

Beyond the War on Terror: Advisors and Foreign Policy in the Indo-Pacific during the George W. Bush Administration

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Abstract

The George W. Bush administration has often been viewed ostensibly through the lens of the War on Terror, Iraq and Afghanistan. Yet the administration made a significant positive impact on the Indo-Pacific region, creating policies that had long lasting repercussions for US security. This thesis aims to address this gap in two main ways. Firstly, by using the policies of China, India and North Korea policy the thesis draws attention to three important and underappreciated areas of Bush's foreign policy. Secondly, it applies a new approach to understanding the role policy makers affect the development of US foreign policy by assessing how the changes in the US foreign policy decision-making power balance impact the development of policy. By using personal interviews, primary documents and secondary analysis this thesis argues that the changes between the three periods (the first term before 9/11, the first term after 9/11 and the second term) resulted in shifting foreign policy outcomes that were responsive to the rise and fall of different groups of adviser's influences, demonstrating the utility of a foreign policy analysis approach to understanding US foreign policy.

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Introduction

“I’ve got one of the finest foreign policy teams ever assembled.” George Bush, May 31, 2000 (Bruni, 2000)

“The nature of history is that we know the consequences only of the action we took. But inaction would have had consequences, too.” (G. W. Bush, 2010)

The George W. Bush administration will always be remembered for its handling of the 9/11 crisis and the two failed conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan that developed afterwards. However, this collective memory of the administration has often obscured the successful policies that they had in other regions around the world. In no place is this obscured policy more prominent than with the Indo-Pacific. This thesis intends, for the first time, to address the three major challenges of this region utilizing a bureaucratic foreign policy analysis approach beginning with the simple proposition that it is people who make policies. Yet not all people within a policy making process are equal and they rarely work alone. When George W. Bush became president, he appointed a staff that held former Cabinet Secretaries, a Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, academics, and the elite of Republican think tanks from around the US. Each had strong opinions about how they wanted to conduct world affairs, their own forms of power and the institutional capacity of their roles. The purpose of this thesis is to assess how these advisers created a power balance that defined the US administration's Indo-Pacific strategy, setting out a two-part framework that identifies the factors that lead to policy and how this strategy was implemented over the two terms of the administration. By doing so, it argues that unintended networks of advisers were

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formed that competed for control of the policy process to a degree that has so far been underappreciated in the literature.

Thesis contribution

This thesis has 5 main aims; Firstly, to draw attention to the policy decisions made regarding the Indo-Pacific and argue that instead of thinking of the region as an afterthought it should instead be at the center of any attempt to weigh the administration's foreign policy. As highlighted above, this is an area that has largely been obscured and is likely to increase in importance due to the increasing prominence of the Indo-Pacific as the dominant region of the 21st Century. Secondly, the thesis aims to draw attention to the significant changes in the policy outcomes between the first and second terms. Though this has begun to gain more attention, the second term is often treated as an extension of the first term's agenda. Schwarz says this is part of the nature of analyzing American Foreign policy, where there is the need to make snap judgements and to define a president early on.(Schwartz, 2003, p. 7). However, this thesis argues that instead of being preoccupied on the first term, there should be a chronological approach that allows a more effective understanding of the entirety of the administration. This allows the significant shift in the power balance within the administration between the two terms to come into focus, showing the real impacts the advisers had on policy. Thirdly, by using original interviews with high-level advisers that reflect a significant range of viewpoints, experiences and positions within the Bush administration it aims to draw attention to previously overlooked areas of policy making that were essential to the development of Indo-Pacific policy. Fourthly, using the example of Iraq, this thesis has contributed to the ability of researchers to bring in external events into analysis of foreign policy decision making. Often this has been a limitation of wider Foreign Policy Analysis. By focusing on the impact of different

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decisions on the policy areas that are of interest it allows for the impacts to be analysed without over-shadowing the areas wished to be focused on. Finally, this thesis aims to create an approach that allows a comparison between different administrations and foreign policy teams. The lessons taken from the Bush administration can be used to understand both how advisers' effect foreign policy more generally but also help to identify how we can assess advisers' relative influence.

The role of advisors: Foreign Policy Analysis and the importance of the Vulcans.

The role of advisors in foreign policy has often been at the forefront of international relations (IR) scholarship. The school of Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA), dating back to the work of Snyder, Bruck and Sapin in the 1950's, was a challenge to the "unsatisfying" approaches that dominated IR including an overwhelming focus on national interests and behaviour. (Hilsman, 1959; Rosenau, 1975; Snyder *et al.*, 2002; Houghton, 2007) Instead, FPA moves away from the 'Billiard-Ball' model of international relations and instead returns agency to the actors who make decisions. (Walker, 2011) In the words of Hudson, one of the leading scholars within FPA, it is human interaction that allows the intersection of material and behaviour factors. (Hudson, 2002) Though surging to relative prominence in the 1970's, represented by the popularity of works by Allison (1971), Jervis (1976), Janis (1972) and Halperin (Halperin, Clapp and Kanter, 1974), the rise of Neo-Realism and Waltz returned the State to primacy within IR. (Waltz, 1979) However, the end of the Cold War and the lack of a clear bio-polar world system opened gaps of analysis within neo realism that scholars such as Hagan and Hudson aimed to fill with a return to Foreign Policy Analysis. (Hudson and Vore, 1995a; Hagan, 2001)

The purpose of FPA is to be able to explain the "decisions by human decisionmakers with reference to or having known consequences for entities external to the nation

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state.”(Hudson, 2007, p. 4) This is not just an analysis of a single decision (or non-decision) but can be across a collection of direct/non-direct choices . To do this, it is essential to analyse the factors that impact those making decisions. This is the great difficult of FPA as a discipline and opens itself to a significant amount of criticism. As Art argued, in a challenge to the bureaucratic school of decision making that is still reflective of criticism today, “it is too sloppy, vague and imprecise as presently constituted to make its use worthwhile.”(Art, 1973, p. 486) The size of the task facing the research in investigating a decision with reference to all the impacting factors assessed is so daunting that it is far easier to return to the safety of the abstraction of states. However, the advantages of engaging in this task make it even more essential. Firstly, focusing on actor-centric decision-making models allows the integration of different levels of analysis. As Putnam (2009) argued there is a simultaneous play of a dual level game within international relations between the domestic and the international. By replacing the concept of the ‘state’ with an actor centric model, whilst still engaging with the systematic impacts that are present, allows the creation a stronger theoretical stance.(De Mesquita and McDermott, 2004; Walker, 2011)The second advantage of FPA is that it provides the ‘Long Hand’ of the ‘Short Hand’ that other IR scholars use.(Hudson, 2007) In other words, the development of a clear explanation about how human actors interact and decide on decisions in the real world allows theoretical explanations of state behaviour to take place. Though there may be patterns, the discussion about why ‘state x made a certain move last Tuesday’ ensures researchers do not forego the interrogation that is required of effective research and can leave IR scholars unresponsive to changing environments.(Wivel, 2005) Finally, FPA allows the bridge from international relations to other fields. Not only does it naturally tie in with comparative politics and public policy but it also speaks to

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psychology, business, sociology and criminology. By bringing the human into the social science, a free exchange of ideas is possible and ensure that IR is not left behind.

(George, 1993)

As people are the heart of FPA, it is important to outline who is involved within the decision making process. As the head of the executive branch in the United States government the President is the essential figure in the decision making process, or in the words of President Truman the ‘buck’ stops with him. However, the vast nature of the interests of the US require presidents to have an immense support network that will both influence and limit the President in how far and in which direction the President pushes his agenda.(Prados, 1991; Daalder and Lindsey, 2003; Rothkopf, 2006) As such, an increasing importance was put on the role of policy making beginning in the 1960’s where authors such as Roger Hilsman discussed the need to understand advisers in the context of the failure of prevailing schools of thought in IR to focus on the decision making process.(Hilsman, 1959; Snyder *et al.*, 2002) Tracking the discussion of foreign policy in academic socials, he identified the perception that foreign policy was made via political actions, with consensus and conflict defining the result. Though mentioning the Executive Branch and the discussions between the advisers, Hilsman still focused on the institutional battles between the President and Congress thereby emphasising the role of intra-conflict between branches rather than the inter-conflict that existed. Likewise, figures such as Neustadt argued the role of the President was the central point of analysis highlighting what the President needs compared to what advisers could give him, with his personal perception of power defining how much influence he had. (Neustadt, 1960)

This work was built on by scholars such as Patrick Anderson. Using the arguments from scholars such as Neustadt and Hilsman, he identified the President as the centre

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of power. (Anderson, 1968) However he developed this by discussing the role of numerous advisers and their general impact on how the President viewed the world, his power and the policies that were made as a result. Similarly, Halberstram's 'Best and the Brightest', first released in 1969, identified the failure of the Vietnam War with the bellicose team of intellectuals without the foreign policy experience that their Truman party elders may have had. (Halberstam, 1993) These books that focused on the foreign policy advisers represented a shift in the public at large, with many viewing foreign policy through the story of the advisers and their internal battles, creating a school of biography that resulted in the 'celebrification' of advisers. For example, in 1978 26% of all political people covered in the newspaper were presidential advisers, a more significant proportion than Senators, Congressman, the Supreme Court Justices or President's Carter and Nixon as individuals. (Maddox and Robins, 1981) The focus on the Kennedy advisers as part of the 'Camelot' narrative or the dominance of National Security Adviser and Secretary of State Kissinger, with his numerous biographies and personal identification with foreign policy directions, has reinforced the focus on advisers and created both an interest in the academic community and the public at large.

This trend has continued with George Stephanopoulos in the Clinton administration and to perhaps a lesser extent David Axelrod in the Obama one, flitting between the border of politician and celebrity. Along with the commentary, the interest in advisers has created an entire genre of political biographies that have come from those who have served the President. This led to the situation that a decade after the Bush administration left the White House every single leading foreign policy figure in the administration, with the exception of Stephen Hadley, had written a memoir including both Secretaries of State, both Secretaries of Defense, the first term CIA Director and

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the Vice President.(Tenet and Harlow, 2007; Cheney, 2011; Rice, 2011; Rumsfeld, 2011; Powell. Colin and Koltz, 2012; Gates, 2014) Though this is now perhaps expected, with cabinet level biographies dating back since the founding of the republic, the significant change has been the range of works from ‘second’ level advisers ranging from key presidential confidants like Karl Rove, Michael Gerson and Karen Hughes to mid-level advisers such as John Bolton as UN ambassador and the combination of memoir and histories from Vincent Cha and Charles Pritchard in relation to North Korea.(Hughes, 2004; Bolton, 2007; Gerson, 2007; Pritchard, 2007; Feith, 2008; Rodman, 2009; Rove, 2010; Zakheim, 2011; Cha, 2012) The demand and market for these biographies symbolises both American and international interest in advisers.

Similar to Halberstam’s and Anderson’s work in format and focus, the idea of a foreign policy team has been reinvigorated by works by Issacson and Thomas, who tracked the role of advisers along plural democratic administrations as independent powers that were related but not limited to the people they served.(Issacson and Thomas, 1986a) Their analysis of the Democratic Party establishment and their role in the Truman, Kennedy and Johnson administrations argues persuasively that the adviser’s personal preferences and their policy differences were significant. A major development that *The Wise Men* contributed to the wider literature was the focus on the history and the impulses of the advisers as individuals and as a group, with their formative experiences being explored to a level of depth similar to that which has become common place with new Presidents. For example, Kennan’s isolation and character is emphasised as his power rose and fell with his influence being reduced when he could no longer count on his allies within in the administration who had diverged from his views. Another important aspect that has been analysed was the role

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of relationships between the important figures. By analysing these figures in terms of the relationships between themselves as well as with the President, Issacson develops the idea that the networks mattered when creating foreign policy. The utilisation of these networks was as critical to their ability to effect policy as any natural talent and positional powers. For example, when discussing how to respond to the Berlin crises, Charles Bohlen's connections and history as an air force pilot allowed him to connect to Air Force General Le May and Secretary of Defense James Forrestal in responding with an airlift. (Issacson and Thomas, 1986a) However, due to its biographical nature it perhaps does not set up the applicability of these networks to other administrations leaving a gap that has yet to be effectively explained in FPA, an issue this thesis aims to remedy.

What is also interesting about works such as these is that they often suggest foreign policy is formed not during government but during times when advisers are in exile. For example, Tom Bethall argues that the Democratic advisers acted as a government in waiting during the Nixon era. (Bethall, 1979) While their positions in think tanks allowed them to criticise their Republican opponents, it also gave prospective outsider presidential candidates such as Carter a resource to draw on. This argument also appeared in the *Wise Men*, with figures such as Secretary of Defense Clark Clifford coming back to advise President Johnson in the later years of his presidency. (Issacson and Thomas, 1986a) In contrast, James Mann in the *'Obamians'* argues that the main advisers of the Obama administration were not the secretaries with experience but the campaign teams as they were the ones who shared his ideas and formed an extension of the Presidents viewpoint. (Mann, 2012) The focus on where the staffs come from and their shared experiences is important as it suggests that often the ideas that shape the administration's policy are often formed years and even decades in advance or else

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formed in the crucible of critical moments such as an election campaign. As such, the experience of advisers is sometimes as important as those of the President and therefore should receive a greater focus, something Mann was effectively able to do in *Rise of the Vulcans* in regards to Bush's foreign policy team. (Mann, 2004a) This acts in contrast to the argument that policies are dictated by events, a key staple of those who believe that a rational actor model can explain foreign policy decision making. The emphasis on previous experience is particularly important in the Bush administration, where the events of 9/11 and Iraq are often seen as catalysts that changed the administration's view. If this is not the case, it is important to know what histories and lessons were drawn from to create the foreign policy that the administration followed.

Others have focused not on the advisers themselves but by looking at what psychological and environmental factors are likely to affect their decision making. Perhaps the most notable of these is the work from Irving Janis, who suggested that the Bay of Pigs fiasco was caused by the phenomenon that he calls "group-think" (Janis, 1982) His suggestion that groups have their own dynamic that effects the decisions made, written as another model that compliments that of Allison's three cut approach, allows the tracking and augmenting of the individual failures to result in overarching direction towards either success or catastrophe. By highlighting the use of conformity and the isolation of individuals that disagree with majority points of interest, Janis produced an explanatory framework that gave the advisers a more central place in the decision making process and also advocates solutions to the problems that have been found. This applicability across plural administrations and the lessons learned exhibits the prescriptive nature of FPA which allows the improvement of the decision making process that has been studied. For example, the

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role of an internal devil's advocate is highlighted as both a danger and an opportunity, with the focus on the 'domestication' of Johnson's Vietnam critics such as Under Secretary of State George Ball inviting comparisons to that of Secretary of State Colin Powell or Richard Clarke. Likewise, the "poverty of expectations", or the willingness of advisers to focus on the best case scenario to better sell policy prescriptions, can be resolved by actively focusing on the ramifications of a policy with someone taking the role of 'Cassandra's advocate'.(Janis, 1982, p. 269)

The ability of an adviser to act and dominate policy has often been tied to the personality and experience of the President that they serve. For example, Barber puts the President on a style and personality spectrum ranging along a spectrum of passive/active and negative/positive.(Barber, 1977) President Taft's passive/positive nature resulted in a lack of trust in advisers due to his ability to have a wide range of friends but very few intimates who could give him the close personal advice that a modern President has come to depend on. Furthermore, his unwillingness to commit to policies and be his own initiator gave the power to underlings who were able to push the President in different directions leading to confusion and distrust. Saunders develops this approach by actively looking at what makes a president susceptible to advisers. She argues that a president's experience is fundamental to their ability to be able to listen to advice. (Saunders, 2017) Tracking both the senior Bush and the younger through their experiences in Iraq, she suggests that experienced presidents are more able to deal with dissent and to monitor what their senior advisers are doing thereby limiting their ability to get off the reservation. Bush 41's experience as Vice-President, CIA director and former ambassador to China gave him the confidence to coordinate the process effectively and therefore have success in Iraq. Marsden (2005, p. 124)also develops the role of the President in his own administration, suggesting

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that the president is the ultimate decision maker, and that the changes in the second terms of a president toward legacy building result in the need for victories allowed the overlooking of facts and policies that contradicted this long term goal. The re-focus on the President through the lens of how they interact with their advisers illustrates the development of FPA to focus more on the way the advisory process works compared to a unitary actors at the top.

Beyond the focus on the character of the advisers and the presidents they serve, others have analysed the role of advisers through the institutional setting that they find themselves in. For example, Rothkopf focuses on the role of the National Security Council arguing that the foreign policy process was a result of the power flows between its component members and as a result of how this 'committee' views both itself and the advisers differing roles among it. (Rothkopf, 2006) By applying the institutional framework and looking at the advisers through the lens of where they stand amongst each other, a comparison between the different administrations emerges that exhibits the ability of advisers to self-define what the US should do and how they should respond to the world at large. Destler, Gelb and Lake also focus on the foreign policy establishment, but argue that it is the role the advisers find themselves in that defines their respective approaches. (Desler, Gelb and Lake, 1984) They distinguished the advisers into two separate categories: the barons (or the heads of departments with their own areas of interest and powers) and the courtiers (who depended on the President for influence and power). Their argument was that the White House staff had managed to accumulate more power due to the increasingly political nature of foreign policy decision making and the personal need of these advisers to gain influence and power. This in turn has resulted in an 'operational presidency' where the President and his internal staff are at the forefront of foreign policy. By viewing

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the decision making process through these institutions and role definitions, these theorists are able to draw strong conclusions about where and how the decisions are made in tandem.

This wide range of approaches has resulted in different lessons being learned, however there remains a tendency to focus on advisers as individuals or a cohesive group. What has remained lacking is a coherent analysis of the foreign policy advisers as a group of ever-changing groups. Halperin goes some way to explore the role of subordinates in the process in attempting to explain why decisions are made, however this is treated more as a passing thought compared to central to the decision making process. (Halperin, Clapp and Kanter, 2006) Furthermore, the implication remains that the only networks that matter were the vertical networks or in other words from the President to the principal advisers then to the secondary advisers. What is ignored is perhaps the more significant horizontal networks that work in between the departments that give advisers more influence outside the official chains of command. For example, the bond between Secretary of State Baker and National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft was integral to their ability to dominate the foreign policy process, a lesson learned by Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney when he came back to power in the Bush 43 administration. This thesis fills this gap by analysing the Bush administration through the role of foreign policy networks that adapted themselves over the course of the administration to deal with different stimuli and the problems the United States faced. Though there has often been a discussion of foreign policy teams they have usually been explored as a joint-bibliography in the style of Isaacson, Halberstam or Mann, often focusing on what individuals were doing at certain times compared to analysing them as groups that built on each other resulting in a far larger

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pressure for one decision or another.(Issacson and Thomas, 1986a; Halberstam, 1993; Mann, 2004a)

The actors within the George W. Administration have been characterised in numerous ways, but none have stuck so much as the ‘Vulcans’, a term that came to identify the initial campaign team. This was a group identity that the advisors themselves took some ownership of, with Defense Department Comptroller and campaign advisor Dov Zakheim (2019) suggesting in our interview that figures such as Cheney had a relationship with the group and president were different and therefore should he should not be considered as a member. However, though the work of Mann (2004b), the term moved beyond the working campaign group to a catch-all term of advisors within the Bush administration. He argued that the group could be characterised by three elements: A firm belief in American power, a significant background within the national security establishment and finally an optimism about America’s ability to do good in the world and to deal with whatever the future would bring. However, Mann’s argument around the unity of the administration often ignored the significant battles that occurred within the advisory system. To a certain respect, Mann (2020) himself challenged his earlier conception writing suggesting that one of the essential explanatory factors for the national security decision making process in the Bush administration was the ‘Great Rift’ between Secretary of State Colin Powell and Vice President Richard Cheney. The monolithic administration that was perceived in the first term (with a few public outsiders of which Powell was the most notable) was broken down into numerous blocks.

The difficulty of characterising these divisions into clear foreign policy subgroups is a significant barrier to understanding these discussions. Especially in a competitive foreign policy decision structure, it is important to understand who the competition is

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between. Even the name of these groups can cause great disagreement. Some term them as groups, teams, networks, wings, organisations, or factions.(Stern and Sundelius, 1997) Yet at the same time, due to the nature of such groupings in foreign policy decision making, they often a reflective of the time, decision, policy preferences and a host of other factors. In the words of Hudson (2005, p.95) “many games are being played simultaneously, and the set of players in any one game only partially overlaps the set of players in another.” If foreign policy decisions are games, not only will you be assessing which players have stakes in any given area but how close/strong the bonds are within the groups on the sides of the issues. That being accepted, the nature of the policy decision making often results in a trend towards semi-constant groups. But what is the best way to identify them? A significant difficulty is that the US foreign policy decision making is rarely drawn across consistent lines. For example, often figures with similar ideologies may group together in the decision-making process. As Jost et al. (2022) argue the foreign policy decision making literature often assumes “that advisers have stable and well-defined predispositions that shape the way they view foreign policy.” However, this assumption ignores the reality of the interaction of foreign policy decision makers. For those who may believe that a policy is too hawkish and others who believe it may not be hawkish enough may join together to vote down a proposal. On the other hand, someone from a different ideological grouping may be convinced to not involve themselves in a specific decision or support a course of action that is not necessarily ideological consistent in order to achieve their wider goals. As such, grouping advisors by ideology may not be the most useful means of assessing advisor impact.

Instead, it is useful to identify the groups by their ‘informal leaders’.(Metselaar and Verbeek, 1997) Informal leaders can be understood as those figures within the

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administration who due to their position, experience, personality or other factor are perceived as the head of a grouping. By identifying the informal leaders within any group decision process, it is possible to more clearly identify the process where those who are stakeholders within the decision making process are able to influence decisions. With the rise and fall of the groups, leaders are often reflective of the larger balance of power within an administration, rising to prominence within the debates and discussions. This approach has been used successfully when discussing the Bush administration from Mann (2020) who followed the relationship between Cheney and Powell to discuss the development of the Bush administration due to their interconnectivity with the other power centres within the administration. This approach also situates the advisory groupings within personal relations both with each other and the President. As Halperin et al. (1974) suggest that these 'in and outers' or the figures appointed by the president, have only one fixed goal in life and that is to somehow maintain access to the President. By centering these networks through their leaders, it is possible to build these connections as an active process. The flow of 'effectiveness' often results into the movement of people within the administration either into or out of the different groups, meaning the makeup and popularity of the different groups is itself an indicator of advisors relative influence.

Within this thesis, there were three groups that became noticeable within the administration. The first was the Cheney-led grouping that were traditionally of a more conservative and hard-line leaning.(Rothkopf, 2006; Gellman, 2008; Baker, 2013; Mann, 2020) This group included significant players within the administration including Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz and Bolton. Significantly, this grouping were spread around the executive branch. Not only was the Office of the Vice President an influential institution in its own right under Cheney, his interconnectivity within this

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group allowed him to utilise the influence, power and prestige of the NSC, Defense Department and other branches. The second significant grouping was that led by Powell.(DeYoung, 2006; Smith, 2016; Mann, 2020) Of a more moderate, but still within the traditionalist republican mould, Powell led a largely State Department based grouping that involved figures such as Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage. Though there was a significant indication that this grouping would be one of the dominant groups within the administration, by the end of the first term it was clear that they had been outmanoeuvred leading to Powell's resignation. In their place, the third grouping that had slowly formed underneath this division came to the fore. This Rice led group was often obscured in the first term, but often was a significant weight added to the other two on individual policies. However, it was not until the end of the first term that the Rice-led group managed to become a force in their own right. With an increase in Rice's personal prestige, influence and power the group began to become key decision makers within their own nature.

Another debate that has tangential to the administration's Indo-Pacific policy has been a focus on how much dominance a 'Neoconservative' agenda had on the administration. For some, the administration's key figures were taken over by those who were at least fellow travelers if not Neoconservatives themselves.(Callinicos, 2003; Fukuyama, 2006a; George, 2005; Halper & Clarke, 2004; Hirsch, 2003; Packer, 2005; Ryan, 2010) Others, such as Kaplan and Kristol, use the broad principles of the neoconservative agenda but term it under "American internationalism" accrediting some of the key figures with it including Secretary Rumsfeld. This ideology, based on principles of an activist vision of US foreign policy that aims to utilize American hegemony in the creation of a new world order based on democratic ideals, has been associated with the administration with a particular focus on Middle East and

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European relations.(Kaplan & Kristol, 2003) Other figures disagree with this characterization of the administration, including some leading neoconservatives themselves. They suggest instead that “Neoconservatism, properly understood, has been a marginal influence on a foreign policy, which has been characterized primarily by a different kind of conservative ideology”.(Boot, 2009)(see Hurst, 2005; Kagan, 2008) This argument, which this thesis leans towards, argues that although the goals and policies being implemented may have had elements that neoconservatives supported it does not mean that the administration’s key figures were necessarily neoconservative themselves. Though a seemingly narrow distinction, it remains important when discussing policy making to understand where advisers’ priorities lay and how they conceptualize their own ideology. For the purposes of this thesis, instead of positioning the figures into camps based on broad ideology the key advisers are positioned on what policy positions they were taking. As Dueck argues in his work on Republican foreign policy, the policy disagreements within an administration position themselves within the more hawkish policy options available. (Dueck, 2010) As such, this thesis groups advisers on their willingness to expose robust and coercive policy options compared to those who were more interested in moderate and engagement directions. This is then adapted to the policy issue, so that when there are divisions between advisers on policy rationales these are discussed even when the ‘policy preference’ remains the same.

Why the Indo-Pacific?

The year 2000 fell between two eras. America had become the sole superpower. Western Europe had grown into a dominant economic and democratic power, Russia had become introspective, and a new ‘American century’ beckoned. Though the 20th

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century had largely been defined geographically by the Atlantic Ocean, the center of US foreign policy was shifting dramatically eastwards. China had outrun the debates of the 1990's about whether it would rise, becoming the second biggest economy and the greatest potential challenger to the United States. Meanwhile India, with its ever-growing population and its development of nuclear weapons, teetered on the edge of war over Kashmir with Pakistan. If one nuclear crisis was not enough, the North Korean undermining of the Agreed Framework that had bound its ambitions to become a member of the nuclear club raised the specter of the Hermit Kingdom being able to destroy not only US allies in South Korea and Japan but to reach the US homeland. Although Obama would later take credit for his 'pivot to Asia', the roots of the policy and the laying of the groundwork that would define Asia policy occurred between 2000 and 2008. (Silove, 2016) It was Bush's team who managed to build a relationship with India that defied expectations and reduced the danger of non-state actors gaining access to nuclear secrets. It was this administration that would settle on a policy of 'Congagement' of China that would define the following two decades, raising two competing policies of both bringing China into the international system (engagement) whilst restricting its rise until it made movements towards a more democratic system (Containment). And it was the Bush administration which took the risk after a policy of isolating North Korea bore no fruit to engage with Pyongyang through a brand-new multilateral framework that offered his successor (untaken) opportunities to reform the East Asian security system.

The 9/11 attacks changed the focus of the Bush administration so that the Indo-Pacific has often been treated as an afterthought, both from contemporary sources and historians. The administration became synonymous with the failed wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, obscuring the administrations relative success in the Indo-Pacific region.

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Whilst not ignoring the wars, this thesis positions the conflicts as factors that affected the administration's policy towards the Indo-Pacific instead of the focus. (For a selection of works that focus on Iraq in more detail see Daalder & Lindsey, 2003; Mann, 2004; Packer, 2005; Ricks, 2007, 2009; Robinson, 2008) This emulates Schwarz's approach to Johnson and Europe in the context of Vietnam as the predominant focus and aims to expand the view of the administration by focusing on some of the areas that have been obscured by the shadow of Iraq. Schwartz argues, often the crisis of the day obscures the nature of American foreign policy by removing focus from the underlying management of strategic, economic interests and military engagements that can have the greater impact. (Schwartz, 2003) As such this thesis does not focus on the story of the decision-making around the build-up to wars and the policy developments, including the Surge, but builds on the existing literature to instead treat the wars as any other factor; namely by focusing on intersection with the region. Figures such as George Bush, Vice President Richard Cheney, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of State Colin Powell, and National Security Advisor (and future Secretary of State) Condoleezza Rice became oversized characters in these critiques of the administration's policies both generally and in Iraq and Afghanistan, each being criticized, defended and reassessed many times over. These analyses of the advisers obscure their impact on the Indo-Pacific policy decision-making and offers an incomplete analysis of what the administration was trying to accomplish and their methods in doing so. Though these advisers were impacted by Iraq and Afghanistan in different ways, both positively and negatively, these were not the only factors that existed. Therefore, this thesis aims to build these factors into a more general framework that allows for a wider and more nuanced look at the administration's policies. Whilst Iraq and Afghanistan have received considerable

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attention, the lessons from the Indo-Pacific policies may become more significant for future scholars as the region becomes more important in US foreign policy.

Thesis Structure

Following this introduction, Chapter 2 outlines and explores the methodological questions behind the thesis. It argues for a case study approach that can be used to generalize findings from the thesis and explores the difficulties and methods surrounding elite interviewing. Chapter 3 sets out the theoretical framework used for the project, explaining its roots in Foreign Policy Analysis and outlining the two-part framework used within the rest of the thesis. The following chapters begin the analysis of the Bush Administration. Chapter 4 outlines the power structure in the period between the campaign and 9/11, arguing that though Cheney and Rumsfeld's network of more hawkish advisers had advantages it was relatively balanced. Chapter 5 utilizes this explanation of the power balance to analyse why the India, North Korea and China policies of the administration followed their relative directions until 9/11. Chapter 6 analyses the period between 9/11 and 2004, arguing that this had a significant impact on the foreign policy decision-making power balance in favour of those who believed in a more hawkish approach. Chapter 7 then focuses on three Indo-Pacific country policies in this period, centering on the impact the attacks and subsequent wars had on the decision-making process. Chapter 8 moves onto the 2nd term, arguing that the foreign policy process became more effective and well managed, as well as less hawkish due to a variety of factors. Chapter 9 then uses the three policies to consider these changes. Finally, Chapter 10 summarizes the thesis, offers some concluding thoughts and argues for future avenues of research. Twenty years after the administration began, this is an opportunity to reassess Bush's legacy in the Indo-Pacific. As Michael Green argues, the role of Iraq in obscuring the administration's

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regional legacy is not something that is easy to overcome, but something that requires “attention and recalibration”. (Green, 2008, p. 181) By viewing the administration’s agenda through the lens of competing figures’ influence, this thesis contributes to this recalibration looking at the totality of the Bush administration’s foreign policy beyond the shadow of Iraq.

Chapter 1 Methodology

Using a comparative case-study approach, this thesis examines the Bush administration to create a more nuanced understanding of how the changing power balance within the advisory system shaped the decision-making process outcomes. This section outlines the purpose of a qualitative case-study approach in creating generalisations which can then be tested through further research. This leads to a discussion of the methods used and their utility in developing information to create these generalisations, including the value of elite interviewing. This will lay the groundwork for the development of a framework to discuss advisory power balance shifts in the next section, placing it within the tradition of foreign policy analysis.

Case Studies

Before discussing the utility of case studies in international relations scholarship it is important to define what is meant by the term and the purpose of case study analysis. In this thesis, a case study is defined as a unit of analysis that is composed of a singular 'bounded system'.(Hammersley and Gomm, 2000) A bounded system is any system with clearly defined distinctions between itself and the outside, broadening traditional ideas that focused on one particular event or individual to a larger range of units. Though a case study may contain sub-systems, these should not be the focus. For example, though a factory may divide into smaller teams, it can still be differentiated between those inside and outside the bounded system. As Eckstein indicates, this can be across any level from the individual to transnational.(Eckstein, 2000) For example, a case study could be a specific political leader, village, company, or the United

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Nations. However, bounded case studies should not be removed entirely from its surrounding culture. Instead, there should be an understanding of where the boundaries can be viewed as 'permeable'.(Geertz, 2000, p. 7) However, the focus and the context should be constantly related back to its impact on the factory. A case study is therefore defined by its focus and the creation of boundaries about what it includes and what it does not. Within this thesis the case studies under consideration are the three time periods within the administration of pre-9/11(including the election and transition), 9/11 to the end of the first term and finally the second term. These cases are delineated by time rather than other factors due to what Bartless and Varus (2017) argue is the ability to 'trace' the development of processes allowing the separation of the unit (in this case the advisory network system within the Bush presidential administration) from the other impacts on the administration. Though the foreign policy decisions were responsive to different factors (including the respective countries themselves), by placing these as indices allows the changing of the foreign policy behaviour to be measured over the differing periods. By focusing on the periods as the case, it permits the centring of the foreign policy actors impact to be placed at the core of the theoretical framework compared to the policy areas themselves.

Whilst case study approaches occur within the unit of analysis, extensive approaches compare different units of the same level. In the factory metaphor above, an analysis of the effect of the management style on the productivity of the workers may indicate that a certain style of management has the effect of increasing workers' enthusiasm and therefore is beneficial to productivity. An extensive approach, on the other hand, may compare factories to see if the factors identified in the first case study are salient to a general hypothesis. As Mitchell argued, between the 1950's and 1990's there was a sharp decline in the use of case studies, with many favouring more extensive

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qualitative, new technologies and quantitative methods that allowed bigger ‘N’ studies.(George and Bennett, 1005; Mitchel, 2000) Since then case study methods have resurged with many commenting on its renewed place in social science discourse. (Swanborn, 2010; Crasnow, 2012) It is clear that even with further technological advances the dominance of the large number studies that focus on an extensive study of the phenomenon at hand has been undercut by a resurgence in the ‘natural’ small or singular case study. As Swanborn argues the purpose of a case study is not to be able to prove so called ‘laws’ but to be able to indicate the answers to broad research questions that can be followed up with further case studies to define whether it is typical or not.(Swanborn, 2010) Viewing case studies from this lens, as a theory generating exercise, rather than one of proof is critical to its application.

Adaptability is critical to case study analysis. As Lincoln and Gruba state “the only generalization is that there is no generalization”. (Lincoln and Guba, 2000, p. 25) They expand by arguing “Constant Flux militates against conclusions that are always and forever true; they can only be said to be true under such and such conditions and circumstances”.(Lincoln and Guba, 2000, p. 39) Instead of generalizations they propose the idea of the ‘working hypotheses’. Creating a working hypothesis allows the transfer to other locales which can add or remove from the hypothesis. For example, going back to the factory example, the first hypothesis may argue that strong feedback mechanisms improve productivity. The next case study that applies the working hypothesis to another factory discovers that this only applies when the workers respect the leadership. Therefore, our hypothesis changes. The usefulness of a working hypothesis is that it allows for development and does not remain static and isolated. Instead, it allows an ongoing process that develops a theory of causal effect without committing to the need for generalizations. Only by having the detailed

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research that can come through a narrowly defined case study can these initial observations create working hypotheses give us the conditions for further testing. These can then be tested using different case studies to define the limits of when the approach is useful and when it is not. Therefore, though the working thesis statement remains **‘The change in the balance of power in the informal advisory networks headed by Vice-President Cheney and Secretary Rice was the most significant factor in the shift in foreign policy between the two terms’**, the conclusion will outline a general working hypothesis that **‘changes in advisory power networks balance of power can explain why changes in policy occur in the US foreign decision-making process’**. Then, using the framework that will be developed in the next section, this can be tested on other presidential administrations and foreign policy decisions.

With this hypothesis, the next step is to develop a set of research questions. Case studies are viewed as the ‘testing grounds’ of research questions, hypotheses, approaches and frameworks. The question’s purpose is to define several factors and deduce their importance to the outcome. This cause of effects’ premise is central to understanding what case studies are useful for when deciding whether it has utility to the project in question.(Mahoney and Goerts, 2006)

In terms of this thesis, the research questions are:

1. Where were the milestones that represented the changing balance of power between advisers?
2. How did the changing balance of advisers’ power effect policies?
3. How important was Bush to the change in advisers’ power?
4. Were the policy changes beneficial to US foreign policy?

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These questions set out the parameters of the case study and define the aims of the thesis.

However, proving that a case study works in the singular is not the sole purpose of the case study approach. The benefit of this approach is that it allows generalizations to be created. As Moses and Knutson suggest a case study is interesting because of "...a larger theoretical concern or a specific research project".(Moses and Knutsen, 2007, p. 133) A case study contributes to the creation of a "database for the construction and testing of theories".(Moses and Knutsen, 2007, p. 133) This logic is critical to the understanding of what the purpose of the project is. Therefore the larger contribution of this project, is to use the lessons learned in the Bush administration to generate a theory that can be replicated in a more extensive study that could in turn contribute to a 'middle range' theory.(McGowan and Shapiro, 1973) By creating a framework, the thesis allows the testing and replication of the conditions needed to be analysed within different cases of presidential administrations' decision-making processes. This further research will answer questions of whether the Bush administration is the typical, 'least likely' or 'most likely' case. Therefore, this case study is not creating general causal factors but rather articulates that this could be one of the causing factors that can then be tested in future research which can then factor selection bias into the case selection process.

Information gathering techniques

Having now justified the use of a case study approach, this chapter will discuss its methods of data collection. Beyond the use of available literature and archival resources, the original data used in this project came from elite interviews. This section

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outlines the assumptions behind the interview methods chosen and some of the assumptions within the interview selection process.

An interview's purpose is to see the things that are unavailable from document analysis. Or in the words of Atkinson and Silverman, the "open-ended interview offers the opportunity for an authentic gaze into the soul of another".(Atkinson, Silverman and Kundera, 1997, p. 304) As such, the type of questions and how the questions are asked determine what information is discovered. There are three types of interview conducted: non-structured, semi-structured and structured. Structured interview is a series of closed questions that allows control of the process and a replicability across multiple interviews. Conversely, the semi-structured interview gives the qualitative researcher reflexivity to respond to the dynamics of conversations whilst allowing them to gather information they need. Though both have advantages, they provide different types of information. Though a structured interview is useful for creation of data that can be compared and contrasted, semi structured interviews offer more unforeseen information. They indicate why people did what they chose to do. Especially with elite interviews, semi-structured approaches allow the researcher the opportunity to react 'on the fly' by following up on promising paths of inquiry.(Packer, 2018)

This thesis requires an understanding of not only when the power balance changed between the two advisory groups but how and why. Part of this is based on the interpretations of what was going on at the time, where the information that led to the decision-maker's interpretation of different events came from and how the personal relationships between the key characters were established. As such it is primarily actor focused and therefore requires the types of opinion and explanation that can only be given in a semi-structured interview. As Morris argues, this is central constructivist

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research and failing to acknowledge this epistemological assumption can lead to confusion and misuse of information.(Morris, 2009) By allowing the interviewee the freedom to expand their own assumptions and logic, not only does the interviewer get useful content but also an understanding of the interviewee's personality. Richards argues an interview's "function is to provide the political scientist with an insight into the mind-set of the actors who have played a role in shaping the society in which we live and an interviewee's subjective analysis of a particular episode or situation".(Richards, 1996, p. 199) By placing the mind-set of the interviewee at the forefront, it allows a greater interviewer understanding and allows them to challenge their own assumptions about why decisions were made.

When discussing interviews, it is important to establish who and why you are choosing the participants. This raises two issues; the selection of who counts as elites and how to ensure fair representation. The term 'elite' has been defined in numerous different ways from those at the top of a profession to those who have a large effect on the social and political role on society.(Zuckerman, 1972; Seldon, 1988; Morris, 2009) Zukerman goes further arguing that even within this elite there is an 'Ultra elite' that is "a typically thin layer of people who exhibit especially great influence, authority, or power, and who generally have the highest prestige within what is a prestigious collective to begin with".(Zuckerman, 1972, p. 159) Though this division between the 'ultra' and 'normal' elites is as arbitrary as the difference between elite and expert, it is important to note that not all elites are equals. Those at the higher end of the elite spectrum are far more likely to have the information needed but are also more likely to encounter the problems found within elite interviewing.

For example, they are often in high demand and unlikely to be as amenable to interviews with scholars who lack a research reputation or connections within the inner

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circle. In this project, an initial target for interviewing was President George W. Bush himself. However, after getting in contact with the President's office it became clear that an interview was unlikely both due to the President's attempts to distance himself from the current political debates and from his highly busy schedule. Furthermore, 'ultra-elites' within the presidential advisory field are likely to have interests and job opportunities that can reduce their willingness to discuss previous work. Perhaps the most notable example of this in this project was found when requesting interviews with Ambassador to the United Nations John Bolton. Soon after the interview request, Bolton was appointed as National Security Adviser to President Donald Trump. This not only reduced the likelihood of an interview but also showed the difficulty when key figures within the project can be viewed as likely to continue to have political careers as the research is being undertaken. For these figures, the lack of interviews meant that it was integral to find different ways of researching their opinions on critical issues. Most notably, this included the use of their autobiographies. As of writing, the only senior adviser focused on in this thesis not to have written an autobiography is Hadley. Autobiographies, though biased and flawed resources, are useful in reflecting the events from the view of the adviser. As Cole argues, presidential autobiographies are interesting because they provide a unique vantage point that no other writer can effectively achieve.(Cole, 2010) In a similar manner, autobiographies of advisers to the presidents are critical in understanding not only their interpretations but how events went through them as members of the inner circle. Popkins suggests this draws the causal link between intentions and results, describing mind sets as well as justifications.(Popkin, 1999)

It is important to have a representative sample of different opinions and those who lean towards different networks within the administration. As interviewers have a

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limited time and budget, it is important to ensure that the sample size can reflect these leanings. As such, research should be done extensively before the sending out of interview requests to allow as wide a range of sources as possible. (Magnussun and Marecek, 2018) For this thesis, it was important to divide the figures encountered based on their likely ideological leanings.. For example, on the issue of North Korea, Ambassador to the United Nation's John Bolton and NSC staff member Robert Joseph had very different interpretations to Ambassador Charles Pritchard. Therefore, interview requests were aimed to reflect this imbalance of opinion. Beyond this need for representation, it is also important to gauge the reason why people are willing to be interviewed. Some are towards the end of their careers and may not be entering government again whilst others may be looking for future roles. This is likely to impact their responses, with some interested in personal legacy building whilst others may be aiming to settle scores and challenge prevailing negative narratives. As such, the interviewer should keep this bias at the forefront of their mind to help weigh the value of their information.

The process used to find participants for the interviews took a number of steps. The first of these was to conduct a brief literature review, identifying the ideological leanings and important actors. This 'purposive sampling', where by those people who were believed to have insight into the issue were chosen.(Bryman, 2012; Nudzor, 2013) The criteria used for designating whether someone would be contacted for interview was threefold. Firstly, did they hold a position within the administration focused on the conduct of US foreign policy, especially within the areas of China, North Korea and Japan? Secondly, did they contribute to the selection aim of a range of views agencies, departments and/or ideological stances? Finally, was it there an accessible method of contacting them? If they met these criteria, a introduction email

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outlining the researchers history, the project and the expectations of an hour long interview were sent. When personal emails were not accessible, organisation emails were contacted to attempt to increase response rates. On rare occasions, alternative methods as LinkedIn were used to conduct initial contact. Though there is some research surrounding practice around LinkedIn recruitment for participation in research, including most notably Stokes Et Al. (2019) , the ethical and practical considerations of conducting participant recruitment at an elite level has been under investigated. Significantly, this might become a more prevalent opportunity for researchers to contact research participants in the future however for the Bush administrations factors such as age and retirement may have limited the usability of this as a source.

Beyond the initial purposive sampling, a ‘Snowballing sampling’ technique was used where participants were asked to suggest other worthwhile potential interview targets. A significant advantage of a snowballing methodology is the ability to assist the researcher in moving past gatekeepers.(Mendez, 2020) Due to the nature of those chosen for interview, the participants are often not only high influential in their field and have significant commitments but also are likely to be repeatedly asked for interviews. By receiving a referral from someone trusted, there is a higher likelihood of successful uptake. This was particularly useful in the case of Douglas Paal. Colonel Wilkinson allowed the use of his name when making the introductory email to help show both credibility that the research was worth while and also to help build a connection. A disadvantage of a ‘snowballing’ sampling methodology is the potential to introduce bias. As Noy(2008) argues, the ability to provide further access to interview recipients is inherently a process that removes control from the researcher. As such, the interactions post snowball have an impact on the knowledge collected,

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creating associations within the mind of the recipient that might otherwise have not been there. This could impact the resulting data. Furthermore, it can lead to overrepresentation of certain communities within the elite pool. This can create bias issues and needs to be actively compensated when possible. However, these disadvantages are not enough to dissuade the use of snowballing due to the greater access opportunities and ease of overcoming potential gatekeeping that it provides.

Chapter 2 Comparative framework: How to use intra-group power dynamics to understand foreign policy decision-making.

Having discussed the methodology, this chapter will define a comparative framework that focuses on the power dynamics that affect both the build-up to the decisions and how these decisions were implemented by the Bush administration. First, this chapter places the work in the context of the FPA literature and outline some of the different ways to analyse foreign policy decision-making and power. It will then go on to outline a two-part model which places differing factors involved in the creation of an imbalanced internal power dynamic critical for a decision to be made when two or more competing sub-groups are conflicting over policy.

Models of Decision Making

Decisions are by their nature a series of resolutions to a series of conflicts between choices, both internal and external, otherwise there would not be a need to decide at all. Hermann proposed a framework that categorises decision-makers into three categories based on where the authoritative decision-making unit resides. (Hermann, 2001) This unit (individual or group) has the ability to commit the resources of the government to implementing decisions and prevent any other grouping from stopping them. A unit can be categorised in one of three ways; predominant leader, single group and a coalition.(C. Hermann *et al.*, 2001; Hagan *et al.*, 2001; Hermann, 2001; M. Hermann *et al.*, 2001) However, the United States has aspects of all three of these groups, creating a complicated dynamic for analysis.

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The 'Predominant leader' is the single 'decider' that has the power to make the final decision. This can be a dictator, a monarch, or an elected official. Though other people will be involved in the decision-making, the decision-maker sits at the top of the hierarchy and can control the bureaucracy beneath them. Abraham Lincoln's decision-making regarding the emancipation proclamation is an effective example of how this applies to the President. In the face of large-scale resistance from his cabinet, he said "seven nays and one aye. The ayes have it". Even though his cabinet was built to represent a 'team of rivals', the role of the cabinet is to advise the President not to overrule them.(Goodwin, 2013) This was essential to the founder's perception of governance.(Hamilton *et al.*, 2008) The President lacking complete executive power would limit the ability of the executive to respond efficiently and effectively in a time of crisis. Though there were numerous checks placed on the President, within certain boundaries they have the sole authority to wield executive authority. As such the President is the final decider, giving them the ability to commit the entire executive and country to any given choice that they choose to be involved in.

If the individual is the decision-making unit, then the important subject of analysis is how they perceive the decision, the choices available and the outcome wanted. As Falkowski argues it is critical to the view the decisions through reference to the flexibility afforded to the individual decision-maker to receive feedback and adjust.(Falkowski, 1979) As such, the analysis can be taken to be understanding how the individual receives information and communicates decisions. Hudson argues "Each decision-maker's mind is a microcosm of the variety possible in a given society".(Hudson and Vore, 1995, p. 217) It is important to bring together not only the understanding of the current political situation but the personal history of the leader. When focusing on a predominant leader, is also important to understand the

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weaknesses of the individual in terms of information overload, bounded rationality and the time/spacial restraints.(Cottam, 1977; Simon, 1997) Only by synthesising these disparate information strands is it possible to understand decisions.

When multiple autonomous actors all have the ability to effect and block policy the foreign policy decision-making process, this can be viewed as ‘government by coalition’.(Hagan *et al.*, 2001) An example of this is the US checks and balances system. Congress has numerous foreign policy powers. As Lindsay argues the pendulum between the two branches develop over time, with various Congresses differing willingness to restrain the President.(Lindsay, 2012) For example, the reassertion of Congressional authority manifested itself over the 1973 War Powers Act which ensured that Congress was able to be a significant actor in US foreign policy.(Spong, 1975) However, in many cases Congresses formal powers have been so weakened by institutional changes that they no longer act as an effective veto-point. For example, although the Senate has authority to give advice and consent over senior appointments, the general norm is that they will acquiesce to the President in choosing his own team. Similarly, the more common use of Executive Agreements over treaties has allowed the Executive to bypass Congress, reducing the importance of the domestic level in Putnam’s two level game.(Putnam, 2009) Though Ramsey argues that Executive Agreements are rooted in the Constitution, he suggests that the high usage and broad nature illustrate the Executive’s dominance of modern politics.(Ramsey, 2006) As such, though the different coalition groups are still important within the development of American foreign policy decisions, the coalition model no longer seems a suitable tool of analysis.

Compared to a predominant leader, a small group approach allows the aggregation of group members’ personal characteristics to understand how they made decisions. A

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'Group' theory of analysis is useful when two or more people are communicating directly with one another to collectively decide.(C. Hermann *et al.*, 2001) It is important to not underestimate the impact on decision-making, as in an unstructured process the result can even surprise the decision-makers involved.(Stern, Sundelius and Hart, 1997) As such, the mere act of a decision being made by a group changes the likely outcome. Janis argues that group processes are affected by range of psychological processes including 'Groupthink', something administrations should correct for in deciding their decision-making structures.(Janis, 1982) By analysing decisions along the key three characteristics of estimation of the group, the closed/open-mindedness of the group and the pressures to uniformity, Janis is able to suggest whether a decision is more likely to end in fiasco or not.(Janis, 1982)

When discussing group decisions, it is important to analyse not only the information available and personal characteristics of the members, but also their information management and processes. As Stern et al argue, these have to be reanalysed for each group as "structures of decision-making are highly variable across political systems, policy domains, and incumbent governments,"(Stern, Sundelius and Hart, 1997, p. 9) suggesting that even though some generalities can be taken from a systematic theory, the group processes needed to be adapted to the situation. For example, Saunders argues presidential success is dependent on their willingness to delegate and their experience.(Saunders, 2017, 2018) By creating a general rule of thumb that can be applied to a range of circumstances, it is possible understand the effect group behaviour has on decision-making.

Administrations often decide as a group. This occurs not only when the President delegates authority but in most major decisions.(C. Hermann *et al.*, 2001) By forming what Rothkopf calls the 'De Facto National Security Council', made up of the

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Presidents most trusted advisers including members of Executive Office of the President (EXOP), such as the Chief of Staff, the National Security Adviser (NSA) and the formal National Security Council (NSC), cabinet secretaries and other significant figures, the President is agreeing to delegate some of their power to ensure its success. Advisers also have real power in being able to limit the President and exert influence. (Allison and Zelikow, 1999; Rothkopf, 2006; Destler I.M, 2012) Their institutional power and prestige can lead them to be critical 'fire alarms'.(Saunders, 2015, 2017, 2018) Though adviser's power have limits to thwart a President whose decisions are firm, it can be critical to shaping its implementation. There is also a legal requirement to have a NSC including the Secretaries of State, Defense and the NSA giving them a constitutional power base that suggests, even if it does not enforce, that the President should be required to have some form of consultative body that includes figures that have Senate consent.(*The National Security Act of 1947*, 1947) Taken together, this suggests that though the President may be able to act as predominant leader in theory it is often a group who make the decision.

A Discussion of Power

The idea of power is at the heart of advisory politics. Before beginning some work defining what is meant by power and power balances, a quick note on terminology is needed. In this thesis, the idea of power is often used interchangeability with influence, control and authority.(Lukes, 2004) This is often due not to identify differences in the forms of power but instead that within the realm of political decision making the concepts often struggle to be demarcated. (Willer *et al.*, 1997) In a traditional pluralist view of power, A has power over B when they can make B to do something they would not traditionally do. (Dahl, 1957, 1989) As Lukes(2004) argues this perception of power is focused on the resolution of conflict as it allows the decision's outcome to

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‘uncover’ the underlying power balance. Importantly, power can be both excised and held in reserve, meaning if the possibility of person A acting has an impact on person B actions then power can be passively exerted.(Dahl, 1957) Though this complicates the observation of power exertion, it allows a better understanding of the relations between the advisors within the decision making framework. Though this complicates the observation of power exertion, it allows a better understanding of the relations between the advisors within the decision making framework.

However, power often moves beyond this ‘first face’ and has multiple dimensions. As importantly within foreign policy decision making is the second face of power which is the creation or reinforcing of values and practices that benefit the person exercising power.(Bachrach and Baratz, 1975) Within American foreign policy decision making, this often manifests itself as the domination of agenda setting, information supply, areas of interest and other factors. This ‘non-decision making’ works to create a mobilisation of bias, where those with second face power a better placed to protect their own interests within a policy decision making process. This suggests that by creating or manipulating the institutional setting within a decision making process, figures can exert power. (Lukes, 2004) This is not to go so far as to infringe on the third dimensional view outlined by Lukes(2004), where power can be viewed as the manifestation and control of the systems of behaviour that have been conditioned within those part of the system (an area that of power that often goes beyond the scope of this study but can be seen in the discussion of neo-conservatism(George, 2005; Cooper, 2011)), but allows the idea of latent conflict or the conflict that would exist if brought to the surface but that does not make it due to the actions of those involved in the decision making process. This suggests that the non-events, or why decisions are

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not discussed, is also a manifestation of the participants power on the decision-making system.

How these two forms of power manifest within the US foreign decision-making process varies. Instead of viewing sources of power as fixed points on a scale that can be compared and quantified within a hierarchy, instead 'powers' should be viewed as working within boundaries of effectiveness. Some manifestations of power are symmetrical, in so far as actors exert power in both directions within the relationship, or asymmetrical, or when power is exerted one way. (Brams, 1968) Likewise, some factors that lead to power can be effective in some situations whilst less effective in others depending on the contextual factors. Though some may be viewed as more consistently effective (including a close presidential relationship) this does not mean that other powers would not be more influential within any one decision process. As such, when considering the factors that impact the decision making power balance, it is important to situate within the decisions themselves including the actors involved.

