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# Entrepreneurs Strike Back! Why and How Do They Succeed in Making Foreign Policy

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A Case Study of the  
G.W. Bush  
Administration

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# "Entrepreneurs Strike Back! Why and How Do They Succeed in Making Foreign Policy. A Case Study of the G.W. Bush Administration"

Charles-Philippe David<sup>1</sup>

*If you don't trust the process, all of a sudden you have people freelancing, trying to get around the decision-making process.....So it's very, very important when you set up shop to make certain that you have a guaranteed flow [of information], and that everybody's got their shot at the decision.*

Richard Cheney, former White House Chief of Staff, 1986<sup>2</sup>

## Abstract

*How are we to explain U.S. foreign policy of the past 10 years, particularly policy-making on national security? Who were the actors and what were the factors that produced what were, to say the least, controversial results? The 10 years of the national security state have been dominated by choices made under the G.W. Bush administration and inherited by Barack Obama. Beyond the speeches, statements and institutions, the security decisions can be seen as the work of "policy entrepreneurs." This article looks first at theoretical approaches to entrepreneurs and their influence over the formulation of national security policy, secondly at who those entrepreneurs were and how they achieved their goal of transforming U.S. security policy. Two decisions are discussed: the pre-emptive war in Iraq and the legal redefinition of torture by the Bush administration.*

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How are we to explain U.S. national security policy of the past 10 years, particularly the making of certain foreign policy and national security decisions? Who were the actors and what were the factors that produced what were, to say the least, controversial results? The 10 years of the national security state have been dominated by choices made under the G.W. Bush administration. Barack Obama inherited his predecessor's policies and, to a much greater degree than expected, continued most of them virtually intact. Looking beyond the speeches, statements and institutions, the security decisions can be seen as the

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<sup>2</sup> Cited in James Pfiffner, "The Contemporary Presidency: Decision-Making in the Bush White House," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 39 (June 2009): 364.

work of “policy entrepreneurs.” To be sure, the President initiated – or approved – the decisions that had far-reaching implications for US foreign policy (the invasion and occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq, the use of torture to fight terrorism, the reorganization of intelligence and domestic security, increased surveillance, the expansion of executive power, rising defence budgets) but in every case, influential advisors guided the policy-making process towards their ideational and organizational objectives by promoting their reading and their perceptions of the issues, and also by skilfully manipulating bureaucratic levers to redefine the security state. The security state would not be what it is today were it not for the influence of policy entrepreneurs.

This article looks at who those “entrepreneurs” were and how they achieved their goal of transforming US security policy. Two decisions are analyzed: the preventive war in Iraq (the lead-up to the 2003 invasion and its aftermath) and the legal redefinition of the concept of torture by the Bush administration. Policy entrepreneurs played a prominent role in both. Before analyzing the policy-making process in these two decisions that shaped the evolution of the US security state, we will discuss theoretical approaches to entrepreneurs and their influence over the formulation of national security policy.

## 1. Policy entrepreneurs and US foreign policy

Foreign policy *entrepreneurship* is a promising field of research which has been largely unexplored by political science thus far, although it is closely related to the study of decision-making and the human factor that drives decisions. What does the research tell us and what is the most useful analytic framework for the study of security of policy? We will cover three points here: the role of “entrepreneurs” according to decision-making theories, the seminal texts of this approach to decision-making, and conceptualisation of the variables that can help us identify and analyze the role of entrepreneurs in the Bush administration.

### *Theoretical approaches to foreign policy and entrepreneurs*

Theoreticians of international relations have shown scant interest in foreign policy and those who do rarely address decision-making theory. Cognitive and bureaucratic models are sometimes mentioned but important work on how the state shapes the international policy environment and on the construction of the “national interest” is neglected.<sup>3</sup> For example, Valerie Hudson, who pioneered the “return” to foreign policy studies in 2005, spends only two pages on decision-making and decision-makers in her landmark article.<sup>4</sup> In her major book she does devote two chapters to decision-making approaches but does not attend to the role of entrepreneurs, focusing mainly on bureaucratic gamesmanship and tactics of influence.<sup>5</sup> She acknowledges, however, that “the ground of international relations is human decision-makers” and adds: “it is in the ‘who draws ideas’ and the

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<sup>3</sup> Dario Battistella, “L’intérêt national,” in Frédéric Charillon, *Politique étrangère : nouveaux regards* (Paris: Presses de Sciences Po, 2002), 139-165.

<sup>4</sup> Valerie Hudson, “Foreign Policy Analysis: Actor-Specific Theory and the Ground of International Relations,” *Foreign Policy Analysis* 1 (March 2005): 14-15.

<sup>5</sup> Valerie Hudson, *Foreign Policy Analysis* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007), 91-95.

‘how the ideas are employed’ aspects that causes of events can be found.”<sup>6</sup> Similarly, former Defence Secretary Robert Gates commented, “I tell professors to throw those textbooks out, because at crunch time, it is personalities that count.”<sup>7</sup> Our thesis in this article could hardly be better stated.

More recently, Alex Mintz and Karl DeRouen have argued that the key is understanding how decisions are framed and manipulated to serve the interests of an individual or a group.<sup>8</sup> In this respect, the constructivist approach to foreign policy opens the door to decision analysis. The constructivists seek to theorize national interest in terms of “social constructs,” “identity” and “representations.” On this view, representatives of the state endow the world with meaning, defining it “intersubjectively” on the basis of ideas, beliefs, norms and values that ultimately produce an “international cultural structure.” But how exactly are constructs constructed? Some researchers believe that it is the power of ideas and of their exponents that, through a kind of “rhetorical coercion,” is able to convince an epistemic community within and without government of the merits of a given policy. “Idea entrepreneurs” thus advance strategies designed to influence such communities.<sup>9</sup> They try to ensure that “ideas come to be shared by enough individuals to redefine state interests and influence state policy,” and that “ideal dissenters are unable to break the grip of the emerging hegemonic discourse.”<sup>10</sup>

Other researchers argue for a genuine constructivist theory of foreign policy and national security, one capable of describing, on an empirical basis, how identities, norms, doctrines and discourses are developed and processed (applied) by the actors, in other words by policy entrepreneurs.<sup>11</sup> For example, Roxanna Sjöstedt suggests that constructivist studies “often fail to address how the information regarding a phenomenon is selected, structured, and analyzed.” In her view, in the current state of the research, constructivist theory “does not explain how a security doctrine formulation is made possible, and why the doctrine has the content it has.”<sup>12</sup>

Two avenues of decision-making research can help elucidate the role of entrepreneurs in the process. Theoreticians who adopt the bureaucratic approach attempt to explain how

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<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, 4, 121.

