command to meetings of more senior officials from the same agencies. If no consensus is reached, this eventually reaches the Principals Committee—the National Security Adviser and the relevant cabinet secretaries. For most issues, resolution takes place at lower levels.[21]

This way of speaking about this process—that conflicting ideas about policy-making will be addressed in the interagency—echoes the idea that the final price of a product will (or should) be determined by "the market." In some cases, that market still exists as a physical place, such as Wall Street, but in most cases, the term rather refers to the dynamics of competition among a variety of sellers and buyers. Such competition is supposed to produce higher quality goods at lower prices; when competition is disrupted or muted in some fashion, one must settle for goods that are flawed and/or more expensive. The classic distinction is between a perfectly competitive market place and one dominated by a monopoly.

This process is an apt metaphor for the nature of policy making in a bureaucracy. Ideally, the "marketplace" of the interagency process should produce the best polices when multiple agencies are involved, offering their policy recommendations and criticizing the policy options proposed by other agencies. That is, when there are multiple agencies involved, vetting occurs as the strengths and weaknesses of the various alternatives are explored thoroughly. Those agencies that are advocates of a policy are unlikely to spend as much effort considering the risks and downsides of their approach, but other agencies are likely to do so as they seek to influence outcomes.

But when one agency dominates the process and therefore faces no criticism or vetting of its ideas from competitors, then that agency may propose policies that are under-examined and, as a result, may undermine the national interest. While it is theoretically possible that the agency that has a monopoly might develop the best possible policies, this is far from guaranteed. Dominant agencies may be smart and diligent, but they may also suffer from a variety of maladies (poor leadership, groupthink, corruption, etc.) Therefore, we expect greater variance in outcomes when the interagency resembles a monopolized marketplace. While the competitive vetting process may not be perfect, we expect that it will ultimately produce fewer problematic policies as these will be improved via the process or eliminated. This competition, as the standard bureaucratic politics argument asserts, may cause some compromises which hurt the policy in question, but we argue that the interagency process, via competitive vetting, produces policies that are better on average, providing higher value at a lower cost.

We, therefore, argue that a more robust interagency process that involves competition between agencies and critique of policies proposed by rival agencies is better than one that is dominated by one agency.[22] We base our analysis on a rare opportunity to test these competing models, an instance in which where competitive and monopolistic processes played out one after the other in the same issue space: how to demobilize the Iraq army after the invasion in 2003.

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[21] This insight is based on the experiences of one of the authors, who spent a year on a fellowship at the Pentagon.

[22] We are not directly concerned with the question of why some issues or eras are more like a monopolized marketplace and other are not, although this may be an interesting avenue for future research and we do address this question briefly in the conclusion

What follows are two cases studies of decision-making within the Bush administration, which were characterized by very different bureaucratic politics, and therefore resulted in very different outcomes.

Methodology and Case Selection

We consider how the Bush Administration handled a tough policy problem in the aftermath of the invasion: what should be done with the Iraqi military? Should it be preserved or disbanded? The more competitive, pre-invasion policy process produced a consensus around the first option, while the more monopolistic post-invasion process resulted in the second outcome.

We have chosen this specific issue for several reasons. First, it presents a measurable, dichotomous policy outcome. Secondly, it is an outcome that varies over time. In the pre-invasion period, when the policy process was characterized by multiple competing actors, each with their own interests, this competition produced a consensus that the army should not be disbanded. On the other hand, in the later period, once the policy process had become a monopoly, a new decision was reached, that the Iraqi army should be disbanded (which it was.) Third, there is a clear difference in the quality of the decisions created by each process. Many of the policy decisions related to the invasion of Iraq remain subject to debate regarding their merits, but the decision to disband the Iraqi army is not one of them. The decision to dissolve the army, a symbol of national unity and one of the largest employers in the country, thereby leaving unemployed hundreds of thousands of young men with military training and a newfound grudge against the American occupation authorities, is widely viewed as having been a massive error that contributed to the rise of the insurgency.[23]

Our argument here is based on comparison between two phases within the same case which vary as to the nature of the policy process, but hold constant most of the major actors and the issue at hand. Our analysis is based on information drawn from accounts in a number of secondary sources on the Iraq War, including a range of perspectives. (Future iterations of this paper will include interviews to be conducted later this year.)

A Competitive Policy Market: Pre-war planning 2001-2002

While it often appeared that there was not much of a plan for the occupation, there seemed to be lots of 'planning' by a variety of agencies. These included the State Department, the Joint Staff, the Office of the Secretary of Defense (Office of Special Plans), CENTCOM, and an independent study produced by the Army War College and vetted by State, Defense, the Joint Staff and Joint Forces Command. There were common themes: the Iraqi army was one of the few unifying Iraqi institutions, the people were loyal to it and not Saddam, it could be used to help rebuild and secure Iraq, and there were too many people employed by it to just simply get rid of the institution. There was also an overarching desire for the American forces in Iraq to be seen as liberators, rather than conquerors. Nevertheless, there were differences: the State Department was more focused on the aftermath of the war, while the Joint Staff and CENTCOM were more focused on the planning for the invasion itself. The State Department saw the

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[23] Pfiffner, "Us Blunders in Iraq: De-Baathification and Disbanding the Army," *Intelligence and National Security* 25, no. 1 (2010); Weiler, "Eliminating Success During Eclipse Ii: An Examination of the Decision to Disband the Iraqi Military," (MARINE CORPS COMMAND AND STAFF COLL QUANTICO VA, 2009); Gordon, "Fateful Choice on Iraq Army Bypassed Debate," *New York Times* 17(2008); Bensahel, "Preventing Insurgencies after Major Combat Operations," *Defence Studies* 6, no. 3 (2006).

preservation of the army as a stabilizing force, while the military saw reform as a necessary part of the post-war process.

        A more detailed examination of the policy process during this period suggests that rather than a suboptimal compromise policy, the multiple policy planning processes during this period produced an evidence-based consensus, driven by the combination of the beliefs held by the different parties, that the Iraqi army should not be disbanded, even if reforms were necessary. In the following section, we will discuss the participation of each of the major parties in this stage of the policy making process.

The State Department

        In October 2001, as the US military was in the process of planning, and subsequently executing, the invasion of Afghanistan, the State Department began working on a plan (with a large group of Iraqi exiles) for the aftermath of a regime change in Iraq named the Future of Iraq Project. By the time the Future of Iraq Project was first publically mentioned in March 2002, State had already begun discretely coordinating the efforts of external Iraqi groups, harmonizing the available knowledge from exile groups to determine how to rebuild the country. The project was headed by Thomas Warrick. While part of the 'anti-war' camp, Warrick understood the importance of preparing for war and the inevitable transition that would follow, reportedly telling his colleagues "I'm nervous that they're actually going to do it—and the day after they'll turn to us and ask, 'Now what?'"[24]

        The role of the Iraqi military was explicitly addressed as part of State's planning process. By the time the project was finalized and labelled "For Official Use Only" on May 24, 2002, there had been a total of seventeen working groups focused on the rebuilding of the Iraqi political and economic infrastructure,[25] with the "Defense Policy and Institutions Working Group" explicitly focused on defense policy. Among the briefs the working group prepared were several on the role of the Iraqi army under a democratic regime, the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration [DDR] of armed groups in Iraq, and the future role of the Iraqi military in Iraq's civil society.[26] Under the section "Civil-Military Relations: Its Important Role in the Iraq of the Future" it was stated that the Iraq Army's engineers would be crucial in "rebuilding and construction of the country."[27] The report also outlined the mission that each force of the Iraqi army would hold in post-Saddam Iraq, and when. For instance, immediately following an invasion, the "role of the Iraqi special forces must be limited in the short term and must stay in their barracks," eventually using their redeployment for peacekeeping missions and defending critical infrastructure alongside US forces.