A Framework for assessing the power balance within inter-group decision making

Purpose and assumptions of the framework

Having now discussed the theoretical underpinnings of both group decision making and power, the remainder of the chapter shall develop the comparative framework used within the rest of the thesis. The expectation of the framework is that it will allow two goals. Firstly, it allows the assessment of the forms and relative strength of advisors power. By doing this, it places actors at the heart of the decision making process and allows the identification of their influence. Secondly, it allows the assessment of the overall foreign policy decision making balance. As such, it is

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important to identify the indicators of the comparative framework, allowing the identification of the similarities and dissimilarities within the case.(Vannoni, 2015) By setting out the factors used to assess where power lies, it is possible to see the trends within the power balance within a political system. Though this comparative framework will be used specifically within the context of the Bush administration, the wider applicability to US foreign policy decision making should be highlighted. The factors identified are transferable and can be developed and specialised to identify where power comes from within the American foreign policy decision making process. The framework can also be used to compare not only the environment within administrations, but between administrations allowing the assessment of relative power dependent on the positions held. By identifying shifts in why the Secretary of States role may be perceived differently within an administration inside the relative constant of the modern role.

It is important to set out a few assumptions before discussing the theoretical framework in detail. The first is the nature of role conceptions and its effect on group decision processes. Allison articulates the idea that where you sit effects the way you think. (Allison and Zelikow, 1999) He suggests the role conception of members of decision-making groups within the US often have numerous political and personal roles that are in competition. Not only do these role conceptions matter differently to the different occupiers, they all happen simultaneously and subconsciously resulting in a decision preference that may or may not represent the interests of the person in each role conception. For example, one Cabinet Secretary may view their role as the presidential representative within the department as more important than their role as department representative to the President. Not only is this important within the

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adviser's personal decision process, but changes the pressures within the group.(Sprout and Sprout, 1957)

As Krasner argues, this is critical as assumptions about where an advisor's view on an issue is are more nuanced than a 'rational' analysis provides.(Krasner, 1972) Rational models are bound by flawed conceptions of utility which can lead to the advisor misunderstanding their own gains, resulting in the 'personal baggage' that an adviser has becoming far more important than their position. (Levy *et al.*, 1997) For example, Secretary Baker's switch from his role as Secretary of State to Chief of Staff fundamentally changed his role within the administration and his priorities to domestic policies and administrative coordination which limited his foreign policy impact.(Cohen, 2002) Though formal roles are important, informal roles matter too. For example, Janis articulates that it is important to have a figure who fulfils the role of 'Cassandra's advocate'.(Janis, 1982) Within the administration, it is critical to set out an opposing voice to allow different policy options to be included in the discussion. However, this internalised dissent can often be harmful to the impact of the person who comes to fulfil this position. For example, Under-Secretary of State George Ball was considered a tame dove in the Johnson administration which resulted in there only being a 'shallow' multiple advocacy system that never seriously challenged the overriding consensus.(Gelb, 1979; Renshon and Renshon, 2008) These informal roles within the administration vary not only by the ideological preferences of the advisers involved but also how they (and often the President) view themselves.

The second assumption is that advisers do not act alone. Within the group, there are often sub-groups that coalesce. Sometimes these are based on ideological grounds but other times it can be based on factors such as seniority and when people joined presidential campaigns. As no man is an island, no individual is brought into a

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campaign without some connection to either the President or their colleagues within the administration. As Issacson and Roberts highlight, foreign policy has often been conducted between well connected groups that self-recruit and bring each other into administrations. (Bethall, 1979; Issacson and Thomas, 1986a; Roberts, 1992) US Trade Representative (USTR) Robert Zoellick, who had work with Bush and Cheney had introduced future Chief of Staff Josh Bolten to the campaign team. (Author Interview with Zakheim, 2020) These connections fundamentally change the way that foreign policy is made, not only by bringing key actors into the room but also changing the interactions between them. By being able to lean on positive relationships from previous experience, their pattern of behaviours are likely to change. A framework looking at the foreign policy decision-making process should therefore incorporate not only the hierarchical relationships between the President and his advisers but also how the relationships between the advisers and how they change over the course of an administration.

This suggests the third and final assumption that these relationships are not constant but develop over time, with success and failures of individuals changing the power balance between them. As Hermann and Hagan argue, it is important to look at where power actually lies at the time the decision is made, not where it is expected to be. (Hermann and Hagan, 1998) For example, the President's powers vary dependent on the electoral cycle as influence in the second term is inherently more limited by their position as 'lame ducks' under the 25th amendment. (Crockett, 2008; Potter, 2016) The perception that presidential power changes over time changes decision-making processes. For example, when a President is less confident about decision-making in his first term he may be likely to lean on experience to compensate, depending on the personality type of the President and their familiarity with international

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affairs.(Saunders, 2017) As such, experienced advisers may lose influence with the President's needs likely to decrease as they become more comfortable with the role. Similarly, advisers influence depends on external factors. The Defense Secretaries importance would increase in times of conflict compared to times of peace. As such, for a framework to be effective in explaining how foreign policy decisions are affected by an internal power balance, it needs to incorporate multiple periods of time to show the development of the relationships. It also needs to explore how the relationships developed till the point of decisions and how it developed after the decision was made. Having now set out some of the assumptions the framework is built on, this chapter will now explore how the framework has been conceptualised and the reason for this. It firstly will analyse the environmental and personal factors which developed the power balance that defined the boundaries of the decision-making process.(Simon, 1997) The focus of this analysis will be actor-centric. As such, information and their interpretation will be viewed through the lens of the actor and how it shaped both their understanding of the decision and their action within the decision-making process. Part of this requires what Marsden calls a "dominant inference paradigm". (Marsden, 2005, p. 18) This paradigm suggests that there is an underlying assumption that all actions made by the actor were intended to achieve the optimal result. However, there are a couple of caveats to this argument. Firstly, mistakes may dramatically impact decisions. Secondly, it is important to identify the non-siloed nature of decisions. Often decisions were not made in a consecutive order. This is important as it suggests that there are inherent trade-offs between advisers when deciding how to advocate for a range of policies simultaneously. Advisers often prioritise their own interests and advocate for the best overall position compared to the best in a specific policy area.

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Power balance environment

The power balance environment is created by a set of factors that can be separated into five broad categories. The first of these is the ‘**institutional factors**’ that define the roles and rules that the decision-making group is bound by due to convention and law. These are longer term factors that set the traditional boundaries of power that give certain benefits or disadvantages to different advisers not specific to the administration. The second category of factors are the ‘**internal rules**’ that allow certain figures specific rights of access to different parts of the process. The third category are the broader ‘**external environment**’. This is the favourability of the time to a certain ideology and can be shaped by a diverse range of sources such as public opinion, prevailing interpretations of events and congressional power balance. The fourth factor is the ‘**presidential position**’. This is the place the President has in the policy decision-making and where his base point of beliefs is. The final set of factors are the ‘**personal factors.**’ These involve not only the individual’s history and traits but also their interpersonal relationships. These categories are neither all-encompassing nor rigid. For example, the institutional factors are reinterpreted in each administration and therefore often share similarities with administration specific rules.(Rothkopf, 2006; Daalder and Destler, 2009) Similarly, the personal relationships of advisers to specific congressional allies may profoundly affect the external environment. Furthermore, all these categories are not equally always weighted. Sometimes the prevailing external environment may be more significant and more limiting than at other times, whilst the President may be more involved in certain policy areas compared to others. However, the categories allow a rough conceptualization of the power balance. By grouping the factors together and

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illustrating how they effected the power balance it is possible to compare events that having similar outcomes and rationales.

The institutional factors are the ‘blueprints’ of the bureaucratic arena where all the administration’s battles occur. As Ikenberry argues, the ‘State’ is not only the individuals that make up the government “it is also a piece of strategically important terrain, which shapes the entire course of political battles and sometimes provides the resource and advantages necessary to win them”.(Ikenberry, 1988, p. 220) The ability of the State Department to call on a wide array of area specific experts that are often at the heart of policy formation inherently benefits the Secretary of State compared to the Attorney General, giving them a higher likelihood to become more involved in foreign policy decisions no matter who occupies which position. Allison’s categorisation of some roles as Chiefs (or department heads), staffers, ad-hoc players or Indians (political appointees set within departments), illustrates the roles that are generally in existence that give advisers differing advantages and disadvantages.(Allison and Zelikow, 1999) Furthermore, some departments have traditional positions of influence which move them beyond the actual power the department has. For example, the Defense Secretary not only has the largest budget of any foreign policy department but has a significant historical legacy. Their institutional role as set out in the 1947 National Security Act and within the chain of command virtually requires their input no matter who is in the role. Though there has been a large variety of types of Secretary, the variation happens within boundaries set by the institutional powers of the office. (Stevenson, 2006)

Furthermore, the institutional roles or setting profoundly impacts the personality and role played by the incumbents. For example, Andeweg articulates the idea of political appointees ‘going native’.(Andeweg, 2000) Within different departments, different

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institutional visions and cultures profoundly impact the pre-decisions that set the boundaries for the decision-making group. For example, Nash argues that State inherently has a longer-term view of foreign policy that is unsuited to the short term wishes of the political appointees who often want to respond aggressively to crises.(Nash, 1973) Similarly, the military establishment have their own institutional beliefs and culture which can fuel strategies and interests of key advisers.(Ricks, 2007, 2009) By immersing themselves in these cultures, advisers' policy inclinations and responses are likely to be effected. In analysing the institutional powers, it is possible to get a base line for decisions that sets out the boundaries for the policy decision group to move in. Significantly, it also allows the ability to set a base line where advisers are 'expected' to be on policy. When they go against this or follow perception of where the institutional base is can create or reduce costs.(Schultz *et al.*, 2005; Trager and Vavreck, 2011) For example, if a Secretary of State is in favour of using military force to create conflict then it is going to seem more like a reasoned position than if it is only the Defense Secretary advocating for it. This is due to the perception that it would be working against their bureaucratic interests. As such, these institutional factors can be both a constraining and enabling factor that effects the agency of an adviser.

Beyond the general institutional factors that affect all administrations, there are also the administration specific rules that change the success of advisers. Usually, one of the first decisions made by an administration is how they are going to structure their decision-making process, setting out how they want decisions to reach the decision-making group and who is part of each stage. For example, there is often a dichotomy set up between having a 'spokes of a wheel' approach with the President at the centre or a strong coordinating figure acting as a Chief of Staff (this can be the actual Chief of Staff or can be designated to the NSA in areas involving foreign affairs).(Walcott

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and Hult, 2010) These factors involve setting out reporting lines, access to the President, norms of behaviour, the power and access of supporting staff and overall administration culture. These approaches depend on the ideas of how to manage a system and what the purpose of the decision-making group is. A culture that emphasis collegiality and loyalty may be considered more advantageous when the emphasis is ensuring that the administration appears strong and united.(Destler, 1973; Janis, 1982) On the other hand, when there is fear of adviser defection or that ideas and information is not getting to the top there may be an emphasis on allowing greater adversarial approaches. These administrative functions are therefore not constant but are continuously adapted and tweaked depending on the perception of the president and their advisers. (Mitchell, 2005)

These administrative factors are an outcome of the process and both reflect and constitute the power balance within the decision-making group. As such, it is important to understand how they affect the decisions. For example, the question of who is invited to NSC meetings and who is not can be critical to the resultant policy. For some administration's, specific advisers may be more present. The Secretary of the Treasury was a vocal and important member of the Eisenhower administration and has also increased in importance during the Bush and Obama administration's due to the increase in the use of economic tools, including sanctions.(Greenstein and Immerman, 2000) Similarly, the Vice President may be given a significant foreign policy role dependent on the administration culture. These administrative rules effect the institutional boundaries and allow more or less flexibility to advisers to change the power balance. As such, they both act as a symptom of these changes but also provide the scenery within the administrative battle arena that can give advantages and disadvantages to certain advisory groups.

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Although the internal group environment is critical to the power balance, it is also impacted by the external environment. Congressional opinion, the ideological balance of the Supreme Court, public opinion, intergovernmental diplomacy and events all profoundly affect the boundaries of acceptable choices. For example, the likelihood of a treaty or authorisation for expenditure of funding can be profoundly impacted by the partisan balance of Congress. (McCormick and Wittkopf, 1990) A figure might be profoundly disliked by the public or by a wing of the administration's party, however this might be viewed as either a net benefit or a bearable cost. As such, the high cost of removing an official from office may make keep them within the decision-making group.

However, it is the prevailing interpretation of these factors within the decision-making group that results in its effect on the power balance. As such, the external environment is brought in by those inside the administration. The different advisors may have different interpretations of what the public may or may not accept in the build-up to a military conflict or when a sufficient level of evidence to convince the public is available. (Jehn, 1995; Fordham, 1998) As such, the external environment should not be viewed as a surrounding black box but a tool that foreign policy advisers can use to affect the internal power balance. Though it does have some limits and may favour some positions more than others it can be made significant dependent on the pulling and hauling that goes on within the bureaucratic process.

The last two categories of factors are both internal to the decision-making group: the presidential position and personal factors. The President is at the centre of the decision-making process. However, the President is not a neutral bystander in the process and their worldview and interpretation is central. (Neustadt, 1960; M. Hermann *et al.*, 2001; Preston, 2001; Rubenzer and Faschingbauer, 2004) As George

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argues the President does not act as a rational decision-maker or 'magistrate' but is inherently biased towards their own inclinations and history. (George, 1972; George and Stern, 2002) This is why such attention is paid not only to the President's actions within an administration but also their biographical history. For example, their previous career experience, education, religion and social values all can help define the President's likely reaction to crises and the information presented in it. This is critical as these factors are known advisers and change their approach. It provides boundaries on not only how they act or how they sell their policies but also inherently leads to the advisory network leaning towards the president's inclination. As such, Presidential positional factors can both narrow and widen the boundaries of the decision-making and how advisers play to these factors can be instrumental in the resulting decision.

The final category of factors are the adviser's personal factors. Similarly, to the presidential factors these include a wide range of factors including personal history, interrelationship with other key actors, personal ideology and characteristics such as age, stubbornness and experience. These factors not only determine the individual's goals and success criteria but also how the advisers are likely to respond to issues and their tactics. For example, Hoff argues that the masculine foreign policy decision environment often results in female advisers facing a higher requirements relating to credibility and authority to accomplish equal goals. (Hoff, 2007) Likewise, race can be significant in giving people authority on certain issues and increasing the value in terms of public perceptions of diversity and influence. This can result in a higher political costs when removing non-white figures within the administration. (Lusane, 2006) As such personal factors can affect the power balance and can result in differing requirements for advisers to achieve the same goal. By setting out the strengths and

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limitations of advisers, these factors can set out the tools available to the different decision-making subgroups to influence the overall decision-making process.

Table 1.1: Summary of the Comparative Framework		
Factor	Summary	Examples
Institutional	Rules and preconceptions about where previous administrations power boundaries lie.	Institutional prestige Organisational power Institutional Culture
Internal	Administration specific rules and systems that influence the power balance environment.	Decision making structure Invitations to key decision-making forums Access to key information
External	Factors separate outside of the internal decision-making process that impact the decisions.	Natural disasters Shifting public perceptions Congressional opinion
Presidential position	The beliefs, perceptions and interactions of the president above and	Presidential religious belief Presidential friendships

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	within the advisory process.	Perceptions of presidential legacy
Personal	The beliefs, personality, history and perceptions of the advisors and the interaction of these within the advisory network.	Pre-existing relationships Ideological closeness Personal animosities

These five categories of factors make up the decision-making environment which is essential to understanding the power balance that is integral to the resulting policy decision that is made within US foreign policy. However, this is not to say that the categories should be viewed as all-encompassing or clearly divided. Often factors have elements of multiple categories. When such discrepancies arise, factors have been placed into the categories by a judgement about the similarity of the impact compared to the definitions above. It has also resulted in some factors being given a higher importance than others, with the selection based on both how they resulted in a changing boundary of acceptable decision-making and how they impacted the power balance specifically. The importance of this power balance to a selection of important decisions in the Indo-Pacific will be explored in remainder of this thesis. Chapters 3, 5 and 7 will explore the power balance for the 3 time period case studies. After this, chapters 4, 6 and 8 will analyse the Indo-pacific based policy examples of India, China, and North Korea to for each time period will utilise power balance outlined in the preceding chapters. These chapters focus on events to show how the policy was affected by the decisions and how that set up the foundations for the next foreign

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policy decision. An event is the policy that ultimately the decision-making process is leading up to, with a diffuse range of options ranging from war and peace to sending a diplomatic mission to another nation or giving a foreign policy speech. Hudson compares an event to the final vote in domestic politics as the fundamental point needing to be explained. (Hudson and Vore, 1995b) This thesis draws the connection between these events and the decision-making power-balance. This will then allow the comparison of foreign policy decisions and how they manifested themselves across a range of issues, periods and administrations. By setting out the foreign policy that resulted in each time period, it produces an essential understanding of the changes within administration policy. (McGowan and Shapiro, 1973; Lentner, 1974; Rosenau, 1975) Having now set out the foreign policy framework and the assumptions behind it, the following chapter will look at the 2000 campaign and the early first term decision-making process.

Chapter 3: Present at the creation; The campaign and early administration

When recounting his decision about running in 2001, President Bush argued that one of his central selling points as a president was his unique position meant he was “convinced I could build a team worthy of the presidency”.(G. W. Bush, 2010, p. 36) Before this chapter applies the framework set out in the previous section, it will begin by discussing the formation of this team during the campaign and the transition. Not only was the campaign an integral recruitment pool to the staff of the first term, it also created the dynamics that were critical in affecting the power balance within the administration.

The Campaign

Bush was in the unique position of an ‘insider/outsider candidate’. As Governor of Texas, Bush was able to tap into the idea of separation from Washington, being able to point to a different vision that he himself had been able to implement in contrast to national policy.(Ambar, 2014) Yet he was also a ‘Bush’. As campaign adviser and key colleague Karl Rove argued this meant that he had a brand.(Rove, 2010, p. 118) This brand was tried and trusted, creating a respectability in Washington that Governors often lack. His father had been President, his grandfather had been a Senator and his brother had become Governor of Florida, a potential swing states in the 2000 election. Not only did his name make him presumptive nominee, with newspapers discussing his ‘favourite’ status even before his re-election as Governor in 1998, it also gave him access to the invisible networks of former administration members, the business community and the academics that form the backbone of frontrunners’ campaign

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teams.(Verhovek, 1998) Discussing the selection of these figures, Yates called them “Close to the father known to the son”. (Yates, 2020) Paraphrasing political opponent former Texas Governor Ann Richards, if he had been called George Walker instead of George Walker Bush, his campaign would not have had the initial access and advice that provided early success and momentum. As Updegrave highlights, this was not a passive effect that existed due to the trust associated with the Bush name and a loyalty to the President who they had served under, but an active effort on the part of HW Bush to recruit his former team. This effort resulted in him asking GOP heavyweights to refrain from endorsing a candidate until his son had decided whether he was running, stopping other candidates from gaining momentum.(Updegrave, 2017, p. 280)

This is not to say that there were not disadvantages about being associated with the Bush brand. As Bush himself said “I inherited all of my dad’s enemies and half of his friends”.(Hughes, 2004, p. 109; Baker, 2013) Though Bush Senior has recovered prestige since the aftermath of the failed 1992 election, the fact that Bush Junior was Bush’s son would hurt him with some key groups that decide the Republican primary including conservatives and those who in the ‘neoconservative’ party wing.(Rothkopf, 2006; Rove, 2010) The Republican party had fundamentally changed since the elder Bush, with a rightward shift resulting in a relative fear of the centrist candidates.(Mann, 2020) By running on a more conservative platform with a ‘moral’ approach, Bush was able to step slightly out of his father’s shadow.(Dueck, 2010) The success of this policy manifested itself in the 68% vote share among evangelicals. (Marsden, 2008) However, even with these attempts to clearly distinguish himself from his father’s legacy most of the neoconservatives viewed Bush as weak on issues such as nation-building in Kosovo and China.(Ryan, 2010b) This resulted in their

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backing of the insurgent challenge from John McCain who ran on his greater foreign policy experience and a more hard-line philosophy. Even after the primary campaign, key neoconservative voices such as William Kristol suggested there was hope that Bush would change provide the moral leadership required to stand up to dangerous actors, a signal of the discontent within the Republican base.(Kristol, 2000).

These two competing urges meant that it was important to use the advantage of the closeness to Bush Senior by recruiting some advisers from his father's administration but also creating distance by involving figures associated with different parts of the party in the creation of a foreign policy team. This resulted in the recruitment of three diverse types of foreign policy advisers. The first were the elder statesmen of the party, people who had served in the administrations of George H Bush Senior and Ronald Reagan. Most prominent of these, was Richard Cheney who had previously served not only as Defense Secretary but had been a congressman and former Chief of Staff. Bush had asked him to serve as VP, but Cheney had been unwilling to serve initially instead heading the Vice President search committee that would result in his own selection. As Baker argues, this was not a nefarious attempt to be able to critique the other candidates and protect his own credibility as commonly argued but instead a slow conversion from Cheney.(Baker, 2013) Cheney not only reaffirmed the link to previous administrations adding significant foreign policy ballast to the ticket but also signalled to the conservative base that they would have a voice. Though Cheney had been painted with a relative moderate brush from his cooperative nature in both the House and his time within the Executive, his voting record was seen as an asset in contemporary analysis at the time.(Cohen and Kitfield, 2000; Warshaw, 2009) Other members would join the campaign, with varying levels of dedication and publicity, including Secretary of State Schultz, Nixon's former Defense Secretary Donald

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Rumsfeld, former Chief of Staff and Secretary of State Baker and former NSA Colin Powell.

The second group were those who had served at lower levels in previous Republican administrations. This grouping of foreign policy advisers was labelled with the shorthand of the ‘Vulcans’ named after a hometown statue of the Roman blacksmith of the informal ‘leader’ of the group, Condoleezza Rice.(Mann, 2004a) Rice had previously served under NSA Brent Scowcroft in the Bush Senior administration and had been provost at Stanford University in the intervening years. Introduced to Bush by Schultz, he took to her immediately. Rice argues that Bush Senior also played matchmaker, hoping that they would be able to develop a close relationship.(Rice, 2011, pt. 1) Importantly, she could simplify difficult problems to Bush whilst connecting to him on a personal level.(Bumiller, 2007; Kessler, 2007; Marby, 2007b) Her strong Christian faith and her genuine love of sports created instant chemistry and raised her to the position of Bush’s personal foreign policy ‘tutor’. It was this closeness which allowed her to take the lead of an experienced group of foreign policy advisers. As Dov Zakheim, a member of the Vulcan campaign group and future Comptroller at the Defense Department and Under-Secretary of State, said in his memoir “Their interactions differed qualitatively from those that any of the others had with him: they seemed to communicate on their own special frequency”. (Zakheim, 2011, pt. 279; Zakheim, 2019) This close relationship helped created Bush’s foreign policy identity and would help shape and influence the administration to come.

Within this group were 8 foreign policy figures from a diverse range of foreign policy views within the party. These were Stephen Hadley; Assistant Defense Secretary for International Security Policy under George H. Bush Senior; former Under Defense Secretary for Policy Paul Wolfowitz; Dov Zakheim; former White House Deputy

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Chief of Staff and Baker Counsellor Robert Zoellick; former Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs Robert Blackwill; former Assistant Defense Secretary for International Security Policy Richard Armitage and neo-conservative luminary Richard Perle. This group advised Bush on perhaps the largest gap in his experience giving him the credibility within different foreign policy constituencies who were perceived as critical to the success of the campaign. As Rice herself argues, she selected Perle in large part because he “had been the bane of the party’s foreign policy traditionalists such as Brent Scowcroft and Henry Kissinger” and to demonstrate the campaign’s commitment to an open foreign policy agenda. (Rice, 2011, pt. 4) As Murray et al. suggest, the creation of this foreign policy team gave the candidate ‘indispensable ballast’ that allowed him to ‘fight to a draw’ on foreign policy issues.(Murray, Brown and Martin, 2017)

Critical to the appointment of these figures was not only the fact that they would be able to help the candidate in the election but from a genuine need to learn. Much like the appointment of Cheney as Vice President, the decision made by Bush was partly based on the idea of not only how to win but how to effectively govern. In the words of Daalder and Lindsey “He was a man who knew what he didn’t know and was secure enough to turn to others to find out what he needed to know”.(Daalder and Lindsey, 2003, p. 19) Though it is important not to overly portray the candidate as a puppet of his advisers, it goes to the central part of the idea of what he wanted from the administration. As Heilbrunn argues, they essentially had only a partially filled candidate who had general guiding principles based on his own experience.(Heilbrunn, 1999) Significantly the team membership, though containing neo-conservative members, leaned far more towards the realist wing of the party.

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This is not to say that it was merely a second term of Bush Senior's foreign policy ideals as these advisers had changed to reflect the end of the euphoria of the Cold War era. (Dueck, 2010) Even those associated with the realist school of Scowcroft and Powell, began advancing more hard-line policies on issues such as North Korea where they attacked the Agreed Framework that had been put in place by President Clinton. For example, Armitage chaired a US working group that reported in 1999 that there needed to be a reanalysis of the assumptions that had surged with the 'end of history' mentality that had surfaced after the Cold War. (Fukuyama, 1989; Armitage, Wolfowitz and Et al., 1999) This indicates that Republican foreign policy had shifted what it meant to be a 'realist'. As such, the ideas behind the administration were largely shaped by the ideas of the first term Reagan administration's 'assertive nationalists' rather than those of Bush Senior.

The final group staffing the campaign were the Texan staff that Bush took from his office of Governor. Though all presidents have these groups of advisers, built on relationships and shared experience, the Bush group were particularly significant due to their centrality within the campaign.(Staff, 2000) Furthermore, these Texans played a big part in controlling personnel selection. For example, it was campaign manager Karl Rove who set out the flaws from the Cheney Vice-Presidential nomination (though he was ultimately unsuccessful in convincing Bush to choose another candidate).(Rove, 2010; Cheney, 2011) Additionally, Clay Johnson (an old Harvard friend of Bush who utilised his close relationship to reflect the President's power and ideas about how the administration should be managed) was placed at the head of the transition team that coordinated with Cheney to make many of the decisions about the low-level personnel. Finally, the Communications Manager for the campaign was Karen Hughes, a key member of the Texas office who, along with Joe Albaugh and

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Rove, made up the 'Iron Triangle'. Though Hughes argues this moniker was constructed by national media, it represented the flat campaign structure with plural voices being heard by the President. (Hughes, 2004) By having these staff members in positions of power rather than a Washington insider Bush ensured that his advisers were more loyal and more focused on the country rather than the Washington battle arena. Furthermore, it created a physical representation of separation. As Rove argues "We ran the campaign out of Austin, not Washington". (Rove, 2010, p. 125) The outsiders would be in central leadership positions, symbolising that 'real' Americans would be involved in the decision-making.

The Transition- Selecting a Team

The election ended in a stalemate, with the Electoral College votes of Florida hinging on whether voters' intent could be deciphered on hanging chads. After numerous appeals and a Supreme Court decision that split the Justices along partisan lines, Bush was declared the victor. Lacking a clear mandate, the President Elect would have to decide how to avoid becoming a one term president like his father. But first, decisions needed to be made about what the administration would look like, and quickly with the transition becoming one of the shortest in history. Johnson had written a report about the lessons learned from previous administrations. He argued that the priority was to "Clearly communicate that we are aggressively preparing to govern, that we are operating without hubris or triumphant partisanship, that we are experienced and not neophytes". (Johnson, 2002, p. 51) It was therefore important to not only emphasise experience but also that the President was creating a government that could serve the entire nation along with implementing his partisan agenda. The priorities were to outline the 'big names' or the key members of the cabinet/administration to reassure the public and ensuring that the President's voice was amplified by having as many

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members of White House staff in place. Burke argues that the nature of Bush's campaign team was a central benefit to this as it had members that had loyalty both to the President personally and the Bush brand, whilst still retaining the Washington insider nature essential to the creation of an effective administration.(Burke, 2004) Frum concurs arguing that there was a lack of division within the White House staff as the people were not split according to location or who their sponsor was but were united within their mixed identities. (Frum, 2003) Zoellick argues this had been reinforced by shared comradeships caused by the Florida recount. (Zoellick,2020) The central image the transition team promoted was simple. After the painful divisions exposed in the country the team would be unified, competent and ready to hit the ground running.

However, there was still a need to appoint figures to the administration with the intellectual and political heft to add credibility to the President's agenda. The first of these appointments was obvious, with the campaign having indicated throughout that General Colin Powell would become Secretary of State, the traditional primary foreign policy adviser to the President. His previous experience as Chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff and NSA during the Persian Gulf crisis in 1991, had given him as high public esteem in the United States as any other figure at the time.(Daalder and Lindsey, 2003) This idolisation from the American population went so far that he had been made into a GI Joe figurine.(DeYoung, 2006) Peter Rodman showed the high esteem that Powell was held in foreign policy circles, stating "Colin Powell is one of the outstanding public figures of the last generation".(Rodman, 2009, p. 237) Likewise, Republican Senator and Bush's beaten primary foe John McCain suggested that Powell was the "Greatest military leader this country had produced since World War II"(Confirmation hearing of Colin Powell, 2001) Not only was this significant in showing the binding

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nature of the appointment to the foreign policy establishment, it also gave Bush the protection from his more hard-line flank who may have questioned Powell's appointment. Powell was not only popular with the Republican Party traditionalists but with Democrats, being seen as a unifying figure across both sides of the aisle.(Ornstein, 2001; DeYoung, 2006) His biographical story as the son of immigrants and the potential to be the highest serving person of colour within US history also created a sense of inevitability about the appointment, with the *New Republic* calling it an "apparent coronation". (*New Republic*, 2000; Lusane, 2006) Symbolically he served as an endorsement of the American Dream and a signal of an attempt to unify the country around the most qualified and experienced professionals. As Powell himself stated, the appointment "just sort of happened".(DeYoung, 2006, p. 296)

Likewise, the choice of NSA seemed obvious for those who had been involved in the campaign. Their close personal connection, what Kessler calls the "Bush-Rice Black Box"(Kessler, 2007, p. 6), meant that Bush had a comfortableness around Rice that was essential to his ability to react to world affairs. She continued her role from the campaign as the President's voice and manager of the foreign policy process, a completely trusted partner to guide him through the future. Bush himself said this was based on the perception of his father's close relationship to his NSA Brent Scowcroft.(G. W. Bush, 2010) This 'Scowcroft model' of NSA was critical to the perception of what a good National Security Advisor should be; both a personal 'confidante' and a manager of the process.(Marby, 2007b; Daalder and Destler, 2009; Hadley, 2016) However, as Burke argues the NSA role is not something that is fixed but is dependent on the perceived needs of the administration. In any transition, it is important to figure out which "package" of these various duties is most appropriate.

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Part will depend on what the NSA advisor brings to the table in terms of experience and expertise. Part will depend on the strengths and weaknesses of other actors.(Burke, 2009)

Bush's management perceptions manifested themselves in Rice's selection. Chief among them, Bush's plan to have strong, experienced advisers changed the role significantly. For example, the traditional need for experience often critical in the hiring of an NSA was seen as of limited importance due to the high level of experience placed elsewhere. Likewise, Bush's lack of experience along with his lack of grand strategy meant that he needed someone who could go out and represent him to the rest of the government as much as represent the rest of the government to him. Their close personal relationship, often one of tutor/student, meant that Rice was uniquely placed to be the President's second voice.(Daalder and Destler, 2009; G. W. Bush, 2010) Finally, Bush had spoken often throughout the campaign of the importance of communicating foreign policy to America, requiring a more public-orientated official. With her campaign role and her well received convention speech, Rice was well placed to fight for the President in the increasingly public part of the role.(Destler I.M, 2012) Therefore the role was not so much one of a technocrat managing the foreign policy bureaucracy, as he had clearly set out for Andy Card in the domestic arena, but of personal aide and representative.(Kumar, 2002; Rudalevige, 2005; Walcott and Hult, 2010)

The other top-level position within the administration was perhaps the one with the least obvious candidate. The Defense Secretary role required not only a manager who was able to control an entrenched bureaucracy resistant to change but someone who could hold their own in a team full of powerful individuals. Originally, Bush had planned to offer the job to the CEO of FedEx Fred Smith. He believed that his strong

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managerial credentials were essential to reorganising the Defense Department, with the Secretary's focus not being pushing grand strategy.(Mann, 2004b; G. W. Bush, 2010) The lack of applicable candidates led to suggestions that Cheney would manage the Defense Department along with his role of Vice President, a decision with profound implications in terms of accountability. However, this idea did not seem to go very far. (Rumsfeld, 2011) Significantly, it was Rice who suggested a left field figure for the role; how about Donald Rumsfeld? (G. W. Bush, 2010; Rice, 2011) Not only had he served at the highest level within industry, as Serle Pharmaceuticals CEO, his previous government experience included being Defense Secretary , giving him a unique position that would allow him to enter the department with a position of not only respect but a smaller transition period. This was significant, with Dov Zakheim suggesting he had been “dealt a pretty terrible hand” with the department being “fundamentally the same as when he left”. (Author interview with Zakheim, 2019) He had remained active within foreign policy circles, resulting in him being seen not only as a manager but forward thinking over issues such as Missile-defence.(Risen, 2000) With congressional experience and close ties to the House and the Senate, Rumsfeld also offered legislative connections that would help deal with the vested interests that were likely to resist Bush's transformation agenda.

The final advantage was that the long running perception of a disagreement between Bush Sr. and Rumsfeld, based largely on the manoeuvring of Bush to the CIA by Rumsfeld in the 1970's offered a signal that the administration would not solely be the haunt of the friends of his father. Updegrave suggests this was an intentional statement not only to the former Bush Senior staffers who had been prominent in supporting him in his journey to the White House but also to his parents.(Updegrave, 2017) As Rumsfeld himself said in his autobiography, the assumption was that his previous

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frosty relationship with his father would have been a disqualifying factor.(Rumsfeld, 2011) However, Scowcroft suggested by the end the 1980s the feud had been relatively patched up.(Mann, 2004b, p. 269) Appointing Rumsfeld followed a Republican tradition of ensuring a spread around the rival camps after an election to show a partisan unity. (Mann and Smith, 1981) By including Rumsfeld in the cabinet, it ensured that Republicans who were not enamoured with the previous Bush administration would still feel represented.

Having selected the top-level positions within the administration, Bush and his transition team went to work on the deputy level. For Deputy NSA, this resolved itself relatively quickly with Stephen Hadley being asked by Rice to serve if she was selected. Hadley is what Rothkopf called the “Epitome of the modern US national security professional”.(Rothkopf, 2014, p. 23) Having been previously an aide to Henry Kissinger, a protégé to Scowcroft along with serving as deputy to Paul Wolfowitz and through him Cheney in the Defense Department, he gave Rice not only the coolness under pressure that came from having been there before but also the connections within the administration’s more hard-line members. This was critical as Zakheim suggest that by the end of the campaign, “there was clearly friction between them (Rice and Wolfowitz), no question in my mind”. (Author interview with Zakheim, 2019) By selecting Hadley, Rice was able to bring that relationship and his influence into her national security staff. Knowing that their relationship had been forged in the previous administration and the campaign meant she could trust him implicitly, the hope that she could utilise his connections to create a harmonious environment was critical to her hopes of achieving an ‘honest broker’ role. Not only did Hadley bring his connections, he also brought significant policy credibility. As Rice said in her memoir, “when there was real work to be produced for the campaign

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(rather than just things to be said and debated) we all looked to Steve to write the first draft of the paper”.(Rice, 2011, p. 3) Hadley would be loyal, smart and help to manage the NSC, lending Rice both his experience and his conservative credentials.

Though Hadley’s appointment was relatively straight forward, the other two major deputy roles would not be. This was because the two leading candidates for the roles, both Vulcans who had assisted during the campaign, were interested in a position that the respective secretary was unwilling to give them. Paul Wolfowitz, who had taken the lead on defense issues within the campaign, was hoping to become Deputy Secretary of State .(Mann, 2004b; Zakheim, 2011) Not only would this have given him the policy making position which he desired, it would have given him a management position which he could use to jump to either NSA or Defense Secretary should the positions come free. However, Powell was unwilling to have him as a ‘mole’ in his department, believing he was too close to Cheney and Rumsfeld.(DeYoung, 2006) This perception of Wolfowitz as neither a top level administrator or a figure who aligned with the vision Powell had for ‘his’ State Department resulted in him being left in the cold.

Instead, Wolfowitz was offered the role of Deputy Defense Secretary by Rumsfeld. Their close relationship began in the 1996 ‘Dole for President’ Campaign, where Rumsfeld had become campaign chairman, taking Wolfowitz on as his deputy assisting with foreign policy.(Mann, 2004b; Solomon, 2007) The close connection between the two, along with Wolfowitz’s ties to Cheney, meant that Rumsfeld was willing to take him on even though he lacked the strong industry background or deep management that Rumsfeld viewed as critical to the traditional selection of a deputy.(Rumsfeld, 2011) Instead they would set up the department in a way that would allow Wolfowitz and Rumsfeld to essentially switch roles: Wolfowitz providing the

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strategy and Rumsfeld the bureaucratic management of the department. Zakheim suggests this was a good formula “until 9/11, when Rumsfeld was forced to become secretary of war (as) you had an odd reversal where the guy at the top wanted his primary mission to be clean up the Defense Department whilst the number 2 wanted to do all the other stuff”. (Author Interview with Zakheim, 2019)

Whilst this manoeuvring was going on, Richard Armitage had likewise been aiming to be Deputy Defense Secretary. As a veteran of the Army, he wanted to save it from the bureaucracy that he perceived as being in urgent need of recalibration to be prepared for the 21st Century. As part of this campaign of reform, he had signed onto a report from *The Commission on America's National Interests* with figures such as Scowcroft in July 2000 that criticised the inadequacy of the US military to deal with national security in the modern era. (Armitage, 2000) This management ideal seemed to fit well with the intention of the administration and would have served to give his ally and mentor Powell a key supporter in Defense. However, Rumsfeld and Armitage only had a limited connection and Rumsfeld was not impressed by his attitude and demeanour. In his memoir, he said “It quickly became clear that since he wasn’t going to be Defense Secretary, as he had hoped, he preferred to be number two at the State Department, working alongside his friend, Colin Powell. I was happy to accommodate him”.(Rumsfeld, 2011, p. 292)Both Graham and DeYoung suggest ulterior motives, arguing that Rumsfeld made it clear that like Powell he was unwilling to have a ‘mole’ inside his agency and wanted instead to have someone he could trust. (DeYoung, 2006; Graham, 2009; Zakheim, 2011)

Instead, Powell attempted to bring his protégée into State to be his number two. This decision fostered a lot of rumours about the conditions placed upon Powell for this to be accepted by not only the White House, but the Vice-President. Wilkerson, who had

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served as a key confidante to Powell and said the two were “close enough to finish each other’s sentences” , believes that the only way that Powell could get Armitage was to make a deal with Cheney that “he would get Rich if he also ate John Bolton as the number 4-5 at State”. (Author interview with Wilkerson, 2019) Bolton, who was named Under-secretary of State for Arms Control, had wanted to be in the running for the Deputy role or the Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs.(Bolton, 2007) Though denying that he was foisted on Powell by a group of ‘Neoconservatives’ he did believe that he was signed off by the President and the Vice-President with the idea that he would provide a ‘check’ on Powell. (Bolton, 2007) This manoeuvring created a powerful dynamic, with two significant hard liners in Defense whilst putting the two more realist orientated members of the administration together at State. Having set these players into their positions, the Bush administration was ready to start making decisions about what both its foreign policy process would look like and how it would operate.

[The Battle for Control: The Power Balance before 9/11](#)

Having now set out the key issues of the campaign and the game of musical chairs that resulted from the shortened transition window, the next section will set out the power structure that was created prior to the September 11 attacks. This was a critical period, where important decisions were made about the approach that the administration would take for the term. As Campbell et al argue “There is no more perilous time for a new administration than the much ballyhooed first 100 days”.(Campbell and Steinberg, 2008, p. 16) Not only is it perilous in terms of the challenge from external states looking for advantage, but it is also dangerous for both individuals trying to assert their position in a fluid and dynamic landscape.

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Institutional factors

The framework of the US National Security apparatus is guided by both convention and law. The primary structure is outlined by the 1947 National Security Act which sets out the decision-making framework of the US. This created the NSC and made clear how the expanding number of government departments would coordinate. With four statutory members, (the President, Vice President, Secretary of State and Defense Secretary) and an executive secretary (who has by convention been replaced by the NSA) this is the leading executive advisory body within the US Government. All other parties serve by the President's pleasure. (Rothkopf, 2006) This has often included key members of the foreign policy infrastructure including the CIA Director and later the Secretary for Homeland Security. Under Bush, the Treasury Secretary was also brought into the meetings, highlighting the increased importance of both finance-based foreign policy tools such as sanctions and the increasing international nature of the United States' economy. (Prados, 2012)

Rice suggested this was critical to the development of the new administration, as from the start the Treasury Secretary had a voice in essential discussions, giving the Secretary the experience and the institutional credibility that comes from being established in a group for later on when crisis began to happen. (Rice, 2011, p. 112)

As Allison argues "participants who represent certain organisations in a processes are normally influenced by that organisation's notions of its critical task, mission, programs, routines and associated culture". (Allison and Zelikow, 1999, p. 276) The institutional power of assured membership is critical as it ensures that the voice is heard within the administration's decision-making process without the exertion of political capital to get there. By involving the Treasury Secretary, there was an understanding about not only the financial impact any decision would have and the

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knock effects on the US economy but also how the department's assets could be utilised. This would prove significant in the response to not only the financial crisis at the end of the administration but also in policies ranging from India and North Korean non-proliferation efforts to the War on Terror. In the first term, Paul O'Neill had been selected. He had previously served as Deputy Director in the OMB in the Ford administration under Rumsfeld and Cheney, resulting in a strong bond between them.(Barnes, 2001) This strong connection and the transformed institutional reform of the NSC that brought the Treasury Secretary into the front and centre of the decisional making process offered an opportunity for Cheney to strengthen his grip within the critical decision-making bodies by giving him an extra ally to support him. A significant battle would emerge over a structural decision. Who would lead the 'Principals Committee', the coordinating body between the departments that sat when the President was unavailable? Traditionally this had been a key part of the role of the NSA and a source of their power. By chairing the body, the NSA can set the agenda, control discussion and organise the action points afterwards. However, the staff of the Vice President started suggesting that he should chair.(Cheney, 2011; Rice, 2011; Baker, 2013) Though this was not unprecedented (Nixon had headed the meetings under Eisenhower) it ran counter to convention and would indicate the Vice President was the primary foreign policy adviser. Daalder and Lindsay suggest that this was a calculated move by Cheney and his staff, essentially subjugating Rice to a secondary staff role rather than the primary coordinator/honest broker that she had idealised.(Daalder and Lindsey, 2003) Though there is significant debate about how much Cheney knew about the attempt, it is significant that the debate shifted from the question of whether Cheney would be in the meeting to would he be running it? Whilst Rice managed to retain the responsibility, and the influence it came with, it indicated

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a disturbing trend. Cheney had managed to carve out a large role and assured that the previous history of Vice President's being only bit part players within the Principals Committee was put to rest. Similarly, to the idea of Cheney holding the position of Defense Secretary as well as Vice President, the discussion was not about whether Cheney would have power but where would the limits be. These two decisions set a theoretical boundary that would soon be overcome through his management of an informal network of key players.

Internal factors

Beyond these larger institutional factors, Cheney had also set himself into a position to be involved at every level of the government. As Phillip Zelikow stated "Cheney was the single most influential person in the transition".(Author interview with Zelikow, 2020) As head of the transition, he put people who supported his intellectual and political priorities into key positions throughout the government, with Wilkerson estimating that he had personally placed around 4000 mid to lower level civil service, schedule B or political appointees into the administration including many 'non-political' roles where they would continue after the administration.(Author interview with Wilkerson, 2019) Perhaps more importantly, Cheney had fundamentally restructured the Office of the Vice Presidency (OVP). As Lachet argues, the Vice President had essentially created a mini-NSC of around 14 staff members dedicated to foreign affairs.(Lachet, 2004) This was not only more staff than the entirety of the Kennedy administration's NSC staff and significantly more than Gore's four mid-level advisers, these were highly qualified and connected members who would have been strong candidates for senior roles within the NSC itself.(Daalder and Destler, 2009) They also had very little obligations in terms of policy management or accountability.

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As part of the Executive Office of the President, they were not directly accountable to anyone other than the President and the Vice President.

Having no natural constituency gave a sense of purity to the group that allowed them to seem to be less entrenched than State policy specialists or Defense's strong traditions and inertia. Instead of acting like a government department which executed the decisions of the leadership circle, they instead acted like a 'think tank' creating policy proposals and shaping US strategy, a role traditionally associated with the State Department's Policy Planning Staff.(Slavin and Page, 2000) This was critical as it bureaucratically changed the role of State from idea creation to strategy implementation, a clear usurpation that followed long trends of declining State power.(Glain, 2011) By focusing on the policy planning instead of policy implementation, Cheney's staff had managed to place themselves into a position where they could delegate and co-opt the other departments.

Furthermore, State and Defense (and increasingly the NSC) were often slowed down by their immense size leading to a lack of cohesiveness and communication between the top and bottom levels. The small number of OVP staff meant it was agile and responsive to the most pressing issues of the day. This flexibility was critical in giving Cheney the appearance, and therefore increased political capital, of being on top of issues and protective of the President image. This small but heavily influential team acted as an extension of Cheney, bringing his power into all levels of the process. Significantly it resulted in the pre-shaping of the 'window' of the policy options presented to the principals that allowed the Vice President to shrink the available choices to those that he was willing to accept and often promoted his preferred option. Cheney was able to magnify his already outsized role within the administration by also giving these advisers a large latitude in using his name and prestige to make decisions.

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Often Cheney did not create formal policy position papers, instead allowing his staff to interpret his preferences.(Rosen, 2015) Rice suggests this was critical to the VP's initial influence, saying that 'many things were done in the name of the Vice President whether he had directed them to or not'.(Rice, 2011, p. 17) In a normal administration, this would have been less significant with the perception of the VP lacking influence. However, people knew Cheney had power and he was perceived as having the influence to make life uncomfortable for those who resisted. Even his reflected influence was often enough to cut through the interagency process.

Beyond this reflected influence, the OVP staff had significant power themselves. Cheney had decided that his staff would have a formal role within the White House hierarchy. Rosen emphasises the importance of this, calling it "Dual Hatting".(Rosen, 2015, p. 106) By giving his staff two roles, one within the OVP and one within the White House, they had further bureaucratic heft. The most prominent example of this was the delegation of his Chief of Staff/NSA Scooter Libby as an Assistant to the President. This resulted in Libby not only having a policy voice through the Vice President but also had the ability to go directly to the act as a White House representative. Significantly, this integration further gave credibility to Libby and other key dual-hatting staff members such as communications director Mary Matalin and legal adviser Dave Addington who were able to manipulate the grey area of whether a specific command came from themselves, Cheney or Bush.(Rosen, 2015) Montgomery highlights that this interlinkage was not just theoretical as the OVP staff having access to the 'paper chain'.(Montgomery, 2009) Every document going through the White House would be sent to the OVP allowing them to be kept abreast of the direction of White House policy, offer suggestions and edit drafts. Ambassador

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Pritchard argues that this clear direction from Hadley that the staffs would be treated as one skewed the power balance in Cheney's favour.(Pritchard, 2007)

This bureaucratic heft meant that Powell was immediately on the defensive. Unlike Cheney, who put allies in key positions throughout the government, Powell believed that he would be more influential working with State's bureaucracy compared to dominating it through political appointees. His mentality was more of an 'officer in the field', believing that the utilization of his management principles from his time at the army would be enough to increase State Department effectiveness.(DeYoung, 2006; Powell. Colin and Koltz, 2012) Powell did not want to be Bush's representative to the Department and force compliance, in contrast to Rumsfeld and later Rice.(Rice, 2011; Rumsfeld, 2011)This was significant as it resulted in improved morale in the foreign service. By giving voice to these experts, he ensured their loyalty.(Brookes, 2005) However, this did have significant costs. Most prominently, the lack of strong centralised control of the department resulted in Powell often being perceived as separated from the administration. For example, in 2003 former Speaker Newt Gingrich released a scathing critique that called for a fundamental overhaul of State due to the unresponsiveness of the department to the President's needs.(Gingrich, 2003) This inability to show an effective loyalty to the President's agenda reinforced his isolation whilst creating a strong unity within the bureaucracy.

In contrast to Cheney, Powell had been unable to place strong allies within the administration. Zakheim argues that the fact that Wolfowitz was not selected as Deputy Secretary of State as a "tragic mistake" largely due to the fact that if he had been at State and Armitage had been at Defense they would have gained a voice within the rest of the administration. (Author interview with Zakheim,2019) Wilkerson suggests that this would have stopped Armitage and Powell "from being together

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every day and thus drinking each other's Kool-Aid". (Author interview with Wilkerson, 2019) Wolfowitz would have been able to utilise his strong relationships with Cheney and Rumsfeld to represent State's agenda and foster an environment of mutual trust between the NSC, State and Defense. However, the fact that Powell's principal ally was within his department isolated them both. Though he had a good relationship with Rice he was unable to utilise this into a clear bureaucratic advantage. Rice was willing to personally help Powell by organising meetings with the President but she was unwilling to sacrifice her possibility of being Secretary of State by undermining Cheney. (Ibid.) Instead, she accepted her lack of bureaucratic heft and aimed to focus on a coordination and confidante role instead of assisting Powell with policy fights. (Rothkopf, 2006) This meant that in the NSC meetings, a majority of the voices were more strongly connected to the Cheney/Rumsfeld network rather than Powell's giving them an advantage.

Personal factors

Though the institutional factors and the administration specific rules may have been working against Powell, his position could have been saved by the President. However, Woodward argues that Powell's behaviour meant there was a 'gap in perception' between the two men that was never fully closed. (Woodward, 2003) Powell had the reputation of being a reluctant campaign surrogate for Bush. The feeling that Powell would have been a more popular candidate, created both through his strong polling and charismatic nature, did not help. (Lafeber, 2009) After the campaign there was no moment to settle the relationship with the truncated transition creating added pressure. Like Obama's decision to appoint Hilary Clinton as Secretary of State, the decision to move someone with significant presidential level credibility into State was important. (Mann, 2012) Traditionally, experienced political forces were

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moved into the Vice Presidency (Al Gore, Dan Quale, Gerald Ford etc.), a position with limited institutional power that was dependent on the President's reflected influence. By putting Powell into the position of Secretary instead of Vice President, Powell was given significant institutional clout but was then perceived as working towards his own agenda rather than the President's. The physical gap between Foggy Bottom and the White House only accentuated the emotional gap between them.

Powell's political threat to Bush was particularly apparent at his announcement. The President introduced Powell as his first nomination to the cabinet in a press conference at the President's home in Crawford, with Cheney also attending. The introduction turned into a tour de force from Powell setting out the clear foreign policy vision that the campaign had largely been missing. (Daalder and Lindsey, 2003; Mann, 2004b; Lusane, 2006) Not only did he speak for twice as long, he physically dominated Bush implying foreign policy would be Powell's domain. For example, in relation to the administration's transformation agenda he stated "I will certainly be there with the Defense Secretary, assisting the Secretary in getting what he needs for the military". (Powell and Bush, 2001) This dynamic where Powell, a veteran General, seemed in control emphasised Bush's perceived weakness on foreign affairs. Even the language he used suggested a culture clash, signifying to the press that he had made the decision not to have the conference on the President's ranch due to the feeling that he was not a cowboy like the President. (Powell and Bush, 2001) Unlike Rice and Cheney, Powell had not taken the opportunity to create common ground such as using sports, outdoorsmanship and religion that were fundamental to Bush's personality. The impression left was not a good one. DeYoung suggests that Powell confidants such as aide William Smullen and Armitage told him the dangerous impression created was likely to come back to haunt him. (DeYoung, 2006) As Saunders suggests,

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experience is critical for a President in their relationship to advisers.(Saunders, 2017)

The gap between Powell and Bush's experience was put in stark relief during the announcement, creating an impression of a new President in over his head. Instead of allowing Powell to stake out the expansive role he perceived that he had negotiated with the President, Bush feared he would not be able to rein in his Secretary of State. Not only had Powell suggested that he would be the power within the administration, he lacked the deference Bush expected both to him and the office of the President.

This relationship could not have been more different to that of the other top members of the administration. As a former Chief of Staff, Rumsfeld knew that his ability to run the Defense Department would be based on his connection to the Bush. Cockburn suggests he sized up Bush as someone who was insecure within both his comparison to his father and also his lack of foreign policy experience.(Cockburn, 2007) By positioning himself in close proximity with Bush and assuring him of his loyalty, Rumsfeld was able to create a climate where he was seen as a close ally compared to Powell who was kept at a respectful distance. Dyson also highlights the importance Rumsfeld placed on having a direct line to Bush, often bypassing Rice.(Dyson, 2009) Rumsfeld made the initial effort to meet with Bush once or twice a week to ensure that there was a continual conversation, allowing him to gain the familiarity essential to ensuring a strong relationship. (Graham, 2009) Zakheim highlights this "phenomenal rapport" as central to Rumsfeld's influence in the role. (Author interview with Zakheim,2019) By creating this relationship, the Secretary ensured that he was near the top of Bush's people to rely upon. Unlike his previous experience with Ford, where he had a pre-existing relationship that allowed him to be confidant in the continued support and loyalty from the White House, Rumsfeld knew that he would have to carve his position through a strong relationship right from the beginning.

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Although Rumsfeld had a strong relationship with Bush, it was not as close as Rice and Cheney's. Building on their campaign relationship, Bush and Rice remained particularly close within the White House. Indeed Bush often labelled Rice as 'his sister' giving her immediate credibility with both those within the White House and abroad.(Bumiller, 2007; Kessler, 2007; Montgomery, 2007) The NSA often has the advantage in developing a close relationship with the President due to their proximity and lack of constituencies.(Daalder and Destler, 2009) Not only did Rice see the President every morning, they met many times a day which ensured that she was up-to-date with the development of his thinking and was there for the personal side of the job that cements a professional relationship. Rice even recommended books for the President to read during his down time.(Mann, 2015) This easy relationship and the ability to explain foreign policy in ways he understood was critical to the Rice's success. Cheney also had a similar relationship in terms of closeness, however he leveraged this in a way that exaggerated his own political capital. Whilst Powell's limited engagement on the campaign had created a gap between them, Cheney and Bush had been close in the campaign, resulting in less deference needed than traditional Vice Presidents who had only limited working (and often competitive) relationships with their Presidents. (Goldstein, 2010) Cheney and Bush trusted each other implicitly and could relax together. This was further strengthened through the weekly lunches the two had together along with conversations most days.

