

Selling War: How the Bush Administration Marketed the Second Iraq War to the American Public

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ABSTRAKT

Tato bakalářská práce zkoumá použití politiky strachu jakožto součásti rétoriky vlády George W. Bushe za účelem získání podpory americké veřejnosti pro druhou válku v Iráku. Pro shrnutí všech prvků, kterými vláda vyvolávala strach mezi Američany, byl vytvořen pojem „prvky teroru“. Na jednu stranu je tato práce zaměřena na veřejné proslovy, na kterých je ilustrováno využívání prvků teroru a na druhou stranu práce dokládá význam použití politiky strachu na výsledcích průzkumů veřejného mínění.

Klíčová slova: Spojené státy americké, George W. Bush, druhá válka v Iráku, politika strachu, rétorika, útoky 11. září, teror, Al Kaida, Saddám Hussein, zbraně hromadného ničení, výsledky průzkumů veřejného mínění.

ABSTRACT

This thesis documents the use of the politics of fear in Bush administration rhetoric in order to gain the American public support for the Second Iraq War. A so-called “terror frame” represents all the elements used by the administration to initiate fear among Americans. On one hand the thesis focuses on the public speeches to exemplify the use of this terror frame in administration rhetoric, while on the other hand it evinces the importance of the politics of fear on the actual polling data.

Keywords: The United States of America, George W. Bush, Second Iraq War, politics of fear, rhetoric, September 11th attacks, terror, Al-Qaeda, Saddam Hussein, weapons of mass destruction, polling data.

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INTRODUCTION

“If America will show uncertainty or weakness in this decade, the world will drift to a tragedy. This will not happen on my watch.”¹ Such was the statement of U.S. President George W. Bush at the 2004 Republican National Convention. Most might view this short statement simplistically, but in fact it encapsulates the main agenda of US foreign policy based on what is now referred to as the Bush Doctrine.² On 20 March 2003 the United States invaded Iraq as another step in the War on Terror presented by President Bush as a way of dealing with a new kind of enemy threatening democracy. With the decision to attack, one of the most hotly debated military actions in modern history began. Despite numerous discussions and objections, the plan to invade Iraq had wide-ranging support among Americans. The majority of experts, sociologists and public opinion researchers estimated a much lower percentage of Americans supporting President Bush in this particular decision than the actual polling data testify.³ But the question remains: What was the crucial element in shaping public opinion that turned out to be so effective and provided President Bush with such wide support? The answer seems to be very complex and many scholars have proposed valid explanations. But, there is one factor they all have in common that can be found by reading between the lines, one thing that explains why Americans did not need trustworthy evidence of Iraq running a nuclear program, one thing that gives sense to the different approaches to the war between Americans and Europeans, and one thing that illustrates Bush’s way of managing his administration: Fear. As this thesis will prove, George W. Bush and his administration successfully marketed the Second Iraq War to the American public through the politics of fear.

¹ George W. Bush, “2004 Republican National Convention Address,” (September 2, 2004), <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/convention2004/georgewbush2004rnc.htm> (accessed March 7, 2012).

² Robert Jervis, “Understanding the Bush Doctrine,” *Political Science Quarterly* 118 (2003): 365-388.

³ Amy Gershkoff and Shana Kushner, “Shaping Public Opinion: The 9/11-Iraq Connection in the Bush Administration’s Rhetoric,” *Perspectives on Politics* 3, No. 3 (Sep., 2005): 525-537.

1 POLITICS OF FEAR

According to psychologist Daniel Gilbert and neurobiologist Michael Fanselow, taking into account the most effective persuasion techniques applicable on the American public regarding the Second Iraq War, from the point of view of both advertising and politics, the use of the politics of fear seems to provide the most solid and persisting results.⁴ Fear has long played a significant role in the U.S. advertising business. It is no coincidence that arguably the most persuasive and successful commercial in the U.S. history was a 1984 Apple commercial, which made use of elements of the Second Red Scare of communism during the Cold War.⁵ However, fear is widely used not only to sell products but also ideas and policies. The use of fear in U.S. politics in order to persuade the public gained its importance especially during World War II and the Cold War.⁶ Given the history and importance of the use of fear during the period of the Cold War, it can be assumed that the American public unconsciously accepted the politics of fear as a viable persuasive technique.

President Bush and his administration realized shortly after the attacks of September 11th that they would most probably persuade the American public very effectively using the politics of fear. The elaborate propaganda that the Bush administration started after the September 11th attacks gained its full extent in selling the Second Iraq War when the “Terror frame” was completed. The term Terror frame is hereafter used as the element covering the attacks of September 11th, terror, Al-Qaeda, Saddam Hussein (and his connection to Joseph Stalin) and the weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

⁴ Jonathan. Ide, “Hard-Wired for Fear,” *Past Peek*, January 11, 2008.
http://www.pastpeak.com/archives/2008/01/hardwired_for_f.htm (accessed April 5, 2012).

⁵ Forbes, “Experts and Viewers Agree: Apple’s ‘1984’ Is the Best Super Bowl Ad of All Time”, *forbes.com*, <http://www.forbes.com/sites/jacquelynsmith/2012/01/30/experts-and-viewers-agree-apples-1984-is-the-best-super-bowl-ad-of-all-time/> (Accessed April 15, 2012).

⁶ Trevor A., Thrall, Jane K. Cramer. *American Foreign Policy and The Politics of Fear* (London: Routledge Talor & Francis, 2009), 14.

2 SEPTEMBER 11TH

On September 11, 2001 the United States experienced one of the most damaging events in its history. Nineteen hijackers took control of four passenger planes in order to attack important buildings, which were considered to be symbols of the United States. Two planes were crashed into the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York City, one into the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia and the last plane was intended to hit Washington D.C. but crashed in a field in Pennsylvania. The results of these attacks included nearly three thousand dead and immense property damage. Furthermore as a result of the 9/11 attacks the economy of the United States significantly declined. The New York Stock Exchange was closed from September 11 through September 17. Thousands of jobs were lost, especially in Lower Manhattan, and the government spent an estimated 21.7 billion dollars on reconstruction by early 2002.⁷

Shortly after the events of 9/11, the U.S. government started an investigation and came to the conclusion that all the hijackers were members of Al-Qaeda, an Islamic militant terrorist organization founded by Osama Bin Laden in 1989. Al-Qaeda was a wide spread organization estimated to operate in up to fifty countries worldwide, mostly in the Middle East, Africa and southeast Asia. In 1996 it relocated training camps from Sudan to Afghanistan.⁸ Thanks to the investigation, Americans clearly knew who was responsible for the tragedy they faced. Nevertheless, the extent of damage caused by the attacks was so wide that it changed the American approach to security and foreign policy of the United States. However, the United States was not the only country to realize the threat of such attacks. In fact in addition to the newly created U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) many other countries passed legislation to prevent and fight against terrorism, including Canada,⁹ the United Kingdom¹⁰ and Germany.¹¹ To some extent, the fear of terrorism became an international phenomenon.

⁷ Gail Makinen, "The Economic Effects of 9/11: A Retrospective Assessment." The Library of Congress (September 27, 2002).

⁸ BBC News, "Al-Qaeda's origins and links", news.bbc.co.uk, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/1670089.stm (accessed March 5, 2012).

⁹ CBC News, "Anti-terrorism Act", cbc.ca, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/cdnsecurity/> (accessed March 5, 2012).

¹⁰ BBC News, "Q and A: Anti-terrorism legislation", news.bbc.co.uk, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/3197394.stm (accessed March 5, 2012).

¹¹ Francis Miko and Christian Froehlich, "Germany's Role in Fighting Terrorism: Implications for U.S. Policy." The Library of Congress (December 27, 2004).