        Ultimately, a key theme of the Future of Iraq Project was the need to carefully plan for the handling and demobilization of Iraq's military as it would be necessary for public order to be maintained once Saddam's regime fell, and for providing the country's Defense after the coalition member's forces left. While the report highlighted the need to remove those close to Saddam, it advocated that this be done without distancing or leaving the ordinary troops without pay. To this end, the authors noted that to prevent disillusionment for the regular army members,

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[24] Fallows, "Blind into Baghdad," *The Atlantic. www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2004/01/blind-into-baghdad/302860 (1 January 2004)* (2004).

[25] Ibid.

[26] "Defence Policy and Institutions," ed. State, Future of Iraq Project (Washington: United States Department of State, 2002).

[27] Ibid.

"All combatants who are included in the demobilization process must be assured by their leaders and the new government of their legal rights and new prospects for work and education will be provided by the new system."[28] Other participants in the project concurred: the Democratic Principles and Procedures working group highlighted that "The decommissioning of hundreds of thousands of trained military personnel that [a rapid purge] implies could create social problems."[29]

However, while the Future of Iraq project produced a large and expertly informed volume of work on Iraq's political and economic institutions for after an invasion, the State Department held onto the report closely, and it was not widely circulated within Washington, while OSD officials considered it not worth reading.[30]

CENTCOM

In late fall 2001, while the State Department was preparing for the reconstruction of post-Saddam Iraq and the mission in Afghanistan was just getting under way, the Department of Defense began preparing for war with Iraq. On November 27, 2001 Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld directed U.S. Central Command [CENTCOM] to begin developing a plan to dispose of Saddam Hussein. The effort would be headed by General Tommy Franks who would report to Secretary Rumsfeld.[31] On January 7, 2002, General Franks met with CENTCOM's Inner Planning circle and began discussing plans for the invasion of Iraq.[32] By February, invasion plans were underway for Iraq. The Iraqi army was a topic of discussion even at this early stage. On February 22, General Franks visited Donald Rumsfeld's office to discuss Iraq, where the two spent some time discussing how best to communicate with the regular Iraqi army, with one eye on ensuring there would be weak resistance come the invasion, but also to ensure that the military would not be destroyed in the fighting.[33]

In July 2002, the Combined Force Land Component Command [CFLCC] planners began to focus their attentions on preparing for post-war hostilities phase [Phase IV] of the CENTCOM campaign plan (to be eventually entitled OPLAN 1003V). This effort was to refine the partially developed Phase IV operations that had been in the works but look more intently at the unique characteristics of Iraq case. Col. Kevin Benson directed a section of CENTCOM staff to begin framing a skeleton of a broader reconstruction plan for Iraq and how the Iraqi military could be instrumental in restoring basic security to the country. One of the major points that the planners understood and considered for their planning was that a significant portion of the Iraq's male population "came to manhood" following the first Gulf War, meaning that post-war planning would have to find a way to incorporate and employ this portion of society instead of isolating them.[34]

Over August 1 and 2, 2002, General Franks held meetings with his top CENTCOM commanders in Tampa to begin developing what would become known as the "Hybrid Plan"

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[28] "Blind into Baghdad."; "Defence Policy and Institutions."

[29] "Blind into Baghdad."; "Democratic Principles and Procedures," ed. State, Future of Iraq Project (Washington: Unites States Department of State, 2002).

[30] "Blind into Baghdad." More on this later but Garner was told by Rumsfeld not to bother wasting his time on it

[31] Dobbins and Rand Corporation., Occupying Iraq: A History of the Coalition Provisional Authority, (2009), http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7249/mg847cc. 3.

[32] Franks and McConnell, *American Soldier* (New York: Regan Books, 2004), 361.

[33] Woodward, *Plan of Attack* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004), 111.

[34] Benson, "'Phase Iv'cflcc Stability Operations Planning," *Turning Victory into Success: Military Operations After the Campaign* (2004): 179-80.

merging alternative plans and coupled them with a minimum 125 day Phase IV post-war hostilities phase.[35] When Frank's commanders inquired as to what exactly would happen would be the plan once Saddam's regime was toppled, he told them that his assumption was the State Department, headed by Colin Powell would lead the rebuilding of political institutions and infrastructure as they had done in the Balkans and Afghanistan. CENTCOM forces would be responsible for the initial stabilization period represented by Phase IV, and then scaled down during an eighteen to twenty-four month "recovery" phase. During the "recovery" phase, the intention was to make "maximum use of Iraqi resources," including the Iraqi military to maintain control of the country.[36]

On August 5, 2002, General Franks and his assistant General Victor Eugene "Gene" Renuart arrived at the White House to brief the President and the National Security Council [NSC] on OPLAN 1003V.[37] The Hybrid Plan included four phases representing a 5-11-16-125 phase structure: Phase I, five days to establish an air bridge to ready transport to the theatre, then 11 days of transporting initial forces into position; Phase II, consisting of sixteen days of air attacks and Special Forces operations; Phase III, 125 days of decisive combat operation, and; Phase IV, an unknown duration of stability operations. In response, Bush concluded that he "liked the concept," and Renuart noted in his books that it was their "best seller."[38]

The preservation and utilization of the existing Iraqi military was not a particular focus of this plan. Franks emphasized that he was expecting to have at his disposal a maximum of 250,000 coalition troops once Phase III concluded that would be necessary to help create a new Iraqi military and establish a security force in Phase IV. Franks stated to the NSC that "well-designed and well-funded reconstruction projects that put large numbers of Iraqis to work and quickly meet community needs—and expectations—will be the keys to our success in Phase IV."[39]

At this point, however, the impact of the multi-voice policy process became apparent. After the briefing, Powell, Rice, and Bush held a long dinner at the White House where Powell informed them that while he had been receiving briefings about the war plan, he had not heard enough on what the aftermath might look like. Powell understood that the Iraqi military was the one institution holding the country together and when the army cracked, so would the Iraqi government structure, leaving Bush responsible for 24 million people. Moreover, Powell urged Bush to consider that it would take time to put a new government in place in Iraq, and in the meantime the United States would be governing authority. Furthermore, Powell warned that the plan would be a multi-year commitment that could suck up close to 40 percent of the U.S. Army for the foreseeable future and would overtake everything else the administration was working towards. Ultimately, Powell was informing Bush that the Pottery Barn rule would be invoked: if you break it, you own it.[40]

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[35] Gordon and Trainor, *Cobra Ii: The inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq*, 1st ed. (New York: Pantheon Books, 2006).