This closeness of relationship manifested itself in the access to the President's Daily Brief (PDB). Traditionally, the NSA has a significant role in not only the creation but the interpretation of the information coming from the intelligence briefer.(Preiss, 2016) This was often the first filter of the information and allowed Rice to shape and direct the President's initial thoughts. Though the PDB is a requirement for every

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president to have, the presentation of the documents and the information contained vary between the differing administrations. For example, George HW. Bush as a former CIA Director preferred a more active engagement with the daily brief, filtering the information through his own worldview and challenging the assumptions behind it.(L. K. Johnson, 2008; Priess, 2016) Likewise, his son had believed in the briefing's importance, both through the lens of a relative foreign policy novice as well as the son whose father had stressed the importance of the document. As such, the act of receiving the document and the discussion around it was critical not only to how the President understood the information but also provided the 'sorting' mechanism where information importance was determined. As Rice says in her memoir, this was particularly crucial because the information is not given in a meeting with the principals, meaning that the Secretary of State and the Defense Secretary are not in the room which resulted in the NSA having to reign in the President when he began asking questions beyond the boundaries of intelligence briefings.(Rice, 2011)

Unlike common convention where the President and the NSA were the main participants in the PDB, Cheney used his personal leverage to not only attend many briefings but to offer the answers to the questions that the President was asking. Before the briefing, Cheney had created a system where he was given a pre-briefing, in far greater detail, so that he was prepared with the issues of the day. Mann suggests that this was partially part of his personality, preferring the raw data so that he could do his own analysis rather than rely on the presented arguments.(Mann, 2020) Rooted in his experience, Cheney had a developed ability to spot trends and to come up with his own nuanced analysis. The assumption that Cheney would be critical in the presentation of any information to the President, meant the CIA created a 'before and after the fold' system of information that only Cheney would read.(Rosen, 2015). By

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involving Cheney within the drafting and organisation of the document, it changed it from an independent analysis focused on the facts and intelligence into a quasi-policy document.(L. K. Johnson, 2008) Considering the fact that Vice Presidents were traditionally briefed separately from the President as a formality to ensure continuity of the administration, Cheney's domination of the PDB was only possibly due to the special relationship he had with Bush.

External Power Factors

Though the personal factors seemed advantageous for Cheney in the early period of the administration the external environment seemed to favour Powell for two main reasons. Firstly, the result of the election created a sense that Bush should be governing in a consensus manner. Whilst Cheney had changed into a more partisan figure as a result of the campaign, with his convention speech seemingly more attuned to the rhetoric of Gingrich Republicans compared to the 'compassionate conservatism' of the Bush campaign, Powell had been voted through the Senate without Democratic dissent. Indeed, Senator Joe Biden spoke of the need for relative partisan 'harmony' in foreign policy during Powell's nomination hearing.(Senate Arms Services Committee, 2001) The bipartisan qualifications resulted in Powell gaining increased credibility as a policy spokesman, raising his political capital. Any dissent from Powell would be amplified due to these bipartisan credentials. However, in an administration that had a large degree of personal animosity to their predecessor, the routine reminders of Powell's bipartisan credentials fuelled the sense of suspicion about Clinton's Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Indeed, in an era of 'Anything But Clinton', this bipartisanship may be a useful tool to sell the Bush agenda to the country and Congress but would be detrimental internally.(Daalder and Lindsey, 2003; Pritchard, 2007)

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Secondly, the challenges facing the administration should have fallen into the State Department's expertise. The perception throughout the campaign was that there needed to be a reassertion of the peace through strength policy of the Reagan administration, with the Defense Department in need of a dramatic reform. This suggested that Rumsfeld would follow a similar line as his previous time as Defense Secretary and utilise his experience as a manager compared to a foreign policy expert. (Stevenson, 2006) Though he had increased his foreign policy credentials in the intervening years, his credentials as a foreign policy ideologue were seen to be limited. This combined with the perception of the threats that America faced were diplomatic in nature, should have resulted in an environment that favoured State. Not only had the campaign clearly set out a non-interventionist sentiment, the lack of a military rivals and a lack of threat had continued the 'unipolar' moment into the 21st century. (Ikenberry, 2004) As such, issues such as the strategic relationship with China, Russia and Europe were diplomatic issues rather than military. Even key military based policy decisions, such as Missile Defense and non-proliferation, had key diplomatic parts that would ensure Powell's involvement would remain central. This should have allowed Powell to stake out clear ownership of the policy issues central to the new administration.

The political culture of the 1990's also played into this environment. Although there had always been a resistance within Republican circles to international organisations, there was a general acceptance about the role that the alliance structures and negotiations played within American foreign policy. Furthermore, a partial war weariness, or perhaps more accurately 'peacekeeping' weariness, had become central to large parts of the Republican Party. As Walt argues, even before the actions in Iraq there was a sense of lost opportunity costs of US peacekeeping, creating a resistance

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that had permeated the pre- 9/11 foreign policy environment. (Walt, 2018) As such, there was a readjustment of the enthusiasm to use the military to act as the ‘world’s policemen’. Therefore, the Pentagon needed transforming, reducing dependency on US forces whilst maintaining technological supremacy for emergencies. Rumsfeld was perhaps one of the more politically attuned members of the cabinet due to his experience at the top level of the Nixon administration, making him realise that key limitations on the use of high numbers of US personnel would be critical in ensuring that the war weariness would not be heightened any further. This focus on reducing American military involvement by necessity created a climate that reduced the importance of the Pentagon, increasing the opportunity for Powell.

Presidential factors

All these factors played to Bush’s management style. His experience during his father’s administration had a profound effect on the new president, showing the utility of a model that favoured open access and delegation compared to centralisation. Cohen believed that the Bush Senior’s Chief of Staff John Sununu was a highly isolating figure, creating a sentry role that shutout the other members of the administration. (Cohen and Kitfield, 2000; Cohen, 2002) Pfiffner also argues that an all-powerful Chief of Staff who ‘domineers’ the policy process results in the President becoming isolated from his senior staff with increased internal political battles because the principal figures feel they no longer have a voice.(Pfiffner, 2008) Bush had been instrumental in the removal of Sununu and his replacement with Baker, giving him the first-hand experience about what to avoid in his Chief of Staff. Bush therefore favoured the idea of multiple avenues of access with Andrew Card and Rice as the key coordinating roles of the domestic and foreign policy sides respectively. Bush also ensured both focused less on the traditional gatekeeping role compared to that of

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coordination. This allowed figures who were willing to exert themselves, most prominently Rumsfeld and Cheney, to take advantage, ensuring their voices were heard often and repeatedly. It also created a need for Rice to reconceptualise her sources of power. Instead of controlling access she ensured she was the one who knew Bush best amplifying her role as Bush's representative and confidante. (Daalder and Lindsey, 2003; Rothkopf, 2006; Rice, 2011)

Furthermore, Bush believed the President's role was to be 'decider in chief'. Having been the first graduate of Harvard Business School to assume the office, his perception of management styles is critical to his interpretation of how the White House should run. This manifested itself in two ways early on. Firstly, it created a management style which resulted in trust of the cabinet members, with the idea that they would be free to run their department within his vision. As Piffner highlights, the role of CEO that Bush had learned at Harvard and implemented in his management of the Texas Rangers was one of quick decisions and then letting the people hired to do the job work out the details.(Piffner, 2007) Though Bush was quick to dismiss his Harvard education in his pre-election memoir, Bush highlights the importance of his university education in giving him a "better understanding of management, particularly the importance of setting clear goals for the organization, delegating tasks, and holding people to account".(G. W. Bush, 2001, 2010, p. 22) Not only did this determine the prospective candidates for the administration but it also led cabinets members to view their role as the administration's voice within the department compared to vice versa. This was critical, as it emphasised that loyalty was the most important commodity within the administration.

Bush's MBA experience also emphasised his own role. Whilst delegating all that could be delegated, the President viewed himself as the final arbiter of any policy,

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expecting that his small select group of individuals to be willing to put their case to him but then accepting his decision. His emphasis on being a ‘gut’ player and avoiding the deliberative and slow processes of Clinton and Bush Sr. created a ‘decide and move on’ mentality which often obscured the complexity of the issue. (Woodward, 2003; Pfiffner, 2007) This created a severe distrust of leaking as it was seen within the White House as attempting to limit the President’s autonomy. This perception of leaks was particularly important in regards to State, as it reinforced the perceived lack of reflexivity to respond to the final decisions. Rumsfeld criticises Powell’s State Department for not working up the chain of the command to the President rather than instead relying on “the anonymous hindsight critiques that appeared from time to time in press accounts and books”.(Rumsfeld, 2011, p. 324) This distrust left the NSC in a position where the role was not only coordinating policy options but to check orders were carried out. Rice’s role became one of Chief Operating Officer, sorting through the details and ensuring the ship stayed on the course that Bush had set. Cheney’s position as enforcer was also reinforced within this structure, with Cheney being conscious not to replace the President’s agenda with his own. As Cheney advisor Yates highlights, those who worked for Bush were to “salute and move forwards in supporting the President’s decision”. (Author interview with Yates, 2020)

Summary

Overall, the picture painted of the initial power balance was a clear positional win for the Cheney group in the administration. Not only had he created a strong institutional role for himself within the foreign policy decision-making process, he had brought in important allies into key positions within the administration. These figures were spread around the administration resulting in a diffusion of power, permeating not only the top but nearly every level and area of the executive branch. This went beyond his

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own personal staff, who were given unprecedented authority, but figures within the Pentagon, NSC, Treasury and even State. Combined with Cheney's position as a close ally of the President, the VP was positioned in a way that offered him the opportunity to take the upper hand in any foreign policy decision.

Just beneath Cheney in terms of influence were Rice and Rumsfeld. Though both had created a relationship that was based on strong personality traits and a clear demarcation of their own bureaucratic territory, they were often unable to take the lead in controlling the ideological direction of the administration. This meant they often made choices within the boundaries determined by Cheney, reacting to his power rather than leading groups within the administration themselves. Both had significant relationships with the other players, Rice through her work in the campaign and Rumsfeld through Cheney but were less successful in positioning their own ideological supporters in the right places. Likewise, both were tied down into managerial roles that limited their ability to dominate the 'ideas' battle that was raging with the administration. Finally, both emphasised loyalty to the President as central to their approach, focusing on a representation role of President to staff compared to vice versa. This dovetailed well with the President's management style, further improving their power base.

On the other hand, the great loser in the bureaucratic manoeuvring in the early period of the administration was Powell. His significant personal power and the traditional strength of the Secretary of State had suggested that Powell would dominate the administration. However, three significant factors reduced this influence. Firstly, his standing and his performance in his nomination process threatened Bush. Their personal relationship was one of mutual respect rather than the closeness the other members of the top team had with the 'decider in chief'. Secondly, Powell never

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attempted to close this gap early on. This resulted in him lacking the personal relationship that was integral to the successes of Kissinger and Baker in the Nixon and Bush Sr. administrations respectively. Finally, Powell was unable to ensure he had allies throughout the government to help him guide the administration at all levels of the process. The most significant decision for this was the placement of Armitage and Wolfowitz in the respective deputy positions. This decision resulted in the Powell allies to become too concentrated within the State Department, creating a self-fulfilling policy of isolation and separation. This perception of a power shift that centred on Cheney and an isolated Powell created an environment where Cheney was in the driving seat of the decision-making process symbolised by Time magazine asking “Where have you gone Colin Powell?”.(McGeary *et al.*, 2001)

Chapter 4: Redefining the Indo-Pacific challenge

With the power balance during the first 9 months of the George W. Bush presidency favouring Cheney over Powell, it is important to discuss how this affected the initial Indo-Pacific policy. Significantly, some fundamental mischaracterisations of the first year have been perpetuated in the discussion surrounding the administration, one that provided the basis of a narrative of an administration centred on unilateralism. (Leffler, 2004; Kuznick, 2016) As such, this chapter will first discuss the administration's campaign vision, arguing that this unilateral impetus was instead a tactical decision to front load controversial decisions. The second section will then move onto specific policy decisions. The first of the three case studies will look at the development of a strategy to contain China, including discussions over the US policy over Taiwan and the E-3 crisis. The second focuses on North Korea including the presentation of new options during the transition and the initial meetings with South Korean leadership. Finally, it will discuss the first steps towards engagement with India. The chapter will conclude by setting out the overall policy approach that defined the period, drawing the connections between the advisory power balance and the policy narratives that defined the Indo-Pacific.

The Campaign

Foreign policy is rarely the focus of campaigns and this was particularly apparent in the 2000 election. For US presidential candidates, foreign policy experience was often superseded by domestic priorities. However, this is not to suggest that foreign policy in campaigns is unimportant. Indeed, Johnstone and Priest suggest the importance lies in not only creating a general sense of competence in the candidate as President but

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also creates a sense of democratic accountability that the candidate will be judged by in future elections.(Johnstone and Priest, 2017) Critically, this has been picked up by scholars such as Payne who argued that it was important to write down the Bush campaign's promises and compare them to the general theoretical and political perspectives of the time so that "those wanting to evaluate the administration's record in implementing its plans can begin their analysis".(Payne, 2001, p. 301) A campaign, through its very nature, is a public enterprise with the aim of not only selling the candidates but a vision of the country's future. How successful a President is largely dependent on their ability to fulfil these ideals.

Governor Bush and his campaign team created a series of on the record policy positions through speech and statements, thereby defining a foreign policy direction. Significantly, campaigns are not held in a vacuum and advisers' views evolved. The act of creating policy speeches was critical in shaping the views of those like Rice through increased exposure and intellectual challenges.(Rice, 2011; Zakheim, 2011) Likewise, media and public opinion created a feedback loop that required development. The bringing of the agenda in line with public opinion fell to figures like Rice and Cheney who were often the campaign's principal foreign policy spokespeople. The very nature of campaigns frequently involves a diverse range of figures feeding back into it, often acting as a group-sourcing of ideas from the different areas of both the party and the foreign policy elites being managed by a select few. (Author interview with Yates, 2020) This process acted as a 'focusing' point for the campaigns advisers, developing their priorities and defining their interests.

Beyond this direct effect on policy, the experience of the members of the campaign who had served knew the danger of statements that came from the President and their surrogates which the administration may have to reverse later on. As Kertzer argues,

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there are significant sunk costs in making/not making threats within a domestic audience.(Kertzer and Brutger, 2016) These in turn have created a consensus, (though not necessarily an accurate one as Croco argues(Croco, 2016), in both academic writing and politician statements that by changing position, an administration can hurt their credibility with the American public. Presidents therefore actively avoid taking a stance that they would need to backtrack later. The creation of an impression that sticks in the public imagination, the media and the foreign policy elite can therefore have long term legacies. Perhaps the most significant example which resonated with those who had strong personal connections to the Bush Senior administration was that of ‘No New Taxes’. As Bush Jr. wrote in his biography of his father, the decision to make the pledge and then backtrack on it was “from a political perspective... a disaster”.(Bush, 2014, p. 241) This preoccupation with an accurate message meant the campaign rarely went off script with Karen Hughes being criticised by reporters for the repetitive nature of the campaign’s narrative.(Hughes, 2004) Most of the official speeches and campaign surrogates were strongly controlled by the campaign team. As such, by creating a foreign policy platform, the campaign was setting their best idea of what the administration’s focuses would be for the next four years and showed the scaffolding that they would use to build their foreign policy agenda.

Throughout any campaign, there are signature events that define a campaign. The Bush campaign was no different and had two critical moments that were utilised to sell Bush’s foreign policy: A Bush speech at the Reagan Presidential library and a 2000 *Foreign Affairs* article written by Rice. The speech at the Reagan Library occurred on the 19th of November 1999, fairly early in the campaign and was based on a need to respond to critiques that had surfaced about the candidate’s lack of foreign policy experience. The location of the speech at the monument to the republican

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president symbolically presented Bush as Reagan's heir rather than his father. This not only drew further distance with the Bush senior ideological position but acted as a reminder to the republican base that he was closer to the iconic figure within modern republicanism. The speech, though criticised for lacking specifics and being created by 'committee', was important because it set out an understanding of not only Bush the man, but Bush the president.(Allen, Press and Matalin, 1999; North and Begala, 1999) Unlike other key foreign policy moments in the campaign, including the often cited spot test where Bush was quizzed (and failed) to show his knowledge of world leaders, this was a clear strategy document for not only the American public but the world. This signalling was critical to both allies and enemies and emphasised the importance placed on the Vulcan campaign team. It also reflected Bush's style of setting out the direction of the administration but avoiding the micromanaging that had consumed Clinton. The stylistic choices, made by Rice's Vulcans, was that the campaign would be associated more with the Reagan administration than Bush Senior's. Though the speech would set out "a broad, if somewhat conventional, foreign policy"(Rice, 2011, p. 23) the administration indicated not only the decisions that would come from the administration over issues such as China and India but also how Bush would run his decision-making process.

In the speech itself, there were significant points that speak to the rightward shift that his advisers had taken in the years between Bush Senior and the 2000 campaign. For example, Bush set out a clear focus on the process of democracy, arguing that "Our realism must make a place for the human spirit".(Bush, 1999) Signalling a focus on morality, it placed Bush within the debates between Reagan and Ford in the 1976 presidential primary about where morality lies. (Gelb and Rosenthal, 2003) Typified through Kissinger's collaborator Scowcroft as NSA, Bush Senior's administration was

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populated with figures who were closer to the President's 'realism' than the moralistic Reaganite wing of the party. This perhaps may have come across most prominently in the aftermath of Tiananmen Square, where Bush charted a restrained course in an attempt to limit the detrimental effect a rupture would have on American interests. (Brands, 2008) Critics had highlighted this as an approach that legitimised immoral regimes which in turn undermined the ability of the US to bring about a better world and worked against US strategic interests in the longer term. As such, the speech distanced Bush from his father's 'realism'. As Berggren highlights, this represented not only the President's personal view of democracy as part of his religious faith, but also reflected the moral tones that had come to dominate Republican foreign policy discourse. (Berggren and Rae, 2006) It also provided common purpose that defied party lines. By emphasising what he viewed as a 'moral' foreign policy, he would provide "a kind of foreign policy which will inspire our people and restore the bipartisanship so necessary to our peace and security". (Bush, 1999)

The second major foreign policy campaign declaration was Rice's article in *Foreign Affairs*. Not only was this a public articulation from Bush's principal spokesperson, it was a statement that occurred in the leading journal of foreign policy that is read by a high number of the academic and policy making community. As Mann argues, campaign discussions of foreign policy can often result in "me too" type of statements (statements where there is such similarity between candidates it can be hard to distinguish themselves) however the points of nuance can be critical. (Mann, 2004a) Rice chose to write that "American values are universal. People want to say what they think, worship as they wish, and elect those who govern them; the triumph of these values is most assuredly easier when the international balance of power favours those who believe in them". (Rice, 2000) Though she later went on to say that this should

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not be at the expense of all other goals, a clear hedge, it places morality at the foundation of the policy. Both Bush and Rice's focus on morality is critical to the later development of the administration's foreign policy and emphasised their policy synergy. It also reflected, contrary to the reputation of Bush as the moralistic force behind the foreign policy shift to one of democratisation, the consensus of the foreign policy advisers who were creating the policy documents. This guiding principle would be essential to how the administration would view the world, providing a balance between the goals of both the short and the long term in the issues of North Korea, China and India.

Likewise, central to the article was an articulation of a resistance to humanitarian missions for its own sake. Though still suggesting that America should intervene when they have a 'duty to' to achieve both comprehensive and limited goals, Rice clearly suggests limiting missions such as Bosnia, where US forces were put in the position of being 'referees' when there was no real national interest at stake.(Rice, 2000) Zakheim proposes this was a critical distinction, with Bush suggesting that the reason he supported continuing the intervention in Bosnia was more to protect the credibility of the US after they had committed to the action compared to moral necessity. (Zakheim, 2011) The article suggested that the dividing line between the Bush and Clinton campaigns was not one of non-intervention vs intervention, but the difference between interventions that benefit or hurt the US as decided by the President. As former Director of the American Institute in Taiwan, widely recognised as the unofficial American ambassador, Douglas Paal suggests that though moral considerations were important, they were usually the second or third order factors that affected policies. (Author interview with Paal, 2020) Daaldler argues that this represented a shift, as although the aims of the campaigns' foreign policy were fairly

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close to the status quo, the rationale behind the decisions were of a 'hegemonist' nature not a moralistic one.(Daalder and Lindsey, 2003) In other words, the power and the capabilities of the US may involve some actions abroad, however they should not be viewed as a global police force. Mann suggests a similar argument, the campaign team often shared a fundamental assumption about the use of American power as a force to prioritise ensuring American interests that also have an ability to cause good rather than the other way round.(Mann, 2004b) This inherent contradiction would be critical to the administration's policy both in the Indo-Pacific and in the respective China, North Korea and India policies.

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China

China held a prominent place within the campaign and the early administration. Steve Yates, Cheney's Deputy Chief of Staff for National Security, suggests that it was one of the key issues that received a concerted policy process that set out a clear theoretical and practical agenda. (Author interview with Yates, 2020) Many other policy issues, most prominently those surrounding India, were often viewed through the lens of the China problem and how to contain the perceived threat of the rising Asian power. (Author interview with Tellis, 2020) This China focus has often been minimised, ignoring how it provided a mind set for how the administration saw the world. Inherently, the lens of China allowed the administration to return to a bi-polar structure of relative gain, providing the administration's figures who had come of age in the middle (Cheney, Rumsfeld and Powell) and the end of the Cold War (Rice) means to order the world. As Yang argues "They look at China through the prism of ideology and try to identify a new enemy in China to replace the former Soviet Union". (Yang, 2002, p. 148) China's size, geopolitical importance and historical relationship offered a large test of the foreign policy decision-making process and the key figures within the administration knew its importance for defining their internal power.

China's symbolic and geopolitical importance within the US foreign policy establishment meant the policy required attention, but the campaign believed it also offered a point of contrast with the Clinton administration. (Daalder and Lindsey, 2003) This 'anything but Clinton' policy manifested itself in the shift of emphasis from China as a 'Strategic Partner' to a reconceptualization of Beijing as a 'Strategic Competitor'. (Bush, 1999; Daalder and Lindsey, 2003; Carranza, 2007; Pritchard, 2007) Bush believed that though cooperation was a good thing, it was only good if it benefited the US. As Rice wrote, "China is not a "status quo" power but one that would

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like to alter Asia's balance of power in its own favour".(Rice, 2000, p. 66) Furthermore, as part of the Bush managerial prioritisation of consistency rather than crisis management, Bush wanted to have an overarching strategic plan that managed to structure the entire administration's duration. (G. W. Bush, 2010) He argued in a key foreign policy address that "Unless a president sets his own priorities, his priorities will be set by others – by adversaries, or the crisis of the moment, live on CNN. American policy can become random and reactive – untethered to the interests of our country".(Bush, 1999) As Roberts argues, this was critical as it created a need to move away from "what they saw as the weaknesses, vacillations, and failures of the Clinton years".(Roberts, 2014, p. 3) In the campaign, Bush made repeated reference to the change in the Clinton administration's position from viewing China as 'the butcher of Beijing' to 'Strategic partnership' insinuating that the lack of clarity threatened US interests. In contrast, Bush's focus would be clear.

Significantly, there was not a significant split within the administration's campaign position. Even figures associated with the neoconservative section of the Republican Party often followed a line that asserted that though democracy was the ultimate end goal to further US interests, this could be accomplished through the development of a relationship based on trade and cooperation. For example, Paul Wolfowitz argued in 2000 that Chinese membership of the WTO was a positive for the United States' global security as this was the best possible route to increase the private sector.(Wolfowitz, 2000) Likewise, Zalmay Khalilzad argued for a policy of 'conengagement' where the choice that China faced would be sharpened and a relational policy would occur with the US increasing their engagement as China modified its behaviour.(Khalilzad, 1999) This positive relationship would come through an ability to show strength through supporting allies, not creating positions where the US would have to backtrack from

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previous commitments and ensuring that there was a culture of respect for Chinese leaders.(Zoellick, 2000) Importantly, the fact that similar messages were coming from both sides of the Republican divide illustrated the relative ideological cohesiveness of the policy. Zoellick suggests this policy coherency was such that “Our small group of foreign policy advisors had a lunch with Governor Bush in Austin to discuss a range of topics, including US policy toward China. Former Secretary Shultz had joined us. We talked about how to work with China in pursuit of mutual interests while also hedging because of uncertainties about China’s future. Shultz suggested that the Governor call China a “strategic competitor,” and we all agreed. We also discussed the importance of deepening ties with India, which became an important initiative for Bush and a key element of US policy toward the Indo-Pacific”. (Author interview with Zoellick, 2020) Though there may have been different emphasis on which parts of the policy were more important, an area which would cause problems later, the overarching policy goal was one the Vulcans could sign up to without difficulty.

The administration came into office determined to display strength. In a highly symbolic act, Bush did not call the Chinese Premier in his initial set of calls.(Qingguo, 2006) Though a seemingly small action, this went to the heart of the administration’s strategy where the niceties of diplomatic exchange would be separated from US commercial and strategic priorities. This continued throughout the first year of the administration. Foot highlights a meeting on the 23rd of May with the Dalai Lama that acted as a symbolic rebuke of the Chinese poor treatment of Tibet.(Foot, 2003) Significantly, it was also the same day that the Taiwanese leader was in New York reinforcing the anti-China symbolism. Furthermore, the style of the meeting was a shift from Clinton. Unlike Clinton, Bush met the Dalai Lama in a regularly scheduled

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and publicised meeting, offering a clear signal that the administration would not be afraid to make a statement on the issue of human rights abuses within China.

This draws comparisons to the discussions that occurred under the Ford administration where both Cheney and Rumsfeld argued for the President to meet with the Soviet dissident Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn.(Cheney, 2011; Rumsfeld, 2011) Similar to meetings with the Dalai Lama, meeting with the Soviet dissident drew fears that it would harm the overarching relationship for little concrete gain. However, both Cheney and Rumsfeld suggested that symbolic action was important as it reflected the support for American ideals such as democracy. It also raised the stakes of Chinese actions. This is particularly important when considering the national brand that China was building during the early 2000s.(Van Ham, 2001) The role of diplomatic niceties was critical to the building of China's image as a world power beginning to announce itself on the world stage. By meeting with the Dalai Lama, the President could show that he was not willing to sacrifice principles for pragmatism, whilst creating leverage over China to exploit later in the administration. Though these small meetings have not taken a prominent place in discussion of the administration's foreign policy, they not only reflect the intent (something that can be obscured in larger crises due to their more significant ramifications) but the influence of Cheney and Rumsfeld. As each decision is not made in a vacuum, these events created momentum that helped define future policy options. It also increased morale for those favouring a more hard-line policy and tied the US to an aggressive posture.

The Administration also made a significant stand over the issue of Taiwan. Dickson argues that the change partially reflected a need to create distance from the Clinton administration that had repeatedly clashed with the Republican Congress over Taiwan.(Dickson, 2002) Pro-Taiwan sentiments became policy with the

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administration increasing the diversity of arms sold to the Taiwanese to hedge against 'bad' Chinese behaviour. Beijing criticised this move, suggesting that it jeopardised the relationship. Though symbolic, this did not shift the 'one-China policy'. Significantly, so called 'pragmatists' within the administration still prized the US-Sino relationship above theoretical discussions over Taiwanese independence. Moving beyond the traditional line that the US recognises China's position on the issue of Taiwan, Powell said in his confirmation that "Taiwan is a part of China". (Hickey, 2004) Though this was partially fence mending after a highly sinophobic campaign, it represented Powell's prioritisation of stability. As Wilkerson suggests, the State department often represented "the brake on momentum both within the administration and the battles within Taiwan over how far the US would support any push for independence". (Author interview with Wilkerson, 2019) Instead of prioritising Taiwan, this group were focused on keeping the relationship with China stable. Powell stated in his confirmation hearing in the US Senate, US-China relations were complex and would have to be carefully managed.(Powell, 2001) Increasing the pressure over Taiwan would detrimentally effect US security and was not worth the risk. China would be needed in the future and the already cold relations should be thawed not pushed further into the freezer.

On the other hand, Cheney, Rumsfeld and figures such as Wolfowitz and Bolton were willing to take a hard-line stance. The battleground was set for the advisers to lay claim to what direction US-China policy should take. This reflected not only their view of the need challenge to China, but also the increased importance of democracy as a goal in itself. This so called 'Blue team', a term based on the Red team exercises in the Cold War and reflected those who were challenging the status quo, were often removed from China experts at State. As Yates argued, the Vice President's office

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perceived themselves as the vehicle for new policy ideas and were often trying to confront the bureaucratic resistance within the government and move away from the status quo. (Author interview with Yates, 2020) This ‘Zombie walk’ of decision-making often favoured existing policy. (Hudson, 2007, p. 147) This division within the administration often led to confusion within foreign governments, with leaders such as those in Taiwan having two US policies directed at them, giving them the opportunity to pick and choose directions they followed. (Author interview with Paal, 2020) Cheney’s ascendancy gave opportunities for those who wanted a new China policy that put the protection of Taiwan at the top of the agenda.

The President fell somewhere between these camps. Both Roberts and Wilkerson argue that Bush took a strong interest in China policy. (Roberts, 2014) Wilkerson suggests that this was prioritisation of the ‘China to Walmart’ connection, the idea that the policy would have profound economic ramifications. (Author interview with Wilkerson, 2020) Part of this was due to Bush’s experiences. Roberts points to the idea that his personal visit to China for seven weeks during his father’s ambassadorship was formative, creating a stronger understanding of Chinese political culture and bureaucracy. (Roberts, 2014) His business experience reinforced this sense of how important China was to the US economy. He also knew the difficulties that his administration would have in keeping China within the international system and avoiding conflict. Yet his religious and inherent distain of atheistic authoritarianism made him unwilling to accept the relationship as it was. This required a multifaceted approach that separated issues, allowing conflict to develop on some fronts but maintaining a responsible line on avoiding a great power stand-off.

This battle over China policy came to a head on the 1st April 2001 when a US E3 plane crashed into a Chinese military aircraft in the most significant crisis of the pre 9/11

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period. Importantly, this was a period of time that Rice believed was critical to avoid confrontation due to the upcoming 2002 Chinese leadership elections.(Mann, 2004a) She believed that US foreign policy followed the schedule of US domestic politics instead of exploiting those of other nations. Though she was not a China expert, her aim was to manage the administration's China policy in an orderly fashion, avoiding jeopardising the business interests that had been fundamental to the election of Bush but still signalling the new direction. This crisis severely jeopardised Rice's plan as it provided an opportunity for hardliners within Congress to respond to the heightened tensions to leverage the administration into a more competitive relationship with Beijing. Not only did the crisis motivate hardliners, it raised significant questions about how far the administration should go in appeasing China. Rumsfeld also used the crisis to make a bureaucratic power grab. He believed that though diplomacy was viewed as beyond the scope of the Pentagon's interests, there were both military and strategic implications.(Rumsfeld, 2011) Bush agreed, hearing views from his wider NSC rather than delegating to Powell. This highlighted the disconnect between Bush's theoretical CEO style and reliance on Cheney, Rumsfeld and Rice. It also reflected his lack of foreign policy experience, requiring the crutch of the wider NSC rather than run the risk of being ridden over by Powell.

As a result Yang argues that the initial stages of the crisis were more confrontational than they needed to be, with Bush creating a public stance that limited the administrations flexibility. (Yang, 2008, 2010) Part of this was due to the timing, as the crisis came within the first few months of the term. Friedman argues that this is something that can often be overlooked in foreign policy decision-making, citing it as a significant reason for the failure of Kennedy over the Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961.(Friedman, 2011) Like Kennedy's hard-line Cuba positioning, Bush had strongly

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identified himself with China scepticism which meant he was conscious that he would be signalling to two different audiences in a dual-level game; China and the American public. The initial policy was devised to ensure that he remained the ‘tough on China’ candidate, playing to his domestic audience. Though this may have hindered him in the long term when dealing with the crisis, it gave him an air of competence. Beyond this policy issue, it also reflected his need to be seen at the centre of the crisis, reflective of the insecurity that Bush had begun to feel around Powell. Bush stated “I am troubled by the lack of a timely Chinese response to our request for this access. Our Embassy officials are on the ground and prepared to visit the crew and aircraft as soon as the Chinese Government allows them to do so, and I call on the Chinese Government to grant this access promptly”. (G. Bush, 2001) This statement was separated from State’s ongoing efforts, with the President and his close team viewing it as essential that he be the face of the crisis not Powell. By personalising the crisis, he was able to raise the stakes whilst tying himself to the outcome. This was significant due to the ongoing perception of the need to retain bureaucratic control within the White House rather than allowing Powell the free rein to achieve a satisfactory resolution. However, after taking the initial and most public stand he then was willing to leave the public arena to his advisers and allowed himself to be kept in reserve in case the crisis became further derailed.(Garver, 2002)

This initial approach strengthened hard-line voices within the discussion. However, Roberts argues that the Pentagon was at a significant disadvantage structurally due to the lack of appointments in place.(Roberts, 2014) Rumsfeld’s distrust of the department’s remaining Clintonites resulted in his unwillingness to take complete control over the issue, knowing that he did not have the bureaucratic muscle to support him. Powell on the other hand was able to utilise the gaps in his department to create

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a direct line through Armitage to the US ambassador, giving him a flexibility and knowledge base that appealed to Bush's desire to resolve the crisis quickly. (Roberts, 2014) By using Armitage and Ambassador Joseph Prueher, Powell was able to put his people directly into the crisis. Furthermore, all three had increased credibility over military matters due to their previous military service (Prueher having formerly been a general in the US army). This gave them the 'authority of experience' and reduced the need for the increased credibility that the Defense Department would have traditionally brought to the issue. This was critical as it meant they could more legitimately cut Defense out of negotiations that traditionally they would have been part of. (Zhang, Qiu and Cameron, 2004)

This meant that all information and negotiations were leant towards State. (DeYoung, 2006) Significantly, Rice was unable to get hold of her counterpart which reduced her ability to influence the operations directly, a critical failure born of her unfamiliarity with her role. (Rice, 2011) The crisis suggested that Powell's ability to co-opt the State Department and keep it operating effectively during the transition whilst the administration was appointing staff strengthened him in the crisis, allowing him flexibility and responsiveness. However, Powell realised that if the crisis went on for a long time, there would have been increased pressure from the external political environment for a more hawkish response, playing into Rumsfeld's hands. (Zhang, Qiu and Cameron, 2004) Significantly, the early nature of the crisis made Bush unwilling to take large risks endangering his other policy priorities, meaning that Powell's promise of quick resolution undercut Rumsfeld. With Bush unwilling to allow his first foreign policy crisis to escalate, Powell's ability to act and offer a solution created a strong positive case for the new Secretary of State to be a central player within the administration.

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It also reflected the nature of the environment. Bush and his team realised that it was important for China to be offered an opportunity to save face. (Rice, 2011) Powell was one of the few administration figures who had the credibility and the tactical manoeuvrability to enable him to find a solution that resolved the crisis but not to seem too apologetic. (DeYoung, 2006) Significantly, Bush learnt that Powell needed to be kept within the tent, rather than outside. Within a week the pilots had been released due to the sending of a communication that had linguistic nuances, giving the Chinese a letter that suggested that the US apologised whilst allowing the English version to merely suggest regret. Significantly, this resulted in criticism from Bush's neoconservative base which was outraged due to the perception that he had embarrassed the US. (Mann, 2004b) By siding with the realists at State, Bush accepted the likely domestic political backlash. Overall, this was a perhaps the high point of the Secretary of State's power over China. Not only did getting the hostages home give Powell a significant and morale boosting victory, the inability of the Pentagon to get the plane back in an equally effective manner weakened Rumsfeld's claim to China policy and highlighted Powell's usefulness. (DeYoung, 2006) Overall, this was a remarkably successful resolution of a significant hot-point of Sino-US relations, one that moved away from conflict without a loss of US strength or credibility. The decision to allow Powell control represented a clear success for Bush, offering unfulfilled promise of their potential relationship.

Interestingly, Cheney was not a prominent figure in resolving the incident. Wang argues that this is partially due to the inherent conflict within the two sides of Cheney's character. (Wang, 2009) On one side, Cheney was a believer in asserting American's strength and restoring American pride, leaning him towards Rumsfeld's position. However, Cheney was also profoundly affected by his work in the business sector.

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This was critical as it meant that he was less willing to risk financial turmoil at home over the issues of human rights, a clear division between the assertive nationalist and neoconservative camps within the Republican Party. As such, Cheney remained above the decision-making around the crisis. His unwillingness to spend his political capital on issues reflected his desire to avoid being spread too thin. He was willing to delegate the battle to Rumsfeld, who ensured Powell's realist tendencies were mitigated. Even when Rumsfeld seemed to lose the battle and then was unable to get the plane back, he continued to remain on the side-lines. With the President and Rice leaning to a resolution based on Powell's diplomatic approach, Cheney would set out a view but not use his considerable bureaucratic resources to force the issues.

Overall, the administrations initial China policy offered an opportunity for optimism. In Rice's narrative of the events surrounding the E3 crisis, the successful outcome came through the close presidential management that occurred during the crisis.(Rice, 2011) This management was centred on a smaller group than the NSC, after initial consultations, of Rice, Powell, Card, Hughes and Bush himself. This hands-on management style reflected the President's CEO style with a willingness to delegate balanced against the need to steer the ship during a crisis. After listening to his advisers, he decided that Powell's policy vision was closest to his own for China policy and he then made the bold decision to largely delegate to his Secretary of State. The E3 crises and its successful resolution created the foundations of a positive Bush-Sino relationship. As Garrison argues, this development of an effective working relationship was critical for underpinning the return to a policy closer to one of strategic partnership than the initial policy power dynamic appeared.(Garrison, 2005) Whilst there had been clear signals of a strengthening of resolve surrounding human rights issues, essential to domestic success, it was not going to be at the expense of the

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overarching relationship that they believed would define the next era. Indeed, the perception was that this would be a clear triumph that would be essential to show foreign policy competence in the 2004 campaign.(Baker, 2013)

The E3 crisis put the administration on a more pragmatic approach than was evident in other areas of Bush's foreign policy.(Murray, Brown and Martin, 2017) By leveraging his own political capital and Cheney's unwillingness to engage, Powell was able to take significant policy control. It also reflected where Powell was likely to be influential going forward. When the administration was needed credibility, Powell's reputation gave him increased power. Likewise, when it required a quick and high-level response to crisis, the Secretary of State was able to leverage his institutional powers to increase his personal influence. However, it also indicated some of his weaknesses. The 'base' would likely criticise the more realist-based solutions that Powell was offering. It also suggested, as Rice gained stature and reputation as the articulation of the President's shadow, his importance would decrease. Finally, it reinforced the importance of timing. Rumsfeld's lack of time to staff his department would not occur next time and he would become far harder to isolate. As such, though it may have been the high point of Powell's influence, his position was still precarious.

North Korea

When the administration came into office, the signals suggested Powell would be the dominant actor. In a meeting between Clinton's North Korea policy coordinators Counsellor to Department of State Wendy Sherman, NSA Sandy Berger and NSC staff member Charles Pritchard with Powell and Rice, Powell took the lead. Interestingly,

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Rice suggested that this was the most detailed transition briefings from the Clinton administration compared to other issues such as terrorism which were given far less attention.(Rice, 2011) As Chinoy argues, Powell indicated that he agreed with most of what the former Clinton figures were saying and, though the policy might be toughened in rhetoric, the parameters would not change too much.(Chinoy, 2008) However, another top member of the administration was also in the discussion and did not agree. Rice came into the meeting late and remained quiet, representing the belief of the administration that there should only be one President at a time.(Rice, 2011) Leaving the meeting, Berger believed there would be no radical changes.(Chinoy, 2008)

However, this ignored the undercurrent of criticism that existed about Clinton's North Korean policy throughout the campaign. Even Powell's long-term ally, Armitage, had suggested there needed to be significant revisions of the Agreed Framework that had characterised the Clinton policy. In a report written with future Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz in 1999, the two advisers argued that the agreement was not only incoherent and politically untenable, but was based on incorrect assumptions that were detrimental of US security. (Armitage, Wolfowitz and Et al., 1999) The advisers believed that Clinton had been conducting diplomacy for diplomacy's sake, looking towards the symbolic importance of the discussion rather than US security interests. When discussing North Korea in campaign events, the emphasis was placed on the need to have a moral guidance to the foreign policy of the administration. Although Wolfowitz would later say in his confirmation that "based on his current knowledge" he would not abrogate on the Agreed Framework, the underlying ideological current within the administration favoured a more hard line policy than that advocated by Powell.(United State Congress Senate Committee on Armed Services, 2002)

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Part of this represented Bush's personal beliefs. In an interview with Bob Woodward, he said that he "loathed" the North Korean dictator Kim Jong Il, thinking the repression and starvation of his people was reprehensible.(Woodward, 2003) Similar to meeting Dalai Lama, Bush would meet numerous North Korean dissidents. For example, presidential speech writer Michael Gerson argues that Bush met the author of *The Aquariums of Pyongyang*, a work that spotlighted the brutality of the regime.(Gerson, 2007) However it does not explain the changing policy. As already seen with the administration's policy towards China, though the administration may condemn the human rights abuses they could still engage in a semi-productive manner when advantageous. With North Korea, Bush had the perception that Pyongyang was exploiting US generosity and naïveté. In the first Principal's meeting about the issue, Bush used the metaphor of a child throwing their food on the ground to get attention.(G. W. Bush, 2010) Bush would no longer pick it up.

This philosophy instinctually aligned Bush with Cheney and Rumsfeld. Cheney, in his previous role as Defense Secretary, had taken the position that the North Korean nuclear program was a clear and present danger to US security. As such, he had frozen the troop reductions that occurred in the aftermath of the Cold War, ensuring that it remained high on the agenda and signalling US continued involvement.(Harnisch, 2002) Both Rumsfeld and Cheney led the group within the administration that advocated greater 'moral clarity', taking the stance that engaging with the regime would offer little gain whilst harming the ability of the US moral standing. As Kaplan argues, for Cheney and Rumsfeld the idea of giving aid in exchange for a reduction in nuclear weapons rewarded behaviour that was detrimental to the United States' denuclearisation agenda.(Kaplan, 2008) This ability to draw clear and distinct lines also allowed the US to hopefully destabilise the regime by restricting aid.

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Bureaucratically, an aggressive North Korean policy would also reinvigorate debates of the need of a more powerful missile defense system.

The internal battle ground within the wider NSC favoured them. Firstly, this was due to the decision of Hadley to integrate the OVP with the NSC Staff. Hadley had taken this decision to both take advantage of Cheney's foreign policy experience but also to ensure his cooperation and support for the NSC. Though this may have insulated the NSC from direct attacks from the OVP it fundamentally changed the policy direction. (Pritchard, 2007) In terms of North Korea policy, this meant they were able to influence policy by encouraging the NSC to present options to the President tilting towards aggressive postures. Significantly, the OVP was well placed to offer ideational direction for North Korea. Unlike the NSC and State, Cheney's staff were able to focus on the ideational and strategic vision of the administration as they had limited operational responsibilities. The 9/11 Commission highlighted one of the most significant areas in need of change was the need to speed up the security clearance process to allow the government to be more effective earlier. (Kumar, 2002) Though this is not to suggest that the security clearances severely restricted the ability of the major participants within North Korea policy, it meant low level political appointees were often slower in being cleared for sensitive material. The relative seniority of the OVP staff, with the dual titles of working for the President and the Vice President, and their small numbers meant they often had security clearances before others were working at full capacity. Furthermore, the lack of direct responsibility meant they could focus on a few issues of the Vice President's choosing. Though North Korea may not have been at the top of Cheney's agenda, it was a focus of his team meaning they were able to concentrate time and resources in creating a coherent position. This was far more focused than the NSC whose priority on staffing the President focused

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on issues of communication, planning and logistics along with policy formation. OVP staff were therefore better placed to provide the ideological underpinnings of the North Korean policy.

The VP's network was also assisted by the nature of time within a US presidency. Yates argues that the VP thought that his influence would likely decrease as the administration went on, as the policy ideas of the administration became more set. (Author interview with Yates, 2020) Inherently the first phase of policy development is the most open due to internal and external pressures. Externally, the President is less likely to be publicly committed and is unlikely to receive criticism for backtracking. This is not to say that a decision cannot encounter resistance and criticism, far from it, but the criticism is more likely to be based on the policy itself compared to 'lack of coherency' attacks. Internally, individuals are also less likely to have committed themselves within debates and therefore they may be more responsive to policy change. The human factor is critical, as group decision-makers are less likely to make a decision that is incoherent with their previous stances on policy decisions without significant changes to the status quo. By shaping the initial conversation and policy planning process and targeting it as a priority, the VP's office was able to leverage their political capital to the greatest effect. In terms of North Korea, this meant they often set up obstacles to negotiation that had to be overcome which importantly meant that the negotiations that could take place were often from the hardest line possible. By utilising this specific time frame to its full, Cheney was able to carve out a significant bureaucratic power balance that favoured a hard-line policy towards Pyongyang.

Beyond the OVP, the Pentagon was also home to significant players within North Korean policy. This was largely due to two factors. Firstly, the US military's position

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within South Korea meant that Rumsfeld automatically had interests involved. The vague language, developed from the original wording that the Defense Secretary would be ‘the principal advisor in all matters related to national security’ to “...related to all matters involving the Department of Defense” under the Truman administration, means that the Secretary’s influence is often determined by how much the military is involved in a situation. (*The National Security Act of 1947*, 1947) Those 37000 troops meant that Rumsfeld had a clear justification to be a principal voice within the administration, giving him bureaucratic clout. (Kane, 2006) As Newhouse suggests, Rumsfeld did not have a wide agenda of things he wanted to accomplish as Defense Secretary. Instead “His agenda is modest. He concentrates on just a few subjects, but these he routinely bulldozes into submission”. (Newhouse, 2001, p. 102) Of these few issues, North Korea was one of the most prominent countries that Rumsfeld cared about. The troop deployments in South Korea represented the Cold War style basing system based on a ‘trip-wire’ approach that equated troop numbers with commitment. (Nam, 2006) Instead, Rumsfeld advocated less troops and a more technologically dependent Pentagon. South Korea offered an opportunity to show you could reduce troops without reducing security.

Secondly, the centrality of missile defence played into the strengths of Rumsfeld. As Ryan argues, Rumsfeld had utilised his 1998 commission to become a leading advocate of missile defense, forcing the Clinton administration and the CIA to move closer to a Republican perception of the threat and required response. (Ryan, 2010b) In an article for *Foreign Affairs*, he reiterated that missile defence closed a vulnerability to coercion from ballistic missiles and that its implementation was critical to US security. (Rumsfeld, 2002) Not only had this expertise been central to his appointment, it meant that he had increased credibility when discussing the issue with

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the President. The expertise not only gave Rumsfeld a perception of 'competence' over missile defense, his role as a politically appointed figure meant this was perceived that he had the influential positional of having 'responsive competence'.(Rourke, 1992) Responsive competence is the possession of information, expertise or knowledge whilst still being trusted by the President to react and change direction to follow their political agenda. The need to ensure a coherent administration strategy and the often extremely technical nature of negotiations meant that he was well positioned to be involved in any policy decision process. By combining the two roles of policy expert and policy advocate, Rumsfeld gained power within the administrations internal decision-making. As May et al. argue: "As issues demand attention, those with the largest stakes at hand are drawn into policy debates".(May, Koski and Stramp, 2016, p. 197) Rumsfeld was far more directly involved in the issue of non-proliferation due to his personal interest and ability to give credibility to the policy decisions.

Significantly, Rumsfeld also had the understated power of being a 'fire-alarm' for those concerned in with missile defense. Under 'Elite cue Theory', an elite cue giver is important due to their ability to act as a warning to key people who are interested in an issue by creating a heuristic shortcut that allows them to instinctually position themselves with limited research. (Berinsky, 2009; Saunders, 2015) Rumsfeld was a force within the GOP due to his visibility surrounding the issue during the 1990s, giving him significant credibility with numerous hawks on missile defense. Bush knew that his credibility would help him in selling policies to the hard-line wing, however if Rumsfeld felt isolated and that he had no significant voice in the discussion he would be likely create political pressure on the President. His previous experience and reputation would increase the political damage that he could do if he perceived the

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administration as being weak. This was especially important in North Korea as it would have been easy for Rumsfeld to paint the negotiations as appeasement that jeopardised US security, a politically devastating critique. When weighing the respective power of Rumsfeld and Powell, missile defence and North Korea was one area where the Defense Secretary's public reputation offered a striking counterbalance to the Secretary of State's larger public image.

As such, this battleground favoured the hardliners. The administration was determined to create a review of North Korea policy, one that would redefine the relationship and stop the perceived gap between the US costs in terms of moral ambivalence and aid compared to the low security benefits achieved under the Agreed Framework. This review would take a significant amount of time, finally finishing on June 7th, 2001. However, significant external events would impact the review. For example, the EU had begun negotiating a deal with Pyongyang who viewed it as an opportunity to show their ability to work with the West and to extend the Agreed Framework.(Harnisch, 2002) This was critical as it created the impression within Washington that the President was being boxed in by his allies. It also played into the suspicions of hardliners who believed that the EU was allowing the regime extra time and resources to continue being a thorn in the side of US power. Perhaps as importantly, it also reinforced the perception that the North Korean's were starting to escape their net in a similar manner to Iraq, where the international unity that had been fundamental to successful sanctions was starting to fall apart.

Nevertheless, the Europeans had routinely been bit part players in the North Korea policy process and easy to ignore. What was not so easy to ignore was Kim Dae Jung's 'Sunshine Policy'. This policy argued that increased engagement could create a more favourable environment for peace and show the tangible benefits for Pyongyang if

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they were willing to become partners in the international system.(Koo and Nam, 2001) Supported by the Clinton administration this dovetailed well with the ambitious efforts to send Secretary of State Madeleine Albright to Pyongyang. The importance of US allies has always been essential to the creation of North Korean policy due to its geographical position. As Newhouse argues South Korea and Japan in particular have important geopolitical interests that if ignored too often had dramatic ramifications for the United States bilateral relationships.(Newhouse, 2003) An example of this tightrope the administration had to walk was on the issue of the abductions of South Korean and Japanese citizens during the 1980s, something the two Asian states had highly different interests in.(Williams and Mobrand, 2010) This often resulted in the need for increased diplomatic work for the administration whenever they were trying to achieve a policy change especially as radical as Cheney and Rumsfeld wanted.

Though Clinton supported the ‘Sunshine Policy’, Bush was less on board. During President Kim Dae Jung congratulatory call he was incredulous of the South Korean leaders naivete, stating ‘Who is this Guy?’(Pritchard, 2007; Chinoy, 2008) Pritchard, who had been kept on due to his perceived hawkishness and had moved to State, was called in late to develop a memo to explain the Dae Jung’s bravery whilst serving in the political opposition to South Korea’s military dictatorship. Pritchard says this memo “did not change the President’s mind”. (Pritchard, 2007, p. 52) This dampened hopes of continuing Clinton’s policy suggesting Bush favoured a hard-line approach. This illustrates one of the important dynamics of the North Korean issue, namely the lack of connection between the South Korean leaders and Bush. Unlike with other foreign leaders, most notably UK Prime Minister Tony Blair and Russian President Vladimir Putin, Bush had a noticeably cold relationship with the Dae Jung.(Perlez, 2001; Bower, 2016) As Giacomello et al. argue, the importance of personal

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relationships has increased dramatically in the post-cold war era.(Giacomello, Ferrari and Amadori, 2009) Though it is important not to overstate the effect friendship can have between international leaders, the lack of it reduced South Korean influence.

The importance of the South Korean relationship was placed high on the agenda with an early invitation from the White House to the South Korean President.(Mann, 2004b) This had been a tactical decision made by Kim Dae Jung, going against advice from his Washington based diplomatic staff and from State Department allies.(Chinoy, 2008) He believed that he was uniquely placed, having often met senior American officials even before ascending to the presidency. However, the fact that he came during a period when the President had not firmly decided on a policy raised the importance of the meeting and heightened the risk. By rushing an initial decision, Bush was more likely to rely on the heuristics that he had developed, i.e., that they should not reward bad behaviour and anyone who did was naïve. This created a large barrier to the South Korean leader's ability to create a new and lasting relationship, whilst also creating a policy commitment from the President that he was unable to return from. Highlighting the importance of other international actors on the internal bureaucratic power balance, this mistake by Dae Jung fundamentally reframed and redefined the North Korea policy in a way that was highly detrimental.

It also raised North Korea to the centre of the news agenda, resulting in Powell giving a press interview the night before the meeting. Significantly, this shows the detrimental side of the Secretary of State being a leading media personality. Their expected influence and power means that their words are often taken as signalling from an administration by both domestic and international audiences. This means that Secretary of State can often shape policy through their use of media contacts. However, it also means that others in the administration kept track of Powell's

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statements and felt required to respond forcefully. It can also lead to a sense of threat from the President, an issue particularly present between Powell and Bush during the early months with Powell's high level of prestige and lack of trust between the two. As Sorensen argues, the Secretary's power of influence in the wider public is so high that a President who does not have the support of their Secretary is far more likely to lose the support of Congress.(Sorensen, 1987) Though Mulcahy argues persuasively that the shift of power seen as early as the Carter administration between the Secretary of State and the White House means that the NSA often has more of a direct influence within an administration and has replaced the Secretary as the principal foreign policy adviser, the Secretary still remains the principal foreign policy spokesperson. (Mulcahy, 1986) Their words are taken as an intentional signal, carefully crafted, from the administration and are therefore treated by the media as inherently newsworthy. Depending on its use, this power offered both opportunity and threats to the power of Powell.