<sup>7</sup> Cited in Steve Yetiv, *Explaining Foreign Policy: U.S. Decision-Making and the Persian Gulf War* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 107.

<sup>8</sup> Alex Mintz and Karl DeRouen, *Understanding Foreign Policy Decision Making* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 156-157. See Yetiv, *op. cit.*, 156-184, for an illuminating example of the role of individual entrepreneurs in making foreign policy.

<sup>9</sup> Johan Eriksson and Bengt Sundelius, “Molding Minds that Form Policy: How to Make Research Useful,” *International Studies Perspectives* 6 (February 2005): 57-58 and 62-63; Ronald Krebs, “Selling the Market Short,” *International Security* 29 (Spring 2005): 196-207.

<sup>10</sup> Andrew Flibbert, “Ideas and Entrepreneurs,” in ed. Jane Cramer and Trevor Thrall, *Why Did the United States Invade Iraq?* (London: Routledge, 2012), 79-80.

<sup>11</sup> David Patrick Houghton, “Reinvigorating the Study of Foreign Policy Decision Making: Toward a Constructivist Approach,” *Foreign Policy Analysis* 3 (January 2007): 24-45.

<sup>12</sup> Roxanna Sjöstedt, “The Discursive Origins of a Doctrine: Norms, Identity, and Securitization under Harry S. Truman and George W. Bush,” *Foreign Policy Analysis* 3 (July 2007): 236 and 250.

organizations and officials manage to defend or impose their interests.<sup>13</sup> Their evidence tends to be anecdotal or superficial; they seldom ascribe individual responsibility for formulating and making decisions beyond the general assertion that “where you stand depends on where you sit” (as Graham Allison famously put it).<sup>14</sup> The bureaucratic approach assumes that decisions are the product of unpredictable bargaining among officials and reflect a sort of “collage” or compromise among the available options and actions. However, as Steve Yetiv has pointed out, this approach largely neglects the ways in which the shape of the “collage” can be significantly inflected by experienced or powerful individuals.<sup>15</sup> Amy Zegart, an expert on organizations and their ability to adapt, analyzes openings for change (some taken, most missed) within organizations and concludes that bureaucracies are likely to put up stiff resistance even where there is a strong political will to transform them. Confining her analysis to the organizational level, she evades the role of policy-making individuals and groups in overcoming such resistance and seizing “the opportunity for change.”<sup>16</sup> The dictum “personnel is policy” applies here, and the decision-makers forge bureaucratic coalitions to implement their ideas. Richard Posner convincingly demonstrated the risk that the reorganization of the intelligence community in 2005, when it was centralized under the office of the Director of National Intelligence, would in fact lead to its weakening as a result of changes wrought by policy-makers bent on forcing the intelligence organizations to adapt.<sup>17</sup>

Theoreticians who take the cognitive approach investigate the concepts and decision-making strategies that determine policy-makers’ choices.<sup>18</sup> Quite often, those choices are dictated by pressure on the decision-making group to conform to groupthink. Such conformism can be toxic. To date, analyses of groupthink have focused on the factors that induce people to conform voluntarily. One is acceptance of the legitimacy of groupthink

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<sup>13</sup> Charles-Philippe David, “Théories bureaucratiques du processus décisionnel. L’organisation de la prise de décision,” in ed. C-P David, *Théories de la politique étrangère américaine. Auteurs, concepts et débats* (Montréal: Presses de l’Université de Montréal, 2012). See Daniel Drezner, “Ideas, Bureaucratic Politics, and the Crafting of Foreign Policy,” *American Journal of Political Science* 44 (October 2000): 733-749, for a discussion of how certain ideas emerge and take hold within bureaucracies. He explores the role of entrepreneurs in building a culture within a bureaucracy and correlates their influence with their position in the government (drawing a contrast between “insulated” and “embedded” agencies).

<sup>14</sup> Steve Smith, “Bureaucratic Politics Approaches,” in ed. Michael Clarke and Brian White, *Understanding Foreign Policy* (Aldershot: Edward Elgin, 1987), 109-134; Gary Clifford, “Bureaucratic Politics,” in ed. Michel Hogan and Thomas Paterson, *Explaining the History of American Foreign Policy*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 91-102.

<sup>15</sup> Yetiv, *op. cit.*, 121-137, argues that the bureaucratic model cannot explain decision-making in the case of the Gulf War of 1990-1991 (there were no organizational rivalries or “collage” effect, and the President was able to establish a consensus and thereby curb bargaining through “top-down decision-making”).

<sup>16</sup> Amy Zegart, *Spying Blind: The CIA, the FBI, and the Origins of 9/11* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 169-197.

<sup>17</sup> Richard Posner, *Uncertain Shield: The U.S. Intelligence in the Throes of Reform* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), 55-86.

<sup>18</sup> Charles-Philippe David, “Les processus décisionnels: l’influence des facteurs cognitifs et bureaucratiques dans la formulation de la politique étrangère américaine,” in ed. Karine Prémont, *La politique étrangère: l’impossible convergence des intérêts?* (Québec City: Presses de l’Université Laval, 2011), 115-146.

when a leader is able to convince the group of the validity of his or her vision.<sup>19</sup> But recent research has shown the coercive dimension of groupthink, describing individual and organizational manoeuvring by policy-makers experienced in imposing the standards, options and actions that define the acceptable parameters within which the decision must fall, in their view.<sup>20</sup> In this sense, conformism is not the outcome of an involuntary process, the result of a desire for cohesion within a group, but rather the product of a deliberate, determined effort by various individuals. Some information and some points of view may be suppressed, some options ignored and others highlighted, the positions of some advisers favoured politically and bureaucratically. As a result, instead of allowing multiple advocacy (the authorized expression of differing points of view), the decision-making process produces uniformity and unanimity, achieved arbitrarily but effectively.<sup>21</sup> Groupthink is in fact artificial, “constructed” by policy entrepreneurs determined to stifle the free flow of information and quash genuine debate between competing options. This propensity is particularly marked among national security advisors: “they tend to succumb to the temptations of using their position to influence and manipulate rather than to guard the advisory process.”<sup>22</sup> The key texts on the subject, notably the work of Zeev Maoz, call this entrepreneurial approach “cognitive coercion.”

