

# Operation Iraqi Freedom: The Unjust War of Generation Y

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to write this paper. Many thanks and much love to all of you and to those who I didn't have the space to mention, you all know who you are.

## A LETTER TO THE MEN I WENT THROUGH HELL WITH

November 1, 2021

My Dearest Degenerates,

Hey boys, I hope you're all well. If you're reading this it's for one of three reasons. First, it's made the rounds in the ways I hoped it would. Second, you somehow stumbled upon it while scrolling the vastness of the interwebs. Or third, I sent it to you and out of your love and loyalty to me, maybe mixed with a hint of your own curiosity, you're actually reading it...for some of you; simply reading it would be a leap. But it is for those of you that do, that I have written this letter. Many years have flown by in what seems to be the blink of an eye. I can still remember vividly traversing a city I had never dreamed of going to in the middle of the night with you, kicking in doors of strangers' homes in the wee hours of the dawn, and taking the fight to the enemy...or so we were led to believe. I remember thinking in those moments that life couldn't get any better than the way it was then. It couldn't get any more precious, more meaningful. For a time, I believed it was the mission at hand that made these things true. But, the more I circle the sun I realize that it was ya'll; the men I had the honor of serving with, that made those times so precious. We have a bond that no one on this planet will understand unless they've toed the same lines we have and come what may, that bond can't be broken. But let's go back to what I said earlier about time passing and realizations. You see, I spent a lot of time when I got home in hospital beds and physical therapy clinics. That followed by the years of processing what it was that we did over there sort of caused a paradigm shift in my mind. When I came to and got my bearings, I realized the only way for me to set myself straight was to learn. I had to know the other side of the story. Like Hollinsworth used to say "go hard or go home", so I went all in. I took Arabic for 2 years and a ton of courses about Islam, Political Science in the Middle East, and tons of personal reading about warfare and the psychology behind it; anything that I felt could possibly lead me to where I needed to be. I just had to know whether we were "right" or "wrong". Turns out, it's a hell of a lot more complicated than that. Anyhow, all of this leads me to where I am now. If ya'll continue to read this, which I hope you choose to, then you need to know that I do not look down on any of you or even myself, for that matter. In a manner of speaking, I feel like we were tricked into going and once we got there how or why didn't matter anymore; all that mattered was getting out alive...together. Some stuff that you'll read in here is more than likely going to make some of ya'll uncomfortable, and that's okay, I've come to learn that discomfort is necessary for growth. Again, I'm not writing this to disrespect any of you, I still love ya'll as much as I did when we were mobbing around Baghdad. There are some hard truths in here. Some things that I have had to struggle with since doing the research...but they're things I needed to know, that we needed to know. So, read it and come to your own conclusions, like I have. But I have to do this to turn the page for myself, for my family, and for our boys that don't have that option anymore. I love you all come hell or high water.

Always and forever,

Joshua "Flip" Philippus

## INTRODUCTION

Man has been engaging in warfare with one another since the dawn of time. It seems as long as we have been in existence we have been, for lack of better terms, dead set on killing each other. Thus, it only makes logical sense that for nearly as long as we have been waging wars with one another we have been thinking about the most efficient ways to carry out said wars. Throughout antiquity there have been numerous individuals, cultures, and religions that have struggled with the ideas concerning the makings of a “just” war. Many of these ideas posed by these individuals, cultures, and religions have been refined over the years to a relatively comprehensive system of defining not only a “just” war but also proper criteria for declaring war and the proper behavior of combatants in those wars. The ideas of Just War range widely from St. Augustine’s Just War Theory with Christian roots to Classical Greek Just War Theory to the Just War Theory of the Yoruba Tribe of West Africa, and on across a multitude of cultures, religions, and times. It is the intent herein to first define the Just War principles from St. Augustine, Classical Greece, and the Yoruba, due to their encompassing of both *right to war* and *right in war*, and then to apply some of these primeval Just War Principles to a more contemporary campaign, Operation Iraqi Freedom. This will be done in the hopes of determining whether or not the war waged by the United States and her coalition against Saddam Hussein and the state of Iraq was indeed a “just” or “unjust” endeavor. Furthermore, in the final chapter I will draw from some of my own personal experiences in combat in an effort to illustrate what combat truly is like on the ground outside of the parameters laid out by these theories.

## I. JUST WAR THEORY DEFINED



## St. Augustine's Christian Just War Theory

The title to this section may be considered rather disingenuous as St. Augustine is not solely responsible for the creation of the Christian Just War Theory. Although he is largely credited with the majority of refinements made to the Theory. Augustine had help from many scholars as well as political and theological thinkers throughout the years; such as St. Thomas Aquinas, Martin Luther, and John Calvin. However, for our purposes we will primarily utilize St. Augustine's Just War Theory as it is presented with one of the most clearly defined frameworks within the field of Just War Theory.

St. Augustine of Hippo, whose given name was Aurelius Augustinus, was born November 13, 354 C.E. in what is now modern day Algeria. St. Augustine died August 28, 430 C. E., also in modern day Algeria. Augustine was born to Roman parents of a respectable stature in Algeria and had at least two siblings. Of his siblings, St. Augustine was the only one sent off to become highly educated. "He studied first in Tagaste, then in the nearby university town of Madauros, and finally at Carthage, the great city of Roman Africa." (O'Donnell). Through the course of a lifetime St. Augustine was a bishop, a teacher in both Tagaste and Carthage, as well as arguably one of the most influential thinkers in Christian antiquity. Augustine is well known for many of his works including "City of God" and "The Confessions". However, of chief concern to the topic herein are his ideas regarding the Just War Theory.

"Augustine's Rome was under severe military pressure from outside, in fact Augustine was alive and writing at the time of the fall of Rome to the Visigoths in 410 C.E." (Corey and Charles, pg. 10). With this and other warfare that was waged accompanied by the steep rise in the Christian population during his life as well as his own conversion to Christianity in 387 C.E.

(Midwest Augustinians) it is of little surprise that Augustine felt the link between warfare and Christianity needed to be more clearly defined. In his pursuit of a clearer definition Augustine became embattled with many difficult questions and had to somehow “reckon with those passages of scripture that seemed to prohibit Christians from engaging in war; Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you. Do not resist one who is evil. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. Blessed be the peacemakers.” (Corey & Charles, pg. 10). Interestingly, Augustine was able to reconcile warfare and Christianity by “taking in the entirety of scripture, not just certain passages in isolation.” (Corey & Charles, pg. 10-11). The result of Augustine’s embattlement and subsequent reconciliation spawned the ideas of Christian Just War Theory.

The traditional Just War Theory is comprised of two “sections” as it were that make up the entirety of Christian Just War thinking. The first section, *jus ad bellum* or *right to war*, is most easily defined as the principle which dictates when and if the declaration of war is “just”. In this particular case “declaration” not only means the act of declaring war but also encompasses everything up to the very brink of hostile military action. *Jus ad bellum* is comprised of six additional sub sections; *just cause, proper authority, last resort, genuine intent, reasonable chance of success, and proportionality*. Each of these additional subsections take on the weight of *jus ad bellum* similar to the way in which tent poles erect a tent. Should one fail, the entire tent, or in this case, argument; will fail as a consequence. The second major section comprising Christian Just War thinking is known as *jus in bello* or *right in war*. *Jus in bello* is the principle of Christian Just War Theory that dictates “just” conduct within warfare. Just as it sounds, this portion of the Theory encompasses the way in which combatants should engage with each other as well as their environment and noncombatants. Much like its predecessor, *jus in bello* is held

up by two additional sub sections; *discrimination* and *proportionality*. Each of the sub sections for *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello* will be further defined in the pages to come. However, it is important to note that in more contemporary times a third major section of Christian Just War Theory has been considered and that is *jus post bellum* or *just after war*. As the title alludes to, this principle has to do primarily with good and proper or “just” behavior between states and combatants following war or conflict. With that being said, some of the most notable Christian Just War Theorists i.e., St. Augustine or Michael Walzer, of a more contemporary time, do not mention *jus post bellum* by name and only allude to the fact “that there is justice in the goals of war, which implies that the postwar execution of those goals might weigh in the overall judgment of the war’s justice” (Bass, pg. 387). Thus, since it has not been thoroughly been defined by a plethora of Just War Theorists throughout the ages, we will not attempt to tackle that endeavor here and now on their behalf.

