

THREE MAN REVOLT: AN ANALYSIS OF RETIRED OFFICERS' DISSENT  
OVER THE IRAQ WAR

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This thesis is dedicated to my parents. I could have never gotten through this process without all of their love and support. I owe everything that I am now and everything I will be in the future to your love and affection.

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## ABSTRACT

### THREE MAN REVOLT: AN ANALYSIS OF RETIRED OFFICERS' DISSENT OVER THE IRAQ WAR

by Darrel E. Farmer

This study is about dissent in times of war. Specifically, it analyzed the effect of technical arguments within the public sphere to advance anti-war discourse. The study consisted of rhetorical criticism of the testimony of three retired officers' testimony before Congress about the Iraq War. The arguments that they presented represent a case study in how dissent functions in times of war. The research questions proposed were: how the Democratic Policy Committee hearings function as a legitimate forum for technical criticism, what strategies were used by the retired officers in opposition of the Iraq War, and what role did technical expertise play in arguing about the war in the public sphere? The study found that technical dissent forced the defenders of the status quo to engage the ideas, rather than attack the sources. The study found that technical expertise allowed a context within which specific arguments could be advanced against the war effort in order to attribute blame on the basis of the chain of command. The study expanded G. Thomas Goodnight's (1982, 1987, 1991) theory of how dissent can be empowered by a third party. Though there can be no proven correlation between Donald Rumsfeld's resignation and the testimony, many of the arguments presented by the general helped form a rationale as to why there needed to be a change in leadership. Further research will help advance the findings that technical dissent, when given the proper

forum, can facilitate policy change. Two potential questions to guide future research on technical dissent can ask: what role did anti-war rhetoric play on the new Administration and what other forums can support technically driven dissent?

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## CHAPTER I

### JUSTIFYING A STUDY OF DISSENT A IN TIME OF WAR

#### Introduction

The United States began military operations in Iraq on March 20, 2003. Two primary reasons were offered for going to war: 1) the potential of Saddam Hussein to possess weapons of mass destruction and 2) his non-compliance with United Nations resolutions on inspection of suspected weapons sites. Over the course of the next several months the Bush Administration faced heavy criticism about the war effort. Donald Rumsfeld was the target of much of the criticism for his strategic decisions, the handling of prisoners in Abu Ghraib, and his rigid adherence to his desire to invade with the smallest possible forces. During that time, President Bush said that he would stand by and support Rumsfeld. However, the embattled Secretary resigned on November 6, 2006 having served as the Secretary of Defense from 2001-2006.

Just prior to Rumsfeld's resignation, the Democratic Policy Committee (DPC) invited distinguished retired military officers to present their views on the Bush administration's conduct of the war. Those speaking before the DPC were Major General John Batiste, Major General Paul Eaton, and Colonel Thomas Hammes. They were highly critical of Rumsfeld's leadership. The 2006 Midterm elections happened almost concurrently with Rumsfeld's resignation. Shortly after the presentation of the retired officers' testimony, Midterm elections shifted the House and Senate to Democratic control. Since Rumsfeld's resignation

occurred in close proximity to these political events, it raises the question of rhetorical effects. To provide a rhetorical accounting of Rumsfeld's resignation this study examines the retired officers' testimony to explain how their testimony creates a case study to better understand dissent. Such an analysis of the power of deliberative rhetoric to facilitate public policy change might shed light on the process of dissent by showing how argumentation, given the proper forum, can affect policy. Thus, the retired officers' testimony seems justified as a case study of technical arguments in the public sphere.

To initiate the study, this chapter presents a review of literature of Goodnight's theory of spheres of argument, discusses criticisms of the theory in relation to problems of achieving consensus and managing consent, and sets the stage for a discussion of argument over the Iraq war in Chapter two. The next section presents a review of G. Thomas Goodnight's theory of argument spheres.

#### A Review of G. Thomas Goodnight's Theory of Argument Spheres

G. Thomas Goodnight's fundamental assumption is that human rhetoric is an art that engages individual choice and common activity. He delineates that, "deliberative rhetoric is a form of argumentation through which citizens test and create social knowledge in order to uncover, assess, and resolve shared problems" (Goodnight, 1982, p. 214). Goodnight describes three spheres in which arguments exist: the private, technical and public. The theory seeks to understand how individuals and societies reduce uncertainties

about difficult issues. Such study will illuminate the values, argumentative characteristics, and prominent ideologies for the given era, society or person being studied.

The three spheres relate to the forum in which argument is presented and the acceptable proofs to contest the claims. "Differences among the three spheres are plausibly illustrated if we consider the differences between the standards for arguments among friends (private) versus those for judgment of academic arguments (technical) versus those for judging political disputes (public)" (Goodnight, 1982, p. 216). In order to understand how the categorization process works, it is essential to understand what, theoretically, comprises each sphere.

The private sphere is for interpersonal disputes and requires the least formal methods of proving claims.

Some disagreements are created in such a way as to require only the most informal demands for evidence, proof sequences, claim establishment, and language use. These may typify arguments in the personal sphere where the subject matter and consequences of the dispute are up to the participants involved. (Goodnight, 1982, p. 220)

The rules of personal argumentative engagement are fluid and can be created as the argument develops. Each side decides what is and is not permissible as evidence, each side collaborates to decide what ground is being discussed, and each side collaborates to decide what represents

coherent refutation. "The argument, stemming from uncertainty of some sort, is important only in the socially agreed upon value given to it by the arguers" (Goodnight, 1991, p. 5). There are no sets of established rules to try to appeal to within this sort of argument, what both parties agree to constitute the argumentative practice. Therefore, the discussion is socially constructed based on mutual preference.

Unlike the informality of the public sphere, the technical sphere has more rules and higher standards by which to evaluate claims.

Other disagreements are created in such a way as to narrow the range of permissible subject matter while requiring more specialized forms of reasoning. These typify the technical sphere where more limited rules of evidence, presentation, and judgment are stipulated in order to identify arguers of the field and facilitate the pursuit of their interests. (Goodnight, 1982, p. 220)

Arguments that arise in technical communities require falsifiable evidence and the ability to explain why a given claim refutes another. An example of such a dispute is on the question of nuclear energy's safety. Entrance into the argument is predicated on one's ability to understand, at its most simplistic level, how nuclear reactors function. Studies authored by physicists utilize evidence that allow a claim about safety to be supported or rejected. One cannot properly evaluate the effectiveness of the claims without understanding, in a technical sense, how nuclear reactors work and how nuclear energy is created.

The public sphere is intended to exceed the limited scope of the personal and technical spheres. The public sphere is comprised of the forums in which the entire society or community can become engaged in an issue. Arguments occur in the public sphere because their outcome will affect large numbers of a society or community.

Transcending the personal and technical spheres is the public, a domain which, while not reducible to the argument practice of any group of social customs or professional communities, nevertheless may be influenced by them. But the public realm is discrete insofar as it provides forums with customs, traditions, and requirements for arguers in the recognition that the consequences of dispute extend beyond the personal and technical spheres. (Goodnight, 1982, p. 220)

The public sphere, as will be discussed later, is the focus of much of this theory's criticism, as well as its practical application. For now it is essential to understand that, as a basic component for the theory, the public sphere is the set of forums where political arguments take place. This is the sphere in which the best argument practices should, theoretically, take place because the public sphere can use standards of proof from the other spheres to test evidence and reasoning. Arguments crafted for the public sphere can rely on evidence from personal experience, past policy choices, or technical understanding from a specialized field. Unlike the personal or technical sphere, arguments presented to the public can be layered by relying on

multiple kinds of evidentiary proofs. Arguments that utilize layered approaches, created to appeal to various groups within the public, lead the collectivity toward deliberative discourse.

Appeals made in any argumentative situation attempt to meet the standards of one or more of the three spheres. Describing spheres as discrete shows how an argument is framed and how it appeals to the audience. The purpose of this theory is to explain and describe how arguments develop, not to formulate a typology for arguments. Argument spheres might overlap. The specifics of the given argument are less important than the way that the uncertainty is delineated and resolved. The framework inherent to the sphere will categorize, not the argument itself, but the tests of evidence that will be expected (Goodnight, 1987b). Understanding how the spheres are conceptualized leads to the next important component of the theory, which is how arguments in a given sphere interact with other spheres. All arguments can be situated in a given sphere, but there is always some level of interdependence. Three examples will illustrate how arguments can shift from personal to public, from public to technical, and how the public sphere influences the technical sphere.

#### Personal to Public

Arguments, such as those in regard to gay rights, can begin their existence in the personal sphere. This example illustrates how argument can shape reality. Initially, the idea of whether or not homosexuals should be

allowed marriage rights was thought of as a personal decision. The idea was, primarily, to be decided by a person's religious affiliation. However, advocacy groups and grassroots organizations came together, championed the cause of gay marriage, and attempted to reconceptualize the situation as one of equality for all citizens. These groups argued that exclusion from the right to marry whom you wanted to marry, regardless of their gender, decreased homosexual's civil rights and was un-American by standards of discrimination. Adopting this reconceptualized worldview would move the argument from the personal sphere to the public sphere.

Regardless of individual feelings about homosexuality, equality for all, not just fair treatment for heterosexuals, was an issue to be resolved by the public. This is because a loss of equality for even a marginalized group affects the equality of the whole. "Controversies leave a legacy that defines the parameters of institutional reasoning" (Goodnight, 1991, p. 8). As the battle over gay rights continues, the laws will only change if the policy makers within the governmental institution are persuaded by the arguments presented. So, from this example it becomes clear how arguments that begin by being evaluated by the standards of the personal sphere can be brought into the public sphere. If the resolution of the controversy will affect the collectivity, then a controversy is elevated from a personal to public controversy.

## Public to Technical

Not all arguments begin at the personal level. Issues that are immediately understood to affect the public good can be a starting point for argument as well. Goodnight used the example of the environment to show how an issue within the public sphere can affect the greater population and, ultimately, be resolved using findings generated in the technical sphere. The argument began with the understanding that people destroying the planet affected everyone on the planet. Therefore, destroying the planet for industrialization was a bad idea because of its irreversibility. However, as the solutions given from the specialized technical field of ecology began to evolve, it became clear that the solutions would require businesses to change their activities. Corporate methods of dumping waste, levels of emissions, and toxic chemicals used in cleaning agents needed to be altered. In order to stop pollution, laws and regulations need to be created to halt harmful practices. Businesses hire lawyers, who also represent a specialized technical community, to argue that such environmental laws will force businesses to leave America for places that do not have such stringent environmental laws. This illustration shows how a problem from the public sphere can be addressed using knowledge gleaned from the technical sphere.

## Technical Sphere as an Influence on the Public Sphere

The technical sphere is utilized to generate arguments that can influence the public by the nature of their scientific appeal. Researchers within

the scientific field help generate evidence to be used as a standard of proof to validate technical arguments. An example of this is the hiring of scientists to test the potential dangers of using chemicals like DDT. The findings of the scientific reports acted as evidence to build the case for or against DDT's usage. This had a double-edged effect. It meant that science would, ideally, influence policy making in a positive way. However, it also meant that technical experts were called upon by individuals with a vested interest in advancing their case. "In order to pursue research and development, scientists shackled their work to promises of risk-minimal, timely positive breakthroughs" Goodnight (2005) explains, but then concludes, "as a consequence, big science and small science became increasingly tied down by the practices of party politics" (p. 27).

The final illustration of sphere overlap is in the area of academia and governmental funding. Resources for research at colleges and universities are limited. Most recently, as state revenues fall, colleges and universities are increasingly pressed to seek grant monies to support their research. However, agencies with monies for research grants often have narrowly constrained research interests. Therefore, researchers must adapt their interests to those of the grant programs and their administrators. Researchers will not be given grant money, support, or a proper forum to advance their claim if their arguments are in opposition to the status quo because agents of the status quo select who receives assistance. Thus arguments that are generated in the technical sphere can have their outcomes altered or ignored by the prevailing values of the actors within the public sphere. Researchers

pursue work consistent with the grant writing agency's priorities because they need the financial support offered by the grant to continue their work (Miller, 2005). As long as their findings do not contradict the claim that the granting agency wants to support, then their financing will continue.

### Controversy in the Spheres

Describing the perfect public sphere, Goodnight says, “its speaker would employ common language, values, and reasoning so that the disagreement could be settled to the satisfaction of all concerned” (Goodnight, 1982, p. 219). The problem with conceptualizing the public sphere in this way is that arguments affecting large numbers of people have advocates on each side who are deeply invested in seeing their side prevail in the argument. For that reason, coming to a satisfactory conclusion is rare. For example, when much is at stake in a controversy, like the debate over evolution vs. creationism, neither side can concede defeat to the other because doing so would invalidate their worldview. The creationists feel that the opposition invalidates their religious belief system. The evolutionists believe that acknowledging creationism as a viable alternative invalidates the basis of scientific research.

### Controversy in Spheres Expanding or Contracting Discourse

Goodnight’s overall purpose in explaining arguments within spheres is to explore the current status of deliberative argument. Believing that Charles Beard’s arguments about the evolution of government hold true today,

Goodnight argued that government has become increasingly technical in nature and that,

As “the operations of public administration become increasingly technical in nature” the governors turn increasingly to specialized knowledge provided by “chemistry, physics, and higher mathematics.”<sup>28</sup> What startled Beard were the implications of this transformation for democratic self-government. If it is the case that specialization is necessary to make knowledgeable decisions, then what value is the participation of common citizens? Entertaining the notion that the United States might best be ruled by a technically trained elite, he concluded that even though such a group might be better acquainted with a range of facts, “it would be more likely to fall to pieces from violent differences than to attain permanent unity through a reciprocal exchange of decisions.” His reason: “[T]ranscending the peculiar questions of each specialty are the interrelations of all the specialties; and the kind of knowledge or intelligence necessary to deal with these interrelations is not guaranteed by proficiency in any one sphere. (Goodnight, 1982, p. 224)

Over reliance on specialization would lead to the general public being excluded from discussions of important issues because they lack the technical expertise requisite for understanding the implications of the issue and lack the ability to evaluate the arguments being crafted.

If all decisions about scientific or technical choices were to be made only by those with specialized training, then their personal turmoil would be what divides their community and precludes consensus. The exclusion of the public and the willingness of technical experts to fall to infighting will prevent any amicable conclusion to volatile controversies. Let us revisit the example of the debate over creationism and evolution. There are trained scientists on both sides who meet all of the requirements to be worthy sources within the technical sphere. Their specialized training denotes their ability to engage the subject and search for truth. Their conflicting opinions about the final outcome, the "truth" of which side is "right" is grounded in their vested interest and evolving disdain for one another. This example of a technical community with such stark divides illustrates the dangerous pitfalls associated with handing a given topic over to the technological elite. The public can often act as a calming influence over such debate, allowing the technocrats a third party to evaluate their claims. However, Goodnight's fear is that the narrowing of argumentation to the technical sphere prevents the public from participating in public deliberation. Controversies, without public inclusion, will have each side entrench their worldviews until no consensus can be reached and no solution can be found.

Inability to participate in a meaningful way, in Goodnight's estimation, has stifled creative public discourse on many issues directly affecting the public. "As arguments grounded in personal experience (disclosed by averaging opinions) seem to have the greatest currency, political speakers

present not options but personalities, perpetuating government policies by substituting debate for an aura of false intimacy” (Goodnight, 1982, p. 224). This degradation of the level of arguments given at the public level creates an uninformed public that lacks the ability to make wise decisions about issues that concern them. “As forms of decision-making proliferate, questions of public significance themselves become increasingly difficult to recognize, much less address, because of the intricate rules, procedures, and terminologies of the specialized forms” (Goodnight, 1982, p. 225). Being left without the proper language, knowledge, and specialization to understand the policies being made, the public is unable to address important issues of the day.

Goodnight explained that the erosion of the public sphere can and will continue as long as the technical and personal sphere keep expanding in their scope. According to Goodnight, “If the public sphere is to be revitalized, then those practices which replace deliberative rhetoric by substituting alternative modes of invention and restricting subject matter need to be uncovered and critiqued” (Goodnight, 1982, p. 227). The theory allows us a lens to view public argument that will allow for the current flaws of the system to become visible. Once those flaws are noticed, then deliberative discourse can become active again. “In pointing out alternatives to present practice, the theorist of argument could contribute significantly to the perfection of public forms and forums of argument. If this task is undertaken, then deliberative argument may no longer be a lost art” (Goodnight, 1982, p. 227). It is in this

way that applying this theory to argumentative situations can actually illuminate and, hopefully, facilitate changes needed in the public sphere in order to encourage deliberative discourse. We may see that dissent from technical communities can be a starting point for discussion about controversial topics.

### Considering Technical Arguments in the Public Sphere

After establishing what constitutes each argumentative sphere and discussing the standards of proof for each, it is important to look to applications of technical reasoning on public discourse. Goodnight (1982; 1987a; 1987b; 1991; 1997) argues that technical jargon prevents deliberative discourse and disables a potentially active public from engaging in important political discussions. He argues that if less credence were given to technical experts, then there would be a revitalization of the public sphere in discursive action. Lippmann (1920; 1922; 1925; 1937) argues that the public is poorly informed and will never be able to understand the inner workings and complexity of the democratic system of governance. Bureaucracy and formalized structures within the system are too complicated for a non-specialist to comprehend. For that reason, government should rely on the opinions of technical experts to make policy decisions. Looking at the potential of technical arguments within theoretical contexts will establish some ground for each side as to which argument most accurately reflects the role of technical arguments. Doing so will give us a glimpse into how technical arguments develop or retard the growth of language and understanding about a given topic.

The effect that technical arguments can have on public discourse is constantly in flux. As citizens become more aware of their surroundings and the mechanisms of control within the government, the more active a citizen can become (Lippmann, 1925). The way that ideas from the technical sphere can influence the discussion of policy making is the heart of the discussion of spheres of argument. Goodnight (1982; 1987a; 1987b; 1989) describes the importance of public deliberation, the sources of uncertainty that breed controversy, what constitutes quality deliberative discourse, and how the technical sphere's expansion mutes public interaction with key issues.

#### Potential Effects on Public Discourse

The narrowing of a discussion to personal impact or the validity of the science behind the claim actually weakens the ability of the public sphere to respond to necessary discussion. Goodnight (1987a) argued that the reliance on the technical and personal spheres for argumentative guidance effectively shut out deliberative discourse. This is consistent with Lippmann's criticism of deliberative discourse in his description of what the common citizen can aspire to take from politics,

What he knows of events that matter enormously to him, the purposes of governments, the aspirations of peoples, the struggle of classes, he knows at a second, third, or fourth hand. He cannot go and see for himself. Even the things that are near to him have become too involved for his judgment...What men

who make the study of politics a vocation cannot do, the man who has an hour a day to devote to newspapers and talk cannot possibly hope to do. He must seize catchwords and headlines or nothing. (Lippmann, 1920, p. 23)

People may not be able to understand the science behind ecological disaster, but they can grasp the idea that the planet where they live is in danger. Criticism strives to move opinion beyond present concerns and argument to a higher level of discussion (Goodnight, 1987b). He asserts that without alteration, the technical and personal spheres will continue to expand in a counterproductive way for the public sphere. In a description of the essential functions of the public sphere Goodnight points to deliberation, "open space," and discursive possibility as one of the three keys to a high-functioning forum (Goodnight, 1987b). The necessary accessibility of arguments to the general public is the key theme that ties his original and subsequent works together.

#### Citizenship and Deliberation

Deliberative rhetoric is a means by which to challenge and alter the public sphere by the evaluation of new competing arguments (Goodnight, 1989). Challenging the prevailing wisdom with dissent would allow the criteria used in spheres to shift and would, thusly, alter the rhetoric used in the public sphere. Deliberative discourse engages an actual or potential public and seeks to adjust, even reorient, knowledge and feelings about an issue in communication or a particular creative work (Goodnight, 1987b). Goodnight

asserts that dissenting arguments would help reinstitute the division between the technical and public spheres in a way that will make the public sphere stronger and more independent. A public forum that encourages through its arrangement arguments originating from the technical sphere to be made understandable for the public, will allow the language of controversies to become more encompassing. When a forum is arranged in a way that the arbitrators of the forum, or the standards of evaluation used within it force debaters to utilize language and internal logic accessible to the common person, then that forum will be more supportive of deliberative rhetoric. Technical sphere arguments can give new language to controversies. "Assisted suicide," "biochemical weapons," and "green power" are all examples of technical terminology being used to more precisely describe situations or objects. Language expansion allows people to understand the issues better and to become superior advocates. However, if the public lacks specialized training, then the technical language of certain arguments stifles rather than engages them. Technical language is stifling whenever it is not explained or not put into the proper context. To make arguments more accessible to untrained listeners and improve the quality of deliberation the reasoning in technical argumentation needs to be explained.

Technical jargon often isolates the common person and keeps him from understanding the argument being presented (Lippmann, 1925). This is because of jargon's foreign sound and precise meaning that is often lost on the untrained listener. Goodnight agreed with Lippmann's fear that technical jargon

was terrible for deliberative discourse because jargon is often substituted for quality evidence. The conclusion is that the public needs to have more access to important decisions, regardless of their technical aptitude. Goodnight argued that studying arguments within spheres would lead to greater levels of critical inquiry. "As public debate envelops legal, scientific, artistic, industrial, educational, medical, regulatory and governance institutions, critical inquiry can examine and judge how and why lines among argument contexts are put up and redrawn through debate" (Goodnight, 1991, p. 7). An argumentative context describes not only the place in which the argument is to be presented, but the standards upon which cases will be built. Argumentative contexts come in all sorts. A context for argument may be a courtroom, in which the standards of evidence are appropriated by written rules coming in the form of statutes and laws. Another context may be a discussion in the living room about the quality of a football play that just occurred, where the standards of evidence are in reference to the game being played and historical examples. Examining how arguments develop within specialized contexts will illuminate how debate in those contexts creates discourse and facilitates or impedes argumentative engagement. Discovering that there were strong forms of dissent in proper forums that challenged the prevalent way of thinking would show the propensity of the public sphere to facilitate deliberative discourse. The problems expressed by Goodnight about the development of the technical sphere could be redeemed if it could be shown that the arguments generated within the sphere actually invite discourse.

In addition to the descriptive value of seeing how the argument develops, Goodnight argued that such action would facilitate public debate in a way that will make evaluating its current status easier from a critical perspective. “Further, reflective discussion might tell us whether claims to public debate and critical discussion are redeemable at all, given the strategies institutions and interest groups chose in order to overcome opposition and influence the public” (Goodnight, 1991, p. 7). In summation, after charting out how arguments develop, it becomes easier to see what arguments succeeded expanding potential dissent. “These arguments are rhetorical, in the traditional sense, in so far as the general customs of cultural understanding and action are left intact while the specific instance is brought into focus, appraised, and judged” (Goodnight, 1987). The choices made and the way that each argumentative engagement develops will allow researchers more evidence to make claims about the nature and function of persuasion in the public sphere.

The public’s ability to engage in deliberative discourse is at the heart of Goodnight’s work (1982, 1987b, 1991, 2005). Robert Rowland tested the theory by analyzing campaign rhetoric as a case study. He found that despite some flaws in the reporting angles, the public sphere was still able to inform the public about the most fundamental arguments from the campaign. He concurred with Goodnight that primarily technical experts are handling certain issues but disagreed that the expert opinion was dominating the development of the argument. “One conclusion is that fears of expert domination of the public sphere seem unfounded. Experts are rarely cited, and pairing

competing experts mutes their influence” (Rowland, 2006, p. 214). The ability of an expert from the technical community to have an influence on the public sphere still relies on one's persuasive ability and the presentation of information.

Unlike Goodnight's belief that the technical sphere would crowd out public deliberation, Rowland found that technical information could inform the public, but un-evidenced claims were being accepted more readily than technical expertise. Rowland explained that expert opinion not only allows the public to continue evaluating issues, but actually serves to make their decision-making easier. “In fact, debate evidently would serve the goals of the liberal public sphere much better were it more informed by relevant experts” (Rowland, 2006, p. 214). Rowland argued technical expertise is helpful in informing the public, but its influence is being circumvented by the addition of traditionally personal frameworks into public argument. This supports Peter's (1989) critique that technocrats inform and invigorate public discourse.

While Rowland was able to generate claims about the aptitude of the public sphere to inform, Abbott (2008) supported the idea that controversy is often a starting point of discussion in the public sphere. Abbott applied Goodnight's theory of spheres of argument to stem cell research and found that many of the arguments against stem cell research were rooted in the personal sphere. The negative appeals were made to personal belief about religion and about ethics, rather than the public good. This personal belief system acted as the flashpoint for the controversy over stem cell research because people objected to the necessity of living organisms to harvest stem cells.

This exchange, also, highlighted the limited effects of unyielding moral principles when applied to public policy. It is this uncertainty regarding a significant political or social controversy that can become a starting point for discussion in the public sphere, as Goodnight (1991) has argued. (Abbott, 2008, p. 36)

The conclusion of Abbott's study supported Goodnight's belief about the purpose of argumentative study. "Being able to identify similar spots of moral ambiguity disguised as certainty can open up space for deliberation on both the general moral principle and its application to specific circumstances" (Abbott, 2008, p. 36). By tracking the way that the arguments over stem cell research developed over time Abbott pinpointed how moral arguments were disguised as technical expertise. This implies the ability of the public to fulfill Goodnight's request of reclaiming issues from the technical sphere, "It can help people take deliberative power into their own hands, rather than rely on institutions to do the thinking for them" (Abbott, 2008, p. 36).

This theoretical discussion prompts the question of whether technical experts help or harm the public's ability to understand policy discussions and engage in deliberative discourse. These two oppositional views of the public's aptitude to engage in civic engagement set the stage for the discussion of how dissenting arguments from the technical sphere can engage or confuse the public.

## Critiques of Goodnight's Theory

Not everyone agrees with Goodnight. Some people have argued against Goodnight's conceptualization of argumentative spheres because they say that the informality of the rule-systems invalidate the concept. Others have criticized Goodnight's conceptualization of the public sphere and how arguments influence individuals. If these critiques are correct, then technical experts could be exactly what the public needs to invigorate deliberative discourse. The next section reviews critiques to examine what they offer for a study of dissent.

### The Public Sphere's Inherent Cultural Biases

Thomas Nathan Peters (1989) argued that though a majority of Goodnight's claims were true, but their logical extension did not point to his conclusion. Peters argued that technical understanding and specialized training are not the only methods by which divergent opinions are stifled. He argued that public discourse can be equally exclusionary as technical discourse regarding certain viewpoints because of societal norms about who is credible and what deserves attention. "Insofar as deliberation privileges some viewpoints to the exclusion of others, or valorizes modes of reasoning that are not available to all citizens, deliberation cannot be truly public" (Peters, 1989, p. 27). This assertion about the nature of exclusion shows alternative causes for exclusion; and such causes are not connected in any way to confrontations among spheres of argument.

An example of this sort of exclusion is the controversy over female genital mutilation (FGM) and the inability of arguments to be accepted in America as an option for parents in some African nations. For some African cultures, the practice of FGM is culturally significant. Parents in Africa engage in the removal of females' clitorises to minimize sexual pleasure in an attempt to make adultery less appealing. This is met with resistance from an American public that conceptualizes the activity as an abuse of adolescent females and a symbol of patriarchy. The standards of proof common to the public sphere are present because the arguments are using accessible language that does not rely on technical expertise. Despite the accessibility of the appeals, the arguments for FGM fail to gain traction because of cultural norms. While it may seem natural in Africa due to cultural traditions, the practice has no equivalent in America. It is rejected on the grounds that such practice constitutes a form of sexual oppression that should be opposed. It is not that certain arguments lack accessibility, or that they appeal only to a technical elite, but that they are excluded from discussion because they are antithetical to societal beliefs.