### *Seminal texts on policy entrepreneurs*

Maoz, the first scholar to investigate the manipulation of decision-making processes by individuals in group situations, described the influence strategies, techniques of persuasion and pressure tactics used by decision-makers to frame foreign policy.<sup>23</sup> He found four key variables: decision-making group structure, preferences of participants, decision-making procedures and context. Maoz understands manipulation as a game in which the goal is to set and control the agenda, i.e. the sequence in which the options are presented. “Decision makers [seek] to control the order of proposals in a manner that suits their preferences.”<sup>24</sup> The agenda may be manipulated formally and rationally, within a structured deliberative group, or informally by various means, such as deliberate omissions in presenting information leading to a biased description of the options (the ideational dimension), massaging the process to exclude or play down the points of view of some actors (the organizational dimension), or skilfully seizing the opportunities created by an event or crisis to radically change preferences and policies (the contextual

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<sup>19</sup> In his study of decision-making in the G.H. Bush administration, Yetiv, *op. cit.*, 140-141, argues that this applied during the Gulf War of 1990-1991. Yetiv suggests that groupthink had a relatively positive effect in that case since it did not produce a fiasco, which is one of the possible results of conformism (Yetiv calls this “the non-fiasco theory,” p. 185).

<sup>20</sup> Mark Schafer and Scott Crichlow, *Groupthink: High-Quality Decision Making in International Relations* (New York: Colombia University Press, 2010), 18-52; Michael Mazarr, “The Iraq War and Agenda-Setting,” *Foreign Policy Analysis* 3 (January 2007): 10-11.

<sup>21</sup> Schafer and Crichlow, *op. cit.*, 70.

<sup>22</sup> Paul ‘t Hart, “From Analysis to Reform of Policy-Making Groups,” in ed. Paul ‘t Hart, *Beyond Groupthink: Political Group Dynamics and Foreign Policy-Making* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997), 329.

<sup>23</sup> Zeev Maoz, “Framing the National Interest: The Manipulation of Foreign Policy Decisions in Group Settings,” *World Politics* 43 (October 1990): 77-110.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 85.

dimension). Manipulation can occur in a fairly short space of time, or in stages, when major decisions are implemented bit by bit (what Maoz calls the “salami” tactic).

Other researchers have specifically studied foreign policy entrepreneurs, but in the context of the behaviour of members of Congress. For example, Ralph Carter and James Scott consider the ideational dimension (pushing one’s view of an issue) and the organizational dimension (structuring the debate, proposing solutions and strategies) of a legislative entrepreneur’s role in theoretical terms.<sup>25</sup> Like Maoz, they focus on the direct methods (bills) and indirect methods (disclosure of information, coalition-building, pressure, public remarks) by which entrepreneurs achieve their goals. Quite often, “to be successful, entrepreneurs need to overcome the inertia of existing policy.”<sup>26</sup> Their degree of success is then measured by their ability to sway the public debate towards their values and choices, and to introduce or reframe policies in the public discussion.

In the final analysis, what is an entrepreneur? The best definition is provided by Michael Mazarr, writing from a constructivist perspective: “Policy entrepreneurs can be seen as the human embodiment of the social construction of policy....Advocates determined, for one reason or another, to fight inertia, the bureaucracy, opposing interests, and anything else in their way to get the idea through the window [of opportunity] and into law or policy.”<sup>27</sup>

How then do they go about it?

#### *The entrepreneur’s strategies in the decision-making process*

To be effective, entrepreneurs generally need to pursue three strategies. First, they must position themselves as wielders of influence within the administration’s decision-making process and master its workings. Secondly, they must take advantage of opportunities to frame the available options in the way most favourable to their view. Thirdly, they must successfully play the bureaucratic game to advance the option they advocate. For all these purposes, the entrepreneur needs strong innate qualities, and these must be taken into account in our analysis. We will look at the nature of these strategies, one by one, and the ways in which they are applied.

a) Entrepreneurs operate in a management environment that may be quite permissive or less so. Their strategy must therefore exploit the opportunities provided by the given style of policy-making. David Mitchell has looked at decision-making environments and concluded that “the kind of tactics that advisors can use to advance

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<sup>25</sup> Ralph Carter and James Scott, “Setting a Course: Congressional Foreign Policy Entrepreneurs in Post-World War II U.S. Foreign Policy,” *International Studies Perspectives* 5 (August 2004): 278-299; Ralph Carter and James Scott, “Understanding Congressional Foreign Policy Innovators: Mapping Entrepreneurs and their Strategies,” *The social Science Journal* 30 (June 2010): 1-21; Ralph Carter and James Scott, *Choosing to Lead: Understanding Congressional Foreign Policy Entrepreneurs* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009).

<sup>26</sup> Carter and Scott, “Understanding Congressional Foreign Policy Innovators...,” *op. cit.*, 17.

<sup>27</sup> Mazarr, *op. cit.*, 16.

their preferences is shaped by the kind of advisory system that they operate within.”<sup>28</sup> For example, the formal (hierarchical) model provides more advantageous conditions for policy entrepreneurs than does the collegial model.<sup>29</sup> They are better able to manipulate the process if they are close to the president and have his ear. In this type of system, the entrepreneur is able to control the framing of options. Clearly, the right person in the right place will have a better chance of manipulating the decision. Control over information is another powerful tool under the formal model; it makes it easier to set the agenda, determine the presentation of options and employ manipulative tactics. Strong centralization, which is typical under the formal model, also provides fertile ground for entrepreneurship. While weak centralization leads to endless bureaucratic in-fighting that undermines the decision-making process, very strong centralization places excessive power in the hands of a few decision-makers and advisors, whose clout is often multiplied by the fact that centralization is frequently accompanied by the dominance of groupthink. In short, the combination of a formal decision-making process, strong centralization and groupthink provides a favourable environment for policy entrepreneurs. During its first term, the Bush administration was in many respects an example of the formal model (with a dose of collegiality, which became more apparent in Bush’s second term). The first point we should consider is therefore who was in a position of authority and able to act as lead entrepreneur in promoting the war in Iraq and an idiosyncratic definition of torture during the Bush administration.

b) Entrepreneurs fight to impose their agenda in the development and presentation of options. According to Michael Mazarr, “An agenda-setting framework, then, suggests that nations make policy – make decisions, take action, ‘behave’ in certain ways – when a fortuitous combination of problems, options, events, and policy advocates comes together to spring an idea free from the gridlock of the political process.”<sup>30</sup> To elucidate how an entrepreneur in a position of authority is able to shape decisions, the analysis must embrace both the contextual and ideational dimensions. Entrepreneurs do well in a “permissive” policy environment, which is to say that there is a context, a crisis, a political debate that require the president and policy-makers to come up with fast solutions to urgent problems (in a sense, through what the constructivists call the “securitization” process). But they successfully exploit those opportunities to advance beliefs, preferences, options and policies that would not have been considered previously. In every case, they must advocate decisions that are credible, politically defensible and promise positive outcomes. There is therefore a fit between the historic moment and the entrepreneur’s ideas and preferred options that allows the entrepreneur to advance his conception of situation. He dictates the agenda, the range of options and the arguments to be considered, setting parameters that support his agenda. He assembles a coalition of advisors who share his preferences. He wins the support of organizations and their officials – or failing that marginalizes them or blocks their efforts – in order to push through the agenda he wants to promote. Surprisingly enough, in most cases a very small

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<sup>28</sup> David Mitchell, *Making Foreign Policy: Presidential Management of the Decision-Making Process* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 225.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 221-229. See also David Mitchell and Tansa Masoud, “Anatomy of Failure: Bush’s Decision-Making Process and the Iraq War,” *Foreign Policy Analysis* 5 (July 2009), 266-272.