As previously stated, the first major section of Christian Just War Theory is that of *jus ad bellum* which is “held up” by the six subsections of *just cause, proper authority, last resort, genuine intent, reasonable chance of success, and proportionality*. *Just cause* is the portion of Christian Just War Theory that requires the cause for engaging in warfare be in and of itself “just”. St. Augustine himself defines *just cause* rather simply for us when he writes “to inflict war on one’s neighbor and then to proceed to others, and out of the sole desire to rule, to conquer and subdue peoples by whom one has not been molested, what else should this be called but grand larceny?”...”Wars of necessity (or just wars) by contrast arise in response to some wrong that has been committed, a wrong so grievous that neither the wrongdoer or their victims would be well served by leniency.” (Corey and Charles, pg. 58). “Wars are thus waged unjustly out of a desire for gain or justly out of a desire to correct a wrong” (Corey and Charles, pg. 58). With this

in mind, one can easily come to the conclusion that in order for a war to fall in line with Christian Just War Theory it must be “reactive rather than proactive” (Corey and Charles, pg. 58).

The clause or subsection of *proper authority* although well defined for archaic traditions is less so for more contemporary times. Nonetheless, St. Augustine felt it necessary to include a clause for *proper authority*, rightfully so, because “if every citizen or subject could declare war at will, wars would be much too frequent and arbitrary” (Corey and Charles, pg. 60). Who has *proper authority* one may ask; Augustine’s answer is simple once one takes into consideration the times and traditions in which he lived and wrote. Although Augustine did not delve too deeply into whom precisely, he believed possessed the proper authority it is made abundantly clear that he is speaking of those in political office. The reason for this falls within a rather archaic line of thought which is: those in power have been put in place by God, who as such, are beyond question. Agree or disagree, that is Augustine’s justification of *proper authority*.

There are three clauses within Christian Just War Theory’s *jus ad bellum* that are very easily explained and may be taken at face value without delving too much deeper. First, the *last resort* clause of *jus ad bellum* is precisely as it sounds. It is the idea that in order for a war to be truly “just” all other means of solving the dispute between individuals or nations must have been exhausted before the declaration of war. More eloquently put, John Calvin famously wrote “everything else ought to be tried first before the recourse to arms” (Corey and Charles, pg. 113), he also famously stated that armed conflict should be “compelled by a necessity that permits no escape” (Corey and Charles, pg. 113). *Reasonable chance of success* is another easily definable tenet of *jus ad bellum*. Simply put, the *reasonable chance of success* clause states that in order for a war to be considered “just” the declaring party must have a reasonable prospect of victory

in said war. The last easily defined clause of *jus ad bellum* is the clause of *genuine intent*.

*Genuine intent* again is rather eloquently defined by John Calvin with this statement; “force can never be justified unless the will of the person employing it be animated by love of one’s own people and of one’s enemy.” (Corey and Charles, pg. 113-114). Although this idea may seem counterintuitive to some; John Calvin, in true Christian fashion, thought that “we can distinguish between love of the sinner and hatred of his sin.” (Corey and Charles, pg. 114) unfortunately, nearly 500 years later it remains to be seen how this idea of Calvin’s is supposed to play out in reality.

The final tenet of *jus ad bellum* that needs addressing before the transition to *jus in bello* is that of *proportionality*. *Proportionality*, in simple terms, is the idea that the end result should be worth the physical, economic, structural, and infrastructural damage that will be required to complete the objectives of the war as a whole. i.e., civilian casualties, structural damage, destruction of water and electrical lines, choking of food supply lines, etc. Even more simply explained the clause of *proportionality* requires that “the means should be commensurate with the ends, as well as be in line with the magnitude of the initial provocation.” (Malese).

The second major section of Christian Just War Theory is entitled *jus in bello* or *just in war* and has to do with the correct conduct within the confines of “just” warfare. As stated previously, much like its predecessor, the section *jus in bello* is supported by “the two central principles of *jus in bello*, which are *discrimination* and *proportionality*.” (beyond intractability-*jus in bello*). “The principle of discrimination concerns who are legitimate targets in war, while the principle of proportionality concerns how much force is morally appropriate.”. (Malese)

The principle of *discrimination* within *jus in bello* can be seen as relatively complex as it tackles a multitude of issues within traditional Christian thought; for example, “the principle of

*discrimination* recognizes that individuals have a “moral standing independent of and resistant to the exigencies of war. Since killing is morally problematic, just war theory must provide an account of why soldiers can become legitimate targets of attack. It must also answer whether a combatant's status changes depending on whether his cause is just or unjust, and establish how those victims of war who can be attacked and killed are to be distinguished from those who cannot.” (Malese). One of the key ways in which the principle of *distinction* justifies the killing of combatants is by asserting that when one becomes a soldier or a combatant they inherently “forfeit some of their basic human rights”. (Malese). With that being said, it bears examining the other side of the coin; civilian targets. In Christian Just War Theory, the intentional targeting of civilians and or noncombatants is expressly forbidden, also known as noncombatant immunity. There is however a caveat, as in warfare civilian casualties are unavoidable to a certain degree. The caveat in the principle of *discrimination* states that “civilian casualties are justifiable so long as their deaths are not intended and merely accidental” (Malese). As an example, a legitimate military target could be considered a military communications station or air field. In striking said station or air field, the unintentional deaths of some civilian contractors may occur. In this case, depending on the number and intention, those deaths would be justified in the eyes of Christian Just War Theory because the intent was to strike a military target and the civilian deaths were secondary result, indirect and unintentional” (Malese).

While this concept may seem fairly black and white, “combatant” and “noncombatant” to most, those who have experienced warfare know firsthand that it is never that simple. A good example of the gray would be the topic of guerilla fighters. Guerillas frequently utilize civilian clothing, operate amongst the civilian or noncombatant population, and frequently conceal their weapons and intentions. To solve this quandary contemporary international law “suggests that

the inhabitants of non-occupied territory, who take up arms on the approach of the enemy and resist the invading troops, even if they have not had time to organize themselves, count as armed forces.” (Malese). It is worth noting that while in contemporary times the topic of guerilla warfare is a prudent and necessary one, to St. Augustine, John Calvin, and their era of warfare; guerillas forces may not have been a defined concern.

The final principal of *jus in bello* and Christian Just War Theory in general to be discussed is the principal of *proportionality-jus in bello*. While similar to the proportionality clause of *jus ad bellum*, the *proportionality* clause of *jus in bello* refers to the idea of proportionality within warfare itself; such as in independent engagements, which is different from the previously mentioned *proportionality* clause that applies to the war as a whole. More simply put this clause “deals with what kind of force is morally permissible in warfare” (Malese). The main idea of *proportionality* in *jus in bello* is that combatants should oppose force with only the amount of force required to achieve their objectives. The more contemporary take of the Christian Just War Theory is known as the law of armed conflict and with regard to the principle of *proportionality* in warfare it has couple of things to say.