#### Technical Argumentation's Potential to Invigorate Public Discourse

Second, Peters argued that utilizing technical expertise will not take away the ability for public forums to disseminate the essential knowledge for good decision-making. Instead, he argued that it would actually increase the likelihood of deliberative discourse.

Rather than seeing the advance of personal and technical groundings of argument as the "erosion" of the public sphere, we can now appreciate that advance as a commonsense move made in response to changes in the demands placed upon forms of argument. (Peters, 1989, p. 29)

Using Goodnight's own logical structure, Peters argued that the development of the technical sphere was necessary to argumentative development within the public sphere. As it becomes necessary to deal with more complex issues, technical specialization gives language and ideas to complex arguments. Using Goodnight's illustration involving the environment (Goodnight, 1982), the public sphere actually calls for the inclusion of technical arguments. This inclusion, Peters argued, does not alter the ability of the public to remain engaged on the topic at hand. In fact, he argued, that it gives the public a stronger sense of the issue.

There is little to regret in the loss of traditionally public forms of arguing, or public groundings of argument. Where personal and technical groundings have triumphed, it is because such groundings were required to manage the uncertainties inherent in issues of public scope. (Peters, 1989, p. 29)

The fact that certain issues of public good are complex enough to require specific knowledge is, according to Peters, not in a zero-sum relationship with traditional public knowledge and its standards of proof. People need expert knowledge or testimony to validate their opinions.

The fear of the technical sphere's dominance is inherent in Goodnight's assumptions, but Peters argued that such fear has no grounding. He argued that Goodnight's fear of the "technological elite" can be addressed in their application.

Nor do these experts assume this power covertly; the public grants them power on the basis of straightforward, public and commonsense claims of technical competence, claims which succeed precisely because the issue of "life as it ought to be lived" is one that requires technical knowledge. (Peters, 1989, p. 30)

It is precisely the ability of an expert to offer specialized opinions that makes their contribution valid. Experts do not limit public participation—they encourage discourse and action through their specificity. The multitude of potential experts on a given topic act to eliminate the threat of a singular technocratic voice that stifles the public. The public gives experts their grant funding and ability to do their specific work, so the power granted to experts is derived from the public--not at odds with it.

#### Contact Points in the Backstage Area

Carolyn Miller (2005) argued against the idea of technical knowledge being the primary pull against good governance. She examined what she calls the backstage area comprised of lobbyists, regulators, and agenda-writers. She said that this point of contact between decision-makers and

actors outside the public sphere is a point of contention for evaluating how the technical and public spheres function together. As a scholarly pursuit, she did not make broad claims about what the backstage area means for Goodnight's theory, but instead asked the question of what it could mean.

Perhaps the existence of this backstage space is simply more evidence of the deterioration of the public sphere, of its imperfections and vulnerability to the influence of elites, special interests, and other forms of power. It is almost certainly a zone where such deterioration begins, a conduit for technical reasoning to infect public deliberation, a problem much remarked in rhetorical and argumentation studies. However, a contact zone is a two-way conduit, and it may also be the place responsible for the politicization of science, a problem noted recently by many scientists and science-policy commentators.

(Miller, 2005, p. 37)

This contact zone is a two-way conduit, so it is not only where the problem arises but also perhaps, the solution. By imagining the same concept applied to politics, the contact zone can be a point where technical arguments meld with public understanding to "revitalize the public sphere" (Goodnight, 1982). By utilizing technical knowledge to indict poor logic within the public sphere, technical arguments may find a place to counter the politicization of particular issues.

## Restricting Access is Commonplace and Acceptable

Handing off the specifics of a policy argument to people who have special training that makes them experts in the field is, in Peter's view, legitimate grounds for restricting access.

Additional restrictions are placed on those who have committed particular crimes, are mentally handicapped, or have not mastered the language skills of the English-speaking majority. In each case these standards serve to ensure that public decisions are made by those with minimum technical competencies regarding the conduct of American public life as manifested in its public institutions and public forums of deliberation. (Peters, 1989, p. 29)

The ability of a well-educated public, which is essential to Goodnight's idea that the public should be the primary force of deliberation within a society, is to distinguish between poorly supported good arguments and well-supported bad arguments. "Knowledge claims, regardless of their relationship to technical interests, are the result of humans applying particular epistemic methodologies to the data of experience (constituted as subject matters), and critically reflecting on those methodologies as a test of epistemic soundness" (Peters, 1989, p. 30). Peters argued here that regardless of the classification of where an argument exists within the spheres, the knowledge gleaned from study operates in the same manner--as raw data to be evaluated within

whichever sphere is utilizing the findings. To this generalization of all arguments and all spheres, Peters agrees,

Virtually all forums have "formal expectations" of argument, which include such things as time (or page) limits, organizational standards, documentation requirements, and the like. These will vary from argument to argument, but they remain constant as categories of characteristics that all arguments possess. (Peters, 1998, p. 31)

In the same way that Goodnight argued that the specifics of an argument do not really matter and the development of the argument is what is important, Peters asserted that the classification of the knowledge being used to validate a claim does not matter and the application of the knowledge produced is what is important.

#### Illegitimate Grounds for Exclusion

Peters argued that excluding arguments based on technical understanding is to be feared.

Rather than feel suspicious of the evolutionary impulse to limit access to public forums, an impulse which, properly understood, helps insure that argument will successfully regulate uncertainty, Goodnight should be concerned with those forces that restrict access on illegitimate grounds. (Peters, 1989, p. 31)

America's history is stained with segregation, limiting the right to vote, and limiting civil liberties to minorities and those are the times whenever a lack of access was deplorable and needed to be illuminated to the public.

Goodnight (1982) asserted that the role of the argumentation theorist was to point out times when the technical sphere had excluded the public and devise how it happened. Peters argued their role is to find when access was restricted unfairly.

This stance leaves argument theorists and social reformers with the task of determining when restrictions on access to argument are in the public interest-hardly a new issue in democratic societies-but it at least allows that not all restrictions on access are to be feared. (Peters, 1989, p. 31)

Exclusion of the public is not only commonplace, but is not always problematic. The appeal made by Lippmann for technological elites to have their own specialized discourse to evaluate potential policy decisions was illustrated within Peter's critique as justly excluded masses. Lippmann said, like Peters, that there is no need to fear the exclusion of the public because individuals with specialized training should be able to advance knowledge without an uninformed public acting as an impediment to discussion. Restricted access on certain issues germane to a technical sphere is not to be feared, but encouraged under Lippmann's view of how a democratic society should function.

## Alternative Conceptualizations of the Public Sphere and the Role of Dissent

Kendall Phillips argued that Goodnight's theory of the public is both too idealistic and ignores the influence of dissent on the public. He began by addressing the inherent problems with the conceptualization of the public sphere, "By claiming that the public sphere somehow transcends the biases, limitations, and coercion of any discursive site, theorists interested in the public sphere have presented a deliberative mirage to communities seeking redress" (Phillips, 1996, p. 238). Unlike Peters and Miller, this argument is designed to contest the very image of the public Goodnight reflects. Phillips framed Goodnight's portrayal of the public in this way to show the public sphere's natural ability and propensity to exclude fringe opinions. Limiting the potential views of the public marginalizes dissent,

The desire for consensus oversimplifies and overdetermines the issue of dissension. The public sphere lays out the apparently impossible goal of universal rational consensus. Critics presuppose this goal, and their observations increasingly embed this telos of consensus into their critical methods. Protesting deviants are either shackled with the goal of consensus or marginalized if they are unwilling or unable to endorse it. Dissent becomes merely a disruption in the inevitable progress toward some transcendent and universal consensus (Phillips, 1996, p. 243).

What Peters, and Phillips argued in their critiques of Goodnight was that argumentation scholars should study how and where dissent occurs, rather than just which issues have been handed off to specialized sub-communities. The nature of dissent is against the ideas of the status quo, so it is naturally controversial. However, viewing arguments through the lens of argumentative spheres makes it too easy to dismiss dissent as a product of the dissenter's own ineptitude at properly formatting their argument. "Any deviance from the prescribed rationality of the public sphere is explained away as a failure to meet the 'appropriate' standards of communication" (Phillips, 1996, p. 241).

Situating dissent is important to a controversy because it will show how dissenters find forums to argue against the status quo. By identifying and discussing topics of dissent, one can illuminate the variety of opinions that are potentially being excluded. Peters and Phillips are primarily concerned with exclusion and the study of dissent has the opportunity to open up the public sphere from the very exclusion they wish to avoid.

So what role does the public play in deliberative discourse about technical issues? Should they, as Goodnight suggests, be the primary arbitrator of all issues in the public sphere? Or, as Lippmann argues, is the public better off allowing specially trained experts to analyze technical arguments? These two theories of what role the public should play in policy making are in direct opposition of one another and need to be examined to see which theory holds true. The Iraq War is a case study in which specially

trained dissenters argued against the war itself. Their arguments provide an interesting glimpse into the theoretical conflict between Goodnight and Lippmann's understanding of the role of the public.

### Summary

This chapter has reviewed Goodnight's theory of argument spheres and the criticism of that theory to illustrate the need to explore the role of dissent in public deliberation. Chapter Two will explain how Goodnight's theory has been applied in the past, justify why it is a suitable theoretical approach to the Iraq War controversy, and describe how the arguments in the controversy will be analyzed. Next will come a presentation of the current literature about the controversy in Iraq to give some historical examples of how this controversy has taken shape. After seeing how the controversy came to be, the next chapter examines how dissent has been utilized by concerned groups or ignored by those in power. Finally, a justification of the texts for study will be offered along with the research questions guiding the study.

## CHAPTER II

### ENGAGING THE PUBLIC IN A TIME OF WAR: CRITICIZING THE CONDUCT OF THE WAR IN IRAQ

#### Introduction

This chapter develops the study in three ways. First, it extends the discussion of the argumentative engagement in the public sphere from chapter one. However, after discussing the problems confronted by democratic systems that strive for engaging the public in complex controversies, the second part of the chapter proposes a study of dissent over the war in Iraq to test the theoretical propositions discussed to this point in the project. After presenting the research questions that guide the study, the third part of this chapter justifies the scope of study. Specifically, given the number of advocates, texts, and media outlets that composed the controversy, it was essential to justify the texts that served as the focus of this study.

#### Part One: Engaging the Public

Walter Lippmann explains in his work *The Phantom Public* that most decisions made in the political realm will directly impact the public but are rarely understood by the public. It is for this reason that Lippmann argued that those with political power and influence—the agents, were the ones who could make the decisions for those who lacked understanding of technical issues—the bystanders (41). Dissent is important to the political arena because every decision rendered is subjective and chosen from a massive

variety of options that all become potential alternatives. Ideally, democracy functions on the basis of a marketplace of ideas where certain plans of action are privileged over others based on the advantages that they offer to the alternatives. However, in situations where dissent is stifled or inhibited, then the democratic process, central to the function of our government, is stifled or inhibited as well.

The connection between dissent and political action is inherent in the ability of the governed to question the government. In the context of the federal government, dissent is applied as the ability of subordinates within a particular branch of government or organization to question their superiors. Better ideas are brought about by the critical negotiation of oppositional ideas through language. When ideas go untested and the fear of repercussion quashes dissent, then stagnant, or flawed ideas are implemented.

Every democracy struggles with what role the average citizen should play in its grand story. Aristotle stated that liberty was of paramount importance within a democracy and that all people should have a say in how their government functions. "The basis of a democratic state is liberty; which, according to the common opinion of men, can only be enjoyed within a state; -this they affirm to be the great end of every democracy" (McKeon, 1941, p. 1265). The United States government is founded on the principle of liberty exemplified by voting. One way in which dissenting opinion is expressed is through voting. Equal voting rights for citizens show how individual opinions are valued and treated fairly. Each citizen gets a single vote, no one vote

counting for more than the next. However, participation in the process requires some level of understanding. The issues that affect the public need to be accessible to the masses or their ability to engage the important issues is circumvented. In order to facilitate participation and involvement from citizens, there needs to be accessible forums within the democratic structure. In addition to the accessibility of the forums, the forums need to be structured in a way that allows free flow of ideas.

The necessity of participation within the democratic state is emphasized by later authors like Ernest Barker who said: "The process of social thought is a process which all the members of society can freely share, and to which all contribute freely" (Barker, 1942, p. 18). What Barker fails to take into consideration is how the forums of communication and the prevailing wisdom of the time affect the participatory ability of individuals who wish to dissent against the status quo. In order for a forum to facilitate free thought and the contribution of all people equally, then voices divergent of the mainstream must be allowed to speak without fear of repercussion. Democratic governments seek consensus, but political parties were created for the sake of moderating consensus versus dissent (Berelson, 1970; Duncan & Lukes, 1970; Walker, 1970). Arguments are presented to try to reach consensus on what is the greater good for society. When these arguments are voiced by competing interests controversies develop over what is best for the public.

Controversies are created in forums where prevailing ideas can be challenged and tested (Goodnight, 1991). Dissent against the status quo is a location for the creation of new argumentative language in controversies (Goodnight, 1987a; Goodnight, 1991; Goodnight, 1997). Phillips (1996) argued that there is an impossible burden put on dissenters because they are forced to utilize the language and forums of their intellectual oppressors. However, there still may be hope found in proper channels within the dominant group's democratic structure. Goodnight (1997) argued the opposite, that the need for democratic societies to seek consensus does not preclude dissention, but, rather, provides an opportunity for dissenting voices to argue their points. Through dissenting discourse, new avenues for policymaking can be illuminated. For example, during the Clinton presidency, universal healthcare was an issue presented to the public. While it did not come to pass, the dissenting argument against the prevailing discourse of individual insurance gave language to the current policymakers advocating on behalf of healthcare for all citizens. However, as the example illustrates, arguments in time of controversy often give way to the will of the majority. Once a controversy has reached the domain of the public sphere, dissent acts to illustrate differences and coordinate meanings between people of dissimilar interests (Hauser, 1997).

Controversies that escalate to public concerns share the common problem of what standards of proof will be utilized to test arguments. Several questions come to mind for the argument critic. Will the arguments be

evaluated by the rules of the forum in which they are presented? Will the arguments be evaluated in the sphere of argument in which they originated, or by the standards applied by those in power? The answer as to which standards apply will influence the rhetorical choices made by potential dissenters. Knowing the standards by which an argument will be evaluated permits the internal logical structures presented within dissent to become clearer than dissent presented without knowledge of the standards of evaluation. Knowing how they will be judged allows a dissenter to build a stronger case on the basis of adequate and proper appeals. An important note made by Goodnight is that, "Once the public sphere is entered, the private and technical dimensions of the disagreement become relevant only insofar as they are made congruent with the practices of public forums" (Goodnight, 1982, p. 219). What separates the public sphere from the technical sphere is that public sphere arguments utilize language that must have mass appeal. This means that argumentative discourse that could have been used in the personal or technical spheres can be used within the public sphere, but only when it meets the argumentative criteria being imposed. Without the knowledge of what standard to which dissent must appeal, potential dissenters are left presenting their case with whatever appeals to them, rather than to the audience they need to reach.

## Part Two: Iraq War Studies

Arguments over the Iraq War reflect a significant public controversy. At least two sides are making the case for and against the war effort although as will be seen in the analysis even those criticizing the Bush administration will differ in the problems that they emphasize and to some extent the degree of those problems when concerns overlap. Both sides represent the technical sphere because both the administration and the retired officers appeal to standards of proof that require specialized knowledge. The problem for the argument critic is to identify which texts compel close study given the vast range of messages from various media outlets. The specific texts chosen for the study are three sets of testimony given at a Democratic Policy Committee meeting by retired military officers. This section of the chapter explains how the DPC offered a forum in which an empowered third party, the congressmen in the committee gave space for the presentation and evaluation of dissenting arguments presented by retired military experts. However, it is important to first review previous work on the rhetorical exchanges over the war in Iraq.

Currently the research about rhetoric surrounding the Iraq War is still being published but there have already been a handful of studies that have reviewed the rhetoric used to lead up to the invasion of Iraq. The importance of such study is reflected in Goodnight's original request for scholars to chart the development of arguments in the public sphere to shed light on when things go awry because of reliance on technical sphere arguments. Research

on Iraq War rhetoric published to date focuses primarily on the rhetorical devices used to portray Iraq as an eminent threat, to link Iraq to the attacks of 9-11, and to distance President Bush from culpability on difficult issues by restricting oversight and diffusing accountability.

The most in-depth rhetorical review of the Iraq War was an issue of *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* published in 2007. John, Domke, Coe, and Graham (2007) present a rhetorical analysis of the Bush administration's language post 9-11. They found that the administration's rhetorical choices were based around changing the public agenda from one of homeland security to the threat of a war with Iraq. The linkage begins by channeling the vengeful feelings after the attack of 9-11 toward Iraq. The linkages between 9-11 and Bush's invasion of Iraq began as soon as the towers fell (John et al, 2007, p. 206). The ability of the administration to link September 11<sup>th</sup> to Iraq was one of the primary arguments that it used to justify the decision to go to war.

In addition to the linkages made between 9-11 and Iraq, another rationale given for the war was that Iraq was accruing Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs). One of the key arguments that Colin Powell needed to be sure to convince the United Nations of was that Iraq had a WMD program (Zarefsky, 2007). This allowed the administration to promote the immediacy of action. As the opportunity for invasion became more realistic and the fear of a WMD program took hold, the Bush administration extended their fear tactics to include assertions that Iraq not only had WMDs, but could actually attack

the U.S. Herbert Simons notes the strategic nature of these appeals, “the Bush administration chose its public rationales for invasion carefully. In a major speech by the president on October 7, Saddam was said to possess weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and the means to deploy them” (Simons, 2007, p. 187).

The Bush Administration conflated all potential threats into one threat represented by Iraq. Pressure from Congress was avoided by complicating communication links between Congressional groups. Groups were given objectives that were in conflict with other groups. The findings of some reports were not shown to some and were shown only partially to others. Diffusing responsibility, by having many subcommittees working, helped the administration avoid required justifications for their plans. Birdsell (2007) explains that Bush used language that systematically eliminated his responsibility to inform Congress of his decision-making. He asserted in multiple speeches that he rationalizes himself to others only as a courtesy. Coupled with his unwillingness to answer to oversight, Bush handed off the responsibility for military action to others within his cabinet. “Carefully worded claims both reveal lack of confidence in the evidence and reduce Bush's accountability for it. Shifts in the strength of assertions reveal that administration officials decreased the strength of some claims that had been challenged” (Jamieson, 2007, p. 258).

Blame for the incorrect assertions was placed on the intelligence briefs. Mitigated blame for the planning fell to Rumsfeld. None of the blame

for the inadequate planning took aim at Bush or the administration because their rhetorical strategy was to avoid accountability for mistakes in Iraq. This style of rhetoric is the same kind warned against by Olson, only from a non-presidential source. Olson (1991) offers four ways in which presidential war-justifying rhetoric can discourage public deliberation and each of them can be attributed to the Bush Administration and Rumsfeld. First, they conflated pro-troop and pro-war sentiments. A main criticism of the Bush Administration by Jamieson (2007) is that they rhetorically transformed caring about the troops to caring about the war. Second, the conflation of troop voices used to support the war. Rumsfeld's primary justification for the troop numbers sent into the war was that he had talked to specialists in the form of generals who agreed with this plan. By deriving authority from the source instead of the content of the message, he was utilizing fallacious reasoning. Thirdly, minimizing the cost of the war effort can be a method of stifling dissent. When General Eric Shinseki tried to voice opposition to the projected financing of the war effort, he was removed from office. Rumsfeld argued that it would not be expensive, that our troops would be met with flowers thrown at their feet, and it would not be a long war. Finally, the Bush Administration tried to get media consumption to take the place of deliberation. They pointed to mass media blitzes rather than open argument to justify themselves.

In all of the above noted incidents, one of the key figures that took a large amount of blame from the administration and Bush was Donald Rumsfeld. Winkler notes Rumsfeld's importance when describing how the

administration rhetorically prepared for war, he explained that Rumsfeld insisted,

There are a number of terrorist states pursuing weapons of mass destruction—Iran, Libya, North Korea, Syria, just to name a few—but no terrorist state poses a greater or more immediate threat to the security of our people than the regime of Saddam Hussein and Iraq. (Winkler, 2007, p. 320)

Rumsfeld is consistently named as one of the key players that helped convince the public of the administration's agenda. This becomes especially important when viewed in conjunction with the public's perception of Rumsfeld, "The results of this analysis suggest that Secretary Rumsfeld's job approval ratings are independent from President Bush's performance evaluations and vice versa" (Panagopoulos, 2006, p. 125). This independence allowed Rumsfeld to accept a great deal of criticism for Bush and then resign his position to allow the problems associated with him to go away.

#### Rationale for Study and Statement of Research Questions

A case study in the inability of subordinates to persuade the general public or their superiors can be found in arguments concerning the Iraq War. The former Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, silenced dissenting subordinates and fired oppositional voices in order to create unified support for president Bush's plan to invade Iraq.

Secretary Rumsfeld "dismissed honest dissent" and "browbeat" his subordinates into agreement, he refused to address insurgency planning, and did not plan to secure Iraq post Saddam (Dorgan, 2006). His authority over people allowed him to force through an agenda based on political face-saving rather than sound logic. The ability to stem dissent allowed him to ignore pertinent arguments against his plan.

Secretary Rumsfeld did not listen to his generals as he claimed he did, instead he relied on systematically removing those unwilling to follow "his plan" (Dorgan, 2006). Most importantly, his ability to fire people at his leisure allowed him to create a general atmosphere of fear that quashed dissenting voices. "At one point, he threatened to fire the next person who talked about the need for a post-war plan. Our country and incredible military were not set up for success" (Dorgan, 2006).

In addition to the threats described in the testimony above, Herspring (2008) explains that Rumsfeld "bullied and fired anyone who opposed him" (p. 12). He browbeat and attacked subordinates in order to maintain an atmosphere of fear and subservience and "surrounded himself with yes-men" (p. 21). As an insulated and protected public appointee, Rumsfeld then transformed the military into a strike force in his image and used his own battle plan to storm Iraq (Mann, 2004). Rumsfeld was untouchable because of his power as an administrator.

By systematically removing all oppositional voices and portraying the war effort in a positive light, Rumsfeld was able to marginalize dissenting voices. Without voices of opposition or dissent from the inside, there was no

way for the system to be changed from within. Instead, as political turmoil began to boil over and the war effort received critical evaluation, the controversy of the war created an opportunity for dissenting voices to be promoted externally. The opportunity for dissent came in the form of the DPC hearings, but before those hearings the controversy surrounding the war effort needed to reach a plateau.

### Controversies as a Source of Deliberative Discourse

Controversies create arguments because, by their nature, there are two sides with opposing interests competing for scarce resources (Miller, 2005). These resources may be as concrete as money and the creation of specific laws, or, as abstract as political attention and public acknowledgement. The diverging interests at stake in a controversy traditionally prevent solid, universally accepted conclusions because one side will always be given greater access to the scarce resource at stake in the controversy (Abbott, 2008). Instead of focusing on reaching consensus through a conclusion, arguments in a controversy can be posed in an attempt to resolve the uncertainty about issues surrounding the controversy (Goodnight, 1991). Creating clarity in regard to the issues surrounding the controversy can make potential solutions from each side more or less reasonable, or, in Toulmin's (1958) language "possible."

Politics is a forum accustomed to handling high levels of controversy. However, the political interests expressed within the greater forum can

constrain dissent. This is because political leaders force their views onto others through the utilization of their political power (Miller, 2005). This is a problem for democracy in the United States because it prevents dissenting viewpoints from finding adequate forums by which to test and strengthen ideas. It is through deliberative discourse that potential ideas are made better and that relies on the ability of arguments to be made openly without politically invested constraints (Goodnight, 1982). Issues of the public good ought to transcend personal or political interest because of the importance of their resolutions. Whether or not we should use nuclear power should not be a battle of one group of politicians controlled by nuclear power lobbyists arguing against politicians controlled by environmentalists, instead it should be a debate argued based on the validity of the evidence presented from both sides (Farrell & Goodnight, 1981; Goodnight, 1983). The political interests of those with something at stake in the controversy should not be the deciding factor in the resolution of the debate.

The politically interested infighting about controversy is inherently heightened during times of war (Herspring, 2008). The decision to go to war is typically a controversial one. With the exception, perhaps, of World War II, in which the attack on Pearl Harbor galvanized the nation, and the September 11th, 2001 attacks, the decision and justification for going to war is inherently controversial. The number of lives that are at stake as well as the amount of money and time that will need to be invested during a war make it a controversial issue. The heightened controversy also makes dissent highly

problematic because doing so questions not only the legitimacy of the decision, but, if correct, it implicitly shows that the losses accrued were for the wrong reasons (Rasor & Bauman, 2007). Telling a mother that her son died for an illegitimate war does not do justice to a family's loss.

With so much at stake in arguing for and against the decision to go to war, administrations have typically framed controversies to be hostile toward dissent. Many attempts were coordinated from political groups to try to change the administration's policies, but their attempts were unsuccessful at immediate change. People seeking a forum for dissent and protest went to the streets with bullhorns and staged large civic protests against the war. During the Vietnam protests, dissenters were argued to be hippies and draft-dodgers. When protestors sought to argue against the war with Korea, they engaged the administration with marches and other mechanisms of protest (Barnett, 2004). During the Korean War protests, dissenters were argued to be a vocal minority that did not represent the views of America as a whole (Barnett, 2004). In the first Iraq War, protesters were argued to be against liberating the free people of Kuwait. Consistently, dissenters are portrayed as unpatriotic or marginalized as representative of only a fringe opinion.

The political climate of the United States changed greatly in the aftermath of the attacks of September 11th, 2001. The Bush administration received an enormous amount of support for their actions toward "bringing the perpetrators to justice." Anti-American terrorists did their best to frighten us. The response was a wave of nationalism: Americans affixed flag pins on suit

jackets, flag stickers on truck bumpers, and listened for America-first rhetoric on the lips of politicians. The Bush administration's rhetoric evolved from treating the terrorist attacks of 9/11 as a national threat to justifying an invasion of Iraq to fight terrorism (John et al, 2007). This created a climate that was hostile to dissenting voices; to dissent against the war was to argue against retaliation for the lives lost on 9/11. Utilizing divisive rhetoric painted Americans as heroic and terrorists and Iraqis as villainous (Ivie, 2007), the Bush administration made it seem like arguing against the Iraq war was unpatriotic. Iraq War dissenters were portrayed as being un-American, and ignoring the loss America felt on 9/11 (Simons, 2007). Even within the administration, where arguments were needed to test the validity of potential policy options, dissent was ignored. The former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld crafted our war strategy and browbeat subordinates into falling in line with his agenda (Dorgan, 2006). Working on behalf of the administration, he created a situation where dissent was not only ignored, but grounds for removal. Officers in the military and within the cabinet, the political check on the administration, were silenced for fear of their job security (Rasor & Bauman, 2007).

Opportunities for dissent in such time are few in number, but studying arguments within this climate will help illuminate the ability of dissenting arguments to challenge existing ideas (Goodnight, 1982; Goodnight, 1991, Goodnight, 1992). Though the political climate created was one hostile to potential dissent, there were still voices speaking out against the war effort. The administration had experts on their side arguing on their behalf. Their

expertise dictated that to refute their justification, dissenters would need specialized knowledge. The magnitude of communicative channels in the information age gave dissenters against the Iraq War multiple options to voice their objections, but bloggers and political writers lacked the expertise or credibility to refute the administration's generals.