<sup>30</sup> Mazarr, *op. cit.*, 9.



circle of advisors and policy-makers frames the agenda when major decisions are made. Once again, the Bush administration offers numerous examples that illustrate this account of agenda setting. The second point we will consider is exactly which ideas prevailed and who supported the policy entrepreneurs in the Bush administration.

c) Finally, the entrepreneur adeptly manipulates bureaucratic systems and processes. Jean Garrison, who has studied how this is done, defines manipulation as “the attempt by one or more individuals to structure a group choice situation in a manner that maximizes the chances for a favorable outcome or minimizes the chances of an unfavorable one.” According to Garrison, an individual’s influence over the decision-making group (over groupthink) is measured by his or her “ability to get his or her way against opposition in an organization.”<sup>31</sup> He derives this influence from his legitimate personal authority, his exercise of power (persuasive and coercive), his knowledge and competence. He uses various tactics that could be considered manipulative:<sup>32</sup> (1) stratagems for including or excluding participants, for bringing external participants into the decision-making process (controlling access to decision-making); (2) stratagems for influencing the direction of the debate, defining the options and determining when they will be presented to the decision-making group (controlling the content of available information and its disclosure); (3) intervening in interpersonal relationships to influence participants’ status, preferences and perceptions, while marginalizing dissenters and foot-draggers (controlling bureaucratic backing and deal-making). Often, efforts to win over some participants and exclude others are conducted through formal or informal coalitions that exploit decision-making opportunities. Clearly, then, the entrepreneur must be endowed with qualities and strengths such as charisma, reputation, knowledge, conviction, connections, motivation, experience and drive. At the same time, he does not shrink from using a wide variety of direct and indirect pressure tactics<sup>33</sup> (threats, lies, duplicity, leaks, promises, rewards and blackmail, to name just a few) to win the necessary support and impose conformism. The third and last point we will look at is how entrepreneurs manipulated the bureaucratic process to build the security state after 2001.

The entrepreneur is successful when he is the right person in the right place at the right time to guide the decision-making process in the desired direction. His success is always uncertain and is not rooted in conspiracies: it is the product of chance and of circumstances that enable the entrepreneur to manipulate the decision-making system. Many factors, both personal and bureaucratic, come into play, and a single one can hamper or ruin attempts at manipulation. To return to our three requirements, the right person at the wrong place or the wrong time will meet with little success as an entrepreneur. We will now consider how and why policy entrepreneurs were able to exert such strong influence over certain security policies under the Bush administration.

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<sup>31</sup> Jean Garrison, *Games Advisors Play* (College Station: A&M University Press, 1999), 20-21.

<sup>32</sup> Paul Hoyt and Jean Garrison, “Political Manipulation within the Small Group: Foreign Policy Advisers in the Carter Administration,” in ed. Paul ‘t Hart, *op. cit.*, 249-269; Garrison, *op. cit.*, 3-28; Yetiv, *op. cit.*, 157-158 (an analysis of the entrepreneurial role played by G.H. Bush).

<sup>33</sup> In his discussion of presidential decision management models, ‘t Hart, *op. cit.*, p. 49, calls these pressure tactics “vertical” when they are “hierarchical” and “horizontal” when they are “collegial.” See also Dina Badie, “Groupthink, Iraq, and the War on Terror,” *Foreign Policy Analysis* 6 (October 2010): 279-281.

## 2. Policy entrepreneurs and the security state under Bush

Two decisions were particularly critical in transforming US policy on national and homeland security over the last 10 years. They relate to two key issues in the debates over the US response to 9/11. Our case studies will analyze the decisions on preventive war (the invasion of Iraq and its consequences) and the expansion of presidential power (the legal redefinition of torture). We will show that entrepreneurs – individuals and organizations – played a critical role that helps explain US decisions and policy directions under the Bush administration.

### *Preventive war: the invasion and occupation of Iraq*

We will not attempt to cover all the decisions related to the invasion and subsequent occupation of Iraq.<sup>34</sup> Rather, we will look at the role played in 2002 by the chief entrepreneur behind this move that proved so costly for the Bush administration: Vice President Richard Cheney. He masterfully led the effort to justify and implement the decisions on the invasion of Iraq, with some strong support (including that of President Bush). Five years later, as the invasion had not yielded the expected results, other entrepreneurs succeeded in redefining the American occupation strategy.

a) While the President did make the decision (at quite an early stage) to carry out the invasion, Cheney was probably the most influential entrepreneur behind the decision. He was the advisor who spearheaded the effort to effect ideational change and to forge an organizational coalition in support of the decision, by means of fear-mongering about weapons of mass destruction and support for neocon advisors who had long been working within the administration to sell and implement the Iraqi “regime change” option.<sup>35</sup> “Without Cheney and his network of neoconservatives, whom he strategically placed throughout the defense establishment, the United States would most likely have limited its war on terrorism to crushing al-Qaida in Afghanistan.”<sup>36</sup> The consensus among observers is that Cheney proved to be one of the most powerful Vice Presidents in

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<sup>34</sup> See Charles-Philippe David, Julien Tournelle and Karine Prémont, *L'erreur: l'échec américain en Irak, cinq ans plus tard* (Quebec City: Septentrion, 2008); Fredrik Logevall, “Anatomy of an Unnecessary War: The Iraq Invasion,” in ed. Julian Zelizer, *The Presidency of George W. Bush: A First Historical Assessment* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 88-113.

<sup>35</sup> Colin Campbell argues that the neocons in the administration engaged in “unrestrained ideological entrepreneurship” on a large scale, a legacy of their long battle to dislodge Saddam Hussein in the 1990s: “As with elephants, they have long memories.” See “Unrestrained Ideological Entrepreneurship in the Bush Advisory System,” in ed. Colin Campbell and Bert Rockman, *The George W. Bush Presidency: Appraisals and Prospects* (Washington: CQ Press, 2004), 82. Mazarr, *op. cit.*, 1-8, 11-13, 17, takes a similar view. On the other hand, Jane Cramer and Eric Duggan, “In pursuit of Primacy,” in Cramer and Thrall, *op. cit.*, 210-220 and 230-238, argue that the neocons did not have to persuade the decision-makers of the merits of the Iraq invasion because they were already convinced (particularly Cheney but also Rumsfeld and Bush himself) and simply used the neocons’ arguments to sell a war they had always wanted to start, for reasons of US dominance rather than “Wilsonian idealism”: “In the case of each of these top leaders, there was already a strong desire to remove Saddam Hussein before taking office” (213).