In this case, it was perhaps the most significant damage that could happen to a new Secretary of State. Powell suggested that he would continue 'where the Clinton administration left off'.(Sanger, 2001) Douglas Paal was quoted as using the metaphor of Bush wanting to be more like the cop who deterred bad behaviour compared to the priest who looked to redeem the regime.(Sanger, 2001) This story not only represented a challenge to the President, it developed into a perfect storm that severely reduced the Secretary's ability to impact the policy. The idea of continuity reflected further division between those in the NSC and OVP, and those at State over the tainted legacy of the Clinton administration. As Daaldler and Lindsey argue this built into the 'Anything But Clinton' approach where change was the status quo.(Daalder and Lindsey, 2003) With North Korean policy, this mentality was particularly apparent

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due to Clinton's late push to make it a legacy defining issue. Any immediate success would have resulted in 'split-credit', meaning there had to be a large incentive for any continuation without a significant gap. Though this may have resulted in a lost opportunity, the personal and partisan conflict with the Clinton administration meant that it was unlikely to be adopted.

Beyond the phrasing, the timing of the statement was also significant. As with Kim, there was a semblance of urgency and overconfidence. The nature of the visit provided an opportunity for Powell to leverage his public position and create what he viewed as a sense of calm around the issue. He believed that unless the President was willing to start a war with North Korea negotiations were likely the only way forward and Clinton had provided the foundations to build on.(DeYoung, 2006) He thought the overarching message was that it would act as a placeholder, not disillusioning the North Koreans but not giving anything away. Though it slightly nudged Bush towards negotiation, Powell viewed the comment as inconsequential and not one that would create a stir. Importantly, he didn't believe that he needed to sign off with the White House. Significantly, others within the administration viewed it as an attempt to box the President in.(DeYoung, 2006) As Bush highlights, his reaction was that it had been the exact opposite of what had been discussed in the meeting the day before.(G. W. Bush, 2010) The need to avoid this being the dominant narrative and create unrest within the foreign policy community meant that a swift denial would be needed, contradicting Bush's focus on message consistency. Powell's reputed competence, one of his major assets, meant Bush thought the statement was intentional and it created further distrust. It also reinvigorated the public perception of distance between them, creating an impetus for Bush to delay the policy review and coloured the important first stages of the policy review with an anti-negotiation slant.

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Bush responded by designating damage control to Rice. In a normal situation, the NSA often had to tread carefully with the Secretary of State to avoid a backlash down the road, a danger multiplied by Powell's prestige. Her relative inexperience reinforced this dynamic, with the relationship being viewed by the Secretary as one of mentor and mentee compared to one of equals. Furthermore, Zakheim highlights how "she starts off with disadvantage as she's a much younger person than these other three guys and quite frankly she's a woman which didn't make it easy". (Author interview with Zakheim, 2019) These factors created a gap between the two. However, like with the battle over the domination of the Principals' meetings with Cheney, Rice was able to leverage her and Bush's personal relationship to assert herself. She told Powell he needed to take the statement back and quickly. Significantly, Powell was forced to do this during the meeting. (Chinoy, 2008) Not only did this mean he was not present and therefore was unable to help shape the conversation, it was a highly symbolic message that situated the Secretary as literally outside the room. With this manoeuvring, Rice increased her internal and external credibility. Powell's actions also had large ramifications for the internal balance over North Korean policy, as Rice had positioned herself with the Cheney/Rumsfeld network and put Powell into the perception of the 'rebel' who was conducting his own foreign policy. Combined with resisting Cheney's usurping some of her own turf, Rice had shown she would be central to the policy process.

At the final press conference, the President signalled a far harder line to the North Koreans and US allies in the region. Armitage suggested that North Korea had entered a certain 'theology' within the administration and that this incident had reinforced how the policy would not be based on the facts on the ground but the ideological underpinning of the OVP and NSC. (DeYoung, 2006) The President's press

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conference also created an atmosphere of conflict with his South Korean counterpart who went home increasingly sceptical of US intentions. Dae Jong was so concerned about the meeting and the direction that he called George H.W. Bush who reassured him that his son would moderate over time.(Chinoy, 2008) However, in the near term though he would have to bear it. It also resulted in the South Koreans moving away from State as a key lobbying source as they had decided that Foggy Bottom was on the edge of the foreign policy decision-making process. As such, Seoul made the conscious effort to talk more to the Pentagon, the NSC and perhaps most importantly the OVP. These open channels diluted the traditional monopoly over diplomacy that was a significant source of power for the Secretary of State and his allies, resulting in a further power shift away from those who were operating as a moderate voice within the administration. Beyond South Korea, it also sent a message that the balance of influence favoured the OVP and Pentagon, with countries such as Taiwan, North Korea, China, Japan, and Israel taking note. As Armitage stated “Oh man, were going to have a long ride if they’re getting upset about that headline. We have real issues out there”. (Chinoy, 2008, p. 55)

There has been a significant critique of this early period of North Korean policy, sparked by significant figures within the administration including Pritchard, that the administration missed an opportunity.(Pritchard, 2007) In Clinton’s own words “We were very close to ending the North Korean missile program in the year 2000. I believe if I had been willing to go there, we would have ended it”.(Sigal, 2002) However, there are significant doubts that this would have been the case. This was accepted by members of the Clinton team, including Berger who said “We’d be standing there in Pyongyang with ourselves very exposed”.(Chinoy, 2008, p. 33) Though the Clinton administration had a firmer grounding in the North Korean policy, the Albright

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Summit had resulted in few tangible benefits and had taken numerous bargaining chips away. Though it is possible that a renewed attempt from Bush may have been able to capitalise on these efforts, the Americans had tried negotiations before without success. As Michishita argues, it played into a pattern of North Korean diplomacy where they exploited America's willingness to complete a deal but then backed out due to fears that they would lose the leverage that kept them at the table.(Michishita, 2009)

The second flaw in this argument was that the North Koreans were later to be found to be working on enriching uranium which had been outside of the agreement whilst the negotiations were ongoing. Although this was only known in 2002, it illustrates the difficulties that would have remained if the administration had continued the diplomatic efforts of Clinton and Albright. This suggests that the arguments made by Spurgeon, among others, that "I believe that, as difficult as North Korea has been, its record on implementing the Agreed Framework has been quite good—probably as good as that of the United States"(Kelly, Halperin and Gallucci, 2001) were not as accurate as they appeared at the time suggesting the opportunity was significantly overstated and increased negotiations could have overextended the administration. Indeed, the feelings of betrayal had Bush committed to the Clinton strategy may have resulted in a far more detrimental position for North Korean relations and imposed significant public opinion costs for the prospect of further negotiations down the line. Though some gains may have been missed, the time taken for the policy review and the decision to change the strategy to a wider and more effective agreement may have had longer term benefits.

Finally, a large problem with the Summit was that it created a significant symbolic gain for the North Koreans who utilised the image of Albright and Kim Jong Il to their

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great advantage. It not only increased their access to resources, but it provided a stabilisation factor that greatly impacted their ability to successfully navigate the international system. As Cha argues, the image presented of Kim as a reasonable and rational actor in the international arena, lived on.(Cha, 2012) This created great difficulties for future administrations who were unable to effectively work to show to domestic and international audiences North Korea's unwillingness to accept rational solutions to the nuclear crisis. The summit also hurt the US moral credibility for little tangible benefit, suggesting that human rights were less significant than US security. As such, though the administration's policy process may have led to short term losses and may have missed the opportunity that existed, the benefits and the likelihood of these successes have often been overstated.

India

One of the great successes of the Bush administration was the creation of a new direction in US/India relations. Though this would take the entire administration to accomplish, there were two early signs that Bush perceived this as a point where he could make a difference. The President had a personal interest in the relationship due to his intuitive connection to the estranged democracy and he was interested why what appeared to be a natural ally of the United States was still isolated diplomatically from the US.(Pant, 2012) Though his inexperience has often been treated as a negative, including in this work, the advantage of a Commander in Chief who was unfamiliar with US diplomatic history and less attached to conventional ways of thinking becomes apparent. The President was willing to reassess the strategic value of India and decided to take a gamble. As Under Defense Secretary Feith suggests, Bush "saw India not chiefly as a problem, but as a great democratic country on track to become the world's most populous state... and a rising power that could be a natural ally of

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the United States”.(Feith, 2008, p. 129) This is not to say that he was alone in this endeavour. In fact, Rice also supported bringing India back into the fold, writing in her 2000 campaign *Foreign Affairs* article that “India is not a great power yet but it had the potential to emerge as one”.(Rice, 2000) Though seemingly a small statement, the fact that she name checked the country in a widely read article was perhaps the most significant statement of what the future administration’s foreign policy would look like and was a significant step in suggesting to India that there was potential to reconceptualise the relationship.

The second important moment came in April 2001, three months after the President was inaugurated, when the Indian External Affairs and Defense Minister Jaswant Singh was invited to series of meetings with Rice and Rumsfeld. This was significant as the early meeting showed a healthy respect for the Indian government and reflected at the least a continuation of the engagement that had begun during the last years of the Clinton presidency. However, what made the trip more significant was the decision for Bush to stop by. As Hathaway argues, the fact that the President had a significant conversation with Singh and even invited him back to the Oval Office reinforced this perception that the US wanted to improve their relationship.(Hathaway, 2002) This also created a channel for the President to personalise the relationship, something that is often essential and overlooked in American foreign policy.(Giacomello, Ferrari and Amadori, 2009) Often personalising the relationship can give added incentives to follow through with commitments and encourage positive outcomes. Bush habitually needed a strong personal relationship with leaders to get behind a policy and invest the time and effort to ensure progress on an issue. Significantly, the discussion was not only about the Indian subcontinent but about the wider Asian security situation which conferred a certain amount of prestige on Singh.(Hathaway, 2002) The meeting

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reaffirmed the fact that the administration wanted a better relationship with India and that it would receive high level attention.

The decision to change US India strategy was based on several factors, but the most important was the change in the worldview from the Clinton to Bush administration's nuclear policy. Unlike North Korea, there was little lingering animosity for Bush, Rumsfeld and Rice surrounding India. As Michael Green, who served as the Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs and Senior Director for Asian Affairs, argued "there was far less deep underlying pathologies" surrounding India within the administration which resulted in smaller barriers internally to engagement being in place. (Author interview with Green, 2020) At the fundamental level, Bush believed that India was not the rogue state that Pyongyang had been and therefore a potential partner in the international community. Significantly, this suggested that there was a realisation that the internal make up of states was as significant as the states' behaviour, providing a basis for later policy decisions regarding the push of the 'Democracy agenda' in the second term. The Bush administration had decided there were good proliferators and bad ones with India being one of the good ones.(Potter, 2006) Hathaway suggests that although the sanctions took a significant amount of time to be removed from the New Delhi nuclear program (they would only be removed after 9/11 due to a series of consultations both internally and with Congress), the administration did clearly indicate they would remove them which helped the Indians who were pushing engagement to show the benefits a relationship with the US might hold.(Hathaway, 2002)

Beyond this change in the perception of India as a nuclear state, New Delhi's approach was to signal support for one of Rumsfeld and Bush's top priorities in an effort to show the benefits of a good US-India relationship. Schaffer argues India was one of

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the most supportive nations for missile defense as it represented a movement away from mutually assured destruction as the basis of US foreign policy and also offered opportunities to contain India's traditional enemies Pakistan and China.(Schaffer, 2009) Though India would later suggest that the US should not abrogate the ABM Treaty unilaterally which disappointed the administration, the relative favourability to missile defense was in marked contrast to the traditional allies' response.(Rajagopalan, 2001) As Ashley Tellis, who served in the Indian embassy during the administration's first term and kept a strong relationship with key advisers, argued, for figures who believed missile defence was critical India "were on the side of the angels". (Author interview with Tellis,2020) The fact the administration was extremely concerned with the existing structure of the internal non-proliferation framework meant they were less focused on how to maintain these institutions and were willing to engage with nations on new approaches. This was perhaps the main difference between the Bush and Clinton administrations' India policy, with the Republicans no longer harassing New Delhi to join institutions such as the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.(Carranza, 2007) By changing their non-proliferation approach, the administration was able to begin to make the progress necessary.

The second overpowering aspect motivating the administration's early policy was the need to contain Chinese power, with Rice believing that it would be essential to include India due to their historic rivalry with Beijing, having fought over the Northern Kashmir border. In her article during the 2000 election, Rice said "India is an element in China's calculation, and it should be in America's, too".(Rice, 2000) For Wilkerson, getting closer to India was the ultimate hedging strategy and as such the multitude of problems faced an added urgency to be overcome in order to ensure that New Delhi was on the US side in any Washington-Beijing standoff. (Author interview with

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Wilkerson, 2020) This belief that a regional ‘balance of power that favoured freedom’, was critical in explaining the reprioritisation of the Indian relationship. Rice believed that the nuclear issue limited this relationship and that only by effectively removing this millstone around Washington and New Delhi’s collective necks could the administration begin to move onto important security concerns.(Pant, 2012) In a competition against Beijing, a powerful India informally acting as a spoke on the American ‘wheel’ offered a check on China’s ability to expand into an Asian hegemon, especially with an effective nuclear deterrent. Foreign policy is always a multi-level game, with different trade-offs required to achieve a range of different objectives. Although Paal suggests that this might have been a fruitless task, with the US often not receiving the benefits that those who push for a better US-India relationship promise, the perception of an opportunity to reassert US supremacy in Asia was one that the top level of the administration bought into. (Author interview with Paal, 2020) For Rice and Bush, the trade-off in allowing New Delhi back into the circle of responsible stakeholders in exchange for a good US-Indian relationship was that they could deal more effectively with what they expected to be the big issue of the administration’s foreign policy strategy.

Conclusion

Overall, the campaign and the early months of the administration created a power dynamic that was fluid. On some issues, the Secretary of State was able to leverage his own internal bureaucratic capital to allow him to take control of the policy issue. This was particularly apparent in circumstances that needed an adviser with high prestige and one who would be respected by Congress or other countries. Powell was also more influential early on when the President was unsure of himself. This was most clearly shown in China policy, where Powell was able to utilise the inexperience

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of the President to show the benefits of an approach that emphasised diplomacy. On issues where the President had either not made up his mind or was unwilling to take large foreign policy risks, Powell was able to influence the administration toward moderation. Significantly, Powell was also more influential when he was able to separate Rice from Cheney and Rumsfeld. Her support would significantly impact the decision-making of the President and act as a balancing force against both Cheney and Powell.

However, North Korea showed Powell's continuing weaknesses. When Bush felt threatened by Powell's influence and had strong personal beliefs on an issue, it was unlikely that Powell would be able to push the policy towards negotiation. With Rumsfeld expressing experience and prestige on the issue, he was able to force the North Korean policy into one that had to be resolved by the entire Principals Committee. This helped the Vice President leverage his structural advantages including the close connection to the NSC and his team's fluidity and responsiveness in a way that would give him a significant policy voice. The meeting with the South Korean President and Powell's faux pas resulted in a threatening message for those looking for a more moderate voice from the new Republican president. Furthermore, Powell's policy preferences did not connect with the new President. This would not have been so destructive in a normal foreign policy decision process, but the increased role of the Vice President and Cheney's strong personal connection with the President meant that Bush had more choice. Overall, the advantage lay with Cheney and Rumsfeld if they could retain the support of Rice and convince the President of the need to respond in a more assertive and hard-line way. All they needed now was a crisis that convinced Bush that security and American supremacy would be more important than ever.

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Chapter 5- Power in the ruins: Analysing the changing power balance after 9/11

Introduction

“My first reaction was outrage. Someone had dared attack America. They were going to pay.”(G. W. Bush, 2010, p. 127)

This was how President Bush began his discussion of the 9/11 crisis in his autobiography, the defining event of his presidency. This suggestion of the need for revenge, coming out of the heightened emotional state of the worst attack on the United States since Pearl Harbour and perhaps the most significant act of symbolic violence since the burning of the White House and Capitol Building by the British in 1814, illustrated the importance of the President at the centre of the foreign policy crisis. Yet, the President was not alone in the White House. Instead, the period between the attacks and the beginning of the second term in 2004 should be viewed through the lens of a bureaucratic search for dominance of American foreign policy within the wider NSC. However, Callinicos' argument that a unified group he calls the “cultists of eternal war” (including Cheney, Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz) hijacked American foreign policy to achieve a long-standing agenda are grossly exaggerated. (Callinicos, 2003, p. 42; Parmar, 2005) There were significant ideological distinctions within the administration which suggests that the seeming foreign policy cohesion (with the exception of some key figures such as Powell) was reactive not prescriptive. As such, the question of how the administration settled on the ‘War on Terror’ framing was a

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matter of shifting bureaucratic power. This power balance favoured those who were advocating an approach based on a vision of the US exceptionalism and securitisation.

This chapter will be separated into two sections. The first of these will cover the factors in general that impacted the decision making between 9/11 and the end of the first term. As such, it will focus on both the initial aftermath of the attacks before moving on to analysing the development of a new strategy that resulted in Bush's 'Axis of Evil' address at the State of the Union and the 2001 NSS that followed, focusing both on the process of creation and the layering of different adviser's assumptions into the two documents. The second part of this chapter will discuss the impact of the decision to invade Iraq and on both the policy environment and the key figures ideological perspectives. Though the issue of Iraq and the decision-making process that occurred in the build up to war has received a lot of academic critique, the focus of this section will be on its impact of the power balance rather than on the reason for the decision itself. (Gelb, 2005; Packer, 2005; Ricks, 2007; Tenet and Harlow, 2007) As such, it does not focus on the heavily covered discussion of whether or not to go to the UN beyond noting how that benefited Cheney and Rumsfeld. This not only helps to give a rationale for the significant policy changes in this period but offers an opportunity to show how other significant policy areas can be utilised as an analytical tool in defining the foreign policy decision making balance within an administration. Overall, this chapter argues that the administration's strategy represents the surge in power of the Vice President and Defense Secretary to the detriment of NSA and the Secretary of State, whilst seeding their future decline in the second term.

On September 11th, 2001, the President, Secretary of State, NSA, Vice President and Defense Secretary were separated across the Western Hemisphere. Powell had been sent to Peru for a meeting of foreign ministers from the Organisation of American

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States, whilst the Vice President had just returned from a trip. Meanwhile, the President was addressing children in Florida to publicise his education plans. Rice and Hadley had made the decision that as the trip was only one day, and focused on the domestic issue of education, they would be able to send the Director of the Situation Room (a relatively low level member of the NSC Staff) to staff the President on foreign policy issues.(Rice, 2011) Even below the cabinet level advisers, other key figures were far away from Washington. For example, Dov Zakheim, Douglas Feith, and Assistant Secretary for International Security Policy J.D Crouch were all in Europe on September 11th resulting in the upper echelons of the Pentagon being separated. (Author interview with Zakheim, 2019) It is important to note how this affected the initial response and reflects one of the foundational truths of discussing bureaucratic politics; it is often who is in the room that can make a significant difference.(Dahl, 1989) By the time everyone was settled back in and the big debates would occur, an initial power dynamic had formed based on a combination of a variety of factors.

Whilst the immediate crisis response was still ongoing, a battle had begun for the future. Indeed, for those figures within the administration that were separated from the Washington bubble, their inability to react and assist meant they were immediately creating their own responses and approaches. Douglas Feith in particular was thinking of the historical metaphor of the British response to piracy, which resulted in a far-reaching doctrine that said that piracy itself was the crime and did not have to be tied to an attack on the British Empire.(Feith, 2008) Likewise, Rumsfeld was focused on the understanding that the US was in a moment that would define whether or not there would be another attack on American soil. His philosophy was “If you cock your fist, you’d better be ready to throw it” suggesting that the bluster of the Clinton

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administration would no longer be enough. The administration response would have to be more drastic, leaning forwards into the fight rather than backwards.(Rumsfeld, 2011) On the other hand, Powell decided to stay at the foreign minister's conference in Latin America for the Organisation of American States he was attending to vote for the Democratic Charter. This was a significant statement from the Secretary of State about the priorities; allies and diplomacy would remain central.(DeYoung, 2006) It also reflected Powell's perception of the attacks. Though the environment that existed after 9/11 was new, it did not mean it was novel. The way to conduct foreign policy was the same as it was on September 10th. Realism with a dash of American idealism would still be the way forward for the US. Significantly, these two competing visions were formulated early in the immediate aftermath and would later come to define each department's positions.

Creating a Strategy- The aftermath of 9/11 and the creation of The National Security Strategy and the Bush Doctrine.

Institutional factors

Perhaps the most significant institutional factor that affected the power balance in the immediate aftermath of 9/11 was the battle between the *De Jure* and the *De Facto* of who was in control. Gellman quotes one member of the White House staff in the bunker where the decision-making occurred who said "The Vice President saw himself as the man responsible for teeing decisions up for the President".(Gellman, 2008, p. 120) Both convention and institutional norms suggested that the Vice President should not have led the administration's response to 9/11, something that has been highlighted repeatedly in the literature.(Gellman, 2008; Montgomery, 2009; Goldstein, 2010) Yet it was Cheney who took control, relying on a mixture of his close relationship with the President, his electoral mandate and his position in the line of

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succession to allow him to dominate the decision making.(Warshaw, 2009) However, in the US chain of command, the Vice President cannot give military orders (an issue that had stopped Cheney taking both the VP and Defense Secretary role). This meant that Rumsfeld should have been the leading military adviser in conjunction with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the process should have gone from Bush to the Defense Secretary and then to the military. Likewise, Rice, as NSA, should have acted as the crisis coordinator for the President and given direction to the cabinet. The practice was highly different from the theory.

But why? Significantly, Cheney opens his autobiography with a relatively undetailed analysis of his response to 9/11, highlighting the ‘fog of war’ that created the difficulties that would require the 9/11 Commission months of investigation.(Cheney, 2011) However, Cheney’s centrality to the crisis was in part due to an institutional mandate that managed to trump the other senior advisers. This is not to suggest that there was a significant conflict about who was in control within the White House. Far from it, from most accounts there was a relative natural drift into the structure that took place.(Cheney, 2011; Rice, 2011) Partially this was due to a large gap appearing at the top of the decision-making process. The lack of communication with Powell’s airplane meant that he was unreachable in those critical hours, removing one key player from the board and requiring Rice to make up the difference along with Armitage. Significantly, Rice points to the training that she received in case of a nuclear attack that helped push her through the crisis and settled into a natural rhythm of contacting NSC principals and responding to the diplomatic crisis that Powell’s unavailability had exasperated.(Rice, 2011) Foreshadowing the second term, Rice was less in charge of the federal government as in charge of Foggy Bottom. The NSA’s coordination role took a higher precedence than her adviser role in a crisis where the

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President was not in the White House and the channel of communication was far more limited than otherwise might have existed.

Likewise, the Defense Secretary was hamstrung by the fact that it was his building that had been attacked. Though Rumsfeld should have been central in organising the military response his personal work in trying to help with rescue efforts, though heroic, meant that he was not managing the foreign policy decision-making process. (Rosenwald, 2019) This left a critical gap at the top of the Pentagon, with the risk of further hijackings needing a decision on the authority to shoot down airplanes that were acting erratically. As Cheney understood it, Bush had said in a phone call (the log of which and the content remains unclear to this day) that the decision had been made under the President's war authority and that the air force had the direction to shoot. (Gellman 2008) Cheney's previous experience as Defense Secretary meant that he was able to speak the language and gauge appropriate responses giving him the ability to slide into a quasi-official role without the natural barriers that would have occurred for someone who had not served in the position.

This institutional gap perhaps explains why there was a need for someone to step up, however importantly it does not designate why Cheney filled it. For example, Deputy Chief of Staff Joshua Bolton was in the bunker and could have taken the lead or Rice could have delegated the running of the NSC to Hadley and taken control of the crisis if she had believed that was her role. The simple answer, as much as there can be, is that there was a significant informal institutional power that Vice Presidents have in crisis situations when the President is not there. Under the 25th amendment, a formalised procedure exists that in all circumstances of Presidential vacancy it is the VP who fills the gap albeit with the consent of the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House. Even though this was not a formal vacancy and therefore

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there was no submission to Congress, the VP had a basis for making an argument that they were in control. Significantly, the VP is also the only other figure in the administration who had an electoral mandate. In a time of crisis, this unquantifiable democratic power dramatically effects the power balance in a way that allows the VP far more leverage, especially close to a recent election. Interestingly, this reinforces the narratives made by numerous scholars of the Vice Presidency about the changing perception of how influential they can be in the conduct of foreign affairs.(Kengor, 2000; Lachet, 2004; Goldstein, 2008) In a time of uncertainty, the fact he was second in succession had far reaching impacts and may have subconsciously lowered any resistance.

It was also a reaffirmation about one of the key advantages of a Cheney as VP. Though he had an accepted role in most areas of the foreign policy, he was not tied down. In a crisis, this gave the OVP the flexibility to respond without having to worry about their management responsibilities. This had been essential to his early ascendancy in the administration as everyone else was coming to grips with their large departments even those like Rumsfeld who was on his second stint at a very changed Pentagon. In the wake of the crisis, the Defense Secretary, State (and due to Powell's unavailability, his Deputy Armitage) and NSA were at the head of unwieldy bureaucracies that were struggling to cope and were often being evacuated from their positions. As David Frum's account of the day highlights, it was not only that staff members were not at their desk but also that they were being told to run as fast they can.(Frum, 2003) The difficulties in managing a team in the wake of a crisis were overwhelming at the best of times, let alone when it was near impossible to contact people and the person being contacted being away from the resources that would be required to make a meaningful impact. By being lean and flexible, the OVP was able to reposition themselves as the

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executive arm of the person in control of the crisis. In future crises, this should be utilised by planners and future administrations to help give more clean lines of authority.

Another noteworthy factor was that the institutional power of OVP staff was significant. Most of the advisers who were essential to increasing the VP's power were high level staff members within the White House and were some of the first to be taken down to the bunker which would serve as the command post of the response. For example, Scooter Libby was critical in setting out an environment where the initial impetus was to let the VP lead due to his position in the White House compared to being further away in the Executive Office Building across the road. Even those who were asked to leave the building were quickly called back, including David Addington who served as Cheney's legal advisor. (Gellman, 2008) This provided a critical mass that was supported by key allies such as Hadley who had a close working relationship with Cheney. By controlling the transition and increasing his connections to a network of administration figures there was an inclination to follow in a critical mass of support. Would a figure who was more isolated from their administration such as VP Quale have been as successful? This seems unlikely with many other figures within the administration having a more significant network and a greater sense of internal management such as Scowcroft. This suggests that it was a combination of these institutional factors and the dynamics of the Cheney Vice Presidency that was instrumental in setting the control of 9/11 and allowed him to dominate. As Cheney suggests "I didn't have to say "I'm in charge here" I think part of it had to do just with the way I'd been operating as Vice President, the way the President had treated me". (Rosen, 2015, p. 210) Longer term, the relatively effective management of the response gave Cheney a high level of influence and reinforced his importance to Bush.

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His worth had been proven and it ensured that he would be at the centre of every decision for the next 2 years. Perhaps the most significant longer-term factor was the change in Defense's institutional prestige that went along with the movement to a war footing after the invasion of Afghanistan. As the commander of the military, Rumsfeld's role moved from being a bureaucratic manager of the largest executive department to the top of the US military that was moving towards conflict in Afghanistan (and later Iraq). Significantly, this created a shift in the Defense Department where the inverse relationship in the first term normalised, with Rumsfeld more focused on policy and Wolfowitz being given more management responsibilities. (Author interview with Zakheim, 2019) However the transformation agenda remained his preoccupation. As such Rumsfeld did not provide the contributions to intellectual policy framework critical of a Defense Secretary. Instead of viewing the war in Afghanistan as the top priority, he wanted to utilise it as an opportunity to justify his far-reaching reforms. On the other hand, Wolfowitz's strong policy preference meant that the fears that people had about his management style became more apparent. Like Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz was less focused on Afghanistan as a policy objective in itself than what it could show was possible for future military conflicts. As such, Wolfowitz was focused on tying the war into a far larger enterprise instead of managing the conflict. The transformation agenda was strongly supported by Bush and Rice, along with Powell to a lesser extent (having concerns about how the transformation would be conducted). However, the lack of leadership over Afghanistan from a distracted Secretary and Deputy Defense Secretary was significant. (Zakheim, 2011) With Rumsfeld retaining his focus on management as had been expected, there was a significant gap in the top which would create problems in the build-up to Iraq and the second term.

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In a time of war, some limits placed on a Defense Secretary disappear as they become a “Secretary of War”. Within the department and the country there was a rallying around the Secretary.(Stevenson, 2006) The reticence of the American high command to the transformation agenda that Rumsfeld pushed was “stopped in its tracks by the attacks”.(Cockburn, 2007) Haass suggests that in most administrations the resistance from the Joint Chief of Staffs is significant. In a poetic turn of phrase, Haass states “If the Pentagon building has five sides, the Defense Department has three”.(Haass, 2009, p. 183) Before the 9/11 attacks the narrative had begun of Rumsfelds’s isolation and impending exit, based on disunity within the Pentagon. Indeed, speaking on September 10th, he suggested the worst enemy the US faced was entrenched bureaucrats.(Rumsfeld, 2001) Due to the fact that the military figures were often more concerned about the actual fighting and implementation of a policy decision, they often ended up closer to the moderate position in the NSC. By utilising this image of a leader in war time, becoming what Dyson calls “almost a deputy commander in chief”, Rumsfeld was able to manipulate Joint Chief of Staff’s patriotism.(Dyson, 2009) This newfound unity increased his leverage in the inter-bureaucracy battles. Though Rumsfeld had sacrificed his chain of command during the response to 9/11, he would now be able to reassert it and ensure that he would be the leading military voice within the administration.

Internal factors

The NSC has always adapted to changed circumstances and in the immediate aftermath of 9/11 there was no difference. However, one significant issue was that the meetings became incredibly chaotic and overly large, dealing with a series of wider issues. Hadley and Rice decided to break it down into smaller ‘pods’ where the NSC could develop responses to smaller issues. (Rice, 2011) This created a structure that

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was more manageable but created a reinforced hierarchy that often meant the President was focused on his War Cabinet of Rice, Rumsfeld, Powell, Cheney and Tenet rather than the wider NSC. (Rothkopf, 2006) With Rice becoming a greater advocate for an expanded American role and Tenet tacking his colours to the network of Cheney and Rumsfeld, it left Powell increasingly isolated in a time where diplomacy would be more important than ever. Furthermore, the increased frequency of meetings, every day for a period after the attacks, fundamentally changed the emphasis of the administration to foreign policy. It centralised the response in a foreign policy capacity and reflected how the President saw the crisis.

Cheney also pushed for changes in risk assessment based on ‘the one percent doctrine’, the idea that if there was a one percent chance the administration would have to act like it was a certainty. (Suskind, 2006) He argued that the administration should be restructured in ways that allowed bold and effective action without traditional restraints. This philosophy gelled well with Bush’s preference for drastic changes, reinforced by public opinion. For this to occur, the President and his advisers needed to readjust their information networks that framed all their decision-making. As Rudalevige argues, it only takes small changes in the informational organisation within the institutional presidency to result in dramatically different outcomes. (Rudalevige, 2005) After 9/11 the emphasis was to increase information flow and the administrations flexibility to respond. This meant that information would have to be passed up the chain of command more quickly, in far deeper quantity and emphasising obscured dangers.

As Preiss highlights, though most changes in the administration would develop over the course of the coming months and years, the PDB changed immediately, doubling in size/length and including more raw data. (Preiss, 2016) Indeed, a whole new

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document was created that emphasised the dangers facing the country entitled the 'Threat Matrix'. Significantly, there was a large increase in the depth of the information about international terrorism, over-correcting the lack of urgency that numerous critics had levelled at the administration.(Clarke, 2008) Likewise, within the FBI there was a reorganisation to increase their capacity to deal with international terrorism issues, a blurring of the traditional boundaries between the CIA and the FBI. Though this is a reasonable response in the light of the crisis, it had three detrimental effects in the running of the US Asia policy. Firstly, the sheer weight of information and the psychological effects of so much danger helped create a policy that refocused on the Middle East, with those within the administration investing not only the country's economic and political capital on the issue but more nebulous concepts such as time, energy and priority. In what Baker calls a "shotgun approach" the new matrix made it difficult to separate out the real and the phantom, contributing to an eternal sense of dread which damaged the administrations collective psyche.(Baker, 2013) As CIA director George Tenet argued in his autobiography, "...the matrix was a blunt instrument. You could drive yourself crazy believing all or even half of what was in it".(Tenet and Harlow, 2007, para. 3765)

Secondly, the threat matrix increased the sense of danger and allowed those who favoured a more hard-line policy of issues such as enhanced interrogations to dominate the agenda. This hurt the US image abroad, undermining their international legitimacy and playing into the images of US unilateralism. Figures such as Cheney, Rumsfeld, Bolton and Wolfowitz were able to leverage their advantages that were indicated pre 9/11 in a way that collectivised an agenda of reasserting executive power and creating US supremacy. According to John Yoo, who served in the office of Legal Counsel and has been widely characterised as the legal leader in the domestic side of the War on

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Terror within the Bush administration, the choice was “Do we adopt aggressive measures against terrorists or allow the chances of another al Qaeda attack to increase”. (Yoo, 2006, p. viii) This false dynamic that set up a strawman of unacceptable risks warped the mentality within the administration and advisers were often unwilling to go against the countervailing narrative of danger on issues such as North Korea.

Finally, 9/11 created a battle for the control of the intelligence. As Priess suggests, Rumsfeld realised that his briefers were responding to his questions and putting the information directly into the PDB so that others could see it.(Priess, 2016) Rumsfeld actively used these questions to channel information to the President to manipulate his decisions. Though a somewhat small bureaucratic manoeuvre, it represented the start of a larger campaign for intelligence control. Significantly, Rumsfeld, Cheney and Wolfowitz started advocating for changes in the intelligence gathering framework. Routed in the Team B exercises in the 1970's, where H W. Bush had created an outside group of experts to analyse the intentions of the Soviets, key figures in the administration such as Wolfowitz were fully aware of the malleability of American intelligence analysis and wanted to challenge the base assumptions. As such, he put his friend Abram Shulsky in control of an independent group within Defense to create an in-house challenger to the CIA narratives.(Mann, 2004b) Though a second look at intelligence seems beneficial, the close relationship and the fact the intelligence was presented in a way that favoured Wolfowitz's preferred course of action meant that hardliners were able to avoid serious engagement with the intelligence gaps that existed on a range of policies from Iraq to North Korea.(Ryan, 2010a) This weakened Tenet significantly and strengthened the case for a hard-line approach. By controlling the information, the Defense Secretary and his Deputy were able to create a battle over

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the facts of the matter as well as the policy. This would later be incredibly detrimental in the build-up to Iraq and prioritise international terrorism over traditional geo-strategic issues. These internal changes around both the mental approach and information in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks would fundamentally shape all that came out after.

Likewise, for the first few weeks after the attacks the Attorney General and FBI director were invited to the PDB along with Rice and then Tenet (Cheney often was there as well when not at an undisclosed location). This increased the ability of these figures to be involved but also led to a coordination between them that would disguise some of the failings of the NSC's inability to effectively coordinate separate branches of the US executive branch. However, this was an unsustainable process that required numerous leaders of the Executive in the same place every day. In the longer term, the administration needed a greater effort to coordinate the ability of the nation to respond to the threat of major terrorist attacks. As such, the administration made two fundamental reorganisations. Firstly, it created a new Director of National Intelligence (DNI) that sat above the CIA director and coordinated all the intelligence agencies within the United States. Though it would not be till 2004 that this position was created and it would be repeatedly criticised, it represented a focus on coordination.(Clark, 2010)This in turn led to an increase in cohesiveness between the high level advisers who were engaging with each other more frequently, leading to groupthink and the reinforcement of preferences and information blind spots. (Janis, 1982)

One of the significant internal factors after the initial 9/11 period was the process created to define US strategy. The US sets out an strategy document entitled "The National Security Strategy of the United States of America" (NSS) at regular intervals that explain US interests and approaches. The NSS has often been at the crux of many

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analyses by foreign policy academics, even though this approach has received a lot of criticism.(Gaddis, 2002) Though these documents can often be over exaggerated in their importance, and do not provide the “Rosetta Stone” of US foreign policy, they are critical to understanding the psychology and approaches that were influential with key figures in the administration at the time. (Author interview with Zelikow,2020) They are indicative of the administration’s priorities and act as a signalling device. It not only signals to those in the US thereby becoming a political football within the country, but it also signals to other countries how the administration perceives the world. Therefore, the document is not only important as a strategy explanation but also acts as a tool to achieve foreign policy aims. By understanding the mentality of the authors behind the NSS, it is possible to understand not only whose views were influential but also where the policy was likely heading.

As a product of the NSC, this document is usually a coordinative document under the control of the NSA.(Doyle, 2007) This means that it often becomes a fairly open bureaucratic battlefield, with the significant players often getting involved in the process. However, for those who serve in the administration the documents often are less important in themselves but as marking posts in larger fights around strategy. As Rice said “People both inside and outside the administration failed to take (Brent Scowcroft’s NSS) seriously; it was just a task to be finished with as little effort as possible so that one could get on to more important things”.(Rice, 2011) This time, Rice wanted a document which would be released to kick-start a new era of US foreign policy. Kattan suggests that the advisers viewed the document as something akin to the NSC-68 document written by Paul Nitze that had defined the response to the Cold War. (Kattan, 2011)

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Traditionally, the NSS is a coordinated document that is heavily critiqued by the different departments, opening a painful bureaucratic battle that often is not worth the discontent it causes within the administration. As such, Rice took the bureaucratic initiative and centralised the NSS within the NSC. To be the point man on the process, Rice appointed her former co-author and friend Phillip Zelikow. He argues that there were few precedents to rely upon and the administration had a relatively free reign to define a strategy for the future. (Author interview with Zelikow,2020) Significantly, Zelikow suggests it was less about the ideology of the advisers that were central to the administration's approach to the document but instead how they were changed by the 9/11 attacks and the way the world now appeared.(Zelikow. Phillip, 2011) Zelikow wanted to expand on the logic of an article written in 1998 called *Catastrophic Terrorism* which suggested a new paradigm shift was needed to define how the US responded to terrorism in the 21st century.(Carter, Deutch and Zelikow, 1998) Unlike the 1992 document Defense Policy Guidance which has repeatedly been pointed to as the 'blueprint' of the George W. Bush administration, which had been written by a relatively marginalised group including Wolfowitz in the George HW. Bush administration and Zelikow views as relatively unimportant, this NSS was the brainchild of far more significant players. (Author interview with Zelikow,2020. For more discussion of the DPG see J. Mann 2004; L. Solomon 2007; Milne 2015; Brands 2018) As a White House document, it was far closer to the opinion of the President and therefore should be given more credibility as an indicator of Presidential intent.

Zoellick played a significant role in bringing economic and trade ideas into the document. This is something that has often been underplayed, with criticism of the strategy of pre-emption taking a large share of the academic discussion on the topic.(Kattan, 2011) However, the strategy did have a positive view on increasing the

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trade links between the US and the world, spending four pages on the issue and framing it as a significant opportunity to stop future conflict stating “A strong world economy enhances our national security by advancing prosperity and freedom in the rest of the world”. (Bush, 2002) By having a significant involvement in the process, the USTR was able to increase his executive authority and tie trade policy into the War on Terror. (Author interview with Zoellick,2020) His close relationship with not only Rice but Zelikow, meant he had key support and an ability to influence the process, exaggerating the traditional voice of the agency and increasing his prominence within the policy creation process. Others such as Rumsfeld were less involved. Zelikow suggests that he paid very little attention except to ensure nothing tied his hands or constrained him and the Defense Department. (Author interview with Zelikow,2020)

Instead, Rumsfeld was more focused on the Quadrennial Military Review that was due in 2001. Though written before 9/11, Rumsfeld utilised the attacks to confirm his approach and to illustrate the desperate need for his ‘transformation agenda’. (Herspring, 2008) Perhaps one of the most significant changes from this document was that the American policy would move away from ‘the two wars doctrine’. This idea, that America could win two major wars decisively, had been sacrosanct throughout the Cold War and had justified overwhelming troop numbers and military budgets. Instead, the review advocated a strategy that would allow the US to win war one decisively whilst still being able to stop an enemy from achieving their aims.(O’hanlon, 2002) Though seemingly a small change, this resulted in an ability to engage in a far wider range of conflicts without retaining a reserve. This allowed the Defense Secretary more flexibility in responding to issues and it also meant that he could enforce readjustment of military plans in numerous nations, most notably Iraq.

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Though an over overlooked document, it showed Rumsfeld's bureaucratic skills in ensuring his relative freedom to run the Pentagon. Instead of contributing as a bit part player in an administration wide document that he believed would have little impact, Rumsfeld focused on retaining control of his department and reducing the stories that had existed before 9/11 that he was losing control of the military.(Cockburn, 2007; Herspring, 2008) He knew he would be assessed by Bush on the success of his transformation agenda in creating an effective war machine not his NSS contributions. Significantly, this should not suggest that the battle for control of the NSS did not dramatically impact the Pentagon. Though Rumsfeld was unwilling to take part, the NSS reflected Bush's thinking, meaning that he would need to frame his ideas through the principles of the document. Rumsfeld's lack of engagement weakened his position which would become apparent in the second term. Furthermore, Pentagon staff read and digested the document, changing their habits. Though the document represented a select view of the administration's foreign policy within which there were numerous conflicting voices, it would change the debates and emphasis. For example, the media focus on the pre-emption doctrine meant that numerous figures at State worked to discredit this idea which reinforced Bush's distrust of the Foggy Bottom bureaucracy. The relative focus of the administration's key figures on the official documents represented differing approaches to how they wanted to maintain their influence and has often been underdiscussed in the literature. Importantly, within this policy process Rice was laying the groundwork for her to later take control as the architect of a new foreign policy approach whilst Rumsfeld, Cheney and Powell viewed the task as one that was not worth the political capital to force it to be a wider executive branch debate. By forfeiting the ground, they made a mistake that they were then forced to play on the grounds set out in the strategy for the next 7 years.

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Presidential factors

A significant debate has occurred in the literature about President Bush in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks; did it reaffirm the President's previous personality traits, or did Bush change? This dichotomy often comes down to the answer of a bit of both. On one side of this divide, there is the suggestion that Bush merely continued a natural progression, with only minor developments, of his ideological path and that there is not a significant gap between the first 9 months and post 9/11 foreign policy. This comes through when reading interviews from former staff members such as Elliot Abram's who argues that "My read-on Bush is that he was instinctively a hardliner. That is, he thought, this is the greatest country in the world and the world is a better place the more active, the stronger, the bolder we are". (Abrams and Russel, 2012) Genovese concurs suggesting the attacks simply unleashed the President, who utilised the crisis to dominate the policy making space.(Genovese, 2004) What previously held him back was a Congress who were reticent to embrace his agenda and other external factors that now didn't exist, meaning it was not Bush who changed but the world around him. Under this view, 9/11 acted as a crystallising event, one that allowed Bush to focus and develop his foreign policy position due to a more pressing need but did not reflect a substantial dissonance from before the attack. Bush was now a wartime President and he could now hijack the country to dominate the policy space.

On the other hand, adviser Michael Gerson argues that 9/11 changed Bush. He states "Unlike some other participants in the drama, such as Secretary of State Powell, or Vice President Cheney, the President did not filter his views of 9/11 through a set of previously adopted ideological commitments and foreign policy views". (Gerson, 2007, p. 81) Instead, he took a different approach, focusing on what Gerson calls "root causes" and letting the solution come from the problem rather than a preordained

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response, an approach learned from his time at Harvard Business School. It created a new dynamic where Bush was forced to confront an entirely new world where every airplane the President and First Lady saw raised the question of “Is that supposed to be there?” (Kaplan, 2010; L. Bush, 2010)(L. Bush, 2010, p. 210) Anybody would have been profoundly affected by the attack and it would naturally result in differences from before. This also reflected his CEO approach where he was there to respond and react to crisis, providing a path forward in a volatile marketplace. Though Bush often emphasised the contrast with his father around whether he had the ‘vision’, one of Bush’s significant assets was his ability to react to the policy environment and adapt to how it occurred. Though framed through old heuristics, lesson and experiences, new information pathways would have to be created within Bush’s psyche to deal with the new world.

Though this debate is interesting and goes to the questions at the core of the importance of foreign policy decision-making (whether human nature or events are the major factors in creating foreign policy changes) perhaps the significant question is not whether Bush’s foreign policy was reaffirmed or created new in the aftermath of 9/11 but what personality factors came to the fore in the period between September 2001 and the 2004 election? Perhaps unsurprisingly for a President who had said his favourite political philosopher was Jesus when running for office, the President was revitalised theologically by the attack. Suskind argues that September 11th resulted in a resurgence of his certainty in his actions that came from a deep rooted faith.(Suskind, 2004) In a press conference on April 13th 2004, Bush was asked whether he had made any mistakes in the aftermath of 9/11 and his response was: “I wish you would have given me this written question ahead of time, so I could plan for it . . . You know, I just—I’m sure something will pop into my head in the midst of this press conference,

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with all of the pressure of trying to come up with an answer, but it hasn't yet". (Robinson and Wilcox, 2007, p. 223) Though this could be put down to an error in a pressured press conference environment, it reflected a larger sense from the President of the willingness to focus on his gut. In the wake of the national tragedy, the sense that God had placed the President in his position at the time of national calamity created a sense of unshakable confidence in the righteousness of his cause. As Smith argues "Just as Wilson's religious certitude led him into disaster at Versailles, so George W. Bush messianic conviction distorted his leadership in the days following 9/11". (Smith, 2016, p. 227) Moving beyond traditional evangelical certainty, this confidence was dramatic in creating not only an incentive to follow those within his administration who were creating a mission that included a far wider agenda and would fundamentally change the US relationship to the rest of the world, it also led to a focus on something 'new' and revolutionary. Being called by God to serve in a time of crisis seems inconsistent with a ship that did need a change of course.

The second part of this transformation was a refocusing of priorities. Like Woodrow Wilson and Lyndon B Johnson before him, Bush would become a president largely defined by his foreign policy when his personal priorities were domestic. (Zoellick, 2020) No longer would Bush be able to rely on the fabled team of advisers which had exuded competence to the electorate in the 2000 campaign and had largely taken control over issues such as China and Kyoto. Instead, Bush would be personally preoccupied about his ability to protect the nation, to ensure that the dreadful surprise that had taken around 3000 lives was never repeated and was not in vain. As Bush suggests in his memoir "September 11 redefined sacrifice. It redefined duty. And it redefined my job. The story of that week is the key to understanding my presidency".(G. W. Bush, 2010, p. 151) He kept a badge of one of the fallen policemen

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who had tried to rescue people in the aftermath of the towers' collapse with him to act as a physical reminder of his responsibility to lead. For a man who by all accounts was highly emotionally intelligent and open these personal tendencies were critical in shaping the President who wanted to become far more actively involved in foreign policy than he had been previously. Though inexperienced, he now had the will to become the man the country needed him to be.

Bush's personal interest and increased activism in the decision-making process was critical as his inexperience in foreign affairs meant he was prone to errors. Unlike Cheney, Rumsfeld, Rice and Powell who had all served in different administrations and had dealt, with admittedly smaller scale, attacks on the US, Bush was more naïve and was willing to lash out in ways that someone more experienced might not have. Most notably, this occurred in the statement about finding Bin Laden "Dead or alive", something that overly personalised the developing War on Terror and severely limited the ability of the administration to develop their preferred broader strategy in the coming weeks. (Edy and Meirick, 2007) It also centred the administration more around Bush in a way that emphasised his personal role as the ultimate decision-maker in the administration where he had previously been more willing to delegate, resulting in a more centralised system. Those advisers whose power was based on a stronger relationship with the President gained influence compared to those like Powell and Armitage whose power was based on individual and institutional prestige. Both these personal transformations fundamentally reshaped the President's approach to the process and favoured those who were bolder and more expansive in their vision for the future. For the President, it was clear that God was inherently on the side of the US and therefore wanted him as President. As such, Bush would respond in a way that did justice to American exceptionalism in this new world.

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Bush had been changed by the attacks. However, beyond the apparent changes in the substance in his personality, there was also a significant change in how he presented himself. His experience in the aftermath of 9/11 in New York had shown him the power of the bully pulpit in a way that he had not previously experienced. Though Bush over the first term would be incredibly frugal in his willingness to spend his political capital with press briefings and televised statements, his ability to utilise 'moments' for creating momentum was a significant advantage to the administration's ability to push their agenda.(Edwards III, 2007) Most notable was the moment where he stood on the fire truck in a still burning New York to talk to a crowd of scared and angry citizens. However, Bush also made mistakes. Gerson suggests that the President misspoke in a key speech on September 14th, implying that there was a larger attack on "evil" compared to merely the scripted "this evil" in an address during the National Cathedral's memorial service.(Gerson, 2007) Though a single word, it changed the emphasis of the speech and was picked up on as a signal for an extremely expanded foreign policy. Often in these moments where the President was engaging with the country, it was not pre-planned statements that came out but a more personal message, reflecting Bush's preferences. The President as the communicator in chief could often create momentum towards an agenda that may lead to benefits in the differing networks fighting for power in the administration. In this case, it again favoured those like Rumsfeld who wanted to respond in more aggressive and active ways.

Perhaps the most significant of the President's public engagements is the annual State of the Union address. Since Woodrow Wilson's decision to give his State of the Union address in person, it has become a traditional moment in American politics where the President sets out a vision for the country.(Shogan and Neale, 2014) As Frum highlights, the State of the Union's importance was magnified due to the attacks,

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resulting in a far higher number of drafts being made and increased engagement from different departments.(Frum, 2003) Significantly, the speech was tailored to the President's rhetorical style as well as the situation. This came through in the choice of words that would later come to define the speech "the axis of evil". Rice suggests this has been overdramatised, highlighting that nobody had flagged in the interagency review it as an issue.(Mann, 2004b; Rice, 2011) Added by Frum and signed off by Gerson, the phrase was particularly suited to Bush. Though it raised comparisons with the "Evil Empire" speech from the Reagan administration, it was more of a personal touch to the speech that reflected the religious roots of the President. The tying of the three states of North Korea, Iraq and Iran led to fundamental problems in policy later and created the impression of the need for a unified response for all three in a coordinated effort to deal with a concerted attack from an almost alliance of rogue states. Significantly, Baker notes that Bush was unwilling to backtrack from the statement even though it was receiving substantial push back from the media and foreign policy community.(Baker, 2013) The language appealed to Bush and he was not willing to muddy the waters in what he saw as three evil regimes. Would the same language have been given to Clinton or even Bush's father? It is highly unlikely and reflects the importance of not only the message but the messenger.

External Political factors

The external environment in the winter and spring after the attacks reaffirmed the dominance of the executive branch. The danger of the attacks was reinforced by repeated anthrax scares that created a culture of fear within the political elite and the public at large. Bush was quick to link the attacks to Bin Laden, even though the attacks turned out to be from a domestic source.(Gillan, 2001) Importantly, this created not only a heightened sense of risk for those figures who may or may not have been

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against the policy within the Democrat elected representatives but also created an incredibly hard political environment. Though Frum argues that there was a quick return to politics over issues such as tax, including from Senator Daschle, there was little oversight from Democrats.(Frum, 2003) The importance of partisanship has often been negated in discussion of American Foreign Policy, however the lack of an effective opposition party was highly detrimental to the ongoing foreign policy debate and exaggerated Bush's leeway.(McCormick and Wittkopf, 1990; Hurst, 2014; Kertzer, Brooks and Brooks, 2017)

The Democrats were in a difficult position of not wanting to appear soft on terrorism as it became the dominant issue (along with the economic fallout from the attacks) in the build up to the 2002 midterms. The meaning of the attacks was contestable, as Krebs and Lobasz argue, but the Democrats were unwilling to act as alternative messengers to push forward a new agenda.(Krebs and Lobasz, 2007) As Rumsfeld argues, the attack on Afghanistan was not predetermined and there was a range of possible responses.(Rumsfeld, 2011) The Democrats still had a significant voice in the debates and would have been able to pressure the administration to take the response in certain directions, even if the nature of the American system would have given the President greater influence. However, instead of attacking the overarching narrative of a nation that the US was a victim of an unwarranted attack, the Democrats instead picked small battles over specific instances of language such as "crusade." This meant the administration was largely able to push through any agenda that the administration could agree on. This dramatically affected the internal power balance as those who were advocating a more expansive view did not need to moderate their policy to deal with the opposition.

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Advisers' personal factors

As Defense Secretary Robert Gates argues “Beyond the traumatic effect of the attack itself, I think there was huge sense among senior members of the administration of having let the country down, of having allowed a devastating attack on America take place on their watch”.(Gates, 2014, p. 93) This guilt has been largely underplayed in both the media and academic commentary on the Bush administration, arguing a new informal rule had been developed by the administration; this can never happen again. Zelikow concurs, arguing that there was a significant “siege mentality” which you could see early in the aftermath of the attacks. (Author interview with Zelikow, 2020) They felt anyone who was outside of the administration underestimated the dangers, making the advisers more closed off and more willing to ignore outside critiques. Suskind suggests that the administration was defined by a ‘relentless impatience’ based on a need to “assuage the guilt that haunts over anyone who was in a position of power before 9/11 and might have done something different”. (Suskind, 2006) Though many new policies would be developed, with the creation of an entire new department from a political party that had routinely attacked government for being too big, this siege mentality provided the foundation of the new decision-making process.

The final factors to consider of the early decision-making after 9/11 were the personal changes of NSA Rice from what Mann calls a ‘traditional realist’ to something different entirely. Rice viewed the administration’s mission after 9/11 as one comparable to the aftermath of World War Two which would involve a new conceptualisation of World Order taken on by the iconic “Wise men” who had been popularised as one of the more effective foreign policy teams in the modern age.(Issacson and Thomas, 1986b; Mann, 2004b) Indeed, Rice told Hadley instead of thinking of the attacks as an ‘Arc of Crisis’ they should instead be thinking of it as an

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‘Arc of opportunity’ where action in Afghanistan could create a stabilising presence in Central Asia.(Rice, 2011, p. 84) It had been Rice and speechwriters such as Fromm who had approved the presidential speech in the evening of September 11th that set out far reaching rhetoric that set the tone of the new policy in the future and the basis of the ‘Bush doctrine’.(Woodward, 2003) Partially, this was due to what Zelikow calls Rice’s nature as a “cultural optimist”, one whose formative government experience was in the hopeful end of the Cold War period compared to those who had served in the more pessimistic early 70’s. (Author Interview with Zelikow, 2020) Unlike Cheney, who viewed the world through a lens of security and threat, Rice would be more expansive and engagement focused. Though this shift was not immediate and would continue to develop over time, the impact of Rice’s view reinforcing the President’s belief in the historic nature of the changes facing the nation would encourage a far-reaching agenda that would be crystallised at the beginning of the second term. In the meantime, it meant she was more willing to push for a wide agenda as part of the War on Terror.