“First, weapons that do not discriminate between combatants and non-combatants cannot be used. The use of asphyxiating or poisonous gases, the starvation of civilians as a method of warfare, and the destruction of objects that are indispensable to the civilian population are prohibited” (Green, pg. 136). Secondly, “weapons that cause long-term environmental damage are prohibited” (Hubert and Weiss, pg. 144) and finally, the contemporary law of armed conflict expressly forbids the use of any force beyond what is required to achieve victory; “if a choice is possible among military objectives, the one selected should be the one likely to cause the least destruction and casualties” (Green, pg. 148). In this particular passage two separate doctrines are

mentioned. Firstly, the Christian Just War Theory and secondly the more contemporary law of armed conflict. While the law of armed conflict is currently considered the “gold standard” in defining *jus in bello* it is not to be mistaken as the same exact doctrine of Christian Just War Theory written and refined by St. Augustine, John Calvin, Martin Luther, and the like. In this case, it was used to provide specific modern examples in order to grant a more thorough understanding of Christian Just War Theory.

### Classical Greek Just War Theory

In the previous section we thoroughly examined St. Augustine’s Just War Theory; a “western framework for thinking about the ethics of contemporary war.” (O’Driscoll, 2015). Being that this framework is arguably one of the most structured or defined we will use it henceforth as a guide for the other examples of Just War Theory herein. Along with the knowledge of the soundness of Augustine’s ideas, many try to credit St. Augustine and his theory with being the first of their kind. While this may be true as far as structure, it is most certainly false with regard to content. Just War Theory can easily be traced “many centuries earlier than the advent of Christianity” (Cox) such as to the Middle Kingdom of Ancient Egypt (2030 to 1650 B.C.) or in the case of our interest, Classical Greece. Most obviously, Aristotle referred to “war that is by nature just,” while Cicero wrote extensively on *bellum justum* (or a just war). Neither produced a systematic theory of just war, but the ideas they introduced remain nevertheless significant” (O’Driscoll, 2015) as we will see. Although significant, it is important to reiterate the fact that Classical Greek Just War Theory while still having the sections of *just ad bellum* and *jus in bello*, had significantly less defined principles therein; to be precise there are



two supporting principles for each larger section encompassing the ideas of Classical Greek Just War Theory.

Much like the more contemporary political thoughts of Christians, the Yoruba Tribe, and many other cultures and religions; “Greeks nevertheless maintained that, so long as it satisfied certain conditions, war could be regarded as a legitimate enterprise.” (O’Driscoll, 2015). The first principle of *jus ad bellum* to be considered by Classical Greeks in their Just War Theory, much like Christians; was the principle of *proper authority*. As previously discussed, *proper authority* deals with who has the right to declare war. “By the fifth century (B.C.), practice indicated that the only authority deemed competent to initiate war was the community (*polis*) manifested by the people (*demos*)” (O’Driscoll, 2015). For Athens specifically, the power of *proper authority* lied with the Ecclesia or Greek *Ekklesia*, meaning “gathering of those summoned” (Ecclesia). The Ecclesia was much like the more contemporary Congress in the United States. Its members gathered together in order to vote on policy, write new laws, and discuss and vote on the declaration of war.

The second and final principle of *jus ad bellum* to be considered in the Classical Greek Theory was that of *just cause*. According to Garlan, “It was essential to have the right on one's side, in the eyes of the gods even more than in the eyes of men.” (O’Driscoll, 2015). The Classical Greek community frequently “stressed the legitimacy of their cause and its putative conformity with norms circumscribing the recourse to force.” (O’Driscoll, 2015). There are a multitude of sources to which one can look in Classical Greek writings in support of this idea such as Plato, Aristotle, and most famously Thucydides. Thucydides writings with regard to the war between the Peloponnesians and the Athenians (431-405 B.C.) mention a discussion between “Nicias and Alcibiades at the *Ekklesia* over whether it was wise to sail on Sicily.

“(O’Driscoll, 2015) which encompassed the idea of *just* cause. Nicias was adamant that engaging in warfare by sailing on Sicily was reckless and foolhardy. While Alcibiades on the other, stood firmly with his idea that Athens had a moral obligation (*just cause*) to her allies which required that Athens actively engage Sparta and her allies in combat in an effort to alleviate the threat against Athens’ comrades.

The Classical Greek Just War Theory’s section of *jus in bello* or “just in war” is very similar in structure to the previously mentioned Christian Just War Theory as it is supported by two central tenets; *discrimination* and *proportionality*. The principle of *discrimination* to the Greek theorists is very similar to that of Christian Theorists in the light that it stands to differentiate combatants with noncombatants and thus who can and cannot be attacked during warfare. However, there are some ever so subtle differences. “The standard application of discrimination in classical Greece related to the protection of “the sacred and the neutralized. Anything society deemed dear to the gods was viewed as sacrosanct and inviolable. This applied not only to places and people, but also to particular times of year.” (O’Driscoll, 2015). Therefore, any structure that was deemed a sanctuary of the gods, a place of worship, etc. was to remain untouched by warfare; similar to the way in which a living noncombatant is to be treated under Christian Just War Theory. “Alongside the inviolability afforded to sanctuaries, certain categories of people enjoyed immunity in their own right, because of their status or function.” (O’Driscoll, 2015) examples of these people would be the different priests of the gods, politicians, and even prisoners that were taken in the heat of battle. Although, “Prisoners seized in siege situations could, however, expect no such generosity.” (O’Driscoll, 2015). As one can easily see the Greek and Christian Theorists share many of the same ideas with slight variations effectively displaying the significance of *discrimination* in warfare across cultures and time.

The second and final principle of *jus in bello* in the Classical Greek Theory is that of *proportionality*. Again, just like in the Christian Just War Theory, the Classical Greek definition of *proportionality* simply states that the means of combat should correspond with the ends. “Contemporary just war theorists typically parley it into the language of utilitarianism. The Greeks, however, presented it as a function of victory.” (O’Driscoll, 2015). Meaning; “that the conduct of war should be judged against whether it produced a definitive victory.” (O’Driscoll, 2015). This principle is most readily accessible in the area of strategy within the confines of Classical Greek warfare. On one hand the Greeks viewed themselves similarly to the way in which the British viewed themselves during the American Revolutionary War; as a class of gentlemanly warfighters. “Brasidas, for example, condemned trickery in war as a barbaric abhorrence.” (O’Driscoll, 2015). On the other hand, support for the use of tradecraft in warfare can easily be found in Greek writings. Xenophon declared, “There is nothing more profitable in war than deception.” Trickery was also common in practice. The tale of how “Kleomenes’ Spartans outfoxed the Argives in 494 BCE is a prime example.” (O’Driscoll, 2015). Looking at both sides of the same coin one could deduce that to the Greeks both styles of warfare were necessary at respective times although the utilization of trickery in combat was only seen useful as a last resort; as victories “achieved by deception did not yield any meaningful glory” (O’Driscoll, 2015).

## The Yoruba Tribe and the Just War Theory

In the West African country of Nigeria there have historically been three main tribes; the Hausa, the Igbo, and the Yoruba. Of the three the traditional tribes Yoruba society seems to have the given most thought centered around the morality of warfare. While the Yoruba tribe appear less prolific on the subject than St. Augustine on the structural foundation of their Just War thought, their ideas and beliefs in regard to “just” combat are no less significant. The traditional Christian and Classical Greek Theories are easily placed in a neat framework with which the reader is familiar, however the Yoruba Theory revolves more so around a set of cultural proverbs than a neatly defined structure of intermingled ideas. With that being said; with the reader in mind, these cultural proverbs have been arranged below in as close to the same structure as possible.