<sup>36</sup> Shirley Anne Warshaw, *The Co-Presidency of Bush and Cheney* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 7.

history, a sort of *de facto* “co-president” or “assistant president” – ironically enough, since he had no personal presidential ambitions.<sup>37</sup> Cheney was a real leader of the executive branch, with a finger in every decision. Always at the President’s side, vested with significant powers, he turned out to be the ideal complement to Bush’s personality and enjoyed the President’s full confidence. He was calm, determined and experienced; he had an extensive network of loyal allies whom he had placed in positions within the administration (most notably Donald Rumsfeld and Paul Wolfowitz at Defense) and vigorously leveraged the Office of the Vice President, which he reorganized into a “mini-NSC,”<sup>38</sup> appointing a Chief of Staff (Lewis Libby), a National Security Advisor (John Hannah), and more than a dozen assistants (such as David Addington) dedicated to spreading his vision throughout the administration. And he had the President’s ear in private, particularly on foreign policy issues, bypassing scrutiny by the policy committees that included the administration’s top foreign policy officials. He was feared by the other decision-makers; many of them (including Secretary of State Colin Powell, CIA Director George Tenet and National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice) proved to be no match for the Vice President – certainly not on Iraq. Cheney served as Bush’s *de facto* national security advisor and Bush followed his recommendations to the letter. He knew how to frame the options so as to convince the President and he did it better than anyone else. He was wholly opposed to free and open debate on the options prior to reaching a decision, pushing for limited access to the deliberations.<sup>39</sup> In Cheney’s view, the President enjoyed near-absolute power and had virtually untrammelled constitutional authority on issues of war and national security, including the right to implement certain policies behind the cloak of secrecy (as our second case study will illustrate).<sup>40</sup> In short, “the Vice President saw himself as the man responsible for teeing decisions up for the president.”<sup>41</sup>

b) Cheney therefore became the entrepreneur-in-chief on a number of controversial decisions related to the US government’s response on September 11, 2001, the war on terror, and especially the invasion of Iraq. He took advantage of the trauma of 9/11 to redefine at the ideational level the objectives of US foreign policy and to justify the idea of preventive war, among other things.<sup>42</sup> The time was right: no one in the administration would openly challenge the doctrine. Cheney “was the architect of the policies to go to war.”<sup>43</sup> He seized and exploited the opportunities created by the post-9/11 political climate and became the public face of the argument for a firm link between

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<sup>37</sup> Barton Gellman, *Angler: The Cheney Vice Presidency* (New York: Penguin, 2008), 388; Craig Unger, *The Fall of the House of Bush* (New York: Scribner, 2007), 181-214; Joel Goldstein, “Cheney, Vice Presidential Power, and the War on Terror,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 40 (March 2010): 102-139.

<sup>38</sup> David Rothkopf, *Running the World: The Inside Story of the National Security Council* (New York: Public Affairs, 2005), 419-428. Also by Rothkopf, “Inside the Committee that Runs the World,” *Foreign Policy* 147 (March/April 2005): 37-38. Cheney’s staff was larger than the entire NSC under Kennedy.

<sup>39</sup> Gellman, *op. cit.*, 86-87.

<sup>40</sup> Jacob Weisberg, *The Bush Tragedy* (New York: Random House, 2008), 145-182; Barton Gellman and Jo Beker, “A Different Understanding with the President,” *Washington Post*, June 24, 2007, A1 ff.

<sup>41</sup> Gellman, *op. cit.*, 118; Cramer and Duggan, *op. cit.*, 230-237, describe Cheney’s longstanding, partisan advocacy of a powerful executive branch unfettered by Congress.

<sup>42</sup> The Vice President’s famous “1% doctrine” was applied to weapons of mass destruction and Iraq: “Even if there’s just a one percent chance of the unimaginable coming due, act as if it is a certainty.” Cited in Ron Suskind, *The One percent Doctrine* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2007), 62.

<sup>43</sup> Warsaw, *op. cit.*, 205.

Saddam Hussein and Al-Qaeda, and for evidence of weapons of mass destruction (including nuclear arms) in Iraq. He made use of allies (Paul Wolfowitz, Douglas Feith and Abram Schulsky at Defence, Stephen Hadley and Zalmay Khalilzad at the NSC, John Bolton at the State Department) and the singular bureaucratic structures they created (the Pentagon Office of Special Plans) to undermine the CIA's more balanced point of view; and he publicly espoused a demonstration of American might against Iraq on the grounds that Iraq had breached its promises to disarm.<sup>44</sup> During the march towards the decision to invade, Cheney dispelled all doubts within the administration, with the support of Rumsfeld (and of course Bush), and allowed only pro-invasion arguments to be heard (claiming the role of "arbiter" in the formal decision-making system). He achieved near-absolute control over the bureaucracy by drawing on his coalition within the administration and deftly managing interdepartmental committees to marginalize or contain dissident points of view from the State Department and elsewhere. The administration's hawks exerted pressures of all kinds to informally elicit or formally impose conformism on Iraq.<sup>45</sup> The decision-making process was therefore subordinated to the agenda of a small clique of senior officials who dominated the government. "The entire national security apparatus had effectively been disabled and replaced by a parallel national security apparatus....it was a stealth organization."<sup>46</sup> Consequently, the options were not surveyed through the usual NSC process and the recommendations were sharply truncated as a result of the efforts of an entrepreneur-in-chief determined to exploit any information, no matter how biased or indeed suspect, in order to legitimate the invasion. (His role and that of his staff in feeding Powell information for his appearance at the UN in February 2003 was a compelling demonstration of his power). Because of the scheming, the decision-making process leading up to the invasion was incomplete, in the opinion of most observers. It operated in an isolated, authoritarian and ineffective way, under the aegis of an acquiescent, obliging President.<sup>47</sup> "Despite ample warnings, the administration's illusion of invulnerability prevented them from sufficiently accounting for the potential risks."<sup>48</sup> The "cognitive coercion" prompted a form of groupthink that was relatively impervious to prudent or dissident points of view. (For example, Powell tried to stand up to Cheney several times but was unsuccessful). "In the end, responsibility for the war in Iraq rested squarely on Dick Cheney's shoulders," comments political scientist Shirley Warshaw.<sup>49</sup>

c) After the invasion, Cheney opined that the insurgency was in its "last throes" (in fact it would last five years). The Vice President was the architect of the entry into Iraq but not of the exit. The "surge" strategy, which boosted the number of US soldiers deployed in Iraq in late 2006 and early 2007, is another illustration of the role played by

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<sup>44</sup> Did the foreign policy entrepreneurs always believe their own discourse? Ironically, the same Cheney stated in 1994 that "occupying Iraq [in 1991] would have alienated the Arab nations and led to a quagmire that would have cost considerable American lives." Cited in Carl and Lou Cannon, *Reagan's Disciple: George W. Bush's Troubled Quest for a Presidential Legacy* (New York: Public Affairs, 2008), 247.