Unlike the war protestors mentioned above, who were citizens against the idea of war, there was a specialized group of dissenters against the Iraq War. This group was comprised of ex-military officers who were arguing that the war effort itself was handled poorly and our course of action ought to be altered. A group of retired officers went before the Democratic Policy Committee and argued against the war effort. They indicted the administration's planning and implementation of the war. They were utilizing technical knowledge gained from years of experience to create arguments against the war effort. Their specialized knowledge gave them traction to build a case against the administration's official stance. Their dissenting arguments offer an opportunity to see how technical expertise can affect the understanding and development of arguments within the public sphere. Tracking these arguments and their appeals might help us understand how dissent in a time of political controversy can shape the institutional reasoning surrounding a controversy (Goodnight, 1991; Goodnight & Hingstman, 1997; Goodnight, 2005). This study will examine their arguments, dissect their internal logic, and present the case that their dissent has opened up the potential for discussion about the Iraq War controversy.

The question of whether the retired officer's dissent was effective in opening up new avenues of discourse for the public remains. G. Thomas Goodnight argued that the public is stifled by technical jargon and that experts are complicating the ability of the common citizen to take part in a deliberative democracy. Walter Lippmann, on the other hand, argued that the technical specificity required by certain subjects dictates that experts be the ones to make policy choices on the common people's behalf. By examining their arguments in greater detail, we can see how the standards of proof utilized in arguments against the war may or may not affect the way that the public understands the controversy. The next section summarizes the theoretical concerns with this study to state the research questions.

#### Research Questions

With the complexity of arguments given before the public, a single argumentative engagement will rarely be enough to settle an issue. People on each side of a given controversy have too much invested to just let the controversy conclude in a way that opposes their views. With this in mind, "the best that a controversy can hope to accomplish is a resolution brought about by virtue of a display before an empowered third party" (Goodnight, 1991, p. 6). Therefore research question one is offered:

RQ 1: In what way(s) did the Democratic Policy Committee hearings function as a legitimate forum for technical experts to criticize the Bush Administration's war efforts?

However, the review of literature in chapters one and two has also raised issues regarding the role of dissenting arguments in Goodnight's theory of argumentation spheres. Therefore, a study of dissenting arguments provides an opportunity to test Goodnight's theory regarding the contributions of technical experts and the degree to which their advocacy enhances public deliberation. Specifically, Goodnight stated:

So, controversy may arise at critical junctures and put up for discussion rules and presumptions on who gets to talk, what counts as proof, whose language is authoritative, what reasons are recognized, which grounds are determinative, along what lines contexts are invoked, and whether penalties should be attached to making objections. (Goodnight, 1991, p. 6)

Therefore, research questions two and three are offered:

RQ 2: What were the argument strategies of the retired officers who testified in opposition to the war at the DPC hearing?

RQ 3: What is the role of technical expertise in arguing about public matters like the conduct of war in the public sphere?

The remaining discussion in this chapter provides a detailed consideration of the scope of study. Given the number of advocates and texts possible for consideration, it was necessary to provide a rationale for decisions regarding which texts would constitute a reasonably circumscribed case study of significant arguments opposing the war.

### Part Three: Scope of Study

One method by which to try to argue against those in power is to find people outside of the political arena that can offer expert commentary as to why the decisions made were not the best choices among available options. Given Rumsfeld's ability to ignore dissenting voices, such arguments need to be protected by an empowered third party. The Democratic Policy Committee offered the retired officers to speak out against Rumsfeld because they had a legitimate forum due to congressional power. Goodnight (1982) explained that this type of argument functions within the technical sphere because experts in a field requiring specialized knowledge generate criteria for the evaluation of the arguments. In the Iraq War, technical arguments were generated against the plan to invade by retired officers, who indicted the administration's plans on the basis of their personal experience and technical expertise. However, it is important to justify the texts for study. Thus, to do so, the next sections explain 1) why texts available in the traditional news outlets constitute a problematic forum for public participation and understanding of the arguments; and 2) why the Democratic Policy Committee offered a legitimate forum for the presentation of arguments.

#### Traditional News Media as a Flawed Forum

Many arguments were made for and against the Iraq war presented in various arenas of the media: electronic and print, in many households and businesses, as well as in specialized political forums like Congressional

hearings. Supporters of the Bush administration, like Fox News and conservative talk radio, argued the war was going very well. They argued the president felt swept up by Congress's push for *increasing* the war effort. Karl Rove, appearing on Charlie Rose's program said,

One of the untold stories about the war in Iraq is that the Bush administration had been "opposed" to Congress holding the vote authorizing the president to use military force in Iraq just a few weeks prior to the 2002 elections because we thought it made it too political. (Rose, 2007)

The other side of the political arena was no better in terms of fair treatment of the issues. MSNBC and liberal hosts like Keith Olbermann described the war in ways that made the White House staff seem unprepared or incompetent. Blogger Arianna Huffington wrote,

The truth is that the zealots in the White House were not about to allow their desires to invade Iraq -- which had been laid out years earlier by the Project for a New American Century -- be quashed by anything as piddling as the facts or the evidence or reasoned debate or Congress. (Nov. 2007)

This portrayal of the events leading to the invasion of Iraq was equally unfulfilling and lacked the fair-handedness that could be achieved with a less mediated recount of the facts. As Lippmann predicted, most of their appeals to the public were driven by arguments centered on individual gains. "The outsider can ask experts to tell him whether the relevant facts were duly

considered; he cannot in most cases decide for himself what is relevant or what is due consideration" (1922, p. 251). Even the expert analysts from both sides of the political spectrum relied heavily on name-calling and avoided the substance of the issue at hand in favor of politically driven spin. The standards of proof for those arguments seemed to degenerate because of the biases inherent to their positions. No one on either side was living up to any objective standard of evaluation. Some advocates might have been trying to inspire emotional reactions in listeners rather than a critique of the war plans without looking to implicate the administration in the forum of public opinion. Regardless, arguing about Iraq in ways that facilitated public deliberation was made problematic by the politicization of the controversy.

#### The Democratic Policy Committee Hearing as a Legitimate Forum

Finding the proper forum is incredibly difficult because not only does the forum need to allow for the free exchange of ideas but the forum must include people those that can influence decision-making. When trying to see how dissent can function against an Administration that insulated itself with like minded followers, it is essential to have an empowered third party to navigate the forum. Few of the traditional media outlets were holding the administration accountable for their policy. However, the Democratic Policy Committee (DPC) was available to fill the gap that traditional news media left. This section discusses the history and function of the DPC, the purpose of the DPC, and the criteria used by the DPC to select the officers for the presentation of testimony.

"The Democratic Policy Committee (DPC) was established in January 1947, after President Truman signed legislation to create majority and minority party policy committees in the Senate" (DPC, 2010, Democratic Policy Committee section, para. 1). The DPC creates a forum where Democrats within the Senate can find information for educated decisions on policy options. They utilize this information when deciding about important votes. "Since its creation over sixty years ago, the DPC has served Senate Democrats by developing new policy proposals, providing research and legislative support, publishing reports on important legislation and policy issues, [and] conducting oversight hearings" (DPC, 2010, Democratic Policy Committee section, para. 1). The committee provides experts as witnesses the opportunity to have their ideas and opinions heard before a representative body of the United States Senate.

The Democratic Policy Committee has a five-member team of policy advisors who cover domestic, economic, national security, and foreign policy issues. These advisors provide the following services for Democratic Senators and staff:

- Conduct policy analysis and research for Leadership and Caucus staff and help implement Caucus initiatives;
- Serve as a central source for information about legislation, amendments, and policy issues;
- Write Legislative Bulletins on major legislation and Special Reports and Fact Sheets on key policy issues;

- Organize Caucus staff briefings, including ones featuring experts from think tanks, research organizations, and universities;
- Work with Leadership and Caucus staff to develop and communicate the Democratic message on key issues; and
- Support the DPC "new policy network" and oversight and investigations functions. (DPC, 2010, Policy and Legislative Analysis section, para. 1)

This is a less politicized forum than the traditional news media because the committee members look to gather as much impartial information as they can to disseminate to their peers. Not providing all of the facts would be antithetical to their pursuit of information.

The purpose statement of the DPC reads, "members of Congress have a Constitutional obligation to oversee the activities of the Executive Branch and improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and economy of governmental operations" (DPC, 2010, Oversight and Accountability section, para. 1). They hear testimony and expert evidence that argues accountability issues and they seek to find truth about the policies of the United States. Ultimately, they act as a check against abuse from the Executive branch. The particular project that does this the most is the Oversight and Accountability Project. "The Oversight and Accountability Project works with standing committees in the Senate to help coordinate hearings and investigations, providing historical and legal resources relating to congressional oversight, and publishing reports that highlight oversight work in the Senate" (DPC, 2010, Oversight and Accountability section, para. 1).

The testimony of the retired officers was part of the Oversight and Accountability Project's work on the Iraq War. The oversight hearing that the retired officers spoke at was created by the DPC specifically to hear an evaluation of the Iraq War effort. This independent body, separate from the administration, was tasked with hearing dissenting voices in order to assess whether any wrongdoing had taken place during the planning, invasion, and early occupation of Iraq. "The DPC also conducts its own oversight hearings, focusing on topics of importance that (Other) committees decide not to pursue" (DPC 2010, Oversight and Accountability section, para. 1). This was an opportunity for dissenting voices to be heard in front of an empowered third party that could do something about the problem if the arguments presented were compelling. Evidence of the DPC's willingness to disseminate expert testimony is shown in the fact, "*in the 110th Congress, the DPC produced more than twenty-five papers that proposed new policy ideas for individual Senate offices to consider*" (DPC, 2010, New Policy Development section, para. 2).

Empowered by the Congress and given this opportunity, a group of retired officers went before Congress to indict the administration's strategy in Iraq by applying standards of military doctrine and practice. The DPC gathered them because, "the DPC works with network partners to facilitate bold, original thinking and develop innovative policy solutions to existing and emerging problems" (DPC, 2010, New Policy Development section, para. 1). The retired officers were believed to be an informal intelligence system to create the check against the press for the administration. It is for that reason that their arguments

were chosen as the primary text of study. These individuals could argue for and against parts of the Bush strategy without directly attacking the administration itself. Their specialization allowed them to critique the Administration's strategy without falling into the pitfall of being labeled anti-American or not understanding the troop considerations. The strength of these arguments is the same as the strength of any good refutation because it focuses on the nature of the action, and the implementation of a policy, rather than on the actor.

They were representatives of the technical sphere, specifically, because they applied specialized knowledge that non-experts lacked. They were all experienced in fighting and winning during active combat and had received their rank and position for exemplary service to their country. They represented experts in the field of military doctrine and practice because of their life experience and job-training. Common people lack the proper training and understanding of world events and political entities to interpret the actions of executives (Lippmann, 1925). However, as Doob (1948) explains, without proper context by which to evaluate the decisions, people rely on what has worked in the past for administrations and war, by and large, is simplistic enough for them to understand. While the television experts with political motivations may be able to indict the administration on the bases of its rhetoric to sell the war, the officers are indicting the battle plans accounting for the situation on the ground in Iraq. While this may not be exactly what the public can readily understand, the government representatives of Congress are the ones to whom they were appealing.

Other sets of arguments about the war seemed problematic as ways to evaluate the progress. First, political pundits and opinion makers in the media all had an opinion on Rumsfeld and the war effort, but their opinions were usually biased, at least suspect as derived from political motivations. Republican pundits supported the effort because Rumsfeld was representative of a Republican administration and Democratic pundits dissented for the same reason. Even if their assessments were honest, their affiliations tended to advance a political agenda. The retired officers had nothing to gain by speaking out, so they were above the politically motivated suspicions that undermined others' assessment of the war.

#### Texts for Analysis

The texts for analysis are the retired officers' testimony before Congress at a Democratic Policy Committee on September 25th, 2006 from Major General John Batiste, Major General Paul Eaton, and Colonel Thomas Hammes. The texts were obtained from the unedited transcripts section of the DPC website. These texts were selected for analysis because the officers have personal experience in wartime, were associated with the planning phase of the war, or had a complaint about how their recommendations had been ignored. The Congress, in this case, was acting as gatekeepers of the public sphere. They were hearing and evaluating the retired officer's testimony with the knowledge and power to understand the technical specificity of the arguments being generated. It was not possible to appeal

solely to technical expertise in this case because the retired officers knew that the Congress was their audience and their arguments needed to be adjusted accordingly. It is Congress's ability to create law that gives the legislative body the ability to be the final arbitrator of the state's potential disputes (Lippmann, 1937, p. 302). The Congress is an empowered third party who represents the public and will arbitrate the controversy as to whether or not the administration made the right choices in regard to the war effort. They are the empowered body to evaluate whether or not the administration will be accountable for their decisions in the war effort. Their reports and arguments generated from the testimony are what remain after the hearing had concluded.

#### Rationale for the Selection of the Retired Officers' Testimony as a Case Study for Dissent

Three reasons can be offered for the choice of these officers' words as texts for study. First, they were independent of the Department of Defense. Second, they did not represent political interests to the extent that their well-being or professional careers could be affected by speaking out. Third, they represent arguments about the execution of the war effort and not its political legitimacy. Thus, they constitute strong examples of technical experts engaged in dissent.

First, these officers' arguments were chosen because their careers were over; there was no personal loss or opportunity for advancement in testifying, so those factors were discredited as reasons for action. They offered an honest expert assessment of the tactical aspects of the invasion of

Iraq. Many arguments about Rumsfeld's handling of the war were available, but these three offered dissenting views of the way Rumsfeld planned for and carried out the war effort without the temptation for political gain.

Rumsfeld, in his evaluation of how things were going, had a vested interest in representing himself—as the sole author of the strategy—and championing the effort of the administration he represented. The best national policies are developed when there is honest evaluation of successes and failures of current policies, so that real progress on national goals can be achieved. The officers' arguments, comparatively, appeared less motivated by personal gain; they were analyzing the facts and offering professional judgment unfiltered by political interest.

Secondly, these arguments were chosen because none of them claimed that we should not have gone to Iraq in the first place. Too often the arguments surrounding Rumsfeld and his strategy degenerated into discussions about the legitimacy of the war. For the Democrats the point was to evaluate what had been done, the effectiveness of previous policy, and where we should go in the future? The system dictates that political officials are in charge of the military, but we can never allow the system to dictate that protecting the administration's public image is more important than proper internal policy analysis.

Third, the officer's arguments evaluated the plans and execution rather than targeting one figure or the administration for political advantage. They were experts who had lived through actual combat experience and seen the

situation on the ground in Iraq, so their critique goes straight to the heart of the important matters and carries the weight of their wisdom. Their arguments rely on metrics of evaluation that can be used regardless of what side of the political spectrum you fall on. Their arguments begin with the assumption that the situation, though handled poorly until now, is solvable. That starting point, by itself, lent some degree of credibility to their words.

#### Biographical and Career Details of the Officers

Three retired officers spoke out against the then Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld at a September 25<sup>th</sup> hearing in front of the Democratic Policy Committee. Retired Major General John Batiste, retired Major General Paul Eaton, and retired Colonel Thomas Hammes each gave a speech laying out their arguments as to what went wrong with the planning and initial phases of the Iraq War.

#### John Batiste

John Batiste is a retired major general who from March 2001 to June 2002 worked with Paul Wolfowitz, and was involved in the very early planning stages of the Iraq War. In spring 2002 Eric Shinseki chose Batiste to be commander of the First Infantry Division, which was deployed to Iraq in December 2003, during the war. After retiring from the Army as a major general in November 2005, Batiste entered into the private sector, to work for Klein Steel, in Rochester, New York. Batiste was a two time combat veteran in both the first Gulf War (brigade operations officer in the 24th Infantry

Division) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (commander of the 1st Infantry Division). In addition, he commanded one of the two US brigades during the IFOR mission in Bosnia from December 1995 through November 1996 and led the NATO Southern Region planning of the mission in Kosovo (Margolick, 2007).

#### Major General Paul Eaton

Major General Paul Eaton has 33 years of service to his country. His assignments ranged from Infantry Command to the chief of Infantry. His most recent operational assignment was commanding general of the command charged with re-establishing Iraqi security forces. His other operational assignments included Somalia, Bosnia, Albania. General Eaton is a graduate of West Point.

#### Colonel Thomas Hammes

Colonel Thomas Hammes was commissioned in the U.S. Naval Academy in 1975. He spent 30 years in the Marine Corps and served at all levels in the operating forces. His assignments include command of a rifle company, weapons company, intelligence company, infantry battalion, and many more. He has participated in stabilization operations in Somalia and Iraq, as well as training insurgents in various places around the world.

Colonel Hammes is currently reading for a Ph.D. at Oxford University, and he is the accomplished author of a book titled, *The Sling and the Stone: On War*

*in the 21st Century*. These were the three retired officers whose testimony before the DPC would provide an alternative view of the war in Iraq.

### Summary

This chapter has argued that dissent during time of war offers an interesting case study for the degree to which technical expertise can play an important role in public deliberation. The scope of study was narrowed to testimony provided by three retired military officers. The chapter demonstrated that these retired officers could be considered technical experts based on their experience and training, could be considered politically neutral in their critiques, and were not constrained by their responsibility in the chain of command since they were retired. Because their arguments rely on technical expertise, their words provide an excellent case study of how the technical sphere of argument might play a critical role in engaging the public in a conversation over how wars should be prosecuted. The next chapter outlines the critical concepts used in the analysis of the arguments.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

V.W. Balthrop (1982) presents a three-step methodology for the study of arguments: describe the argument, interpret the argument, and evaluate the argument to create a "critical stance" (p. 240). Utilizing this methodology, this study will identify, describe, and provide representative dissenting arguments about the Iraq War. Description, as Balthrop argues, is the foundation for analysis, which is why Toulmin's (1958) classification system will make the description of arguments clear.

Interpretation is a more complex undertaking on the part of the critic because there are multiple definitions of words, yet it is an essential step in understanding arguments. The "ability to describe the debate does not equate to an ability to interpret the debate" (Balthrop, 1983, p. 10). Bailin provides a suitable definition for interpretation as, "the process of analyzing an argument to understand what an argument says" (1990, p. 234). Applied in this study, once the arguments have been described in terms of the Toulmin model, they will be interpreted to see what the rhetorical choices made say about the argumentative intent.

Once the arguments have been described and interpreted, the critic is called upon to evaluate the argument. Evaluation is only possible after the claims, data, and warrants of an argument have been described adequately

and interpreted carefully. Together, these three steps offer a critical stance for the study of arguments. Each is discussed in detail in the following sections.

### Description

Stephen Toulmin (1958) establishes a way to categorize and assess arguments. This will be the method utilized to describe the arguments. He sets out to find out how logic is used in the presentation of arguments. Toulmin finds that,

Logic is concerned with the soundness of the claims we make--with the solidity of the grounds we produce to support them, the firmness of the backing we provide them--or, to change the metaphor, with the sort of case we present in defense of our claims. (Toulmin, 1958, p. 7)

To restrict the discussion from the abstract concept of logic as a whole, Toulmin narrows his aim to, "justificatory arguments brought forward in support of assertions, in the structures they are expected to have, and the merits that they can claim" (Toulmin, 1958, p. 12). This exercise is undertaken for the sake of "grading, assessing, and criticizing" (Toulmin, 1958, p. 12) the arguments. The ultimate purpose is to test, "how strong each case is when tested against its own appropriate standard" (Toulmin, 1958, p. 38).

In order to establish a context within which to analyze arguments, Toulmin presents his concept of argumentative fields. "Two arguments will be said to belong to the same field when the data and conclusion in each of the

two arguments are, respectively, of the same logical type" (Toulmin, 1958, p. 14). The tools utilized in this classification system are discerned from the ideas of "field-invariant and field-dependent" aspects of an argument. The field invariant aspects of an argument are the standards of reference that are the same regardless of field, while the field dependent aspects vary between argumentative fields (15).

Utilizing the judicial system as a model for the rational process, Toulmin explains how different kinds of evidence would be presented in a murder trial than in a libel trial. Depending upon the claim at hand, the standards of evidence and proof shift. The standards of argumentation are represented by force and criteria. The argument's force is a field invariant concept that deals with the implications of an argument. The criteria are the field dependent aspects used for judging the effectiveness of the argument. Take for example the idea of statutory rape. One justification for why not to commit such an act is a legal one: it is illegal. So the statement, "a person over eighteen should not engage in sexual intercourse with a minor because it is illegal" shows how the concept works. "A person over the age of eighteen should not have sex with a minor" is the field invariant concept, while the criteria set forward for evaluation, "because it is illegal" is field dependent.

Toulmin goes on to explain that all justificatory arguments, regardless of field, follow a certain pattern or procedure. Arguments must be, "set out and presented in a sequence of steps conforming to basic rules of procedure"

(Toulmin, 1958, p. 43). The primary classificatory means needed for this paper are claim, data, and warrant.

A claim is "the conclusion whose merits we are seeking to establish" (Toulmin, 1958, p. 97). The claim is the part of the argument that must be validated using data and warrants. There are many different kinds of claims, but justificatory claims need to be validated by providing adequate evidence as a standard of proving their potential conclusion as a viable option for consideration. No amount of evidence, necessarily, makes a statement true or false. The best that an argument can hope to do is to be considered a possible solution to the question at hand because "to speak of a particular suggestion as a possibility is to concede that it has a right to be considered" (Toulmin, 1958, p. 18). It also stands to reason that claims validated with data and warrants demand consideration because "to call something 'possible' and then ignore it indefinitely without good reason is inconsistent" (Toulmin, 1958, p. 19).

Data is "the facts we appeal to as a foundation for the claim" (Toulmin, 1958, p. 97). Data is comprised of evidence, empirical proofs, or personal experience used to validate a potential claim as a viable option for consideration. The kind of data that a given claim requires is field dependent and, therefore, situational. In a casual discussion among doctors about surgical procedure, data can come in the form of medical journal findings or personal experience with patients; however, in a court of law the rules for admissible evidence are written out and followed strictly. Unsworn in

testimony, for example, is grounds for excluding potentially important data to validate a claim in the court room because it does not meet the standards for what is admissible as evidence. Simply put, "if the claim is challenged, it is up to us (the advocate) to appeal to the facts, and present them as the foundation upon which the claim is based" (Toulmin, 1958, p. 97).

Warrant is the hardest of the terms to define, but it is the reasoning that connects the data to the claim. Warrants show that by taking "the data as a starting point, (that) the step to the original claim or conclusion is an appropriate and legitimate one" (Toulmin, 1958, p. 98). Warrants provide the interweaving of logic within a given argument. "Warrants, it will be observed, correspond to the practical standards or canons of argument" (Toulmin, 1958, p. 98). Including the ideas mentioned earlier, we apply criteria to evaluate the claim based on not only the data, but the warrants offered. The warrants validate the connection between data and claim by applying the criteria requisite for the given argumentative field. "The warrant is, in a sense, incidental and explanatory, its task being simply to register explicitly the legitimacy of the step involved and refer it back to the larger class of steps whose legitimacy is being presupposed" (Toulmin, 1958, p. 100). In terms of the types of warrants and their potential appeals to criteria, Toulmin explains,

Warrants are of different kinds, and may confer different degrees of force to the conclusion they justify. Some warrants authorize us to accept a claim unequivocally, given the appropriate data--these warrants entitle us in suitable cases to

qualify conclusions with the adverb "necessarily"; others authorize us to make the step from data to conclusion either tentatively, or else subject to conditions, exceptions, or qualifications. (Toulmin, 1958, p. 100)

To illustrate how this methodology works, I will now provide an example. The claim of a son of his mother could be "that is my mother." Such a claim could be validated by providing the data that the woman in question gave birth to the boy. The warrant for this claim would be that because giving birth to an individual makes you a parent, then the woman is the boy's mother. Such an example is one that fits underneath the category delineated by Toulmin of unequivocally true.

### Elements of Interpretation

Interpreting dissenting arguments about the Iraq War will include the elements of structure, evidence type, form of reasoning, and argumentative strategy. Ehninger (1974) offers a system to examine the structure of argumentative strategy. The first element of the system is a typology of claims. There are four types of claims, according to Ehninger, and they are: declarative, classificatory, evaluative, and actuative.

#### Claims

A declarative claim argues that "a certain state of affairs existed (or not existed) in the past, to exist (or not exist) in the present, or as likely (or not likely) to exist in the future" (Ehninger, 1974, p. 29). This category of claim

argues that something is or is not a fact. An example of a descriptive claim is, "that tree is dead." This is a declarative claim because the assertion whether or not the tree is alive or dead.

A classificatory claim asserts that something should be, "classified or defined, with the genus or category into which it properly falls" (Ehninger, 1974, p. 29). This category of claim argues that something is or is not to be grouped together. An example of a classificatory claim is, "that is an oak tree." This is a classificatory claim because the assertion is that the tree in question is of the variety oak.

An evaluative claim argues, "the attitude we should adopt toward a given action or state of affairs, with how we should appraise or evaluate it" (Ehninger, 1974, p. 30). This category of claims argues that something is appraised negatively or positively. An example of an evaluative claim is, "oak trees are stronger than pine trees." This is an evaluative claim because the strength of oaks is appraised over the strength of pines.

An actuative claim argues to, "bring new states of affair into existence. They assert that some present policy or procedure should be replaced by a new way of doing or ordering things" (Ehninger, 1974, p. 30). This category of claims argues that one thing should happen instead of another. An example of an actuative claim is, "companies should be prevented from cutting down too many oaks because of deforestation." This is an actuative claim because it asserts one thing should be done. It is important to note here that, "the distinction between evaluative and acuative claims is sometimes difficult to

grasp" (Ehninger, 1974, p. 30). However, Ehninger offers two important differences. First, evaluative claims ask only for evaluation, while actuating claims have an inherent call to action. Second, evaluative claims can argue things that were or are the case, but actuating claims deal only with the future.

## Forms

There are different forms that claims may take and Ehninger (1974) offers four classifications: simple or complex, unqualified or qualified, unconditional or conditional, universal or restricted. Simple claims have a single assertion, while complex claims can have multiple assertions. An example of a simple declarative claim is, "you are stupid." An example of a complex declarative claim is, "you are stupid, fat, ugly, and bald." Unqualified claims, "make flat, uncircumscribed assertions" (Ehninger, 1974, p. 31), while qualified claims, "make tentative or limited assertions or recognize exceptions to what they declare" (Ehninger, 1974, p. 31). An example of an unqualified claim is, "you are wrong." An example of a qualified claim is, "you are wrong most of the time." Unconditional claims assert that something should be the case, "irrespective of other conditions or developments" (Ehninger, 1974, p. 31), while conditional claims state, "certain conditions under which the judgment or recommendation embodied in the claim is to apply" (Ehninger, 1974, p. 32). An example of an unconditional claim is, "you should be killed." An example of a conditional claim is, "you should be killed if you call me fat again." Universal claims make assertions, "concerning all

members of a given class" (Ehninger, 1974, p. 32), while restricted claims make assertions, "concerning fewer members of a given class" (Ehninger, 1974, p. 32). An example of a universal claim is, "all people who prefer Family Guy to South Park are evil." An example of a restricted claim is, "most people who prefer Family Guy to South Park are evil."

## Warrants

Separate from the claim itself and the forms that those claims may take is the relationship between the evidence and the claim. Ehninger (1974) offers five classifications to relate the evidence to the claim, or, to use Toulmin's (1958) terminology, five classifications of warrants. The five classifications are: comparison, generalization, classification, division, and connection.