One of the significant gaps between the advisers’ ability to influence the momentum of the administration was their differing goals. This was encompassed by the debate on what the ‘War on Terror’ should be. Rumsfeld was looking to strengthen his weakening position and to utilise US insecurity to transform Defense. Though this was partially based on the transformation agenda, it also involved a reconceptualization of what the role of the US was in the face of new threats. As Feith argues, if the perception of how to respond to the attacks was one of self-preservation rather than retributive justice the conclusion drawn was that the targets would be far wider than just those who conducted the attacks.(Feith, 2008) The push from figures such as Feith and Peter Rodman, who served as Assistant Defense Secretary for International Security

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Affairs, was critical on shaping Rumsfeld's response and pushed the Pentagon to take a maximalist security approach that challenged traditional notions of 'security' and sovereignty. Indeed, Rumsfeld was noted as saying that the focus was "Not only UBL. Go massive, sweep it all up. Things related and not".(Ryan, 2011) Ryan highlights the fact that Rumsfeld was preparing his commanders across the globe to be prepared for possible conflict in their region, sending a memo on the 19th of September to all the Unified Military Commanders (not just the CentCom chief who would be in charge of conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq). (Ryan, 2011) His internal and strategic visions pushed him to support an expansive the War on Terror.

Although it was going to be centralised around Islamic terrorism, with Rumsfeld noting in his autobiography his problems with the political correctness that limited the administration's ability to say this explicitly, the conflict would not be limited to the Middle East. (Rumsfeld, 2011) Indeed, Wolfowitz wanted to go beyond to areas such as Somalia, believing it offered an opportunity to expand American influence in Africa. (Mann, 2004a) This went into direct conflict with Powell who had previously worked, along with Reagan's Defense Secretary Weinberger, to create a set of informal guidelines for the decision-making around the US committing to conflicts with the likelihood of escalation to war. Powell was unwilling to commit forces unless there was an overriding national interest, clear objectives and an exit strategy. (Lafeber, 2009) The perception of an unhindered and overly expanded War on Terror reflected Powell's worst-case scenario. The 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review pushed the administration towards a more expansive posture. However, the Secretary of State's unwillingness to involve himself in military affairs along with the internal nature of the review meant he had been unable to challenge it at the time. Rumsfeld and Cheney both ensured Powell was removed from Defense policy. Wilkerson

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suggests that sometimes after NSC meetings, Cheney would approach Powell and stick his finger in his chest and say that “hah you are no longer a military man you don’t get a bite at that apple”. (Author interview with Wilkerson, 2020) Not only did this illustrate some of the passive aggression within the top level of the administration, it also reflected the significant limitations Powell had within the foreign policy process. His experience acted counter-intuitively as a barrier to his involvement within defense policy, with an unwillingness to violate the norms that civilians should control the military. Now when a fundamental shift away from his life goal to put a better approach to military deployment learned hard from the Vietnam war, he was kept at literal arms length. Powell’s previous non-involvement reinforced the idea that he was a junior partner within the planning and reiterated his powerlessness.

Instead of reshaping the world, Powell wanted to prioritise Afghanistan. As he said to Bush, other countries (most notably Iraq) would be targets to deal with “at a time of your choosing”.(Mann, 2020) Focused action was the only way to avoid Afghanistan becoming the weeping sore that it had for the Soviets. As such, Powell’s focus was creating a broad coalition and ensuring that allies remained active in their support. With the first ever invocation of the Article 5 collective defense clause by NATO, the benefits of this approach were clear. However, restricting focus to Afghanistan seemed insufficient for Bush and the others. By focusing on a relatively narrow vision, Powell did not offer enough to satisfy the President’s will to fundamentally meet the moment.

Beyond the battle between the Rumsfeld and Powell’s visions, the OVP took a significant step by reconceptualising the attacks. Similar to after the election, the OVP managed to create the impression within the government of what Jarvis calls a ‘temporal discontinuity’.(Jarvis, 2008) This required more policy creation, an area where the OVP was influential. Yates argues that Rice ordered a review of all

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geographic and functional areas with the War on Terrorism arguing 9/11 “was a massive reset of the structure, substance and the overall priorities for American foreign policy”. (Author interview with Yates,2020) Cheney’s team utilised this reset to reassert ideological control. Powell and Armitage compared the OVP’s actions to “building coral” where the ideas took root and provided a platform to reinforce themselves.(Mann, 2020, p. 264) Most notably, they were able to argue for an expansive War on Terror, which encouraged more hawkish responses. Significantly, Cheney repeatedly increased the feelings of insecurity within the administration. For example, by increasing the use of enhanced interrogation and advocating for the removal of the restrictions of the Geneva conventions the abnormality of the moment was reinforced. (Gellman, 2008) This built into the momentum that laws and norms should be readjusted in the period after 9/11 in both domestic and foreign affairs. If exceptional measures were being taken at home, why should the US be bound by conventions that the administration had problems with at the best of times? Instead, a more active and independent foreign posture was required.

Summary

The impact of 9/11 was prominent in numerous ways. Significantly, it created a point of change within the administration that had begun to settle into a routine. After the attacks, the preconceptions and approaches taken by the leading advisors were reanalysed and new debates that had been simmering under the surface were brought to the fore. By the end, Cheney and Rumsfeld’s vision of how the War on Terror should be run was dominant in this period. It combined well with the NSS Rice had outlined, creating a new ‘international norm’ against terrorism and the states who sponsor it.(Rice, 2011) By creating a new framework and justifying it in terms of a wider conflict that challenged failing states allowing the US an essential role in

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resolving them, Rumsfeld was reinforcing the key components of the NSS and carved out an influential position. Bush's vision combined well with Cheney's focus on the need to protect the US at all costs, with an increasingly aggressive American posture. The exceptional times required a global agenda that would ensure American supremacy. With no significant voices of opposition in Congress and the media, and Bush who was looking for a new and more inspiring way to meet the moment, the bureaucratic power balance favoured those who were willing to take initiative and to resell previous policy goals through the lens of the War on Terror. The NSS foreign policy principles reflected this new power balance, leaving Powell as an outsider.

Iraq's domination of the foreign policy process

The spring of 2003 brought perhaps the most ill-fated of US foreign policy choices when the administration decided in the face of overwhelming opposing world opinion to go to war with Iraq. Though a significant example of foreign policy decision-making failure on its own, this has been covered in detail both inside the academic community and within government in the form of the Iraq Report. (Woodward, 2004; Packer, 2005; Baker and Et al., 2006; Ricks, 2007) The Iraq War changed the direction of a range of foreign policy decisions like no conflict since the war in Vietnam. (Schwartz, 2003) Often, administrations are defined retrospectively by the larger contemporary issues that dominated the news for a significant period after the administration leaves office before a broader analysis occurs. (Brands, 1999) But this can often lead to the minimalizing of the knock-on impacts of the event on the other foreign policy decisions by ignoring the affect it had on the institutions, advisers and external environment that this framework argues is essential to decision-making. Therefore, this section focuses on the Iraq invasion's far-reaching impacts on the power balance within the administration as a factor in Asia policy.

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Institutional factors

The OVP and Pentagon used the Iraq invasion to challenge the existing institutional environment. Significantly, this challenge focused on the control of intelligence flow. As suggested previously, intelligence had become a battlefield within the administration and Wolfowitz had taken the radical step of creating a separate intelligence group within the Pentagon in response to the perceived failures of the pre-9/11 intelligence. He believed this reflected a larger problem of intelligence resources being ineffectively utilised creating an opportunity for mistakes in both intelligence gathering and analysis. As Kerr et al. argue, the intelligence community had the tendency to focus on crisis rather than longer term issues. (Kerr *et al.*, 2008) As such, though Iraq had been an administration priority since it came to power, the intelligence community had not given the high-level resources needed to justify the case for war. The beliefs of figures such as Wolfowitz, Cheney and Rumsfeld that intelligence was not functioning at the level required led to their tendency to ignore strategic insights from the political, cultural and economic side of intelligence gathering. This created an over reliance on those focused on the military aspects and led to many false flags that raised insecurity fears challenging traditional conventions of intelligence independence. Prados argues the administration was often pressuring the CIA to give corroborating conclusions and they increasingly became a creature of the executive branch. (Prados, 2017) As Johnson suggests, this limited the oversight prerogatives of Congress, as the head of the CIA is more directly accountable to the President and Congress became an audience to be sold policy rather than a constructive partner. (L. Johnson, 2008)

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Significantly, the CIA had been weakened in the aftermath of the Cold War. Tenet therefore prioritised his relationship with the President, becoming a trusted adviser instead of being willing to act independently. He instead believed it was more effective to work within the process and ensuring alignment with the rest of the administration. By becoming an advisor within the administration rather than the honest broker of intelligence, Tenet devalued his own department's influence. This significantly impacted intelligence gathering around, areas such as North Korea, China and Russia. It also created implications of politicised intelligence which hurt the credibility of the intelligence from both sides. Those favouring more radical policies such as Cheney and Rumsfeld were unwilling to accept more moderate reports whilst those who felt they had been burned by the CIA over Iraq distrusted their findings on North Korea. (White Jr., 2008)

Internal Rules

Beyond the intelligence dynamics, the administration's over-prioritisation of Iraq hurt Asia policy. The administration became defined by Iraq which meant other foreign policy engagements were viewed through the lens of how it impacted the war against Baghdad. This was apparent from the very start. Indeed, in the NSC meeting at Camp David on September 17th, Wolfowitz had laid the marker down by suggesting that Iraq should be the priority target. As the only 'deputy' present, with Armitage in Pakistan enlisting Musharraf in the War on Terrorism, Wolfowitz set a clear argument that Iraq would show the seriousness of US intent to deal with the state sponsors of terrorism. (Woodward, 2003) Though Tenet was clear to say that there was no credible intelligence linking 9/11 to Iraq and the principals voted overwhelmingly to focus on Afghanistan (with Rumsfeld abstaining) Iraq's importance was clear. Iraq offered an

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opportunity to exhibit American military prowess quickly, compared to the slow and more undramatic conflict in Afghanistan, appealing to Bush's need for action.

As such, the administration deprioritised Afghanistan and Asia policy more generally. Iraq required significant investments in political capital, troop numbers and funding, even (or perhaps exasperated) with the short-sighted limits placed on Phase 4 planning by Rumsfeld. (Gallagher and Steward, 2018) Significantly, the administration was willing to conduct the war before resolving Afghanistan reducing their available bandwidth. As troop numbers are a finite resource (with long term recruitment taking a far larger amount of mobilisation than usually acceptable to administration's) the two conflicts left little spare. In fact, Afghanistan meant the 'on the shelf' plan of 'Desert Storm plus' was no longer possible. (Woodward, 2004) If the conflict in Iraq were to happen, it would require a massive change in the assumptions behind it and limit the administration's flexibility regarding other foreign policy goals. This was a critical part of the Rumsfeld transformation agenda which argued that the military's tendency towards risk aversion as a result of conflicts in Vietnam and Lebanon meant often far fewer numbers were needed. (Herspring, 2008) By limiting available troop resources, the Defense Secretary willingly risked overexerting the military to accomplish his objectives both in Iraq and the Pentagon.

Herspring calls Rumsfeld the 'Supreme Bureaucratic Knife Fighter' and he used the Iraq war to consolidate his control at Defense. (Herspring, 2008) Rumsfeld competed with McNamara as the most micromanaging Defense Secretary in history, personally approving any troop deployments and going through line by line to remove units who he deemed as excessive. (Stevenson, 2006) When General Shinseki testified before Congress that the numbers of troops required would be in the "Several Hundred Thousand", Rumsfeld responded with a concerted effort to publicly discredit

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him.(Coletta, 2007) This marginalisation of the military as autonomous decision-makers was critical to increasing the Secretary's power allowing him to become the military's public and internal 'voice' on both Afghanistan and Iraq. Unlike Powell in the H W. Bush administration, Rumsfeld would not let the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff gain public prestige. This meant that there was not a significant separate voice coming from Defense which would have been able to push the Secretary into increasing the numbers available. General Franks, who was the lead voice on the military planning toward Iraq, was willing to follow the orders from Rumsfeld, even though he too had concerns about the numbers of troops available. The internal battle over troop numbers created a more unified department and reduced the risk of the President being given alternative options in the early stages of the planning.

Having now taken control of his department in full, Rumsfeld wanted to take more control of the direction of the war in Iraq away from State. To begin planning for the conflict, the administration had set up a group within the Pentagon called the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA) under retired Lieutenant General Jay Garner. Though aiming to streamline the process and reduce interagency conflict by bringing the governments post war planning under one roof, it became a bureaucratic battlefield between Rumsfeld and Powell. (DeYoung, 2006) Feith argues there was a process before under NSC staffer Frank Miller that worked with Lieutenant General George Casey (US Army) but this had inherently failed to solve the internal divides between the agencies.(Feith, 2008) As Rudd, the field historian associated with ORHA, argues the NSC as the coordinative body within the Executive has far less capacity which created roadblocks to successful planning. (Rudd, 2011) As such, Bush signed NSPD 24 that required not only the formation of the organisation within Defense but defined the other agencies' role. The hope was that ORHA would be able

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to utilise the expertise across the different departments and allow a more focused and effective planning to take place. However, the reorganisation did little to resolve interagency conflicts. Both Miller and Robin Cleveland from OMB, who had been essentially downgraded by the policy directive, were unwilling to work with the new office creating a dynamic of essentially beginning again.(Rudd, 2011) Even those like Feith, who was still heavily involved in the project, threw obstacles in the way such as not inviting Garner to all the meetings that were occurring in the Pentagon so they could protect their bureaucratic turf. This distrust hurt relations between advisers that spilled over into Asia policy.

Significantly, Rumsfeld and Feith took control of the ORHA hiring process. If personnel represent power in these organisations, they were determined to ensure that their preferences in terms of a limited occupation and Iraqi control would guide the planning. Those who opposed this, including Meghan O’Sullivan and Thomas Warrick, were ostracised. Warrick, who had been at the centre of NSC planning in the ‘Future of Iraq Project’, had expressed reservations about the political decision-making within the Pentagon and was viewed with scepticism by Wolfowitz and Feith whilst O’Sullivan had previously worked for a Democrat senator which suggested she was not politically loyal.(Gans, 2019) Powell wanted both involved and pushed for their inclusion. Instead, after a few days working in the office, Garner found out that he was not able to have the two and that it came from a source above Rumsfeld.(Herspring, 2008) This source was Cheney, who inserted himself into the staffing issues in an attempt to ensure the control of the policy of those who favoured Rumsfeld’s approach. Though he accepted O’Sullivan later, the personnel battle showed Rumsfeld’s and Cheney’s influence.

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Herspring suggests this was a defining moment in the relationship between Defense and State creating an atmosphere of conflict that was increasingly difficult to avoid.(Herspring, 2008; Glain, 2011) Powell, after hearing about the rejection of many State Foreign Service Officers who were considered Arabists, called Rumsfeld and said “What the hell was going on?”. (Woodward, 2006) Rumsfeld had rejected their role because he did not see them as sufficiently committed to the project. More significantly the conflict over staff created such animosity at State that they began to take the attitude that they were being isolated and disrespected. The interagency approach therefore fell short. As individual policy areas drain into each other, the relationship damage caused by these fights resulted in significant reverberations around the policy decision process and hurt the overall ability to respond to the crisis facing the administration in areas like Iran and North Korea.

External Political Environment

Perhaps the main issue surrounding the 2003 invasion of Iraq that will surprise future generations will be that it had only limited resistance from the public, the foreign policy establishment and Congress. Ever since the ‘failure’ to remove Hussein in the 1990’s, the hawkish wing of the party had called on the US to finish the job. Figures such as Lawrence Kaplan and Kristol were representative of this wider constituency when they wrote *The War over Iraq*.(Kaplan and Kristol, 2003) The work, which advocated the liberation of Iraq in line with America’s mission and security, essentially became a manifesto for those who were advocating intervention. This included Senator John McCain, Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, who said “Anybody who harbours doubt about the imperative of regime change in Iraq for the Vital Security Interests of the United States should read this book”.(Kaplan and Kristol, 2003) Though numerous figures deny the influence of Neoconservatives in

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the administration including Boot, the impact on the external environment should not be minimalised. (Boot, 2009) As Dumbrell argues, organisations such as Project for the New American Century were instrumental in creating the intellectual climate that facilitated the war and allowed the administration to push forward with their agenda (even if they were not all neoconservative themselves). (Dumbrell, 2008; Ryan, 2010b)

This push from neoconservative groups was significant in not only causing the War on Terror to occur, but also focused national attention on the impending invasion. Zakheim was clear in his critique of his own Defense Department's handling of the war that internally it caused a distraction from Afghanistan and hurt the conflict there, dragging it on for far longer than expected or needed. (Zakheim, 2011) The entirety of the administration was focused on Iraq with issues such as India, China and North Korea often put on the back burner, repeatedly linked to the invasion of Iraq and ignored by an American public that was preoccupied with the looming conflict. When large areas of the front page were dominated by Iraq, other policies couldn't receive adequate attention especially over the longer-term issues. Those who were advocating for wider agendas were frequently forced to place it in new contexts, either arguing for Iraq to be used as a starting point for progress in other places or to suggest that resolutions would help the war effort. For example, Doran argued that Palestine remained the important issue in an article for *Foreign Affairs* but that it should be viewed as an opportunity to solve after Iraq. (Doran, 2003) This was important because it gave key advisers more flexibility around other issues that would normally have resulted in wider congressional conflict. Though they probably would have still passed, it resulted in far less Congressional interference than otherwise might have existed.

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Another significant impact of the Iraq war was the break between those who served in the previous Bush administration. Though epitomised by the Scowcroft article “Don’t go to war with Iraq”, other key figures such as Secretary of State Baker expressed discontent with the policy. (Scowcroft, 2002) This was important because it created a split within the party and allowed those who were not foreign policy experts an opportunity to show dissent. Scowcroft, who wrote a joint memoir with George H.W. Bush after his term in office, was associated with the ‘realist’ faction within the Republican Party and his position as a prominent NSA gave him high credibility meaning that he was taken seriously both by influential congressional figures and the wider public. Significantly, the close ties to Bush also meant that he was seen as a representative of the former President. As Updegrave argues, though the retired Bush did not come out to condemn the war, the fact that he was asked permission from Scowcroft and that he did not veto the piece was viewed as evidence that the former President was against the war. (Updegrave, 2017) For a family that had prized loyalty and had a reputation for punishing those who betrayed the family trust, this was a significant step. Rice reacted with anger at the betrayal by her former mentor, creating insider Washington narratives of conflicts between the old and the new republicanism that reinforced the distrust for those who were not inside the administration. (Daalder and Destler, 2009) Rumsfeld and Cheney believed these figures were living in the pre-9/11 world and therefore not to be counted on. (Sparrow, 2015)

Elite Que theory suggests that those who are in expert positions have influence over voter policy preference due to their ability to create intellectual shortcuts. (Berinsky, 2009; Saunders, 2018) However, the Iraq war was different due to this large split within the external elite’s position that was not based on partisan differences. As one of the simplest heuristic cues in American politics, party labels can create a simple

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explanation from low investment voters. By splitting the Republican Party from itself Scowcroft and Baker diluted this heuristic and thereby limited the utility of the administration to unify the party around themselves. It also allowed other figures to come out against the war including Senator Dan Luger and General Zinni. (Sparrow, 2015) Berinsky highlights the incredibly partisan nature of the war, noting the support was likely eroded by the permission structure given by figures such as Scowcroft and Baker who represented a differing Republican foreign policy. (Berinsky, 2009) Elite cues are not all born equal, with the President able to dominate the partisan associations within foreign policy. Yet Scowcroft and Baker were elder statesmen, had supported Bush prior to the event (thereby creating a 'break' narrative that was a driver for news and a sense of threat to the status quo that is likely to increase notice of the cue) and were associated with success in the issue area meant they were able to take a sizable chunk of support and create narratives detrimental to the agenda. Internally it meant that Powell had some running room to push for a UN resolution to appease American public concerns that had been stirred up by the article.

This was significant to other areas of foreign policy as it built into the narrative that the administration was radical. (Daalder and Lindsey, 2003) It created a distinction between the two administrations and thereby removed some of the reserve political capital associated with Republican foreign policy. (Pope and Woon, 2009) It also meant that the internal organisation that Scowcroft led, the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, was marginalised and reduced the outside voices that were actively included within the decision-making process. (Sparrow, 2015) Although this was a minor board and not integral to the process, it centralised the process still further at the top of the administration. The article and the other forms of resistance from the external Republican Party elites created a distrust of those who favoured

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positions different from the rest of the administration limiting the debate that is integral to the creation of effective policy. This distrust was not localised to Iraq but could be seen in policies ranging from China, Russia and North Korea. Though a discussion over Iraq was needed, it impacted Asia policy in drastic ways.

Presidential factors

Bush's personal involvement in Iraq is central to its impact on foreign policy. Bush's investment was shown through the personal reaction to the criticism from Scowcroft. His response was to call his father to criticise the former NSA, believing his press article showed a sense of disloyalty to the family. (Scowcroft, 2002; Updegrave, 2017) Iraq has often been portrayed as an issue that is fundamental to understanding the father and son dynamic though this can sometimes be overstated by figures such as Updegrave. (Updegrave, 2017) The association of Iraq with the former Bush administration created a lot of easy contrasts and a significant amount of psychological writing over exaggerated its importance. (Frank, 2004) Though Bush had a visceral dislike of the Iraq leader that may have been exasperated by Hussein's assassination attempt on his father, the invasion should not be taken as a case of personal revenge as Lieberfeld implies. (Lieberfeld, 2005) Many other Republicans were able to construct a rationale behind the war on Iraq without their father being President. Likewise, those narratives that suggest that Bush wanted to complete the unfinished work of his father are overly simplistic. A President is inherently going to compare themselves to their predecessors and look to improve, however the idea that improvement had to be through a full-on invasion often twists hindsight into certainty. However, the issue did have a lot salience in that the relationship did affect the administration's foreign policy decision-making. For example, the former President's reticence to speak about foreign policy meant that the Senior Bush did

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not air his concerns to his son or endorse his former staff members. (Updegrave, 2017) Though this might not have affected the internal decision-making, it would have led credence to the elite cues that could have created increased pressure not to go to conflict.

The sense that Bush needed to be his own man, an image cultivation that had become routine after the campaign, also meant that Bush did not reach out to the former President who had won a war in Iraq. Though not perhaps as common as it should be, ex-presidents can be a significant assistance to subsequent administrations. Most notably, Carter used Ford's knowledge on the issue of Panama independence, helping sell the policy to the public. (Shaller and Williams, 2003) Likewise, Carter has been consulted by both Georges HW. Bush and Clinton over a whole host of issues, most notably human rights. (Morgan, 2012) Bush believed that his father would reach out to him if had concerns and set out a clear case in his memoir that he believed the former president supported him. (G. W. Bush, 2010) However, his relationship meant that he was unwilling to take advantage of the potential resource of perhaps the most successful foreign policy president of the post-cold war era. Though influential in Iraq policy, he also failed to utilise his experience over China (where he had served as ambassador and had been in charge during the flash point of the Tiananmen square) and North Korea (where the former President had been instrumental in stabilising relations by removing nuclear weapons from South Korea) that may have been incredibly helpful to the relatively inexperienced president.

Beyond his relationship with his father, Bush was also profoundly affected by his leadership style when it came to the war in Iraq. As Dyson argues, the President was averse to going over the chain of command which gave Rumsfeld a dominant

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position with the military planning for the conflict. (Dyson, 2015) He believed his job was to provide leadership over the general direction and trust his staff to complete the job. This often resulted in Rumsfeld taking maximalist decisions and avoiding working with other figures in the administration. Rumsfeld and Feith have indicated that a large problem with the decision-making was that conflicts were not resolved, which they blame on Rice as the manager of the NSC process. (Feith, 2008; Rumsfeld, 2011) However, most of this mismanagement was due to Bush's unwillingness to overrule Rumsfeld. (Ricks, 2007) Genovese argues that beyond this aversion to the overruling of military officials there was a lack of intellectual curiosity to fully engage with the potential dangers of the invasion. (Genovese, 2016) Though the delegation may have advantages, it limited Bush's ability to control his administration in the first term.

Personal Political Factors

The final set of factors were perhaps the most significant result of the Iraq war on the foreign decision-making process. The debate during the build up to the Iraq war created an environment of conflict between Cheney and Rumsfeld on one side and Powell on the other, with Rice and Tenet oscillating between them. Though many portray this as a time where Powell was completely removed from influence, this is not the case. Indeed, the Secretary of State was able to achieve large concessions from the President on matters such as going to the United Nations and Congress. Though Ricks, among others, argue that Powell was largely against the conflict and made a significant play to delay it, the rationale was based less on the problems with the Iraq invasion itself as more of a problem with the domination that Iraq would take of the agenda. (Ricks, 2007) Woodward quotes Powell as saying "this will become the first term". (Woodward, 2004, p. 150) However, Powell had not managed to build a

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relationship with Bush as Rumsfeld had and this hurt his ability to make his case. Many felt that Powell should have done more to resist the road to war by utilising his personal reputation. Lafeber provides the example of seven major editorials suggested that he should resign, illustrating a public call for his principled opposition. (Lafeber, 2009) Likewise, internal dissent from within State came often from figures such as Cocker and Haass who tried to push Powell for a showdown with the more hawkish members of the administration. (Mann, 2020) However, that was not how Powell viewed his role. He understood that many people outside the administration were taking their lead from him but did not want to leverage this. Once the President had made his decision that was the end of the story, similarly to his idol and general turned statesmen Marshall. (DeYoung, 2006) He largely supported the President and refused to take the leadership role of the resistance as other Secretary of States' such as Al Haig have done. Furthermore, he believed that he could make things better if he remained in the administration. Haass believed that Bush would have likely pushed ahead anyway. (Haass, 2009) As such, his loyalty kept him inside the bubble and helped strengthen the administration as they pushed forward into the conflict.

Perhaps the most significant way that Powell was personally impacted was due to his involvement with the briefing to the UN. The speech to the UN by Powell, with Tenet behind him, has come to be one of the defining images of the conflict and has haunted him ever since. Powell himself suggests that it would "Earn a prominent paragraph in my obituary" and that it was a blot on his record. (Powell. Colin and Koltz, 2012, p. 219) The President had decided on Powell to give the speech because it utilised his assets. As the face of diplomacy within the administration and having had a career that included military and political roles, the Secretary of State had the international prestige to demand the respect of any audience. This not only allowed him to persuade

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potential allies but also the domestic audience which would tune in. As a set piece of American diplomacy, Powell delivered a masterful speech that created a strong and lasting impression that quietened down resistance from the public who assumed that the messenger was less hawkish and more reasonable than the other administration members. The problem was that it was based on a series of lies, half-truths and conjectures that resulted in his credibility being hugely undermined. (Powell, Colin and Koltz, 2012)

Initially, the speech was supposed to be based on a report from Libby and Feith. Cheney himself called Powell and encouraged him to take the overarching direction and evidence from the initial report as closely as possible. (Mann, 2020) However, Powell was unconvinced by the intelligence which resulted in a need to completely review the contents. Wilkerson suggests that around 80% of the initial Iraq-WMD script was not verifiable or needed to be removed. (Author interview with Wilkerson, 2020) Importantly, the urgency required meant the speech had to be edited in four days which was a significant constraint on the ability to create an effective draft and reanalyse the evidence. (Tenet and Harlow, 2007) In the end, the so called '16 words' within the speech that created a high level of controversy and had already been discredited by the intelligence establishment were not removed. Beyond the severely detrimental effect this had on US world credibility and the significant undercutting of the intelligence services, it had two important personal effects on Powell. Firstly, it created a sense of disenchantment and conflict within the administration. Wilkerson argues that by the end of the administration Powell was often away from his desk and had lost the energy for the fights that were required, becoming a Cassandra that was not listened to within the administration. (Author interview with Wilkerson, 2020) Beyond the top level, it created a atmosphere of distrust for the interactions between

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Defense and State, hurting coordination on many issues. Often policies relating to China, Russia and Korea were framed through distrust, creating differing incentive structures for policies in meetings. Secondly, it reinforced a distrust of intelligence and the intelligence process, both within the CIA and outside of it. As Tenet argues in his memoir, he blamed the White House and the OVP for the intelligence flaws as “we might have uncovered more of those flaws if our people had not had to spend two days getting the garbage out of a White House draft that we had never seen before”.(Tenet and Harlow, 2007) The professional intelligence service were therefore isolated. This often meant they felt they were unable to get an effective voice into the White House weakening Tenet and hurting the fight to combat the intelligence corruption by more hawkish figures. Likewise, State felt they could not trust the CIA. As such, it weakened the ability of the professional services within both departments to create an effective block to the Iraq policy and sowed distrust on issues that were intelligence heavy especially Korea.

Although Powell was leveraged into a position where he was forced to make a public case for the war, the build up to the Iraq conflict opened an opportunity for Cheney to move from the shadows of policy making to one of the central public advocates. In what Smith calls a ‘Fire and Brimstone speech’ at the Veterans of Foreign Wars conference, the VP set out a clear message that the war was fundamental to US security in the new world created by 9/11. (Smith, 2016) What is more important perhaps than the content of the speech was why Cheney decided to deliver it in the first place. Considering his resistance to take a public speaking role regarding the immediate response to 9/11 and for numerous other issues within the administration that he was passionate about, the decision to involve himself in the public selling of the war seems to be highly contradictory. However, there were two main reasons for this change.

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Firstly, the blowback from the Scowcroft article created a need to halt the large momentum that was going against the conflict. As Woodward argues, Cheney felt that everyone was offering their opinion except the administration. (Woodward, 2004) Rice was attempting to remain relatively neutral in the build-up to the war with Iraq. Though she had said in an interview with the BBC that there was certainly a moral case for going to war, Cheney felt she had not gone far enough. (Rice, 2011) Secondly, the speech was the first time that Cheney was willing to utilise the ‘Bully Pulpit’ that comes from being elected rather than appointed. As Kengor argues, the Vice President is likely to be listened to more than any professional staff member due to his proximity to the President and his outsized public influence. (Kengor, 2000) With Cheney, his inherent insider status and his unwillingness to be the public spokesmen meant his words were treated with greater attention meaning the speech was far more publicised. Though he later gave a more moderate speech checked by the NSC staff under Rice’s direction, the damage had been done and the case had been made to the public.

How did this change Cheney’s position within the administration? Firstly, it tied him to the Iraq war in the most obvious way in the mind of those who were external to the administration. This was integral as it meant that the Vice President’s credibility within and externally to the administration were tied to the conflict. When the war looked to be going successfully around the ill-fated declaration of victory or “Mission Accomplished” speech in May 2003, Cheney had an increased institutional capital that allowed him to push on other policy issues. However, when the war began to turn against the US, the Vice President would be associated with the failing conflict more than most other advisers. For an adviser whose influence was largely based on his sound management and experience, this would weaken him in the beginning of the second term. Furthermore, it annoyed Bush to feel boxed in and meant that he was

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more willing to go along with Powell's plan to involve the UN creating a significant delay. (Rice, 2011) Though Cheney denies that he was called to back track, it still indicates the role of the adviser's behaviour in creating incentives for the President to choose a policy in the short term but create a longer term weakening of their position. It also hurt the Vice President's reputation as only serving the president's goals. By becoming a public participant in the debate and taking on the administration's position as he believed it was, he was committing the same sin that Powell had. Overall, the issue of the speech undermined the traditional means of influence that the Vice President had used to this point, changing the source of his power for a short time surge before a quick and drastic deteriorating the second term.

Summary

Iraq significantly changed the power balance within the administration by changing the roles and perceptions of critical players. Not only did the conflict take top priority, thereby distracting the advisers from other critical issues, it became the primary battlefield that would have knock on effects throughout the administration. Significantly, it reinforced a atmosphere of division between different departments that hurt the ability to create an administration policy in many other areas. This battle manifested itself over the intelligence debates and the control of policy creating a significant split between the OVP and Defense on one side and State and the CIA on the other, reinforcing the institutional politicisation of the intelligence process that had become more and more prevalent over the preceding decades. Likewise, the decision-making regarding how the Iraq war would be run and by whom is critical to understanding the relative dysfunction within the process and how it undermined the policy areas as explored in the next chapter. Overall, Cheney and Rumsfeld had taken a significant amount of control with Powell often being left to fight on the margins of

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the issues to bring it back to moderations. Rice was often tangential to these battles and managed keep her powder dry for other issues. By the end of 2004, the policy environment looked far different than it did on September 11th, 2001.

Chapter 6: Post 9/11 Asia

Introduction

This chapter focuses on how this power balance affected the policy areas of North Korea, India and China between the September 11th attacks and the end of Bush's first term. Significantly, this period offered a lot of fluidity in administration policy. Although the hardliners had significant advantages and were able to direct policy with more authority in the immediate aftermath of 9/11, illustrated by Iraq, the policies suggest that instead of hardliner domination across the board there was far more fluctuation than may have been expected. Noticeably, the effect was not uniform across all three policies. Instead, the power balance affected the decision-making in two highly divergent ways. The first was that the possible options and benefits of policies were dramatically reassessed regarding what the aims of the more hawkish group of officials wanted to accomplish. The second was that often there was a surge toward a more hawkish policy before a 'course correction' towards the end of the first term. Together, this meant that by 2004 the more moderate groups within the administration had begun to reassert themselves over the three major policy changes in the Indo-Pacific. This reality challenges the dominant narrative that the Bush administration was uniformly unilateralist and belligerent in this period.

North Korea

By September 2001 a new more hard-line North Korea policy had been created compared to the second term of the Clinton administration. A significant division had

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appeared, not only between those who favoured a more hard-line approach including Cheney, Rumsfeld, Bolton and Joseph and those who favoured a negotiation-based strategy such as Powell, Armitage and Kelly, but also between the President and his Secretary of State. This had manifested itself in a more aggressive posture from the administration, with the Agreed Framework seeming to be on its last legs.(Bolton, 2007) Yet Pyongyang hoped they would be able to utilise the 9/11 attacks to create a new relationship with the administration. They released a statement expressing their regret about the attacks and reminding the international community that as a member of the UN they had made critical commitments against terrorism including an agreement of cooperation with the United States in 2000. They even suggested that they would ratify the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and the International Convention Against the Taking of Hostages as a show of good faith.(Chinoy, 2008) With America hurting and looking to lash out, Pyongyang wanted to ensure they were not about to become collateral damage. Pritchard in turn wanted to utilise these events as a catalyst for moving forward, utilising small agreements on issues such as terrorism to help leverage a breakthrough in negotiations.(Pritchard, 2007) The attacks provided an opportunity to apply the maxim that was given to Pakistan by Armitage, “that you’re either with us or against us” and North Korea wanted to be with the US.

However, this did not prove to be the diplomatic opening that North Korea wanted. Though the attacks had changed the priorities at that moment of time, it had also brought the fears of figures like Cheney and Rumsfeld into greater focus. Counter proliferation was prioritised to the highest level of concern under the administration as the ramifications for an attack using a nuclear weapon would be catastrophic. As Yates recalled, the administration was in a “post 9/11 mind-set and we are worried

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about the world's worst people having the world's worst capabilities... you have a much higher sense of urgency about how you attempt containment". (Author interview with Yates, 2020) Critically, the OVP, the NSC and Rumsfeld viewed State's approach of using the attacks to generate momentum in restarting negotiations as not only distasteful but actively harmful. As Yates argues it moved the emphasis from 'how do we stop this problem' to 'how can we utilise this to limit the problems impact whilst not isolating ourselves from their allies and needed partners'. (Author interview with, Yates 2020) For Michael Green, the NSC Asia expert, the idea that the North Koreans had any relative experience to combating terrorism was just not credible and should not be tied into any broader War on Terror efforts.(Chinoy, 2008) The minuscule benefit would come at the 'expense' of negotiations, which gave the North Koreans credibility and could act to undermine any sanction regimes that the administration wanted.

For these figures, negotiations in themselves could be harmful as they created a sense of delay, especially if there was not a clear indication of what Pyongyang were willing to sacrifice. Though Bolton believed that September 11th "pushed North Korea to the side", it also revitalised the ability of figures such as Bolton, Yates and Joseph to ensure they retained a significant voice. Pyongyang became perhaps one of the most significant friction points within the administration besides Iraq. (Bolton, 2007, p. 103) Instead of North Korea being an adjunct to China policy, a perception that exists in the academic discussion of the administration from figures such as Garrison and Kim, it was re-emphasised as a threat on its own. (Garrison, 2005; Kim and Hundt, 2011) Though some, including Perle and Frum advocated a naval and air blockade, these views were viewed as extreme and were not seriously considered. (Frum and Perle, 2003) Instead the policy agenda for these hawks was to increase sanctions and

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end the Agreed Framework. Significantly, the Clinton engagement policy had offered an opportunity to change the policy due to the ability to remove the benefits of sanction relief to deter North Korean actions. (Kang and Cha, 2018) This allowed neoconservatives to build support among assertive nationalists and more traditional balance of power realists within the administration for a more aggressive policy. For these figures, efforts by Pritchard to engage with North Korea did not reflect the President's policy and the idea that they should sneak their agenda in under the auspices of anti-terrorism was viewed with short shift by the NSC staff members. Cheney and the OVP was instrumental in stopping an opportunity for engagement in the aftermath of the 9/11 attack showing their ability to maintain a wide lens view and not be bogged down by the Afghanistan war. However, just because the OVP and those sceptical of North Korea within the administration had managed to resist the calls for negotiations did not mean that they would bring the rest of the administration along with a more hawkish strategy. In December, Pyongyang decided to demonstrate a further willingness to engage by allowing the International Atomic Energy Agency to enter the country if the President kept negotiating suggesting that there were legitimate options going into 2002. How the President would choose to deal with these issues would be critical and the administration began to reconceptualise their policy in the period before the State of the Union.

This process of policy discussion in public speeches has often been ignored in the narratives, with speechwriters such as Frum indicating that North Korea was added more for its ability to disassociate the 'Axis of Evil' from a purely Islamic enemy and to bring the number up to the magic three which would reinforce the comparisons with the Axis of the Second World War.(Frum, 2003) Likewise, Michael Gerson recalled that it was Rice who added Iran and North Korea in an attempt to dispel the notions

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that the administration was solely focused on a potential war in Iraq. (Gerson, 2007) Though this process may indicate that North Korea was on the backburner, it should not obscure the underlying pressures that were building. The President had been slowly raising the pressure on North Korea to emphasise that the development of WMD's countered as 'terrorism'. This was reaffirmed by Rumsfeld, who released a classified report to Congress that indicated a change of policy that justified a pre-emptive nuclear strike to deter military programs that were detrimental to US security creating a lot of consternation as it was a significant departure from previous statements and agreements. (Quinones, 2003) Though it may have been beneficial to include a non-Muslim nation in the Axis of Evil, there should be no doubt that the reason North Korea made the cut was the high level of concern about the issue within the administration. Both the political and policy benefits of creating a more confrontational relationship with Pyongyang even though this might remove the possibility of negotiations was a risk the President was willing to take.

Significantly, the intention behind the speech was for the foreign policy section to act as nudge for these nations. Rice in particular suggests that she was surprised by the focus on the Axis of Evil when the argument that the administration was trying to make was that proliferation would be the significant challenge of the post 9/11 era. (Rice, 2011) Even Powell was not overly concerned by the President's words believing they were a rhetorical flourish broadly reflective of the existing policy. (DeYoung, 2006) Had they known the difficulty that the phrase would cause them in later years, it is highly likely that they would have reconsidered. The speech created an impression of bellicose both internally and externally, inspiring those who were pushing for a more hard-line policy whilst demotivating those who favoured a more engagement focused approach. For Pyongyang, it reinforced the message that the concessions they

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had already made were not creating a productive relationship and that the administration would only be encouraged to come back to negotiations if they began to act more assertively. Instead of building momentum, it seemed to stop it in its tracks.

It was not only North Korea that felt betrayed. The South Korean government felt they had been blindsided by the decision-making inside the administration with Ambassador Hubbard suggesting that they believed that the speech would raise the prospect of war on the Peninsula (Chinoy, 2008). This illustrates that the decision-making process often lacked engagement with outside countries, with the notable exception of the UK where Bush and Prime Minister Tony Blair had built a close personal connection over this period. On North Korea policy, Japan and South Korea often felt like spectators rather than engaged allies. Inside the United States there was also a lot of discontent about the use of the 'Axis of Evil' terminology. Though largely there was a positive reaction, some key figures within the State's bureaucracy were shocked and disheartened. Figures such as Bob Carlin, who was one of the most experienced hands in the intelligence analysis of North Korea and had served for 31 years, left the department believing that the administration would not provide an opportunity for effective diplomacy.(Chinoy, 2008) This mattered as it meant what expertise was left favoured a more aggressive approach. Even those who favoured a more nuanced 'hawk engagement' like NSC staffer Vincent Cha were still further away than the group led by Kelly and Powell.(Victor D. Cha, 2002) Meanwhile, State Department staff were spinning the press that the apparent change in direction should be ignored. Bolton suggests that Powell attempted to put a stop to this, making it clear that the President made the foreign policy of the US not the State 'professionals'.(Bolton, 2007) However, the attempted spin reinforced the belief that State was not on board with program. Overall, the speech created discontent both

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within the administration and outside. The decision (or lack of decision) for Rice and Powell to fight the President on the use of the 'Axis of Evil' term created a significant shift in opinion both internally and externally which hurt their respective positions moving forward.

This environment meant that Rice's coordination role took on added importance. Powell and Armitage's disengagement through a lack of awareness as much as intent meant it would have taken a significant investment of political capital from the key players to take charge of the policy implementation process. As the President's closest confidante and the coordinator of the decision-making process, she was uniquely situated to change the presentation of the issue to Bush and moderate his position. Certainly, Rice routinely took a relatively moderate position on North Korea within the administration, unwilling to endorse the bellicose strategy advocated by Cheney, Bolton and Joseph. As Rice recalls, though she was in favour of the ideas behind the President's position she did not see how it could be workable when the international environment was against it and that the centralisation and oppressive nature of the North Korean regime meant that an internal revolution was highly unlikely. (Rice, 2011) This suggests that it was not a policy difference with Powell that created the significant gap between them, but it was based on other factors.

The most prominent of these was her unwillingness to spend her bureaucratic capital on the issue knowing the President's personal stance on North Korea was based on his strong moral convictions and distaste in dealing with repugnant foreign leaders. Rice's power lay with her personal connection to the President and the perception that she was pushing his agenda not her own. Forcing this would mean that she risked jeopardising that relationship. As Marby argues, Rice was politically savvy and part of this was her willingness to choose her battles, meaning that when she did not see a

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clear path to achieving a goal she did not engage.(Marby, 2007a) With the high level of distraction of the war with Afghanistan and the administration beginning to take an Iraq invasion more seriously, Rice was unable to prioritise North Korea. Instead, she let the disagreements fester, meaning the decision-making process was not brought to a head in an effective way. Daalder and Destler argue this was perhaps the greatest failure of Rice, in that she was unwilling to throw her weight behind either side. The lack of an effective decision meant both the Hawks and the Moderates were unsatisfied and believed their strategy had never been given an effective chance to work.(Daalder and Destler, 2009) Though a decision coming out of a series of high level meetings may not have changed the deeply entrenched positions of the advisers, it may have convinced the President to commit to one of the approaches that was available to him allowing the administration to move onto how to implement the decision instead of what that decision should be.

In the meantime, this policy inertia facilitated a more hawkish approach to North Korea best represented by the decision to send Assistant Secretary of State Kelly to Pyongyang. Though on the face of it this was a victory for those who had a more dovish view on North Korea, it was under such constraints that they were unable to utilise it. As Schneider argues, the absence of leadership from both Rice and Bush meant that there was an attempt to satisfy both those who favour diplomatic engagement but also stopped the inducements that were required for it to succeed.(Schneider, 2010) Rice suggests that this reflected the reality of the balance of power within the administration where there was a realisation that they needed to do something that would ease the Allies' minds but hardliners were able to ensure that this was a purely symbolic exercise.(Rice, 2011) Kelly was originally scheduled to go in mid-July in an attempt to signal to allies that negotiations were still ongoing.

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However, this trip was stopped as a response to a maritime attack on South Korean vessels a week before the proposed trip. As Bolton highlights, he hoped this would kill the trip but the hard-line group were unable to convince the President to cancel it entirely and instead it was merely delayed until October 2002. (Bolton, 2007) However, Cheney was able to capitalise on the delay. He managed to tweak the delegation's instructions, along with Joseph, limiting the flexibility usually afforded to negotiators. These instructions were so tight that Kelly was not even allowed to attend welcome drinks on his arrival. Even when Kelly could speak, he was forced to stick to the talking points drafted by Hadley and the NSC Director for Asian Affairs Green with considerable engagement from the OVP. Rice suggests these were more like stage directions than suggestions and were incredibly restricting to ensure buy-in from the hawkish factions both within State and the NSC along with the more obviously resistant OVP and Pentagon. (Rice, 2011)

This was significant in two regards. Firstly, it showed that although those who favoured a hawkish line had a significant amount of power, they were still limited in their ability to completely discount negotiations. Like the build-up to the war in Iraq, the hardliners were still constrained by the realists' perception of a need to engage in the multilateral channels that would provide significant costs on the administration if ignored. This was largely due to allies who would not engage in more extreme sanctions' regimes without some diplomatic engagement. However, it also reflected the lack of convincing options. Daalder and Lindsey argue that the lack of hawkish pressure for a military option, in contrast to Iraq, was reflective of the fact that the preferred process was one of malign neglect rather than vigorous action. (Daalder and Lindsay, 2003) Though Frum and Perle may have pushed an escalation towards war, it would have gone further than many of the hawks were comfortable with, let alone

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Rice and Bush whose operational code was between them and the more dovish Powell and Armitage (Robison, 2006). As Green suggested in his discussion of the decision-making process that he expected the middle ground to be one of regional cooperation compared to the more extreme tailored containment advocated by Joseph with only marginal engagement of allies.(Green, 2019) The balance of power may be central to the decisions that were available but this did not mean that it could convince figures to do anything.

Secondly, it indicated Powell was not trusted to run State. This was a critical departure from the CEO style presidency that Bush was trying to instil, micromanaging to a far greater extent than he had before 9/11.(Pfiffner, 2007, 2008) In comparison to the decision-making after the E-3 crisis in 2001, it reflected the increased distrust of State from figures such as Cheney and Rumsfeld who believed they had not followed the President into the new post 9/11 world. Reaffirmed by Powell's behaviour in the first year, North Korea became an issue where State would be tightly managed. The attitude was such that Cheney and Rumsfeld advocated that instead of Kelly taking the trip, a more hard-line figure such as Robert Joseph be instructed to take it.(Pritchard, 2007) By involving the NSC as an operational rather than coordinative body, reflected the growing sense that the NSC was being forced to change to accommodate the wishes of the OVP. As the operationalisation of the NSC had been essential to the Iran-Contra Affair, this was not a step to be taken lightly. However, the level of discontent within the administration was such that it became a viable option, even if it was not one that was taken.(Destler and Daalder, 2004) With the inbuilt hawkish advantage coming from figures such as Joseph, Hadley and others it reflected a hawkish ascendancy in the decision-making process. As a message of unity to their State colleagues, it left a lot to be desired.

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This is not to say that State did not often give credibility to the arguments made by the hawkish networks that they had gone rogue. The decision for Powell to meet the North Korean Foreign Minister in Brunei in early 2002 (and according to Rodman two other occasions that the Defense Department knew about) reflected a similar distaste for the interagency process and created a sense of distrust. (Rodman, 2009) Powell suggested that he was doing this for the President, to give him plausible deniability and an ability to shoot the trial balloons down if it backfired. (Chinoy, 2008) With a better relationship between the two, this would have likely been something that other figures of the administration would have expected and been consulted on. However, the lack of this relationship and the pre-existing distrust created the sense that Powell was acting on his own which rankled hawkish figures in the OVP, NSC and Pentagon. Beyond the division within the two lower realms of the departments, the Kelly trip also had a large bureaucratic effect. For the Secretary of State himself, this decision to limit the Ambassador to talking points could only be seen as an attack on his credibility. If the Secretary was not trusted to direct his own staff, then how was he supposed to act within the administration? Rice wrote in her memoir “I made a mental note that this was no way to treat the Secretary of State”. (Rice, 2011, p. 161) By undermining the Secretary of State again over the issue of North Korea it reinforced for those figures who were concerned about the direction the administration was heading that Powell was no longer in control. Cheney’s ability to undermine the traditional power of the Secretary of State boded ill for the administration’s ability to move forward on the nuclear issue.

One of the main purposes behind the meeting was that the administration wanted to confront Pyongyang over its decision to pursue Highly Enriched Uranium (HEU). As Eberstadt and Ferguson argue, the intelligence gathered was apparent from early 2002

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yet they waited until the fall to pressure the North Koreans.(Eberstadt and Furguson, 2003) However, the intelligence was deprioritised to allow focus on the Global War on Terror. The delay in dealing with North Korea was particularly dependent on Iraq. As the decision on whether to go to war had begun to be made by the summer of 2002, if it hadn't already been made, as many argue, a crisis on the Korean Peninsula reflected the worst possible outcome for those who were pushing for an invasion of Baghdad. Here was an intractable problem with no solution. Why draw attention to it if it was not something that the administration could do? As Bolton suggests, this was apparent in both low and high level meetings, with a sense that delay helped both figures like Rice who were unwilling to commit to the issue whilst Iraq was so prevalent and also those like Wolfowitz who did not want to undermine Iraq.(Bolton, 2007) As WMD's had been the issue that the administration had pushed as the central factor in the clear and present threat to the US, the more clear intelligence surrounding Pyongyang's program would have hurt the case for war. This also reflected the fact that those who served in the Bureau for East Asian and Pacific Affairs (EAP) who like Kelly and Pritchard were of the more negotiation minded part of the administration knew that they were in a weak position. By not making a decision on the Agreed Framework, a bureaucratic inertia took hold which allowed State to push forward with the decision they wanted to make in the hope that cooler heads would prevail. It also reflected Powell's preference that any big decision would occur after the South Korean elections scheduled for December, knowing that significant US escalation could have a profound effect. By sending Kelly to Pyongyang, an opportunity for progress was given whilst not requiring a heavy investment of time and energy from the principals to engage with the issue.

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This was the set-up for the meeting, one which started badly and became far worse for those who favoured a more moderate policy towards North Korea. The instruction to cancel the traditional dinner that the US would host to reciprocate the North Korean's welcome was sent to the North Koreans whilst the delegation was in the air. Pyongyang was insulted by the rejection and instead of sending a high level foreign ministry official to collect the Americans sent a relative junior member of the government, surprising Kelly and setting a highly negative tone.(Chinoy, 2008) For a regime that craved the international credibility and prestige that the talks would give, the removal of these diplomatic niceties soured the talks. However, this was nothing compared to the atmosphere created when the US revealed they knew about the efforts to create the HEU which the North Koreans admitted. As Jannuzi argues, the North Koreans were both surprised by the revelation and the strength of feeling that this betrayal caused within the American government.(Jannuzi, 2003) With the US having failed to deliver on its commitments under the Agreed Framework this was deemed an equal breach in Pyongyang. They believed that this was a traditional part of negotiations and would be something to either give up or to use to extort the US over future concessions rather than the crossing of a red line that would cut them off from any further progress. Indeed, the North Koreans were willing to engage believing that they had now reached a point of relative security and had managed to bring the US to the table.

Instead, it meant that Kelly, with his strict instructions, was forced to leave the table. This news spread through the entirety of the administration relatively quickly according to Chinoy as everyone had their own contacts within the delegation with large mailing lists of likeminded individuals included. This led to the beginning of a new question: How should they respond to the crisis now?(Chinoy, 2008) For Bolton,

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the case was clear. He suggested that on the Monday after the trip Powell called him into the office and the Secretary said that “There’s no question it’s over” when discussing the Agreed Framework.(Bolton, 2007, p. 115) This was music to Bolton’s ears. Finally, the North Koreans had provided a smoking gun that allowed him to kill off the negotiation-based strategy that the EAP and Powell were still actively pursuing. However, it did not come immediately. The administration was unwilling to release the story, with Bush allowing no leaks. Though some assume this is because of the preference of secrecy that existed, this was more of a tactical decision that the information would be distracting from Iraq.(Chinoy, 2008) Yet when a USA Today journalist, who was puzzled by the lack of an announcement after what should have been a well-publicised trip, began to investigate the administration’s hand was forced. To ensure control of the story, the administration decided that they wanted to spin the story their own way to nullify its impact.

Significantly, the October 15th meeting of the NSC in which the information from the trip had been presented to the Principals and the strategy moving forward was meant to be discussed was dominated by Iraq instead of North Korea.(Chinoy, 2008) As Pollock suggests, the timing of the press statement confirming the North Korean programme only occurring after the administration had passed the Iraq resolution through Congress indicated the two policies relative importance.(Pollack, 2003) Even after the administration let the word out, with considerable congressional outrage that they had held on to the information for so long, they were unwilling to escalate the crisis beyond refusing negotiations and withdrawing the economic assistance that was due under the Agreed Framework when the North Koreans nullified it publicly.(Bolton, 2007) Whilst the government were silent, the key advisers began a battle in the media to shape the interpretation and the post Kelly trip policy making

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environment. The most notable of these was Powell's suggestion in the *Washington Post* that there were parts of the Agreed Framework that would be kept on. This fuelled the sense that the Secretary had gone too far, leading to a quick response. A senior official was quoted in a Washington Post story, saying "What that person said . . . may represent his view, the State Department view, but it does not represent the administration view". (Allen and DeYoung, 2002) This media narrative of a lack of control of the administration's key officials was significant in continuing the coverage suggesting that the system was in disarray, annoying Bush and Rice. For hardliners, State was in active rebellion from the administration's line and that was a dangerous situation.