For our first glimpse into the precolonial Yoruba Just War Theory’s “*jus ad bellum*”, the work of Wole Soyinka is particularly informative. Soyinka is a well-known Nigerian playwright, poet, essayist, activist, and novelist who has had this to say about warfare in the Yoruba kingdom; “The justification for war is justice. The Ifa corpuscle claims that justice is the mortar that kneads the dwelling place of man. “(Soyinka). This statement by Wole Soyinka seems to place the idea of *jus ad bellum*’s *just cause* front and center as “justice” for the Yoruba Kingdom. Thus, as relative as it may seem, the only *just cause* for declaring war for the Yoruba tribe would be to do so in the pursuit of justice. After the first principle of *jus ad bellum* from Wole Soyinka another interesting place to turn in for the purpose of Just War Theory would be three Yoruba cultural proverbs that illuminate three more principles of Yoruba Theory; one of which belongs to *jus ad bellum* and the other two residing within the walls of *jus in bello*. The remaining tenet

of *jus ad bellum* stems from the Yoruba proverb; *Ogun awitele ki I pa aro to ba gbon*. The literal interpretation of which means “A wise invalid is never consumed by or destroyed in warfare.” (Cordeiro-Rodrigues & Singh, pg. 100). Upon further analysis the proverb can be taken to mean that there must be a forethought of noncombatants prior to engaging in battle in order to afford “the invalid to prepare for safety or crawl to a safe hiding place.” (Cordeiro-Rodrigues & Singh, pg. 100). To reiterate, in precolonial Yoruba’s Just War Theory there are two central tenets to *jus ad bellum*; first, the only *just cause* for declaring war is to do so in the pursuit of justice. “Justice” in this case referring to the righting of a perceived wrong. Second, prior to engaging in battle an opportunity must be afforded to noncombatants to escape from the path of destruction, thus resembling *discrimination* from Christian and Classical Greek Theories.

The two remaining proverbs of the Yoruba Kingdom do a fine job of providing insight into their ideas of *jus in bello*. The first proverb states *Moja Mosa ni kii je ki akinkanju o bogun lo*, which directly interpreted means “Knowing when to start warfare and the appropriate time to call it off or escape from it; preserves the life of the brave warrior” (Cordeiro-Rodrigues & Singh, pg. 100). The deeper meaning to this proverb is rather simple; timing is everything. Which is to say that if war is waged survival will often depend on one’s ability of knowing not only when to begin but when to end the violence. The second and final tenet of traditional Yoruba *jus in bello* is *Ogun ni sini mu, epe kii sini pa, ko seke kii fi eke ku*. The direct interpretation of said proverb means “A person could be an unintended victim of warfare, but a curse affects only a deserving person; he who does not transgress does not die from the consequence of the transgression.” (Cordeiro-Rodrigues & Singh, pg. 100). Simply put; war is hell and on occasion the wrong people die. This idea falls in line with the caveat of the Christian Theory’s principle *discrimination* which again states that “civilian casualties are justifiable so

long as their deaths are not intended and merely accidental' (Malese). Thus, while it is relatively easy to see the change in structure from one culture or belief system to the other; it is also equally easy to see that a lot of the same ideas comprise each society's Just War Theory.

## Conclusion

In the preceding chapter a distinct effort was made to adequately define Just War Theory through the use of multiple cultures or belief systems as illustrative examples. Now that a solid baseline of understanding with regard to Just War Theory has been established, in the next Chapter we will utilize this baseline knowledge to further examine a more contemporary military campaign through the lens of Just War Theory. To be more precise, in the upcoming chapter the framework provided by St. Augustine's Just War Theory will be applied to Operation Iraqi Freedom in an effort to determine the "justness" of said military endeavor.

## II. OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM THROUGH THE LENS OF JUST WAR THEORY

Now that a firm grasp has been established on the history, framework, and ideas which comprise the Just War Theory; they will be applied to a much more contemporary conflict, with which many across the modern world are familiar; Operation Iraqi Freedom. Operation Iraqi Freedom officially began on March 20, 2003 and officially ended on December 18, 2011. Our goal herein is to analyze the justness of Iraqi Freedom via the lens of the Just War Theory. In order to facilitate this, the contemporary western framework that was shaped by St. Augustine, Martin Luther, John Calvin, and the like will be used. By placing each principle of the Christian Just War Theory (which has been shown to be incredibly similar to other Theories throughout time and cultures) in juxtaposition with historical facts regarding the war in Iraq one will inevitably come to the conclusion of whether or not said war was a just endeavor.

### Jus Ad Bellum (Right to War)

#### *-Just Cause-*

As previously discussed in Chapter 1 the doctrine of *just cause*, simply put, tells us that wars are either waged “unjustly out of a desire for gain or justly out of a desire to correct a wrong” (Corey and Charles, pg. 58). After the United States Congress was briefed with intelligence from the CIA analysts, acting Director of the CIA George Tenet, and acting National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice, Operation Iraqi Freedom was declared by the George W. Bush administration with permission from the United States Congress via the passage of House Joint Resolution 114. The resolution passed in the United States House of Representatives on October 10, 2002 by a vote of 296 for and 133 opposed. House Joint Resolution 114 then moved to the United States Senate where it swiftly passed on October 11, 2002 by a vote of 77 for and 23 against. The bill was then “signed into law by President Bush on October 16, 2002 as Public



Law 107-243. President Bush had received the congressional authority he requested to use military force against Iraq.” (Hoeffel, pg. 81). This chain of events logically indicates that the intelligence presented to the United States Congress by the CIA and the rest of the Intelligence Community provided the “cause” for the declaration of war. Thus, in order to effectively determine whether or not the cause of Operation Iraqi Freedom falls in line with the doctrine of *just cause* the intelligence provided to Congress requires further analysis.

Excluding only eight members of Congress, the vast majority received their intelligence via a briefing from George Tenet, Condoleezza Rice, and the CIA public White Paper. The previously mentioned eight members of Congress who received their briefing from an outside source, namely the classified National Intelligence Estimate or NIE of October 2002, were required by law to not share any of the information contained therein with the media or any of their colleagues for the sake of national security. The National Intelligence Estimate and its findings will be discussed momentarily. With that being said; the intelligence contained within the public CIA White Paper fell in line succinctly with the statements being made by former President George W. Bush, former Vice President Dick Cheney, former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, and former Secretary of State Colin Powell. Each of the aforementioned individuals had gone on record in front of the American people and the United Nations stating repeatedly that Al Qaeda, who was believed to be responsible for the 9/11 attacks, was hiding in Iraq, that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction or WMDs (chemical and biological weapons), that Saddam Hussein was creating more WMDs, and that Iraq was actively pursuing the materials necessary to constitute a nuclear weapon. It bears reiteration that nearly the entirety of Congress relied solely on the information contained within the CIA White Paper to cast the

votes they deemed appropriate with regard to House Joint Resolution 114, the authorization for American military force in Iraq.

In the words of former Representative Joseph Hoeffel “The White Paper was a whitewash. It was an intentional attempt by the Bush administration to keep Congress and the American people from knowing of the numerous uncertainties and professional doubts within the intelligence community regarding Saddam Hussein, the status of his weapons, and his actual threat to the United States.” (Hoeffel, pg. 24). The CIA White Paper, which the majority of Congress relied upon to cast their votes for H.J.R. 114 was, as Hoeffel said, intentionally manipulated to hide the truth from Congress and ultimately the American people in more ways than one. Before expanding on the multitude of ways in which the public White Paper was a farce, it would prove beneficial to have a firmer grasp on the classified National Intelligence Estimate. A “National Intelligence Estimate is the authoritative written assessment of United States intelligence analysts on a particular national security issue. Produced by the National Intelligence Council under the Director of National Intelligence (before 2004, by the Director of Central Intelligence), Estimates express the considered and coordinated judgements of the Intelligence Community, the group of 16 U.S. Intelligence agencies that gather and analyze intelligence. Estimates are classified documents prepared for policymakers, typically at the request of senior civilian and military officials, including congressional leaders.” (Hoeffel, pg. 17). The public White Paper was, in theory, supposed to be a summary of the much more comprehensive National Intelligence Estimate on Iraq, Saddam Hussein, and their respective threats to the national security of the United States. However, as we will see; there were significant discrepancies between the White Paper and the NIE upon which it was based.