The first classification is comparison. Arguments of comparison assert, "that what is known or believed to be true of one thing will likewise be true of something else which is in all essential respects like the first" (Ehninger, 1974, p. 67-68). The two types of classificatory arguments are parallel case and analogy. A parallel case shows that when something is true for one situation, it is also true for a similar situation. An example of a parallel case is arguing, "using teeth whitening strips made my teeth significantly whiter, and we are both human beings with teeth, so if you use teeth whitening strips, your teeth will be significantly whiter." This is an example of a parallel case comparison because the establishment of the two subjects being human beings with teeth, more or less alike in their nature, is the basis upon which the claim draws its

force. Arguing by analogy utilizes evidence that is implicit rather than explicitly alike. An example of this is arguing, "literature is nourishment for the mind in the same way food is nourishment for the body." This is an example of argument by analogy because reading and eating are not, necessarily alike, but the claim utilizes the logic that they are similarly essential to an individual's well-being.

The second classification is generalization. Arguments of generalization claim that, "what is true of a number of the members of a class, taken as a representative sample, will also be true of additional members of the same class" (Ehninger, 1974, p. 71). Arguments of this type may claim that some phenomenon extends to more or that some phenomenon extends to all of a given class of things. The requirements implicit in making an argument of generalization is that the classification be the same, there be a sufficient number to represent the whole of the population, and that the selection of representative be random. An example of an argument of generalization is, "the 45 homes we checked out of 50 on Block street all have aluminum siding, so all homes on Block street must have aluminum siding." This is an example of an argument of generalization because it uses a representative sample to reach a conclusion.

The third classification is called classification. These arguments proceed from the process of inclusion. Arguments of classification argue that, "what is known or assumed to be true of the class as a whole is also true of the item or items in question" (Ehninger, 1974, p. 74). An example of an argument of classification is, "100% of children from broken homes become juvenile offenders and, since Johnny came from a broken home, he will be a juvenile

offender." This is an argument of classification because it says that being one thing translates to being another because it has been proven of the category of thing as a whole.

The fourth classification is division. Arguments of division proceed by a process of exclusion, rather than inclusion. Arguments of division seek to disqualify potential solutions to a given problem. The requirements for an argument of division is that it establishes, "all reasonable alternatives" in evaluating a situation because without such an encompassing requirement it would be impossible to evaluate "another possibility that has gone unnoticed" (Ehninger, 1974, p. 76). An example of an argument of division is, "we cannot go left at the T junction because the road is closed, so, in order to keep advancing we must go right." This is an argument by division because it excludes alternatives to reach its conclusion.

The final classification is connection. Arguments of connection assert that, "two phenomena are connected or conjoined in such a way that from the existence of the first we may infer the existence of the second" (Ehninger, 1974, p. 76). One kind of argument by connection is arguing from cause. An example of this is, "purchases of the new Whopper have doubled in the last month, all things remain equal except a dollar decrease in the sale price, so the doubled sales is due to the price cut." This is an argument by connection because it establishes that (a) the sales have doubled, (b) all things except the price change are the same, so (c) the only connection is the lowered price to the increased sales.

## Strategies

Another aspect of interpretation is argumentative strategy. Ehniger (1974) establishes many types of strategies that debaters can utilize. Some forms of argument strategy are: examination of appeals, language strategies, strategies of thought, and attacking the credibility of the opposition.

Examination of appeals allows the critic to categorize appeals made in support of a claim and show how the categorization is spurious. Language strategies come in many forms, but an example of potential language strategies are utilizing emotionally charged words or personification.

Strategies of thought encompass fear appeals, appeals to authority, appeals to tradition, and circular reasoning. Finally, attacking the credibility of an opponent negates the appeal of their argument because it calls into question their reasoning and analytical skills. The purpose of all of these strategies is to further the claims asserted by the debater.

### Evaluation: Moving Toward a Critical Stance

The final part of the methodology is evaluation. It moves beyond the description and interpretation to examine the assumptions of the arguers. "In the instance of argument, analysis would involve not only an attempt to understand the language and subject matter of the argument itself, but also the social grounding in which it occurred and preunderstandings of the argument's creator" (Balthrop, 1982, p. 242). Balthrop explains evaluation by

saying, "arguments must be evaluated in terms of their adequacy" (1983, p. 13). In summation of the role of the critic, Balthrop explains,

It is after all, only through the critique that the judge can reveal his or her construction of reality, can indicate the extent of the dialogue with the debate text, can demonstrate knowledge and skill in the use of a community's standards, and can make a case for the quality of the arrived--at interpretation. Equally important, it is only through the critique that one can generate the kind of interaction of other critics within the community that allows both individual and communal standards to be tested. And, finally, it is only through this testing that individual and communal knowledge can be broadened and deepened.

(Balthrop, 1983, p. 14)

This methodology gives form to argument analysis. Through the description of arguments utilizing Toulmin's (1958) claim, evidence, and warrant, to the interpretation of the argument using Ehninger's (1974) classification system, to the evaluation utilizing Balthrop's (1982; 1983) methods--a critical stance toward the argument analysis takes shape. This paper will use this methodology to analyze dissenting arguments from retired officers about the Iraq War.

## Summary

This study will show how three retired officers tried to present dissenting arguments to test the administration's rationale for the Iraq War. The forum, granted power by the third party, gave them the chance to force the administration to engage the opposition in ways that were, in other forums, ignored and labeled as "un-American". As advocates, they were able to build a case based on technical knowledge that indicted the administration's rationale in ways that non-experts could not have crafted. Ultimately, their selection of arguments will be examined utilizing Toulmin's (1958) method to analyze the composition of their reasoning. The findings will generate a discussion as to the effectiveness of technical argumentation to facilitate public discourse.

## CHAPTER VI

### AN ANALYSIS OF THE TESTIMONY OF MAJOR GENERAL JOHN BATISTE

#### Introduction

Toulmin's (1958) methodology provides a framework to understand the justifications being presented by the retired officers. By categorizing the arguments using Toulmin's method, the data presented to support the claim should show the intended rhetorical strategy based on evidence selection. Each of the retired officers presented arguments that explained how the Iraq War effort was mismanaged from the administration and Department of Defense.

At the DPC hearing, each retired officer was able to present a prepared statement, then there was a question and answer period from members of Congress to the retired officers. For the sake of clarity, the analysis that follows presents the arguments made by each of the three retired officers during both their opening statements and the question and answer period because it is the justifications offered rather than the order the arguments were presented that is important.

#### Opening Remarks

Before the retired officers spoke, Senator Dorgan, the then chairman of the DPC, set forth criteria for the discussion,

The success -- rather -- of the war in Iraq and the success in the war against terrorism will come only if we make good decisions.

To date, those who have made decisions about both have not been held accountable for, in some cases, some very major mistakes. What's working? What isn't? What mistakes have been made? Have they been corrected? How can we prevent those mistakes in the future? Those are the issues we will deal with. (DPC, 2006, p. 2)

This allowed the discussion to be pushed in the direction of an evaluation of what happened, rather than opening up a discussion about the wisdom of going to war in the first place. In addition, the criteria requested that the retired officers go beyond an evaluation of the present situation to extend the discussion to how mistakes made can be avoided in the future. This type of criteria invited rather than stifled dissent because it inherently asked for the retired generals to be critical of the administration's decisions. Unlike the political climate, which seemed to ask for patriotism without question and was openly hostile to dissent, this opening statement helped justify this forum as one for critical discussion. It is especially important because it addressed the idea of patriotism directly by acknowledging that we could only win the war on terror if good decisions were made and good decisions need critical evaluation.

Even though this was a hearing before the Democratic Policy Committee, Senator Dorgan offered a remark about attempted bipartisanship,

And I also want to say for the record that Senator Reid and I sent a letter to Senator Frist and also Senator Kyl -- Senator Frist is the majority leader here in the Senate, and Senator Kyl

is chairman of the Republican Policy Conference-- because --  
Committee, rather -- because we had invited them to be any  
part that they would wish to be of any of our hearings, including  
to come and participate in today's hearing. So I wanted to say  
that as a matter of course. (DPC, 2006, p. 2)

This statement showed that the Republican side of the Congress was not excluded, but chose not to be a part of the hearing. This was important because simply excluding them without any effort being made toward inclusion would attribute an unfair level of blame toward the party which President Bush represented. By extending this opportunity, Senator Dorgan and the DPC offered Senator Kyl and the RPC an opportunity to be represented, to argue on the war effort's behalf, and to answer the arguments presented by the generals. Representation is a key to dissent and representatives of the administration, or at least the party of the administration, were offered the chance to engage these arguments in a public forum and they declined. Senator Dorgan concluded his opening remarks by presenting a statement that speaks to the importance of this hearing,

We called the Department of Defense this morning for the latest update. As of this moment, 2,702 American servicemen and women have died in Iraq. Over 20,000 have been seriously wounded. We owe it to these brave men and women, and to those who continue to risk their lives as we meet in the safety of this room,

to ask the right questions and to demand honest answers. We owe nothing less to our troops and their families. (DPC, 2006, p. 4)

This statement put the hearing in a context of accountability. As more soldiers died in the war effort, those who made the decisions that put their lives at risk, needed to be held accountable for their loss. It endowed the hearing and the retired officer's testimony with a symbolic meaning about finding some semblance of truth. It acknowledged with this statement that the arguments of the administration had, up to this point, not been tested in public forums and offered this moment as a chance for that challenge to occur. While the choice to go to war could be argued in a separate forum, this hearing was to find out what went so wrong that almost 3,000 Americans had already lost their lives.

#### Testimony of Retired Major General John Batiste

Before General Batiste spoke, Senator Dorgan presented his credentials and explained why he was a valid expert to offer testimony on the war effort, Major General Batiste retired after 31 years of service in the United States Army. My understanding is this two-star general was about to receive his third star, and rather than receive his third star, he chose to retire. He retired from active duty November 1st, 2005. He is a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy, the Army War College. He was the senior military assistant to then-Deputy Secretary of Defense Wolfowitz. He served in operations Desert Shield, Desert Storm, Operation Joint Endeavor in Bosnia,

Operation Iraqi Freedom II. General Batiste's most recent assignment was as commanding general of the 1st Infantry Division from August 2002 to June 2005. During that time frame, the Big Red I conducted peace enforcement operations in Kosovo and combat operations in Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. General Batiste, like all three of our witnesses, is a soldier and an American patriot, and we welcome him and appreciate very much his appearance before this committee.

(DPC, 2006, p. 6)

The implicit claim was that Batiste was a credible witness to argue against the war effort and the data presented was Batiste's service record. An easy response from the administration about potential dissenting opinions could have been that the dissenter lacked the expertise for the arguments they presented, but this sort of statement acts as a preemptive response to that potential answer.

Batiste began his statement by explaining his reason for appearing at the hearing, "Our nation is in peril, our Defense Department's leadership is extraordinarily bad, and our Congress is only today, more than five years into this war, beginning to exercise its oversight responsibilities. This is all about accountability" (DPC, 2006, p. 6). He was appealing to Senator Dorgan's criteria of accountability. Batiste's arguments can be grouped into three main categories: arguments against Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, arguments about inadequate troop levels, and arguments about how to craft a better future in Iraq.

## Arguments Against Rumsfeld

The first claim that Batiste made was, "Donald Rumsfeld is not a competent wartime leader. He knows everything, except how to win" (DPC, 2006, p. 6). He justified this claim by presenting the data, "he surrounds himself with like-minded and compliant subordinates who do not grasp the importance of the principles of war, the complexities of Iraq, or the human dimension of warfare" (DPC, 2006, p. 6). The warrant presented as to why this inability to plan strategically was an argument from cause,

His plan allowed the insurgency to take root and metastasize to where it is today. Our great military lost a critical window of opportunity to secure Iraq because of inadequate troop levels and capability required to impose security, crush a budding insurgency, and set the conditions for the rule of law in Iraq. (DPC, 2006, p. 6).

This argument advanced the idea that Rumsfeld was unable to properly plan the war effort and his strategic shortcomings were accountable for the lost opportunities for victory. This claim set the stage for the arguments to come because it argued that the problems with the strategy were due to avoidable planning phases that Rumsfeld avoided.

Batiste extended this claim, saying that it was the same lack of strategic planning that was actually costing soldier's lives, "Secretary Rumsfeld's dismal strategic decisions resulted in the unnecessary deaths of American servicemen and women, our allies, and the good people of Iraq"

(DPC, 2006, p. 7). This claim gave the idea of accountability a tangible consequence. The signs of dismal strategic planning were the gaps in what we could have assumed would happen and what we did. Batiste shed light on these gaps in the data that he presented. It wasn't just that the strategy made winning the war more difficult, but this claim drew attention to the human element at stake in that mismanagement. The data offered in support of this claim was,

He was responsible for America and her allies going to war with the wrong plan and a strategy that did not address the realities of fighting an insurgency. He violated fundamental principles of war, dismissed deliberate military planning, ignored the hard work to build the peace after the fall of Saddam Hussein, set the conditions for Abu Ghraib and other atrocities that further ignited the insurgency, disbanded Iraqi security force institutions when we needed them the most, constrained our commanders with an overly restrictive de-Ba'athification policy, and failed to seriously resource the training and equipping of the Iraqi security forces as our main effort. (DPC, 2006, p. 7)

This data presented not only reasons for the loss of life that validates the claim, but it additionally laid the groundwork for some of the later claims about how the errors in the planning process affected the potential outcomes of the war effort. It showed the gaps in what we could have easily foresaw coming and what we did to prepare. By saying that we ignored the need to build

peace, Batiste highlighted that we did not prepare for what would happen after we won the invasion phase of the war effort. This type of gap between what should have been done and what was done constitutes his claim of dismal strategic planning. The conclusion of this argument was presented as an afterthought that Rumsfeld, "does not comprehend the human dimension of warfare" (DPC, 2006, p. 7). This argument begins by giving the strategic mismanagement a human element by emphasizing the soldiers who have lost their life, then transitions into how that mindset of ignoring the human element of war actually accomplished the opposite of what the strategy intended. Instead of winning the war, protecting Iraqis as well as ourselves, and creating a stable government for transition, we were losing lives on both sides, losing the war effort, and creating a climate among our troops that allowed for torture.

The next claim Batiste presented dealt with how Rumsfeld had created the situation that allowed his strategic shortcomings to go forward without resistance, "Secretary Rumsfeld ignored 12 years of U.S. Central Command deliberate planning and strategy, dismissed honest dissent, and browbeat subordinates to build his plan" (DPC, 2006, p. 6). The data that Batiste presents to support his claim that Rumsfeld ignored the intelligence briefings was that the plan did not address, "the hard work to crush the insurgency, secure a post-Saddam Iraq, build the peace, and set Iraq up for self-reliance. He refused to acknowledge and even ignored the potential for the insurgency, which was an absolute certainty" (DPC, 2006, p. 6). Here Batiste utilized

cause and effect reasoning. In addition to ignoring the potential for insurgency, Batiste bolstered his claim by including data that utilized his technical expertise when he stated that Rumsfeld, "reduced force levels to unacceptable levels, micromanaged the war and caused delays in the approval of troop requirements and the deployment process, which tied the hands of commanders while our troops were in contact with the enemy" (DPC. 2006, p. 7). The implication of this argument was that commanders were unable to focus on the important exchanges between themselves and the insurgents because they needed to focus on managing the flawed plan from above. "At critical junctures, commanders were forced to focus on managing shortages rather than leading, planning and anticipating opportunity" (DPC, 2006, p. 7). The argument about ignoring intelligence briefings was expanded when Senator Harry Reid asked how, exactly, intelligence had been presented. Batiste, utilizing his personal experience and personal service, explained,

Our combatant commanders utilize a tremendous war planning process. It's very analytical. The very best and brightest are involved with this. It considers everything from assumptions to the threat to the mission to the specified and implied tasks and then a detailed troops-to-task analysis to figure out what the requirements are to accomplish the mission. In the case of the U.S. Central Command, this process had been ongoing -- as many of our plans are just on the off chance that we may need

them -- for a period of 12 years -- every two years cyclical approval process through previous Secretaries of Defense -- Cheney, Perry and Cohen. I was privy to a meeting in 2002 where General Franks and some of his staff from U.S. Central Command was to have briefed Donald Rumsfeld on the plan. It didn't get very far. The numbers were too high. For whatever reason, they were ushered back to Tampa to try it again. And this process happened over and over and over again until the plan was finally whittled down to this unacceptable level that we all accepted back in March of 2003 -- completely ignored the insurgency which was an absolute certainty, completely ignored the hard work after the fall of Saddam Hussein, deployed insufficient troops and capability to the Iraqi theater of war so that we could accomplish the mission. (DPC, 2006, p. 13).

This argument utilized cause and effect reasoning to explain that by constantly ignoring potential threats, Rumsfeld set the stage for our strategic demise. There weren't enough troops, so we couldn't defend against the insurgency. There wasn't a plan to deal with Iraq after Saddam Hussein fell, so we failed to win the peace. Each piece of the argument showed how accountability for the problems in Iraq all led back to the decisions made by Rumsfeld.

In regard to why the active duty commanders did not speak out, Batiste argued that it was a matter of how the military worked and how Rumsfeld used his power to quash dissenting voices, "We have a Secretary of Defense who browbeat his subordinates, surrounded himself with compliant officers that built his plan, his plan alone, and that's what we executed" (DPC, 2006, p. 12). The data offered was, "we started with a strategy and a plan that was under-resourced in soldiers and Marines and airmen and sailors by over a factor of three" (DPC, 2006, p. 12). Batiste explained how that power dynamic made dissent unlikely, "so we started out way behind the power curve. There's also a culture within the military that you keep it within. And the secretary of Defense had absolutely made his thoughts known" (DPC, 2006, p. 12). With this argument, Batiste made it clear that there was no opportunity for dissent within the existing structures for active duty military members. The culture worked against speaking out, Rumsfeld had made it clear that dissent was an offense worthy of dismissal, and there was no mechanism by which to circumvent Rumsfeld's authority. An example was in the dismissal of General Eric Shinseki. "What pushed General Shinseki afoul of the civilian leadership before this war began were his comments on the levels of force that might be needed to stabilize Iraq after the battles were over" (Weinraub, 2003). Shinseki was forced from his position shortly after the comment. This meant that no idea or option could be tested from within the existing military structure. Flawed plans were forwarded rather than reworked because the reasoning behind the moves could not be argued. This rationalized why the

hearing was necessary, because no one else within the military, except retired officers outside the jurisdiction of the Secretary of Defense, was able to speak out or have a forum where their objections would be heard. When one person has as much control over the plan as Batiste argued that Rumsfeld had, then there is no way to dissent without fear of punishment.

When asked by Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton what steps could be taken to succeed rather than fail in Iraq, Batiste argued that Rumsfeld and the current leadership needed to be changed. "All of us have said today at least one time that the Department of Defense really does need new leadership, a leader whose instinct and judgment we all trust" (DPC, 2006, p. 27). Batiste utilized cause and effect reasoning throughout his arguments and claimed that Rumsfeld and the decisions made by the leadership were the cause of the problems in Iraq. It then stands to reason that getting rid of the leadership, who is the cause of the problem, would increase the likelihood of success. The claim that the leadership needed to be changed is backed by the data that the person in charge needed to be someone of trustworthy judgment and instinct. This argument built off the previous argument saying that Rumsfeld, through failures of strategic planning, was unable to be that sort of leader. Batiste argued as to how this will help was, "that's the leader of the inner circle -- the whole thing needs to be changed out. Then we can move forward" (DPC, 2006, p. 27). Here Batiste argued that only when the leadership has been changed can America begin to succeed rather than fail in Iraq. This end note for the arguments against Rumsfeld argued that his

leadership style, understanding of the war effort, and connections with subordinates had degenerated to the point that he and the administration he represented were unable to fix the problem. He argued consistently that it was their mindset and leadership style that had created the problems, so, inherently, only a new group with a different mindset and leadership style could fix the problems that Rumsfeld created. By eliminating the cause of the problem one could limit the strategic errors in the future. New leadership who could fix the problems needed to do the opposite of what Rumsfeld and the administration did by acknowledging the human elements of the war, adjusting their plans to suit the situation on the ground, and being willing to call on a much larger number of troops to ensure that the efforts of the military were not wasted.

### Troop and Equipment Shortages

The second main group of arguments that Batiste presented dealt with not having enough troops or equipment. The first claim made was that at the heart of the strategy was a flawed assumption,

The mission in Iraq is all about breaking the cycle of violence and the hard work to change attitudes and give the Iraqi people alternatives to the insurgency. You cannot do this with precision bombs from 30,000 feet. This is tough, dangerous and very personal work. Numbers of boots on the ground and hard-won relationships matter. (DPC, 2006, p. 7)

This claim was supported by data about how troop shortages affected the war effort. In order to compensate for troop shortfall, "commanders are routinely forced to manage shortages and shift coalition and Iraqi security forces from one contentious area to another in places like Baghdad, An Najaf, Tall Afar, Samarra, Ramadi, Fallujah, and many others" (DPC, 2006, p. 6). The problem with this shifting is that it is, "generally successful in the short term, but the minute a mission is complete and the troops are redeployed back to the region where they came from, insurgents reoccupy the vacuum and the cycle repeats itself" (DPC, 2006, p. 6). Finally, Batiste argued that this flawed assumption about troop numbers made all previous actions futile. "Troops returning to familiar territory find themselves fighting to reoccupy ground that was once secure" (DPC, 2006, p. 6). Therefore, the strategy forced troops to gain control over an area, be redeployed elsewhere to compensate for troop shortages, then be sent back to their original foothold only to find that in their absence their work had been undone. Batiste was able to argue from the sign of failure being the lack of correlated effort and show that it was caused by decisions made during the strategic planning. Overall what Batiste argued was that in order to succeed in Iraq, the United States would need a strategy that focused on creating alliances and working with Iraqis. This could only be accomplished by having large numbers of troops on the ground to stabilize regions within Iraq and create the kind of lasting peace necessary to gain the trust, or the hearts and minds, of Iraqis. Rumsfeld's plan was flawed because it had our military sweeping through regions and then, because of low troop

totals, not having enough soldiers to leave in each region to maintain the peace. What that left was devastated cities and regions where insurgents could take hold because there were no troops there to stop them. Leaving the regions of Iraq in states of perpetual fighting, or the "clearing" phase of the plan, did not win their trust or help create the kind of relationships that would have facilitated long lasting peace and, ultimately, victory.

The argument that there were troop shortages stood in contrast to the reports that were being offered to Congress, according to Senator Dorgan, who asked why such shortcomings were not addressed by active commanders. Batiste utilized his personal experience on the ground in Iraq to explain how the situation developed,

Senator, many of us routinely ask for more troops. I certainly did so in the days, weeks and months leading up to the deployment of the 1st Infantry Division. And I sure asked for more every time I was tasked to deploy a brigade-sized unit out of the 1st Infantry Division's area of operation to take on the insurgent in places like An Najaf and Diwaniyah twice, Fallujah once and

Tall Afar. (DPC, 2006, p. 12)

To support the claim that there were not enough troops and requests were denied, Batiste reiterated, "In my testimony I describe--it's a shell game that we play in Iraq, and we've been doing it since day one and we're still doing it today. There simply aren't enough troops there to accomplish the task" (DPC, 2006, p. 12). This helped explain why, prior to this hearing, information was

not being presented to the Congress about troop shortages. The military's chain of command dictates that commanders make requests and, fulfilled or denied, they move forward with their mission. "At some point a decision is made. A senior commander makes a decision. At what point the requests went up the chain of command and were denied, sir, I can't tell you" (DPC, 2006, p. 12). This argument established that the military wanted more help, but had to keep moving forward with whatever they were given. The importance of this argument was to alleviate the potential of blaming the troops or the military leaders. The two schools of thought following the poor outcomes in Iraq were that either the military had botched a fine plan or the military had done their best with a flawed plan. One side puts the blame on the military and takes the blame away from the Administration for having done the best job that they could do. The argument Batiste presented argued on behalf of the second school of thought that blamed the Administration for not taking an accurate view of the problem and putting the military, who in Batiste's eyes was doing the best that they could, in a position to fail. This was an example of an argument from division because of the two potential solutions to the question of blame. Batiste eliminates one by saying that requests were made, leaving only the Administration as a potential option for accepting the blame. Regardless of how the administration or Rumsfeld reported on the subject, Batiste is a retired officer explaining that he asked for more troops and was denied. This argument speaks to the inability of a civilian commander, in the Secretary of Defense, to capably plan and carry

out a war when he ignores dissenting opinions. Dissent, in this context, would not be to belittle the Secretary of Defense, but to point out that requests were being made and denied, so it was, ultimately, a problem created from the top down that there was a troops shortage. No matter what part of the chain of command denied the request, the requests were being sent up the existing hierarchy. It argued that all of the problems associated with that troops shortage, therefore, fell to the DOD, or, at the very least, the existing hierarchy of the DOD was ill-equipped to handle such requests. Either way, it spoke to the mismanagement of the war effort from the civilian commander in charge.

#### Arguments About Future Action

The final set of arguments that Batiste presented dealt with what could be done at this point to try to offset the problems in Iraq and what could be done at home. The first claim that Batiste made about future action involved an active public, "the American people need to take charge through their elected officials. Secretary Rumsfeld and the administration are fighting a war in secret that threatens our democratic values. This needs to stop right now -- today" (DPC, 2006, p. 7). Only through dissenting opinions and the open evaluation of ideas could such secret wars be evaluated and halted. It was the ability of Rumsfeld to have absolute control over the planning phases of the war that allowed such secretive and destructive ideals to infect our overall strategy. In extension of this idea, Batiste made it clear that it needed to be a

complete overhaul of the DOD hierarchy was needed, "we must replace Secretary Rumsfeld and his entire inner circle. We deserve leaders whose judgment and instinct we can all trust" (DPC, 2006, p. 7). The data presented as to why this change must occur is offered as, "I believe that Secretary Rumsfeld and others in the administration did not tell the American people the truth for fear of losing support for the war in Iraq" (DPC, 2006, p. 7).

Appealing to truth has a specific rhetorical importance to this argument because, as previously established, Rumsfeld grounded much of his rationale for going to war in knowing what the troops wanted and how the strategy would work. By claiming that Rumsfeld was not being truthful not only was Batiste saying he was incompetent, but also knowingly misled the American people. It places agency for the decision to act on his shoulders rather than leaving it covert.

Finally, the data presented as the cause of the problem connects the failures in Iraq to Rumsfeld's failure to honestly evaluate the war effort,

1 percent of the population shouldering the burdens, continued hemorrhaging of our national treasure in terms of blood and dollars, an Army and Marine Corps that will require tens of billions of dollars to reset after we withdraw from the country; the majority of our National Guard Brigade's no longer combat-ready, a Veterans Administration which is underfunded by over \$3 billion, and America arguably less safe now than it was on September 11, 2001. (DPC, 2006, p. 7)

This claim was important because Batiste extended his idea to say that if we had taken a full view of the requirements necessary for the invasion of Iraq then "we would likely have taken a different course of action that would have maintained a clear focus on the main effort in Afghanistan, not fueled Islamic fundamentalism across the globe, and created more enemies than there were insurgents" (DPC, 2006, p. 7). Here Batiste used cause and effect reasoning to rationalize why Rumsfeld was an inept leader. The evaluation of leadership is always about the choices those with power make. With this argument, Batiste argued that the people in power made decisions that made the United States less safe, less able to protect itself, and it put an unfair burden on the very people in the military charged with our protection. The cause and effect relationship between the choices made by the leaders and the outcomes felt by our country begs for a change. Batiste utilized a rhetorical strategy that focused on painting Rumsfeld and the administration as bumbling and unable to fix their own mistakes— then followed it up by arguing that they need to be removed from command.