<sup>45</sup> Badie, *op. cit.*, 284-288.

<sup>46</sup> Unger, *op. cit.*, 299.

<sup>47</sup> See Schafer and Crichlow, *op. cit.*, 211-236.

<sup>48</sup> Badie, *op. cit.*, 291.

<sup>49</sup> Warshaw, *op. cit.*, 239.

foreign policy entrepreneurs.<sup>50</sup> The case is distinctive in that the entrepreneurs were, in part, actors from outside the government (generals, think tank analysts, professors) who had the support of advisors inside the administration. Another specific feature of this case is that it was National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley who played the lead role the adoption of the new policy, with the firm support of President Bush – despite hostility in the political environment, which was cool to the surge. Without the pressure exerted by the entrepreneurs, the President’s will alone would not have sufficed and the surge would not have been possible. The new policy grew out of dissatisfaction with the Iraq fiasco on the part of retired generals (notably Jack Keane), some serving generals (David Petraeus, Raymond Odierno), researchers at the American Enterprise Institute (Fred Kagan), academics (Eliot Cohen, Stephen Biddle), and NSA Hadley and his staff (Meghan O’Sullivan, William Luti, J.D. Crouch) in 2006. This coalition of entrepreneurs urged a dramatic change in US strategy, even as a public commission was calling for the military commitment to be scaled back. After a 12-month gestation period, “a few insiders, led by Keane, managed to persuade President Bush to adopt a new, more effective [counter-insurgency] strategy.”<sup>51</sup> The pitch for a change in course was made entirely outside the usual decision-making system and the NSC decision-making forum, notably at an informal meeting between the coalition and the President at Camp David in mid-June 2006. Bush was convinced, and the NSA and his staff were given free rein to push the surge through the bureaucracy and interdepartmental committees. (Significantly, it had the support of Cheney and his officials.) Throughout the fall, Hadley and his officials hammered out the new policy, against strong resistance from senior officials in the State Department and the CIA, as well as the military.<sup>52</sup> On December 11, Bush decided, in the presence of the informal coalition of advisors, to go ahead with the surge and send another 20,000 soldiers to fight in Iraq. Petraeus and Odierno were assigned to lead the military operations and rewrite the war plan, with the help of colonels such as H.R. McMaster, who were recruited for the cause. They redefined the doctrine and produced a new counter-insurgency manual in a short space of time. The President played a singular and prominent role in the shift. “I decided a change in strategy was needed,” Bush said.<sup>53</sup> He went to the Pentagon to listen to the rebel generals and colonels, held formal meetings to hear opposing recommendations and opinions, and decided in late 2006 to approve the surge. The decision received reluctant support from his Cabinet (including Secretary of State Rice, who had strong misgivings), the top military brass (particularly the Chief of Staff of the Army, who backed the decision in public), Congress and public opinion. However, as the strategy proved successful in 2007-2008, it won over almost all the decision-makers. In this case, manipulation of the decision-making process by a clique of entrepreneurs determined to shift US public opinion produced favourable results.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> On the adoption of this policy, see Fred Barnes, “How Bush Decided on the Surge,” *The Weekly Standard* 13 (February 4, 2008); Peter Feaver, “The Right to Be Right: Civil-Military Relations and the Iraq Surge Decision,” *International Security* 35 (Spring 2011), 87-125.

<sup>51</sup> T. Ricks, *The Gamble* (New York: Penguin, 2009), 9.

<sup>52</sup> For an account of the opposition, see Bob Woodward, *The War Within: A Secret White House History* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2008), 230-239.

<sup>53</sup> G.W. Bush, *Decision Points* (New York: Crown, 2010), 371.

<sup>54</sup> B. Woodward, *op. cit.*, discusses the important role played by NSA Hadley, who unlike Rice dictated an approach to decision-making better suited to the President’s style. Hadley and Bush “had managed – quite artfully, they thought – to circumvent the normal chain of command” (266).

*Expansion of presidential power: the legal redefinition of torture*

Individuals are important but so are organizations. For example, the Justice Department's Office of Legal Council (OLC), a tiny unit, set the agenda for the reinterpretation of US policy on the implementation of international conventions against torture. The entrepreneur who spearheaded the redefinition of standards in this area, invoking an "inherent executive power" to protect national security, was John Yoo, deputy assistant attorney general in the OLC. He had the support of Jay Bybee (director of the OLC), Patrick Philbin (deputy assistant attorney general in the OLC), William Haynes (general counsel at the Defense Department), and most importantly David Addington (legal counsel to Cheney) to conduct a large-scale operation to justify the expansion of executive power and the legal use of torture, a conundrum he deftly resolved in his legal memos to the office of the Vice President which provided the legal foundation for the approval of "enhanced interrogation techniques." "Addington insisted on strict secrecy, preventing the circulation of drafts to agencies that might challenge Yoo's analysis."<sup>55</sup> In the end, it was Addington who drafted the historic rules, directives and executive orders. He had the decisions endorsed not only by Cheney but also by White House counsel Alberto Gonzales and his deputy, Timothy Flanigan, who worked hand in hand to set a new agenda legitimating the use of torture.

a) Who were these entrepreneurs?<sup>56</sup> First of all Yoo, a law professor at Berkeley, was recruited by Attorney General John Ashcroft to write legal opinions for the government. These firmly defended the President's use of absolute discretionary power in security-related matters and supported the expansion of executive authority in crisis situations, precisely what transpired after 9/11. The expansion of authority extended not only to laws and treaties but also to torture, wiretapping (on US territory, which is normally illegal) and arbitrary detention of prisoners accused of terrorism (the famous "illegal combatants"). Yoo belonged to the "interventionist" school of constitutional law, which holds that US law takes precedence over international law. Philbin then supported Yoo's opinion by drawing parallels between the situation in 2001 and the circumstances that led to the internment of Japanese in the US in 1942, under the F.D. Roosevelt administration. Finally, Addington, the Vice President's long-time chief of staff, was the most formidable of advisors. Jack Goldsmith, who worked with him, recalls that Addington was feared by officials "as the best-informed, savviest, and most conservative lawyer in the administration."<sup>57</sup> According to participants in the process, Yoo, Philbin and Addington transformed the OLC, which is normally impartial and as objective as possible, into a propaganda tool to justify the decisions on torture, military commissions

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<sup>55</sup> Gellman, *op. cit.*, 136.