First of these discrepancies between the White Paper and the NIE is the outright omission of several important points from the classified Estimate.” Whole sections of the classified Estimate containing caveats and reservations were omitted in their entirety from the public White Paper” (Hoeffel, pg. 21). A good example of these omissions and their significance is the section of the NIE entitled “Confidence Levels for Key Judgements in this Estimate”. In this section intelligence analysts expressed their less than adequate confidence in three of their ““key judgements”; when Saddam would use weapons of mass destruction, whether Saddam would engage in clandestine attacks against the U.S. Homeland, or whether in desperation Saddam would share chemical or biological weapons with Al Qaeda.” (Hoeffel, pg. 21). Meaning that the best and brightest of the American Intelligence Community in October of 2002 had little to no confidence in the ideas that Hussein would utilize WMD, whether he would attack the U.S., or if Hussein would in desperation share WMD with Al Qaeda. These are rather significant facts that punched gaping holes in the justification for the Bush administration’s call to arms, yet they were intentionally omitted from a document as crucial as the public White Paper.

A second inconsistency between the public White Paper and the classified National Intelligence Estimate is the outright removal of important qualifiers regularly used by the Intelligence Community such as “we judge” or “we estimate”. The meaning of these qualifiers is especially important when considering their removal from the public White Paper. In another Estimate that was released in 2007 the National Intelligence Council clarified precisely what they mean when they use such phrases ‘When we use words such as “we judge” or “we assess”, terms we use synonymously, as well as “we estimate”, “likely”, or “indicate”, we are trying to convey an analytical assessment or judgement. These assessments which are based on incomplete or at times fragmentary information are not a fact, proof, or knowledge.’ (Hoeffel,

pg. 20) Thus, when the acting Director of Central Intelligence, George Tenet, authorized the removal of phrases like “we assess”, “we judge”, or “we estimate” from the classified National Intelligence Estimate before publishing the public White Paper on October 4, 2002 date; he knew exactly what he was doing. He was intentionally distorting intelligence in an effort to coerce not only Congress, but the American people into going to war with Iraq by turning “cautious expressions of opinion to firm statements of fact” (Hoeffel, pg. 19) before releasing the public White Paper. For more information with regard to the misrepresentation of intelligence and the removal of caveats see Appendix I.

The CIA public White Paper also included specific information on a multitude of topics ranging from the presence of Al Qaeda in Iraq, to Hussein’s procurement of nuclear material, to Hussein’s so called WMD or weapons of mass destruction (chemical and biological weapons programs); all of which would be of massive concern to American national security interests, had they been true. This intelligence was used by the Bush administration both in view of the American people and in view of Congress (who ultimately granted authorization for military action based on this intelligence) in order to seek approval for the declaration of war against Iraq. Due to the fact that these specific fear and anger inducing topics were utilized both in the Bush administration’s public remarks and in the briefing of Congress before voting on H.J.R. 114, they call for a slightly more in-depth examination.

First to be discussed is the topic of the presence of Al Qaeda in Iraq. On multiple occasions President George W. Bush and his administration utilized the presence of Al Qaeda in Iraq in full view of the public to further stoke the flames of hostilities against Hussein and Iraq even though this seems to have been the all-out fabrication or at a minimum misrepresentation of intelligence. On September 23, 2002 acting National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice told the

New York Times "there are some Al Qaeda personnel who found refuge in Baghdad" (Schmitt) after the U.S. began their initial push into Afghanistan. Then, On September 26, 2002, in a speech given in the Rose Garden of the White House, President Bush stated "The regime has long-standing and continuing ties to terrorist organizations. And there are Al Qaeda terrorists inside Iraq." (Bush). Acting Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld said on the same day in remarks to reporters "We do have solid evidence of the presence in Iraq of Al Qaeda members, including some who have been in Baghdad." (Schmitt). Then again in President Bush's State of the Union in January of 2003 former President Bush doubled down and stated plainly "Saddam Hussein aids and protects terrorists, including members of Al Qaeda." (Bush).

These comments and many like them were being circulated in front of the eyes of the American people and Congress during the run up to conflict with Iraq. However, the actual intelligence painted an altogether different view. Greg Thielmann, the former Director of the State Department's intelligence wing, the Bureau of Intelligence and Research; which is responsible for "monitoring, reporting on, and analyzing all source intelligence on political military subjects for the senior leadership of the State Department" (Thielmann) gave remarks at length on this topic at a Q and A panel by the Arms Control Association. On July 9, 2003 Thielmann said "the lack of a meaningful connection with Al Qaeda, these areas were understood by the intelligence community, and the community's assessments were accurately conveyed to the executive and legislative branches." (Thielmann). Meaning; the public remarks given by the Bush administration, which were previously discussed, were known to be false when they were given. Thielmann also said during the same Q and A event "From my perspective as a mid-level official in the US Intelligence Community and the Department of

State, the Bush administration did not provide an accurate picture to the American people of the military threat posed by Iraq before the nation went to war.” (Thielmann).

Excluding Thielmann and other officials like him that publicly made similar remarks there is also copious evidence against the alleged link between Iraq and Al Qaeda given in the 2006 Senate Report. One “key conclusion” from the 2006 Senate Report stated that “Saddam Hussein distrusted Al Qaeda and refused all requests from Al Qaeda to provide material or operational support. Second, postwar findings supported prewar assessments that there was no credible information that Iraq was complicit in or had foreknowledge of the September 11 attacks.” (Senate Select Report 109-331). For this and other key conclusions with regard to the link between Iraq and Al Qaeda, including Hussein’s attempt to capture Al- Zarqawi (a key Al Qaeda figure) please see Appendix II.

The second topic of note with regard to faulty intelligence is that of Hussein’s alleged attempts to procure uranium and aluminum tubes for a centrifuge in order to create a nuclear weapon. Again, the Bush administration flooded the public, the U.N., and Congress with statements indicating that Saddam Hussein was actively attempting to procure equipment in an effort to manufacture weapons grade nuclear material. On September 12, 2002 former President Bush told the United Nations Security Council “Iraq has made several attempts to buy high strength aluminum tubes used to enrich uranium for a nuclear weapon. Should Iraq acquire fissile material, it would be able to build a nuclear weapon within a year.”. This was not the only grandiose statement made by the Bush administration in an attempt to persuade the American public and Congress that war was the answer.

On February 5, 2003, a year later, former Secretary of State Colin Powell said before the U.N. Security Council “Saddam Hussein already possesses two out of the three key components

needed to build a nuclear bomb...he has made repeated covert attempts to acquire high specification aluminum tubes from 11 different countries.” (Powell). Another chief concern with regard to the pursuit of nuclear material by Iraq was that of uranium procurement, a key ingredient in manufacturing a nuclear bomb. In his January 2003 State of the Union former President George W. Bush told the American public, Congress, and the world “The British government has learned that Saddam Hussein recently sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa.” (Bush). It seems that again the Bush administration was operating under false pretenses as on June 13, 2003 a senior CIA official spoke to the Philadelphia Inquirer under the condition of anonymity and stated “the intelligence agency informed the White House on March 9, 2002- ten months before Bush’s nationally televised speech- that an agency source who had traveled to Niger could not confirm European intelligence reports that Iraq was attempting to buy uranium from the West African country.”(Hoeffel, pg. 140). Of the same vein there are the results of the International Atomic Energy Agency’s investigation into this matter. Dr. Mohamed ElBaradei, the Director of the IAEA, testified before the U.N. Security Council on the account of both Iraq’s acquisition of uranium and the aluminum tubes. On March 7, 2003 Dr. ElBaradei testified that “Extensive field investigation and document analysis had failed to uncover any evidence that Iraq intended to use those 81mm tubes for any project other than the reverse engineering of rockets.” (Blix and ElBaradei) and “based on thorough analysis the IAEA has concluded with the concurrence of outside experts that these documents which formed the basis for the report of recent uranium transaction between Iraq and Niger were in fact, not authentic.” (Blix and ElBaradei). Additionally, it was concluded in 2004 Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Report 108-301 that “Even after obtaining the forged documents and being alerted by a State Department Bureau of Intelligence and Research analyst about problems with them,

analysts at both the CIA and DIA did not examine them carefully enough to see obvious problems with them.” (Appendix I) with regard to the forged Iraq-Niger uranium documents. Finally, the Senate Report 108-301 also concluded “The Committee believes that the information available to the Intelligence Community indicated that these tubes were intended to be used for an Iraqi conventional rocket program and not a nuclear program.” (Appendix I).