In addition to changing the entire DOD staff, Batiste argued that many political leaders should be changed. He argued that the Congress is supposed to work for the people and that they were negligent in the way they handled the war effort. In his estimation, both parties' oversight committees were, "strangely silent for too long, and our elected officials must step up to their responsibilities or be replaced. This is not about partisan politics, but rather what is good for our country. Our November elections are crucial" (DPC, 2006, p. 8). This acted as a piece of data because it argued to elected

officials who are not doing their job should be replaced. To further support this claim, Batiste implored the American public to vote for "the candidate who understands the issues and who has the moral courage to do the harder right rather than the easier wrong" (DPC, 2006, p. 8). Batiste argued that the very accountability that the hearing was trying to create was at stake with the elections. "I for one will continue to speak out until there is accountability, until the American people establish momentum, and until our congressional oversight committees kick into action" (DPC, 2006, p. 8). This argument explained why political action is tied to civilian understanding. Until the arguments against the war effort are engaged, the public cannot weigh in on the topic. The elected officials had an obligation to do the fact checking and to test potential plans on behalf of the public. The elected officials' failure to engage and argue against the plans made them accountable for the problems too. They were accessories to the mismanagement of the war through complacency. Their silence allowed the administration and Rumsfeld to have the authority to do as they pleased. As stated in his final comment, Batiste and the retired officers are acting on behalf of the citizenry who will never have access to a forum such as this and will never have a direct say in the planning to go to war. Those who do have access, like members of Congress, needed to demand more answers and critically test ideas.

A controversial claim that Batiste made was that the poor planning for the war effort had allowed the situation to metastasize and led to the conditions which created the Abu Ghraib scandal. In the following Batiste argued from signs by

saying that the lack of respect for the Geneva Conventions has made us less safe, then he follows up with cause and effect reasoning by saying that the unfair capture and detainment of Iraqis left the United States with a worse perception than before the war started. When asked how he could validate this claim, Batiste argued,

I consider these to be unlawful, and we will not do this. We will ground ourselves rather firmly in the Geneva Conventions, and we will treat people right. You see, in an insurgency, the last thing you want to do is make more enemies than there are insurgents, and that's precisely what we did when we deployed with insufficient troops by a factor of over three. We put our commanders with an incredible burden, and they had to react, and sometimes it wasn't as precise as they'd like it to be. And we ended up killing and hurting large numbers of Iraqis, and then that person's family and, of course, the person's tribe becomes eternal enemies of the United States. We would, in 2003 and early 2004, collect up huge numbers of Iraqis and put them in Abu Ghraib. The number eventually grew to over 13,000. Probably 99 percent of those people were guilty of absolutely nothing, but the way we treated them, the way we abused them turned them against the effort in Iraq forever.

(DPC, 2006, p. 14)

This justification utilized military expertise when Batiste explained how the rules were changed from above and personal experience when he described actions taken on the ground in Iraq. This data was followed by an extension of the claim with more data about the relaxation of the rules being the cause of the prisoner abuse,

I have personally seen examples where, because of these watered-down rules, these rules I consider to be on the one hand unlawful, on the other hand certainly ambiguous and changing all the time -- as a result of that, great Americans, servicemen and women, are doing unconscionable things to the people that we detained. And as I said, in most cases, guilty of nothing other than being in the wrong place at the right time. (DPC, 2006, p. 14)

Continuing this argument, Batiste said, "we allowed this insurgency, as I said in my statement, to metastasize, and it grew geometrically to where it is today. It didn't have to be this way" (DPC, 2006, p. 14). Here Batiste utilized a cause and effect relationship saying that the loosening of restrictions on torture and on detainee rights led to the abuse in Abu Ghraib. He argued that those in power made decisions that would destroy the ability of the United States to ever have the type of relationship with Iraqis that he previously established was essential to winning the war. This not only called into question the ability of Rumsfeld and the administration to lead, but, in addition, argued that the new leadership would have a lot of work to do just to right all that had gone wrong. By arguing that 99 percent of the people in Abu

Ghraib had done nothing wrong amplifies the atrocities that befell them because it emphasizes their innocence. Here Batiste argued that the loosening of these restrictions didn't just let our morals fall so low that torture occurred, but that the people being tortured had not even committed a crime.

### Summary

Batiste presented three main categories of arguments: Rumsfeld failed, the troop numbers were too small, and that there was still hope for the future of Iraq. He presented his case by using his own experience and understanding of military rules. In order to justify his claims, Batiste used reasoning by sign, cause and effect reasoning, argument from division, and classification arguments. He presented evidence in defense of his claims that helped ground them depending upon the type of logic being used. He was uniquely qualified to make these arguments because of his technical expertise.

## CHAPTER V

### AN ANALYSIS OF THE TESTIMONY OF MAJOR GENERAL PAUL EATON

#### Introduction

Before General Eaton spoke, he was introduced and his credentials were offered to support the claim that he was a qualified expert to offer testimony on the war effort,

Major General Paul Eaton, retired; 33 years of service to his country. His assignments included from Infantry Command to the chief of Infantry. His most recent operational assignment was commanding general of the command charged with re-establishing Iraqi security forces. Other operational assignments included Somalia, Bosnia, Albania. General Eaton is a graduate of West Point, and we very much appreciate, General, your willingness to come and testify here on Capital Hill today. (DPC, 2006, p. 8)

Eaton's testimony offered arguments that critiqued the administration and the war effort as a whole. His arguments can be grouped into four categories: first, arguments about our inadequate troop numbers and equipment, second, arguments about the Iraqi Security Forces, third, arguments about alliance building, and, finally, arguments about the administration--with Donald Rumsfeld's leadership as a primary focus.

## Arguments About Inadequate Troops and Equipment

Retired General Eaton established that the troops being sent to Iraq were not enough in quantity to complete the tasks necessary to win the war. He utilized his personal experience on the ground in Iraq to explain, "between June and October, I relied upon a revolving door of volunteers -- men and women -- on loan from other staffs there for two to six weeks dependent upon the donor unit" (DPC, 2006, p. 9). The problem was that these troops were never trained in the way that they needed to be in order to be of adequate use. They were always behind because by the time someone was properly trained, they seemed to be sent elsewhere. They never had enough soldiers on the ground, "two weeks into training, it became obvious that it was a flawed plan. We needed soldiers to train the Iraqi army, not contracted civilians" (DPC, 2006, p. 9). The argumentative strategy employed was a testimonial in which Eaton explained that he worked on the ground in Iraq and saw it was a flawed strategy. What the testimonial did rhetorically in this instance was call attention to his personal experience on the ground and, in addition, emphasize that the people being sent to do the job were not the people that were needed to do the job right. Eaton relied on cause and effect reasoning to show that the cause for the inadequate troop numbers came from decisions made by those in leadership roles. Eaton argued that the administration and Rumsfeld made choices that led to the shortcomings on the ground.

In terms of total troops, Eaton argued that only half of the necessary figures were being deployed. The Phase Four planning, which was to help establish forces during the post-war occupation, never lived up to its promises.

Phase-four planning was amateurish, at best, and failed to do the operational planning we needed. The establishment of the Iraqi security forces started off with a 24-page PowerPoint briefing built by CENTCOM and approved by Secretary Rumsfeld. I reported to Baghdad on 13 June and met with Colonel Roland Tiso and four other men borrowed from the CENTCOM staff to craft the future of Iraq's army. The joint manning document would never hit 50 percent. That's the document that assigns a personnel to build out that course.

(DPC, 2006, p. 8).

Establishing with firsthand experience that there was only half of the people necessary to complete the required tasks helped Eaton build the case that the failures in Iraq were due to poor planning and failure to adequately supply troops. The revolving door that Eaton described forced he and other commanders to swap soldiers between groups. That meant that no one group was able to do what needed to be done and just when a soldier was properly trained for that group's specific task, then they would be sent somewhere else to start the whole process over. This retarded the outward growth that the military needed on the ground and stifled the ability of soldiers to gain the

experience and comfort necessary to properly handle a difficult insurgency. Finally, this argument showed how powerless the active military was to do anything but work within the confines of the DOD strategy. There was no way for Eaton or anyone else to assure that they kept the soldiers that they trained or would get trained soldiers in return during what he called the "shell game."

In addition to providing 50% or less of the necessary troops, Eaton argued that the troops who were sent never had the proper equipment to succeed. He made the statement that the Army is in terrible shape. When asked to clarify what he meant, Eaton explained that the equipment used in Iraq was, like the soldiers, in short supply. To validate his claim, he offered the following, "there is a shuttle program moving combat equipment from one division to the next, because we do not have enough combat gear to maintain the equipment in theater and to maintain a training set in the United States" (DPC, 2006, p. 14). So, as soldiers were training at home in anticipation of their deployment, they were doing so without usable equipment to train. Eaton explained how this complicated the training process, "you've got units -- and this is a front-page article today in The New York Times -- whereby the 3rd Infantry Division is awaiting delivery and can't train for want of combat equipment" (DPC, 2006, p. 14). The problem with this holdover is that it prevented the Army from restocking itself with soldiers. As groups like the 3rd Infantry Unit waited idly for equipment, the deployment requirements forced other groups back into the combat zone quicker than anticipated. "We don't have the soldiers necessary to give the appropriate two-to-one for active units

or three-to-one time back, time in deployment to our soldiers" (DPC, 2006, p. 15). This created, in Eaton's words, "a racetrack of young men and women coming back to the United States only to begin preparing for deployment which is an intense period" (DPC, 2006, p. 15). Eaton relied on cause and effect reasoning throughout this argument. He argued that the revolving door of soldiers being sent to different areas of Iraq was because of the low troop totals. To compound the problem, they were also faced with immediate redeployment. He argued that the low troop totals were the cause of the problems on the ground. This established blame for the administration and diverted blame away from the soldiers on the ground in Iraq. Eaton argued that no matter how good the effort was from the soldiers themselves, an inadequate troop total and inadequate supply of equipment doomed them to failure, or, at the very least, made their jobs exceedingly difficult. The troop numbers and equipment rations were granted from the top down, so the blame for this strategic malfunction rests with those in power. Eaton framed the arguments to explain that the effort itself was flawed because promises made for troops and equipment were not fulfilled.

#### Inadequate Training and Staffing of Iraqi Security Forces

As established in his credentials, retired General Eaton was in charge of the Iraqi Security Force (ISF). Eaton grabbed his Congressional audience with a narrative from an unnamed sergeant.

A sergeant up in Kirkuk on my first assessment visit said, "Sir, I am embarrassed to tell you, but here I am, the best-equipped soldier on the planet, "and by that time everybody had issued the body armor; we had the Mac lights, the rifle suite of target and equipment -- "I am embarrassed to stand behind an Iraqi policeman who stands there bravely wearing his thin blue cotton shirt with his old PK-47," nine months after we started on this; not enough ammunition to qualify his weapon. The man is not qualified with a weapon. He was issued 10 rounds. (DPC, 2006, p. 26)

The purpose of this narrative was to give the image of unequipped policeman in plain language. The army told the Iraqis who risked their lives to take ISF jobs that they would receive the necessary training and support, but the U.S. failed to fulfill the promise. This argument was built around arguing from sign to show effect. It draws upon the symptoms of an ill-equipped soldier to draw the conclusion that his condition was unsafe. The utilization of language like "bravely wearing", but "unqualified" portrayed the struggle of people who were willing to sacrifice their lives for a free Iraq, but offered no help. This created an enthymeme with knowledge about the first Iraq war in which the argument was made that US forces came into the country promising freedom, then abandoned Iraqis at the first opportunity to leave. Eaton appealed to an ethical standard by saying, "that is unconscionable. Those shortages persist today. The April visit that General McCaffrey reported out on, even-page back

brief, reports still shortages within the Iraqi security forces" (DPC, 2006, p. 26). With this argument, Eaton linked the current situation on the ground to the narrative. The data and warrant for this claim were presented as, "General McCaffrey's recent report reveals that Iraqi security forces -- arguably the second most important security forces on this planet, second to our own -- continue to lack fundamental equipment" (DPC, 2006, p. 9). He explained that nothing has changed and McCaffrey's report supported the idea that brave Iraqis who joined the ISF remained little more than poorly armored targets. Making the problem into a narrative, then explaining that the problem remains unchanged to this date offered Eaton the chance to appeal to the ethics of his audience. He was arguing that if nothing changed, then our efforts and their lives would be squandered because we failed in something as simple as supplying the ISF with adequate equipment. This argument concluded with the warrant that tied this issue back to the larger problem of the war effort and accountability, "the Secretary of Defense has failed to resource his main effort -- the objective to stand up the Iraqi security forces, enabling us to withdraw U.S. forces" (DPC, 2006, p. 9). For the problem of inadequate training, Eaton blamed Rumsfeld and asserted that we could not leave Iraq until the problem was solved. Staffing and training the ISF was the essential step to ending the US occupation of the country. Until the ISF was ready to have the country handed over to their care, the US army was a necessity for peace and stability. A poorly armed group with no training and no body armor is not ready to maintain peace and stability. Eaton gave this argument weight by

linking our opportunity to leave with properly arming and training the ISF. This argument as a whole draws on signs of a poor commitment to the ISF. Eaton argued that the equipment that they were offered, the funding they lacked, and the importance they were neglected all showed how the United States was failing their honest efforts. What this meant for the overall strategy presented by the Administration was that Rumsfeld's plan could not meet their objectives. In order to win the war and leave Iraq a democratic state, we would need to help them create the foundation of a security force that could facilitate that transition. Eaton argued that such a transition would not be able to happen as long as the ISF was not given the financial, training, and equipment support that it needed to thrive.

In addition to the portrayal of the ISF as brave, but unassisted, Eaton argued that they were put low on the priority hierarchy. Eaton offered a conversation he had with Rumsfeld to validate his claim in which Rumsfeld said, "we were his last priority -- Iraqi police were first -- a failure to understand the import of armies to Arab populations. I would discover later that the priority one, his police forces, was an unfolding disaster" (DPC, 2006, p. 9). This preview claim was important because it helped attribute blame toward the prioritization for the problems that would come later. By arguing that the priorities set forth from the DOD were out of alignment, it established that those in power could have done things differently and more effectively. What these two arguments did was argue the importance of the ISF and then argue that Rumsfeld and the administration didn't understand that importance.

The argument utilized cause and effect reasoning to show that the lack of priority given to such an important part of the transition of Iraqis to power led to the unfolding disaster in Iraq. Eaton was trying to advance the idea that the administration was at fault for the problems in Iraq and, in addition, the implicit claim became that as long as they continued with the same mindset that they would be unable to solve the problems in the future.

In addition to the conversation, Eaton argued that setbacks were common place in the war. To validate this claim Eaton relied on personal experience, "we sustained a series of setbacks: one, Pentagon rejection of the equipment contract, and another was Mr. Wolfowitz's withhold of \$253 million dollars designated to build out a division set of barracks" (DPC, 2006, p. 9). He then gave a statement of importance and attribution of blame by saying that the withheld funds were the, "determining step for the creation of the armed forces. The deputy secretary was reportedly unhappy with the development of the Iraqi police and held these funds hostage" (DPC, 2006, p. 9). This argument showed that Rumsfeld would use essential funding as a bartering tool to try to leverage his subordinates. It showed a propensity toward self-serving behavior that fuels many of the arguments against Rumsfeld. This example from personal experience showed what was happening on the ground and offered an explanation of what was happening. Eaton concluded this argument by explaining that a review of the ISF, ordered by Paul Wolfowitz and conducted by General Eikenberry showed, "that Iraqi armed forces were on track, that police and border troops were not, that

money and personnel would be diverted from my operation to support the police development -- a zero-sum game" (DPC, 2006, p. 9). This concluding argument gave greater weight to claims made by all of the generals because it showed how precious resources were being shifted due to mismanagement. Instead of continuing to support the projects that were going well and finding additional support for the programs that were doing poorly, those that did well were rewarded with budget cuts and their funding was offered to programs that were failing. Eaton argued that the cause of the problem was the zero sum nature of the situation created by the low troop appropriations and that it caused shortfalls in troop allotments on the ground. By establishing that the problem was the detained funds and low troops and arguing that those decisions caused the problem, Eaton was blaming the Administration and Rumsfeld who had the authority over making those choices. This discouraged the military on the ground because when they did their job well, they were punished instead of rewarded. The job, through budget cuts and general mismanagement of the war effort, was constantly made harder.

One final attribution of blame for the ISF shortcomings came when Eaton described the initial assessment of the Iraqi Army. He explained that the assessment showed a, "stunning lack of progress by the Minister of Interior, his staff, and a failure to understand how to man, train and equip the functions, the unworkable command and control network, a logistics and administration system that didn't work" (DPC, 2006, p. 9). This is important because the United States' role in the transition away from Saddam Hussein's

regime was to provide guidance, training, and support to the new Iraqi government. This argument showed that we were failing in our basic capacity to the Iraqis. Eaton explained the outcome of such mismanagement was, "a national police and border forces that were in complete disarray, ill-equipped with untrained leaders and a dysfunctional set of facilities" (DPC, 2006, p. 9). This argument shaped the scope of the controversy to the Congress. Eaton gave a description of the ISF as dysfunctional and receiving no help from their US counterparts. While so many other arguments allude to or attribute accountability for mismanagement, this one actually gives the Congress an image of what that mismanagement of the war effort had left behind. By describing the importance of the ISF and then their poor shape, Eaton argued that the administration and Rumsfeld had known how important the ISF were, but were unable to understand how to create a complicated security force. It spoke to their ineptitude for the task and gave a grim account of what that alleged ineptitude had done.

### Alliance Building and Competing Worldviews

Retired General Eaton argued that we failed to build the necessary alliances to set ourselves up for victory in Iraq. He relied on theoretical grounding and examples to validate his claim. Rhetorically, he relied on cause and effect reasoning to show how our failure to secure necessary alliances caused future problems. When faced with a question about how the United States actions actually helped the problems in Iraq and in the Arab world

grow, Eaton offered an explanation about the loss and relocation of political capital,

There's a theory that there is X amount of political or diplomatic capital available on the planet. It's not my theory, it's just that as one nation surrenders diplomatic capital, it will go somewhere else. Donald Rumsfeld began an isolation of the United States with his "old Europe" comment and his unwillingness to engage with allies to embark upon a mission that was held important to the United States and this administration. With that intentional displacement of potential allies, we shed and began to shed political and diplomatic capital that has found homes in other regions of the world. (DPC, 2006, p. 20)

After establishing that there is some theoretical tradeoff at stake with the decisions made by the United States, Eaton articulated the empirical outcome,

And you have seen it [political and diplomatic capital] spike in the jihadist world, in these -- in the spawning of terror cells that - - and we've gone on to further exacerbate our problem by seeing it as a monolith. And it is not. It is a lot of cells. But this administration has declared that it is a monolithic problem, and it is not a monolithic problem. We have failed to see any engagement or success in engagement with potential allies in this venture -- countries that have a lot to lose to this rise of Islamic extremists

-- Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Syria, Egypt. We have not done well in  
-- from the very beginning to develop an alliance to tamp this  
down, to develop the links to tamp this down. And the failure to  
do that and the erosion of our credibility in former alliances has  
allowed this thing to spike on us. (DPC, 2006, p. 20)

Here Eaton argued that the Administration and the DOD were conceptualizing the issue wrong and that conceptual misallocation disabled our alliance building. The problem, in Eaton's estimation, was not one of nation to nation, but of cells within nations. What is at stake with this conceptualization is what constituted proper action. If one sees the problem of terrorism as a monolith, then the "with us or against us" attitude of the Administration makes sense. However, if one were to envision the problem of terrorism the way that Eaton did, then alliance building was the only way to have the required help to damage the terrorist cells. This framing of the issue was central to many of Eaton's arguments because it established two competing worldviews in which an evaluation of actions taken needed to be viewed through an accurate lens to establish what Dorgan wanted from the meeting--accountability. Only when one adopts one worldview or the other can accountability be established and this line of argument firmly established the way that Eaton conceptualized the terrorist threat and its implication to the overall war effort. Seeing them as competing interpretations of the world allows for an individual seeking some sort of "truth" to compare and contrast the validity of these competing views of how terrorism works in conjunction with alliances.

Eaton described the phase of the plan that dealt with creating and maintaining the Iraqi Army by offering a descriptive narrative,

I traveled to Jordan to set up a potential equipment buy. The Jordanian army, the most professional of Arab armies, was willing to assist. And we set up a plan whereby the Jordanian army would retrain officers from the old Iraqi army brought back onto active duty. We would train noncommissioned officers in our own coalition, noncommissioned officers academy set up in Iraq; they, in turn, would train their own soldiers. With Iraqis understanding Iraqis, and oversight provided by 10 men, coalition support teams provided by the Army and the Marine Corps and others from Navy Air Force -- but dominated by the Army and the Marine Corps. I briefed this plan -- a second phase, essentially, the operation given me -- a requirement to adapt. Mr. Rumsfeld received this briefing on 5 September, and I got his approval to proceed with an accelerated, adapted plan that would produce an army of 27 battalions -- essentially 40,000 personnel, associated command and control from national to squad, start the navy, start the air force, the logistics systems at a budget of \$2.2 billion. We laid out the basing strategy for the Iraqi armed forces. (DPC, 2006, p. 9)

This established all of the necessary work to create the strategy, the alteration of the strategy, and the connections that could be built utilizing this strategy. Eaton again argued the worldview of the Administration when he explained Rumsfeld's reply, "he approved this plan, but he put his finger in my chest and said, 'Just don't make this look like the American Army'" (DPC, 2006, p. 9). It became clear from the testimony that Eaton believed that Rumsfeld was inaccurately focused on the perception of their actions rather than the content of the decisions. He utilized reasoning from the signs that Rumsfeld was an inept leader. Eaton argued that by ignoring potential options and focusing on the public perception of decisions, he was making erroneous choices from his position of power. Rumsfeld's reply was not about the potential outcomes of this planning, but on how the outcomes would be perceived. This validated the claim that Rumsfeld and the Administration were so focused on perception that they mismanaged the war effort. The attribution of blame for this claim was focused around flawed worldviews, just like the argument about the understanding of terrorism as a whole. What this argument called into question was how power could be abused to manipulate potential strategies to suit political agendas. Rumsfeld was not worried about the potential success or failure of the strategy, only how well it was catered to the political agenda he subscribed to through the administration.

After establishing the problems with conceptualization, Eaton moved on to an argument about the empirical benefit of alliance building. The potential benefits that Eaton discussed, effectively, became what was lost by

not building alliances properly. Eaton began his argument by describing the problem he would address, "we are, conservatively, 60,000 soldiers short to meet the foreign policy requirements of this nation. And the troops to task -- and it's an Army term -- is completely out of sync right now" (DPC, 2006, p. 27). Eaton argued that we not only are lacking in numbers, but because of the previously described tradeoffs, our soldiers were never in the right place long enough to create lasting success. Eaton described the nature of the problem in greater detail by saying,

We need to apply that axiom, "Keep your friends close; keep your enemies closer," we distance ourselves from potential allies -- or at least people who had at least a vested interest in some level of security in a very difficult neighborhood. (DPC, 2006, p. 27)

To give his claim about distancing ourselves from potential allies weight, Eaton offered an empirical example, "we have got to build alliances outside of the United States. Why we do not have an ambassador in Syria today is simply incomprehensible" (DPC, 2006, p. 27). This example shows how Syria and others would have helped the United States, not out of any misguided altruism, but because they had a vested interest in protecting themselves through the stability of the area. Iraq never existed in a vacuum, so its instability affects the Middle East as a whole. By not utilizing countries in the area who would have helped us out of the desire to see a stable Iraq, we lost the opportunity to have the help necessary to facilitate long-lasting peace.

Eaton argued, using cause and effect reasoning, that alliance building at the national level was so basic that failing to do so showed, "we are bankrupt in leadership right now at the national level" (DPC, 2006, p. 27). This argument explained that there were friends and allies to be made, we simply didn't engage them. What that spoke to was the unwillingness of the administration to engage potential allies because those allies would have wanted some say in the overall strategy. Many of Eaton's arguments rely on explaining the administration and Rumsfeld as misinformed and unwilling to budge in their worldview. Here, that claim was central because he illustrated that we could have had help if we were not so inflexible in our understanding of the problem and the potential solution. The absolutism of the plan Rumsfeld put forward did not allow leeway for any assistance from anyone in the region. The plan was to go into Iraq, topple Hussein's regime, and be out of the country quickly with a new democratic government set up in our wake. That plan did not allow for the contingencies that created the problems in Iraq and, more than that, it never included the opportunity for input from the sources mentioned here that could have been of assistance. The overarching argument was one of accountability and Rumsfeld's unwillingness to include potential allies was a sign of incompetence, as the plan's sole author, for the resulting blunders in Iraq.

## Arguments Against Secretary Rumsfeld and the Administration

Eaton argued that the DOD and Administration had failed to prepare the troops for success at the strategic planning level. He used reasoning from sign because he argued that Rumsfeld showed the symptoms of being a poor leader by not understanding basic concepts requisite to the task, and the condition, therefore, would be an incompetent commander. He began by explaining how the national strategy does not equate to what the military would define as a strategy,

Secretary Rumsfeld's strategy stated -- the "stay the course" or "stand up Iraqi security forces, stand down U.S. forces" -- that's not a strategy; that is an end state. That's the objective. There is a failure on the part of this administration to understand what strategic planning's all about. (DPC, 2006, p. 8)

Identifying an objective as a strategy, Eaton argued, threw the rest of strategic planning off because there were misapplied terms and concepts. To clarify the issue, Eaton explained the definition of strategic planning, "strategic planning is assignment of the objective, which is standing up the Iraqi security forces, viable government so this nation can stand up. The lines of operation to get there define the strategy" (DPC, 2006, p. 8). What is important here is that Eaton distinguished between objective and strategy. How you achieve the objective is a strategy and, therefore, to call the objective the strategy was to ignore all the action it would take to achieve said objective. Simply put, an objective is a great idea, but without a means to accomplish it one would have no plan at all. To

remain on the topic of accountability, Eaton argued that we have no strategic plan and that the necessities of such planning had been ignored, "we have not done that [strategic planning] as a nation. We have certainly not done it in the Department of Defense" (DPC, 2006, p. 8). Here Eaton argued that the DOD led by Rumsfeld was incompetent. He established this claim by establishing that the signs of incompetence were clear. By not understanding how strategic planning even worked, they, effectively, never had the chance to get it right. This argument makes the case that Rumsfeld was unfit to lead the operation and that his tactical inexperience and misconceptions precluded him from creating a strategy, let alone a winning strategy. This meant that his tactical abilities were at too remedial a level to be fit for the task. The even greater implication was that perhaps a non-officer and someone who never served in the military was ill-equipped to be the commander of such an important mission. By portraying Rumsfeld as so woefully inept, Eaton implicitly argued that he lacked training and understanding of even the most basic elements of planning--or what constitutes a strategy.