[36] Ibid., 67.

[37] Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, 145.; Franks and McConnell, *American Soldier*, 385; ibid.

[38] Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, 146.

[39] Perry et al., Operation Iraqi Freedom: Decisive War, Elusive Peace, (2015), http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7249/j.ctt19w72gs. 39-40.

[40] Gordon and Trainor, *Cobra Ii: The inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq*, 67.

The Iraq Political-Military Cell

As CENTCOM was getting to work on developing OPLAN 1003V, the Joint Staff's Strategic Plans and Policy directorate headed by Lieutenant General George Casey set to work on creating an interagency group to coordinate planning on Iraq work under way at CENTCOM, and to support CENTCOM "before, during, and after" a war.[41] The group's name was the Iraq Political-Military Cell, and was directed by Joint Staff officers, including officials from the State Department, Central Intelligence Agency [CIA], the NSC staff, Vice President Cheney's office, and Undersecretary for Defense, Douglas Feith's policy organization. The Cell's charter highlighted post-war issues including infrastructure, humanitarian action, and how to achieve "acceptance" from Iraqis. The security planning tasks of the group included, amongst other tasks, creating a new Iraqi police force, military and intelligence agency.[42] At the request of Franklin Miller, one of Condoleezza Rice's NSC staff, this entity was then placed under more direct White House control via the creation of an Executive Steering Group to direct the Iraq Political-Military Cell.[43] On August 12, 2002, Miller officially convened the new Executive Steering Group including members from the White House, State and Defense Departments, and CIA. In the months following its inception, the group would expand to include representatives from other agencies as well.[44] From that point onwards, the Executive Steering Group constituted the key forum for interagency Iraq planning.[45] It commissioned several other interagency working groups focusing on specific issues, such as the Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Working Group, which had primary responsibility for post-war activities.[46]

One significant problem with this planning process was that, in the interests of ensuring that Saddam did not become aware that the US was already planning for war and end the ongoing negotiations, all the interagency planning groups worked in secret without knowing the others existed.[47] While the Executive Steering Group became the key interagency forum for planning for the war, it experienced considerable difficulty coordinating between CENTCOM and Washington policy makers. For example, in an October 2002 briefing, the group presented an account of post-war issues for CENTCOM to consider, including securing the post-war environment and promoting civil order, but several months later, they were still trying to focus CENTCOM's attention on these issues. This did not go unnoticed by the Joint Staff, which was uneasy with the lack of attention General Franks was devoting to Phase IV operation, and nudged him repeatedly in the year lead up to Operation Iraqi freedom (OIF).[48]

Outcome

The outcome of the parallel processes undertaken during this period – and the competition that occurred not only among these agencies but also within them – was a consensus, which President Bush appears to have supported, that the Iraqi army should not be

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[41] Feith, *War and Decision: Inside the Pentagon at the Dawn of the War on Terrorism*, 1st ed. (New York, NY: Harper, 2008), 276.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Perry et al., *Operation Iraqi Freedom: Decisive War, Elusive Peace*. 320.

[45] Feith, *War and Decision: Inside the Pentagon at the Dawn of the War on Terrorism*, 276.

[46] Perry et al., *Operation Iraqi Freedom: Decisive War, Elusive Peace*. 320.

[47] Bowen and United States. Office of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction., Hard Lessons: The Iraq Reconstruction Experience, (Washington, DC: Special Inspector General, Iraq Reconstruction,, 2009), http://purl.access.gpo.gov/GPO/LPS108462. 13.

[48] Feith, *War and Decision: Inside the Pentagon at the Dawn of the War on Terrorism*, 292.

disbanded.[49] This consensus appears to have been accepted even before the Strategic Studies Institute Plan was promoted. A week after giving his tacit agreement to proceed with preparing with the Hybrid Plan, President Bush was on holiday in Crawford, Texas. Rice chaired a Principles Meeting on August 14, 2002 to work on a draft of a National Security Presidential Directive [NSPD) entitled "Iraq: Goals, Objectives and Strategy" that had been approved by the Deputies Committee.[50] The NSPD articulated several goals, including ensuring the preservation of the Iraqi military but also reforming of the Iraqi military and security institutions. Specifically, the final element to the strategy outlined was "to demonstrate that the United States is prepared to play a sustained role in the reconstruction of a post-Saddam Iraq with contributions from and participation by the international community, that rapidly starts the country's reconstruction, that preserves but reforms the current Iraqi bureaucracy and reforms the Iraqi military and security institutions."[51] This reflected the perspectives of the multiple actors in the policy making process. On August 29, 2002, President Bush signed off on "Iraq: Goals, Objectives, Strategy".

This consensus was even, at least at first, reflected within the Defense Department. In August 2002, the Office of Northern Gulf Affairs was renamed the Office of Special Plans [OSP], with responsibilities including the development of policy issues including coalition building, troop deployments, and de-Baathification. OSP even developed policy guidance on the future of the Iraq army alongside the de-Baathification process, under the assumption that the Iraqi army would survive the initial invasion and would exist after the war had ended. For instance, the OSP planned to use the Iraqi army for reconstruction projects while its personnel were being vetted and reorganized. Moreover, this assumption was incorporated into the planning efforts of Jay Garner's Office for Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance [ORHA].[52]

It is impossible to know whether, had Rumsfeld's DoD not wrested control of the policy process away from all other parties (particularly the Army and State Department), the policies outlined in both the SSI document and earlier NPSID documents would have been implemented and the Iraqi army kept intact. It is possible that other events might have intervened to prevent this. But the evidence suggests that the policy itself, if not the implementation of that policy, pointed in that direction.

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[49] In mid-October 2002, a team from the U.S. Army War College's Strategic Studies Institute, in coordination with the Office of the Army Deputy Chief of Staff, initiated a study to analyze how the American and coalition forces could best deal with post-conflict problems found in Iraq. There was a meeting of 70 experts and scholars at National Defence University that came to a similar consensus: recommending against a quick, uncoordinated dissolution of the Iraqi military, but that "there should be a phased downsizing to avoid dumping 1.4 million men into a shattered economy." Two dozen officials from the Joint Staff, Joint Forces Command, and the Departments of Defense and State vetted the report's findings. See Fallows, "Blind into Baghdad."; Crane and Terrill, "Reconstructing Iraq: Insights, Challenges, and Missions for Military Forces in a Post-Conflict Scenario," (ARMY WAR COLL CARLISLE BARRACKS PA, 2003), 32. ; Ricks, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq* (New York: Penguin Press, 2006), 73.

[50] Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, 154.

[51] Ibid., 155-56.; Rice, "Iraq: Goals, Objectives, and Strategy," ed. Affairs (Washington: The White House, 2002).