The third topic to be touched on with regard to false or misrepresented intelligence is that of Iraq’s WMD (chemical or biological weapons) or weapons of mass destruction program. In President George W. Bush’s Rose Garden speech of 2002, he plainly stated with confidence “The Iraqi regime possesses biological and chemical weapons.” (Bush). “On January 7, 2003 Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld said: “With respect to chemical weapons, we know they not only have hidden them but that they’ve used them. And with respect to biological weapons, we have clearly--the Central Intelligence Agency has said what it has said, and there’s no doubt in my mind that they currently have chemical and biological weapons.” (Hoeffel, pg. 83). Again, in President Bush’s 2003 State of the Union he stated “Today, the gravest danger in the war on terror, the gravest danger facing America and the world, is outlaw regimes that seek and possess nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons.” (Bush) referencing Iraq. Former Secretary of State Colin Powell also plainly stated in his speech to the U. N. Security Council in February of 2003 “Saddam Hussein has chemical weapons.” (Powell) However, as we have seen repeatedly thus far; the facts on the ground painted a different picture.

As evidence to the contrary there is a plethora of sources to which one could turn. For example, the Iraq Survey Group; an organization comprised of 1,400 international team members who were tasked solely with finding the WMD in Iraq by the Pentagon and the Central Intelligence Agency. The head of the Iraq survey group, David Kay, after a year of searching;



resigned on January 23, 2004 stating that “weapons stockpiles in Iraq did not exist” (Hoeffel, pg. 157). David Kay went on to conduct an interview with Reuters on the same day and said “I’m personally convinced that there were not large stockpiles of newly produced weapons of mass destruction. We don’t find the people, the documents, or the physical plants that you would expect to find if the production was going on.” (Hoeffel, pg. 157). Additionally, the 2002 Defense Intelligence Agency stated that “there was “no reliable information” about Iraq’s chemical weapons” (Hoeffel, pg. 142) which is a far cry from the statements made by the Bush administration.

The last bit evidence to the contrary of statements made by the Bush administration to be examined herein stem from the conclusions of the “Duelfer Report”. The “Duelfer Report” was the Iraq Survey Group’s final and most comprehensive report on Iraq’s WMD programs. It was a staggering 918-page long document that “represented the largest and most authoritative attempt ever made to find out what happened to the weapons that the Bush administration had claimed Saddam Hussein possessed” (Hoeffel, pg. 168). The key conclusions the Duelfer Report came to with regard to WMD in Iraq were as follows; “There were no stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. Iraq destroyed its chemical weapons stockpiles in 1991, and only a few old, abandoned chemical munitions were discovered. Iraq abandoned its biological weapons program in 1995. While it could have re-established a rudimentary biological weapons program, there was no indication it was trying to do so.” (Hoeffel, pg. 168). For more information in regard to the evidence against the existence of a WMD program in Iraq please see Appendix III.

In theory, the intelligence providing the *just cause* for the invasion of Iraq was all together false or misrepresented and thus inherently “unjust”. Due to this fact, one could easily conclude that Operation Iraqi Freedom in and of itself was “unjust”. However, due to the fact

that hundreds of thousands of lives were lost or forever altered by this campaign, it is the least one could do to continue our analysis; if for no other reason than the respect of those lost, on both sides.

-*Proper Authority*-

The clause of *proper authority* is slightly more ambiguous than the rest of Just War Theory however, as previously discussed, for St. Augustine *proper authority* believed this power rested with those in political office i.e., a king, president, Classical Greek Ecclesia, or Congress were ordained by God to rule. Thus, having the authority to declare a “just” war. As President George W. Bush went about gaining authorization to declare war with Iraq legally, through Congress, it would be difficult for one to argue any points against him having *proper authority*. With that being said, it is pertinent to reiterate that nearly all of the intelligence provided to Congress prior to their vote on H.J.R. 114 was either altogether false or heavily misrepresented. Additionally, one could argue that former President Bush should have waited for authorization from the United Nations Security Council, to whom both Bush and the former Secretary of State brought their case. However, the rebuttal to that would be that while the United States is indeed a member of the United Nations our constitution grants the President authority to declare war with a majority vote from Congress. Thus, if Congress voted to give the authorization for military force to the President; he obtained it in a legally adequate manner. Even if Congress was for lack of better words, swindled. So, it is the conclusion herein that President George W. Bush did have the *proper authority* to declare war with Iraq, in a manner of speaking. Although it is beyond the scope of this paper, it may prove interesting in the future to further examine the “authorization to

use military force”, which Congress provided in this case, in juxtaposition with a formal declaration of war.

*-Last Resort-*

The clause of *last resort* requires that the declaration of war be the only logically justifiable course of action. For as John Calvin said “everything else ought to be tried first before the recourse to arms” (Corey and Charles, pg. 113). In order to provide a sound understanding of whether the invasion of Iraq was truly the *last resort* it would be beneficial to examine the options that were provided by the United Nations and to Congress as potentially viable alternatives to war.

Democratic Congresswoman Barbara Lee of California proposed an amendment to the H. J. Res. 114 on October 10, 2002 (?) which “noted that Hussein had accepted the ceasefire of the U.N. Security Council Resolution 687 in April 1991 ending the Persian Gulf War, but Hussein was not complying with the provisions requiring free access for weapons inspections. The amendment provided that the “true extent” of Iraq’s weapons development and the threat posed by such development are unknown and cannot be known without inspections.” (Hoeffel, pg. 60). Congresswoman Lee said these words as she presented her amendment “My amendment provides an option and the time to pursue it. Its goal is to give the United Nations inspections process a chance to work. It provides an option short of war with the objective of protecting the American people and the world from any threat posed by Iraqi weapons of mass destruction through United Nations inspections and enhanced containment.” (Lee). “Lee argued that we did not need to rush to war, the President already had “all authority in the world” to defend the

country, and unilateralism was not the answer. She advocated for improved border monitoring, including the installation of surveillance technology to keep an eye on Hussein. She said the words “first strike” by the United States should fill us with fear.” (Hoeffel, pg. 60).

Congresswoman Lee provided a well thought out and effective strategy that could’ve been built on to avoid war and the always tragic loss of life. Congresswoman Lee’s amendment “failed by a ratio of 72 for and 355 against” (Hoeffel, pg. 67).

An additional amendment was offered by Democratic Congressman John Spratt of South Carolina. The Spratt amendment “sought to encourage continued presidential diplomacy while authorizing immediate use of American force, but only under U.N. auspices, and requiring the President to seek a second congressional vote for war authority if the United Nations failed to act satisfactorily against Iraq.” (Hoeffel, pg. 68). In an effort to sway the House in his favor Congressman Spratt “opened the debate on his amendment by reminding the House that his proposal called for the same approach used by the first President Bush; namely, to use American military force in an international action sanctioned by the United Nations Security Council “(Hoeffel, pg. 69). Unfortunately, the Spratt amendment also failed by a ratio of 155 for and 270 against.