<sup>56</sup> Jane Mayer, *The Dark Side: The Inside Story of How the War on Terror Turned into a War on American Ideals* (New York: Doubleday, 2008); John Yoo, *The Powers of War and Peace: The Constitution and Foreign Affairs After 9/11* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005); David Cole, "The Man Behind the Torture," *The New York Review of Books* (December 6, 2007): 38-43; David Luban, "The Defense of Torture," *The New York Review of Books* (March 15, 2007): 37-40; Hudson, *op. cit.*, 95-101; Weisberg, *op. cit.*, 174-176.

<sup>57</sup> Jack Goldsmith, *The Terror Presidency: Law and Judgment Inside the Bush Administration* (New York: Norton, 2007), 27.

and the conversion of the Guantanamo base into a prison for illegal combatants. In Goldsmith's view, the OLC "was excessively legalistic, because it often substituted legal analysis for political judgment."<sup>58</sup> Never before had the OLC and the legal advisors to the President and the Vice President acted so vigorously and so closely in concert to set a specific legal agenda, strong-arming or silencing unwilling officials. According to Yoo's successor, "the OLC gave the White House freer reign to do as it wished, and to insist that others do so as well."<sup>59</sup>

b) What convincing theses did the OLC put forward and who supported them?<sup>60</sup> The starting point was the sensitive issue of what to do with "illegal" combatants captured in Afghanistan. In an opinion drafted in early November 2001, Yoo maintained that the US government was under no obligation to grant them any legal protection (on the grounds that no international treaty, including the Geneva conventions on the treatment of prisoners of war, applied). Arbitrary detention by US forces was therefore authorized. At a private lunch with the President on November 13, Cheney had Bush sign the famous executive order stripping detainees of all legal rights and establishing the military commissions, based solely on this legal opinion and ignoring Ashcroft's objections in principle. The gates of Guantanamo were opened to create a detention centre beyond the reach of US law, Cuban law or international law. The decision was made by a handful of people (with Bush bearing responsibility for the reasoning and the consequences<sup>61</sup>) without input from Rice, Powell, Tenet or their legal advisors, none of whom were involved in the discussions with the President. It was a snap decision made over a private meal and announced on CNN before the Secretary of State was even informed. It also raised a still more serious issue: the authorized use of torture. Precisely what ill treatment could CIA agents and military police inflict on detainees to make them talk and prevent another terrorist attack? On January 9, 2002, in another secret memo, Yoo repeated the same legal arguments he had made two months earlier and added that the Geneva conventions on war crimes, and specifically the convention against torture, also did not apply to the detainees (often accused of being Al-Qaeda members). Bybee and Addington then wrote a series of memos (actually legal opinions) arguing that tough interrogation methods could not be considered torture. Yoo deemed the methods to be within the President's constitutional powers as commander-in-chief. The memos were

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<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 102.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 132.

<sup>60</sup> The legal discussion is fully analyzed by David Cole, "They Did Authorize Torture, But..." *The New York Review of Books* (April 8, 2010), 42-43; "The Torture Memos: The Case Against the Lawyers," *The New York Review of Books* (October 8, 2009), 14-16; and "What Bush Wants to Hear," *The New York Review of Books* (November 17, 2005), 8-12; Elizabeth Drew, "Power Grab," *The New York Review of Books* (June 22, 2006), 10-15. See also Mary Dudziak, "A Sword and a Shield: The Uses of Law in the Bush Administration," in Zelizer, *op. cit.*, 39-58; Pfiffner, *op. cit.*, 368-374; Goldstein, *op. cit.*, 115-121; Goldsmith, *op. cit.*, 99-140 and 165-176; Gellman, *op. cit.*, 159-194 and 277-326; Barton Gellman and Jo Becker, "Pushing the Envelope on Presidential Power," *Washington Post*, June 25, 2007, A1.

<sup>61</sup> In his memoirs, Bush acknowledged: "On 9/11, it was obvious the law enforcement approach to terrorism had failed...Had I not authorized waterboarding on senior al Qaeda leaders, I would have had to accept a greater risk that the country would be attacked...I approved the use of the interrogation techniques...The CIA interrogation program saved lives...America went seven and a half years without another successful terrorist attack on our soil. If I had to summarize my most meaningful accomplishment as president in one sentence, that would be it." Bush, *op. cit.*, 154, 169, 171 and 181.

forwarded to Gonzales throughout January 2002 for the President's approval. Bush signed an executive order on February 7, over Powell's repeated objections. Two other Yoo opinions issued on August 1, which remain secret to this day, were used by Addington, Bybee and Haynes to convince policy-makers to officially endorse the use of unorthodox methods, including waterboarding. Those methods had in fact been practiced since the spring but it was not until the summer of 2002 that Bush approved them, on Cheney's and Gonzales' recommendation, and informed Ashcroft, Rice, Powell, Tenet and Rumsfeld. They were then used regularly until the Obama administration took office. Once again, the President's decision was not preceded by any discussions or formal deliberations among the decision-makers (although some of them, including Rice and Rumsfeld, had been informed that such methods were being used and had acquiesced). Most notably, no documents were sent to Powell and Taft; the State Department was not even asked for its opinion. According to Goldsmith, "Important legal decisions in the Bush administration...were made by a very small and largely like-minded group of lawyers, and announced, if at all, without outside consultation."<sup>62</sup> The work of the OLC's legal experts basically served to rationalize predetermined legal opinions.

c) What tactics did the entrepreneurs use to manipulate the bureaucratic process on the redefinition of torture?<sup>63</sup> If Yoo was the sire of the memos on torture, Addington was their midwife. In January 2002, to counter the strenuous objections expressed in a memo from State Department counsel William Taft IV, who challenged Yoo's analysis of arbitrary detention of illegal combatants, Addington leaked unflattering rumours about Powell's views to the *Washington Times*, describing him as the defender of terrorists' rights within the administration. The State Department was accused of coddling terrorists, the most grievous sin four months after 9/11!<sup>64</sup> Later, there would be internal recriminations about the harsh interrogation methods. At the time, NSA counsel John Bellinger's contrary opinions, which he submitted to Rice, were forwarded to the office of the Vice President by Deputy NSA Hadley without Bellinger's knowledge. Addington and Flanagan monitored and channelled the bureaucratic process in order to enforce the executive orders they had solicited. Military lawyers from each branch of the armed forces and Bush's counter-terrorism advisor Fran Townsend, who all disagreed vigorously with the executive orders, were upbraided by Addington, Haynes, Wolfowitz and Feith.<sup>65</sup> The electronic surveillance program was also developed and supervised entirely by the Vice President's office ("Cheney's brainchild"<sup>66</sup>), a first in the annals of

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<sup>62</sup> Goldsmith, *op. cit.*, 206.