[52] Bensahel et al., After Saddam: Prewar Planning and the Occupation of Iraq, (2008), http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG642/. 25. Bowen and United States. Office of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction., *Hard Lessons: The Iraq Reconstruction Experience*. 10. "Later, officials working on the management of post-war Iraq would discover that this office had produced relevant analyses and concept papers that were not shared during interagency consultations or with those who eventually played leading role in post-war Iraq."

Policy by Monopoly: 2002-2003

The policy process in the second period under discussion here was very different. In 2002, the Office of the Secretary of Defence [OSD] began consolidating control over policy-making and implementation with regards to Iraq. Ultimately, other actors – particularly the State Department and the US military – were shut out of the process, and it became driven almost exclusively by the beliefs and preferences of a handful of actors, with little challenge or competition from others. In particular, policy was made by Paul "Jerry" Bremer and his deputy, Walter Slocombe, but the process itself was overseen by Donald Rumsfeld. This closed policy making process led not to a more efficient policy, but to a decision viewed by many observers – including many in the American and Iraqi militaries – as a tragic mistake.

OSD Takes Control

OSD's consolidation of control over the policy process began well before the invasion. By the fall of 2002, the OSD had begun to consolidate its control over the planning for postwar Iraq. The Joint Staff drafted a plan calling for the establishment of a headquarters presided over by a three-star general and staffed by experts from across U.S. government agencies, which would eventually coordinate with the U.S. ambassador to Iraq.[53] Secretary Rumsfeld, however, was not convinced. He ordered a number of revisions to the plan, most importantly that the Defense Department would take the lead in all post-war efforts. The Secretary of Defense would oversee post-war political, economic and security activities, and all references to the State Department disappeared from the Organizational Chart. Separate civilian and military command structures would report to CENTCOM and ultimately to Rumsfeld himself.[54] This revision represented a significant consolidation of power in the Department of Defense in general and in hands of the Secretary of Defense in particular. To advance Defense's hold on post-war operations, Feith proposed the establishment of an interagency planning cell in OSD that would be in charge of implementing policy on the ground in Iraq.[55]

The consolidation of authority in the hands of the Defense Department was accordingly set out in a classified document, National Security Presidential Directive No. 24 [NSPD 24) that would ultimately set up the interagency planning cell known as the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance [ORHA) and hand over total post-war Iraq control to Defense.[56] On January 20, 2003, President Bush signed NSPD 24 formalizing Secretary Rumsfeld's authority over post-war Iraq and ORHA. The consolidation of authority in the DoD's hands was accompanied by the exclusion of other actors and voices from the policy process. With the NSPD, ORHA superseded existing military command structures, two civilian agencies, and a circle of White House officials that had expected to oversee post-war planning. Garner noted "Rumsfeld pulled the rug out from under them," and "They never forgave us for that."[57]

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[53] Gordon and Trainor, *Cobra Ii: The inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq*, 140.

[54] Ibid., 141.

[55] Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, 282.

[56] Ibid., 283.

[57] Bowen and United States. Office of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction., *Hard Lessons: The Iraq Reconstruction Experience*. 36.

The State Department

Under NSPD 24, any interagency planning that had been undertaken by the State Department was to be transferred over to ORHA, and all of the interagency planning that had occurred within the Executive Steering Committee was superseded.[58] It is true that Powell had not immediately opposed the plan, stating "State does not have the personnel, the capacity, or the size to deal with an immediate post-war situation in a foreign country that's eight thousand miles away from here,"[59] but State's exclusion from the policy planning process nevertheless represented a departure from the earlier policy process.

It was noteworthy for two additional reasons as well. The first was State's previous expertise in postwar reconstruction and governance, having handled post-war activities in the Balkans and Afghanistan, and the second was the planning work that had already been done for postwar Iraq itself. But neither reason was compelling to those at Defense who sought to sideline State. There were those in the Defense Department (particularly Feith) who made the case explicitly that that State had mishandled the Afghanistan situation and that this time Defense should get a shot at running it unilaterally, avoiding a division of labor seen as problematic in previous instances and ensuring a unity of command.[60] There was also apparently a concern that people from State might not be sufficiently pro-War.[61]

Secondly, and perhaps more problematically, the marginalization of the State Department extended to individuals with specific expertise on Iraq. Indeed, it might be more accurate to say that the State Department was marginalized because of a desire to exclude those who had particular expertise in the Arab Middle East. For instance, when Garner sought to hire Tom Warrick, who had headed the Future of Iraq Project at State, he was told, by Rumsfeld, that this was out of the question.[62] It eventually became clear that the order came directly from Vice President Dick Cheney himself.[63] Five out of seven State Department-based officials who Garner tried to hire were eventually assigned to him, but not before two weeks of infighting between State and Defense, which reportedly included Secretary Powell calling up Rumsfeld and telling him "This is bullshit."[64]

CENTCOM

The second entity directly impacted by the consolidation of control at the Defense Department was, of course, the military itself. SPD 24's new arrangements directly impacted on CENTCOM's Phase IV planning. As the former CENTCOM planner Major Ray Eiriz stated, there "were two phases to the plan we had developed," first the Humanitarian Planning Team was in place to ensure that the rest of the government would be "in synch" with CENTCOM's plans for possible humanitarian emergencies emerging in the wake of the invasion. There was "then going to be the reconstruction planning team," in order to address Iraq's civil institutions and infrastructure." However, after NSPD 24 was signed, CENTCOM stood down the

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[58] Woodward, *Plan of Attack*.

[59] Bowen and United States. Office of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction., *Hard Lessons: The Iraq Reconstruction Experience*. 34.

[60] Gordon and Trainor, *Cobra Ii: The inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq*, 147.

[61] Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, 284.

[62] Ibid., 283.

[63] Ricks, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq*, 103-04.

[64] Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, 284.

Humanitarian Planning Team and reassigned the reconstruction mission to TF-IV, the Joint Staff's task force.[65]

The division of duties between ORHA and TF-IV was ambiguous. General Casey, who had launched TF-IV, believed it would become the command center for post-war operations in Iraq, working directly with USAID, State Department, USACE, and CFLCC. However, the creation of ORHA complicated things.[66] When General Franks, the CENTCOM commander, attempted to bring ORHA under his control, Garner responded by asserting his independence as defined by the NSPD and because of his relationship to the Secretary of Defense. In essence, the Pentagon's leadership of the Iraq campaign had created two competing post-war organizations, essentially creating competition for control between OSD and the military itself. But rather than creating a policy marketplace, the conflict was instead resolved by silencing one set of voices (the military) in favor of the other (OSD). By the end of March, TF-IV was still extremely understaffed, and it was announced that it would be disbanded, and about half of TF-IV's staff moved over to ORHA. While some of the ideas and concepts that had been developed in TV-IV were incorporated into planning documents, final say now resided with ORHA, and ultimately with the OSD.[67]