But, the United States was without any doubt involved in the issue much more than any other country. Even though the threat of terrorism had been recognized before the attacks of 9/11, it definitely gained the attention of the wider public through these attacks. The attitudes and perceptions of terrorism among Americans changed dramatically meaning that Americans started to fear terrorism and to feel vulnerable. This fear led to the point where Americans felt like their whole society and their values were in danger. On the other hand this fear helped to raise up two very important characteristics of Americans, which later played a crucial role in the struggle of the Bush administration to justify the decision to invade Iraq.

The first characteristic is represented by the belief rooted deeply in the minds of Americans that the United States is a world leader, which is blessed by God to guide humanity to democracy and peace, also known as the City Upon a Hill concept. This idea, of Puritan origins, was one of the reasons why Americans were able to take advantage of the threatening events and unite themselves in order to fight the common enemy.

The second characteristic is based on the fact that whenever in history there was a tough situation affecting the United States, Americans naturally tended to turn to God for help. The concept of City Upon a Hill, the reunification of American society in the face of a common enemy, and the growing importance of religion as a natural American response to fear of terrorism were all beneficial for President Bush in two ways. Firstly, they created an atmosphere that reduced public skepticism about both the administrations' presentation of the threats and also the solutions offered to deal with the whole situation. Secondly, Bush's self identification as a highly religious evangelical Christian strengthened his position of trust among Americans and made it easier to follow him and his suggestions.¹² The feature of references to God in public speeches is in general typical for American presidents. On the other hand, George W. Bush seemed to use these references more than most, and the implementation of religious remarks occurred in practically every Bush speech. The January 28, 2003 State of the Union Address is a perfect example.

¹² George W. Bush, *Decision Points*. (New York: Crown Publishing Group, 2010).

America is a strong Nation, and honorable in the use of our strength. We exercise power without conquest, and we sacrifice for the liberty of strangers. Americans are a free people, who know that freedom is the right of every person and the future of every nation. The liberty we prize is not America's gift to the world, it is God's gift to humanity. We Americans have faith in ourselves - but not in ourselves alone. We do not claim to know all the ways of Providence, yet we can trust in them, placing our confidence in the loving God behind all of life, and all of history. May He guide us now, and may God continue to bless the United States of America.¹³

The idea of God guiding the United States is very important for Americans. It again touches the basic City Upon a Hill approach to the role that US is playing in the world order. Furthermore it works sort of like an engine of American society in the sense that it boosts their nationalism. Americans once again realize their mission, unite and seek out a better future. The use of the City Upon a Hill idea presented and modified by President Bush can be seen in his State of the Union Address delivered on January 20, 2004 while introducing the aim of Americans to spread peace and democracy to the rest of the world, saying: "America is a nation with a mission, and that mission comes from our most basic belief."¹⁴ Implying to the audience that the City Upon a Hill is their most basic belief. Nevertheless, the aftermath of the September 11 attacks continued and the Americans felt vulnerable knowing that Al-Qaeda was still functional and apparently able to proceed in another demonstration of its power. For these reasons, it is very likely that Americans realized that the new threat to their country represented by terrorism could no longer be contained. President Bush did as well.

One thing that comes along with a fight against a new kind of enemy is a new way of treating it. The idea that different enemies require different approaches can be easily seen in past conflicts, those of both military and non-military nature. The most obvious differences can be found in the tactics of two conflicts: World War II and the Cold War. On one hand there was a traditional concept of war expressed during World War II through the exhaustive use of military forces, and on the other hand there was a U.S. diplomat George Kennan's post-bellum idea of Policy of Containment. The long-lasting period of the Cold War caused the application of an opposite approach to the enemy from the one used during World War II. The two-pillar Policy of Containment was supposed to (1) get rid of communism by disabling its ability to spread and (2) by letting it fail naturally. Kennan

¹³ George W. Bush, "2003 State of the Union Address," (January 28, 2003), <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/stateoftheunion2003.html> (accessed March 5, 2012).

argued that it was inevitable for communism to fail because human nature requires competition between individuals.¹⁵ However effective containment was during the Cold War, President Bush realized that terrorism could not be treated this way, which seems to be obvious because terrorists neither belong to a certain country nor region; they are spread all over the world and so it is practically impossible to contain them. Even though Iraq is a sovereign country, in which the regime could be potentially contained, the possibility that Saddam Hussein could harbor and supply terrorists with weapons was the element that helped President Bush to come to the conclusion that containment is out of the question. Bush's statement stands for itself: "prior to September the 11th, we were discussing smart sanctions ... After September the 11th, the doctrine of containment just doesn't hold any water, as far as I'm concerned ... My vision shifted dramatically after September the 11th, because I now realize the stakes. I realize the world has changed."¹⁶

With the investigation of the attacks and the US reaction in Afghanistan the Bush administration started to address the sources of the threat differently. There was a shift in what the administration considered to be the imminent threat to the United States and democracy from the specific terrorist organization (Al-Qaeda) to the terrorism in general. However this shift in the administration's rhetoric is understandable with respect to the most prominent objectives, which were Al-Qaeda, Afghanistan and Iraq respectively. The use of terror was supposed to cover all issues mentioned and make logical connection between them. And so the speech given after the 9/11 attacks in which President Bush stated, "We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them."¹⁷ makes more sense knowing what followed. The quote from September 20, 2001 shows the outline of the transition of rhetoric from Al-Qaeda through Afghanistan to Iraq. "Our war on terror begins with Al Qaeda, but it does not end there. It

¹⁴ George W. Bush, "2004 State of the Union Address," (January 20, 2004), <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/stateoftheunion2004.htm> (accessed March 5, 2012).

¹⁵ Steven Kreis, "George Kennan, The Source of Soviet Conduct (A947)", The History Guide, <http://www.historyguide.org/europe/kennan.html> (accessed March 5, 2012).

¹⁶ George W. Bush, "President Bush Meets with Prime Minister Blair," (January 31, 2003), <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030131-23.html> (accessed March 7, 2012).

¹⁷ George W. Bush, "9/11 Address to the Nation," (September 11, 2001), <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/gwbush911address-to-the-nation.htm> (accessed March 7, 2012).

will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated.”¹⁸

The fear repeatedly being connected by government officials to terrorism became strong enough to help the Bush Administration to persuade people even two years after the 9/11 attacks in the case of the Iraq war. To demonstrate this struggle in Bush’s rhetoric there is a number of examples serving as evidence. In his September 20, 2001 speech, Bush says: “The terrorists’ directive commands them to kill Christians and Jews, to kill all Americans and make no distinctions among military and civilians, including women and children.” Compare this with his speech delivered on October 7, 2002 outlining the Iraqi threat, where after giving details about the chemical and biological weapons produced and used by Saddam Hussein which he used against Iran and against over 40 villages in Iraq he stated: “These actions killed or injured at least 20,000 people, more than six times the number of people who died in the attacks of September the 11th.”¹⁹ There were many speeches and statements delivered by President Bush and his administration officials connecting terrorism to Al-Qaeda and Iraq in order to create the atmosphere of fear among Americans. The two examples mentioned above obviously initiate the threat to American values (killing civilians including women and children) and are also clear evidence of the Administration constantly referring to the attacks of September the 11th. It was understandable that the Administration needed to persuade American public to fear those threats, but in fact Al-Qaeda itself helped them realize that the problem is real when Osama Bin Laden, the leader of Al-Qaeda, openly claimed: “The ruling to kill the Americans and their allies -- civilians and military -- is an individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it.”²⁰ This statement went even further with the claim of former Al-Qaeda spokesman Suleiman Abu Ghaith posted on Al-Qaeda-affiliated websites alqaida.com in 2002 saying: “We have the right to kill 4 million Americans - 2 million of them children and to exile twice as many and wound and cripple hundreds of

¹⁸ George W. Bush, “Address to a Joint Session of Congress Following 9/11 Attacks,” (September 20, 2001), <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/gwbush911jointsessionspeech.htm> (accessed March 7, 2012).