Yet still, a third alternative option to unilateral warfare was proposed by Democratic Congressman Dennis Kucinich of Ohio. Congressman Kucinich attempted to use the time-honored tradition of recommittal. “A motion to recommit a bill or resolution to the committee that had approved it for floor action was considered the last opportunity for the opponents of the legislation to try to stop passage.” (Hoeffel, pg. 78). The Kucinich motion for recommittal proposed to add language to H. J. Res. 114 “which required the President, prior to using the authorized force, to issue an unclassified report to Congress that addressed the impact of such

use of force on our national security. The presidency report was to include an estimate of the costs and impact of military action, a plan to provide for humanitarian, economic, and political stabilization assistance in Iraq, an estimate of military and civilian casualties, a statement of international support for military action, an analysis of the Intelligence Community's assertions about Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, and an analysis of a long-term impact of a preemptive first strike on the stability of the world." (Hoeffel, pg. 78-79). The proposition was another valid option that added additional barriers to unilateral warfare and further separated the idea of the war in Iraq as an only and final option. However, this too failed to pass by a "margin of 101 for and 325 against" (Hoeffel, pg. 79).

As we have noted, there was not one, but three viable options presented by Congress to keep the Bush administration from proceeding to war with Iraq. These facts clearly and effectively illustrate that the call to arms against Saddam Hussein was indeed not the only and final option. Thus, one inevitably comes to the same conclusion we have time and time again; Operation Iraqi Freedom failed to meet the clause of *last resort* in Just War Theory and was therefore inherently "unjust".

#### *-Reasonable Chance of Success-*

As stated in Chapter I "Simply put, the *reasonable chance of success* clause states that in order for a war to be considered "just" the declaring party must have a reasonable prospect of victory in said war. In order to properly apply this tenet to Operation Iraqi Freedom one must consider two factors. First, it is prudent to take into account the conventional forces that the United States planned to engage in combat with i.e., Saddam's Republican Guard and the Iraqi

Army. Second, even if the intelligence being provided had been accurate, American armed forces should have expected significant resistance from the Al Qaeda insurgency that was allegedly occupying Iraq prior to the launch of Iraqi Freedom; therefore, this too must be considered in the prospects for victory.

First to be considered is the *reasonable chance of success* of American armed forces against conventional Iraqi forces including the Republican Guard. On the one hand, “Western military experts generally estimated that in early 2003, Iraq’s armed forces were down to about 40% of their 1991 Gulf War levels, when they fielded some 1 million troops. International sanctions had kept Iraq from maintaining or modernizing outdated weapons and equipment, and Iraqi soldiers lacked training in modern techniques of war.” (Otterman). Meanwhile, in the same year (2003) the American government spent a whopping “440.53 billion dollars, 3.83% of GDP” (MacroTrends), on its Defense Budget which includes recruitment, training, and equipping of warfighters. When looking at these numbers it is reasonable for one to conclude that the United States military had an above reasonable chance at defeating conventional Iraqi forces before the launch of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Indeed, “Coalition forces in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) were able to take down Saddam Hussein’s regime in less than three weeks, at the cost of relatively few Coalition casualties.” (Hosmer, pg.iii).

The second portion that must be considered in order to properly weigh the *reasonable chance of success* principle is that of the engagement of the alleged presence of Al Qaeda and other insurgent or unconventional forces. Although there is no evidence or intelligence to support the idea of Al Qaeda in Iraq before the invasion in 2003 let us nonetheless weigh it at face value given that it was indeed the premise under which Congress and the Bush administration were

operating. In this specific case it would prove prudent to first differentiate between conventional and unconventional forces.

The conventional force is the force that comes to mind when most think of an army. They wear uniforms, carry their weapons openly, and for the most part engage in direct combat with their enemy on the field of battle. Unconventional forces, guerillas, or insurgents are an altogether different breed of warfighter. “For guerillas don’t merely fight *as* civilians, they fight *among* civilians, and this is in two senses. First, their day-to-day existence is much more closely connected with the day-to-day existence of the people around them than is ever the case with conventional armies. They live with the people they claim to defend, whereas conventional troops are usually billeted with civilians only after the war or battle is over. And second, they fight where they live; their military positions are not bases, posts, camps, forts, or strongholds, but villages. Hence, they are radically dependent on the villagers, even when they don’t succeed in mobilizing them for “people’s war”.” (Walzer, pg. 184). It is precisely because of these forces and the failure of the U.S. to adequately acknowledge their potential impact before entering the war that Operation Iraqi Freedom continued for another eight years after former President George W. Bush gave his “mission accomplished” speech on board the USS Abraham Lincoln on May 1, 2003.

Even without considering the additional 8 years of combat required to “withdraw” American troops from Iraq one could turn to the example of the Vietnam War for historical evidence of the performance of American forces against those of an unconventional nature. Although several factors contributed to the detriment of the Vietnam War, it is undeniable that the guerilla forces with which America was engaged were a leading contributor. For as Walzer says, “anti-guerilla war is a terrible strain on conventional troops.” (Walzer, pg. 193). With that

being said; it is arguable that given the training, financial support, and equipment of American armed forces that they would maintain a *reasonable chance of success* in their victory against Iraq. Therefore, after weighing both types of combat that American troops had to engage in Operation Iraqi Freedom one could come to the strained conclusion that it did indeed meet the criteria for this tenet of Just War Theory.

### -Proportionality-

The clause of *proportionality* in *jus ad bellum* “is to be measured against the military operation as a whole, whereas proportionality under *jus in bello* is to be assessed against individual military attacks launched in the framework of this operation.” (Steenberghe). Thus, for this tenet one must weigh the objectives of the war against the overall impact it had in order to determine the overall “justness” of the campaign. In order to accomplish this, multiple different aspects of Operation Iraqi Freedom must be examined. First, the stated objectives of said Operation. Second, the casualties as a whole of said operation. Finally, one must look at the overall impact on Iraq and the region caused by the war.

The stated objectives of Operation Iraqi Freedom are rather simple to comprehend. The primary objective was to create "a stable Iraq, with its territorial integrity intact and a broad-based government that renounces WMD development and use, and no longer supports terrorism or threatens its neighbors." (Ball). Based on that primary objective the top three secondary objectives were to "defeat or compel capitulation of Iraqi forces, neutralize regime leadership,



and neutralize Iraqi theater ballistic missile/WMD delivery systems"(Ball) as well as the pursuit and elimination of alleged Al Qaeda operatives in Iraq.

The second aspect which one must review in order to determine if Operation Iraqi Freedom met the clause of *proportionality* is a difficult one to quantify, the casualties of the conflict or the human cost. Prewar estimates indicated that "Iraqi losses, including military personnel as well as civilians, would probably be ten to twenty times as high as the invading forces. In rough terms, they might range from 1,000 to 100,000, if the warfare took place mostly outside the cities most of these casualties would probably be military personnel. If the combat were in urban settings, then the majority of Iraqi losses would probably be civilians killed inadvertently in the course of the fighting." (O'Hanlon, pg. 23). With regard to projected numbers of American casualties, the prewar estimates suggested "that the United States and any other foreign militaries that ultimately participate in a war to change regimes in Baghdad could together lose anywhere from 100 to 5,000 personnel. (Numbers of wounded troops could be four to five times as high, making for total casualties ranging roughly from 500 to 30,000 casualties)" (O'Hanlon, pg. 23).