A Policy Echo Chamber: the CPA under Bremer

This exclusion of other voices only became more extreme following the invasion when the Coalition Provisional Authority, headed by Paul "Jerry" Bremer, was established. Bremer was first approached to run the CPA at the beginning of April 2003 by senior officials from the Defense Department and Office of the Vice President when Lewis "Scooter" Libby called to ask him whether or not he would consider serving in Iraq.[68] Bremer's job 'interview' consisted of a meeting with Rumsfeld, whom he personally knew from the Ford administration thirty years prior, on May 5, 2003. Despite not having any Middle East experience, Rumsfeld apparently felt this to be an asset because he would not present difficulties for the Defense Department's plans to remake Iraq.[69]

Upon arriving in Baghdad, Bremer became administrator of the CPA with "all executive, legislative and judicial functions" in Iraq,[70] while only being subject to the "authority, direction and control of the Secretary of Defense."[71] From the beginning, Bremer insisted on maximum autonomy with minimum oversight, and that he not be micromanaged by those in Washington who he referred to as "bureaucratic hamsters" trying to micromanage his efforts "with an eight-thousand-mile screwdriver."[72] On May 6, 2003, Bremer met with President Bush at a private luncheon before a NSC meeting. Bremer made clear that he adhered to the "unity of command" principle, and that he would not be able to succeed if there were other people in Iraq saying they as well were conducting the President's business: "Mr. President, this also means I must have

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[65] Bowen and United States. Office of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction., *Hard Lessons: The Iraq Reconstruction Experience*. 34.

[66] Ibid., 38.

[67] Bensahel et al., *After Saddam: Prewar Planning and the Occupation of Iraq*. 51-52.

[68] Bowen and United States. Office of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction., *Hard Lessons: The Iraq Reconstruction Experience*. 63, 69.

[69] Gordon and Trainor, *Cobra Ii: The inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq*, 475.

[70] Bremer and McConnell, *My Year in Iraq: The Struggle to Build a Future of Hope* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006), 13.

[71] Feith, *War and Decision: Inside the Pentagon at the Dawn of the War on Terrorism*, 441.

[72] Bremer and McConnell, *My Year in Iraq: The Struggle to Build a Future of Hope*, 81, 186, 92.

full authority to bring all the resources of the American government to bear on Iraq's reconstruction" to which the president agreed.[73] In practice, this meant the removal of Presidential Envoy Zalmay Khalilzad, who was informed that he had been dismissed from his role minutes prior to the official White House announcement later in the day. Powell himself was so stunned by the decision that he called up Rice to ask what had happened, explaining that Khalilzad was the only person in the administration deployed to Iraq who was respected by Iraqi players. Rice responded that she had nothing to do with the move, and in fact the national security apparatus had been sidestepped by Defense and the White House.[74]

Once Bremer took over as head of the CPA, communication between the CPA and any agencies in Washington other than the OSD and White House essentially ceased to exist. Bremer gave updates to the President and Rumsfeld in a weekly teleconference, and although Powell and Rice usually participated in the calls, they were not privy to any other information.[75] It appears that Rumsfeld refused to allow non-Defense Department staffers in the CPA to communicate formally and directly with their agencies back in Washington, while the Defense Department failed to relay Bremer's reports in to the State Department, CIA and even the White House, who had delegated all interagency coordination about Iraq to Bremer.[76]

In contrast to State Department communications which are shared with other agencies, the CPA followed the Defense Department's protocol of not sharing communications with other agencies unless the message is explicitly intended for that agency. The CPA's communications were thus being handled as military, rather that diplomatic, communications, keeping Washington out of any planning loops in Iraq.[77] Staffers from the NSC and State Department were forced to use cell phones and their personal email accounts to maintain access with Washington.[78] Even Rice's senior staff resorted to checking the CPA's website for updates as it was faster and more informative than waiting for official communications.[79]

The exclusion of other voices from the decision-making process came at a cost. Most obviously, in the early days of the occupation, Garner's team found themselves without access to information and expertise that might have allowed them to operate more effectively. Without the involvement of other agencies, they were solely responsible for familiarizing themselves with the planning that had already been done by the rest of the government. As stated by Garner "they hadn't lined up anybody to brief us…we really had to find out what they were doing by word of mouth."[80] Rumsfeld told Garner not to bother reading State's Freedom of Iraq Project,[81] and only heard about Feith's Office of Special Plans after one of his aides stumbled across it by chance.[82] But the larger cost of the echo chamber that Rumsfeld had constructed through his exclusion other players from the process became clear in May, in the form of Order #2, which,

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[73] Ibid., 11.

[74] Gordon and Trainor, *Cobra Ii: The inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq*, 476.

[75] Chandrasekaran, *Imperial Life in the Emerald City: Inside Iraq's Green Zone*, 1st ed. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), 64.

[76] Dobbins and Rand Corporation., *Occupying Iraq: A History of the Coalition Provisional Authority*. xviii.

[77] Ibid., 19.

[78] Ibid., 29.

[79] Chandrasekaran, *Imperial Life in the Emerald City: Inside Iraq's Green Zone*, 64.

[80] Bowen and United States. Office of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction., *Hard Lessons: The Iraq Reconstruction Experience*. 36.

[81] Fallows, "Blind into Baghdad."

[82] Bowen and United States. Office of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction., *Hard Lessons: The Iraq Reconstruction Experience*. 36.

despite previous planning and the preferences of the US military itself, effectively disbanded the Iraqi Army.

Outcome: The dissolution of the Iraqi Military

One fact stands out clearly regarding the decision to disband the Iraqi military: it was not a policy that had universal support. Indeed, it took many members of the military, State Department, and even some at the White House by surprise. In early March, when he was still overseeing the US presence in Iraq, Garner clearly intended to preserve the military. When asked if the Iraqi military would continue to exist he stated, "I believe that's our plan." He further elaborated that "One of our goals is to take a good portion of the Iraqi regular army," and that the U.S. would "continue to pay them. Using army allows us not to demobilize it immediately and put a lot of unemployed people on the street." Using the Army to work on construction made sense as "the regular army has the skill sets to match the work that needs to be done."[83] Garner envisioned something similar to the Depression-era Civil Conservation Corps to rebuild the country, and President Bush himself authorized Garner's proposal to utilize the Iraqi army on reconstruction.[84]

For his part, Rumsfeld himself appeared to believe, as late as March, that while the Republican Guard and other elite security forces would have to be dismantled, as well as special militias like the Fedayeen Saddam, the regular army could be saved, with three to five regular army divisions forming the nucleus of a new army following reconstruction efforts.[85] In presenting the pros and cons of maintaining the regular Iraqi army in a presentation to President Bush, Feith noted that the main arguments in favor were to retain the Army's organizational capacity, discipline, supply of skilled personnel, and vehicles, and the likelihood that the U.S. would need the army for reconstruction work. Furthermore, there was a real risk involved in putting large numbers of armed men out of work and onto the street.[86] When Feith finished the presentation, nobody at the NSC spoke against the plans drawn up by Garner, and Bush officially signed off on the plan.[87]

The actual process leading to the dissolution of the Iraqi military remains disputed. Indeed, it is perhaps one of the strongest indictments of the decision that no one was, or is, willing to take responsibility for having given the order to do so. On the eve of the invasion, CENTCOM began dispatching planes over Iraq distributing leaflets instructing soldiers not to fight; one such leaflet depicted a married couple and their children sitting down for a meal with the caption "Stay at home in safety with your families," and "Please do not attempt to interfere with coalition operations or you will become a target." Iraqi soldiers by and large complied (although several Republican Guard units did fight), with many members of the Iraqi army changing into civilian clothes and going home.[88] While this would later prove a contentious point when Defense and CPA officials claimed that the Iraqi army had 'self-demobilized', in reality the intention of this policy was to prevent the army from schisming, and in any case, the American military leadership believed this to be a temporary situation, not a permanent one. On

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[83] Ricks, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq*, 104, 61.