¹⁹ George W. Bush, “President Bush Outlines Iraqi Threat,” (October 7, 2002), <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB80/new/doc%2012/President%20Bush%20Outlines%20Iraqi%20Threat.htm> (accessed March 7, 2012).

²⁰ Federation of American Scientists, “Jihad Against Jews and Crusaders”, fas.org, <http://www.fas.org/irp/world/para/docs/980223-fatwa.htm> (Accessed April 5, 2012).

thousands. Furthermore, it is our right to fight them with chemical and biological weapons.”²¹ These controversial quotes of Al-Qaeda leaders could not let Americans stay calm and the President Bush knew very well how to use these statements in order to create an atmosphere of fear to gain the support of his nation for the war in Iraq.

He was steadily suggesting the link between Al-Qaeda and Iraq, which can be found in many Bush’s speeches. What made Bush’s speeches and reasoning to invade Iraq so successful was not just stating the facts about the issues individually, in fact, it was a very elaborate use of multiple issues together giving the audience the notion that all emphasized points in his speech relate to each other, which was, however, not always explicitly stated. The perfect example of the speech creating the threatening picture of Iraq as the biggest enemy of the United States by connecting the issues of September the 11th attacks, Al-Qaeda, Saddam Hussein and the inapplicability of the Policy of Containment is the State of The Union address delivered on January 28, 2003 stating:

Before September the 11th, many in the world believed that Saddam Hussein could be contained. But chemical agents, lethal viruses and shadowy terrorist networks are not easily contained. Imagine those 19 hijackers with other weapons and other plans -- this time armed by Saddam Hussein. It would take one vial, one canister, one crate slipped into this country to bring a day of horror like none we have ever known. We will do everything in our power to make sure that that day never comes.²²

Also the speech of George W. Bush at the United Nations General Assembly proves the link between September 11 attacks, Al-Qaeda and Iraq. When President Bush states: “Iraq's government openly praised the attacks of September the 11th. And al Qaeda terrorists escaped from Afghanistan and are known to be in Iraq.”²³ Elaborate speeches and statements like the two mentioned above were the perfect choice for the President Bush. Despite the fact that not everything that he claimed was proved he managed to compose speeches that had a lasting influence on Americans.

²¹ Northeast Intelligence Network, “Nuclear Warfare is the Solution for Destroying America”, [homelandsecurityus.com](http://homelandsecurityus.com/archives/2089), <http://homelandsecurityus.com/archives/2089> (Accessed April 5, 2012).

²² George W. Bush, "2003 State of the Union Address," (January 28, 2003), <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/stateoftheunion2003.html> (accessed March 5, 2012).

²³ George W. Bush, "President's Remarks at the United Nations General Assembly," (September 12, 2002), <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020912-1.html> (accessed March 25, 2012).

2.1 The CEO President

President Bush was the first American president ever to gain an MBA degree.²⁴ His business education at Harvard and long practice as an oil man greatly determined his leadership of the White House.²⁵

President Bush saw himself as a chief executive officer of his administration, which led to many changes in both the structure and functionality of the administration.²⁶ The most visible changes that President Bush made were the reorganization of intelligence agencies and strong top-down control in his administration.²⁷

In regards to intelligence agencies, there was a shift in the CIA from a separate and independent agency to one that is integrated with other institutions like the Counter Terrorism Center and Clandestine Service.²⁸ Also for the first time since 1947 the CIA lost the status of the primary intelligence analysis agency and was replaced by the new director of national intelligence, who reported directly to the president and was also responsible for other intelligence agencies.²⁹ In other words, President Bush integrated all his sources of information under the administrations' influence meaning that no outside advisers were involved in the core information gathering.³⁰

The President's CEO approach to managing the administration became a very strong characteristic during the Bush presidency. Bush's approach to the role of the U.S. president was to have a vision, be able to decide quickly and to delegate the details and subordinate decisions to the team. He described his decision-making process as follows: "I listen to all voices, but mine is the final decision ... I'm the decider, and I decide what is best."³¹ These aspects of the Bush's CEO-like leadership style provide reasoning for the administrations'

²⁴ Mike Allen and David S. Broder, "Bush's Leadership Style: Decisive or Simplistic?", *The Washington Post*, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/07/01/AR2009070104217.html> (accessed April 14, 2012).

²⁵ James P. Pfiffner, "The First MBA President: George W. Bush as Public Administrator." *Public Administration Review* 67 (2007): 6-20.

²⁶ James P. Pfiffner, "The First MBA President: George W. Bush as Public Administrator." *Public Administration Review* 67 (2007): 6-20.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Nicholas Lemann, 2004. Remember the Alamo. *New Yorker*, October 18. http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2004/10/18/041018fa_fact (accessed April 14, 2012).

³¹ CNN News, "Bush: 'I'm the Decider' on Rumsfeld", http://articles.cnn.com/2006-04-18/politics/rumsfeld_1_secretary-rumsfeld-military-personnel-fine-job?_s=PM:POLITICS (accessed April 14, 2012).

tight connection to the business attitudes and in extension the use of fear as an efficient persuasive technique. President Bush acted quickly, clearly and confidently because he knew from experience that this is the way that works.

3 SADDAM HUSSEIN

Saddam Hussein appointed himself president of Iraq in 1979 and ever since then he developed a regime, which turned out to be exceptional even among those of other totalitarian countries. In this context, exceptional stands for extraordinarily cruel with no respect for human life. According to Saïd K. Aburish who worked closely with Saddam's government and was involved in his secret program set up in order to gain chemical and nuclear weapons, Saddam had a dream in his mind to overtake Iraq, turn it into a "Stalinist state" and become an Arab leader long time before he actually gained any political power.³² It is well known that he was one of the world's cruelest dictators in history. President Bush and his administration were of course aware of the way he treated his own people and they knew very well how they could persuade Americans so that they perceive Saddam as their archenemy.

The United States experienced the long-lasting period of fear of communism and dictatorship represented by the USSR during the Cold War and ever since then the United States has been perceived as the political as well as economic rival to modern-day Russia. Americans did not forget the atmosphere of the Red Scare, suspicious thinking about their neighbors, struggle to locate Soviet spies, fear of a communist regime where the dictator kills his own people on a daily basis in order to get rid of anyone who could potentially oppose the regime and finally knowing that the atomic bomb is in the hands of a tyrant. This period in American history has a strong influence on the present. President Bush realized that one of the things that could help him to get the American public on his side was to reinstate the atmosphere of fear similar to the one after World War II. And so he stated on October 2, 2002:

We also know the nature of Iraq's dictator. On his orders, opponents have been decapitated and their heads displayed outside their homes. Women have been systematically raped as a method of intimidation. Political prisoners are made to watch their own children being tortured. The dictator is a student of Stalin, using murder as a tool of terror and control within his own cabinet, within his own army, even within his own family. We will not leave the future of peace and the security of America in the hands of this cruel and dangerous man.³³

³² PBS News, "Secrets of His Life and Leadership", pbs.org, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/saddam/interviews/aburish.html> (accessed March 20, 2012).

³³ George W. Bush, "President, House Leadership Agree on Iraq Resolution," (October 2, 2002), <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021002-7.html> (accessed March 25, 2012).