At the same time, the need for moral clarity was reinforced for figures such as Cheney by the discovery that North Korea had been a key part of the A Q Kahn proliferation network. This network was a connection of proliferators from states such as Syria, Pakistan and North Korea and represented the worst case scenario for administration figures who had securitised the illegal proliferation of both the nuclear technology and the missile technology required to make a nuclear weapon deliverable.(Albright and Hinderstein, 2005) Significantly, it combined the threats from Iran and North Korea into a singular umbrella concept that was useful for the war on terror as it linked some of the more problematic actors in the world beyond their antagonism to the US.(Case, Khan and Hastings, 2012) If the North Koreans were going to be involved in this subterfuge whilst they were negotiating, why should the US give it resources? As Rice suggests "After all, North Korea would sell anything".(Rice, 2011, p. 163) However, it also created a problem. A new solution would be required that would begin to deal with the North Korean nuclear problem rather than let it continue. If containment was

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a short-term strategy and the administration was unwilling to either invade or bilaterally negotiate, something creative and new would be essential.

One of the areas the Bush administration has been routinely condemned for has been its tendency to act unilaterally.(Pempel, 2008) However, by the middle of 2003 there was a clear indication that the administration had accepted that they would have to have significant buy-in from the Asian community. As Green argues the NSC settled on creating a forum similar to the one used in Bosnia where other nations involved were invited to allow a grouping of interested parties to present a unified front against the hermit kingdom.(Green, 2019) Interestingly, this also reflected a significant change in the dynamic. According to Pritchard, he had been told to convey a message to the North Koreans that “Secretary Powell was now in charge of North Korea policy; accordingly, with respect to that policy, Pyongyang should listen only to the President and the Secretary of State”.(Pritchard, 2007, p. 58) As a statement in itself, this was quite remarkable in showing how the undermining of the Secretary’s position and the increasingly competitive foreign policy spokesmen role required securing. The President had begun to make a personal move into the North Korean policy and had been instrumental in limiting the excesses of the hard-line group of advisers and restoring a sense of order in the process, showing a maturing into the role as the head of the foreign policy process. He suggests in his autobiography that it was around this time that he realised the process was beginning to become more and more dysfunctional, using the metaphor of a dual with the ‘seconds’ (or key advisers to the Secretaries) of the departments preferring to attack each other rather than cooperating.(G. W. Bush, 2010) This attempt to draw more clear divisions between who could and could not speak for the administration reflected the start of a trend in restoring a sense of balance within the administration.

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It also reflected the growing changes in the policy arena. Rice, Rumsfeld and Cheney were stuck managing two major wars and were running out of time to deal with issues that were on the second order of importance. Cheney and Rumsfeld both recommended that regime change remain the policy, with their preferences periodically resurfacing in debates between the end of 2003 and the end of the term. Though this acted as a limited engagement, they were unable to provide an effective method for bringing this about due to their unwillingness to spend time and effort to ensure the implementation of policy was developed.(Chinoy, 2008; Rice, 2011; Rumsfeld, 2011) This represented perhaps one of the few weaknesses of the OVP in this period. Although his team were often able to help shape policy they were not in charge of its implementation and could only rely on utilising the power of their boss on the occasions he was able to give time to it. Powell, realising this, wanted to press his advantage and get a little further out ahead of the President to try and direct the administration's path.(Pritchard, 2007) North Korea was one of the few areas where the President and his Secretary of State were able to come to some form of understanding between them at this time, reflecting Powell's increased influence towards the end of the term when the fervour of the immediate aftermath of the attack had dissipated a little. Powell would be taking the lead and have the responsibility of the issues in its general form yet would have to take an incredibly strict line that involved no bilateral negotiations and to keep the other figures in the loop. Within those constraints, diplomacy would be allowed to move forward.

However, for this to occur China would have to be involved and Bush knew he would have to court them into accepting that the current position was untenable and hostile to Chinese interests.(G. W. Bush, 2010) According to Pritchard they were made the primary communications method to the North Koreans over the New York/UN

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channel which allowed China to retain their apparent detachment whilst still ensuring they were firmly in the mix.(Pritchard, 2007) Although there will be further discussion of the importance of the China relationship later in the chapter, this was made possible by a change in the perception of China as a competitor to a partner in the new post 9/11 order. According to Cha “Bush framed diplomatic cooperation on denuclearising North Korea as a key test of China’s emergence as a responsible great power in the international system, and as a key test of the US-China partnership”.(Cha, 2012, p. 251) In a sign of the interconnected nature of modern policy decision-making, the decisions were often based on differing goals depending on where the focus was. Was it worth making concessions to China to balance the threat from North Korea or was it worth creating distance between the two communist Asian allies in a hope to create a new form of Asian cooperation?

The outcome was preliminary talks in Beijing between the US and North Korea with China acting as an intermediary in April 2003. Significantly, South Korea and Japan were not invited though they had been courted heavily by State as Pyongyang had refused to meet with them. This resulted with Bush having to personally apologise to the US’s two most important allies in the region.(Buszynski, 2013) Though a far cry from the preceding few months where the administration had set out a clear no negotiation policy, the Beijing talks themselves were not successful largely due to the differing expectations of the various delegations. Whilst Kelly was just relieved to be able to negotiate with the North Koreans, they were not allowed to engage beyond the talking points (very similar to the visit to 2002 Pyongyang visit). On the other hand, the North Koreans had perceived the Chinese as merely the hosts and that this was a bilateral in all but name, an impression that the Chinese had cultivated. The Chinese were then caught in the middle having to force the two belligerent parties to meet. This

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manifested itself at the evening dinner where the US negotiator, Kelly, was literally cornered by the North Koreans who gave a statement as if the dinner was a formal negotiation.

Though the conversation contained little actual information and more bluster than negotiation, the report of this meeting was soon sent out to the key members of the administration. David Straub, who was on the trip, suggested that both sides utilised their email distribution lists so that members of both sides of the debate got information out immediately.(Chinoy, 2008, p. 172) In an age of instant communication, State's control of the diplomatic cable, a traditional power that had helped the Secretary of State retain control of the foreign policy process, was reduced in importance and reflected a significant change in the dynamic within the administration compared to the previous administration. This was significant, as it reduced the ability of State to spin the talks and allowed the administrations more hawkish figures to push for even stricter guidelines. In all, this first foray into multilateral diplomacy did not go well and helped accentuate the gulf between Pyongyang and US negotiating strategies. Something new would have to occur to change the dynamics of the negotiation.

Significantly the momentum for the Beijing talks and its successor the Six Party Talks came from US policy in the Middle East. The war in Iraq was in full swing by the middle of 2003 and the conflict looked like it had been a success from the US perspective. Success in Iraq created a new dynamic in rest of the world, showing both US power and willingness of the administration to use it. Both those states who were feeling threatened by the US, most prominently Libya and North Korea, along with those who feared what an expanding US presence would mean for them (most notably China) were forced to reconsider their position.(Park, 2010) As Joseph argued in

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relation to Libya, the reason they were so willing to give up their nuclear weapons was the spectre of being the next Iraq hovering over them.(Joseph, 2016; Author interview with Joseph,2019)Ominously for those who favoured diplomacy, the Libyan example provided a basis for the more hawkish members of the administration to see a different model of how to handle non-proliferation. It was no longer a case of war or negotiation but a case of standing firm, using sanctions and then waiting for the others to come to them.

As Bush writes in his memoir, the suggestion to China that he might consider a military option in North Korea was a pushing factor towards action on the diplomatic sphere.(G. W. Bush, 2010) However, North Korea took the opposite lesson, which was that without weapons of mass destruction they were likely to be victims of their own Iraq. Why give up their most significant deterrent? In exchange for any new action, it was critical for there to be a declaration of no hostile intent. Though this provided a new avenue of negotiations, one that President Trump would utilise over a decade later, it also showed a sense of retrenchment from both sides. With the administration riding high, boosting the political capital of Cheney and Rumsfeld, the idea that they would be willing to negotiate with North Korea was unlikely. Significantly, the role of Iraq would continue to play a significant part in the administration's ability to deal with North Korea. For now, it was a benefit, though perhaps one that the hardliners were unable to capitalise on perhaps believing that the success of Iraq would last for a significant period, any deterioration in position was likely to weaken the US position and give Pyongyang more confidence at drawing out US concessions.

What manifested itself was perhaps the greatest success of the Bush administration in Asia. To get negotiations moving again, it was agreed that there would be a new set

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of trilateral talks that would immediately move into a larger multilateral framework that included Russia, China, North Korea, Japan and South Korea. Powell was at the forefront of this, bringing the other countries in and pushing the administration into a trap they could not retreat from.(DeYoung, 2006) The reason for these diplomatic gymnastics of two separate meetings in one place was that China wanted to pressure North Korea and the US to put them in the position to begin the process of negotiation.(Chinoy, 2008) As a practical point, the North Koreans eventually dropped the pretence for a trilateral talk, with Pritchard suggesting this gave them some sense of ownership of the process and helped to assure their own prestige that the other nations were listening to them.(Pritchard, 2007) In August 2003, the first round of 6 party talks was held focusing mainly on setting out the groundwork for future discussions. The result itself showed the difficulties of negotiation with the product being a Chair's statement rather than an official declaration from all the parties. Notably this was down to the more hawkish member's insistence that North Korea must achieve Complete, Verifiable and Irreversible Dismantlement (CVID) before any benefits could be given. Indeed, it was the US who were perceived by the other nations as the belligerent party with the Chinese host of the meeting stating: "The American policy [towards North Korea]-this is the main problem we are facing".(Chinoy, 2008, p. 188) Though Powell had pushed for flexibility, figures such as Yates, Bolton and Joseph cut down the ability of Kelly so much he was not allowed to sit down at the table with the North Koreans.(DeYoung, 2006) As an exercise in diplomacy it left a lot to be desired but for the hardliners the advantage was that it tied the Chinese to the issue without giving anything away.

Though China proposed a second round of talks in December, Cheney worked to stop these occurring.(Chinoy, 2008) As Kessler points out, when Cheney turned up to a

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North Korean foreign policy aides' meeting on December 12th, his first in months, he dominated the room.(Kessler, 2004) This was not only due to his force of personality but the perception that he was acting as the representative of Bush's instincts on the issue. By putting down hard lines that were highly at odds with the North Korean position, Cheney was able to put State in the impossible position of having to negotiate from a position where a deal could not be attained. This was best exemplified by a story from Chinoy on February 27th. (Chinoy, 2008) He writes about how Cheney was able to utilise his personal connection with Bush to push the President into going with his instincts and sent a new set of instructions to the negotiators that the US would be willing to torpedo the talks unless their demands were met, whilst Armitage and Powell were unaware till after the information had been delivered to the other members of the talks.(Kessler, 2004; Chinoy, 2008) Indeed, that they were at dinner at the time and not consulted exemplified the power the VP had. In little more than an evening, Cheney had managed to completely change the tone and direction of US policy. The delay was instrumental as it reduced the natural momentum for the talks and meant that all the parties had to reconsider their own approaches, isolating the US more and giving Pyongyang more leeway to act. Whilst another two rounds of negotiations would occur before 2005, the strict lines from the administration meant an impasse was met with both times resulting in a chair's statement rather than an agreement.

Although this was suggested as a failure by some, the very fact these talks were occurring reflected some important bureaucratic developments.(Buszynski, 2013) The unwillingness to give much in the talks and the belligerent US stance reflected an ongoing confidence from the more hawkish officials in the administration to ensure that they were still able to dominate the policy agenda. However, the high level of

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distraction and the lack of other options allowed Powell the flexibility to pursue a workaround policy that allowed some form of negotiation. Whilst little could be done to change the US negotiating position, it kept the process ticking over with both Armitage and Powell having accepted that they were not going to be part of the second term and hoping the rest of the foreign policy team would change around them. The Six-Party Talks would provide a baseline for those moving forward and give a productive forum to deal with the issues if the US chose to do so. As Rodman (who was still serving in Defense) argues “Within two years, however, U.S. diplomats were congratulating themselves that they had turned the Six-Party talks into a façade behind which all the serious business was conducted bilaterally with the North Koreans”. (Rodman, 2009, p. 255) Though significant, the lack of influence meant this was as far as engagement could go. It would require someone with a better connection to the President and a surge in State’s influence to move forward.

India

Whilst North Korea engagement began slowly, India showed that the Bush administration was willing act quickly when they believed a strategic opportunity existed. For the world’s largest democracy and a counterbalance to China, India certainly fitted those requirements. The period after 9/11 was critical to the development of the US-India relationship and showed the ability of the administration to be successful when advisers were largely in agreement with one another. Indeed, the administration’s India policy was perhaps its greatest success and has been underappreciated both by scholars and in contemporary accounts.(Tellis, 2005);Author interview with Tellis, 2020) As Green argues, this positive relationship did not have to be the case.(Green, 2019) Not only would a Gore Presidency have likely slowed the development of the relationship due to his strong identification with

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the non-proliferation framework that often acted as an impediment to US-India progress, but the Global War on Terror presented many different geostrategic challenges that could have fundamentally changed the decision-making within the Bush administration. This included decisions surrounding Pakistan, China and nuclear proliferation along with longer terms issues such as the war in Iraq and the increasing competitive relationship with Iran. However, due to a combination of bureaucratic factors on the US decision-making and effective Indian responsiveness to the opportunity, the administration was able to develop a new relationship by 2004.

The predisposition for a positive relationship from the pre 9/11 era was critical to the favourable outlook towards India in the post 9/11 world. The attacks changed the policy environment regarding India dramatically due to changing issue priorities.(van de Wetering, 2016) Knowing the attack came from Afghanistan, the administration would have to change the relationship to Pakistan in order to get the leverage needed for bases and support. As such, this jeopardised the India relationship due to the often 'hyphenated' relationship between the two subcontinent rivals. India, perhaps realising that they had to act quickly to respond to the attack if they wanted to keep the positive relationship, offered three military bases before any requests had been made (these were eventually turned down but illustrated their support.)(Lloyd and Nankivell, 2002) Hathaway notes that New Delhi was incredibly quick to offer far reaching intelligence and military cooperation which the US gratefully received.(Hathaway, 2002) The Indian experience with Islamic terrorism, reinforced by the December 13th 2001 attacks from Pakistan backed insurgents on the Indian Parliament, made it an incredibly useful ally and helped to establish themselves as a partner in the War on Terror. Though formed in early 2000 during the Clinton administration, the US-India Counter-terrorism Joint Working Group received

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increased high level interest and met regularly to help push forward this bilateral relationship.(Mariet and Souza, 2008) As India became more willing to show its support, the administration repeatedly offered assurances that the new Pakistan relationship would not negatively affect the blossoming partnership. In fact, in her memoir Rice made it clear that she believed that although Pakistan would be central to Afghanistan, India was the natural US ally.(Rice, 2011) This distinction between the short term needs and the longer grand strategy reflected an important continuation with the administration's policy agenda. Democracy would be central to American visions of the world once the security crisis had been stabilised. By the end of the first term, significant trust had been built that helped both sides see the benefits of a positive relationship.

Significantly, the military component of the relationship was also strengthened. As Sachar notes, military diplomacy has become more important in recent years and India and the US have become significant players in utilising its benefits both with other nations and each other.(Sachar, 2003) This rapprochement was only possible because the Pentagon favoured developing a new relationship with India. This included the three most senior Pentagon figures; Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz and Feith.(Pant, 2012) Not only did Defense have to actively plan most of the coordination between the two militaries and act as a central part of the intelligence sharing, the Pentagon's willingness to develop strong personal connections showed India that the Bush administration took the relationship seriously. Feith recalls that "As Indian officials plunged eagerly into strategic talks with us, one commented to me that America had unprecedented power in the world and that it was an enviable opportunity for any country to have the ear of the Pentagon". (Feith, 2008, p. 129) The receptiveness of high level engagement (with Rumsfeld, Feith and Admiral Dennis Blair all visiting

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India) helped to build trust that both nations would be drawing on to overcome the resistance in their respective domestic audiences.(Chaudhuri, 2014) Schaffer suggests that this shift was fundamental as it moved the Defense department from one of scepticism under Clinton to outright eagerness, removing a significant barrier to progress.(Schaffer, 2009) This cooperation was essential in creating some early landmark occasions including the Indian naval escort of a US cargoes through the Strait of Malacca, which ended long term opposition to U.S. Naval presence in the Indian Ocean. Strategically this was vital due to Chinese movements on the freedom of the seas and the potential chokehold of Middle Eastern oil which goes through the Strait every day. Both nations would have numerous joint exercises, which not only helped their respective military readiness but helped signal a deepening relationship to other Asian nations. With the NSC on board as well, Defense's willingness to engage with India and their concrete actions to create the relationship was a significant benefit in helping the internal bureaucratic balance move towards engagement with India.

Although the leadership of Defense and the NSC were both fully active in pushing a new India relationship, State was far more split, leading to a significant delay in the building of an effective relationship early in the administration. Foggy Bottom was the last remaining outpost in the administration of what Rice calls the "high priests and protectors of the Non-Proliferation Treaty...(who) would resist anything that looked like a change of U.S. policy in that area". (Rice, 2011, p. 129) Interestingly, Rodman suggests was not just Doves but Hawks like John Bolton (a person that no one could call a protector of the Non-Proliferation treaty) who believed that it would undermine the non-proliferation policy in regards to Iran.(Chaudhuri, 2006; Rodman, 2009) A senior administration official suggested that Bolton was specifically kept out

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of the policy area due to his tendency to leak and the likelihood of congressional resistance without a vigorous public campaign to push the relationship. (Author interview with Senior Administration Official, 2020) Though Congress was relatively uninvolved in this period, Bolton could have been a fire alarm for those concerned. Between him and his traditional foes who supported the NPT, an unorthodox alliance of convenience was formed. The fact that the debate was not between the departments but within State is an interesting contrast to many other policies that the administration was engaged on. This bureaucratic impediment meant that it would take a significant action from the administration to change the policy direction otherwise inertia would keep India largely in the cold to defend the NPT and other nuclear institutions. According to Tellis, though Powell and Armitage saw the value of India, they believed their primary task on the Indian subcontinent was to keep Pakistan in line and meant they were unwilling to take a high number of risks. (Author interview with Tellis, 2020) This difference of priorities did not mean they actively hindered India policy being made but reduced the active engagement as the relationship was largely a diplomatic one that required State's input.

However, below the top of State there was a significant enthusiasm for improving relations in the form of the activist ambassador Robert Blackwill. Critically, Blackwill had been a member of the Vulcan campaign group which meant that he had been regularly involved with Bush and the other significant advisers. Zakheim suggests that Blackwill was brought into the Vulcans very early due to his close relationship with Rice and was a critical voice, being entrusted with the foreign policy sections of the 2000 Republican convention speech. (Zakheim, 2011) This was important as the strong relationship with Rice ensured that the Ambassador had a voice in the White House. Without a strong tie to the White House, ambassadors can become peripheral to the

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foreign policy decision-making process and must go through their Secretary of State at best, if not numerous layers of State department bureaucracy. Also importantly, Blackwill had a strong relationship with the Pentagon leadership through Feith, which meant that he was able to take into consideration their policy preferences in his proposals and utilised their resources.(Feith, 2008)

The only significant players he lacked a close relationship with were, ironically, his own bosses with Powell having rejected him for a job in the previous Bush administrations NSC and both him and Armitage believing that he was a ‘Godzilla’ of a manager who would be trying to achieve higher bureaucratic power at their expense.(Chaudhuri, 2014) However, Blackwill was often able to work around this due to his close relationship with Haass, who was able to use his position to protect the Ambassador from the State hierarchy. (Author interview with Tellis, 2020;Chaudhuri, 2014) The inability of Secretary of State to deal with everything meant that Powell was willing to largely delegate the Indian relationship to Haass who in turn was willing to delegate it in turn largely to Blackwill and his deputy Tellis as long as it did not intrude on the Secretary’s Pakistan policy. Wilkerson argues this ability to prioritise and bifurcate his brain was essential for Powell to be able to delegate policies such as India to close subordinates. (Author interview with Wilkerson,2020) This suggests that the perception of the issue as one of secondary importance was beneficial for those who wanted a more engaged policy.

Significantly, the decision to put someone who had been closely associated with the Bush campaign, that had a high level of government experience and a direct line to the White House, signalled to New Delhi that the administration was serious about wanting a relationship.(Zakheim, 2011) This was important, as both India and the US had to be socialised in the short term to allow greater integration in the future. The

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willingness of Blackwill to push his relationships and the positioning of Tellis as someone trusted by both the Indian and US government was an impressive start. On the US side, Green credits Hadley with a push to socialise to the American establishment that India would be an administration priority. (Author interview with Green, 2020) He suggests that his legal manner meant he was able to meticulously attack opponents' arguments in a non-ideological way, often disarming the critics in both academia and Congress. He also widened the process to increase people ownership of the policy to ensure they were stakeholders in better relations. Often Hadley acted as a second point man for Rice, meeting with the Indian delegations as the NSA and others became more tied up with Iraq in the first term.(Mistry, 2006) Ensuring it remained with her Deputy meant that she was kept more closely in the loop and reaffirmed to India that they had not been forgotten. As Zoellick suggested he; “had a good relationship with Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld. They were both Midwesterners from Illinois. They had worked together on a commission created by Congress to review US trade policy late in the Clinton years and also had taken part in a RAND project that brought together Russian economic reformers and new business leaders with a small group of Americans. In 2004, Rumsfeld arranged for Zoellick to brief the Joint Chiefs and top civilian defense officials on US trade policy in the secure “tank” at the Pentagon. Zoellick prepared a PowerPoint that referenced the historical links between trade and security policies and then outlined the trade strategy and agenda in the Bush administration, including connections with US interests in various regions of the world.” (Author interview with Zoellick,2020)

Furthermore, Blackwill's experience at the NSC meant he understood how convoluted the agenda becomes in a crisis and that by putting the administration in the position that they were responding to issues compared to pushing the agenda, the

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Ambassador was able to shape it so that it would have required an active voice to go against them to create an impediment to action. (Author interview with Tellis, 2020) Powell's ambivalence, and the rest of the Principals' broad support meant that this was highly unlikely and helped to assure a position within the administration.

Perhaps the most telling example of the changed relationships status was the debate surrounding the involvement of India in Iraq. On the face of it, the fact that India did not support the conflict by sending troops suggests the limits of the relationship and a failure of the administration attempts to improve their defense relationship. However, this argument lacks the nuance that comes from understanding how far the relationship had dramatically changed by the invasion. As Chaudhuri argues, the very fact that the Indian government was seriously considering sending troops and were intent on negotiating with the US administration to protect the relationship showed the development of a significant connection. (Chaudhuri, 2014) Though she suggests there was some discontent caused by the decision, she quotes Rumsfeld as saying "Oh my goodness no, India-US relations were not damaged in any way because they did not send troops to Iraq". (Chaudhuri, 2014) The repeated interactions between US officials at the highest level, including Bush who met with them three times to ask for their support in the upcoming war, showed the increased importance placed on India outside of the tradition hyphenation with Pakistan that had consumed the US perception of New Delhi's role. (Hathaway, 2002)

As such, by the end of the first term the administration had made a significant step in creating a relationship. This was crystallised in 2004 with the development of the Next Steps in Strategic Partnership which committed both nations to working together on the significant issues of civilian nuclear energy, space, technology trading and missile defence. (Tellis, 2005) As Tellis highlights, this was a grand statement that India had

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been accepted by the Bush administration and provided the basis for more ambitious goals, though it remained a precarious breakthrough without follow on agreements.(Tellis, 2005) The fact that this was possible, so soon after the 1998 Indian nuclear tests, represents the significant change in the relationship between the two largest democratic countries. The impediments that remained for a bigger deal was a Secretary of State who was largely ambivalent, a small section of the State department who aimed to protect the Non-proliferation regime and a US Congress that had not moved significantly on and had a considerable amount of entrenched resistance to developments in the relationship. These were all significant and would have to wait till the second term before being dealt with in a new power dynamic.

China

As discussed in Chapter 4 the administration's foreign policy priority in the early months was how to create a new strategy that contained China. This involved changing the approach from the Clinton administration's designation of China as a 'strategic partner' to a 'strategic competitor'. Some argue that the 9/11 attacks meant that this idea had to be fundamentally reassessed, with the US moving to a war-footing and needing the support of China in a host of issues ranging from Iraq, Afghanistan, North Korea, trade and Taiwan. For example, Yates believed that the first thing the administration needed to do was make significant adjustments to the administration's policy, reassessing the priorities which meant that China would no longer be on the 'top tier' as it was not perceived as essential to keeping America safe. (Author interview with Yates,2020;Abramowitz and Bosworth, 2003; Pollack, 2003; Zhao, 2008; Swaine, 2011) Others suggest that the attacks merely reinforced the policy preferences that had formed before the attacks.(Qingguo, 2006; Roberts, 2014) Especially in Asia, which was on the periphery of the War on Terror, there was a sense

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that continuation would count as progress. As Bacevich argues, “The effect of September 11 was, if anything, to reinforce this preference for the status quo in Asia. In this regard as in so many others, the day said to have changed everything left much intact”.(Bacevich, 2003, p. 28) The difference between the perception of the 9/11 attacks reflects the importance of bureaucratic politics. It impacted not only the secondary analysis of the event but the decision-making itself as an adviser who believed there had been a fundamental change in the context would likely behave differently to those who believed there had not been.

Importantly, this suggests that the bureaucratic power balance and how factors such as prioritisation and perception were more important than the ideological underpinnings of the administration which acts in contrast to numerous arguments made about the Bush presidency.(Pan, 2006) Though those who favoured a harder line generally in foreign policy may have shared some perceptions about the importance of China and how to ensure American hegemony continued in the 21st century, other figures within the neoconservative movement disagreed. For example, Fukuyama argued that “Despite its appeal among U.S. conservatives, isolating Beijing is a nonstarter”.(Fukuyama, 2005) For him, neo-conservatism was based not only on ideas but on possibilities. What could be done with a power as significant as China that had not declared a confrontational policy as the Soviet Union had done in the Cold War? As Lynch argues, “Bush’s China policy rarely conformed to a neoconservative prescription because on the PRC especially, there is no obvious neocon prescription”.(Lynch, 2010, p. 132) This does not mean that Bush was not criticised from conservatives for what they perceived as weakness in dealing with Beijing, but this criticism was far from uniform.

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Indeed, an example of this criticism comes from Lynch and Singh who criticise the administration for failing to bring the issue of freedom in China to greater light. (Lynch and Singh, 2008) However, it does suggest that the presence of conservative figures in positions of power throughout the administration did not mean that they would follow a hard-line policy. Whilst figures such as Wolfowitz and Feith put more focus on human rights and Taiwan's freedom, others like Cheney did not. Though they were often working together and came out at similar positions over issues such as Iraq and North Korea, China policy showed that the likelihood of ideological consistency is based on issue salience as much as worldview. The idea that there was a dominant Asia policy that followed a neoconservative ideology is therefore an unconvincing argument. As such, Garrison's argument that this period between 2001 and 2004 should be viewed as a series of competitions between two competing blocks running separate processes should not be understood as the same groupings that had come to define other issues. (Garrison, 2005) The most notable difference was the lack of engagement from Cheney and a more active engagement from the President himself which significantly changed the administration's power balance.

The group who favoured a more constructive engagement with China led by Powell were able to ensure that their policy preference that drove a significant portion of the administration's China policy. Though figures such as the Pentagon and OVP were still involved, the change in the prioritization of policies that occurred after 9/11 meant that the balance of power between the groups shifted. Whilst it was evenly balanced in the first months of the administration as shown in the E-3 crisis, by 2004 Powell had solidly taken control of China policy on a day-to-day basis. Bush wanted his closest advisers focused on the first tier issues of the Global War on Terror compared to the normalcy of State on State relations that he was willing to delegate to

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Powell.(Abramowitz and Bosworth, 2003; Roberts, 2014) Furthermore, Green suggests that Powell's greater familiarity with Asia was essential to giving him an air of competence that other figures lacked. (Author interview with Green,2020) Bush had an 'understanding' with Powell about his management of the process and trusted him to keep it stable. (Author interview with Wilkerson,2020)

Though Bush may have placed more personal emphasis on personal and religious freedom which acted as significant impediments to the US Chinese relationship, he was willing to reassess the relationship from one of conflict to one of engagement. Paal's perception was that the President had learned that you could not throw the baby out with the bath water and faced the same limitations as previous presidents. (Author interview with Paal, 2020) As Roberts argues, if we follow the argument that Bush was often willing to delegate to advisers that he believed followed a similar philosophical or policy standpoint as we see in both North Korea, India and Iraq policy then the delegation of China policy should be assessed with the same logic and be judged as a reflection of Bush's personal preference. (Roberts, 2014) He also viewed it as less important than that of the War on Terror and wanted those he trusted more in a position to help him. If he had concerns, he and Rice could personally intervene to bring Powell back into line. As he allowed Powell to largely follow his own instincts, Bush must have broadly agreed with the policy direction.

Significantly, priorities are not set, and they shift with new information and as a response to crisis. This is important as it suggests that foreign policy should be viewed as an adaptive process compared with traditional grand strategy analysis. This means that the relative level of importance of a policy issue can change quickly. As Farnham notes, "the identity of those who must find a decision acceptable and the qualities that make it so may vary in specific contexts".(Farnham, 2004; Mitchell, 2010) The Bush

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administration's China policy was a clear example of this. Instead of China being foreign policy issue number one, as figures such as both Zoellick and Zakheim indicated, it sank down the list. (Author interview with Zakheim, 2019) Feith suggests "the calendar is a zero-sum game", meaning that the top level figures within the administration could only spend so much time on so many issues. (Feith, 2008) Mann quotes Cheney's other Deputy National Security Adviser, Aaron Friedberg as saying that Cheney "was not oblivious to the problem (China)... I think he just made a conscious decision that this was going to be a lower priority". (Mann, 2020, p. 315) As a decision-maker, the emotional and political capital you are willing to expend to change policy is dependent on how important you feel it is. As such acceptability of the policy direction should be viewed as the sum of how important the issue is relative to other policy priorities and how much investment of resources it would take to change. In the aftermath of 9/11, Cheney decided it was no longer something he could significantly invest in with issues such as Iraq, detainees and interrogation taking a significant portion of time. (Gellman, 2008)

This is not to say that there was unanimity within the top of the administration. Figures such as Rumsfeld were still concerned about Beijing's intentions and would occasionally throw their hat into the policy decision-making process over issues such as Taiwan. Though Graham argues that Rumsfeld still was a China sceptic, this became less and less pronounced as he focused on the two wars. (Graham, 2009) Similarly, Klare argues that although Rumsfeld consistently raised the spectre of China as a challenge to US supremacy publicly, this did not often reflect the engagement focused policy of the administration after 9/11 as he had been unable to convince those who were deciding on the policy to follow his approach. (Klare, 2004) A senior official suggests that Rumsfeld was removed from the process and was only

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able to cause difficulties on side issues such as military relations. (Author interview with senior administration official, 2020) For example, Rumsfeld put pressure on South Korea to change its strategic posture and allow the US military to use its bases for general Asian operations. This would have significantly antagonised China. However, Bush put a stop to the Pentagon's lobbying and was able to avoid conflict. By the end of 2003, the senior official suggested that Rumsfeld was reduced to more petty options such as banning the JCS from talking to the NSC about China. Compared to the Pentagon leadership's engagement with India and the active resistance regarding North Korea, the China policy represented an impotent resistance with little to show for Rumsfeld's efforts. With different priorities, Rumsfeld and the Pentagon put less investment into China policy which allowed Powell and others to become more in charge of the policy and a lack of willingness to invest the capital required to push a more abrasive strategy.

For Powell, the attacks did require as much reprioritisation as it did for Cheney and Rumsfeld. Partially this was due to his role as Secretary of State as still largely one of managing of relationships with states. The attacks had reaffirmed to Powell the importance of diplomacy and stability within the China relationship if the War on Terror was going to be successful. Swaine quotes an administration insider who argued that "Bush didn't want to hear any more from those who wanted to focus on China as the enemy. He wanted friends and coalitions, not distractions". (Swaine, 2011, p. 55) This was music to Powell's ears, believing that the administration needed to work with China on a host of issues from sea rights and trade to North Korea and Iraq. Any one of these issues could provide a serious distraction from the wars and hurt the US in their pursuit of security after the attacks. Though there were significant differences between Beijing and Washington, strategic necessity meant that there needed to be

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engagement rather than action. This was manifested in the 2002 NSS where Powell pushed for a statement on the support of Chinese diplomacy which Rice and Zelikow agreed to. (Wang, 2013) This provided a clear signal not only to China but to those who were pushing for a more hard-line policy. As the strategy states “The United States seeks a constructive relationship with a changing China”. (Bush, 2002, p. 27) Though listing numerous areas where the relationship still required improvement, the administration was clearly indicating a new tone and signalled that there had been a shift since the language of strategic competitor in the campaign. As a reflection of the situation, it showed a positive evolution for those who favoured engagement and helped reaffirm that Powell’s preferences had begun to be official policy within the administration.

Significantly, Bush himself took a significant personal role in the relationship by investing time and travelling to China. (Wang, 2013) This was particularly apparent for the Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation conference in 2001 which occurred a month after the attacks. As Yates highlights, the very fact that Bush went to the meeting was a significant step as the Secret Service had substantial concerns about the security of the President. (Author interview with Yates, 2020) Significantly, this was a symbolic statement that the administration would remain focused on Asia and would not let previous sticking points, such as Taiwan’s involvement in the talks, interfere with the administration’s decisions. (Garrison, 2005) Wanli argues that the decision, in the face of both public and internal dissent over whether the President should go to an economic conference so soon after the attack, allowed him and President Hu Jiang to exchange thoughts and solutions to the conflicts within the two nation’s foreign policies. (Wanli, 2009) Compared to Clinton, who did not visit China in his first term, Bush exchanged a reciprocal visit with Jiang in 2002 showing a willingness to

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personalise the relationship and give the Chinese a certain level of prestige.(Mann, 2000) Why was Bush willing to invest his time and effort in China when he was focusing his energies and those of his most senior advisers on the War on Terror? Firstly, he believed that improving relationships in East Asia was one of his priorities and it showed that the terrorists had not managed to distract the United States from its obligations and duties.(G. W. Bush, 2010) Secondly, as a believer in the importance of his own personal relationships, he wanted to ensure that he was keeping his ties to Asia strong in a time where the relationships would be drawn upon like never before. Finally, he needed China to help solve North Korea. Powell and Rice's push for the President to be personally involved in the China policy reflected their belief in its importance and the President's decision to invest showed his inclination to follow the policy prescription of his Secretary of State.

By the end of 2002-2003, Bush believed that North Korea was inherently a destabilising presence in Asia and had come round to the belief that China would be essential to resolving the tensions with Pyongyang.(G. W. Bush, 2010) Rice suggests this had come pretty quickly in 2002, however the North's behaviour had meant that there was little opportunity to engage with China beyond pressuring them to persuade Pyongyang to improve.(Rice, 2011) Post 9/11, China became more critical in dealing with issues that the US had to resolve with less investment at the top. It was critical for the administration that China should view North Korea as a test of their ability to be counted as a partner instead of foe.(Pritchard, 2007) As Christensen suggests, the PRC viewed the Three-Party talks and later the Six-Party talks as an opportunity to protect US-China relations from a potential North Korean crisis by giving both countries investment in a diplomatic process.(Christensen and Glosny. Micheal, 2003) To show their seriousness in the issue and the benefits of keeping Beijing on side to

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both Washington and Pyongyang, China shut down an oil pipeline to North Korea in 2003 in an attempt to coerce them to join multilateral talks.(Economy, 2003) However, this came with political trade-offs for both nations, with the administration being unable to push as hard on other issues for fear of linkage with the North Korea negotiations. For example, the administration did not push as hard as some expected on the outstanding issues of trade and copyright infringement, with Powell and Rice in particular being unwilling to jeopardise the administrations larger security priorities.(Wanli, 2009)

Beyond North Korea, the administration worked to develop a cooperative relationship on the issue of counterterrorism. As Economy argues, the Chinese were willing to leverage their support to gain assistance with Uighur separatists in the mostly Islamic Xinjiang region after deciding that the conflation of terrorism and other issues such as Tibet and Taiwan would lead to push back from the United States.(Economy, 2003) By engaging on Washington's greatest priority, China was able to ensure they were with the US rather than against them. The creation of the U.S.-China Counterterrorism Sub-Dialogue showed this high level engagement, meeting regularly and exchanging financial and tactical information.(Swaine, 2011) This represented a significant departure from the administration's unwillingness to engage in more than 'exceedingly limited' military exchanges after the E-3 crisis.(Kan, 2014) Largely a diplomatic exercise rather than a military one, it was pushed for by Powell who had to overcome significant reticence from Rumsfeld who believed that the US did not get as much out of the contacts as China did.(Shambaugh, 2002) This worked both ways, with the administration deciding to recognise the East Turkistan Islamic Movement as a terrorist organisation, with the sanctions and isolating effects that this had.(Swaine, 2011) As Wang highlights, the US was central to both designating the group as a

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terrorist organisation internally but also pushed for the UN to designate it as such within a year of 9/11.(Wang, 2003) The linkage between the group and Al Qaeda helped to assure the US that it was worth acting to cut access to finance for the group, even though there were concerns that this was just a fig leaf to cover the Chinese subjugation of religious and cultural resistance. Backlash at the time suggested the evidence was less convincing than the administration portrayed and represented a betrayal of Uighurs in the name of preserving the administration's relationship with China in the hopes of helping them push their Iraq agenda.(Eckholm, 2002) Though there has been little discussion of the internal decision around the designation, this reflected a movement away from the focus on human rights that existed before the attacks indicating the important role of Powell in taking a 'realist' approach to the relationship.

Beyond terrorism in China, Beijing made the significant decision to avoid working against the US terrorism related priorities in the Indo-Pacific region including the Indian subcontinent, central and Southeast Asia. As Castro argues "Beijing's most visible expression of support to a U.S. war on global terrorism has been its silence over America's growing military foothold in Central Asia". (Cruz and Castro, 2005) Though the Chinese did not commit troops to Afghanistan and occasionally banned the US from utilising Chinese airspace, Beijing resisted moving beyond vague criticism over the increased US military presence in the region and even contributed over \$150 million dollars to reconstruction efforts.(Taylor, 2005) Indeed, Paal suggests that this was a return to the engagement of the 80's where the Chinese had supported anti-Russian efforts in Afghanistan, showing that they could engage with the US on important issues as the 'China threat' slipped down the list of priorities. (Author interview with Paal, 2020) This applied to other nations such as the

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Philippines, Indonesia and Pakistan where China was willing to accept limited US engagement in exchange for promises of their short term nature. Although Swaine highlights that this was only of limited use in South East Asia, it made life easier for an administration that was willing to engage with a large range of global terrorism issues.(Swaine, 2011) As Taylor argues, the Chinese did not have to do this, with concerns of the US presence and its destabilising effect on allies such as Pakistan being prevalent in public and internal discussions of the decision.(Taylor, 2005) This had a profound effect on the internal power balance within the administration. Yang suggests that for those such as Rumsfeld and Cheney, the willingness of China to engage with the administration showed that there could be a productive relationship and undermined their speculation that Beijing would be happy to see the US suffer.(Yang, 2010) This helped push a positive relationship and assisted those like Powell who wanted to reduce the conflict within the two nations.(Qingguo, 2006)

Tied to this was Chinese engagement over Iraq. Though opposed to the conflict on both ideological and strategic grounds, the Chinese were willing to engage with the US over the issue and did not take up a leadership position against the conflict like erstwhile US allies such as France and Germany. (Mahbubani, 2005; Lusane, 2006) Taking a similar approach to India, Beijing realised that they could use the war as an opportunity to cement improving relationships between the two countries and was unwilling to jeopardise the gains that had occurred after 9/11 for a conflict that they would have been unable to stop. Criticism of issues such as human rights from the US remained muted as the administration courted Chinese support, with a particular wariness of the Chinese UN veto ensuring that they wanted to keep Beijing onside.(Kessler, 2003; Swaine, 2011) In turn, this resulted in an ambiguity in the Chinese stance over Iraq, with Rice suggesting that China's voting intention over the

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second UN resolution that would have explicitly endorsed an invasion was ambiguous compared to those of Russia, France and Germany. Although the administration was unwilling to admit a swap for the two issues there was the perception that Beijing thought of it this way. Hickey quotes Armitage as saying “China is operating under the mistaken assumption that the war against terrorism and Iraq will get them something in return on Taiwan, that the US will make concessions on Taiwan”. (Hickey, 2004, p. 474) Likewise, Roberts quotes Powell as saying after the decision to recognise the East Turkistan Islamic Movement “The timing, I’m sure, was associated with whatever we then gave the Chinese the next day, but I’m confident that we did the due diligence necessary”.(Roberts, 2014, p. 150) Though they believed that they had siloed the issues so that they did not impact American decision-making, how and when they used the concessions was fundamental to achieving US goals over Iraq. Whilst it would be wrong to suggest that a grand bargain had been made, the decision-making over China was impacted by the different priorities held by the administration’s key decision-makers and how they viewed the shifting goal of US China relations.

The final critical issue in US China relations that indicated the shifting power balance was Taiwan. As Hickey argues the administration’s improved relations with the PRC was a critical part in ensuring that the US-Taiwan relations hit a ‘glass ceiling’.(Hickey, 2004) This suggests a significant momentum shift, indicating the dramatic bureaucratic power balance change that had occurred. Though figures in Defense and the OVP were still intent on supporting Taiwan, Powell was willing to ensure that this stopped before independence. The increased partisanship of the Taiwanese cabinet and the increased activism of President Chen Shui-bian in attempting to ‘needle’ the Chinese meant that by 2002 Washington at large had

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decided he was more trouble than he was worth according to the US representative in Taiwan. (Author interview with Paal,2020) However, the Defense Department and OVP were still able to give competing signals that suggested to Taiwan that they challenged State's efforts. (Author interview with Wilkerson, 2020)As an issue of priority for many hawks, they often tried to push a more supportive US position. However, unlike with North Korea, the President was willing to clearly signal that the State Department followed his thinking in the 2003 meeting with the Chinese Premier. He stated "We oppose any unilateral decision by either China or Taiwan to change the status quo. And the comments and actions made by the leader of Taiwan indicate that he may be willing to make decisions unilaterally to change the status quo, which we oppose".(Peters and Woolley, 2003) This strengthened figures such as Powell's hand in saying they would not support a push for independence. Significantly, the power shift away from those who favoured a more radical stance on Taiwan meant that the pro-Taiwan independence movement found only limited traction within Washington and not with the key decision-makers Bush and Powell.

Overall, the Chinese policy in this period reinforced the proceeding trend that had developed where Powell was taking control of policy. On issues such as Taiwan, Iraq, Counter Terrorism and the US role in Afghanistan, the Sino-American relationship was greatly improved with Powell arguing in 2004 that "U.S. relations with China are the best they have been since President Richard Nixon first visited Beijing more than 30 years ago".(Powell, 2004) This was largely because of three factors. Firstly, the prioritisation of China changed in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks and Rumsfeld and Cheney no longer could be as invested. Though still involved in discussions and using their significant resources to communicate distinct messages in Taiwan, they were unable to take control of the decision-making process and were left largely side-lined.

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Secondly, Bush favoured an approach that was closer to that of his Secretary of State, and he was willing to delegate a large amount of trust to Powell. This was due to his focus on the issues of Afghanistan and Iraq at this time and reflected the importance of Bush and Rice in removing a block to power for advisers. Bush also focused on building a personal relationship rather than policy, knowing that it would be a significant asset further down the line. Finally, China was willing to leverage the attacks to develop the relationship. They did not create more difficulties in areas such as Iraq policy and central Asia which was essential to challenging the idea that China was viewing the relationship as a contest. This gave support to those like Powell who favoured a constructive and engagement focused relationship compared to those who were advocating a containment approach. This was perhaps Powell's most significant success in the administration and runs counter to the narratives that persist that he was an ineffectual Secretary of State.

Chapter 7 Re-election Realignments and the Restoration of the Realists.

Introduction

George W. Bush won re-election with a 281-256 margin, which though not a blowout offered what could be Bush took as a mandate for the next 4 year. The election had a significant foreign policy component with the 9/11 attacks still fresh in the minds of the American public and the Iraq war looming over the administration, something the campaign had weaponised to help persuade independent voters.(Rove, 2010) Yet the American people had chosen to continue on the same path rather than opt for the Democratic candidate, Senator John Kerry. In doing so, Bush finally was able to move beyond his father's shadow by achieving what he had never done- a second term. Having won what would be his final campaign, the President needed to decide what he wanted to accomplish and who he wanted to accomplish them with. Some decisions would be made for him as people left whilst others would come out of seemingly nowhere to shape how he wanted to respond. Unlike in 2001, there would be no formalised transitions, no time to reconceptualise his approach. Instead, they were straight back to work, managing the country as they had before, albeit with an electoral bounce in their step. This chapter will focus on the changing power balance in the final four years of the administration, arguing that there was a significant shift from the Cheney/Rumsfeld network to the one headed by Rice and Hadley. Though this was present from the very beginning of the second term, by the 2006 midterms this had turned into a practical dominance of the system and led to a relatively harmonious and effective policy making process.

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Institutional factors

The President decided before the election that he needed to change his foreign policy team. As he wrote in his autobiography, “(I) concluded that the animosity was so deeply embedded that the only solution was to change the entire national security team after the 2004 election”.(G. W. Bush, 2010, p. 90) Historian John Lewis Gaddis suggests that the 2nd term is a moment of opportunity for a president to rethink and provide course corrections, reaffirming the important parts of their agenda whilst shedding some of the weight.(Gaddis, 2005) The expectation of changes means that personnel can be removed without a significant scandal or the expenditure of political capital, allowing those who may be clashing with the changing agenda a graceful way out that harms neither the reputation of the President nor those being removed. Similarly, the President has more of an opportunity to plan for the transition as they are already in government and have a ready source of both experienced people who can be promoted and that the people within the administration will have developed stronger relationships with outside figures and have a clearer conception of what is needed.

Significantly the President is more experienced as well. As Light argues, the President is often empowered by what they call the “Cycle of increasing effectiveness”.(Light, 1999, p. 37) Put simply, the President learns on the job and becomes more effective at what they do. In terms of the appointments, Bush’s increased effectiveness gave him both the trust that he no longer needed the reputational gain given to him by an all-star set of foreign policy advisers but also the experience to know how he wanted the differing roles to work. He also hit the ground running to ensure that he utilised the opportunity given to him, with very little honeymoon given to a second term president. In his own words he said, “we have to move quickly because after that I will be

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quacking like a duck”.(Suskind, 2004) Quandt suggests that this is perhaps the best time for the President to act on foreign policy as he is both at his most effective, has a renewed electoral mandate and also has the experience and clarity of intent that first term presidents often lack.(Quandt, 1986) For Rothkopf, “the second term of the Bush administration suggests that from the President on down, there was an awareness that mistakes had been made and that midcourse corrections were called for- some quite significant in their consequences”.(Rothkopf, 2014, p. 24) As such, Bush wanted a team that was both able and willing to act quickly. The on-the-job training of the first term would allow him to slip people into place, people who would have seen the previous incumbents of the office and taken on an apprenticeship of sorts to learn how to be effective. Although Dunn argues that there is what they call ‘Personnel depletion’ where the Presidents first choice leaves or are burned out by the second term, very few Bush favourites left, allowing him to consolidate his policy control.(Dunn, 2006) The previous experience of figures such as Cheney and Rice was helpful in this regard and ensured the second transition was effectively handled.

In this regard, it was important that Powell had decided early in 2003 that he would not serve in a second term, believing that he was no longer able to significantly control policy and that he was spending too much time in conflict with the Pentagon. This feeling was overwhelming, with Wilkerson suggesting that Powell was at the end of a four year term and so disillusioned with the policy process that he went “MIA” in the final weeks. (Author interview with Wilkerson, 2020) Reinforced by the treatment regarding the UN, Powell no longer wanted to be involved and felt betrayed.(DeYoung, 2006) Although there is a natural period of burnout towards the start of the second term, with a team usually having gone through two tiring presidential elections and a term’s worth of governing, the relative stability of the Bush

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first term (with the team being the same as it was in 2001) exacerbating this. The schedule of early starts, late nights and seven-day weeks should not be discounted in explaining why second term policy teams are often dramatically different. Not only did figures at the top begin to tire, those underneath were either looking to move up or move on. As Yates argued, by the end of 2004 a lot of the Vice President's team had begun to move onto private sector work, believing there would be less opportunity for policy innovation as the direction of the administration had become determined. (Author interview with Yates, 2020) Largely, those who were now moving up into the second and third level policy positions were either those who were promoted or those who had been put in from the next generation. These figures were often more hopeful about the future and were part of Rice's generation, something Zelikow suggests was critical in having a more hopeful and less security focused approach. (Author interview with Zelikow, 2020)

The creation of a gap at the top of State offered an opportunity. Significantly, the Secretary post was a critical signalling opportunity to other nations and those inside the administration about future priorities. Bush wanted to signal one main message. The administration would be raising the importance and strategic necessity of State and in so doing re-establish the importance of diplomacy in the American toolbox. Though Marby suggests that the promotion within created some discontent both in Washington and allied capitals, fearing it signalled increased centralisation and unilateralism, the strong personal connections that Rice had created as NSA helped sell the appointment. (Marby, 2007b) As Rice recalls in her memoir, she herself had concerns about the job having seen the Powell's struggle to maintain control within the administration and did not want to be put in the same position. She said she would only take the job on the assumption that her taking the role "would also mean

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reaffirming the primacy of the Secretary of State as the principal agent of the development and execution” of the foreign policy of the US.(Rice, 2011, p. 292) On issues such as Palestine, Rice wanted to have more control and be able to do something more than manage crises as she had done in the NSC. As Chinoy argues, the very appointment of Rice was a sign that possibilities that were closed off under Powell were now wide open.(Chinoy, 2008)

Internal Factors

Though Powell had perhaps the most international prestige of anyone entering the administration, significantly more than the President, his influence had waned over critical issues and the impression that he was on the outside weakened the perception that the administration trusted Foggy Bottom. As Kessler argues, this was something Rice planned to put right by bringing State back into the fold.(Kessler, 2007) Though this was significant in terms of policy process, with State no longer acting as an opposition but as a key stakeholder, it also increased the power of the Secretary of State as it signalled that the messages sent to Foggy Bottom would now get to the White House instead of becoming bogged down in Powell’s office. This perception of closeness to the President was critical in raising the centrality of the State Department and restoring trust. Like Baker before her, Rice was strongly associated with the President and was viewed as an extension of him. (Author interview with Zoellick, 2020) Without this perception, however qualified and successful she may have been would often have not been enough to fight off the media narratives surrounding a ‘State Department in revolt’. Though she may have been judged as outmatched in the first term by some, having her own department was seen as an opportunity to right this balance.(Daalder and Destler, 2009; Mann, 2020)

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Significantly, Rice was not the only person who moved up. Her close allies were moved into positions of strength. The most prominent of these figures was the promotion of Hadley to NSA. Though he had a strong relationship with the other members of the administration and was more conservative than Rice, their four years joint service at the NSC had created one of the strongest relationships between an NSA and Secretary of State since Kissinger had held both roles in the Nixon administration. Hadley suited the role well, acting as a professional foreign policy organiser focusing on managing the process more than pushing an ideological agenda. (Author interview with Zelikow, 2020) Indeed, Rothkopf quotes Rice as saying “He was the right personality for it. And I think I was the right personality to Secretary of State. I always laughingly say, we finally go into the right positions”.(Rothkopf, 2014, p. 47) Significantly, Hadley was less reputationally focused than Rice and was willing to let her take centre stage both internally and externally. Acting as the ‘power behind the throne’ would be perhaps pushing their relationship too far but Hadley has often not received the credit he deserved for changing the momentum of the Bush administration. In his own words, the NSA role was the best one in government for a figure like him as “you spend a higher proportion of your time on policy substance than any other national security principal – being freed of the ceremonial duties that often serve to encumber your cabinet secretary colleagues”.(Hadley, 2016) On policies ranging from India to Iran to Iraq, he had a significant impact in both the direction and implementation of policy.

Part of his success was due to his interpretation of the role of NSA. For example, he often acted as the honest broker to bring the Principals into a closer relationship with the President rather than ensuring his own position by putting himself between them. This avoidance of the ‘pleasing the teacher’ mentality, where the adviser focuses on

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improving their relationship with the President at the expense of their relationship with others, was critical for allowing both a non-competitive relationship with the other Principals and a stronger relationship for the President and other members of the team. (Rothkopf, 2014; Hadley, 2016) He also attempted to deescalate tensions between the Principals, a necessity after the conflict of the first term. (Brands and Feaver, 2017) For example, he encouraged the Secretaries of State, Defense, Treasury, VP, Chief Of Staff, Director of National Intelligence and CIA director to come to a 'chips and salsa' meeting every Tuesday which helped to ensure they were on the same page and had a chance to air grievances with each other before it escalated to the President's involvement. Similarly, when bringing someone new into the administration, such as Treasury Secretary Hank Paulson, he was helpful in guiding people through the process and ensuring they built into the cooperative nature of his NSC. (Paulson, 2014) Though small actions, in keeping with Hadley's subtle personality, the creating of a more cooperative working atmosphere was significant in changing the direction of the policy process from one of rancour to one of civil respect. Indeed, his success in the role led to Rodman saying that "From my vantage point, the iconic figure in the Bush administration was not Dick Cheney, the Darth Vader Caricature, but Stephen Hadley, the pursuer of bureaucratic consensus". (Rodman, 2009, p. 271) As a representation of his influence, this clearly showed that among those involved within the administration knew his worth and his power.