[84] Bowen and United States. Office of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction., *Hard Lessons: The Iraq Reconstruction Experience*. 44.

[85] Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, 243.

[86] Feith, *War and Decision: Inside the Pentagon at the Dawn of the War on Terrorism*, 367.

[87] Ibid.

[88] Chandrasekaran, *Imperial Life in the Emerald City: Inside Iraq's Green Zone*, 74.

April 17, 2003, little over a week after American troops entered Baghdad, Lt. General John Abizaid told Deputy Secretary of Defense, Wolfowitz and others via a satellite video conference that an interim Iraqi military should be formed out of three divisions using the units that had as he put it "self-demobilized". He believed they could be tasked with guarding buildings, reconstruction, and monitoring border crossing points, while also providing a stabilizing force.[89]

And indeed, at first it appeared that at least some members of the Iraqi military were willing to work with the Americans. Soon after arriving in Baghdad, Garner's top planner Colonel Paul Hughes heard that some former Iraqi officers had approached U.S. troops in Baghdad to see how they could receive their salaries. Hughes met with the group on May 9th, 2003, after gaining permission from senior officers, at Republican Guard's officer's club where the group called themselves the Independent Military Gathering.[90] The officers wanted to work with American troops and were willing to supply the names of potential recruits including lower lever NCOs. Moreover, the group was in possession of the computers containing military personnel records as they had removed them from the Defense Ministry anticipating it would be bombed when the campaign started. Eventually the Independent Military Gathering officers gave the American a list of 50,000-70,000 names including those of the military police.[91]

General David McKiernan, who had sought to recruit a new Iraqi general staff after his arrival in Baghdad, met with a select few senior U.S. officers. He then met Faris Naima, an Iraqi diplomat valued by Saddam and a former Iraqi officer who had been commander of al-Bakr Military College, at Abu Ghraib palace in a meeting coordinated by the CIA. Naima told the Americans that because of the looting and crime in Baghdad, a show of force was necessary to bring security to the city. Naima further urged the Americans to establish three Iraqi military divisions in north, central and southern Iraq with an army company stationed in each major town to back up the police. When the Americans asked where they would find commanders for this force, Naima told them that there were plenty of potential military leaders not committed to the Ba'ath party. When the Americans asked where they would actually find the officers, Naima told them "I can bring them to you." In the meantime, the American should pay the military, police, and bureaucrats to maintain civil order – in line with Garner's initial plan.[92] When General Abizaid, believing there to be between 300,000 and 400,000 Iraqi soldiers potentially willing to return to duty, got into discussions with a few of the former Iraqi army generals, asking "Just what is the possibility of bringing back some of the units of the Iraqi army?" the response was overwhelmingly positive.[93]

But the nature of the decision-making structure put in place by Rumsfeld meant that these insights could only have a limited impact on actual policy-making. By appointing Bremer in the capacity of Presidential Envoy, Bush had placed Bremer in a position to oversee, direct and coordinate all government activities in Iraq, including the Iraqi army, police, and security services including border enforcement and intelligence agencies. This portfolio was directly overseen by Bremer's staffer Walter Slocombe, in the role of Senior Advisor for National Security.[94] Bremer and Slocombe were operating from a very different set of preferences and assumptions from the rest of the bureaucracy, and the monopoly over decision making that had

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[89] Gordon and Trainor, *Cobra Ii: The inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq*, 480.

[90] Ferguson, *No End in Sight: Iraq's Descent into Chaos* (PublicAffairs, 2009), 179.

[91] Gordon and Trainor, *Cobra Ii: The inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq*, 481.

[92] Ibid.

[93] Sanchez and Phillips, *Wiser in Battle: A Soldier's Story* (HarperCollins, 2009), 176.

[94] CPA – Occupying Iraq 52; CRS 2008, 63

been established by the NSPD 24 meant that their ideas faced very little competition or challenge from the outside.

From the beginning, Bremer was working with a very specific objective: a total break from Saddamism. For this to be made explicit required the dissolution of the Iraqi Forces.[95] Accordingly, Bremer immediately instructed Slocombe to start working on a draft order to dismantle the security forces.[96] Slocombe had discussed possible options for the Iraqi army with top OSD officials in light of the "self-demobilization" that occurred during the invasion, and had come to the conclusion that pre-war planning that had been approved by the President in March was no longer viable.[97] He and Bremer rather believed the Iraqi army should be dismantled.

There were three reasons for this. First, since the Iraqi military had self-demobilized, the CPA would not itself be disbanding the army, but formalizing what had already happened. Furthermore, the U.S. would not have to use frozen assets to pay AWOL Iraqi officers and soldiers who had "self-demobilized."[98] Second, Bremer believed that disbanding the army would creating a firm symbolic break with the Saddam regime, later stating "It's absolutely essential to convince Iraqis that we're not going to permit the return of Saddam's instruments of repression—the Ba'ath Party, the *mukhabarat* security services, or Saddam's army. We didn't send our troops halfway round the world to overthrow Saddam only to find another dictator taking his place."[99] And finally, they believed that the ongoing looting and destruction meant that reconstituting the army would in fact mean rebuilding it from scratch, infrastructure and all.[100]

On May 9, 2003, Bremer and Slocombe met with Feith to discuss their plan to dissolve the Iraqi army before Bremer headed off to Iraq the next day.[101] They argued that in order to best serve U.S. interests, a new Iraqi army should be built – it would be easier to build something new rather than fix a badly designed institution. Bringing the existing Iraqi Army back might not work, and, if it did, could pose problems such as upsetting the Kurds and Shiites.[102] During the meeting, Bremer presented Feith with a draft of what would be CPA Order No. 2, written up by Slocombe, that listed the dissolution of the Iraqi Ministries of Defense and Information, the Intelligence Service, the Special Security Organization, Saddam's bodyguards, the army, air force, navy, and other regular military services, the Republican Guard and Special Republican Guard, the Fedayeen Saddam and other paramilitaries, the Revolutionary Command Council, and the Revolutionary, Special, and National Security Courts.[103] Feith told Slocombe and Bremer to discuss the proposal with Rumsfeld, to whom they would present a draft of order No. 2 on May

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[95] Gordon and Trainor, *Cobra Ii: The inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq*, 476.; In a memo to Pentagon colleagues Bremer outlined his vision, writing "my arrival in Iraq be marked by clear, public and decisive steps to reassure Iraqis that we are determined to eradicate Saddamism."