In other words, President Bush points out three things: the endless cruelty of Saddam Hussein, terror and the similarity of Saddam Hussein to the former Soviet leader, Stalin. The cruelty described in women being raped and children being tortured with prisoners made to watch can be considered as a struggle of President Bush to view Saddam violating the American value of family. Terror is used here as well as in most of Bush's speeches as a leading theme since THE 9/11 attacks, and the reference to Saddam as a student of Stalin evokes the feelings of the Red Scare. Saïd K. Aburish provided the world with the information about the similarity of Saddam's tactics to those of Stalin. From putting emphasis on the security service rather than army to employing a semi-literate man loyal to him in the services he needed. Aburish also said that Saddam used to train his security people in East Germany, and then he taught them to use a Stalinist method of detecting people opposing the regime.³⁴ The value of family, important for Americans, was absolutely ignored by Saddam because he used to order the murders of whole Iraqi families. And this despite the fact that in Iraq, according to one source, "Family and tribal connections are supreme. They come ahead of ideology. They come ahead of commitment to the nation-state, they come ahead of all commitments."³⁵ This was his ordinary practice, described by Aburish saying: "... after that came the tribal factor, when Saddam said "Don't get rid of Abdullah, get rid of his whole family, because one member of his family might assassinate us."³⁶

The connection between Saddam Hussein and Joseph Stalin as made by President Bush can be seen in the case of the Iraq war as an attempt to demonize the Iraqi leader in the eyes of Americans. The struggle to make a connection between Iraqi regime and Soviet Union had the best chance to initiate fear among Americans because they already had experienced the scare first hand. Also, the evidence that Saddam Hussein committed genocide and numerous crimes against humanity were well known and recognizable. All this information given by President Bush, supported by Saddam himself not hiding his admiration for one of the cruelest dictators in history, had the impact on Americans that they feared Saddam even more than before.

³⁴ PBS News, "Secrets of His Life and Leadership", pbs.org,
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/saddam/interviews/aburish.html> (accessed March 20, 2012).

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

4 WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

Ever since the Manhattan Project and the first use of nuclear weapons in 1945 took place, the world started to understand how damaging these weapons could be. Such enormous power must be handled with the highest responsibility. Since the World War II many nations started to seek for these weapons and so, some of them were actually successful. Possession of weapons of mass destruction, however, became kind of status-strengthening element of influential countries throughout the world given the fact that development and construction of these weapons are very expensive. Probably the first actual threat of weapons of mass destruction to the United States in the history occurred during the Cold War. Knowing that then Soviet Union possessed these weapons as well as the United States did, these two countries represented the two poles in the bilateral world. Soviet Union possessing the nuclear weapons played a crucial role in how Americans perceived Soviets during the Cold War period. In the United States it was on daily basis that children were taught how to hide under their desks in the classrooms for the case of nuclear attack. The fear of the nuclear weapons in the possession of Soviet Union was so strong that it caused Americans to be suspicious, paranoid and permanently in fear. As was mentioned earlier this period of American history was never forgotten and it probably will never be forgotten. Nevertheless during the time the influence of these two nations was stabilized and from nowadays point of view it is highly unlikely if not excludable that any of them would actually use these weapons. But what the United States saw as a problem is that weapons of mass destruction are sought by the rough regimes like the one of Iraq. With respect to all what has been said it is inevitable for the Unites States to fear the possibility of outlaw dictators gaining the power that these weapons provide. However Iraq is not the only country that the President Bush considered as the threat to the Americans, in his State of the Union Address delivered on January 29 2002 he labeled Iraq, Iran and North Korea “an axis of evil”.³⁷

³⁷ George W. Bush, "2002 State of the Union Address," (January 29, 2002), <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/01/20020129-11.html> (accessed March 25, 2012).

4.1 Why Iraq?

However dangerous the weapons of mass destruction can be in the hands of dictator, President Bush addressed the threat differently by the concerns about the possibility that it could be terrorists who would be provided with these weapons as he stated on January 29, 2002 “States like these, and their terrorist allies, constitute an axis of evil, arming to threaten the peace of the world. By seeking weapons of mass destruction, these regimes pose a grave and growing danger. They could provide these arms to terrorists, giving them the means to match their hatred.”³⁸ But on March 17, 2003 he was more specific and concentrated on the possible role of Iraq saying: “The danger is clear: using chemical, biological or, one day, nuclear weapons provided by Iraq, the terrorists could one day kill hundreds of thousands of people in our country or any other.”³⁹ The scenario of Iraq providing terrorists with the weapons of mass destruction could be easily concluded as feasible with respect to the geographical factor (Middle East region) and the view on the United States shared by both Iraq and terrorists generally. President Bush and his Administration saw Iraq as the most imminent threat not only because of the possibility that Iraq harbored and supported terrorists but also because of Saddam Hussein’s history of the use of weapons of mass destruction and his struggle to dominate the whole Middle East region. On October 7 2002 President Bush explained how is Iraq different from other countries with outlaw regime saying:

While there are many dangers in the world, the threat from Iraq stands alone -- because it gathers the most serious dangers of our age in one place. Iraq's weapons of mass destruction are controlled by a murderous tyrant who has already used chemical weapons to kill thousands of people. This same tyrant has tried to dominate the Middle East, has invaded and brutally occupied a small neighbor, has struck other nations without warning, and holds an unrelenting hostility toward the United States.⁴⁰

The reasoning is clear and understandably delivered to the American public. The nature of the threat coming from Iraq is mentioned in the speech many times. In addition President Bush referred to the statement of former chief weapons inspector of the United Nations

³⁸ George W. Bush, "2002 State of the Union Address, " (January 29, 2002), <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/01/20020129-11.html> (accessed March 25, 2012).

³⁹ George W. Bush, " Address to the Nation, " (March 17, 2003), <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/wariniraq/gwbushiraq31703.htm> (accessed March 25, 2012).

⁴⁰ George W. Bush, "President Bush Outlines Iraqi Threat," (October 7, 2002), <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB80/new/doc%2012/President%20Bush%20Outlines%20Iraqi%20Threat.htm> (accessed March 7, 2012).

who said: "The fundamental problem with Iraq remains the nature of the regime, itself. Saddam Hussein is a homicidal dictator who is addicted to weapons of mass destruction."⁴¹ Thanks to the huge number of statements not only generated by the Administration providing the American public with the information about the outlaw regime in Iraq and the threat it represents, Americans seemed to believe President Bush, which was reflected on the support for the Iraq war.

4.2 History of Saddam Hussein and the Weapons of Mass Destruction

The claims of the Bush Administration alone about the possibility of Iraq possessing weapons of mass destruction would probably not convince American public the way President Bush intended. Possibly for that reason President Bush managed to use the statements and evidence from the past, particularly from the period of the first Gulf War. Very transparent example of the use of the Saddam's history is the one when in September 2002 President Bush stated that after the first Gulf War Iraq was in fact "six months away from developing a [nuclear] weapon." According to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors.⁴² This statement about the period after the first Gulf War does not actually say much about the situation in September 2002. Nevertheless it was obviously used on purpose. These findings of IAEA inspectors in Iraq were intentionally used by the administration as a tool to oppose the intelligences like CIA of even IAEA, which argued that Iraq was not in fact able or close to finish the nuclear weapon. The struggle of the administration to oppose these intelligences using above described non-relevant argument can be also observed in the Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's statement: "Some have argued that the nuclear threat from Iraq is not imminent-that Saddam is at least 5-7 years away from having nuclear weapons. I would not be so certain. Before Operation Desert Storm in 1991, the best intelligence estimates were that Iraq was at least 5-7 years away.... The experts were flat wrong."⁴³ Another thing that helped President Bush to shape

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Chaim Kaufmann, "Threat Inflation and the Failure of the Marketplace of Ideas: The Selling of the Iraq War." *International Security* 29 (2004): 5-48.