This did not mean that there were not significant policy differences within the administration on a variety of issues. Even though Rice and Hadley were relatively close, Hadley was significantly more conservative in his approach and had been characterised in the beginning as closer to Cheney ideologically speaking (having worked under the VP and Wolfowitz in the Bush Senior administration). (Harding,

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2004) Having all the principal figures feeling that they had a significant stake in the position and the feeling that it was not tilted was critical to early narratives of harmony.(Sinha Palit, 2008) However, the selection of Rice and Hadley created a different power balance than had previously existed. Though Hadley had a strong relationship with the VP, he was far personally closer to Rice. Like the connection between the OVP and the NSC in the first term, in the second State and the NSC often coordinated far more closely than the other departments. Though this did not last, with the perception that by 2006 Rice had managed to manipulate the process to tilt far more towards the State Department, it was important for the administration to change the narrative from one of conflict to harmony.

Indeed, this went so far as for Rice and Hadley to agree to coordinate staff appointments to reinforce the strong links between themselves and the institutions they represented.(Daalder and Destler, 2009) This is not to say Hadley ignored Rumsfeld and Cheney when making decisions. His appointment of JD Crouch, who had served at Defense before becoming Ambassador to Romania was well received by Rumsfeld who believed it would help make the process more efficient.(Rumsfeld, 2011, p. 631) This was critical in giving Hadley credibility within more hard-line circles that their voices were being heard in critical spaces such as the Deputies Committee. However, if Cheney had managed to 'win' the personnel battles in the transition of the first term, it was clear that Rice had managed to utilise her connection with both Bush and Hadley to stack the foreign policy bureaucracy with 'fellow travellers'. Significantly, this would help ensure that policy coordination was possible on a whole range of issues, not least Iraq where by September 2006 there had been a 'merging' of the NSC and State's Iraq policy decision-making in anticipation of larger interagency coordination.(Dueck, 2014) This departmental cooperation was supported by strong

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personal connections, with Baker suggesting that Hadley utilised Rice to push ideas into the process to ensure he did not undermine his reputation as a honest broker.(Baker, 2006) It allowed him to put it into what he called “the market place of ideas” whilst still ensuring that it had a powerful member of the team pushing it forward. These changes in the rules and relationships between the NSC and Foggy Bottom were critical in creating a new and more positive interagency dynamic.

Beyond Hadley, other members of the administration who had a close relationship to Rice were moved into positions more central than they previously enjoyed, including Zoellick and Zelikow. Zoellick had not been part of the foreign policy battles in the first term. The President and Vice President were comfortable with him. He got along with the principals in all the departments, knew the State Department well from his time with Secretary Baker under the first President Bush, had a strong international network all around the world, and had support in Congress. But Zoellick was reluctant to leave the trade post, which was cabinet-rank, and in which he had considerable freedom to set the agenda and make decisions, to become a deputy. When he first heard of Rice’s suggestion while flying to African countries to build support for the global trade negotiations, he said to his staff, “It’s better to rule in hell than serve in heaven—and the State Department isn’t heaven!”. Nevertheless, both the President and Vice President urged him to make the shift, and he felt he should go where the President thought he was most needed. Condi Rice also suggested that the two of them could divide up activities, a gracious idea but also hard to put into practice because there can only be one Secretary of State. (Author interview with Zoellick, 2020) Similarly, the choice of Zelikow as State Department Counsellor allowed her to utilise someone who had been heavily involved in both developing her own thinking as well as literally writing the book on foreign policy decision-making processes.(Rice, 2011)

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Even those who were more hawkish in their approaches, such as Robert Joseph who moved to Bolton's previous position as Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security, spoke of the mutual respect that they had with Rice and the strong connection they had. (Author interview with Joseph, 2019) Compared to the experience that Powell had with Bolton being moved into a senior leadership position, Rice had far more unity beneath her.

The 2006 midterms produced a seismic shift in the power of the administration with the resulting Congressional defeat largely perceived as a public rebuke of the President's agenda. This provided the final change in the administration's power balance, with changes made on the foreign policy team cementing the rise of the administration's new generation of more moderate figures. The day after the midterm election, the President had decided that the ever-present Defense Secretary Rumsfeld would leave the administration. Perhaps the most divisive of all the senior administration figures, albeit closely followed by Cheney, Rumsfeld's departure represented the final victory for Rice in her attempt to assert control over the administration. Cheney had lost his final significant ally among the principal advisers and the environment would favour the various policies that Cheney had mostly managed to squash in the first term.

So why was Rumsfeld removed? He had offered his resignation twice before, once in the aftermath of the Abu Ghraib scandal and in early 2005, but Bush had always felt that the difficulties in changing a Defense Secretary in the middle of two wars and numerous foreign policy crisis were too significant to accept. (G. W. Bush, 2010) However, Herspring notes that ever since the election there had been two significant forces that had been pressing for Rumsfeld's removal. (Herspring, 2008) Firstly, the top military generals had begun to react to the negative relationship between

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themselves and Rumsfeld, leaking to the press the problems within the military strategy and the Pentagon. Though condemning the so called 'general revolt', where a group of retired army and air force military officers condemned Rumsfeld in early 2005, Owens showed the impact that the condemnation had across the administration and represented a significant challenge to the Defense Secretary .(Owens, 2006) Although the revolt created an immediate protective reaction from Bush, who did not want to feel that he been forced into the change and wanted to reassert civilian control of the administration, it reinforced some doubts about Rumsfeld's leadership.(Ricks, 2009) For Cockburn, the Secretary was now 'in play' and his position which had never seriously been in jeopardy was a matter of when not if he would go.(Cockburn, 2007) Interestingly, Rodman argues that Rumsfeld was (in contrast to conventional opinion) too deferential to the generals and that this cost him in the long run.(Rodman, 2009) Although he may have been repeatedly criticised from those who no longer served, he remained largely supported by those internally. Similarly, Baker argues that Rumsfeld was unwilling to overrule the generals in the field on issues such as the surge in the first two years of the second term.(Baker, 2013) Partially, this was due to the fact that he had appointed most of the significant generals in the field by the 2005 stage and they were all converts to the transformation agenda that had been perhaps his personal priority since the beginning of the administration.(Herspring, 2008) Significantly, Dyson suggests that this unwillingness was reinforced by two destructive personality traits.(Dyson, 2009, 2015) The first was the 'rubber glove' tendency where Rumsfeld was unwilling to take direct ownership and responsibility over a policy area. This was not necessarily a negative, with numerous secretaries being hurt by their tendency to micromanage. However, the second problem with Rumsfeld was that he was unwilling to accept any infringement on his bureaucratic turf. As Herspring notes, his resistance

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to the increased role of State led to him becoming a weight around the administration's neck. (Herspring, 2008) A senior official argued that Rumsfeld was inherently a force for inertia in the second term, passively resisting the surge in a way that heavily restricted the President's ability to engage without removing him from office. (Author interview with Senior Administration official, 2020) Even though this had been effective in reducing the ability of the administration to move in the first two years of the term, by the second half of the term Bush had become jaded with the continuous problems with the leadership of the Defense department.

Rumsfeld's problems were not just with the military. Significantly, his previous allies within the neo-conservative movement and those who had begun competing with Rumsfeld in the previous years had begun to ratchet up the pressure internally to remove him. This came from figures as varied as Card and Gerson but perhaps the most significant figure within the administration was the pushing from new Chief of Staff Josh Bolton. (Gerson, 2007) Though Card had come round to replacing Rumsfeld by the end of his tenure, Bolton was far more enthusiastic and had persuaded Bush that there needed to be a change at Defence. (Baker, 2013, p. 452) Likewise, Rice had been clear at the start of her tenure that she did not "intend to spend my energy sparring with Don" and the President knew her position on wanting a change. (Rice, 2011) Though not actively pushing for a change, believing it would be unseemly for Secretaries to be actively lobbying for their colleagues departure, the spectre of his closest advisers within the administration being against his Secretary no doubt played on the mind of Bush. However, perhaps the more significant shift was within Hadley. As Hadley discusses in an interview with the Miller Oral history project, Rumsfeld eventually came around to a new strategy for Iraq but for a significant period between 2004 and 2006 he had been a significant obstacle in creating the surge policy. By the

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beginning of the autumn of 2006, Hadley had begun to come round to the need to remove Rumsfeld. Together, these figures had enough influence to convince Bush to appoint a new Defense Secretary.

Significantly, Cheney was not a major part of this decision. In fact, Cheney was not involved in these discussions at all. The rise and fall of Rumsfeld mirrored Cheney's waning influence. Not only had the VP been critical in Rumsfeld being appointed to his position, he had repeatedly intervened in the previous years to reassure the President of his capabilities and avert any serious discussion of his removal.(Cheney, 2011, p. 442) The fact that he was not actively consulted was surprise enough for those who believed that Cheney was the most significant player within the administration. As Mann argues, the process surrounding the decision-making illustrated that the President no longer relied on his judgement and connections as he had in the earlier years.(Mann, 2020) In his own words, Cheney wrote "This time the President didn't wait around after he told me he had made up his mind. He turned and was out the door fast. He knew that I'd be opposed, and I suspect he didn't want to hear the arguments he knew I'd make".(Cheney, 2011, p. 443) Rumsfeld represented a radical departure from the previous power balance that showed Cheney had lost a significant amount of influence.

Not only was Cheney not engaged on the issue of Rumsfeld's departure, he also was told after the decision had been made that Robert Gates would become Defense Secretary. As someone who had worked with the NSC and CIA he was well known to many in the administration and perceived himself as having a positive relationship with Cheney.(Gates, 2014) However, he had a significantly stronger bond with Rice and Hadley than the VP and was more of a protégé of Brent Scowcroft. Rice's reaction to his appointment indicated her position, suggesting that she "could barely contain

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her joy”.(Rice, 2011, p. 719) Significantly, Gates also was largely in line with Hadley on a lot of issues, including the surge, and was able to protect that relationship with the NSA.(Hadley *et al.*, 2011; Gates, Nelson and Engel, 2013; Smith, 2016) Though Cheney had not necessarily been opposed to the appointment, he had not been actively involved in selecting the new position. The fact that this was over a major position, perhaps the 4th most important after the Secretary of State, Treasury and VP himself, increased the psychological and bureaucratic blow of not being consulted. As Baker argues “there was probably no more important decision in his presidency that Bush had not shared with his Vice President”.(Baker, 2013, p. 457) As someone who had dominated the transition and been able to stack the administration with like-minded figures, this was a significant blow to Cheney’s power base and dramatically reduced his ability to have multiple avenues to convince the President and be involved with the decision-making.

Presidential Factors

Perhaps the biggest change in the administration between the two terms was the change in the President himself. As previously mentioned, presidents often grow into the roles with experience and become better adapted at making the decisions and controlling their administration’s in the second term.(Saunders, 2017) For a president who had run the foreign policy part of his campaign in 2000 by pointing to the fact he would have an ‘A-team’ of advisers, by 2004 he had become far more confident in his own abilities. This impacted his relationship with Cheney. As Mann argues, the departure of Powell offered an opportunity to Cheney who had now managed to outlive his primary rival for supremacy within the NSC principals.(Mann, 2015, 2020) However, instead it became a moment of clarity for the President who decided that

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after 4 years, he was ready to reassess and re-establish himself in the policy process. In his inaugural address he set out his new foreign policy vision, creating a “Freedom Agenda”. This was the fourth prong of the security strategy he believed had started with 9/11 and would define the next four years.(G. W. Bush, 2010) He stated “The survival of liberty in our land increasingly depends on the success of liberty in other lands. The best hope for peace in our world is the expansion of freedom in all the world”.(Bush, 2005) Though this might have been music to neoconservatives’ ears, for Cheney it sacrificed ‘security’ for abstract principles. As Gelb argues, Cheney “is a hard-headed conservative pragmatist whose history would suggest great scepticism about policies designed to transform the world”.(Gelb, 2005, p. 9) Likewise, Baker quotes Chief of Staff Card as being struck by the idealism of the address, suggesting that “this was not a speech that Cheney would give”.(Baker, 2013, p. 373) Though a key adviser can influence policy, when the President sets out a policy agenda they are forced to use that as the beginning point in any discussion.

This suggests that even at the start of the second term, the Vice President had lost a little ground. Though he had not always been the most active member when it came to writing speeches and public facing documents, as seen in the first term during the creation of the 2002 NSS, he had often chipped in when it counted. Yet Baker suggests this time the Vice President’s lack of engagement resulted in him being sidelined.(Baker, 2013) Like the NSS, the Freedom Agenda speech was critical in situating the administration as approaching security in a new way. Significantly, the fact Bush felt comfortable by this stage to not consult heavily with his VP was a significant step in his own development. Smith suggests that this was due to a subtle change in conception of how the President viewed his VP’s role. Instead of being a formulator of policy, as he had been in the hectic period after 9/11, Cheney would be an

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implementer who could go through the minefields of both the bureaucracy and Congress. (Smith, 2016) This is not to say that the two were no longer close. On the contrary, they still had their weekly lunches and Cheney was still in the room where all discussions occurred and contributed on issues from intelligence to energy policy. (Greenstein, 2016) He still had strong institutional power and the bureaucratic skills that had made him so successful previously. However, Cheney was no longer the crutch that he had previously been to a President who had come into his own.

External factors

Two external factors were critical to the first period after the 2004 election. Firstly, the large electoral margin (remaining the only time a Republican has won the popular vote in the 21st century and a significant Electoral College majority) gave the President increased confidence. As Bush himself wrote, he had political capital and he now wanted to spend it. (G. W. Bush, 2010) Though he had not governed like a President who had won a razor slim election in the first term, the election win was a revitalising moment that proved to a deeply religious president that he belonged in office. As Kreft argues, it was likely Bush's management of 9/11 and his strong foreign policy credentials that had carried him over the line (the difficulties within Iraq having not yet become apparent). (Kreft, 2005) Though elections are rarely decided on foreign policy, the 2004 election proved to be the exception to the rule with Iraq and Afghanistan high in the public consciousness during the election season. (Klinkner, 2006) As the administration's face, he had often been far more idealistic in how he talked about policy than the rest of his team and he believed that the American people had responded to this vision and wanted him to continue towards a more democratic world. This belief acted in contrast to the negative prophecies from scholars such as Klarevas who saw a return to a 'realist' approach and a vision closer to Cheney's world

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view as the most likely outcome.(Klarevas, 2005) Bush's foreign policy idealism helped him win the election and he would not be like his father who lacked "the vision thing".(Bush, 2014)

Beyond Bush's success, Republicans took both Houses of Congress. As the first President to increase his party's congressional representation in a presidential re-election year since FDR, Bush had significant coattails. Instead of campaigning on traditional soft issues, the President was critical in ensuring that his national security advantage translated to the entirety of the party.(Milkis and Rhodes, 2007) Though Congress does not necessarily vote along partisan lines, the relative unity caused by the resurgent election was critical in the aftermath of the election. Deflating the Democrats who believed they would not only take over the Presidency but also Congress meant that their opposition to his foreign policy would be limited for 2004 and 2005. The retainment of Congress gave him flexibility in appointments such as Bolton to the UN. Although he was still only a recess appointment, unable to be confirmed even in a Republican controlled Senate, there was a sense of confidence and reassurance that would not be present two years later after the loss of the Congressional midterms.(Bolton, 2007) As such, this allowed the administration to push forward with a bigger agenda than would have been possible if the President had not gained public support for his foreign policy.

The other significant external factor between 2004-2006 was the growing domestic opposition to the Iraq War. Although this resistance was not enough for the administration to lose the election, it remained a counterbalancing force that heavily limited both the ability and the willingness to engage in certain policies. As Sanger argues, the choice to invade (along with the manner that choice was carried out) in the first term heavily limited the ability of the administration to engage with other issues

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as they would without the massive resource and troops being already committed to two conflicts.(Sanger, 2007) Though it had had a positive effect in areas such as Libya's nuclear disarmament in the initial phase, by the time the second term had begun in 2005 the perception around the world was that the United States had over extended itself. (Author interview with Joseph, 2020) From issues ranging from North Korea to Iran, no credible threat of coercive action existed. This emboldened enemies around the world and decreased the incentives for engagement with the US on their own terms. The Iraq issue also created a sense of distrust from the American public which began the process of congressional resistance towards the midterms, with figures in both parties viewing distance with the President as essential. The Iraq Study Group, a bipartisan Congressional report which roundly criticised the Bush administration's approach, was a clear example of the challenge to the Bush administration's control over the narrative surrounding Iraq and resulted in a limit to the flexibility the administration had to respond to world events.(Baker and Et al., 2006) Overall, the war in Iraq limited the range of options available to the administration in a way that favoured the more diplomatically inclined Rice and Hadley network.

Perhaps as importantly, it took a significant amount of time and energy from the foreign principals which could not be spent on other issues. This included the President, who was viewed as the essential communicator to the public and therefore had to be highly engaged. In positions where time is perhaps the biggest commodity, it meant that the decision-making innovation available to figures such as Hadley, Rumsfeld and Bush were incredibly limited. Bark and Bell, two education scholars, suggest that institutional capacity is likely to impact issue prioritization and that the personality of the figures and their perception of the environment is likely to have an

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effect on which issues are raised to the top of the agenda.(Addison, 2009; Bark and Bell, 2019) Though this is focused on the higher education sector, the findings are relevant to the study of US foreign policy as the President is under similar constraints. When the public is focused on a political issue, the salience provides broader restrictions on the flexibility of the President to choose their own priorities. This meant Bush, and Hadley as an extension of the White House, were forced to focus on Iraq to the detriment of their involvement in other Asia policy. Likewise, the need to manage an ongoing war that was at the forefront of US foreign policy meant that Rumsfeld no longer had the ability to be as involved in the decision-making on issues ranging from China and North Korea. Furthermore, the ownership of the issues from the first term, especially for Bush and Rumsfeld, meant they had added incentive to follow the policy through as a failure to succeed would have been a challenge to their wider policy vision. Although it would be wrong to say that these figures were exclusively focused on Iraq, it meant that the policy innovation that would have been possible had Iraq not been an all-encompassing issue was unavailable to these figures.

The one exception to this was Rice, who made it clear that she wanted only limited involvement in Iraq. Kessler argues that Rice had managed to avoid a strong association with the war in the first term, pointing to the fact that over 50% believed that she had little to no responsibility for the tactical fiasco.(Kessler, 2007) Though this ignored the close role she played in the conflict as both a facilitator and confidante of the President, it was part of a clear attempt from the new Secretary to position herself as far away from the conflict as possible. Indeed, Baker quotes a Rice adviser as believing that her approach was to basically say she was sorry for Iraq, and that the administration would not be making that mistake again.(Baker, 2013) As Secretary, she could not ignore the issue completely, but her ability to delegate the problem to

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high quality deputies such as Zoellick and later Zelikow, and the increasing control of the policy from the White House meant that she was able to focus on other issues. (Rothkopf, 2014) With the administration being criticised for being too military focused, Rice's position as the primary diplomat, raised her public profile even higher. Unlike Powell who had believed that it was essential to remain in Washington, Rice was the most travelled Secretary to date in an attempt to show that the State department was at work and being effective. (Rice, 2011) Significantly, Rice was also able to gain influence both internally and externally by situating herself as separate from the Iraq debacle. Zelikow believes that this was critical, suggesting that those who had been involved in pushing the war were "badly bruised and had lost a lot of credibility". (Author interview with Zelikow, 2020) In public, figures such as Wolfowitz, Cheney and Rumsfeld were put on the defensive and the President began to hesitate about relying on their policies as he had before. As such, Iraq helped to both distract her competition for bureaucratic control whilst also providing a gap to exploit in the needs and public perception of how the administration should conduct American foreign policy.

The importance of Iraq increased in the period after the 2006 midterm. Though the decisions around the surge had been ongoing for a significant period, they had not filtered out into the public before the election. The expectation, fuelled by the Iraq Study Group Report and the new approach that had been pioneered by Rice, was that Iraq would be wound down. However, Bush (with the help of Hadley who had run the internal planning around what to do in Iraq) had decided that instead of removing troops he would be sending around 20,000 more. As Bush himself writes, "the reaction was swift and one-sided". (G. W. Bush, 2010, p. 378) In the aftermath of an election that was perceived as a severe rebuke over foreign policy, the audacity of the move

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was overwhelmingly negative and received condemnation from both Democrats and Republicans. However, significantly Ricks argues that this resistance was severely split and both the Democrats and those Republicans who disapproved of the policy were not willing to do the one thing that could have stopped the surge in its track; withhold the funds necessary to fight the war.(Ricks, 2009) As Caulfield argues, though Congress does have significant powers in foreign affairs, over Iraq they were unable to utilise the public anger and general distaste with the war into concrete actions due to the inability to convince a supermajority to overturn the presidential veto. (Caulfield, 2011)

The administration also had to decide how to divide up their resources in managing the crisis. As Zelikow argues, by the time that Gates had come in “Of course their (those who favoured a more hard-line agenda) political capital was almost all gone by then, but the atmosphere was much improved, and people felt freer to do straight analysis and to say that things weren’t working”. (Author interview with Zelikow, 2020; Zelikow and Riley, 2010) For Bush, Gates and Hadley the war would become even more consuming than it had been in the previous two years, even as the internal process surrounding the war became far more harmonious. A lot of the other policy preferences were pushed into the background, limiting the political capital the President had to spend on other foreign policy successes. Likewise, Gates was significantly less able to have a far-reaching agenda due to the prominence of Iraq, and to a lesser extent Afghanistan. In his own words he believed that his “tenure as Defense Secretary would be almost entirely judged by what happened there”.(Gates, 2014, p. 25) Significantly, the willingness to trust both Rice and Hadley with the remainder of the agenda was essential to this relationship working effectively and helped reduce the conflict that is chronic in the Defense/State bureaucratic

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environment.(Glain, 2011) Between this and the smoothing over of the bad feelings both inside the Pentagon and outside caused by Rumsfeld's tenure, Gates would only have a limited ability to shape a global agenda.

This investment from Bush, Hadley and Gates was critical to the relative success of the surge. (Packer, 2005; Robinson, 2008; Ricks, 2009) However, the issue became all-encompassing and took a significant amount of time from the administration's ability to deal with other things. On one hand, the President was given a relatively free hand to run the war as he saw fit, but every step of the way brought criticism and required extensive justification. The Democrats control of Congress resulted in a far greater need to be responsive to hearing requests and to have a more inclusive process. In all, this meant that not only was there a significant increase in issue management time but also an increased communication burden that required a high level of energy, time and resources. The limited political capital available was spent slowing the decline of public opinion. The administration's decision to prioritise the war in Iraq meant that they were often on the back foot on other issues. The perception of foreign policy mismanagement over Iraq often blinded both academics commenting on the remainder of the administration's foreign policy and created an atmosphere of condemnation that hurt the President's ability to move beyond the box. This 'tainted by association' meant that more hard-line policies were not possible but could be politically so toxic that they might undermine the conflict in Iraq. The President's unwillingness to risk this reduced the available options to him on issues from North Korea, China, Russia and Iran. Even without these more political considerations, the 20,000 extra troops required provided a significant investment from the army in terms of manpower and budget, resulting in a further strain on the resources of the military. Overall, the conflict became all-consuming in a similar way to the initial 2003

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decision. The difference was that this time, the administration was boxing from a position of weakness rather than one of strength.

The other significant issue that defined the boundaries of the presidency was not so readily apparent. In an interview with the Miller Center Oral History project, Chief of Staff Josh Bolton suggests that by the beginning of 2006 he had begun to expect some form of international financial crisis and had begun to prepare by looking for a new Treasury Secretary to take over from John Snow. The problem? Bush was “a pretty unpopular President, with the war in Iraq going badly, who had not quite even three years left in his term, and with relatively little prospect of pushing major victories across the finish line in the succeeding three years”.(Bolton *et al.*, 2013) In the end, a decision was made to bring Hank Paulson, a former Goldman Sachs executive, into the Treasury Department with the proviso that he would be a far more significant player than either of his two predecessors.(Paulson, 2014) This Bush agreed to do, not realising that “his tests would rival those of Henry Morgenthau under FDR or Alexander Hamilton at the founding of our country”.(G. W. Bush, 2010, p. 450) However, even with the administration having an engaged and active Treasury Secretary they were not ready for the depth of the financial crash. The collapse of the housing market and the US economy was the defining issue of the 2008 election and fundamentally reshaped the administration’s ability to function. Beyond the large scale bailouts and financial commitments the administration made, with the President believing that if the country was looking like it was going to go into another great depression “you can be damn sure I’m going to be Roosevelt rather than Hoover”, the administration’s key figures were no longer able to focus on the traditional foreign policy as they began to spend a significant amount of time on the financial crisis.(G. W. Bush, 2010, p. 440)

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When discussing the administration's response to the crisis, what has often been ignored, was the relative harmony among the principal advisers. This is not to suggest there was agreement on how to deal with the financial crisis among the top of the administration, but in terms of managing the foreign policy aspect there was far more harmony. Part of this was due to the effective relationship management between Hadley, Rice and Paulson. For example, Rice was willing to delegate the discussions with the big nations (most notably China) to Paulson who was more effective in explaining US plans and achieve buy in.(Rice, 2011; Paulson, 2014) Likewise, Hadley's relatively strong relationship with Paulson enabled them to work effectively on National Security issues and navigate the bureaucratic milieu. Significantly, Paulson engaged with Rice early after realising her support would be critical on a whole host of his priorities. For example, his Strategic Economic Dialogue (SED) with China was presented to her through the lens of assistance compared to 'running roughshod' over her turf.(Paulson, 2014) He also assisted the Secretary of State on key issues like North Korea which helped to cement the positive relationship between the two. Significantly, Paulson recruited key people who knew Rice and Hadley into their team including Rueben Jefferey and David McCormick who brought not only an expertise in foreign policy to the new team but an understanding of how the Secretary of State worked.(Rice, 2011) This allowed easy communication that reduced inherent misperception of bureaucratic overreach. As Zackheim suggested when discussing the potential swapping of Armitage and Wolfowitz in the first term, the ability of heads of agencies to have figures who had strong connections to the other key departments is critical to their success. (Author interview with Zakheim, 2019) Compared to the bureaucratic conflict in the first term, the relatively unity reflected the consensus about how to manage foreign affairs, a strong understanding between the principals of where

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the boundaries of acceptable cooperation were and the removal of characters such as Rumsfeld who hurt the functioning of the NSC.

As Rice argues, even though she was focused on significant issues including Iran, North Korea, China and Iraq the financial crisis was front and centre.(Rice, 2011) Beyond the need to reassure Americans that the administration was focused on the crisis and was doing everything they could to fix it, the foreign policy team had to reassure allies around the world that they would be consulted on how to fix the global recession. Though the crisis had started in New York, there were global panics with banks all over the globe failing. However, this does not cover the gap that was created. Though traditionally the last year of an administration has been viewed as a barren time for foreign policy, Potter argues that the relative lack of constraints combined with the relative little short term political value of the foreign affairs on voters' minds means that administrations are more likely to focus on significant executive actions in an attempt to increase their legacy.(Potter, 2016) For example, the Clinton administration significantly pushed for dramatic action on North Korea in their last few months and Obama also pushed for an improved relationship with Cuba.(De Bhal, 2018) The fact that they would not need to face the voters again made unpopular policies in the short term that had a hope of success in the long term more attractive to Presidents who were beginning to feel the end of the influence. Especially in the last few months, the ability to travel around the world can be critical to the ability to push last minute agendas over the line. Rice still attempted to do some good work on issues such as India and Palestine but by September these initiatives had stalled. Overall, though the process was functioning perhaps as well as it ever had, the financial crisis was so all consuming that it sucked the air out of the room for the

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administration and any remaining influence, credibility or political capital was pushed into keeping the country from a complete economic collapse.

Adviser Factors

There were two major factors that affected the new direction of the administration, the promotion and movement of key personnel and the indictment of Scooter Libby. The first of these was the removal of a series of key hawks inside the administration. Most of these were not seen as active removals but were part of the natural development of the administration. For example, Wolfowitz was moved from his position as Deputy Defense Secretary to the Presidency of the World Bank and Bolton was moved to Ambassador to the UN. Although these were nominally promotions from secondary to a more primary roles, with the Washington Post suggesting that both decisions represented a reward for those who had supported the Iraq War, the decision to move them on weakened the Cheney-Rumsfeld network.(Blustein and Baker, 2005) For Immerman, although Wolfowitz movement was an opportunity, the action represented the ‘cutting loose’ of the primary architect behind Iraq and a clear message of how the administration wanted to conduct themselves moving forward.(Immerman, 2010) This is not to say that they were not replaced by people who were opposed to their world view. Indeed, Bolton’s replacement was Robert Joseph who was his key ally in the first term and represented the more hawkish policy position on nuclear proliferation. The significant difference was that Joseph had a significantly better working relationship with Rice from his time in the NSC. Though hawkish views were represented, they were no longer as confrontational. Even when they disagreed, such as on North Korea policy which would result in his leaving of the administration, he was unwilling to take pot shots on his way out the door. (Author interview with

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Joseph, 2019) This represented a seismic shift in the administration where the stronger connections were no longer between the VP and the second tier of advisers who were critical to the pushing of the agenda, but between them and the Secretary of State.

Beyond the strength in these relationships, there was a slight loss of star power within the top ranks of the more hard-line figures within the administration. Though Bolton was criticised by a Senior White House official for being untrusted on major issues due to his tendency to leak to the press, he was viewed as a strong figure within the administration and had an outsized influence beyond his relatively secondary position. (Author interview with Senior Administration official, 2020) Likewise, Wolfowitz was a key intellectual who had his own relationship with Bush, Hadley and Rice from the campaign which reinforced his influence within the first term and increased the Pentagon's power. As Solomon argues, the decision to move Wolfowitz to the World Bank was based in part in an unwillingness of Bush to promote him within the federal government in either State or perhaps most realistically to NSA. (Solomon, 2007) In a different world, had Wolfowitz been promoted to either Deputy Secretary of State or NSA, the power and influence of Cheney and Rumsfeld would have exponentially increased. Yet instead of having a 'man on the inside', Wolfowitz left the federal government. The coordination of these figures had been instrumental at pushing through their agenda in the first term and their removal not only hurt the ability of those who remained to push their views but represented a break from Bush and Rice as they began the second term.

In contrast, Rice had assembled an 'A team' in the State Department which comprised of figures such as former Indian Ambassador Robert Blackwill, Ambassador William Burns, Zelikow and Zoellick. The quality of both the minds and bureaucratic skills meant State was better staffed and more effective at getting their policy positions into

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formal administration policy. Rice utilised their connections and capabilities to allow her to focus on the issues she cared about and delegate others whilst still retaining her impact. This was most notable on issues such as Iraq where the Secretary did not want to be strongly involved with the political capital that was required to keep the policy afloat. Like Cheney's team in the first term, these figures had the authority of being seen as extensions of the Secretary. (Author interview with Zelikow, 2020; Author interview with Zoellick, 2020)) However, they were also dependent on her personally to a great extent. Zelikow's post was brought back from extinction by Rice and his authority was based on his close relationship with the Secretary. Likewise, the perception that Burn's was a 'closet democrat' meant that he was reliant on Rice to be an insider in the top levels of decision-making. Beyond this, the appointments brought a swagger back to State and helped to remotivate those who had been demoralised by the first terms policies. Significantly, this gap in talent and experience between the more hard-line group and the moderates headed by Rice helped explain the difference in influence between the two groupings within the administration. (Kessler, 2007)

Perhaps one of the most significant losses for the administration's more hard-line figures was not through their promotion but from scandal. As discussed in the first chapter, Scooter Libby had become a significant figure within the administration through his institutional position as part of both the White House and the OVP and the wide latitude given to him by Cheney to be his delegate. Yet by the second term, the VP's point man had been indicted due to his involvement in the Plame affair. A representation of the distrust of the American public over the administrations obscuring of evidence around the Iraq War, the scandal was based on the release of the identity of CIA agent Valerie Plame who was the partner of administration critic Amb. Joseph Wilson. Though the Silberman-Robb commission would later argue

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that there was no intent from the intelligence community to misrepresent the evidence, something Cheney would repeatedly point to when defending the administration's conduct in the war, Libby became the face of the Bush administration's 'culture' of deception.(Silberman and Robb, 2005; Rosen, 2015) The decision was taken early in 2005 that Libby would leave the administration to fight the indictment, eventually being convicted on three counts in 2007, leaving a significant gap at the OVP. There were two important effects from the loss of Cheney's Chief of Staff and primary advisor. Firstly, as Gellman highlights, though the OVP still had capable figures within it including Addington, the collective suffered.(Gellman, 2008) The loss of Libby's management, bureaucratic and to perhaps an underappreciated extent his personal skills meant that Cheney's team were no longer able to outmanoeuvre the other departments as effectively. During the second term, the 'fear factor' that existed in having to go to battle the OVP was greatly reduced.

The loss of Libby also took an emotional toll on Cheney. Baker suggests that though the President felt for the loss of Libby, his VP was hurt in a 'far deeper and surprising personal way'.(Baker, 2013, p. 426) Libby had become 'Cheney's Cheney' the loyal lieutenant who was willing to subsume his identity into his boss to ensure that he was able to do the job that he wanted to do. The loss of not only a key colleague but a friend was critical in hurting Cheney's willingness to get involved in the debates. Not only was he now distracted from the day to day running of the administration as he kept track of the trial, he began to use his internal capital in an unsuccessful attempt to lobby the President to pardon Libby. As Mann argues, the relationship was jeopardised by this relationship with Bush unwilling to pardon Libby both in the short term and at the end of his administration for fear that he would be tarred with the same brush that had hurt his father's legacy surrounding the pardoning of figures such as

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former Defense Secretary Casper Weinberger over Iran-Contra.(Mann, 2020) Significantly, both the President and the VP wrote at length on the incident in their autobiographies. For Bush, he argued that he feared that his final decision would ruin the friendship between the two and was relieved when Cheney appeared to bury the hatchet in the aftermath of the election.(G. W. Bush, 2010) In contrast, Cheney sets out a fairly blistering attack on the President significantly different in tone to other critiques of the administration's policy flaws. He concludes it by saying "George Bush made courageous decisions as President, and to this day I wish pardoning Scooter Libby had been one of them".(Cheney, 2011, p. 410) The divergence over Scooter Libby represented a key part of understanding the power balance of groups of individuals. Though relationships can be critical in extending an advisor's power, they can also hurt relations to other people when emotions are intertwined with political decisions.

Summary

Overall, the final four years of the administration showed a dramatic shift in the power balance within the administration from one leaning significantly towards Cheney and Rumsfeld to one that favoured the more moderate group that included Rice and Hadley. This was due to a mix of both intentional decisions and the structural constraints that removed some of the inbuilt advantages held by those who favoured more hard-line policies. The growth of Bush as a foreign policy leader, the selection of Rice as a Secretary who had a powerful vision of the changes she wanted to make, the tying together of the State department and the NSC, the loss of critical hard-line members including Rumsfeld and Libby and an environment that favoured consolidation and diplomacy all moved the administration away from its bellicose first term reputation. This process was accelerated after the 2006 midterms, with the

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administration was poised to move even further towards a policy of reputation rehabilitation and the creation of a legacy that would temper the widespread condemnation of the first term.

Chapter 8: Reimagining Bush in the Indo-Pacific.

Introduction

With Rice and her network in the ascendency, policy towards the three main Indo-Pacific priorities (China, India and North Korea) were some of the most opportune areas for change. The importance of the region had seemingly diminished in the aftermath of the September 11th attacks, but with the administration bogged down in the quagmires of Iraq and Afghanistan Bush saw an opportunity. In my interview with Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs and Senior Director for Asia Michael Green, who was the one of the key figures within the NSC focusing on Asia, he suggested that historians and academics have given, and would continue to give, good marks to the Bush administration on Asia in the second term. (Author interview with Green, 2020) Though the administration's Asian policy is underappreciated, it still remains largely an under-studied and misunderstood area of Bush's foreign policy, as it did in 2009 when Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Thomas Christensen suggested that Obama would benefit from the administration continuing to largely follow the strategy.(Christensen, 2009) This chapter argues that a significant part of this success was due to the changes in the foreign policy process that favoured a policy of engagement. This new policy direction had significant, and largely positive, changes on the three main policies in the Indo-Pacific, namely those of China, India and North Korea.

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China

On February 2nd, 2005, at the start of the second term, Green was sent to Beijing with a letter from the administration to convince China to apply more pressure on North Korea. Beside the significant amount of evidence contained within it, the letter also contained a key message to the Chinese government. It was time to bring the US-China relationship “to the next level”.(Green, 2019) In the aftermath of an election campaign where both candidates had been pressured to harden their China policies, would the new direction be positive or negative? The administration still contained significant figures who had pushed for the designation of China as a ‘strategic competitor’ in the 2000 campaign and though the administration had mostly kept the relationship stable, they symbolically engaged China on their human rights abuses and Taiwan. Both in the US and internationally, there was a significant fear that the US would become more combative now that they had ‘resolved’ Iraq and that the administration would return to a pre-9/11 mindset. What would a second Bush administration with an increased mandate look like in Asia?

The concerns proved to be unfounded. During the build up to the 2004 election, the administration had made a subtle effort to improve relations with Beijing. However, in the second term there was a clear decision to take the opportunity to further strengthen the relationship with China. This was based on a more ‘big-business’, conservative and neoliberal ideological approach where increased economic and political engagement would increase Chinese openness to political accountability and participation. As Counsellor to the Secretary of State Phillip Zelikow suggested when discussing China:

“We were profoundly uncertain about what would happen with China politically... so you ask yourself as a foreign government can you make it more likely that the

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constructive forces in China will prevail?... Our argument internally was by welcoming China, instead of a policy of containment or pseudo-containment, we accept you are becoming a major player and we will welcome you to the table”.

(Author interview with Zelikow, 2020)

This represented the outlook of key figures such as Rice, Hadley, Zoellick and later Gates and Treasury Secretary Hank Paulson, a faction within the administration. Instead of focusing on China as a ‘Strategic Competitor’ as they had before the 9/11 attacks or an uneasy ally in the aftermath, there was a fundamental focus on what could be done “on the margins” to help shape the rise of China. (Author interview with Zoellick, 2020) Though not going so far as to argue for a “G-2” as critics such as former NSA Brzezinski would propose in later years, they believed that China could be reasoned with.(Brzezinski, 2009) Although there were different strengths of support from this group, with Watanabe suggesting that figures such as Zoellick and Paulson differed on how close the US should be with China, there was largely an acceptance that the administration should develop the relationship.(Watanabe, 2013; Sutter, 2018)

Though this faction was strong, it was not unopposed. Significantly, both Cheney and Rumsfeld were reticent to further engage with Beijing beyond keeping the relationship stabilised.(Cockburn, 2007) Cheney’s staff turnover in the 2005-2006 period had significantly weakened his ability to be involved in all areas of the administration’s foreign policy compared to the first term. This is not to say that he did not still have competent staff who viewed China with a high level of hawkish intent. Indeed, his Deputy NSA in the second term, Aaron Friedberg, would become a public critic of the administration’s softening stance. Even in 2005, whilst still serving in the OVP, he suggested that there were numerous ways of approaching China in a more hawkish

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manner. However, he concluded by arguing: “There is every reason to hope that U.S.-China relations will follow a smoother and more peaceful course. But neither history nor theory can provide any assurances that it will be so”.(Friedberg, 2005) This public statement reflected the efforts of the OVP to slow down the engagement strategy pushed by State, Treasury and the NSC. However, as in the first term, Cheney’s focus remained on issues such as executive power, Iraq, Iran and energy policy. With declining political capital, from the end of 2004, Cheney was less and less involved in China policy discussions and by 2006 he was very much on the edge of the administration’s decision-making process.

Though perhaps not as isolated as the VP, Rumsfeld’s loss of Cheney’s support weakened the Pentagon’s policy impact. Although discussing North Korea and other regimes, Rumsfeld could have been discussing China when he stated “there are limits to diplomacy, just as there are limits to goodwill. Some problems cannot be solved through negotiations”.(Rumsfeld, 2011, p. 637) Instead of viewing negotiations as an opportunity, he believed that it should be utilised as a source of leverage. Though in 2005 he would become the first Defense Secretary to visit China since the Tiananmen Square massacre, he still pushed for a limitation of military contacts in an attempt to signal the US scepticism of Chinese military expansion.(Kan, 2014) In a speech at the 2005 Asian Security Conference, attended by Defence and Foreign ministers across Asia, he challenged China’s expansionist posture.(Shanker, 2005) Rumsfeld was sharply critical of the expenditure of the Chinese government on military affairs and highlighted the fact that he China must re-correct their course.(Nye, 2006) Not going so far as to say that China poses a threat to the US, he often highlighted the need to be sceptical of the ‘weak China’ mentality and to begin to reassess the administration’s perception of Beijing’s intentions.(Lampton, 2005) On issues such as Chinese

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economic expansion in Latin America and Central Asia, Rumsfeld often raised the spectre of a global challenger both within and outside the administration.(Silove, 2016)

This public campaign to raise the threat level from China reflected a perception within Defense that they were beginning to lose their internal influence. China scepticism was reinforced in Rumsfeld's 2005 report to Congress and in the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review Report. In the report, the Pentagon argued that:

“Of the major and emerging powers, China has the greatest potential to compete militarily with the United States and field disruptive military technologies that could over time offset traditional U.S. military advantages absent U.S. counter strategies”.(Rumsfeld, 2006)

Going further than previous strategies, Defense set out the position that there would need to be significant investments to deal with the asymmetrical military build-up in cyber, space and electronic warfare capabilities. This was on top of the significant increase in the defense budget since the 9/11 attacks and represented the dominance the Pentagon had previously enjoyed.(Cox, 2014) As congressional appropriations are an indicator of legislative support, the argument for increased funding represented Rumsfeld's desire to raise his department's relative influence over China. This document sent a clear signal of Defense Department discontent with the overarching administration position, aiming to undermine figures such as Rice. Overall, the public and congressional lobbying from the Defense Secretary highlighted two things. Firstly, Rumsfeld was profoundly opposed to increased engagement with China. The second was that this argument, far from being the spectre of a new policy, was a short

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lived resurgence of the ‘strategic competitor’ mentality from before 9/11. (Adler, 2009)

Internally, Rumsfeld was beginning to become more and more isolated on China. However, he was still able to put more than a few spanners in the works. Not only was he a central communicator in signalling the ‘China threat’ to Congress, but he also limited the ability of the administrations more engagement focused figures to get important military information and utilise the Defense Department’s resources in ensuring the strategy was a success. As one senior Bush administration official suggested “he had ordered the JCS not to talk to the NSC about China... we had to meet in coffee shops and stuff. This was small scale bureaucratic efforts to try and maintain control but really Bush was not listening to Rumsfeld on China”. (Author interview with Senior Administration Official, 2020) However, significantly the distractions of Afghanistan and Iraq still existed and meant that Rumsfeld was unable to dominate China policy making. Along with these internal distractions, the key allies within the region were pushing for a stabilisation of the relationship and added more support to the engagement faction. As Green argues that “we couldn’t do China policy without allies. This gave us a huge boost and a source of legitimacy”. (Author interview with Green, 2020) Though Rumsfeld’s China scepticism was a significant viewpoint within the US, globally there was a preference for increased engagement between the two most powerful nations rather than risking a second cold war. These external factors were essential in limiting those who favoured a more hard-line approach with China.

Rice’s increased involvement in China policy reinforced Rumsfeld’s decline in influence. Rice had been associated with the more moderate camp on China, based on her perception of great power engagement rooted in her previous experience in the

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Bush Senior administration as a Soviet expert. Indeed, Hoff suggests that by the time she was entering her final two years as Secretary of State her policies had become far closer to those of Madeleine Albright than Cheney and Rumsfeld's. (Hoff, 2007) Even if this might be exaggerating the policy direction on a host of issues, especially North Korea and the Arab-Israeli conflict, regarding China the Secretary was pushing for a far stronger relationship. Green suggests that this policy preference was much firmer than Bush Senior's but still fairly close to the centre rather than based on the preferences of the hawkish wing of the party. (Author interview with Green, 2020) Even though the administration was not immune to criticising the Chinese government, as Sutter argues, they were highly restrained compared to the high minded rhetoric of the Freedom Agenda that dominated the rest of the administration. (Sutter, 2018) Whilst Rice was uncomplimentary of the Chinese relationship in her memoir, often highlighting the difficulty in working with Beijing on most issues, she emphasised how important the engagement was to the success of the administration's wide ranging policy agenda. (Rice, 2011) This engagement focus, combined with a strong personal relationship with Bush and in the face of a decline in power of Rumsfeld, meant she was in a position to dominate the China policy discussion.

Rice used her influence to empower her advisers as proxies to deal with the issues as they saw fit. (Kessler, 2007) Partially this was to do with the high quality of her assistants such as Zoellick and later her second Deputy John Negroponte and State Department official Anja Manuel (who would also go on to be her partner at the RiceHadleyGates LLC consultancy firm). Her power within the administration was such that even this reflected influence was enough to give them the ability to wield wide ranging authority. For Manuel, it was critical that the US developed (and

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continues to develop) a “strategy of coaching both China and India on how to become great powers”.(Manuel, 2016, p. 277) These figures argued for this policy in the 2005 ‘Responsible Stakeholder’ speech from Zoellick. The speech moved the US away from containment to active engagement with China and to reshape the international system whilst protecting US interests. Put simply, he argued that: “Relationships built on shared interests and shared values are deep and lasting. We can cooperate with the emerging China of today, even as we work for the democratic China of tomorrow”. (Zoellick, 2005)

This philosophy was not new. The second term often had similar ideas to the 2000 *Foreign Affairs* article that Zoellick had written during the first campaign. Indeed, the argument that “The United States and its allies should explain to both China and Russia the steps that can build on shared interests and lessen differences” was essentially the same language that he used to express the policy in 2005.(Zoellick, 2000; Swaine, 2011) However, the difference was that Zoellick now had the authority to take the lead and fundamentally reshape the direction of the China policy. Unlike the belief in Japan that had dominated Asia strategy under Richard Armitage in the first term, Zoellick was able to recalibrate the relationship to situate US-Sino collaboration at the highest priority.(Saunders and Prystop, 2006; Green, 2019)

Beyond this change of approach, there was also far less conflict over who should own the policy. Instead of having to seriously engage and reassure those of a more hawkish philosophy, Zoellick was able to utilise his position as a ‘number two with the credibility of a number one’ to help make the most of the strategic portfolio Rice had entrusted to him. (Author interview with Zoellick, 2020) Furthermore, he utilised his connections and bureaucratic experience to manage any potential difficulties. For example, when Rumsfeld asked about how trade and diplomatic strategies were able

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to work with Defense Strategies, Zoellick was quick to engage the prickly Defense Secretary and offer to take any recommendations on board. (Author interview with Zoellick, 2020) The lack of follow up from Rumsfeld indicates a less combative relationship between the seconds within the department compared to Armitage and Wolfowitz in the first term.(Silove, 2016) With trust from figures such as Cheney, who believed that his background as Baker's Deputy meant that he was someone who could be trusted to run an effective process, Zoellick was able to change the direction of the ship of state from conflict to cooperation.

This speech represented an attempt to shift public sentiment and signalled the significant change of direction, reflecting the changing internal dynamics. Critically, the administration created a senior dialogue between the two countries, chaired by Zoellick and Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Dai Bingguo. The fact that the Chinese were willing to engage at a high level helped to focus the administration's policy and rough the contours of any tensions that would flare up. (Author interview with Zoellick, 2020) Significantly, the administration was willing to get buy-in on a host of international issues, from trade to proliferation to UN interventions, and involved some acknowledgement that the US would need to accommodate China's interests too.(Swaine, 2011) With an administration that had used negotiations as an indication of the will to have relationships with nations such as North Korea and Iran, the symbolic as well as substantive policy shift was critical in showing the administration had turned over a new leaf in its policy development. By the time Zoellick left the administration in June 2006, the direction of the Sino-US relationship was in a significantly more positive place than in 2004.

These talks would be supplemented in 2006 by the arrival of Hank Paulson at the Treasury Department. Before 2006, Treasury Secretary Snow had been a bit part

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player. In an interview with a Senior Administration official, they said that although Snow was Pro-China his relative bureaucratic weakness limited his interagency influence and meant he was not a significant player within China policy. (Author interview with Senior Administration Official, 2020) For Paulson, the previous US engagement efforts had been too diffuse and needed strong centralisation under a 'supra-cabinet' official who could more effectively engage the Chinese at the top level.(Paulson Jr. Henry M., 2015) Convincing Paulson that he would be this figure helped the future Treasury Secretary to take the job and significantly increased the prominence of economic issues.(Rice, 2011) As Wanli argues, Paulson was further along the engagement spectrum than even Zoellick.(Wanli, 2009) This shifted the balance even further towards engagement. Importantly, Hadley worked hard to bring the new Treasury Secretary into the team in a constructive way, encouraging a relationship between him and Rice and helping to define the boundaries between their respective roles. Though Rice would remain the primary diplomat and in control of the policy, she was willing to delegate great latitude to Paulson in a similar way that she had to Zoellick.(Rice, 2011; Paulson, 2014)

The result was the Strategic Economic Dialogue (SED) which created a bi-annual meeting that covered a wide variety of issues. Paulson envisioned it to be the forum to discuss everything barring foreign and defence policy.(Paulson, 2014) Even some issues that were traditionally viewed as foreign policy, such as food security, were brought into his purview. The limited backlash to this, along with Rice's acceptance, illustrated the big differences between the atmosphere of the first and second term. Even Rumsfeld, who would leave soon after, did not stand in the way. Instead of the turf wars between the departments that were common in the first term, the more collegiate and well managed environment, rooted in Hadley's NSC reforms, were

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critical in helping advisers manage the process more effectively. Significantly, a wide range of officials went to these summits across the government so that the other principals felt they had some investment in the process and were able to bring their expertise to bear on the issue. A deft move from the Treasury Secretary, the decision also indicated to the Chinese that the administration was serious about the talks by investing time and effort from highly credible advisers.

Glaser highlights the success of the SED on issues such as copyright infringement and the signing of a 10 year energy and environment framework led to both the Bush administration and the Chinese to highly value the dialogue and to encourage the next administration to keep it running.(Cha, 2007; Glaser, 2008) Even those who critiqued the SED on its substantive achievements suggested that it should be institutionalised as a useful mechanism to push the US agenda in the long term.(Scissors, 2008) For the US, the SED represented the natural progression from Rice whose decision to reemphasise the Treasury in the foreign policy decision-making process by inviting them to the NSC and the willingness to delegate such a key foreign policy area represented an institutional understanding of how to improve the process.(Rice, 2011) Now that Rice felt she had a more effective partner at Treasury, she was able to share responsibility with him and the network of her advisers. Though figures like Barnes pointed to Paulson's heightened role in China policy as a sign of weakness of previous figures, the dominance of Rice was such that she was able to delegate things beyond herself and still be able to keep a high degree of influence and control.(Barnes, 2006)

Above the advisers, Bush was willing to use his strong personal relationships to push forward the agenda. During the first term he had decided to remove some of the politicisation of China policy in an attempt to stabilise the relationship, including over issues such as SARS where the President had refrained from jumping on the

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bandwagon of figures criticising Beijing for the health crisis.(Roberts, 2014) As Colonel Wilkerson argued in our interview, the President's understanding of the economic issues (the "Walmart reality" and the effect China policy had on average citizens was fundamental to allowing the administration's more moderate figures led by Powell, to gain control. (Author interview with Wilkerson, 2020) In the second term, he strengthened his role in China policy. Though delegating a large amount of power to Rice and Paulson, he was still willing to utilise his relationship with President Hu when required to ensure the SED and the Senior Dialogue were not pushed into bureaucratic inactivity.(Paulson Jr. Henry M., 2015) As Rumsfeld argues, this was one of the significant areas where the President was an asset stating "what he chose to dispense with in polish, he made up for in persistence".(Rumsfeld, 2011, p. 628) Through repeated calls, meetings and cajoling, the President was able to personalise progress and helped to encourage Hu to do the same. Though Bush still focused on symbolic signalling around human rights issues, including meeting with the Dalai Lama in 2007, the President had shifted the priorities significantly between the 2000 campaign and the second term.(Zhao, 2008)

Beyond the firming up of his own views, the winning of the election also freed the President to take political risks in his second term that were not possible in the first. His belief in China and his support for his team were firmly outside of the mainstream of Republican politics and this could have had a significant chilling effect. However, unable to run for President again meant he was less affected by the domestic political situation. As Wanli argues, the President was able to 'make through' the difficult period between 2006 and 2008 by increasing communication and pushing a focused agenda through bilateral meetings between the most senior figures within both governments. Although some commentators argued that the Chinese were essentially

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running down the clock on the administration, this ignores the fact that the administration was able to gain substantial support from China over the recession of 2008.(Solomon, Leow and Dean, 2008; Paulson Jr. Henry M., 2015) As Potter argues “Diplomacy, remains attractive for politically weak presidents at the end of their time in office because they can turn to it as a residually productive outlet for obtaining their foreign policy objectives”.(Potter, 2016) Both substantially and symbolically, Bush realised his best opportunities for defining his legacy was through diplomacy. Combined with his confidence in his own views, this allowed a far more expansive policy than would have been the case in the first term. Though he would retain a focus on human rights, bringing up abuses himself and ensuring his staff did too, he continued to prioritise the economic relationship. As a result, by 2008 the US-Sino relationship was as good as it had been since the Nixon administration. This culminated in the decision to go to the 2008 Olympics in Beijing in the face of significant critiques.(Stolberg, 2008; Welch, 2009) Though in the press conference the administration made it clear that they did not mean the attendance as a political statement, it is hard to imagine that an outgoing President with little to lose would have felt obliged to go with so few of his fellow world leaders in attendance. Instead, the President wanted to show his support for China and wanted to ensure the relationship remained as positive as possible for his successor.