Having argued that the Administration and DOD did not have a proper grasp on strategic planning, Eaton articulated an example of how that misunderstanding impacted the war effort. First, in regard to Rumsfeld's overarching mission, Eaton claimed, "Mr. Rumsfeld came in to transform the U.S. military, to turn the military into a lighter, more lethal armed force. In fact, Rumsfeld's vision is a force designed to meet a Warsaw Pact-type force more effectively" (DPC, 2006, p. 9). He then refuted Rumsfeld's understanding of the war effort as a whole by explaining,

But we are not fighting the Warsaw Pact. We are fighting an insurgency -- a distributed, low-tech, high-concept war that demands greater numbers of ground forces, not fewer. Mr. Rumsfeld won't acknowledge this fact and has failed to adapt to the current situation. He has tried and continues to fight this war on the cheap. (DPC, 2006, p. 9)

Very much like calling an objective a strategy, here Eaton argued that Rumsfeld was creating a military unit designed to fight a fighting force completely the opposite to the one with which he was engaged. He was pointing out through the symptom of Rumsfeld's lack of understanding about the type of battle that he was in as a sign of his incompetence. Instead of trying to streamline the military and do everything for less money, the only way to fight an insurgency was to have enough troops and equipment to counter the insurgents. This was important because this argument built on the last argument by stating intuitively that if one had crafted a proper strategy to achieve an objective, then one likely would have better adapted a plan to defeat an insurgency. The purpose of policy making is to achieve goals and Eaton argued that the policies that Rumsfeld pursued while in control accomplished the opposite of his objectives, which argued Rumsfeld had no idea what he was doing. By framing the arguments in this way, Eaton argued that not only was the strategic planning flawed due to ineptitude, but that proper planning was achievable, if not easy to do for one who was properly trained.

Eaton argued that the only solution was to, "replace the secretary of Defense with a proven leader who has a vision to get the country's defense establishment back on track" (DPC, 2006, p. 10). And when asked what kind of character traits that the replacement should have, Eaton explained that we need, "a secretary who understands how to build alliances at home and abroad, who understands the operational art and understand the contemporary operating environment we live in" (DPC, 2006, p. 10). A similarity between Eaton and Batiste was that both were looking for changes at multiple levels of government. Eaton extended his critique of Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld to other cabinet members by saying,

We do need new military leadership for the nation, and that the selection of someone who will build alliances within the nation and outside of the nation to aggressively understand the interagency process, and that each of the administration's Cabinet members would see this war in the same important terms as the soldiers who fight it, that they apply the resources and the demands for resources on the system in order to pursue a war that is not just a military action, but a pure, broad-spectrum national fight, that we've got to use every level of national power that we've got. (DPC, 2006, p. 27)

This broadens the scope of accountability beyond the DOD to an interagency issue. Eaton framed the problem as one that occurred in many different parts of the government and a search for accountability needn't focus on only the

DOD. Finally, Eaton concluded his argument by explaining how to move forward,

We need to debrief redeploying soldiers of all ranks, make public their views on what deploying soldiers need. I doubt if you'll ever hear, "We have enough soldiers." We need a Manhattan Project to resource the development of the Iraqi security forces, more and better equipment, triple the current 4,000-member equivalent adviser complement, and to work all operational lines to achieve success here. We need a bipartisan commission with complete transparencies to deliver a series of recommendations to the president that leadership on both sides of the aisle can endorse. This is not a purely military problem. It is an interagency development problem. The war on terror demands we mobilize the country and significantly increase the size of our ground forces, to match our troops' strength to the foreign policy we've embarked upon. We need to help this administration through its last two years by forcing upon it the remedies that we point out in need for victory. (DPC, 2006, p. 10)

Here Eaton offered several practical solutions about how to fix some of the problems created by the strategic mismanagement of the war effort. However, what sticks out the most is the last line where he emphasized that the remedies would have to be forced upon the Administration. In terms of

accountability, Eaton framed the Administration as incompetent by articulating signs of their misunderstandings about how to plan and their incommensurate world views about the problem and the solution. He argued that these symptoms should lead to the understanding that the Administration would not reach the necessary conclusions on their own and the corrections would need to be forced from a third party or group.

### Summary

General Paul Eaton's critique of the war effort could be grouped into four categories: first, arguments about our inadequate troop numbers and equipment, second, arguments about the Iraqi Security Forces, third, arguments about alliance building, and, finally, arguments about the administration--with Donald Rumsfeld's leadership as a primary focus. He used argumentative strategies that focused on arguing from signs as well as cause and effect logic. His professional expertise and personal connection with the war helped mold his appeals.

## CHAPTER VI

### AN ANALYSIS OF THE TESTIMONY OF CONONEL THOMAS HAMMES

#### Introduction

The third and final retired officer to speak was Colonel Thomas Hammes. Like those who came before him, his introduction began with an account of his credentials,

Colonel Thomas Hammes. He was commissioned in the U.S. Naval Academy in 1975, 30 years in the Marine Corps, served at all levels in the operating forces to include command of a rifle company, weapons company, intelligence company, infantry battalion, and -- the list is endless. He has participated in stabilization operations in Somalia and Iraq, as well as training insurgents in various places around the world. Colonel Hammes is currently reading for a Ph.D. at Oxford University, and he is the accomplished author of a book titled "The Sling and the Stone: On War in the 21st Century". (DPC, 2006, p. 10)

Retired Colonel Hammes utilized his experience on the ground, understanding of technical warfare, and specialized training in academia to develop arguments about the war effort. One technique that Hammes began with, different than that of his counterparts, was a statement at the beginning of his testimony that set forth a purpose and framework for what was to come,

Mr. Chairman and distinguished members, it is a privilege to participate in the discussion of what may be the most important security matter of our generation. I will not discuss the mistakes that brought us to this point in Iraq, but rather focus on what we must do if we wish to achieve success. Any discussion of what I perceive to be mistakes will be only to provide context for subsequent recommendations. (DPC, 2006, p. 10)

With this statement Hammes accomplished two things: first, he attributed a high level of importance to the hearing by saying that the situation in Iraq was the most important security matter of our generation and, second, he established that he was not going to be looking back as much as looking forward with his critique. This set forth a different style of dissent than the other two retired officers because he was not going to try to find accountability for the mistakes that set up the problem, only with the mistakes that were allowing the problem to continue. Hammes's arguments can be grouped into three categories: how the lack of funds prevents success, how we are failing to secure Iraq, and strategic mismanagement from the United States government.

#### How the Lack of Funds Prevented Success

Retired Colonel Hammes began his testimony by claiming that our strategy in Iraq of Clear-Hold-Build had potential for success. If all of the objectives were met in the order required, then it should be able to create the

Iraq that was envisioned during the war planning. He argued that the strategy had all the necessary requirements to succeed, except funding,

Insurgencies can only be defeated by good governance. The first step, security for the people, is the fundamental responsibility of any government. The clear-and-hold steps of our strategy address that issue. The build phase addresses the other basic requirement of good governance, providing people with hope for a better future. Given we have a solid strategy, it is particularly distressing that this administration has failed to resource any part of it. (DPC, 2006, p. 10)

This claim relied on cause and effect reasoning. Hammes argued that the lack of money was the cause of problems the army had faced in regard to equipment. In order to support this claim, Hammes offered the data that since, "summer of 2003, we have know there are better, safer vehicles available than the armored humvee -- for instance, the M1117 armored security vehicle. Yet in three years, the Pentagon has purchased only about a thousand of them" (DPC, 2006, p. 11). Finally, Hammes offered the conclusion that tied everything together,

I find it remarkable the nation that could produce 4,000 aircraft a month in World War II is limited to 48 armored vehicles per month today. We did not ask our soldiers to invade France in 1944 with the inferior equipment they had in 1941. Why are we asking our soldiers and Marines to use the same armor we

found was insufficient in 2003? It is simple: The administration has refused to dedicate the resources necessary to make it happen. It is content to let our troops ride in inferior vehicles. (DPC, 2006, p. 11)

This argument utilized arguing from signs to advance a claim of incompetence. He showed that the unwillingness of the Administration to fund the purchase of equipment that experts like himself knew would be needed showed a condition of incompetence. With this argument, Hammes explained how the government failed to supply the mission with the required funding, which left the troops using inferior equipment, and he explained that this was not always the way our government had conducted war. He utilized an argument by analogy with WWII. By using the comparison with WWII, Hammes offered an example of how our government had formally offered overwhelming support, which highlighted why he classified our current output as a failure. The rhetorical purpose of arguing by analogy is to show that the analogous situation was handled one way that the situation in question ought to be handled. In this case, Hammes was successful in making the analogy seem a parallel case. To amplify the strength of his strategy, Hammes used rhetorical questions to emphasize main points. When he asked why we were using inferior armor, the question presumes that the armor being used was inferior and makes the validity of his point seem more direct. By extending the analogy to use 1944 to 1941 and 2006 to 2003, Hammes even utilized adequate time appropriateness for his argument by analogy which strengthened the argument.

Hammes solidified his claim about the Administration's unwillingness to provide equipment by offering a personal narrative that we could provide more vehicles, they can be manufactured: "I've talked to manufacturers of several of the vehicles. We know the vehicles are better. We could produce them. It's a matter of asking for the resources and in applying them with a sense of urgency" (DPC, 2006, p. 13). This was important because it shifted the argument from assessing whether we can or cannot do something to an argument that we are or are not doing something. It eliminates the option for a rebuttal saying that the Administration didn't purchase more armored vehicles because they were not available or could not be produced fast enough. The attribution of blame is more direct when one chooses not to take an action, rather than a time when an action is precluded due to some inescapable variable. This argument began with an argument from a sign of incompetence when Hammes argued that they could do what needed to be done, they just didn't. He then utilized cause and effect reasoning to say that the failures in Iraq were directly a result of choices the Administration made about funding.

Continuing with funding based arguments, Hammes claimed that, "the administration has failed to replace and maintain the equipment necessary for the units of the United States to be ready for other potential operations" (DPC, 2006, p. 11). The data offered for this claim explained,

The services have done a pretty good job of stripping the forces in the U.S. to send equipment overseas. Talking to guys who are in Iraq now with the Marines, the equipment there is pretty good. The guys back

here literally have nothing to train on. We have units that are less than a year out for going, and they have zero equipment. They don't even have weapons that can fire because they don't have any money to repair the weapons until the new fiscal year starts. (DPC, 2006, p. 26)

Hammes linked everything back together with a sign that although our troops did not have the necessary weapons or equipment to train with at home, "our repair depots are working single shifts and only five days a week. The American people have not refused to provide what our people need. The administration has refused to ask for the funding" (DPC, 2006, p. 11). With this argument, Hammes established the tradeoff occurring within the armed services between troops on the ground and troops being trained. This was an inevitable outcome of not properly resourcing what was, in Hammes's estimation, a good strategy. He also argued that the unwillingness to fund such a strategy showed negligent leadership and an inability to follow through a good strategy. He maintained his focus on articulating why the current actions precluded success because we could have had people working double shifts, seven days a week to help arm our troops--we just did not. It was a choice not to have more money and effort spent on the war effort and that choice was a glaring symptom of a lack of leadership capacity. After establishing the shortcoming, Hammes concluded an ethical assessment of the situation, "the failure to provide our best equipment is a serious moral failure on the part of our leadership" (DPC, 2006, p. 11). This was his attribution of blame not only at a decision-making level, but also at an ethical

level because they could do more and were not doing so, which led to the loss of countless American and Iraqi lives. Troops died because of poorly armored vehicles, troops died because of poor training without equipment, and our government could have provided them both. This was an argument of classification that described the choice to let troops go unfunded as an unethical one. By describing the choice in this way, Hammes looked to classify it with other moral failures, but left the specificity of the moral failures to the minds of his audience. This allowed them to imagine whatever moral failure that sprung to mind: cheating on a spouse, murder, or slander to be imagined alongside the choice to leave the war effort unfunded. Rhetorically this went a step further than assessing blame for strategic blunder to an attack on the character of the people making the decisions. Good people make bad decisions, but this evaluation argued that the decisions proved the leadership to be of poor ethics. They knew better, they could have helped, and they chose not to, which this argument classified as a moral failure. Such strong language calls into question the character of the leaders and not just the validity of the decisions that they made.

#### Failure to Secure Iraq Diminished Chances for Success

Retired Colonel Hammes argued that security was the most important aspect of the strategy. In fact, he argued that it was the key to defeating any insurgency. "You can't succeed in a counterinsurgency without reconstruction. Security, I agree, is absolutely the fundamental problem"

(DPC, 2006, p. 23). The data that Hammes offered to validate this claim was an explanation of how the Clear-Hold-Build strategy ought to work. He explained that if we clear the area of threats, "then provide sufficient troops and resources to hold it, then you must immediately start building so that everybody can see that being part of the government is better than not being part of the government" (DPC, 2006, p. 23). Hammes concluded this argument by rationalizing why creating security and stability would defeat insurgency,

Now, that may mean two or three or four years to bring stability to a town before you move on to the next one. If you do not increase troop levels, you've got to decrease the amount of ground you try to hold. And then, as you build this up and create these zones where there is prosperity, and the other people have been living under the insurgency and not doing so well, then they're a little more motivated when you move out to help them. But it's got to be -- both elements have to be there.

Security comes first, but right behind it has to be the build piece [of the strategy]. (DPC, 2006, p. 23)

This argument reaffirmed his previous argument that the Clear-Hold-Build strategy could be effective. In addition to this reaffirmation, this argument also framed the problem in a sequential manner. If one part of the strategy was not implemented or was mishandled, then the next steps in the sequence would be doomed to failure. This became important as Hammes argued later that it

was our inability to hold, brought on by policy decisions that led a good strategy to fail. The causal chain of events required for the strategy to work tied blame directly to the administration for not carrying out each set of actions in the sequence.

Hammes argued that the lack of security was what prevented Iraq from standing up on its own. When confronted with an alternative theory from Senator Richard Durbin, who argued that the Iraqis were not working hard enough to be trained because they were being protected by the greatest military in the world, Hammes replied with an argument that built outward from his security-first principle,

We have been telling them [Iraqis] for almost a year that we are leaving while we have rhetoric in Washington that we're not leaving. If you watch what we do on the ground, they know our strategy is clear, hold, build -- we took away the build money. We won't do the hold, because we won't provide sufficient troops. And we won't give them equipment. So we've made it very clear to them that this administration's looking for a way out, and we're getting ready to cut. (DPC, 2006, p. 17)

The sign of poor leadership in this argument was when Hammes presented the idea that Washington took away the funding and support. To support this claim, Hammes presented data based on his personal experience that refuted the claim that Iraqis were lazy or unwilling to learn,

We say they [the insurgents] won't fight, and yet we tell our soldiers you can't go out unless you're in an armored humvee. But you Iraqis, pile in the back of that pickup truck, you'll be just fine. We disparage their courage, and yet they come to work every day knowing that their family could be massacred. The Iraqis that worked for me wore civilian clothes in and kept where they lived a secret. They had to come through a kill zone -- a known kill zone which was bombed repeatedly -- and they came to work. (DPC, 2006, p. 17)

Here Hammes utilized reasoning from sign because he argued that the Iraqis showed all of the symptoms of someone who had the condition of courage. He argued that despite knowing that they could be killed for their efforts, they were still fighting. This was important because it framed the Iraqi plight as noble and emphasized what they were risking by even trying to become part of the new military. The language choice of the word *massacre* emphasized the brutality of the way that their families could be killed. It implicitly claimed that it would not be a swift death, but an agonizing one. In addition, the choice of the word *courage* denoted the underlining opposite of cowardice asserted in Senator Durbin's question. Hammes brought everything back to security when he argued,

I don't think there's a lack of courage on the part of the Iraqis. There's very confused signals from the United States, and for all of our rhetoric about we will support them, they watch what we

do. And what we are doing is not supporting them. What we are doing is saying you're second class, and we're just looking for a way out of here. I'm, frankly, not surprised that they haven't stood up more than they have. (DPC, 2006, p. 17)

Hammes used arguing from signs of poor leadership from the perspective of the Iraqis. He used language about the United States sending confusing signals that do not match up with their rhetoric. He argued that our inconsistency was a sign that our government was not honest in their promises of protection. He argued that they still fought with honor and bravery despite these warning signs of our lack of support. With this argument, Hammes linked the idea of support and security to another essential part of the war effort--the creation of a strong Iraqi Security Force. Civilians were risking their lives daily and the lack of support showed from the top down. Just like Hammes initially framed the idea of security, he argued that when people see a stable, high-functioning government they will want to be a part of it. As long as the United States failed to secure Iraq, no such government could exist. Creating security on the ground would allow citizens to join the armed forces without fear of having their families massacred and it would instill a sense of pride rather than fear to be a part of the new army. Hammes argued that such a strategy could work, but we needed to help the people who were brave enough to try to make it work. Speaking on this endnote, Hammes explained that the timeframe to achieve this sort of long lasting victory is indefinite because, "once you enter an area to secure it, you can

never leave, because those people who have the courage to come forward and help you -- if you leave, they die" (DPC, 2006, p. 15). Essentially Hammes argued that since we started this war and began the process of creating a new army, we had to stay for as long as it took to let them gain the strength to stand on their own. The language choice of the word help showed that the Iraqis were not just participating in the war effort, but they were helping us, sharing our vision of what Iraq could be, and working with us toward that goal. This emphasized the same idea that Hammes had used before, that if we could leave these courageous people who helped us to die then it would be, yet another, moral failure of leadership. By utilizing this classification of policy actions as moral failures, Hammes argued moral issues through the lens of policy choices. The choices that the administration and Rumsfeld made, in Hammes' view, were moral failures and the consequences of such choices were casting them as incompetent leaders and justified being removed from their positions.

### Accountability and Training

When discussing accountability, retired Colonel Hammes argued that the government has not put us in a position to win the war because it failed to mobilize its resources and coordinate its efforts to facilitate victory. Ultimately, he argued that this mismanagement failed our troops and diminished their chances for securing Iraq, but he began by framing the problem as a lack of mobilization and effort. Hammes claimed, "despite its rhetoric, our leadership

has failed to put either our personnel or our procurement policies on a wartime footing" (DPC, 2006, p. 11). He argued with this claim as a sign of failed leadership. Hammes offered data that explained our personnel shortcomings,

The administration has stated repeatedly and correctly that only the Iraqis can win this war. Yet on the military side, there are too few advisers to provide the close contact the Iraqi army needs to achieve full capability. Advisory teams should be 50 to 60 men per battalion, instead of the current 10, with proportionate increases at every level above that. (DPC, 2006, p. 11)

In this case, the data explained what advisory teams had been staffed at in the past and how the current supply was five to six times smaller. Here Hammes shifted away from focusing on ethical and moral dilemmas to a more logical one, focusing on the most logical of proofs--numbers. Hammes utilized a simple ratio that implied we were beneath necessary capacity by a multiple of 5 to 6. No matter the total number of troop commitment, the ratio makes the argument easy to understand and gave any listener an accessible piece of information regardless of their technical understanding of what the Army typically requires for battalions.

In addition to not putting the U.S. on a wartime footing, Hammes argued that our soldiers are not being trained properly and their directives were often at cross purposes. "To date, U.S., civil, military and contractor efforts are poorly coordinated and at times work at cross purposes" (DPC, 2006, p. 11). He expanded his claim by saying that not only was the war effort

poorly coordinated but, "the current U.S. government personnel systems are actively hostile to successful counterinsurgency efforts" (DPC, 2006, p. 11). Hammes again used reasoning from this claim as a sign of incompetent leadership. This claim was justified by data stating,

Insurgencies are long struggles by nature. Yet our military and civilian personnel policies still emphasize short tours with rapid rotation of key personnel. Today a large number of our forces spend only three to seven months in country. And of course, we still have no system to provide the language and cultural training essential to working effectively with the Iraqis. (DPC, 2006, p. 11)

This data justified the claim by explaining what actions were being taken that made our personnel unable to deal with insurgency. To wrap up the argument and tie it back into what this means for the overall war effort, Hammes argued, "the lack of unity on our part makes it even more difficult to unify the fractious efforts of the new Iraqi government" (DPC, 2006, p. 11). With this argument Hammes attempted to link the orders coming from the top down to the problems on the ground. This argument put the mindset of the leadership into question because it asserted that the way they are approaching counterinsurgency was wrong. By utilizing two specific forms of data: his technical expertise and personal experience, Hammes offered a comparison of what needed to happen in contrast with what was happening. This rhetorical device emphasized what was wrong with the current strategy by explaining how different choices would have optimized our chances for success.

Arguments from Hammes about mishandling the war effort focused blame on the administration for the problems in Iraq. He clarified his purpose by reiterating the flaws in the current strategy with the argument that the Clear-Hold-Build strategy could work if implemented properly,

We need legislation now that does for the entire U.S. government what Goldwater-Nichols did for the services. Such legislation must provide the career, monetary and disciplinary incentives that will allow our federal agencies to encourage and, if necessary, order the right personnel to serve overseas. Once unity of effort is established and personnel provided, we can then effectively focus resources on our clear, hold, build strategy. (DPC, 2006, p. 11)

This argument all leads to accountability because Hammes clearly stated that if the government put forward the correct legislation and properly staffed the war effort, then the strategy could succeed. Rhetorically, this implicitly called into question the ability of the DOD and the administration to police itself. By calling for third party action in the form of legislation, Hammes argued that only by an empowered third party could change actually occur. Ultimately, he argued that Congress needed to use its oversight capacity more and force action through legislation, which subtly argued that the administration had too much unchecked power. The imbalance of power led to the abuse of power and the ability to ignore dissenting opinions. Hammes argued that a legislative body that had the ability to force change could only circumvent such power.

After establishing that the strategy could work, Hammes argued directly about accountability by claiming that, "the first problem is the leadership change we need. Then we have to create a unity of effort across all our agencies and contractors, really get the U.S. government involved in the war" (DPC, 2006, p. 27). The data Hammes offered to support this claim was a projection of actions we would need to take that we were not doing,

We have to put the U.S. government on a wartime footing. We can no longer pretend that this is something 1 percent of the people are doing somewhere in a distant country and we're not particularly interested. And finally, we have really got to make the Iraqi government as a whole -- security forces first, but the government as a whole -- the main effort. This is going to be much more expensive than it would have been if we'd done it right three years ago. We need 60,000 more soldiers. It's going to be very difficult to recruit them. We're probably going to have to spend a lot of money to do that. (DPC, 2006, p. 27)

The implication of this argument was that the administration and current leadership would not take these actions which, Hammes argued, were essential for success. The change in leadership was justified if one were to accept that these changes, which were incommensurate with the worldview of the administration, were, indeed, necessary. Worldviews, by their nature, are resistant to change and that helps to explain why Rumsfeld and the Administration were not altering their strategy despite attempts at dissent.

They could not be convinced even by valid evidence because to acknowledge alternatives as viable would, inversely, acknowledge the flaw in their intellectual grounding of the war effort. If we needed more troops and we had been wrong from the start, then the very premise of Rumsfeld's argument that his plan was justified would be invalidated. For the Administration and Rumsfeld, they were entrenched out of necessity to maintain that the troop levels were not the problem. This made them put blame onto other, uncontrollable, external factors because acknowledging the alternative would force them to accept blame for the outcome.

Hammes continued with an emotional statement, "if we fail to do that, we will fail in Iraq, and I am convinced that our children will continue to pay for that mistake" (DPC, 2006, p. 27). With these emotional statements Hammes was emphasizing the ongoing nature of the problem and that it is not one that can be swept under the rug. He argued often that we would need to stay in Iraq indefinitely or for as long as it took for the Iraqis to stand on their own and by stating that this problem would be one that could be generational--he was emphasizing the necessity of immediate action.

Hammes concluded his arguments about accountability very differently than the other two retired officers by arguing that it is not only the administration and DOD represented in his view of failing leadership, but Congress as well. In response to a statement that the administration and others had seized power and made many bad decisions, he claimed, "how did this small group of people seize power before the war? They didn't seize

power. Power was conceded to them" (DPC, 2006, p. 25). This argument put blame on the Democrats in Congress who allowed the group to take power. In order to justify this claim, Hammes offered empirical data about the war effort,

In October of 2002, when then a majority of Democrats decided not to hold the debate on the war until after the election, they conceded power. Looking at the TPFDD (Time Phased Force & Deployment Data), anyone who had been informed on the war knew that by January 20th, when the new Senate was seated, would be too late; we would be too far into the TPFDD, and we could not pull out without backing down dramatically. (DPC, 2006, p. 25)

This data offered in it the explanation that the unwillingness to change the war effort before the election, for fear of losing seats in Congress, allowed a flawed plan to move forward. This showed how it was not only the people who made the decisions who were at fault, but also those that did not utilize their right and obligation of oversight. Despite being critical of past lacks in oversight, Hammes argued that this hearing could be the start of solutions presented through discourse,

This is the first -- this is very encouraging to me, as someone who this is very close to, that Congress is starting to reassert its power. And I think we have to do that, use the power of Congress to bring those people forward. And I think they'll answer honestly. (DPC, 2006, p. 25)

This section of the argument claimed that the Congress was right for having hearings like this and that the people brought forward could help explain why things in Iraq were not going well. Hammes argued that only when people are informed and have the necessary information to be empowered could they ask the right questions and create dissent. This would allow Congress to better represent the interest of the American people because they were empowered by knowledge to ask the right questions. He made the case that until Congress used hearings like this one as forums for dissent the information required for good decision making was unlikely to occur. In addition, though the argument blamed Congress for failing in the past, it was praised for being willing, unlike the administration, to change its strategy. Rhetorically this argument advanced his claim that the administration had too much power and only Congressional legislation could curtail that power's abuse. He argued that they needed to open the forums of dissent to more participants and as those potential dissenters were given a chance, they would speak out against bad policy options. By choosing the language "use the power of Congress" and "they'll answer honestly" Hammes employed rhetorical devices that intended to empower Congress and argued that people would speak truthfully if given the proper forum. Dissent cannot exist without the ability to speak freely. Rumsfeld and the administration had robbed subordinates and those of unlike opinion of the ability to speak out and Hammes argued that Congress needed to give potential dissent its protection.

## Summary

Colonel Hammes's arguments can be grouped into three categories: how the lack of funds prevents success, how we are failing to secure Iraq, and strategic mismanagement from the United States government. He utilized arguments of classification, arguments from sign, as well as cause and effect reasoning to make his case against Rumsfeld and the Administration. His first hand experience in the war effort as well as his training helped him mold arguments to make his case.

## CHAPTER VII

### DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS CONCERNING THE OFFICERS' ARGUMENTATION STRATEGIES

#### Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings from the analysis of the retired officers' testimony. The discussion is organized around three main sections. First, the introductory comments are discussed in relation to the ways the Democratic Policy Committee signaled the purpose of the hearings—that they were held for the purpose of examining the effectiveness of the Administration's conduct of the war against Iraq. Second, the chapter discusses similarities in the argument strategies used by the officers. Third, the chapter discusses differences in the argument strategies presented by the officers.

#### Introductions Featuring Credentials

The retired officers were introduced by the DPC with their names and an emphasis on their professional histories and technical expertise. Their number of years of service to their country, rank, professional accolades, and personal connection to the Iraq War were offered as a rationale for entry into the discussion. These pieces of information about the retired officers portrayed them as experts on the topic. Their number of years served was a statistic that highlighted that they were not speaking about the issue without the connection with it that comes from years spent in the field. Their

professional accolades acted as facts that grounded them as exemplars within their chosen profession because it emphasized their achievements beyond their peers. Their personal connections with the Iraq War were stories that connected these officers not just with having the generic experience of their years of service, but the case-specific experience with this war effort, its planning, and implementation. Stylistically, the language use was very formal and very precise to categorize the retired officers as specialized members of a community of service men and women who could adequately evaluate the Administration's job performance. As theorized by Goodnight, technical expertise had become a requirement for evaluating a public policy issue. Rumsfeld had effectively silenced dissent from his subordinates by fear and intimidation, but the DPC offered a forum for technically trained specialists to analyze the public policy decisions that he made before, during, and after the Iraq War.