⁴³ Donald H. Rumsfeld, "Testimony of U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld before the House Armed Committee regarding Iraq," (September 18, 2002), <http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/polisci/faculty/trachtenberg/useur/rumsfeld180902.html> (accessed March 25, 2012).

public opinion was paradoxically Saddam Hussein himself. However odd this may sound, Saddam Hussein created the atmosphere that it was quite likely that he possessed the weapons of mass destruction, which was without any doubt beneficial for the Bush Administration. The proof that the Administration successfully created the picture of Saddam Hussein being a reckless aggressor who is willing to put Iraqi people, future of his country and even his own life in stake just to maintain the throne can be found between the lines of Vice President Cheney's statement: "Twelve years ago, Saddam Hussein agreed to disarm Iraq of all of its weapons of mass destruction. For twelve years he has violated that agreement, pursuing chemical, biological and nuclear weapons even while U.N. inspectors were in Iraq."⁴⁴ However on June 11, 2004 Saddam Hussein himself admitted that he let the United States and the world think that Iraq could have possessed the weapons of mass destruction and he explained his motive for such misleading behavior with the claim that he was much more scared of Iran finding out the Iraq's weakness than of the United States' invasion because according to him, Iran had capabilities to annex southern Iraq.⁴⁵ However there is one more possibility expressed by Francis Fukuyama in 2003 (that means before the above mentioned interview with Saddam Hussein happened) that Iraqi scientists could have exaggerated their achievements in producing the weapons of mass destruction simply because they could have been afraid of Saddam's reaction to the fact that they failed to produce such weapons.⁴⁶

4.3 Weapons of Mass Destruction as a Part of War on Terror

The threat of Iraq handling or having capability to gain the weapons of mass destruction was used by the President Bush as a part of the War on Terror frame as well as the attacks of September 11th, the terrorist organization Al-Qaeda and the reign of Saddam Hussein. Some may consider the weapons of mass destruction to be the crucial if not the most important element of justification for war. This is however very unlikely because of two reasons. Firstly, weapons of mass destruction frame as a justification for the war on terror

⁴⁴ Richard Bruce Cheney, "Vice President's Remarks at 30th Political Action Conference," (January 30, 2003), <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030130-16.html> (accessed March 25, 2012).

⁴⁵ Glenn Kessler, "Saddam Hussein Said WMD Talk Helped Him Look Strong to Iran", *The Washington Post*, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/07/01/AR2009070104217.html> (accessed April 5, 2012).

first occurred just at the same time the President Bush started to focus his rhetoric on Iraq. This is dated to January 29, 2002 at the State of the Union Address. And secondly the polling data discussed later show the crucial elements differently. Nevertheless this frame was rather used by the administration as a support for the immediate preventive war and the final element of the threatening scenario of complete terror frame. The following statement from the speech delivered by the President Bush on September 12, 2002 uncovers the use of the weapons of mass destruction as a tool to initiate the need for immediate war.

With every step the Iraqi regime takes toward gaining and deploying the most terrible weapons, our own options to confront that regime will narrow. And if an emboldened regime were to supply these weapons to terrorist allies, then the attacks of September the 11th would be a prelude to far greater horrors.⁴⁷

This statement implies there is no time to hesitate and the United States should act quickly, but with time passing the Administration changed the rhetoric and made the reasoning for immediate war more straightforward and so the President Bush as well as some other Administration officials declared that the only way how to prevent Iraq from finishing or purchasing nuclear weapon is immediate (preventive) war.⁴⁸ To demonstrate the full extent of the terror frame on January 23 Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz added: "Disarming Iraq and the war on terror are not merely related. Disarming Iraq of its chemical and biological weapons and dismantling its nuclear weapons program is a crucial part of winning the war on terror."⁴⁹ These statements show the struggle of the Administration to complete the terror frame by connecting all the elements used since the September 11th attacks in order to make Americans fear the Iraqi regime. Suggesting the possibility of attacks that the United States could experience that would be even worse than the ones of 9/11 had a strong influence on Americans and so the Administration used it very frequently. In fact the following statement is from the same speech delivered by Paul Wolfowitz as the one above. "The threat posed by the connection between terrorist

⁴⁶ Francis Fukuyama. "The real intelligence failure?" *Wall Street Journal*, August 5, 2003.

⁴⁷ George W. Bush, "President's Remarks at the United Nations General Assembly," (September 12, 2002), <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020912-1.html> (accessed March 25, 2012).

⁴⁸ Chaim Kaufmann, "Threat Inflation and the Failure of the Marketplace of Ideas: The Selling of the Iraq War." *International Security* 29 (2004): 5-48.

⁴⁹ Barton Gellman and Walter Pincus, "Depiction of Threat Outgrew Supporting Evidence," *The Washington Post*, August 10, 2003, p. 1, A9.

networks and states that possess weapons of mass terror presents us with the danger of a catastrophe that could be orders of magnitude greater than Sept. 11."⁵⁰ Even though the Bush Administration used the weapons of mass destruction very often, there were still some reservations about the validity of these statements whether expressed by someone from the outside or even inside of the Administration. From the very moment when the Administration first used the weapons of mass destruction frame, it was practically impossible to truly prove that Iraq possessed these weapons. So the Administration based its arguments on either evidence from the past, or on its belief.⁵¹ Even though neither could be considered credible source of information, in overall it somehow worked. One of the explanations why were these statements so successful could be the fact that the President Bush had already created the atmosphere of fear so strong that the American public was more likely to accept his claims. After all, the Administration was very persistent about the use of September the 11th attacks, claims about Al-Qaeda's intention to acquire weapons of mass destruction and to use them against the United States and finally the struggle to initiate the connection between Saddam Hussein and Stalin, playing the role of the fear-initiating element.⁵²

4.3.1 Focus on Chemical and Biological Weapons

During the period when President Bush and his Administration presented the threat to the United States represented by the Iraqi regime and its capabilities to provide terrorists with the support for the attacks on the United States, there were numerous speeches delivered on this topic. However it is quite noticeable that the Administration shifted the rhetoric from straight claims about Iraq's possession of weapons of mass destruction to rather implications that it could possibly acquire or develop these weapons. Moreover President Bush openly admits that the weapons frame is based rather on the possibility than the evidence, which is clear from the statement presented on September 2002 when President Bush declared: "The first time we may be completely certain he has a -- nuclear weapons is

⁵⁰ Kathleen T. Rhem, "Wolfowitz: Disarming Iraq 'Crucial' to Winning War on Terror" *American Forces Press Service* January 23, 2003. <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=29536> (accessed March 22, 2012).

⁵¹ Richard Bruce Cheney, "Vice President's Remarks at 30th Political Action Conference," (January 30, 2003), <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030130-16.html> (accessed March 25, 2012).

when, God forbids, he uses one. We owe it to all our citizens to do everything in our power to prevent that day from coming.”⁵³ This statement is clear evidence that the Administration was not sure about Iraq having weapons of mass destruction, but on the other hand President Bush started to place emphasis in his speeches specifically on the chemical and biological weapons rather than nuclear ones. So what can be observed is the, so to say, “softening” of the claims about the weapons of mass destruction by concluding that there are not only nuclear but also chemical and biological weapons in that category.⁵⁴ One of the reasons for the extension of the category of weapons of mass destruction was according to Bush’s speeches the fact that it was more likely that Iraq possessed chemical and biological weapons rather than nuclear ones. What also increased the credibility of the President Bush’s claims about these weapons was the general consensus of experts that chemical and biological weapons can be easily transported and hidden, unlike the nuclear ones.⁵⁵ Having in mind that the administration needed to include certain element that would suggest there is a threat based in Iraq of something even worse than the September 11th attacks, providing that such element was supposed to scare the Americans more than 9/11 attacks itself, if possible, the use of chemical and biological weapons proved to be a good choice for the administration from the point of view of both credibility and the impact on the American public. There was a number of validated reports declaring that Iraq possessed chemical and biological weapons before the first Gulf War and also the evidence that Saddam Hussein did not hesitate to use these weapons were available among others from the findings provided by the IAEA inspectors.⁵⁶ This shift in emphasis in the Bush Administration’s rhetoric from weapons of mass destruction to chemical and biological weapons is also noticeable from the speech delivered by President Bush on October 7 2002 in Cincinnati where he outlined one of the key factors that helped him to gain such wide

⁵² Steven Kull, Clay Ramsay, and Evan Lewis, “Misperceptions, the Media, and the Iraq War” *Political Science Quarterly* 118, No. 4 (Winter 2003/2004): 569-598.