Often when figures look at China policy in the second term, there is an argument that the administration was so distracted by Iraq, Afghanistan and the Global War on Terror that there was no opportunity for the administration to follow their true preferences in Asia.(Wanli, 2009; Thuy Hang Nguyen, 2017) Though this is part of the story behind the administration’s changing policy, it was only important because of its effect on the bureaucratic power balance. The reduced influence of Rumsfeld

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and the creation of a strong network of advisers who supported Rice and Zoellick's strategy of engagement with Beijing was critical. Without the positive environment facilitated by figures such as Hadley, there is little doubt that the administration's China policy would have been stymied by the bureaucratic inertia that had defined the end of the first term. Likewise, those pointing to the strategic environment and suggesting that the argument was merely the most rational choice ignores the belief system that underlined the policy process. (Peng, 2007) Figures such as Bush, Zelikow, Zoellick and Paulson all agreed, to a greater or lesser degree that engagement would be critical to pushing a human rights agenda without falling into a new cold war. A containment strategy would still have been possible, if perhaps unsuccessful, had those who favoured more hawkish views been in control. Instead, the administration was willing to take significant political risks in keeping an engagement focused strategy at the forefront. Though the contextual factors may have given increased influence to those who favoured engagement, the underlying power balance within the administration was willing to take a reasonably strong position in the face of rising anti-China sentiment.

India

Along with advances in the administration's China policy, there was a significant push in the second term to create the breakthrough in the India relationship that Bush and his team had laid the groundwork for in the first term. Significantly, the decision to run with the policy and to bring India in from the exiled community of nuclear proliferation rogues was one that came from the top down. (Bhatia, 2017) Having taken the brave decision that India would be a fundamental partner in the US strategy in the Indo-Pacific, in the face of considerable congressional and non-proliferation bureaucracy disagreement, the next step was to engage with the Indian government to

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sell an expanded nuclear deal and then to pass it into law through a Senate that was uninterested at best and actively hostile at worst. As Tellis, former staffer in the New Delhi embassy and one of the deals main internal proponents argues, the ideas behind much of the India engagement policy were available in the first term. (Author interview with Tellis, 2020) In fact, he published a work in 2005 that built on the memos and discussions between himself and other senior members of the administration that outlined the arguments going on behind the scene.(Tellis, 2005) As he argued;

“if the United states is to completely fulfil the **one unalloyed foreign policy achievement** of President Bush’s first term- the transformation of U.S/India relations – the administration will have to pay special attention to increasing the substantive gains that both sides, particularly India, enjoy as part of their deepening ties”.(Tellis, 2005) (emphasis added)

The second term was therefore a critical period where the administration had to move India, who remain unlikely to ever be a formal ally due to their history and foreign policy culture, into a ‘responsible partner’ of the United States.(Raja Mohan, 2006) By the 2008 presidential election, the administration had done such an effective job at selling the India relationship that “both leading candidates expressed full-throated support for a deepened and expanded U.S.- India partnership”.(Kronstadt, 2009, p. 1) Perhaps the most underappreciated but one of the most significant successes of the administration, India policy in the second term offered a clear example of the impact changes in the foreign policy advisory power balance made.

The fundamental change in the relationship between the US and India was the creation and implementation of the U.S.–India Civil Nuclear Agreement. This deal entailed

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moving India into the international nuclear proliferation framework from its position in the 'nuclear ghetto'.(Rice, 2011) Though India would not join the NPT, they would have a changed status to one of 'responsible partner' which allowed them far greater access to materials and the removal of the remaining US sanctions. In the deal, there would be a movement to "full civil nuclear energy cooperation" according to the 2005 joint statement, something that had only previously been given to signatories of the NPT and a significant departure from the previous US policy.(Office of the Press Secretary, 2005) Though the deal would not be officially adopted in the US until 2008, the Joint Statement acted as the catalyst for the nuclear relationship to begin in earnest. Putting a portion of India's nuclear plants under IAEA safeguards, the deal also reduced the threat of proliferation as the Indian government were able to trade on the open market and avoided significant funds going to black market dealers. In exchange, India would be able to access dual-use technology which had previously been banned. Though the deal was basic, like the agreements that the US had with other declared nuclear powers, the fact that it was given to a country that had gotten its nuclear weapons by violating non-proliferation agreements has often been underappreciated in discussion of the Bush administration's foreign policy.

Like most of the significant changes in the second term, India policy received a much-needed boost by the arrival of Rice as Secretary of State. By 2004 India policy had begun to stagnate, with no significant action beyond the review of what the administration should do. Partially this was down to the slowdown of policy development in elections years. However, the most important thing was the changes in the administration bureaucratic power balance. Significantly, Rice and her State Department team wanted to hit the ground running in the immediate aftermath of the election. The decision to visit New Delhi at the beginning of her Asia trip after being

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confirmed as Secretary of State was symbolic of the new approach. As Blackwill argues, the decision was intended to signal its high level of India's importance to both the Indian government and her own bureaucracy.(Blackwill, 2005) With the support of Bush, she was able to become what a senior administration official in my interview with them called the 'voice' of the policy and utilised her position at State to reduce the bureaucratic drag. (Author interview with Senior Administration official, 2020) Unlike Powell, who had been unenthusiastic about India, Rice was personally invested and willing to spend political capital in forcing through a breakthrough. Both Mistry and Burns give significant credit to Rice for being nimble and effective at controlling her department, taking the lead to push through policy.(Mistry, 2006; Burns, 2014) Though Kessler indicated that there were some flaws with this approach, including the inability to effectively consult with figures who would be key in taking the agreement forward, the fact that Rice was willing to take the initiative in negotiating was a significant step on progressing towards the deal.(Kessler, 2007) As Chaudhuri argues, the decision-making by Rice and her flexibility and willpower during this trip was essential to the success of the talks.(Chaudhuri, 2014)

One of the key stories about the negotiations happened during the reciprocal visit to Washington. With an impasse between the negotiators, there was a belief that the administration had snatched defeat from the jaws of victory. Having gone to bed in the face of stalled negotiations, Rice famously decided at 4.30 am to go for one last push, engaging with the Prime Minister and using her considerable one on one talent to push through the deal, selling him on the idea that it was a "deal of a lifetime".(Rice, 2011, p. 439) As Zoellick said to her after, "Sometimes the Secretary of State gets tested. You would not take no for an answer".(Rice, 2011, p. 439) Kessler argues that the Indians viewed Rice as the linchpin of the deal, the person who had managed to

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bring both parties into a position where they could fudge the issue enough for both to sign onto it.(Kessler, 2007) Discussing why the administration's policy with India was a success in the second term during our interview, Zelikow suggested Rice was not only influential because of who she was within the negotiations but because she had such an effective grasp over the issues that she was able to know when and where to give things away. (Author interview with Zelikow, 2020) This grasp of the details, rooted in both her previous experience with government as a Soviet analyst and an academic, gave her the confidence within her own actions to make decisions. Significantly, the key figures within the administration and State spent a lot of time on the issue. In the Miller Centre Oral History project, Zelikow suggests that India took up more time in the critical early months than even issues such as Guantanamo Bay.(Zelikow and Riley, 2010) By focusing on the issue and giving it a high level of thought to support the work of figures such as Indian ambassador Blackwill, Hadley and Tellis in the first term, Rice and her team at the top of the State Department were able to take significant steps forward. In Zelikow's words, "Rice saved the initiative". (Author interview with Zelikow, 2020)

Significantly, the Pentagon continued to offer support for the process along with people from the OVP. Though this was partially due to the option to sell military hardware to a new customer (a significant priority for figures such as Feith), there was a higher emphasis on the need to contain China.(Rice, 2011; Chaudhuri, 2014) For figures such as Friedberg, the shift in relations with India due to a "number of causes, but the deepest and most important was a newly shared concern over the rise of China".(Friedberg, 2011) This narrative became a central point for critics who distrusted the deal, arguing that the administration had sacrificed too much for India's support against China.(Guihong, 2005; Perkovich, 2005) Though this may have been

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a small part of the rationale for those at State, Zelikow argues that it runs counter to the positive efforts that had been made on the China front as part of the responsible stakeholder strategy. (Zelikow and Riley, 2010) Instead, this rationale was utilised to forge a bureaucratic consensus. Like the war in Iraq, where numerous different figures had a variety of reasons for supporting the invasion, the Chinese containment part of the Indian strategy gained hawkish advisor's support. Significantly, the lack of serious opposition from the hardliners for a policy of engagement made the administration's India policy perhaps the most harmonious of Rice's major policy initiatives.

This is not to say that there was not opposition. As Pant argues, there was concern from both inside and outside the administration. Internally, some hawks still resisted the deal. For example, in his confirmation hearings, Robert Joseph had said that the administration had no intention of moving forward with an India deal. (Pant, 2012) Though this was perhaps because the deal was not ready at that point, it reflected his desire to slow down the bureaucratic momentum behind the administration's push. Beyond Joseph, figures such as UN Ambassador Bolton, OVP staffer David Addington and NSC staffer John Rood were part of this rear guard of resistance. However, these figures were often peripheral to the discussion and were unable to significantly slow the process. What they were able to do was tactically leak information in the period between 2006 and 2008 when Congress were considering the deal. (Kessler, 2006; Pant, 2012) Significantly, this created more controversy than was perhaps necessary when passing the legislation but was not enough to stop it. This did not mean that there was not significant resistance from congressional figures who felt that their traditional prerogatives had been usurped. For example, the *New York Times* quoted Chairman of the House International Relations committee Henry Hyde as saying "As it stands, the situation is both strange and unusual in that the Indian

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authorities know more about this important proposal than we in Congress".(Brinkley, 2005) From the 2005 agreement onwards, there was a significant effort from Rice and Burns to keep congressional forces in the loop.

This represented one of the significant gaps within Rice and her team's experiences as none of them had served in Congress and therefore were liable to overlook it. It was not that Rice had not been warned about the issues with Congress, with a memo from a senior official explaining the likely problems having been sent in early 2005.(Kessler, 2007, p. 60) Though she was able to push through the policy, it came at a cost to her relations with Congress who would routinely pressure her towards the end of the administration. This manifested itself through routine public comments, an increase in the amount of oversight hearings and broad statements criticising her conduct. Though not enough to stop the deal, the 2006 midterm loss and the feeling that Rice had not sufficiently consulted meant "the gauntlet for approving the accord grew longer, requiring elaborate choreography from New Delhi to Washington".(Warburg, 2012) With a relatively benign Congress in the first term, this was a significant step up in intensity.

This is not to say that Congress concerns were only political and procedural. Critics were concerned that the India deal gave too much away for little in return and fundamentally undermined the NPT. As Mistry argues, the administration had not consulted on both technical and strategic issues surrounding the nuclear deal.(Mistry, 2006) Significantly, the fear for many Democrats and non-proliferation experts was that the deal would end US efforts to support the international non-proliferation frameworks. When the Democrats took both houses of Congress in the 2006 midterms, there was a need for a more elaborate engagement with Democratic leaders than had previously been the case.(Warburg, 2012) Furthermore, the issue of Iran was often

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brought up, with India reliant on America's enemy for access to oil. As Schaffer argues, the more hawkish figures within Congress pointed to Iran as a signal that India could not become a trusted ally in the same way that Japan or the United Kingdom were. (Schaffer, 2009) Fair suggests that the multifaceted nature of the Iran issue, as both a symbolic and practical security concern, meant that the need to placate the American Congress was such that the Indian government decided to vote against Iran at the IAEA over non-compliance in 2006. (Fair, 2010) This was a significant concession to the Iran hawks within both parties (and in the face of Indian national public opinion) and reassured Congress that the positive relationship benefited the US. Added to the high level of political capital the Bush administration was willing to spend on the issue, with Hadley spending a significant amount of time coordinating the various figures within the administration in a full court press, this provided the 'win-set' that Mistry argues was essential to giving Congress the ability to pass the deal. (Mistry, 2006)

Significantly, it was not just the advisers who were pushing the deal. As Kapur argues, the only way that Rice and her team were only allowed the latitude to ignore the interagency bottom up process because of the personal investment in the relationship that came from Bush. (Kapur and Ganguly, 2007) His receptiveness for the Indian deal had come from the work of Hadley and Rice in the first term according to an interview with a senior administration official, which meant by the second term he was "Conditioned and Sympathetic". (Author interview with Senior Administration Official, 2020) Tellis concurred, suggesting that the socialisation had meant that Bush perceived the time as ripe to push for it, giving the energy and presidential support which is an accelerator within any bureaucratic decision-making process. (Author interview with Tellis, 2020) As such, Bush was willing to take what was a significant

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risk in pushing through the agreement that was both technically very difficult and unpopular with Congress. The President's willingness to spend his political capital on the issue whilst fighting two major (and deteriorating) wars was a sign of the importance of how important the issue was to Bush and Rice. As President, he was focused on what was right for the country and was confident in his vision of how he wanted to push the administration forward. As Karen Hughes quotes Hadley as saying "The President loves to be a change agent".(Hughes, 2004, p. 280) Though it was important that Bush had the vision, he also needed to match it with the willingness to take a risk.(Moens, 2016) As after 9/11, the need to be the President who made history was a critical component of the President's psyche and helps to explain his willingness to fight conventional policy. This certainty (or hubris dependent on the observer) in his own judgement and a relative willingness to challenge the political consensus in his second term was critical to the India deals success.

Similarly, the focus the President put on his relationship with foreign leaders also came to the fore in the negotiations. During our interview, Tellis suggested that the President was able to bring the Indian Prime ministers with him because of his good relationship with both built up over the previous five years, stating that "there was a trust that was unbelievable". (Author interview with Tellis, 2020) Though there has been a large amount of commentary on the President's relationship with figures such as Putin, the relationship with the two different Indian Prime Ministers were among the best that Bush had and this was the final piece of the puzzle for a successful process. As Wheeler argues, interpersonal trust is essential between leaders to help them to understand the risks and intentions involved within a decision.(Allin, Scardino and Wheeler, 2004) The decision to engage with India in the first term and the decision of Indian leaders to risk their national reputation to reciprocate had built a strong

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relationship, with high costs for both sides in terms of reputation, time and political capital. Without Bush's preference for personal democracy and strong relationships with other leaders, the deal could not have been pushed through.

Though the nuclear deal may have been the most important part of the administration's Indian policy, the focus for the administration went beyond it. Figures such as Blackwill continued to push for a stronger military relationship and the inclusion of India in a sturdier international institution framework.(Blackwill, 2005; Wheeler, 2018) This was critical as it helped expand the spoke and wheel approach that defines US policy in Asia As Green argues, the nuclear issues were the 'Gordian knot' which had to be solved before the advancement of the US and India relationship could take place.(Green, 2019) In particular, the Indian government joined the 'Quad' humanitarian relief after the Asian Tsunami to coordinate efforts and put a united front of democratic nations helping in the Asian community.(Green, 2019) Significantly, though Canberra and Tokyo would both step back from the Quad, India were passionate in increasing the military coordination and took part in massive joint naval exercises that included the US, Australia, Singapore and Japan. (Raja Mohan, 2010) Considering the significant domestic opposition to involving themselves in entangling military alliances and New Delhi's history of non-alignment, this was a significant action. It also represented a concerted effort from both State and the Pentagon to bring the relationship forward in a comprehensive way that reflected a unified appreciation of the importance of the relationship and the capabilities to bring it through.

Significantly, Wattering argues that this development of the relationship challenged the narrative of the fundamental changes in the administration's foreign policy decision-making in the aftermath of 9/11. Instead of viewing India policy through the lens of 9/11, they argue that the administration's policy was 'temporarily' ruptured in

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the aftermath that reprioritised both terrorism and the importance of engagement over issues such as Iraq and Afghanistan.(Chaudhuri, 2014; van de Wetering, 2016) However, what the second term exemplified was the return great power diplomacy. Like with North Korea and the Six-Party talks, the administration aimed to remove previously unworkable international institutions and restructure the relationship with India through new frameworks such as the Quad. This reflected the willingness to reconceptualise the world and take significant departures from foreign policy convention. Though the relationship with India complemented the Freedom Agenda that provided the framework for the foreign policy in the second term, it reflected the initial values and preferences of the core members of the foreign policy advisory team during the campaign. Though Rumsfeld and Cheney were often supportive of engagement over India policy, the energy and willingness to spend political capital meant the State department were able to push forward with an agenda that was successful in establishing a brand-new relationship, it has often been underappreciated how revolutionary the thinking was. Instead of being a hyphenated relationship with the unstable Pakistan, India had by 2008 become a true partner, if not an ally, in the Bush administration's Asian agenda and offered an opportunity for the administration's successor to build on that relationship. If Asia policy was the highlight of the Bush administration's foreign policy agenda, the India policy was the crown jewel.(Mead and Gwertzman, 2007; Green, 2019)

North Korea

A lot of the foreign policy decisions surrounding the Indo-Pacific region in the second term were widely seen as positive developments in US foreign policy and have received a high level of credit from both external figures such as Mead as well as former administration members including Vincent Cha.(Cha, 2007; Mead and

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Gwertzman, 2007) However, the most significant blot on the administration's Indo-Pacific record, for both hawks and doves, was the failure of the President's second term foreign policy toward North Korea's nuclear ambitions.(Pritchard, 2007; Chinoy, 2008; Green, 2019) This seeming consensus around the negatives ignores some of the significant positives that came out of the second term engagement with "the impossible state".(Cha, 2012) By the end of the administration, there had been a significant reopening of negotiations, with the establishment of the Six-Party talks as a bold and innovative international forum allowing a more stable and effective relationship. Although former administration members Cha and Kelly suggest that the policy success reflected the solid strategic and tactical approach that was rooted in the developments of the first term, this success was possible due to the significant changes in the foreign policy bureaucratic balance.(Cha and Kelly, 2008) Building on the work from the beginning of the Six-Party talks, a large shift occurred with those who favoured engagement becoming more influential within the decision process so that they were far more eager to negotiate with Pyongyang.

As with China and India, the most significant factor that led to the change in the North Korean policy of the Bush administration was Rice's move to State. Her appointment came with statements that appealed both to those who favoured a hard-line policy and those who favoured increased engagement, leading to observers being unsure where her intentions lay.(Pomper, 2005) For the hardliners, Rice's suggestion that the North Korean regime was an 'outpost of tyranny' in her confirmation hearing and going to the US command centre in Seoul in a move that was widely seen as a bellicose statement of intent were both promising.(Rice and Committee of Foreign Relations, 2000) On the other hand, her speech to students at Sophia University clearly indicated support for engagement stating: "No one denies that North Korea is a sovereign state.

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We have said repeatedly that we have no intention of attacking or invading North Korea”.(Rice, 2005; Chinoy, 2008) This represented what Kessler calls “the administration’s often schizophrenic approach” to North Korea, a problem that Rice had failed to deal with in her time as NSA, with figures from both side of the debate believing that both Rice and Bush secretly supported their ideological viewpoint.(Kessler, 2007, p. 66) Personally Rice, like Bush, found the regime repulsive however she believed that it was important for the administration to engage with Pyongyang, even if it kept Kim Jong Il in power. However, for this to occur the administration needed a more unified voice (hers) and “Washington’s micromanagement, so evident in the first term, needed to end. The President could trust me to keep my negotiators in line”.(Rice, 2011, p. 348) Delegation, as long as it was to her, would present a more united front and make the policy coherent enough that breakthroughs could be made.

This relied on two significant decisions. Firstly, the administration had made the overarching decision that with the war on Iraq and Afghanistan taking a lot of attention and manpower, negotiations would be the focus of Indo-Pacific policy. This, combined with domestic failures such as the botched response to Hurricane Katrina, meant that Bush was unable to be as belligerent as he had in the build-up to Iraq.(Kahn and Sanger, 2005; Hur, 2018) This inherently would have raised the profile of any Secretary of State, with the President needing to rely on his main spokesperson, one of the few figures within the United States who had the institutional credibility to speak for the US. However, Rice’s decision to continue within the administration had been predicated on her unwillingness to fight with Rumsfeld and Cheney on all the issues that Powell had. As Mann argues, Rice had pushed for greater leeway on negotiations than had been given to Powell, resulting in her no longer having to clear

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every statement with the entire NSC.(Mann, 2020) Instead, flexibility would be critical and allow Rice and her negotiators to push through deals when required. Though Bush still had strong feelings on North Korea, he was willing to delegate the day to day running of the policy to Rice and her team. Only when major decisions were required would Bush intervene, often following Rice's lead.

The decision to delegate, though born of both practical and bureaucratic necessity, was made easier by the trust the two had. Built on their shared religious convictions and similarity of interests, the trust that had been seeded in the campaign had grown over the first term to the extent that the former NSA had become an extension of Bush. In the President's own words, Rice was able to "read my mind and methods".(G. W. Bush, 2010, p. 90) As Baker argues, Rice had a relationship with Bush like no other advisor, even Cheney.(Baker, 2013) Whilst Cheney and Bush remained close, the VP had a relatively independent foreign policy vision that manifested itself on issues such as North Korea. His preferences for moral clarity and reticence to engage in any negotiations that were predicated on North Korean submission gave Bush little option for success. Rice, on the other hand, had internalised and shaped Bush's view and felt both his disgust with Pyongyang whilst knowing he wanted to stabilise the region and allow the 'true' sunshine that would come from some engagement to help in the long curve of history. This is not to imply that it was only one direction, as some have argued, with Rice merely being a political chameleon taking on the role of her mentor.(Marby, 2007a) This problematic presentation of Rice, rooted in racial and gendered undertones that often minimize black women in foreign policy decision-making, ignores how much of a role Rice had in shaping Bush's approach to the world. (Alexander-Floyd, 2008) By 2005, Bush had been moulded into her image and this allowed them to work together incredibly effectively and with a high degree of trust.

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Beyond her own personal capacity and relationship with Bush, Rice was also able to bring in key figures who favoured an engagement strategy. Though some members of staff had concerns about her management abilities, including her senior advisor Jim Wilkinson, the support structures she put in place amplified her ability to take control of the department.(Kessler, 2007) In turn, these figures were other more likely to be able to convince her of the need to develop a more effective approach to North Korea. For example, Zelikow as counsellor and confidante of Rice was a strong believer in the need to encourage negotiations between the United States and North Korea.(Chinoy, 2008) Likewise, Nicholas Burns similarly emphasised the need for engagement with the North Koreans and had resituated negotiations as central in his role as chief policy architect within the department. In testimony in 2006, he strongly pushed for negotiations as a tool of US policy, which was ideologically consistent with his strong defence of negotiations with Iran.(Burns, 2006) Beyond this policy effect, the advisers' strong relationship with hardliners within the administration whose waning influence had forced them to prioritise where they spent their bureaucratic capital, was reassuring and helped to head off any interference within the policy position. As Bumiller argued "Conservatives were not entirely happy (with her choices) but they held their fire because they thought Rice was at heart probably one of them".(Bumiller, 2007, p. 255) Rice's ideological ambiguity had managed to make both moderates and hardliner's both believe that she would push her team in their direction. Both Zelikow and Zoellick were high level and respected Republican Party figures, with Zoellick stepping down from a cabinet level role to help lead the State department. The ability to engage with experts who were both familiar with State and the foreign policy process more generally reduced the learning curve that new teams faced when joining the administration. As such, they were able to hit the ground

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running in the positive aftermath of the election when an administration has more political capital to spend.

Beyond this top tier of advisers, the selection and non-selection of the North Korean policy makers was instrumental to the successful adaptation. Rice had seen the amount of problems Powell had with regards to marshalling his own department and was determined that she would not fall into the same trap. Though conservatives had pushed for Bolton to be promoted to Deputy Secretary, instead Rice promoted him to US Ambassador to the UN after being instructed to find an important role for the highly visible hawk. Becoming a leading figure within the administration, often placed near cabinet rank, the US Ambassador to the UN has a large staff to control, a large megaphone and is often at the heart of negotiations with the most significant international organisation within world affairs. Though the US ambassador is highly prestigious, especially in Republican circles with figures such as Jeanne Kirkpatrick having reinforced the ideological leadership part of the role, the influence can be highly variable depending on the relationship the Ambassador has with both the President and the rest of the Principals. (Fasulo, 2015) Unlike both his predecessor and successor, Bush did not make the UN ambassador a member of the cabinet, following the precedent set by Bush senior. This meant that Bolton reported directly to Rice. This lack of a personal channel to the President limited his influence and created a sense both within the administration and outside of it that Bolton was on the outskirts of the policy making process. (Author interview with Senior Administration Official, 2020) Though useful as a rhetorical hardliner to raise stakes at points when the administration needed to add pressure and to mollify more hard-line figures within the Republican foreign policy community, Bolton's geographic and bureaucratic isolation limited his ability to effect the North Korean policy decision-making process. In other

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words, Rice told associates that Bolton would be sent to the UN where he would implement policy, not make it. (Bumiller, 2007) This decision, like many in the first months of the new administration, would be instrumental in helping push a more moderate line of foreign policy.

Instead of Bolton, the leading voice within North Korea policy was Christopher Hill. Rice, whilst assessing the role of Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian Affairs and who would be best to fill it, decided that she needed someone who would be able to hold their own against an assertive military presence in Hawaii which had often blurred the lines between diplomacy and defence. She also decided she needed fresh thinking and someone who would not fall into the specialisms that ran rampant within the bureau. (Rice, 2011) Hill was someone who ticked both these boxes, who had a lot of experience negotiating under Richard Holbrooke within the Dayton Accords and was an Asian generalist having spent a majority of his time working on European affairs. Even so, the decision made the Korean experts within State excited as it was a clear sign that the administration had begun to ‘get serious’ about resolving the North Korean standoff. (Kessler, 2007) As Green argues “Chris had a completely different world view on Asia, he believed that we should make massive compromises to North Korea, Japan was not a trustworthy ally and we needed to cut a G2 type deal with China going forward... but he was the only one who thought that”. (Author Interview with Green, 2020) After a year as South Korea Ambassador, Hill had begun to get to know the key players and it had been decided that he would be too important not to bring into a more policy orientated role. In his own autobiography, he quotes Hadley during his informal interview for the role as saying “We are looking to draft and sign the best athletes regardless of their position”. (Hill, 2014, p. 195) Hill came out of the meeting with a sense of optimism, having understood that Rice and Hadley were both

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committed to negotiation with North Korea and develop the “patterns of cooperation” that were essential to any negotiations to succeed. (Hill, 2014, p. 197)

These ideas were not universally supported. Within the White House, key hardliners such as Joseph remained and pushed for more confrontational policies. However, Hill was often able to side-line them and push forward within the process due to Rice’s willingness to push the boat out to achieve a deal. In September 2005, Hill was able to pull off a deal within the Six-Party talks where the North Koreans agreed to a vaguely formulated “full denuclearization”. Instead of having limited authority to negotiate, like Kelly had in the first term, Hill was able to present the deal to the White House as a take it or leave it offer with only a few hours remaining to sign off. (Kahn and Sanger, 2005) Although the Hill team still had those loyal to Cheney and other hardliners within the administration, he was largely able to isolate them from the key decision-making process by convincing Rice (and through her Bush) that the only way to have any success was to actually engage in effective negotiations. In the September 19 Agreement, as it became known, the US had agreed to give light water reactors (LWR) to the North Koreans in exchange for giving up weaponised plutonium. A red line for the North Koreans, the US hardliners were unwilling to acquiesce to the request as it drew easy comparisons to the Clinton Agreed Framework. When it became clear that this had been drafted and given out, Chinoy quotes an American official as saying “People in the U.S. delegation were literally screaming at each other in the hallways”. (Chinoy, 2008, p. 248) This was a significant departure from the first term, where the hardliners had routinely dominated the drafting process limiting the ability of Kelly and Powell to negotiate. Instead, Rice was willing and able to give Hill significant flexibility because of both the relationship with Bush and the ongoing deterioration of other areas of the world that limited interference. (Clemens, 2016)

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In the summer of 2006, a further change occurred within the administration that limited the hardliner's influence. As Green argues the discipline, by which he meant restraint within negotiations, behind Asia policy started to become undone due to the loss of key figures within the administration who had previously kept Hill blocked in. (Author interview with Green, 2020) Figures such as Green in the NSC, Zoellick at State and Richard Lawless within the Pentagon had left, along with strong critic Robert Joseph. Though these figures often restricted their public criticism, Joseph argued it was a significant factor in his resignation. (Author interview with Joseph, 2019) For Green, the decision to reengage had become something of a trap, requiring more and more concessions to keep the progress going having committed US prestige to the negotiations. (Green, 2019) The loss of these key figures resulted in an opportunity for Hill to take even more control, building on his internal credibility from the September 19th Agreement and the strong relationship with Rice. As the 'Surge' in Iraq began to take centre stage and hurricane Katrina limited the domestic capital of the administration, North Korea policy became more and more dominated by Hill and the EAP.

Noticeably, the OVP had lost significant influence over the policy. The reliance on backchannels and the extent to which Hill was given freedom to make decision on location meant that OVP's domination over meetings, the paper chain and memos counted for less. (Gellman, 2008) The loss of Libby and his replacement John Hannah's relative lack of influence meant that the VP had less visibility and reinforced the perception that Cheney had lost a step. The more moderate figures within the administration also realised that they could get around the formal email lists that Cheney had been a party to in the first term, only copying in those they wanted involved compared to the more formal NSA or Asia that had given the OVP

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access.(Gellman, 2008) Even when the VP was able to get involved in the discussions, he was not able to limit the negotiators' freedom with the same ability as before. Part of this was based on the idea that these figures no longer had the institutional clout they did in the first term. For Yates, the easiest person to blame for Iraq was Cheney and the ties with Iraq policy had fundamentally weakened the Vice President on issues like North Korea as the problems seemed to mount. (Author interview with Yates, 2020) Though able to push for harder sanctions on some issues, the diplomatic initiative often took more and more priority which resulted in further compromises.

Yates accredited this change also as part of a natural institutional part of the timeline of VPs. He said;

“The Vice President’s office is not one of policy implementation. He does not have the intelligence authorities to authorise covert actions like the President and those in the chain of command can do. He does not go off and give speeches that launch foreign policy in new directions that are not approved by the President. The VPO does not have embassies, does not deploy troops, and does not have a large budget. The VP and his office had diminishing influence over time but under all two term presidencies this should be the case” (Author interview with Yates, 2020)

In North Korean policy, this meant that Cheney was less able to direct the implementation of the policy and was unable to keep the focus on the dangers emphasised by the post 9/11 mind-set compared to viewing North Korea as a regional and diplomatic problem. As Mann argues, though Cheney fought Hill and Rice step by step he eventually had given so much ground that the North Korean policy was unrecognisable from that of the first term, coming from different starting points and aiming for different goals. (Mann, 2020)

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The changing nature of the foreign policy was reaffirmed by the 2006 North Korean nuclear tests. With the Iraq Surge taking a significant amount of the administration's energy, the decision for Pyongyang to test their nuclear weapons came at the worst possible time for the Bush administration. Bolton, now at the UN, wanted to take the opportunity to show that the Six-Party talks had run their course and it was now time to go back to a stronger policy of international isolation.(Bolton, 2007) On the other hand, Hill took it as a sign that they needed to step up efforts to negotiate and to remove some of the barriers that had undermined further progress on the talks. (Hill, 2014) The fact that Hill not only won this debate but that he won it so quickly reflected the dominance of the Asia policy that he had created. Rice took the approach that there was no better time to engage with North Korea than when the international community had hardened against them.(Rice, 2011) For Bush, whose distractions had only multiplied as the term aged, the North Korean issue remained one of high interest but could only have little time devoted to it. Though he firmly believed that the only way Pyongyang's nuclear ambitions could be solved was through the bringing of freedom to the people of North Korea, he believed that the Six-Party talks were the best opportunity to bring them about.(G. W. Bush, 2010) As such, he was willing to overrule the remaining hardliners and give Rice the runway to attempt to stabilise the issue. This showed the maturing of the President who had begun to temper his ideological purist attitude whilst still retaining his ideals and moralistic foreign policy goals.

However, to attain a deal Hill and Rice needed to have something to give. After the acceptance of the need to give the LWR nuclear reactors in the September 19th Agreement, there was only one card left on the table. Not unusually when engaging with Pyongyang, this was a financial card. Starting in 2005, the Treasury department

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began to highlight the illicit financial activities that North Korea had been conducting, including black-market trading and counterfeiting of so called 'super notes'.(Hur, 2018) Quickly this spilled out throughout the US financial system and created an environment where no international bank wanted to be viewed as being involved with Pyongyang and resulted in the seizing of around \$25 million from the Banco Delta Asia. A relatively small amount for the US, this was an essential slush fund for the North Koreans and was a major source of hard currency that allowed the economy to stay afloat.(Bechtol, 2010) As Vincent Cha said, ""We want our \$25 million dollars back"" was the only thing the DPRK negotiators said for one year after the September 2005 Joint Statement".(Cha, 2012, p. 265) Though on the surface separate, the sanctions were a coercive part of the diplomacy and had been highly sought after step from more hard-line figures who believed it was an instrumental part in the establishment of a coercive foreign policy.

The decision to give back the fund, with a high amount of difficulty considering how toxic the financial community found the money,(Cha, 2012) was lambasted by conservatives for giving up one of the key leverages the administration had. Bolton, writing after he had left office at this point, said in the *Wall Street Journal* that "the U.S., in a vain effort at chasing the mirage, gave up its most effective pressure point - the financial squeeze -- allowing Pyongyang renewed access to international markets through institutions like Banco Delta Asia".(Bolton, 2008) For Green, the decision was not based on what was sensible but instead believed "the policy was driven by the desire to avoid the expenditure of limited political and strategic capital on a problem that clearly would not be solved before the next presidency and might explode as the next president took office".(Green, 2019, p. 508) However, both these arguments suggest the difficulty in engaging with North Korea. Though the tests provided some

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galvanising of the international community, the Chinese and South Koreans were already pressuring the US to give in to the regime on the BDA funds. The Democrats were largely also pressuring for the release with a bipartisan delegation going to North Korea in 2007 headed by Democratic New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson. In his statement, he clearly linked the two together and put pressure on the administration to resolve the issue before the North Koreans would take the next step. (Richardson, 2007) In reality, the decision to move the foreign policy away from conflict bowed to the inevitable, a decision of pragmatism vs ideology. Having committed to negotiations and with time running out for Rice and Bush to deal, the administration was unwilling to backtrack to their earlier position. For Mazarr, the decision to negotiate reflected an administration that had “abandoned its principles in favour of pragmatism when those principles proved inconvenient”. (Mazarr, 2007)

However, as with every decision within the Bush administration, the pragmatism was always tinged with an optimistic belief that Bush and Rice could pull off something truly transformational. With Iraq in a worsening situation and Iran seemingly more intractable than ever, Pyongyang offered one last shot to do something truly world changing against the Axis of Evil. (Hur, 2018) Green suggests that in 2006, Rice met with Kissinger and Scowcroft (who had been restored somewhat from the cold if never completely trusted) who said “you need to go with the big plays in last two years”. (Author interview with Green, 2020) Like Clinton before him, Bush believed that there was a real opportunity to engage and that he had to take it. With the pressure of 2008 and the likelihood that the election would make it almost impossible to conduct serious foreign policy with such a toxic regime, Rice and Bush pushed hard. The symbolic demolition of the Yongban, in exchange for the removal of North Korea from the State sponsors of terrorism list, offered a sign of progress and allowed both Rice and Bush

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to say they had done all they could. Even the *New York Times*, a routine critic of the administration's policy, suggested that the negotiations offered the best chance for non-proliferation. (New York Times Editorial Board, 2007) In the end, the negotiations were given everything they could to be given as much chance of success barring one final decision made by Bush in the closing stages of his presidency. In the final round of talks in 2008, the President refused to give the energy assistance that was required when the North Koreans would not open to verification of their nuclear program. There was one opportunity that may have rescued it, with Rice stating that she had been offered an opportunity to go to North Korea. However, the symmetry with the Madeleine Albright trip proved a bridge too far, and Bush was unwilling to sanction such a trip. As a result, 8 years later after a series of false starts, near misses and dead ends the Bush administration stepped back and let the new Obama administration take control.

Overall, the North Korean policy in the second term represented the victory of the moderates over the hardliners. Rice summarised the administration's second term well when she said "At least in giving the diplomatic track its best shot, the United States can't be blamed for what North Korea has done".(Rice, 2011) With the US unable to engage militarily, the administration had two reasonable choices. Firstly, they could create a sanctions regime and hope it held. This policy had been tried in the first term and had only strengthened Pyongyang's resolve, created international sanctions fatigue and hurt the administration's credibility in the region. The other option was to utilise the Six-Party talks to create a breakthrough. Taking this choice, Rice and Hill were sometimes too eager to give concessions. Yet this seemed to them like their only option. Distracted by Iraq, Katrina and the financial crisis that had begun brewing in 2008, the policy of moral clarity and a strong sanctions regime became less appealing

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among the administration key decision-makers. This is not because those inside the administration changed their minds (with the possible exception of Bush) but instead represented the change in the dominance within the foreign policy decision-making process. Now Rice, with her institutional influence, personal relationship with Bush and strong team, was able to take on and beat the heavily weakened Rumsfeld and Cheney. As more and more figures like Green, Joseph and Bolton left the administration the impediments to negotiation were removed. This, combined with the bureaucratic skill of Hill, was critical in shaping the decision-making process and helped give the negotiations one more chance. Their failure to solve the problem, with the issue remaining long after the administration represented the intractability of the North Korean issue, nonetheless gave the Obama administration an opportunity to build on the institutional framework and the good will caused by the negotiations. How Obama would approach the issue and how the North Korean's would respond to a new administration would determine how successful he would be.(Martin, 2010; Kim, 2015)

Conclusion

This thesis has created and used a comparative framework to help analyse how presidential decision-making is defined by the outcome of the advisory power balance within the decision-making process. The utility of this approach has been shown in analysing the Indo-Pacific policy of the George W. Bush administration, providing a clear example of how changes in this power balance can change the course of US foreign policy. By identifying the five factors that impact the decision-making power balance (namely institutional factors, internal decision structures, presidential factors, environmental factors and personal factors) this approach allows comparison across different periods within and between different administrations. This conclusion will be separated into three parts, one assessing the changes within the Bush administration and summarising the most significant parts of the changes and the second outlining the major contributions of the thesis to the study of American foreign policy and then the final part outlining some avenues for further research.

Bush in the Indo-Pacific: Two Terms, Two foreign policies?

The first important finding about the Bush administration's Indo-Pacific policy is that it was not constant, but reflected the growing influence of two different groups within the administration. The changes in policy reflected the waxing and the waning of the influence of key figures, as both the internal and external environments shifted. This acts in contrast to the narratives surrounding the administration as a neoconservative take over. Even for those who suggest that there would (or at the very least should) be a continuation of the Bush foreign policy, this is often suggested to be a coherent approach that follows a logical progression from the beginning to the end. (Lynch and

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Singh, 2008) Even administration insiders argue that the changes of the administration were largely tactical rather than strategic.(Cha, 2007) Though this may be true in the largest sense of the word in that main strategic interest is to keep the US safe from challenge these arguments are disingenuous. Though the changes between the two terms manifested themselves differently in the country policies, all were impacted by the changes in the decision-making power balance. In the second term, the foreign policy was based on principles of engagement and negotiations as a form of cooperative diplomacy and stability. This was different from the first term tactics of competitive relations, negotiations as coercion and challenge to the existing order. Nowhere was this more pronounced in the Indo-Pacific than in North Korean policy, where the focus on moral clarity in the first term put such restrictions on those engaging with Pyongyang that they could not deviate from a script that offered little hope for cooperative relations. In contrast, the engagement efforts from Hill and Rice were a dramatic reversal, giving numerous concessions to create a relationship of, if not trust, then mutual engagement. Though critics such as Chinoy decry the period as “a catastrophic failure in American diplomacy”, even they were clear that there was a significant change of direction, focus and tactics.(Chinoy, 2008, p. 381) The new policies from the administration were often greatly improved, focusing on a more positive form of American engagement sorely needed both in the region and in the aftermath of the collapse of American prestige post-Iraq.

One of the most significant reasons for this change was the loss of power and influence of Vice President Cheney. As many have argued, Cheney was the United States’ most powerful VP. (Gellman, 2008; Goldstein, 2010; Baker, 2013) Though the role had been growing in influence since Walter Mondale, Cheney’s influence in the first term made the VP’s position reflect the moniker of the second most powerful man in the

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world. Part of this was through institutional and internal decisions, with Cheney having a national security staff that was as large as that of JFK. He also ensured that these staff members had access and influence beyond any previous Vice President. However, this should not discount the impact Cheney's bureaucratic positioning had on the administration in the first term. Not only did he make himself indispensable to Bush, the senior advisor to an inexperienced President, he also placed key allies throughout the administration as the head of the transition. Cheney's bureaucratic manoeuvring allowed him extensive reach into other departments. However, Cheney's influence was not constant and by the end of the second term his position had been dramatically weakened. Partially this was due to the nature of the Vice Presidency. Without a huge bureaucracy, the OVP team were better placed when there was a high degree of policy flexibility. Though this initial period of strategizing was extended by the 9/11 attacks, the natural inertia and move from idea creation to policy implementation weakened Cheney and his team's ability to control the direction of the Indo-Pacific policy. Beyond this, the loss of key allies in the second term, most notably Scooter Libby and Rumsfeld, hurt the Vice President and left him as a more isolated voice. This limited the impact of his hard-line positions and resulted in his diminished role in deciding the policy direction. His role in pushing the Iraq war also hurt his reputation, leaving him with a stain that overshadowed his judgements. Finally, Cheney was less needed as the President discovered his own policy voice and became more experienced in the role. Though his expertise was still sought, Bush felt more comfortable going against his elected partner. Overall, Cheney's change in position dramatically impacted the policy environment in the Indo-Pacific.

Beyond the diminution of Cheney's influence, the other most significant change in the administration's power balance was the rise of Rice as Secretary of State. Although

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Powell had many characteristics that should have led him to be influential in the administration, he lacked the most important one: rapport with the President. As Mann suggests, out of all the Vulcans he had the highest credibility with the public and had served in the greatest range of top foreign policy positions than anyone else. (Mann, 2004b, 2020, p. 366) Yet it was his inability to create a strong personal relationship with the President that undid the former general, as he often was kept to the edge of any decisions, even in areas such as the Indo-Pacific where he played a more significant role. In contrast, Rice had been viewed as one of the worst National Security Advisers in recent US history and was widely viewed to be out of her depth. (Rothkopf, 2006; Rodman, 2009) Yet she became arguably the most successful Secretary of State in the post-Cold war era for directing an administration's foreign policy in line with her own personal preferences. Why? Most significantly, she was well trusted by Bush and was able to capitalise on the distraction over issues such as Iraq to take control of the policies in the Indo-Pacific. Part of this came from their strong personal relationship but it was also due to their similarity in views. Though Bush may have instinctually been more hard-line in his preferences over policies such as North Korea, he was willing to follow the advice of Secretary Rice due to her role as foreign policy tutor. Though her lack of coordination of the leading figures within the first term may have limited her ability to direct the foreign policy process, she essentially acted as confidante and was therefore critical in controlling the formative experiences of the new President. As such, when she took over the helm of Foggy Bottom, she had great leeway to direct the policy. She also knew how important it was to keep the relationship strong, keeping communication at a high level.

Beyond her relationship with Bush, she also developed a strong relationship with Hadley. Significantly, Rice in the first term had failed to bring the principles into a

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coordinated structure which allowed a significant amount of infighting between figures such as Powell and both Rumsfeld and Cheney. The joint promotion of her and Hadley to be Secretary of State and NSA respectively allowed her to feel supported by the White House and ensured that she would not be cut out of the decision-making as Powell was. By coordinating staff appointments, strategies and approaches both Rice and Hadley were able to dominate the decision-making process and helped to create a power balance internally that helped to push their respective policies forward. Though Hadley still had a strong relationship with the more hawkish elements of the administration, the advantages that the Pentagon and OVP had enjoyed in the first term over access and information began to decrease. The improvements in the management of the process also allowed more decisions to be brought to a head which was essential for the Indo-Pacific. In terms of India policy, the pair's respective position was critical to give the issue high attention and bureaucratic heft, ensuring that the momentum built up did not dissipate. Likewise, on issues such as North Korea, Hadley was willing to acquiesce to the Rice/Hill approaches even though he was more hawkish in his beliefs. Instead of changing the balance in the administration to favour those who favoured a more hard-line approach such as Robert Joseph and the OVP, he supported Rice and ensured there was a relative unity behind the State Department's efforts. As such, their strong connection was critical in pushing forward the more positive agenda in the second term.

Finally, this thesis has argued for putting Bush back into the narrative of his own administration. Maureen Dowd, New York Times Op-Ed contributor, once wrote a column where she characterised Bush as a "Boy Emperor" who turned to the "imperial war tutor" Donald Rumsfeld to explain why the administration was undertaking a war in Iraq.(Dowd, 2004, p. 300) Though highly exaggerated, it represents a strong

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undercurrent throughout the Bush literature that Bush was often only a bit player within his own administration. Whether this was accurate at any point is subject to debate, but clearly by the second term the President had become more engaged within the policy process and began to set out an ideological approach. Though still relying on his advisers, he was better placed to choose whose views of the Indo-Pacific region were the ones which best represented his vision for the country. In particular, it was Bush who was able to refocus the largely dormant US-India relationship to perhaps its best position if not ever at least in the post-cold war era. Not only did he allow new thinking to take priority within the administration, it was Bush who provided the necessary focus and support that allowed Rice and Hadley to move forward. Though his policy decisions may have been subject to criticism over issues like North Korea and China, the understanding of the role and his management of the process improved greatly between the first and second terms. He was also better placed to identify people closer to his mindset in the second term, giving power to those he found to closer ideologically to himself compared to relying on those figures who had significant experiences. Whilst figures such as Powell were pushed on Bush by public expectation and political expediency, by the second term Bush felt comfortable enough within himself to make decisions about who he wanted to place in key foreign positions. This was critical around most of the foreign policy priorities of the administration, but the Indo-Pacific was profoundly shaped during the period leaving a significant, if controversial, legacy in the region.

[Wider Lessons in American Foreign Policy.](#)

This thesis, though focused on the Bush administration's Indo-Pacific foreign policy, has given far-reaching implications that are more widely applicable to US foreign policy. Firstly, this thesis has argued that American foreign policy process can be best

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understood through an understanding of the power balance between advisers. Building on the work of foreign policy analysis scholars, this thesis has aimed to recentre the academic debate back on bureaucratic engagements and processes. A decision is not based purely on a rational analysis, if there could be such a thing, of what is going on in isolation from both the internal and external environment the decision is being made in. Though perhaps an obvious finding, this thesis takes the next step in giving a basis to assess the power balance between the advisers, allowing a more nuanced understanding of both who is responsible for the decisions made by an administration and how these decisions impacted the policy implementation. By using the five fluid categories of factors, this thesis develops an approach that allows change and continuity to be tracked within an administration. By showing power is not static, this thesis gives agency back to an administration and helps to provide a greater understanding of how decisions were made, remade and implemented.

The second of these contributions was the creation of a structure that allows a comparison between different administrations. By analysing the changes in power balance within an administration, it creates a list of variables that can be used to contrast between them. For example, by allowing a comparison between the role of the President it provides an opportunity to assess how a President's beliefs, personality and operational code impact the advisory power balance underneath them. By doing this, it allows the development of best practice, showing which advisor can be raised in importance and how the emphasis is placed can direct policy preferences. This thesis therefore provides the groundwork of showing that it is a worthwhile approach that should be expanded to a wider comparison of administrations' advisory frameworks. As new models, approaches and characters are appointed to different roles in a shifting institutional landscape some of these factors will be developed,

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reformed and dismissed as defining influences on the foreign policy decision-making power balance in this comparison process. This natural process from a case study analysis, as outlined in the methodological section of the paper, is a useful enterprise and hopefully there will be an opportunity for this to be developed in both the authors and others future work.

The third important finding of this thesis is that external events and pressures must be brought into the administration by its members. Each adviser will develop their own approaches to engaging with these external factors, sometimes through constructive mechanisms other times in destructive ways. However, this is an agency driven approach, one that does not treat the events occurring as independent of the foreign policy decision-maker. Most notable of these external factors in this thesis was the case of Iraq. Though Iraq had a well-documented effect on the administration's decision-making processes and subsequent legacy, its impact was interpreted in a diverse set of ways depending on the actor. In the Indo-Pacific, it often helped more moderate figures push against hard-line agendas by removing military resources and focus of key figures with the OVP and Pentagon. Especially in the second term, these figures had lost internal credibility with the President. They were less persuasive as the ramifications of the Iraq war became more apparent and were less able to utilise their outsized support from more hawkish and neoconservative communities who had achieved their most prominent goal. As such, this thesis has shown that it is worthwhile looking at the intersectionality of different policies with the environment that it is part of.

The fourth finding of this thesis was drawing some lessons about how an adviser can be more influential in different periods of time within a presidential administration. Though some of these lessons, for example the need to be close personally and

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politically to the president, are a constant throughout this analysis. However, it is also critical to identify emphasise points where some benefits have expiration dates on them. Through the interviews conducted for this thesis, a clear theme emerged that Cheney was far more influential in the first term and the immediate aftermath of the 9/11 attacks than in the second term. As perhaps the VP with the most executive branch experience of the 21st century, Cheney came into the transition and early administration with a high amount of credibility and competence that Bush lent on as he adjusted. This was then reinforced by the 9/11 attacks where Bush's lack of experience with crisis management meant that Cheney was able to become the dominant figure within the initial response and one of the most significant policy creators in the period between the attacks and the end of the first term. The lack of experience and its effect on the internal power balance was reinforced by the relative inexperience of Rice and Hadley as the head of the NSC, whilst Rumsfeld was able to utilise his experience to reinforce Cheney's policy preferences. However, the nature of a presidential administration is that previous experience becomes less influential, though never not at all, because everybody becomes more experienced as the administration ages. Especially after 9/11, something that so fundamentally changed US security policy, these figures became more qualified and therefore more confident as the administration went on meaning the experience gap drastically reduced. By the second term, this gap had been reduced so much that both Bush and Rice were far more comfortable and able to take the lead role in the foreign policy decision-making. This natural progression shows the continuous change caused by changing presidential time within an administration.

Importantly, this suggests that foreign policy advisers should be aware of the nature of time when making foreign policy decisions. As shown by the VP, sometimes

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advisers are more powerful early on. Part of this was due to the influence of Cheney as an individual, the ability to put a highly effective team together quickly and to integrate this with the White House Staff allowed them to hit the ground running. However, the nature of Presidential time meant that the early administration was a time of policy planning and creation compared to one of implementation. As policies became more set and restrained by previous decisions the emphasis of the role changes. Institutionally, the OVP was better situated to the creation of ideas and policies due to their small highly placed nature compared to later in the first and second term where the policies had begun to be set and were only able to be shifted slightly. Furthermore, people lose influence the longer they are in a position. Change is required to keep an approach fresh and powerful, especially over a period of 8 years. The stagnation in the OVP and Pentagon meant that those staff members were often drained and less able to push through their boss's interests within the administration. Though there is a significant learning curve, where people do perform better in their role after some time settling in, staying too long in an administration is likely to reduce the influence of a figure. Rice's change to the Secretary of State role allowed her to revitalise the top of Foggy Bottom, supported by a cadre of high-quality advisers. With this change in staff and greater institutional resources than she has as NSA, Rice was better placed to wield the influence of her department with fresh energy compared to the OVP and Pentagon.

Futures avenues of Research

Having offered some findings about both the Bush administration's Indo-Pacific policy specifically and the foreign policy process more generally this thesis will suggest three further avenues of research to help build on these findings. The first involves moving beyond the Indo-Pacific region within the Bush administration and

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see how the power balance defined in this thesis impacted the rest of the US foreign policy between 2001 and 2009. This would allow a better understanding of the totality of the administration and would help contribute to the next generation of research that is beginning to reevaluate the administration's foreign policy. By utilising the findings of this thesis, a more general understanding of the administration would be possible and would help show the interaction between the often-siloed country and issue specific policies that come out of an administration.

The second potential avenue of research would be to utilise the approach used in this thesis to analyse different administrations' Indo-Pacific policy and develop a comparative approach to show general trends in both American foreign policy and the bureaucratic process. This approach offers a chance to test the lessons learned in the Bush administration and to draw out greater nuance in analysing the foreign policy power balance. It also offers an opportunity to show trends across a range of administrations and track the policy towards the Indo-Pacific instead of by country analysis to create a more holistic understanding of US foreign policy towards the region in the post-Cold War era and beyond.

Finally, throughout this thesis it has often been difficult to find up to date analysis of the role of the Secretary of State. Unlike other positions which have received a significant amount of attention, including the VP and Defense Secretary, there is a large gap looking at the developments in the post-Cold War era in the predominant US foreign policy advisory position. Following on from the analysis in this thesis, an interesting and potential useful avenue of further research would be a critical comparison between the post-Cold War Secretary of States in terms of their ability to influence and dominate/be dominated within the administration's advisory power balance. This would give both a better understanding of the significant, yet sometimes

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obscured, impacts a Secretary of State makes and would allow an improved understanding of the role. With the increased prominence of Secretary of States following Rice, including Hillary Clinton, John Kerry and Mike Pompeo, this avenue could greatly improve our understanding of the foreign policy balance and how the Secretary of State interacts with it.

The Bush administration has often been defined by its role in Iraq and Afghanistan, with these two failures often obscuring the role that it played in reorienting US foreign policy towards the Indo-Pacific. This was apparent both through its approaches in dealing with both its attempts to contain major foreign policy threats, such as in North Korea, its attempts to ensure stability within the region, through its second term strategic partnership with China, and finally through its ability to develop strong relationships with key nations such as India. Though the Obama administration has been routinely credited with the first pivot to Asia, it was George Bush and his team who created a new groundwork in the 21st Century that helped allow his successor the opportunity to do so. With the Biden administration's withdrawal from Afghanistan 20 years after the 9/11 attacks and their explicit move towards thinking of the region as the Indo-Pacific instead of 'Asia' the lessons drawn from the Bush administration seem more vital than ever.

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Interview list

Author Interview with Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
and Senior Director for Asian Affairs Mike Green 22/12/2020

Author Interview with Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International
Security Robert Joseph (21/09/2019)

Author Interview with Director of the American Institute in Taiwan Dr. Douglas Paal
20/03/2020

Author interview with former State Department official Ashley Tellis 25/06/2020

Author Interview with Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson 11/11/2020

Author interview Vice Presidential Deputy National Security Advisor Steve Yates
20/03/2020

Author Interview with Comptroller of the Department of Defense Dov Zakheim
13/12/2019

Author Interview with United States Trade Representative Robert Zoellick,
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