### Similarities

Two major findings were noted in relation to similarities in the use of arguments by the retired officers. All three relied on argument from sign and argument from cause. Argument from sign related to leadership while argument from cause function to support claims criticizing the administration's leadership. Each form of argument is discussed in the following sections.

## Arguments from Sign

Each of the retired generals utilized the argumentative strategy of arguing from sign. While each officer utilized different pieces of evidence to validate their claims, each was arguing that the existence of a problem illuminated the problem's root cause. Three instances of the officers arguing from sign are: General Batiste arguing that our strategic choices in creating Abu Ghraib prison was a sign of us ignoring the Geneva Convention, General Eaton arguing that our strategic shortcomings were a sign that Donald Rumsfeld was a poor leader, and Colonel Hammes arguing that our personnel shortcomings were a sign of poor leadership from the Administration and Rumsfeld.

Major General John Batiste claimed that we were less safe after Donald Rumsfeld had relaxed the rules in the DOD about what constituted torture and prisoner abuse. He did this through relying on personal knowledge as an expert and personal experience in meeting with Donald Rumsfeld. He explained that as the rules were relaxed from the top down, soldiers would receive orders that seemed antithetical to the spirit of the Geneva Conventions. He claimed that the worst thing for a counter insurgency was for the insurgents to be shown that the locals are being treated unfairly. He then explained that in the creation of Abu Ghraib prison innocent Iraqis were arrested and detained without any formal charges. Batiste claimed that 99 percent of the people in Abu Ghraib were innocent. This argument gained greater rational appeal as he presented statistics to highlight the amount of

innocent people who were imprisoned. It also had psychological appeal to members of Congress, who typically adhere to American ideologies that view imprisonment without trial and quarantining innocent people as inherently wrong. Such behavior, carried out in our name, was an attempt to make them recognize the severity of the situation.

Batiste then explained that the watered down rules about prisoner abuse led those innocent people to be treated in ways that turned them against the United States forever. Donald Rumsfeld changed the rules when he was Secretary of Defense. That choice created the situation in Abu Ghraib and, in Batiste's estimation, made the U.S. less safe against terrorism and made the insurgency in Iraq stronger. This analogy linking our actions in the war effort in Abu Ghraib to the greater issue of terrorism added psychological appeal because it illustrated the linkage between our policy actions and the greater problem. By selecting this type of reasoning, Batiste was relying on Congress to focus on the bigger issue of terrorism and see actions taken on the ground that were antithetical to keeping the U.S. safe from terrorism as a misstep from the current leadership. Batiste argued that the strategic blundering that allowed those rules to be changed was a sign of incompetence from Rumsfeld. In addition to linking terrorism and our actions in Abu Ghraib, this argument called into question the values of the Administration. When Rumsfeld altered the rules on torture in order to try to gain information and extract an advantage over his opponents in Iraq, he showcased a value system that put winning and gaining an advantage over

protecting our nation and keeping Americans safe. While that likely wasn't his primary objective, according to Batiste, Rumsfeld's actions made us less safe and those actions were taken with some set of priorities in mind that did not put our potential security at the forefront. This misalignment of priorities is illustrated within the way that Batiste presented the argument and it has implicit psychological appeal by calling the values of Rumsfeld as a leader into question.

A leader is expected to understand the potential outcomes of their choices and make decisions that will protect those who they represent. By making America less safe and making the job harder for the troops in Iraq, Rumsfeld had accomplished the opposite of that expectation. Here Batiste is once again creating greater psychological appeal to his Congressional audience by arguing that actions from the leadership were making the troops less safe. No one in Congress would ever want to support policy decisions that put our troops in harm's way because it is both irresponsible and political suicide. Here is an example of where the Administration, as illustrated by Ivie (2007), utilized savage imagery to justify the cost of the war effort. The effort was justified against the backdrop of the terrorist attacks of 9/11. The linkage between troop levels and troop support used the same logical appeal of the savage imagery to justify protecting the troops once they were already in harm's way.

Batiste appealed to the strong urge to support the troops by linking the actions taken by the Administration and Rumsfeld to the lowered levels of safety encountered by our troops in Iraq. This argument claimed Rumsfeld

was incompetent to justify leadership change. Batiste never said that Rumsfeld should lose his job because he had botched the job so badly, but this was a major part of Batiste's claim that the current leadership was unfit to handle the mission in Iraq. By leaving the claim of incompetence implicit, Batiste utilized the sign of that incompetence as the focus of his argument instead of being more direct with his assertion.

Major General Eaton argued that the inability to understand strategic planning as it relates to military objectives was a sign of Donald Rumsfeld's inability to lead. Eaton argued that Rumsfeld did not understand the difference between a strategy and an objective. He supported his claim with both a definition and personal experience. Stylistically, Eaton was using formal technical terms to delineate the difference between two ideas. Doing so emphasized his mastery of the material and implicitly portrayed himself as more educated about the subject matter than the Administration and Rumsfeld, whom he critiqued for misusing terms. While this may not seem like more than a semantic difference, Eaton explained that in terms of military strategy it shows a misunderstanding of the basic terminology of war. When one selects a leader for a job, the simplest expectation is that the potential leader understands how the job works and how to carry out his or her basic functions. By arguing that this misunderstanding was a symptom of incompetence, Eaton showed how the inability to differentiate objective from strategy was a sign of a much greater inability to lead. This argument appealed to Congress because it explained situations that they had not had

firsthand experience with during the planning phase of the war. Eaton explained how Rumsfeld had altered the makeup of the Army and prepared for a different sort of combat than the one we were likely to face. By explaining the issues within the format of a personal narrative, Eaton relied on members of Congress to help bring additional meaning to the story. While they all knew that the Army had been altered from an overwhelming ground-based group to a quick-strike tactical unit, they had not realized that such alteration occurred in direct conflict with the sort of problems that we were going to face in Iraq. Eaton, like Batiste, was making the case that Rumsfeld and the current leadership was unable to succeed in the mission.

Colonel Thomas Hammes claimed that the personnel shortages in Iraq were a sign of incompetence from the leadership. Hammes utilized statistics and reports to validate his claim that there was a shortage of troops, then explained that the shortage was a sign of failed leadership. One expects those in power to understand projections and create plans that facilitate success. Hammes argued that the plans were based not on their projected potential for success, but instead on public perception and cheapness. This, like Batiste had done earlier, called the priorities and values of the Administration and Rumsfeld into question. Hammes claimed that they were more focused on how things looked than how the actions they would take might alter the war effort as a whole. Taking that line of reason to its logical conclusion, he claimed that they were more worried about their political interests and careers than about making sound decisions in order to try to win

the war in Iraq. This had psychological appeal to Congress because it portrayed the Administration and Rumsfeld as "bad politicians" who were focused on personal image and greed rather than on success and selflessness. This was an appealing argument to this audience because it explained a problem in a way that they could relate to and easily understand. The analogy between the Administration and Rumsfeld's actions to greed and self-interest is the image that members of Congress are constantly trying to avoid. That mental template made the argument much stronger because it was a portrayal that had personal relevance and meaning to the members of Congress. By worrying more about how the decisions would look and how much potential choices would cost, Rumsfeld and the Administration had showed a sign of incompetence to succeed in the mission in Iraq. By misappropriating troop totals to the point of shortchanging the mission's success, Hammes argued that Rumsfeld and the Administration had failed to properly craft a strategy for success.

Each of the retired officers used arguments by sign to show symptoms of incompetence from the leadership. They found strategic failures that could be traced back to decisions that the leadership did or did not make and they emphasized those failures as a symptom of a greater problem. This strategy focused the discussion on the aptitude and reliability of the current leadership. This strategy was employed to highlight the implicit claim that the current leadership's incompetence required a change in leadership to succeed.

## Arguments from Cause

Each of the retired officers utilized the strategy of arguing from cause. Batiste argued that Rumsfeld and the Administration were to blame for the troop shortage in Iraq, Eaton argued that they were to blame for the lack of support for the ISF, and Hammes argued that they were to blame for the lack of equipment. To validate each of these claims, the retired officers used arguments from cause.

Major General Batiste claimed that Rumsfeld and the Administration were to blame for the troops shortage in Iraq. He supported this claim with facts and personal experience. The method that he used to present his facts was a system of deductive reasoning. First, he established that there was a problem, next that the problem was caused by policy decisions, finally that those decisions were made by the Administration and Rumsfeld.

In order to establish blame he argued that their decisions from leadership positions created the shortage that became a catalyst for our hardships in the war effort. Batiste's argument began by establishing that there was a problem. He explained that commanders were dealing with troop shortages throughout Iraq and that the lack of support troops was allowing the insurgency to reclaim areas that were previously peaceful. He explained that as troops were shifted from one area to another to compensate for the shortages that it left the area they were shifted from as a viable target for insurgents. Batiste said that there were not enough troops there to succeed in their goal. He claimed that this was one of the reasons that we were not able to stabilize Iraq during the occupation and why the "clear and hold" phases of

the mission were an abysmal disaster. Batiste utilized personal stories and experiences as facts to explain the situation to his audience. By emphasizing that he had been on the ground in Iraq, talked to the commanders who were in control, and spoke on their behalf because they could not do so he was creating tremendous psychological appeal. It emphasized his credibility as an expert and allowed him to explain the topic as a solitary voice of opposition against that of the Administration. This presentation of material showed that one of Batiste's primary motivations was to support his claims with himself as an authority on the topic and to do that he relied on stories about interactions between the important actors on the ground in Iraq.

After establishing the problem, he claimed that the Administration and Rumsfeld had made choices that caused the shortages to occur. He used two different kinds of evidence to validate his claim: statistics and facts. The statistics that he used were that we began the mission at a shortage of one third of what was needed for success. The fact that he used to support this claim was that he had personally asked for more troops leading up to the deployment of the 1st infantry division and was denied. These two pieces of evidence validate his claim that it was a failure on the part of the leadership because the choice as to how many troops to send and which requests to fulfill was their responsibility. From explaining the problem, to establishing the cause of the problem, to offering evidence to justify blame for the problem: Batiste argued that there was a casual chain of events that led to troops shortages based on the decisions of the Administration and Donald Rumsfeld.

This argument was structured in a way to create Batiste as the voice of the troops. This organization structure created a perspective in which there was a fact, that we were only supplying one third of the troops needed, that acted as a threshold. That meant that there was a tangible standard that would have been enough people to accomplish our objectives and win, but we just weren't fulfilling that need. Next, it established that requests were made for more troops. Batiste's firsthand experience with requesting more help and being denied was a good piece of evidence to support this claim because it wasn't based on assumption, but a recollection of an actual occurrence. Putting these two ideas together to create a perspective through organization, Batiste claimed that the Administration knowingly did not give the war effort enough troops because they had projections and only staffed it one third, and they were inflexible to requests that would rectify the incongruity. This portrayed the Administration and Rumsfeld as poor leaders from the outset, but then gained greater psychological appeal by saying that they were unwilling to change when requests came up the chain of command. Leaders make decisions that do not go as planned all the time, but the unwillingness to alter one's plans when they hear reports of that strategic misstep speaks to an inability to succeed. This was especially appealing as an argumentative strategy because it highlighted a cognitive rubric that was familiar to the audience: one of modification and alteration. As a bill goes to committee and is altered to meet the needs of many, those alterations are changes to a potential plan that are necessary to get to the final goal of

passing the bill. Batiste explained the situation as a group of people who made a mistake and were unwilling to listen to other viewpoints about how to fix it and, in doing so, he created an intuitively appealing argument to an audience who must compromise daily to achieve their goals.

What is important about this argument was that it placed accountability for the problems in Iraq on the shoulders of those making the decisions. It diverted responsibility from the short-handed troops on the ground in Iraq and the commanders trying to manage those troops. When establishing the problem as the inability to create and maintain stability, Batiste had opened up to critique the soldiers carrying out the job. Someone in a leadership position could easily argue that they had a good strategy--it was just implemented poorly on the ground. That argument would absolve the leadership of responsibility for the problem. By arguing that the troop shortage was what facilitated the problems, Batiste localized the blame for the strategic failure on the people in power and not the people carrying out the plan. This strategy was consistent with his portrayal of himself as the voice of the troops. It is important to note that as a retired officer, Batiste had allegiance to his fellow soldiers and wanted to help exonerate them from any guilt with the failing strategy. By utilizing stories about interactions with commanders on the ground in Iraq, Batiste had solidified his position as one that was sympathetic to the troops and critical of the Administration. This had psychological appeal to his audience because the entire hearing of the DPC was about critically evaluating the war effort and this style of argument appealed directly to that goal.

Major General Eaton claimed that the failure to create and maintain a high-functioning ISF was the fault of the Administration and Donald Rumsfeld. Eaton utilized deductive reasoning as an organizational pattern by first establishing that there was a problem, isolating the cause of the problem, and attributing blame for that problem with the Administration and Rumsfeld. In order to validate his claims, Eaton relied on two sources of evidence: facts and stories.

In order to establish that there was a problem, Eaton utilized personal stories to showcase the poor equipment that the ISF was using. He explained that while U.S. soldiers were some of the best armed in the world, we allowed the force that we intended to leave in control once we left with laughable firepower and little ammunition. Stylistically, the language that he used was very informal, but quite precise. He described the forces informally as "brave" and "proud", but he also remained authoritative by referring to their weapons as "PK-47s". This allowed Eaton the opportunity to try to relate to the members of Congress on a personal level with a plain folks approach within the story, but still remaining an informed observer about the information that he presented.

What our poor equipment offerings showed Iraqis, Eaton argued, was that we were not serious about helping them and it was an affront to those who volunteered for the ISF that we gave so little. He argued that the poor equipment and little staffing caused the ISF to be slow to train and always behind schedule. He claimed that it was our fault for not offering enough staff

to train them or equipment to arm them. He offered two types of evidence to validate this claim: a report and personal opinion. The report was of the specific occurrences in Iraq offered by General McCaffrey that was, at the time, a report card for our progress in Iraq. The report stated that the ISF lacked fundamental training and equipment. Strategically, offering the report as a piece of evidence relied on the expertise of the author as support. It also helped to offer a second expert opinion to support his opinion that the problem was ongoing. The personal opinion offered was that the lack of prioritization from the top crippled the development of the ISF. Eaton offered his personal experience to say that he was given fewer troops to train the ISF and was constantly put in a zero sum game with other commanders on the ground. These two pieces of evidence were offered to validate the claim that it was a failure of leadership that retarded the growth of the ISF. The leadership from the Administration and, specifically, Donald Rumsfeld could have offered more troops to train the ISF at any time. In addition, the claim that the ISF was given lower priority put blame on the shoulders of the leadership because they are the ones who attribute priorities in fulfilling requests on staffing and financing.

This argument placed the blame on the Administration and Rumsfeld rather than on the Iraqis who manned the ISF. One way of imagining the problem in defense of the Administration was to say that it was neither the leadership nor the U.S. forces that were to blame for the ISF's failure, but the Iraqis who were lazy, weak, or incompetent. By arguing that the leadership

was the cause of the failure due to decisions that they made about staffing and training, Eaton argued that the Iraqis were not to blame. He emphasized that our own reports showed that we were not offering them the support that they required. In doing so, it implicitly highlighted that our leadership was not meeting the goals and benchmarks that they set for themselves. Eaton argued that the policies and prioritization that they put into place left the ISF in terrible shape. Strategically, by labeling the military in terrible shape, Eaton was trying to change the connotation of actions that allowed the military to develop in that way. He was trying to emphasize what the Administration and Rumsfeld had done through policy to weaken our military as a whole. Making their decisions and their prioritization the cause of the problem stressed that the Administration and Rumsfeld were accountable for the problems related to Iraqi security.

In addition, this argument advanced a claim that the leadership was inept because their decision making prioritized objectives in a way that was antithetical to the mission's success. By arguing that we were worse off because of the decisions that Rumsfeld and the Administration were making in regard to prioritization, he emphasized the ineptitude in planning the war against Iraq. Organizationally, the structure of Eaton's argument had established a problem, claimed causes for the problem, and joined the leadership with those proposed problems and, in doing so, he evaluated the leadership's ability to fluidly alter their strategy. He looked to create a connotation of their actions by saying that because they didn't plan and they

didn't alter their plans when things started going badly that they can't plan. Eaton argued that planning a war and managing the post-war peace required problem-solving skills that the current leadership lacked. The causal relationship he established between their prioritization and the shortcomings of the ISF was a sign of their inability to manage the mission.

Coronel Hammes argued that the Administration and Rumsfeld were to blame for the lack of necessary equipment needed by our troops. To frame the problem, Hammes explained that as early as the summer of 2003 they knew that the M1117 armored security vehicle was available and better than the Humvees that we were supplying. Stylistically, Hammes utilized very precise and formal language to emphasize his expertise and assert credibility in his statements. In terms of content, this meant that the problem was one of inadequate equipment for troops in a war torn area.

The claim Hammes made was that the Administration had refused to allocate resources to fund the necessary equipment to win the war and arm our troops. To justify his claim, Hammes relied on two forms of evidence: exhibits and presumptions. Strategically, these two type of evidence relied on the perceived validity of the exhibits and the acceptability of the presumptions.

He offered the results of meetings and conversations with vehicle manufacturers as his exhibit that they could produce more of the required vehicles if they were asked or orders for such vehicles were placed. This style of evidence emphasized that Hammes had done due diligence in his critique

of the Administration. The story served to explain the situation in an accessible form and it also portrayed Hammes as a fair critic who had looked at potential options before arguing that enough was not being done. This type of evidence highlighted negligence on the part of the leadership because they were not even trying to acquire the best armored vehicles for our troops. The second type of evidence came in the form of presumptive proof offered as an analogy to WWII. Hammes argued that because the leaders of the past did not ask soldiers to fight with antiquated equipment, that our current leaders should never impart such a burden on our troops. Utilizing an analogy altered the perception of the situation to illustrate how it was similar to actions of the past. The presumption was that we supplied our troops with the best materials in the past and they won; now we are not doing so and the war effort is being considered a disaster. By using imprecise language that spoke generically about WWII, Hammes was allowing his audience to fill in the conceptual blanks and create a reality similar to his own. This argument played upon the nostalgia that people feel for the past and argued that we used to support our troops much better than we are now. That emphasis on past vs. present while using imprecise language represented an attempt on Hammes's part to reconfigure his audience's understanding of the current situation. It creates an enthymeme in which the listener is expected to fill in the conceptual gaps that Hammes leaves blank.

Hammes emphasized that the Administration was not living up to the code of conduct to which past Administrations had adhered. Leaders are

supposed to learn from the past and evolve to become better at their job, but here Hammes argued that the current Administration was ignoring the importance of past actions. By labeling the WWII leadership as supportive and our current leadership as unsupportive, Hammes was trying to create a contrast in their styles that could be extrapolated to their abilities. America's track record with war efforts hasn't been great since WWII and by comparing the current leadership as the opposite of that record, Hammes implicitly classified them as leaders incapable of achieving victory. Their negligence of due diligence in protecting the troops was a failure of leadership that was magnified by the fact that past Administrations had made better choices when put in similar situations.

All three of the retired officers utilized arguing from cause as a strategy during the DPC hearing. This strategy employed by each of the retired officers focused the blame for problems in Iraq on Rumsfeld and the Administration. It highlighted their choices as the source of many of the problems that our troops faced in Iraq. Arguing in this way allowed each of the officers to attribute accountability, which was the purpose of the DPC hearing.

### Differences

The analysis of the retired officers' testimony also yielded some differences in the choice of argument strategies. The officers differed in the way they discussed the capability of the leadership, the role of U.S. military personnel in the effort to prevail in Iraq, the morality of U.S. military

operations, and whether the strategy chosen by the Bush administration could ultimately succeed. Each theme is discussed in the following sections.

### Arguments on the Capability of the Leadership

Batiste and Eaton both argued that the strategy in Iraq was flawed and acted as a sign of the Administration and Rumsfeld's incompetence from their leadership positions. Hammes, on the other hand, argued that the strategy itself was not flawed, only that the way it was being carried out was problematic. First, Hammes presented his argument to say that the problem was the Administration because of their mindset. Second, that things could have been done differently. Finally, he deduced that the blame for the situation rested with Administration for poor implementation and not the strategy itself.

Hammes claimed that the strategy was not working because of a lack of funding and a lackadaisical mindset about the war effort. He validated this claim with two types of evidence: facts and statistical projections. In terms of rhetorical strategy, these two types of evidence were selected to try to rationalize his thesis and relied upon precision to advance the claim.

He first used facts by saying that the money to purchase necessary equipment was held hostage by the Administration. Using the language "held hostage" was a metaphor that emphasized the coercive relationship between the Administration and the commanding officers in Iraq. "Held hostage" meant that in order to "save" the money from the Administration they would have to

carry out their demands. It implicitly classified the Administration as criminals who would have to hold hostages to force compliance. This was presented as a fact because it was grounded in his personal experience in the war.

Hammes argued that the lack of funding was a major contributing factor to the failure of the strategy in Iraq. Without funding we lacked equipment to armor our troops, to arm the ISF, and to train the ISF.

The second type of evidence that was used was statistical projections. He said that we could be producing more weaponry faster if we only put forth the same type of effort that we had in previous wars. Hammes projected that we could produce equipment 2-3 times faster if we increased the amount of hours per day and days per week that manufacturers were contracted by the government to work. Stylistically, the use of statistics in this instance gave the audience figures that grounded the topic in understandable language. Saying we could go faster would have been a less precise way than explaining that we can produce vehicles 2-3 times faster than the current rate. Also, the use of statistical evidence represents the highest level of logical proof because of its reliance on numbers to simplify the argument and make sense of the claim. This emphasized the lackadaisical attitude that was allowing us to send too few troops, armor them poorly, and fail to offer the ISF the necessary training equipment to learn to operate on their own. The decision to withhold funds and the attitude one takes while employing the strategy are not aspects of the strategy itself, they are aspects of that strategy's implementation.

Overall, Hammes argued that the Administration was failing the strategy, not that the strategy was failing the Administration. One potential retort from the Administration would be to deflect personal responsibility for the problems in Iraq by saying that the strategy itself was flawed. While Batiste and Eaton argued that going forward with a flawed strategy showed their general incompetence, Hammes was eliminating potential excuses for their faults. This style of argument put the blame directly onto the Administration and leadership by saying that their plan could work, if they knew how to implement it properly. This is more damaging to their credibility as leaders because if accurate it argues two potential outcomes: first, they don't know how to implement a potentially winning strategy, or, second, their leadership is the difference between a good strategy and a bad strategy. If the first idea is true, then they are failures at their task because they have no idea what to do while in charge and need to be removed from command. If the second idea is true, then they are the catalyst for failure and, even more so, need to be removed from command. Either way acts as an argument against the current leadership and was a style that Hammes utilized that the others did not.

#### Argument by Division

Batiste utilized an argumentative strategy that the others did not when he utilized techniques of division. Batiste framed the problem of accountability as one that could be understood as a choice between blaming the leadership

for crafting the strategy or blaming Rumsfeld's subordinates and the troops carrying out the strategy. This strategy utilized *a fortiori* to increase its logical force. It is built upon the acceptance first that there was a problem, then that the problem could be traced back to correctable choices by the Administration and Rumsfeld.

Batiste claimed that the troops were doing the best that they could with the flawed strategy that they were given. He blamed the leadership who crafted the strategy because they did not assign enough troops for the strategy to even have a chance to succeed. Batiste used two forms of evidence to justify his claim: reports of specific encounters and opinion. The report on a specific encounter was his personal narrative about asking for more troops to be sent only to have his request denied. Batiste could not focus his argument on one specific member of the leadership due to the military's chain of command not allowing him to know when or by whom the request was denied, but someone in a leadership position had denied him the troops he said he needed to complete the mission. This type of evidence attempted to justify that it was the leadership's shortcomings, not the troops, that had let the mission fail. It was a strong argument; strategically it allowed the audience to make meaning of the events based on the stories of his experience. Although he could not pinpoint who made the choice to deny his request, he recounted the denial and that allowed the audience to imagine a member of the Administration or chain of command denying the request.

The second form of evidence offered was personal opinion when Batiste claimed that Rumsfeld browbeat subordinates and surrounded himself with like-minded people. This was important from a strategic sense because it used informal, precise language that portrayed Rumsfeld as a bully. Most people have dealt with a cruel or overbearing boss and Batiste crafted this appeal around that idea. It was a strong argument because it allowed his audience to imagine how they would feel when put in the role of the browbeat subordinate rather than in the position of power. It emphasizes power incongruity and the mistreating of subordinates while creating a sense of sympathy for those being abused. Thus, Rumsfeld single-handedly short-staffed the war effort based on botched projections and his personal desire to streamline the Army. By portraying Rumsfeld as a cruel overlord and his subordinates as weak and powerless to refute him, Batiste attributed blame directly rather than allowing it to be spread among many.

This was a technique of division because as the lines of argument eliminated the commanding officers and Rumsfeld's subordinates as sources of potential accountability; then the only alternative in Batiste's binary option was to blame Rumsfeld, who crafted the strategy. The purpose of this type of argument is to leave implicit the comparison and simply highlight the flaws in one side of the choice. Batiste was very effective at arguing against the Administration's actions and, in doing so, he deflected potential accountability away from the troops and Rumsfeld's subordinates. This strategy is also effective at highlighting the troops struggle to implement a strategy

shorthanded. He used language that championed their effort and portrayed them as stalwart even when understaffed, which allowed his audience to imagine the Army in the traditional proud, brave, and strong cognitive template that they heard in the past. By emphasizing the refusal to send help, Batiste argued that the troops were trying their best and not being offered help from the people who crafted the strategy in the first place.

### Arguments of Classification

One of the strategies utilized by Hammes that was not used by Batiste and Eaton was argument by classification. He relied on classifying policy decisions as moral or immoral acts. Hammes utilized figurative language in order to create the image in his audience's mind that the morality of the policy maker was related to the actions taken. By doing so, he attributed not only blame to the Administration but, in addition, made the decision making appear symptomatic of greater incompetence. Saying that someone made a bad decision is excusable; saying that they have made immoral decisions is a claim that they lack the moral fabric to make good decisions in the future. It called their character into question on the basis of their behavior.

Hammes utilized this strategy by presenting two types of evidence: exhibit and personal opinion. He used the existence of better armor in contrast to an unwillingness to purchase that armor as an exhibit of decision making. This was an example of an exhibit because Hammes relied on explaining what existed and then explaining what we had, then drawing

attention to the difference in the two. This comparison revealed how the current Administration had misplaced priorities leading to his moral evaluation. The strategic function of this type of evidence was to classify the style of decision making as immoral. It relied on the power of analogy to liken the decisions of the Administration to the common understanding of immorality. Defining the action in this way allowed Hammes to operate from a position of strength where he was a moral authority standing in judgment of the choices made by the Administration and Rumsfeld. This position of authority made him look more credible and attempted to make the Administration look less credible.

The second type of evidence that Hammes used was personal opinion; he made the moral attribution that such decision making was immoral. He relied on an argument that relayed information from the past about what Administrations had done versus what the current Administration was doing. The evaluation of the decision making as immoral implicitly claims a future inability to make moral decisions. This use of figurative language allowed the audience to attribute whatever negative connotation they might have felt with immorality to the policy making decision. A commonplace failure can be a mistake, bad planning, or poor implementation of a strategy, but a moral failure is avoidable based on making high character choices. Classifying something as a moral failure implies a higher level of guilt attribution because the claim is that the action says something about the makeup of the actor.