[96] Ferguson, *No End in Sight: Iraq's Descent into Chaos*, 193. Ferguson claims that Bremer started work on May 1, 2003 (not corroborated by anyone else) and then states that "Slocombe began to urge Bremer to disband Iraq's military and security apparatus, even including the Ministry of Interior and the civilian police."

[97] Dobbins and Rand Corporation., *Occupying Iraq: A History of the Coalition Provisional Authority*. 53.

[98] Gordon and Trainor, *Cobra Ii: The inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq*, 482.

[99] Bremer and McConnell, *My Year in Iraq: The Struggle to Build a Future of Hope*, 54.; Dobbins and Rand Corporation., *Occupying Iraq: A History of the Coalition Provisional Authority*. 53.

[100] *Occupying Iraq: A History of the Coalition Provisional Authority*. 53-55.

[101] Ferguson, *No End in Sight: Iraq's Descent into Chaos*, 293.; Feith, *War and Decision: Inside the Pentagon at the Dawn of the War on Terrorism*, 428.

[102] *War and Decision: Inside the Pentagon at the Dawn of the War on Terrorism*, 432.

[103] Ibid., 428-29.

19, four days before formally announcing it.[104] In a final memo sent that day, Bremer sent a memo to Secretary Rumsfeld, his general counsel William Hynes (cc'ing Paul Wolfowitz, Doug Feith, Gen Franks, Gen Garner, Jaymie Durnan, Walter Slocombe) summarizing his and Slocombe's theory that getting rid of Saddam's security institutions and army would "reinforce our overall policy messages and reassure Iraqis that we are determined to extirpate Saddamism."[105] It is probable that Garner did not receive the message.[106]

On May 15, 2003, Ambassador Robin Raphel brought Garner a draft of Order No. 2, disbanding the Iraqi military.[107] Garner was stunned at the order as it directly contradicted the plan approved in March by the White House for which he has been delivering regular video reports to Rumsfeld back in Washington about. ORHA staff had been meeting with former Iraqi Generals and had received lists containing around 137,000 former soldiers ready to reform their old units or form into new ones once they were paid the $20 emergency payment agreed upon by Garner. The CIA had also compiled lists of soldiers and was arranging for the re-constitution of the military.[108] Even the CPA web site still stated that 30,0000 former Iraqi army members had registered for emergency payments and that the CPA's stated goal was to bring them back to active duty.[109] Garner protested the decision to Bremer saying "We have always made plans to bring the army back," eventually convincing Bremer to preserve the Ministry of the Interior that oversaw the police.[110] As for the Iraqi army, Bremer told Garner he could take up the decision with the Secretary of State but the decision was made "above Rumsfeld's pay grade."[111] The same day, Walter Slocombe arrived in Iraq, and was invited to a meeting with Naima and a number of other Iraqi officers.[112] Contrary to all of the previous agreements made by Garner and ORHA, he then thanked them, and informed them that they would not be an integral part of the new Iraqi army, in an effort to avoid creating another Sunni dominated force.[113]

Slocombe then set about finalizing Order No. 2, according to which there would be a new force, the New Iraqi Corps (later changed to New Iraqi Army) which would be "professional, non-political, militarily effective and representative of all Iraqis." A draft of Order No. 2 was sent to the Defense Department so that Rumsfeld's staff including Feith could sign off on it.[114] Slocombe would later state: "This is not something that was dreamed up by somebody at the last minute and done at the insistence of the people in Baghdad. It was discussed…The critical point was that nobody argued that we shouldn't do this." However, it apparently did not reach the White House itself, as President Bush later recounted that "the policy was to keep the army intact; didn't happen."[115]

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[104] Ibid.

[105] Dobbins and Rand Corporation., *Occupying Iraq: A History of the Coalition Provisional Authority*. 56 n.16. The Memo from Paul Bremer to Jim Haynes "Subject: Proclamation on Dissolved Institutions, C: Paul Wolfowitz, Doug Feith, Gen Franks, Gen Garner, Jaymie Durnan, Walt Slocombe," May 10, 2003.

[106] Ibid., 56 n.17.

[107] Woodward, *State of Denial* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006), 194.

[108] Ibid., 194-95.

[109] Ricks, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq*, 162.

[110] Dobbins and Rand Corporation., *Occupying Iraq: A History of the Coalition Provisional Authority*. 56., Woodward, *State of Denial*, 195.

[111] Feith, *War and Decision: Inside the Pentagon at the Dawn of the War on Terrorism*, 429.

[112] Ferguson, *No End in Sight: Iraq's Descent into Chaos*, 204.

[113] Gordon and Trainor, *Cobra Ii: The inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq*, 482-83.

[114] Ibid., 483.

[115] Hounshell, "Who Disbanded the Iraqi Army?," Foreign Policy, http://foreignpolicy.com/2007/09/04/who-disbanded-the-iraqi-army/.

It bears emphasizing here that this was a decision made largely in isolation from other actors within the security bureaucracy. On May 22, 2003 Bremer briefed the NSC and the President on his plans to issue Order No. 2 the following day.[116] For the members for the NSC outside the OSD, the news came as a shock, and although nobody formally challenged the plan, the "unanimity masked serious reservations and misunderstandings."[117] Rice was caught unaware but decided that the White House just needed to trust their man in Iraq, later stating "I don't think that anybody thought it was wildly out of context with what we were trying to achieve, and the whole structure had been set up so that some of those decisions could be made in the field or through the Pentagon chain."[118] CIA director Tenet claims that neither he nor any of his staff had been briefed.[119] Miller, whose Executive Steering Group had been shut down once Bremer arrived in Iraq, found the decision shocking considering that they had been telling the President for months that they would be using 300,000 troops for reconstruction purposes before reintegrating into an army.[120] Powell, who was in Paris when he heard the news, was shocked by the decision,.[121] He recalled:

> When the Army was disbanded, I called Dr. Rice and said, 'What happened?' Nobody seemed to know about this and [her] answer was, 'We have to back Jerry [Bremer].' There was no meeting on it; there was no, 'Gee, is this a good idea?' You couldn't even tell who had decided it…I saw Peter Pace, the Vice Chairman, a little later and I said, 'Peter, did you guys know about this?' He said, 'Hell, no!'[122]

As for the CIA's perspective, Tenet recalled that:

> NSC officials were expecting Proclamation Number Two to include some language about how Iraqi military members below the rank of lieutenant colonel could apply for reinstatement. After all, the majority of army members were conscripts just trying to feed their families. CPA Proclamation Number Two appeared to be punishing them—and even the Shia who made up the bottom rung of the military—equally with those who had ruled the roost. When the pronouncement was issued, however, that provision was not mentioned.[123]

When, the next day, on May 23, 2003, Bremer issued Order No. 2, the "Dissolution of Entities," disbanding the Iraqi military, even CENTCOM was surprised. According to Gen. John Agoglia, the planner who became the command liaison to the CPA