⁵³ George W. Bush, “President’s Remarks at the United Nations General Assembly,” (September 12, 2002), <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020912-1.html> (accessed March 25, 2012).

⁵⁴ Richard Bruce Cheney, “Vice President’s Remarks at 30th Political Action Conference,” (January 30, 2003), <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030130-16.html> (accessed March 25, 2012).

⁵⁵ Amy Gershkoff and Shana Kushner, “Shaping Public Opinion: The 9/11-Iraq Connection in the Bush Administration’s Rhetoric.” *Perspectives on Politics* 3, No. 3 (Sep., 2005): 525-537.

⁵⁶ Chaim Kaufmann, “Threat Inflation and the Failure of the Marketplace of Ideas: The Selling of the Iraq War.” *International Security* 29 (2004): 5-48.

support for the war. This factor was the threat that Iraq could have demonstrated the power of chemical and biological weapons on the U.S. homeland using Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) to deliver these weapons to the United States.⁵⁷ In the speech he explains:

We've also discovered through intelligence that Iraq has a growing fleet of manned and unmanned aerial vehicles that could be used to disperse chemical or biological weapons across broad areas. We're concerned that Iraq is exploring ways of using these UAVS for missions targeting the United States. And, of course, sophisticated delivery systems aren't required for a chemical or biological attack; all that might be required are a small container and one terrorist or Iraqi intelligence operative to deliver it.⁵⁸

Assuming that the evidence of Iraq possessing nuclear weapons was at least blurred, the claim of the administration that Iraq possessed chemical and biological weapons was in compliance with the legitimate evidence accepted internationally.⁵⁹ For this reason, the claims provided by the administration gained the credibility and as for the outcome the reservations and dubious argumentations were to some extent suppressed. Nevertheless, there was still a large portion of Americans who were influenced by the administration's statements connecting Iraq with the weapons of mass destruction including nuclear weapons, which turned out to be to some extent persuaded on the grounds of fear of Iraq's nuclear capacity.⁶⁰

As for final and ironclad evidence of the Bush Administration intentionally using the politics of fear, on March 2003 Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz explained the use of fear saying:

As a senior intelligence official generally sympathetic to the administration told me late last year, after September 11, it was easier to build a case for war around weapons of mass destruction and links to al-Qaeda. "You certainly could have made strong cases that regime change was a logical part of the war on terrorism, given Baghdad's historic terror ties," he said. "But that didn't have enough resonance. You needed something that inspired fear."⁶¹

⁵⁷ James P. Pfiffner, "Did President Bush Misperceive the Country in His Arguments for War with Iraq?" *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 34 (2004): 25-46.

⁵⁸ George W. Bush, "President Bush Outlines Iraqi Threat," (October 7, 2002), <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021007-8.html> (accessed March 25, 2012).

⁵⁹ James P. Pfiffner, "Did President Bush Misperceive the Country in His Arguments for War with Iraq?" *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 34 (2004): 25-46.

⁶⁰ Amy Gershkoff and Shana Kushner, "Shaping Public Opinion: The 9/11-Iraq Connection in the Bush Administration's Rhetoric." *Perspectives on Politics* 3, No. 3 (Sep., 2005): 525-537.

⁶¹ Jason Vest, "The Wrong Target", *The American Prospect*, <http://prospect.org/article/wrong-target-0> (accessed April 3, 2012).

5 UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL

The United Nations Security Council consists of fifteen members. Five of them function as permanent members (USA, UK, France, Russian Federation and China) and ten change on a yearly basis.⁶² The most prominent aims of the U.N. Security Council are to maintain international peace and security, to investigate and recommend what action should be taken to suppress the threat to the peace and to take military action against the source of such threat.⁶³

In the case of the Iraq war its responsibility was to pass the legislation to prevent Iraq from developing and acquiring weapons of mass destruction and to run the investigation in Iraq using the weapons inspectors. To cover these responsibilities the United Nations Security Council passed seventeen resolutions stating the terms and conditions that Iraq was supposed to meet. The conditions covered by the resolutions were predominantly related to the obligation to declare and destroy all the weapons of mass destruction, chemical and biological weapons including, and get rid of facilities that can be used to produce or maintain such weapons.⁶⁴ Nevertheless, Iraq did not comply with these resolutions and refused to give evidence of disarming.⁶⁵ In March 2003 as a consequence of Saddam Hussein not cooperating with the U.N. weapons inspectors and according to the claim of US and UK that he was “just playing for time” the United States supported by the United Kingdom proposed so called “eighteenth resolution” which was supposed to establish the deadline for Iraq to fully disarm.⁶⁶ But the resolution did not pass because of countries such as France the permanent member of Security Council and Germany presiding over the Council at the time absolutely denied support for such resolution.⁶⁷ In

⁶² U.N. Security Council, “Members”, un.org, <http://www.un.org/sc/members.asp> (accessed April 5, 2012).

⁶³ U.N. Security Council, “Functions and Powers”, un.org, http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/unsc_functions.html (accessed April 5, 2012).

⁶⁴ *The Guardian*, “Full Text: UN security council resolution 1441 on Iraq”, [guardian.co.uk](http://www.guardian.co.uk), <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2002/dec/20/iraq.foreignpolicy2> (accessed April 5, 2012).

⁶⁵ CNN News, “Transcript of Blix’s U.N. presentation”, articles.cnn.com, http://articles.cnn.com/2003-03-07/us/sprj.irq.un.transcript.blix_1_inspection-effort-unmovic-unscom/2?_s=PM:US (accessed April 14, 2012).

⁶⁶ *The Telegraph*, “Iraq Inquiry: war ‘not legitimate’, Sir Jeremy Greenstock tells inquiry”, [telegraph.co.uk](http://www.telegraph.co.uk), <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/iraq/6669634/Iraq-inquiry-war-not-legitimate-Sir-Jeremy-Greenstock-tells-inquiry.html> (accessed April 5, 2012).

⁶⁷ *The Guardian*, “France, Russia and Germany harden stance”, [guardian.co.uk](http://www.guardian.co.uk), <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2003/mar/06/russia.iraq?INTCMP=ILCNETTXT3487> (accessed April 5, 2012).

fact, the resolution providing deadline for Iraq to disarm, was supported just by four members of the Security Council, the minimum for the resolution to pass is nine yeas out of fifteen votes.⁶⁸

5.1 U.S. Argumentation

President Bush with support of UK and Spain declared war against Iraq on the grounds of Saddam Hussein not complying with the passed resolutions and preserving the threat to the United States.⁶⁹ The legal justification of such decision was presented by the Bush Administration with respect to the U.N. Charter. Specifically according to Chapter VII of U.N. Charter article 40, U.N. Security Council is supposed to pass resolution making a country possessing the threats to the peace get rid of such possession. Since Saddam Hussein refused to give evidence of complying with the resolutions, there was a valid reason for Security Council to proceed to the action covered by Chapter VII article 39 in accordance to articles 41 and 42, which give Security Council the right to take action by air, sea or land forces to maintain the peace.⁷⁰ But Security Council decided not to act by using any of these measures; instead it continued to solve the problem by prolonging the investigation of the weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.⁷¹

The argumentation of the Bush administration was practically based on the complete terror frame. The crucial speech delivered on February 5, 2003 to the United Nations Security Council by the Secretary of State Colin Powell serves as evidence of the importance of the terror frame in the argumentation. The following fraction of this speech declares that the Bush Administration was aiming to proceed to the imminent war and was not willing to postpone such action.