## Could the Strategy Secure Success?

The retired officers did not agree on whether the strategy pursued in Iraq could secure success in the overall mission. Batiste argued that the strategy itself was flawed and that there was no way that the plan Rumsfeld had crafted would work. Eaton argued that there was no strategy, only a set of objectives, so it could not work because it did not exist. Hammes argued that the strategy could work if it had been implemented properly, but Rumsfeld and the Administration failed to enact the plan.

Batiste claimed that the plan Rumsfeld crafted was incapable of success. Batiste argued that the plan could not meet the objectives needed to secure and rebuild Iraq post-war. He used two forms of evidence to validate his claim: personal reports about specific states of affairs and reports as exhibits. He presented his argument in a deductive reasoning pattern in which he stated the required objectives, then made the case that the strategy could not meet those objectives, then that such a failure doomed the success of the mission.

The first type of evidence that Batiste offered to validate his claim was personal reports about specific states of affairs, which he offered in regard to a meeting between Donald Rumsfeld, General Franks, General Batiste, and the U.S. Central Command Staff. He explained that Rumsfeld, who was unhappy with the troop totals requested in the original plan, cut the meeting short. By using a personal story, Batiste was creating a strong argument by building identification with the subject matter he was explaining and upon

which he was acting as an expert. This helped reaffirm his credibility and allowed the audience to help create meaning for the actions within the story with him. Batiste explained that the process systematically eliminated requirements that most planners would have emphasized like post-war insurgency and post-war security. This type of evidence validated the claim because it showed examples of Rumsfeld personally altering the strategy from one that could succeed to one that could not succeed. This style of proof preemptively refuted the argument that there were no alternative plans on the table or that the Administration had not been warned of the necessary requirements to obtain success. It also attributed singular blame to a group that had ignored experts and alternative opinions. It portrayed the Administration as unwilling to accept alternative viewpoints and the sole actors in crafting the war strategy.

The second type of evidence that Batiste offered to validate his claim were reports from Central Command offered as exhibits. Batiste explained how Central Command had twelve years worth of pre-war planning that highlighted potential troop tasks in a war situation. By using this type of evidence as proof, Batiste is relying on the strength of the authority of Central Command on the topic of war planning. Also, this piece of evidence highlights the number of years that such planning had occurred. The concrete and precise language of the report bolstered the logical strength of the argument. He then argued that Rumsfeld ignored those reports, upon which other Secretaries of Defense Cheney, Perry, and Cohen had relied. By highlighting

alternatives to the Rumsfeld who had done the same job, Batiste created a comparison that made Rumsfeld's actions seem incompatible with his duties. It, again, narrows the scope of blame and the attribution of guilt to a group and a man who ignored pertinent battle plans and did not adhere to policies that long preceded him at his job. This was an exhibit of Rumsfeld making policy decisions differently than his predecessors and being personally responsible for crafting a strategy incapable of success.

Overall, Batiste's strategy highlighted the personal accountability that Rumsfeld had in crafting the war strategy. He also highlighted that the strategy ignored key factors for a successful post-war effort. Batiste's choices in emphasizing these two types of evidence to validate his claim were effective because they appealed to the desire to attribute accountability requested by the DPC. Organizationally, Batiste deduced greater responsibility by starting with claims that alternatives were available, others in Rumsfeld's position would have adopted the alternatives, and that meant Rumsfeld had unique responsibility for the problems of the strategy he created.

Eaton argued that there was no strategy, only a set of objectives. He did this to emphasize Rumsfeld's incompetence to set and follow through with strategic plans. In order to validate his claim he offered two types of evidence: definitions and facts. This argument shows the effectiveness of setting definitions within a claim because Eaton sets the terms for the discussion through definition.

The first type of evidence that Eaton used concerned definitions of the words *strategy* and *objective*. He explained how what Rumsfeld was calling a strategy actually amounted to an objective. It emphasized that the plan only stated what we wanted to happen, not how to make it happen. This validated his claim because if his definitional argument is correct, then there was no strategy being pursued at all, just a list of unattainable objectives. By doing this, Eaton was able to generate claims about the incompetence of the Administration and Rumsfeld because of their inaccessibility of terms. This portrayed them as poorly equipped for their positions and robbed them of credibility. While presenting his testimony as an expert, this was an attempt to portray himself as a master of the requisite terminology and those that he was refuting as lacking the basic linguistic tools to even understand strategic planning.

The second type of evidence that Eaton offered to validate his claim was that we had downsized the Army to a lighter, more lethal force. This type of fighting force, Eaton explained, was the opposite of the type of force that would be needed in planning for a post-war occupation and fighting against an insurgency. Rumsfeld's Army was built around being smaller and a quicker striking force, when, Eaton argued, we would need more boots on the ground and to deemphasize mobility to win the post-war effort. Consistent with his definitional argument, here Eaton attempted to rob Rumsfeld of credibility by explaining that he had created a force opposite of the one that he needed. He used precise and technical language to evaluate the problem; such language

use made him seem informed and able to critique this action. This validates the idea that the strategy could have worked in mutually opposing ways; during strategic planning one would, inevitably, adapt the fighting force to the objectives desired in a potential strategy rather than in a way that misaligned resources and objectives.

Overall, Eaton's arguments advanced the claim that Rumsfeld and the Administration had no real strategy at all. By presenting definitions and factual accounts of personal experience, he highlighted the lack of a strategy and, in doing so, denied that Rumsfeld's objectives could be accomplished. Whether the objectives could or could not be achieved with a strategy was left unsaid, instead focusing on the complete lack of a strategy as Eaton had defined it.

Hammes was different than the other two because unlike Eaton, he believed that the clear-hold-build plan was suitable to be called a strategy. Also, unlike Batiste, he believed that the clear-hold-build strategy could have been a success if implemented properly. The claim that he advanced was that the plan could have worked if Rumsfeld and the Administration had funded it, trained our troops to enact it, and provided the equipment that the strategy required. In order to validate his claim, Hammes offered three types of evidence: statistics, personal opinion, and facts. This claim was important because it established that the Administration and Rumsfeld had priorities that were antithetical to the objectives. Actions illuminate priorities and by portraying the Administration and Rumsfeld in this way, Hammes attempted to show that they were the problem and not the strategy itself.

The first type of evidence that Hammes provided was the statistics that explained in three years since updated vehicles had become available the United States had only purchased 1,000 of them. This use of statistical information created a scope for the problem that, considering the massive amount of resources that the government has their disposal, we had still only purchased 1,000 of the superior vehicles for our troops. This style of argument emphasized that the priorities of the Administration had to be elsewhere based on such a small attribution of funds for something that Hammes argued was so relevant to potential success. He then cited a report that explained the Army was operating with zero money to repair broken equipment until the beginning of the next fiscal year. The use of this statistic as a piece of evidence lowered the funding range to absolute zero. It wasn't a matter of there being too little money attributed, but that there was no money at all. These two statistics emphasized that the Administration and Rumsfeld were trying to pay for the war effort as cheaply as possible and that economic shortchange was causing us to fail, not the strategy itself. Without the proper equipment to ensure success, the troops were doing all that they could, but still failing to fulfill the objectives delineated in the strategy. This type of evidence was to show that the numbers did not support a claim that the strategy was receiving the type of financial support that would allow it to succeed.

The second type of evidence offered was Hammes's personal opinion that we weren't providing the essential security for Iraqis to create good governance. You can't fight a counter insurgency, in Hammes's view, without

providing security for the people who are forced to endure the constant violence. He argued that the clear-hold-build strategy centered around being able to provide security while Iraq was rebuilt and democracy took hold, but we failed to properly clear insurgents or hold areas as we stormed through. The sequential nature of the strategy meant that as we failed in the previous objectives of the strategy, the future objectives were also doomed to failure. This type of evidence stressed the Administration and Rumsfeld's personal accountability for mishandling the strategy as the reason for failure, not the strategy itself. Hammes took careful note to explain that the strategy could have worked if we had done each of the phases of the strategy properly. However, as the initial phases were mishandled, it made the next phases increasingly difficult to implement.

The third type of evidence that Hammes offered was the fact that we sent our military into a counterinsurgency effort without the prerequisite cultural and language training that such a battle would require. Part of the clear-hold-build strategy was to make partnerships with the Iraqi people in order to facilitate the shift away from Hussein's regime to democracy. Without the required language and cultural training, our troops were not even equipped to communicate with the Iraqis whose lives were often at risk due to violence. There are few, if any, opportunities to utilize meaningful non-verbal communication without understanding the native language with which you intend to communicate. Overall, the inability of the troops to speak to the Iraqis made it progressively more difficult for the clear-hold-build strategy to

be implemented. As lines of communication were eliminated, partnerships were not made, and as those required partnerships were not created the drive toward insurgent violence grew. The Iraqis were not told of the plan or what was going on in their country from day to day by the foreign soldiers who occupied their land and it became easy to blame America for the problems because they did not hear exactly how we were trying to help.

Communication and personal interaction could have made the creation of alliances with the Iraqi citizens possible, but Rumsfeld and the Administration chose to eliminate that training for expediency of deployment and cheapness. This type of evidence highlights the unwillingness of the Administration and Rumsfeld to take necessary actions to accomplishing their objectives. If one wants to build partnerships, then one must be able to communicate with the people with whom they are seeking partnership.

Overall, Hammes took care with all of his arguments to claim that the Clear-Hold-Build strategy could have worked if it had been implemented properly. He utilized facts, statistics, and personal opinion to try to validate his claim. He highlighted that the Administration had underfunded, understaffed, and under trained a strategy that could have worked if it had been supported properly from the top down.

### Summary

The retired officers utilized different strategic decisions in order to validate their cases. They also disagreed on some of the fundamental

assumptions about what had gone wrong. Their differing strategies highlighted different elements of the capability of the leadership, arguments of division, arguments of classification, and the potential for success of the strategy. They also highlighted different areas of the problem in Iraq with the types of evidence that they chose to present.

## CHAPTER VIII

### IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

#### Introduction

This study has illustrated the power of technically based arguments to appeal to an empowered third party in matter of policy decisions. In addition, it has illustrated the power of specifically grounded technical reasoning to empower potential dissent against a hostile Administration. This chapter presents the major findings of the study, considers the implications for Goodnight's theory, draws lessons for future advocates, identifies the limitations of the study, and offers questions for future research.

#### Findings for Research Question One

Research question one asked, what way(s) did the Democratic Policy Committee hearings function as a legitimate forum for technical experts to criticize the Bush Administration's war efforts? This study validated the idea that an empowered third party can create a forum for dissenting opinions. The administration was openly hostile to dissent from within and without, but Congress granted legitimacy to the arguments presented at this hearing. Batiste explained that he had been talking about the planning failures for months before the hearing, but until Congress created a forum for discussion, his op-ed pieces and blogs lacked structural support. The arguments presented by the retired officers would not have had the same rhetorical importance had they not been offered at the first formal Congressional

hearing to evaluate the planning and execution of the Iraq War. Though their personal expertise and technical credentials made them superior candidates to engage in such a discussion, their arguments would not have found a home without the Congressional hearing.

The forum created an area where dissent was safe from the oppression of Administrative voices. Without the protection of Congress, these arguments would not have had the formal traction that they were lent by the hearing. The Administration was able to have a forum for their arguments at any point because they have the power to call press conferences and hold meetings, but without the formal power to command such attention, the retired officers needed to find a forum that could support their dissent. The Congressional forum made it more difficult to dismiss their arguments as unimportant or not representative of the issue as a whole.

#### Findings for Research Question Two

Research question two asked, what were the argument strategies of the retired officers who testified in opposition to the war at the DPC hearing? The argumentative style of a rhetorician shows some of their motivation in their argumentative presentation. The selection of style can illustrate different intended appeals and the desired function of the arguments. Argument from sign was selected primarily for three reasons: the purpose of the DPC hearing, the need to link symptom with cause, and the adequacy of representativeness of the signs.

The most prevalent argumentative style utilized by the retired officers was argument from sign. Their purpose during the DPC hearing was to evaluate the actions taken by the Administration and come to conclusions about whether the planning process and early implementation of the plan was effective or ineffective. This purpose meant that they needed to look for signs of success or failure to validate claims of effective or ineffective planning. Arguments were put forward about the potential success of a strategy and compared against alternative strategies. The decision to go with one strategy or the other acted as a sign of effective leadership or ineffective leadership based on the strength of the selected strategy.

In order to validate their claims of argument from sign, they relied primarily on cause to effect reasoning, classification, and division. They used these types of proof to validate their claims because each of these types of proof let them categorize or explain the signs from which they were arguing as either effective or ineffective leadership. Using reasoning from cause to effect illustrated how one decision or set of decisions led to undesirable outcomes. Arguments that classified U.S. actions as immoral allowed the retired officers to label certain categories of choices as good and others as bad. The division showed that in a world of potential alternatives, the ones that were selected had to be chosen from a list of many.

The strategy of argument from sign was also important in its ability to associate the signs and symptoms of a condition, in this instance, failed leadership, to its cause. When given the task of evaluation, one must look for

observable phenomenon to critique and the retired officers found evidence from the war effort that constituted signs of effective or ineffective choices. Arguing in this way allowed them to control the discussion of what the implications of decisions were, how alternatives could have worked differently, and what constituted good and bad judgment from those in the Administration. While one can always point to many problems within a given war effort, this style of argument let them attribute blame through an evaluation of the choices that caused those problems.

The strategy relied on the strength of the signs that the retired officers selected. The adequacy of their selections of signs of effective or ineffective leadership would ground their argument in an understanding of the topic to be evaluated. If their arguments from signs were representative of the types of decisions that could properly evaluate the decision-making effectiveness of the Administration, then their arguments would have greater traction. By selecting signs that had to do with the action on the ground in Iraq and personal experience, they were relying on evidence that could not be argued not to exist; only that it was an inadequate sign to test the effectiveness of the leadership. This allowed them to control the discussion of the topic on the basis of their sign selection and made anyone who would try to refute them either offer an alternative explanation of the signs because they could not ignore their existence.

### Findings for Research Question Three

Research question number three asked, what is the role of technical expertise in arguing about public matters like the conduct of war in the public sphere? Three findings merit discussion in relation to research question number three. Additionally, this section offers a number of implications for Goodnight's theory of argumentation spheres.

#### Dissent is Informed by Technical Expertise

This study is an instance where dissent was informed by technical expertise. The ability of the retired officers to utilize their specialized knowledge was what generated validity for their critiques. Their arguments were grounded in personal experience and pertinent knowledge about the war effort. They also relied on their status as officers to illustrate flaws in the strategic planning of the war effort. Their ability to speak about the problem using precise, technical language helped them craft arguments that narrowed responsibility to people within the Administration. Individuals who lacked their specialized knowledge may have wanted to make the same types of arguments, but they lacked the credibility offered by years of service, personal experience, and precision mastery of technical language to do it.

The retired officers are an example of how technical expertise enriches rather than degrades the public sphere. The appeals that they made to Congress were enlightened by their expertise, but they made the complex ideas accessible by also employing analogy, narrative, and personal

examples. The threat of technical sphere dominance seems not to apply in this case because the retired officers used their knowledge to inform the Congress rather than exclude them from the discussion.

#### Technical Expertise Can Increase Dialogue on a Subject

The retired officers used their testimony in front of the DPC as an opportunity to let technical expertise expand the dialogue of dissent against the Iraq War. Their technical expertise was not a barrier to understanding, but, instead, acted to facilitate the understanding of their audience based on their logical appeal. They accomplished the goal of expanding the dialogue of dissent by their utilization of accessible technical language and by illustrating war-related issues for Congress in a narrower scope.

By using their specialized knowledge to explain their position within the DPC hearing, they presented an example of how technical expertise can expand the dialogue about a particular subject matter. Rather than stifle Congress's understanding of the topic, the retired officers' arguments acted as an attempt to expand the language used to describe the events leading up to the Iraq War. Their uniquely informed insights from experts on the ground allowed Congress a different interpretation than the one that they were receiving from the Administration. Members of Congress, as was evident by their statements in the question and answer period, had not been exposed to certain facts about troops shortages, the types of vehicles available, and the condition of equipment for troops training to go to war.

The fact that the retired officers were able to illustrate new problems for Congress was an example of their ability to expand the scope of dialogue about policy issues. The discussion couldn't have existed prior to the hearing because members of Congress did not know about the details of the problem. The retired officers' experience on the ground gave them the ability to establish the grounds of the new discussion and illuminate claims that will lead to further argument. Regardless of the success or failure of the retired officers' argumentative strategy, they expanded the dialogue on the topic through their explanation of the situation and the insights they offered as justification to their claims.

#### Additional Implications for Goodnight's Theory

This study offers support for Goodnight's Theory of Argumentative Spheres. The analysis supported the theoretical ideas that the theory advances. The three key areas where the study supported Goodnight's theory were: 1) in the location of controversy for potential deliberative discourse; 2) in the ways in which the technical sphere can use its specificity to assist meaning-making in the public sphere; and 3) how technically specific language acts as a tool to attribute motivation to action.

The first idea that this study extended was that controversies were a place where deliberative discourse could take place. The DPC hearing was a forum that housed discussion of the controversy over the Iraq War. During the testimony that ensued, the scope and language base of the controversy

expanded through the arguments and discourse presented. The purpose of the hearing was to resolve uncertainty about the planning phases and early actions of the war effort. The debate was to be judged on the merit of the criteria presented and not due to the political ramification (Farrell & Goodnight, 1981; Goodnight, 1983). Still, as was hypothesized, the outcomes of the hearing had political implications despite the relatively politically-neutral arguments presented before the DPC. While the forums and channels for dissent were few in number, opportunities like the DPC hearing allowed dissenters to challenge the prevalent viewpoint that the Administration had made the only choices that they could with the limited information that they knew (Goodnight, 1982; Goodnight, 1991, Goodnight, 1992). By offering alternatives and evaluating those choices, the retired officers illuminated new areas of the controversy through their discourse.

Goodnight argued that technical specification could act to inform discussion in the public sphere. In this instance, the arguments presented by the retired officers supports that claim because they utilized their technical understanding of the Iraq War to expand the scope of dissenting discourse for the public. These arguments were presented in a way that illustrated how dissent can appeal to institutional reasoning (Goodnight, 1991; Goodnight & Hingstman, 1997; Goodnight, 2005). They didn't restrict discussion on the topic, but instead invigorated the discussion by infusing it with new constructs and specific language. All of the arguments made about the war, because of their influence over public life, exist in the public sphere, but in this instance

the technical sphere was able to localize the controversy in a way that shifted the understanding of the public sphere toward a better evaluation of the planning of the Iraq War.

Finally, the retired officers utilized reasoning and created arguments that illustrated the potential for technical specification to invigorate public discourse. Technically specific language is a lens to view the potential for argument making (Goodnight, 1987a; Goodnight, 1991; Goodnight, 1997). By delineating the internal mechanisms of the decision-making process, the retired officers were able to describe the problem in ways that their evaluations could attribute guilt based on the strength of the language choices they had at their disposal.

#### Lessons for Advocates Interested in Dissent

The study showed how four factors affect potential dissent in the future: 1) technical expertise can play a valuable role in public argument; 2) empowered third parties play a critical role in granting legitimacy to dissenting voices; 3) dissenting voices must be credible; and 4) effective dissent changes the debate. While there were other factors involved in the process of dissent, this study indicates that these four factors have relevance for future controversies. Each of these factors is discussed in the following sections.

#### The Role of Technical Expertise

The arguments presented by the retired officers at the DPC hearing showed how technical expertise can create a context for potential refutation.

Their arguments established certain facts about the controversy that needed to be explained away or refuted in order to offer an alternative. This strategy should advise dissent against insulated, but powerful entities by illustrating the need to control the debate through qualified evidence. Allowing the Administration to narrow the debate to the ideological issues and arguments that they want only disables the ability to put forth quality dissent. Their testimony also helps explain the importance on relying on statistical and report-based evidence as a metric of evaluation because it builds the credibility of the argument so it makes it harder to dismiss outright.

#### The Role of Empowered Third Parties

In addition, this analysis validates the idea that dissent relies heavily on being lent the rhetorical validity of an empowered third party. Congress gave the retired officers a forum and their structural legitimacy made the testimony presented a rhetorical situation. Their arguments were given greater weight and traction in the discussion because they were appealing to a specialized audience who, if persuaded, were empowered to take action on the matters being evaluated. Simply convincing a non-empowered third party would have been rhetorically valid, but would not have offered the opportunity for policy change that the Congressional audience provided. By opening the discussion to specialized arguments that expanded the language and scope of the controversy, they illustrate how dissent can function to enable change before an empowered group.

## The Importance of Credibility for Dissenters

This study validated the argument that dissent relies heavily on the perceived credibility of the dissenters. By emphasizing their military careers and accolades, their introductions stressed their credibility as evaluators of the war effort. Their credentials legitimized their critiques and, again, made their dissent powerful because they were uniquely qualified to explain the situation on the ground to Congress. As a result, previous ideological justifications for the war against Iraq could not be perceived as relevant to the reasoning and evidence regarding the capacity of the Bush administration to wage war effectively.

## How the Retired Officers' Arguments Changed the Debate

The retired officers' arguments shaped the ways that proponents of the administration could defend their views, and in effect, controlled the ground of the debate on which Administration supporters would need to engage their arguments. By relying on their technical expertise, the retired officers constructed their arguments in a way that required an understanding of the technical merits of their critique for refutation. The Administration or anyone defending the alternative point of view now needed to engage the controversy on the specific instances and terminology upon which their arguments were built. The two main ways in which they established this were through their evidence selection and use of precise, technical language.

The utilization of personal experience, facts, and reports force oppositional voices to refute the retired officers' explanation of the situation or ignore those pieces of evidence whereby they will act as preemptive answers to their refutation. As Roberts-Miller (2009) suggested, the creation of a second option made it easier to support arguments against the war. It was no longer an issue where if one did not support the war effort then they were unpatriotic, it forced war supporters to engage in a decision based on evidence. The reliance on empirical data used as evidence not only leant their arguments logical appeal, it also required that oppositional voices have an alternative way to explain the facts that can withstand critical evaluation. This allowed the retired officers to control the grounds upon which the arguments would be discussed. By relying on the facts as they interpreted them, anyone who wished to offer an alternative view would need a framework that could house all of the information presented. Simply refuting one experience or fact would not be enough because their entire strategy of argumentation was to build multiple examples that all came to the same conclusion. Each line of argumentation that led to the conclusion of ineffective leadership would need to be refuted in order to undermine the entirety of the claim.

In addition to the requirements for refutation, the retired officers' reliance on technical expertise also created a framework where arguments based on patriotism and ideology would not apply. When ideology and patriotism are the building blocks of an argument, they lack the precise data presented by the retired officers. Ideological arguments use symbolic and

metaphorical language that is in direct opposition of the precision and specificity of technical argumentation. The narrow scope of the topic created by this style of argument forces arguments in opposition to deal with the situation through tangible means rather than the intangibles inherent to ideology. One cannot explain away the analysis of choices made about specific armored vehicles as unpatriotic because the specificity of the example is neutral of political context.

### Limitations of Study

The study was expansive, but not complete. There were three major limitations that merit discussion: the lack of multiple forums, the lack of a formal response from the Administration, and the lack of casual policy outcomes from the dissent. This section provides a discussion of each of those limitations and an explanation of those shortcomings.

#### Only Using One Forum as a Representative Text

The DPC hearing was selected because of its importance as the first Congressional evaluation of the Iraq War, but it only constitutes one forum for analysis. There were follow up hearings, hearings before the RPC, and arguments presented in print and television, but this study did not analyze any of those alternative forums. Studying more forums could either contribute greater strength to the claim that an empowered third party can create a rhetorical forum for dissent or, perhaps, create an argument in opposition of that claim.

## No Formal Response from the Administration and Rumsfeld

Though their case was presented as context for the DPC hearing, the study never analyzed a representative text of a formal response to the retired officers' arguments. The DPC was a hearing to evaluate the Administration's actions, but they never got to respond to the retired officers nor did they get to speak in their own defense. The retired officers' arguments framed the situation around the assumptions inherent to their positions, but the Administration, undoubtedly, would have held a different position on many of the primary areas of contention.

The unwillingness of the Administration to send anyone to speak on their behalf at the DPC hurt their potential refutation. The lack of defense about their case to go to war made it seem as though they were disinterested in defending themselves or had no defense. Either way that one looks at the situation, disinterest or defenselessness were not positive traits to attribute to an Administration who was being evaluated.

One problem with defending themselves that bears discussion is that any active duty officer would have lacked credibility to act as a counter expert because many of the arguments presented by the retired officers explained that such individuals were doing the best they can and would not be critical of the Administration for fear of their jobs. This point emphasizes the need for forums that can allow arguments to be presented equally from both sides of a controversy and let the merits of each argument stand on their own. While Goodnight's vision of such an empowered public forum may seem

unattainable, the need for such a forum is made clear by the lost potential arguments on behalf of the Administration. Regardless of the politics of the controversy, a deliberative discussion of the actions taken would only make future policy making better.

#### Did not Analyze the Policy Outcomes of the Dissenting Arguments

The DPC hearing had many tangible outcomes based on the arguments presented by the retired officers. Some argue that it was their critical evaluation of Donald Rumsfeld that led to him removing himself from his position in the months after the trial. The follow up hearings became increasingly critical of our role in Iraq and some have argued that it was this initial DPC hearing that set the stage for future argumentation. The limited scope of the discussion and inability to prove any causal links prevented a direct discussion of the policy outcomes. However, even acknowledging them as potential outcomes was a potential avenue for research that this study ignored.

#### Issues for Future Research

This study's findings generated new questions for future research. The two primary questions generated from the study are: what implications did the rhetoric have on the new Administration and what other forums are available for technically grounded dissent? This section will address those questions and offer optional pursuits for future researchers.

## Did Anti-war Rhetoric Change with the New Administration?

The planning and initial phases of the war occurred under the Administration of George W. Bush, but the Administration of Barack Obama has continued many of the policies in Iraq that the Bush Administration used. Future analysis focused on critiques of the Iraq War may be focused on the Obama Administration to search for similarities and differences in the rhetorical approach to dissent against the war effort. A potential argument against the retired officers is that they may have been especially critical of a conservative president. Future research about how they treat dissent against a liberal president would evaluate that claim.

## What Other Forums Can Legitimize Technically Driven Dissent?

The Congressional hearing is one potential forum for dissent, but blogs, television shows, op-ed pieces and many other forums can be utilized by dissenting rhetoricians. In the future, studies of more diverse forums can help evaluate the importance of an empowered third party on creating a meaningful forum. Does the empowerment of the third party need to be based on their governmental authority? Or can internet blogs with millions of viewers act in an equal capacity? Studying diverse forums to see how they support dissent can be a rich area of study. In addition, recognizing the criteria being used by potential forums for dissent may help explain why policy arguments

are crafted in specific ways. As Goodnight explained, studying such arguments will allow us to better understand institutional thinking of policy issues, but, in addition, an analysis of the criteria being used in evaluation will help explain how and why dissent is ignored or elevated.

### Summary

The power of dissent, when given equal opportunity, can open up avenues for deliberative discourse in argument spheres. The criteria used in evaluation may shift between the spheres, but good evidence and powerful claims facilitate rather than degenerate discussion on a given topic. Dissent against the Iraq War had a hard time finding an empowered forum within which to grow, but the DPC offered an opportunity for technically based arguments to be expressed before a group that could use the knowledge presented. There are problems with power structures, forums, and resistant authorities, but three retired officers' evaluation of the Iraq War shows that there is still hope for deliberative discourse to occur within our government.

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