<sup>63</sup> Unger, *op. cit.*, 219-224; Warshaw, *op. cit.*, 230-235; Zelizer, *op. cit.*, 32-38; Timothy Naftali, "George W. Bush and the 'War on Terror'," in Zelizer, *op. cit.*, 59-87.

<sup>64</sup> On the tense relations between the White House and the State Department, particularly between Addington and Taft, concerning the treatment of detainees and the interpretation of the Geneva Conventions, see Karen DeYoung, *Soldier: The Life of Colin Powell* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 2006), 364-372.

<sup>65</sup> Gellman and Becker, *op. cit.*, A1. At the Pentagon, the generals (particularly Joint Chief of Staff Richard Myers) and the civilian decision-makers (Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz and Feith) were usually silent, sometimes proactive accomplices in the use of torture, starting in the spring of 2002. See Philippe Sands, *Torture Team: Rumsfeld's Memo and the Betrayal of American Values* (London: Palgrave, 2008); also by Sands, "The Complicit General," *The New York Review of Books* (September 24, 2009): 20-24; and David Cole, "What to Do About the Torturers?" *The New York Review of Books* (January 15, 2009), 20-24.

<sup>66</sup> Goldstein, *op. cit.*, 116.



intelligence. “Addington, armed with Cheney’s proxy, kept the program secret not just from Congress and the courts, but from the NSC.”<sup>67</sup> Their methods stoked a near-rebellion by disgruntled senior officials, including Deputy Attorney General James Comey and Jack Goldsmith, who replaced Yoo at the OLC in October 2003.<sup>68</sup> Goldsmith soon became convinced that “Cheney and Addington manipulated the legal advice they sought [from Yoo].”<sup>69</sup> He disputed all the premises of Yoo’s opinions. In March 2004, a full-blown crisis was averted when Bush reluctantly agreed to modify the wiretapping program, over Cheney’s furious objections. Had he not done so, he would have been faced with the resignations of a half-dozen disaffected advisors, including Comey and Goldsmith, and a refusal by the Department of Justice to approve renewal of the program.<sup>70</sup> However, the damage was done. Goldsmith’s successor, Steven Bradbury, brought the OLC back into the Vice President’s ideological fold after his appointment in March 2005. Regular memos legitimating the use of “enhanced” interrogation methods again emanated from the obliging OLC. Neither Guantanamo nor the redefinition of torture would be questioned during the remainder of the Bush presidency.

## Conclusion

Behind the G.W. Bush administration’s most important national security decisions are the hidden hands of policy entrepreneurs who were able to take advantage of the opportunities afforded by a centralized, hierarchical decision-making system to pull government policy in a direction consistent with their ideas and aims. Our case studies of the invasion and occupation of Iraq and the legal redefinition of torture show that the administration’s core national security policies were developed and pushed through by a small clutch of players (see Table 1).

That select club included the ubiquitous Richard Cheney, who was involved in every battle and played a central role in our two case studies. His actions were directed towards an unchanging general objective: to secure uncontested leadership on national security matters for the President, ignoring the balance of powers and even the merits of debate within the decision-making team. Cheney was unique among entrepreneurs in the Bush administration in that he was also the architect of the decision-making system he was exploiting.

We can therefore draw four lessons concerning the security state and policy entrepreneurs. First, a policy entrepreneur will have more influence over the decision-making process if he is able to shape the decision-making environment before it becomes clear which way the wind is blowing.

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<sup>67</sup> Unger, *op. cit.*, 221.

<sup>68</sup> The new counsel strongly challenged Yoo’s judgement on virtually every legal opinion sent to the White House after September 2001. In June 2004, Goldsmith withdrew and disavowed Yoo’s memos and then resigned to write his memoirs, *op. cit.*, in which he sought to set the record straight and argued against Yoo’s opinion on executive power.

<sup>69</sup> Gellman, *op. cit.*, 287.

<sup>70</sup> Some observers have compared this episode to the clashes between Nixon and Justice Department officials during Watergate. See for example Gellman, “Conflict Over Spying Led White House to Brink,” *The Washington Post* (September 14, 2008), A1.

Secondly, our studies suggest that opponents of the policy entrepreneurs, both at the White House and in rival agencies within the executive branch, had little influence over policy development. In the case of Iraq as in that of the legal redefinition of torture, the entrepreneurs focused on controlling the flow of information and limiting access to the closed circles of decision-making, enabling them to skirt the usual bureaucratic processes (multiple advocacy, bargaining, expert input).

Thirdly, while the entrepreneurs’ strategies varied widely depending on circumstances and the actors involved (see Table 1), some constants can be discerned. The factors that enabled them to dominate the decision-making process were largely the same: a clear strategic vision of ends and means, an ability to withstand the fits and starts of a drawn-out decision-making process (which are often but not always foreseeable), a willingness to play dirty in an ostensibly collegial decision-making process that actually lends itself to manipulation of information, *ad hominem* attacks, underhanded manoeuvres, *ad hoc* alliances and coalitions of convenience.

Fourthly, the policy entrepreneurs all seem to possess leadership qualities, but their style of leadership is distinguished by the unorthodox methods they use to achieve their goals.

It must be said that the Bush administration’s response to post-9/11 security challenges was dominated by power games that continued to affect the course of events well after G.W. Bush’s departure from the White House. That is a telling indication of the impact of the entrepreneurs who played the lead role in defining and formulating national security policy. The policies introduced by those entrepreneurs have had such far-reaching effects that only new entrepreneurs, as determined as their predecessors, will be able to change the direction of US national security policy and budge its national security apparatus.

Table 1: National security policy entrepreneurs in the Bush administration

		Who were the main entrepreneurs?	Who supported their ideas? ( <i>Names in brackets were not part of the government</i> )	What tactics did they use to achieve their ends?
<b>Preventive war</b>	Invasion and occupation of Iraq	Richard Cheney	Paul Wolfowitz, Douglas Feith, Stephen Hadley, Zalmay Khalilzad, John Bolton, Donald Rumsfeld	Controlling the entire decision-making system
	The surge	Stephen Hadley, David Petraeus, Raymond Odierno	(Jack Keane), (Eliot Cohen), (Stephen Biddle), Megan O’Sullivan, William Luti, Jack Dyer Crouch, H. R. McMaster	Directly convincing President Bush of the need for a radical change in strategy and the new plan’s chances of success, against majority opinion
<b>Legal redefinition of torture</b>		John Yoo, Jay Bybee, Patrick Philbin, William Haynes, David Addington, Richard Cheney	Alberto Gonzales, Timothy Flanigan, Stephen Hadley, Paul Wolfowitz, Douglas Feith, Steven Bradbury	Leaks to the press to discredit Powell and the State Department, ongoing monitoring of the bureaucratic process