⁶⁸ U.N. Security Council, "Members", un.org, <http://www.un.org/sc/members.asp> (accessed April 5, 2012).

⁶⁹ Colin Powell, "Address to the United Nations Security Council," (February 5, 2003), <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/wariniraq/colinpowellunsecuritycouncil.htm> (accessed April 5, 2012).

⁷⁰ Charter of the United Nations, "Chapter VII: Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression", un.org, <http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/chapter7.shtml> (accessed April 5, 2012).

⁷¹ *The Guardian*, "France, Russia and Germany harden stance", guardian.co.uk, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2003/mar/06/russia.iraq?INTCMP=ILCNETTXT3487> (accessed April 5, 2012).

Should we take the risk that he [Saddam Hussein] will not some day use these weapons at a time and the place and in the manner of his choosing at a time when the world is in a much weaker position to respond?

The United States will not and cannot run that risk to the American people. Leaving Saddam Hussein in possession of weapons of mass destruction for a few more months or years is not an option, not in a post-September 11th world.⁷²

He outlines all the threats and connections of Iraq that the Administration considered to be the reasons for preventive war starting with the attacks of September the 11th, through Iraqi ties to terrorism and Al-Qaeda, cruelty of Saddam Hussein to the chemical and biological weapons. Specifically, in this particular speech he used the term terror, terrorist or terrorism 26 times, Al-Qaeda 32 times, chemical weapons 39 times and biological weapons were used 36 times. All the elements of the terror frame were used as the evidence that Iraq was in material breach with the U.N. resolutions and so it was the imminent threat to the world peace.⁷³

Many in the world outside the United States could see the disapproval of the military action in Iraq expressed by the United Nations Security Council as the evidence that fear among the Americans was not actually so strong. However this approach would be fundamentally inaccurate. The politics of fear, which was presented by the Bush Administration using the terror frame, had extraordinary impact on the American Public. But since the politics of fear is very important and widely used to persuade Americans, its application on non-American public seems to have much lower effect. And so given the fact that the U.N. Security Council is formed by the United States and fourteen other countries, it was quite understandable that the politics of fear did not persuade the members of the Council with one logical exception which was the United Kingdom. Why logical? Because the British are, of all the nations, the closest in thinking to Americans.

⁷² Colin Powell, "Address to the United Nations Security Council," (February 5, 2003), <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/wariniraq/colinpowellunsecuritycouncil.htm> (accessed April 5, 2012).

⁷³ Ibid.

6 POLLING DATA

The decision to use the politics of fear to persuade the American public played a crucial role in the period from the September 11th attacks to the Iraq Invasion on March 20, 2003. There were, of course, many polls run by various researchers. Some of them with aim to monitor the public opinion on the decision to invade Iraq itself. In other words these polls were trying to find out whether the Americans considered the Bush's decision to be good or bad. On the other hand some set their goal a bit higher, specifically to find out what was the most and the least important element of the Bush Administration rhetoric used in order to persuade the American public. Whereas the first category of polls gives the overall percentage of how successful the Administration was, the second category explains specifically which parts of the Terror frame were the most influential. The overall support of the American public for the Iraq war was in March 2003 from 70 to 86 percent.⁷⁴

6.1 Weapons of Mass Destruction Polls

According to many polls taken before the final decision to invade Iraq, the support for the war among the American public was very strong. The impact of the Administration argumentation that Iraq (Saddam Hussein) possessed weapons of mass destruction was reflected in polls taken from February 2002 to February 2003 with the outcome that 55 – 69 percent of Americans believed that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction, which is very high portion but in fact over 95 percent believed that Iraq was actually building these weapons.⁷⁵ What later turned out to be quite surprising was that the pools from February and April 2004 show that even though the evidence of weapons of mass destruction was not found in Iraq, 57 percent of Americans still believed that Iraq had these weapons and 52 percent were convinced that they have not yet been found.⁷⁶

Many in the world could think that the Administration claims about weapons of mass destruction were the most persuasive element of the rhetoric. But according to a *Los Angeles Times* poll, this scenario is very unlikely because the study says that “82 percent of

⁷⁴ CNN News, “Poll: Americans less positive on Iraq”, [articles.cnn.com, http://articles.cnn.com/2003-06-30/us/sprj.irq.iraq.poll_1_guerrilla-war-operation-sidewinder-end-of-major-combat?_s=PM:US](http://articles.cnn.com/2003-06-30/us/sprj.irq.iraq.poll_1_guerrilla-war-operation-sidewinder-end-of-major-combat?_s=PM:US) (accessed April 14, 2012).

⁷⁵ Chaim Kaufmann, “Threat Inflation and the Failure of the Marketplace of Ideas: The Selling of the Iraq War.” *International Security* 29 (2004): 5-48.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

Americans said they would support the war, whether or not any WMD were found in Iraq.”⁷⁷

6.2 Support for War without U.N. Endorsement

The Bush Administration concentrated primarily on persuasion of the American public, which was understandable with respect to the fact that the President Bush could not have invaded Iraq if he did not have strong support in the United States. The polling data summarizing the support for war even without the U.N. Security Council endorsement testify how successful the argumentation for the war actually was. Apart from the fact that the Administration primarily aimed to persuade Americans, as a reason why Americans did not need to feel the support of the rest of the world or at least the U.N., can be considered the importance of the politics of fear in the United States used by the administration. Nevertheless the support for the war even without the U.N. endorsement was steadily increasing from June 2002 to March 2003.⁷⁸

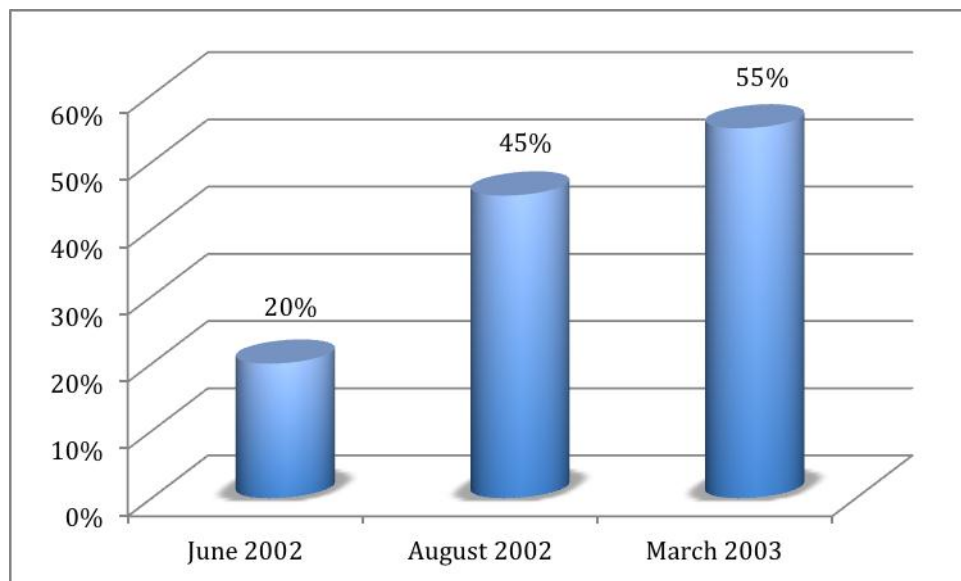


Figure 1: Support without U.N. Endorsement

⁷⁷ Amy Gershkoff and Shana Kushner, “Shaping Public Opinion: The 9/11-Iraq Connection in the Bush Administration’s Rhetoric.” *Perspectives on Politics* 3, No. 3 (Sep., 2005): 525-537.