> "We wanted to rapidly call the soldiers back, get them on our side, and then sort out who could and could not be trusted…It would have been a lot faster than building one battalion at a time. And we wanted to send a psychological message

[116] Dobbins and Rand Corporation., *Occupying Iraq: A History of the Coalition Provisional Authority*. 57.
[117] Ibid., 58.
[118] Gordon and Trainor, *Cobra Ii: The inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq*, 483.
[119] Tenet and Harlow, *At the Center of the Storm* (HarperCollins, 2007), 428.
[120] Woodward, *State of Denial*, 209.
[121] Gordon, "Fateful Choice on Iraq Army Bypassed Debate."
[122] Bowen and United States. Office of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction., *Hard Lessons: The Iraq Reconstruction Experience*. 76.
[123] Tenet and Harlow, *At the Center of the Storm*, 428.

that they were going to be part of the new Iraq, to prevent them from turning against us."[124]

On that day Agoglia even turned to Bremer and stated matter of fact "You guys just blindsided CENTCOM." He later recalled remarking "we snatched defeat from the jaws of victory and created an insurgency."[125] Another planner, Col Kevin Benson explained that "We expected to be able to recall the Iraqi army. Once CPA took the decision to disband the Iraqi army and start again, our assumptions for the plan became invalid."[126]

The dangerous consequences of that decision became apparent almost immediately. Within days of Order No. 2 being issued, crowds gathered outside the CPA gates demanding the restoration of their salaries and pensions. In Mosul, where Major General Petraeus was commanding the 101st Airborne, disbanded soldiers protested for several days, before the protests escalated into violence, leading to the loss of life.[127] One former tank driver in Basra was quoted as saying "The U.S. planes dropped the papers telling us to stay in our homes…They said our families would be fine…We have guns at home. If they don't pay us, if they make our children suffer, they'll hear from us."[128] Colonel King traces the onset of the insurgency to that decision: "May was the turning point…When they disbanded the military, and announced we were occupiers—that was it. Every moderate, every person that had leaned toward us, was furious. One Iraqi who had saved my life in an ambush said to me, 'I can't be your friend anymore.'"[129] In some of the clearest evidence that continuing to pay the Iraqi military might have forestalled the onset of the insurgency, the rioting eventually began to subside after the CPA announced that the emergency payments would be made to former Iraqi army members – albeit on June 23, 2003, a month after Order No. 2 was issued.[130]

Conclusions and Implications

On August 31st, 2010, President Barack Obama declared the end of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Eight years later, the long-term effects of the war – including a range of Shi'ite militias supported by Iran, and the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, a rebranded version of Al Qaeda in Iraq which itself arose in the chaos following the invasion – continue to cause enormous suffering in Iraq, and now in Syria as well. As of this writing, the war has led to 268,000 casualties, around 200,000 of them Iraqi civilians. 4,424 American soldiers were also killed in the war.[131] This is a far cry from the swift and decisive victory predicted by the Bush administration.

While no one single factor accounts for the vast different between the outcome predicted by Rumsfeld and his allies and what actually happened in Iraq, the nature of decision-making in the months leading up to the war played a key role. The decision to disband the Iraqi military – leaving thousands of young men with military training unemployed and resentful of both the American forces and the new Shi'ite government in Iraq – was a key factor in the emergence of

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[124] Gordon and Trainor, *Cobra Ii: The inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq*, 484.
[125] Ricks, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq*, 163.
[126] Ibid.
[127] Bowen and United States. Office of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction., *Hard Lessons: The Iraq Reconstruction Experience*. 77.
[128] Lacey, "After the War: The Military; Jobs at Risk, Ex-Iraqi Soldiers Vow Fight If Allies Don't Pay," *New York Times* (2003).
[129] Ricks, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq*, 163.
[130] Dobbins and Rand Corporation., *Occupying Iraq: A History of the Coalition Provisional Authority*. 59.
[131] Count, "The Iraq Body Count Database," IraqBodyCount.org.

the insurgency, and in particular of Al Qaeda in Iraq. Even today, a number of ISIS' leaders are former Iraqi Ba'athists.[132]

This decision also serves to illustrate the impact of the nature of bureaucratic politics on the quality of policy outcomes. In the pre-war period, the policy-making process included multiple voices, including the military (CENTCOM and the Joint Staff,) the State Department, and the Office of the Secretary of Defense. This resulted in a robust debate over policy that produced a consensus that the Iraqi military should remain intact. This consensus was based in part on the information provided by Iraq experts at State, who had a great deal more expertise on the situation on the ground in Iraq than did OSD.

But immediately after the invasion, Rumsfeld, Bremer, and their allies at OSD moved to consolidate decision making power in their own hands, excluding all competing voices. This resulted in an echo chamber within which policy ideas were not challenged and outside information was neither sought out nor accepted. Ultimately, this led to the adoption of a policy – the disbanding of the Iraqi military – that was supported by only a few decision-makers and viewed as a terrible idea by both Iraqi experts like Warrick and generals like McKiernan and Agoglia. The short, medium, and long-term consequences of this decision suggest that it was among the most severe mistakes made by the Bush administration during the first year of the Iraq War. We believe that this therefore indicates that, contrary to what much of the literature on bureaucratic politics suggests, that competition between multiple voices can and does produce better policies than a monopoly by a single actor.

For future work on bureaucratic politics and foreign policy, both in the US and elsewhere, more attention needs to be paid to how the processes are structured. We should see more variation in the quality of outcomes where there are more monopolistic processes. Perhaps smart monopolies can push smart strategies, but a lack of vetting can mean that even good policies might not thoroughly vetted.[133] While we have our hunches, we did not explore why some policy processes are dominated by an agency or a personality while others are not. This is a key next step in this research.

This study has important implications both for our understanding of subsequent policy outcomes and for policy makers themselves. Analyses of seemingly contradictory responses to the various challenges faced by the Obama administration – such as the decision to invade Libya but stay out of Syria – can perhaps be better understood if we view these decisions as the outcome a complex marketplace of policy, rather than a single voice with a single ideological or doctrinal approach. It also suggests that the apparent elimination of any voice that appears to contradict President Trump's frequently shifting policy impulses makes an already unstable policy situation even more dangerous. The appointment of John Bolton as National Security Advisor may well worsen this situation, since the evidence from his tenure in the Bush administration suggests that his instincts tend toward a monopolistic policy process. Given that the role of the NSA is to coordinate a policy process drawing on the expertise of the national security apparatus as a whole, his appointment to this particular position seems especially likely to lead to the construction of another foreign policy echo chamber. Unfortunately, this suggests that whatever lessons have been learned from Iraq, they have not been learned well enough.

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[132] McCants and McCants, *The Isis Apocalypse: The History, Strategy, and Doomsday Vision of the Islamic State* (Macmillan, 2015).

[133] For instance, Apple designs stuff really well, but mention "dongles" to Apple consumers, and they will indicate that even the smart need to have their ideas vetted.