⁷⁸ Chaim Kaufmann, “Threat Inflation and the Failure of the Marketplace of Ideas: The Selling of the Iraq War.” *International Security* 29 (2004): 5-48.

In addition, the Americans were so convinced about the need to remove Saddam Hussein from power that 64 percent said “Saddam Hussein should be removed from power in Iraq, regardless of whether U.N. inspectors find evidence of weapons of mass destruction.”⁷⁹ So neither WMDs nor U.N. endorsement was the key element for the public support for the war. The final percentage of Americans who supported the war whether or not the U.N. approved it is very important to put into the comparison with the percentage of those who believed or did not believe that the evidence of Iraqi connection to the September 11th attacks was found. Following figure shows the percentage of Americans supporting the war even without the U.N. endorsement with respect to their belief about the implied connection.

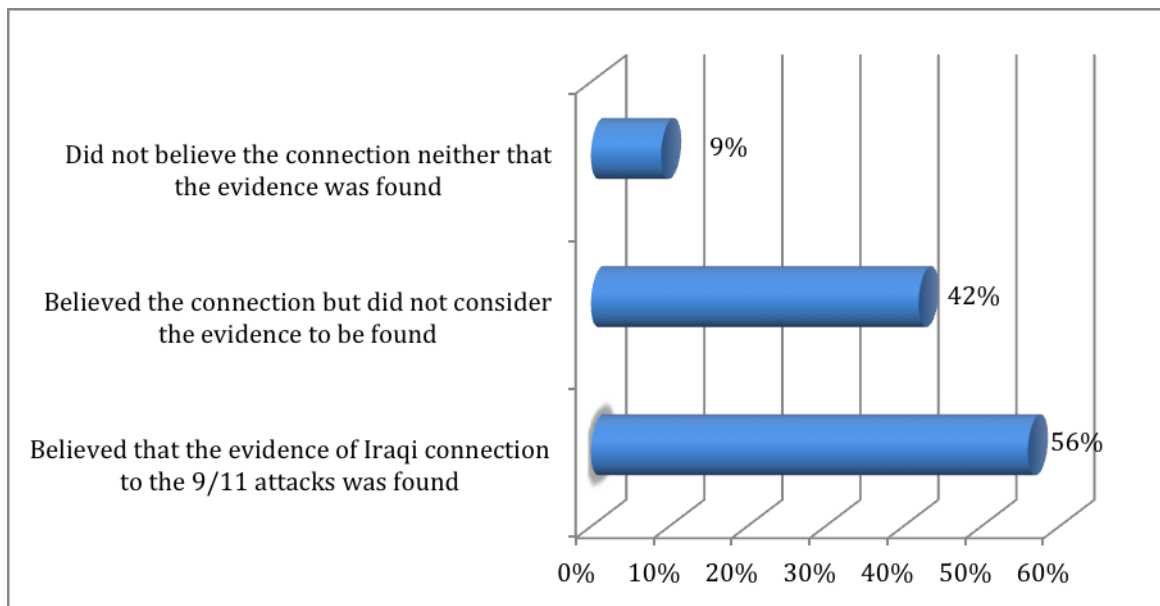


Figure 2: Support Dependence on 9/11 - Iraq Connection

From the chart it is obvious that there was a strong dependence on whether the respondents believed in the Iraqi connection to the September 11th attacks or not so of course those who believed that such a connection was found were much more likely to support the war.⁸⁰ Furthermore several polls from August 2002 through March 2003 suggest that 45 –

⁷⁹ Amy Gershkoff and Shana Kushner, “Shaping Public Opinion: The 9/11-Iraq Connection in the Bush Administration’s Rhetoric.” *Perspectives on Politics* 3, No. 3 (Sep., 2005): 525-537.

⁸⁰ Steven Kull, Clay Ramsay, and Evan Lewis, “Misperceptions, the Media, and the Iraq War.” *Political Science Quarterly* 118, No. 4 (Winter 2003/2004): 569-598.

66 percent of Americans believed that Saddam Hussein assisted the terrorists with the 9/11 attacks.⁸¹

6.3 Speeches' Effectiveness

As stated earlier, the core of the Bush administration's success lay in the elaborate speeches using the terror frame in order to create the atmosphere of fear in the American society. The public speeches were delivered to millions of Americans who based their opinions mostly on the information included so it is very important to analyze not only the features of the speeches but also the effectiveness thereof. The most important speeches regarding the support for the Second Iraq War were 2003 State of the Union Address delivered by President Bush and Colin Powell's speech to U.N. from February 2003. What the polls suggest was that after the 2003 State of the Union Address 9 percent of Americans switched from not supporting the war to supporting the war and 10 percent switched from yes to no after hearing the Colin Powell's speech.⁸² This shift in favoring the Iraq invasion is rather big taking into account that the 19 percent growth in support was initiated only by these two speeches. Two days after the Bush's State of the Union Address 38 percent of Americans agreed with the statement that the administration provided the public with enough evidence of connection between Saddam Hussein and Al-Qaeda.⁸³ Nevertheless, when the same respondents were asked about the same question after the Colin Powell's speech to U.N. 68 percent agreed.⁸⁴ So there was a 30 percent jump after the Powell's speech, which could also be the outcome of the fact that Powell stated much more evidence of the links between Al-Qaeda and Saddam Hussein than the President Bush did. What was even more interesting was that almost the whole 30 percent jump came from the Democrats, which is again the evidence that the Bush administration rhetoric was successful regardless of the Democratic or Republican believes of respondents.⁸⁵

⁸¹ Gallup poll, August 19-21, 2002; Pew polls, October 2-6, 2002 and February 12-18, 2003; and New York Times poll, March 11, 2003.

⁸² Amy Gershkoff and Shana Kushner, "Shaping Public Opinion: The 9/11-Iraq Connection in the Bush Administration's Rhetoric," *Perspectives on Politics* 3, No. 3 (Sep., 2005): 525-537.

⁸³ Amy Gershkoff and Shana Kushner, "Shaping Public Opinion: The 9/11-Iraq Connection in the Bush Administration's Rhetoric," *Perspectives on Politics* 3, No. 3 (Sep., 2005): 525-537.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

CONCLUSION

The decision to invade Iraq was, is and most probably will be, controversial for days to come. Some may support while others may oppose it. That is the destiny of many controversial decisions. But controversial decisions require strong backing in order to be accepted. President Bush and his administration chose to back up their decision with one of the most persuasive techniques applicable on the American public. They learned from the way Americans are persuaded every day and in every stage of their lives. They used the politics of fear, which is in this thesis called the Terror frame. The analysis of what specific elements were used by the administration in order to persuade Americans and their actual impact proved by the polling data shows that the reason why the Administration was so successful lay in the elaborate rhetoric covering all the issues initiating fear, from the attacks of September 11th through terrorism represented by Al-Qaeda, the cruel dictator Saddam Hussein and his connection to Stalin all the way to the weapons of mass destruction. Given the fact of how many times, in what formulations and with what implications these elements were used, it turned out that the use of politics of fear played a crucial role in the struggle to gain the support of the American public for the war in Iraq.

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