Now, it seems appropriate to take a look at the *actual* numbers of human losses incurred by Iraq and America. Preliminary data from Statista.com shows that between the years of 2003 (the initial invasion) to 2011(the drawdown of American forces) there were a total of 120,023 *civilian* deaths attributed to American forces. "Of the 4,040 civilian victims of US-led coalition forces for whom age data was available, 1,201 (29%) were children" (Rogers). These deaths are merely the ones attributed to direct combat, however "a recent study by American, Canadian and Iraqi health experts found that 500,000 Iraqi deaths were attributable to the war. The tally includes death from indirect causes, such as failures of health, sanitation, transportation,

communication and other systems. Still missing from this accounting is the fate of millions of Iraqis and Americans whose lives were rent asunder by the conflict — the families who lost loved ones and those struggling to support traumatized and ailing family members. Iraq's incapacity to rebuild its ravaged health and safety infrastructure extends the costs of the war into the distant future.” (Carasik). A chief contributing factor to these excess deaths caused indirectly by the conflict was the lack of American planning and budgeting to address such matters. For, as Carasik states in her article for Al Jazeera “Washington’s reconstruction and remediation plan for Iraq was woefully inadequate. Planning focused more on securing and upgrading oilfields for foreign investment than providing humanitarian support and cleaning up the lethal waste left behind “(Carasik). The lethal waste Carasik speaks of will be addressed shortly in the discussion of the overall effects of Iraqi Freedom on the country and the region.

American forces suffered approximately the number of losses O’Hanlon predicted for the entirety of Coalition Forces during the invasion, “4,488” (Carasik). In regard to number of wounded American warfighters, America also fulfilled O’Hanlon’s prediction for the entirety of Coalition Forces with a total number of over 30,000. However, this number could be interpreted as misleading because it “discount the tens of thousands of veterans who suffer from devastating physical, psychological and moral injuries and thousands of suicides after vets return home” (Carasik). These numbers continue to climb as a report from the American Veteran’s Affairs (VA) published in 2016 states that as of 2014 “an average of 20 Veterans a day died from suicide” (VA). In fact, “as part of its Costs of War series, Brown's Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs estimates that 30,177 active-duty personnel and veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have taken their own lives over the last nearly 20 years” (Losey). That is nearly four times the number of American lives lost in combat. Although these

men and women were not killed in direct combat per se, it is irrefutable that their deaths were caused by the operations they took part in and the woeful inadequacies perpetrated by Washington with regard to the preparation for their mental healthcare upon their return to the United States.

The final aspect that must be analyzed in order to properly determine if Iraqi Freedom meets the requirements of *proportionality* is the overall effect the war had on Iraq and her people. First to be considered is what happened in Iraq and the region as a direct result of the removal of Saddam Hussein from power. Hussein was a despot, of this there is no doubt. He ruled Iraq with an iron fist and was in no way, shape, or form bashful about committing heinous acts of murder and persecution. With that being said, there is a very old adage that comes to mind in regard to this topic; “The devil you know is better than the one you don’t.” As stated, Saddam was a murderer...and everyone in the region knew it. It was arguably Saddam’s reputation that kept the country of Iraq out of the purview of terrorist organizations such as Al Qaeda. One can easily come to this conclusion when they consider the fact that Saddam Hussein was captured on December 13, 2003. At this time there was no known presence of Al Qaeda in Iraq. Approximately 10 months later however, AQI or Al Qaeda in Iraq appeared “when Abu Mosab al-Zarqawi, a Jordanian-born militant already leading insurgent attacks in Iraq, formed an alliance with al-Qaeda, pledging his group’s allegiance to Osama bin Laden in return for bin Laden’s endorsement as the leader of al-Qaeda’s franchise in Iraq. Al-Zarqawi, who quickly came to be regarded as one of the most destructive militants in Iraq, organized a wave of attacks, often suicide bombings, that targeted security forces, government institutions, and Iraqi civilians. Intending to deepen the sectarian conflict at the heart of the Iraq War, al-Qaeda in Iraq especially

targeted Iraqi Shi'ites, sometimes during religious processions or at Shi'ite mosques and shrines.” (Tesch et al.).

In this manner Operation Iraqi freedom had lasting negative impacts on Iraq and the region in four distinct fashions. First, it resulted in the ousting of Saddam who was indeed a despot, but was not leading or collaborating with terrorist organizations. In fact, in Appendix II there is an excerpt from Senate Report 109-331 that illustrates the nonexistent “relationship” between Hussein and Al-Zarqawi specifically. Second, the removal of Saddam by American forces created a power vacuum in the region which allowed for men like Al-Zarqawi to move into and conduct operation in Iraq who otherwise, wouldn't have been there. Third, Operation Iraqi Freedom and the vacuum which it created allowed for not only the creation of AQI (Al Qaeda in Iraq) but also gave birth to a new threat of a similar vein: Islamic State of Iraq, which Abu Ayyub al-Masri “announced the creation of” (ISIS Fast Facts | CNN) in October of 2006; that ultimately evolved into ISIS. A terrorist organization that has since claimed responsibility for countless deaths and terrorist attacks the world over; including in Iraq. Finally, with the spreading of men like Al-Zarqawi and their ideology came an ever-increasing wave of sectarian violence that drove a wedge deep into the heart of Iraq from which she may never recover. For in 2013 alone “according to the United Nations, more than 7,800 civilians were killed in Iraq” due to sectarian violence” (Carasik), two whole years after the official end of American combat operations in Iraq.

The second way in which the overall war affected Iraq was the near total decimation of her infrastructure and the lives of the civilians which depended upon it. Researchers from the United States, Canada, and Iraq conducted a study on the negative affects the invasion had on Iraqi infrastructure and the deaths that were caused because of things like; lack of sanitation,

adequate medical care, etc. As well as civilian deaths that were caused by the “extensive migration in and emigration from Iraq occurring as a result of the war” (Brownstein). In their study “researchers estimated 405,000 deaths, with another 55,800 projected deaths from the extensive migration in and emigration from Iraq occurring as a result of the war” (Brownstein). A far cry from the average Americans misconception of the “Iraqi civilian death toll from the war being in the neighborhood of 10,000.” (Brownstein). Additionally, the previously mentioned study concluded “that 60 percent of the deaths were violent, with the remaining 40 percent occurring because of the health-infrastructure issues that arose as a result of the invasion” (Brownstein) and “approximately half those deaths were attributed to inadequate treatment for cardiovascular disease.” (Brownstein).

The final way in which Operation Iraqi Freedom affected Iraq as a whole that will be discussed herein is the long-term negative effects the combat, logistics, and equipment used in combat has had on civilians. Specifically, the use of depleted uranium and burn pits by American forces. “Depleted uranium is a dense metal produced as a by-product of enrichment of natural uranium for nuclear fuel. It is still radioactive, but at a much lower level than the starting material. It is used in armor-piercing shells and bombs, to give them more penetrating power (Depleted Uranium). Additionally, the United States is known to utilize depleted uranium in “tank armor and some bullets due to its high density” (US Department of Veteran Affairs) and “more than 300,000 DU rounds are estimated to have been fired during the 2003 Iraq war, the vast majority by US forces” (Edwards). As a side note, this is devastatingly ironic as one of the main justifications for the invasion in Iraq was to dispose of radiation-based weaponry. The massive amount of depleted uranium used by American armed forces in population centers of Iraq have caused a lasting health crisis for not only the generation of Iraqis that were in the vicinity of

combat, but for that generation's children. "Iraqi doctors report unprecedented spikes in birth defects, infant mortality and elevated pediatric cancer in Fallujah and its environs" (Carasik). Also in Falluja, a city in Iraq well known for the extensive fighting that took place there, there have been a surge in pediatric issues "which include a baby born with two heads, babies with multiple tumors, and others with nervous system problems" (Chulov). Naturally, the United States officially does not accept the link between these generational medical issues and their use of depleted uranium or the responsibility of having potentially caused said medical issues. But, "Dr. Chris Busby, a chemist from the University of Ulster who conducted two studies about the correlation between the use of weapons and the rates of disease in Iraq, said the findings revealed "the highest rate of genetic damage in any population ever studied"" (Carasik).

Exposure to burn pits are another source of long-term ailments for not only Iraqis but American troops. A burn pit is a "large area of land in which the military and its contractors incinerate all waste generated by military bases, including plastics, medical waste, rubber, human waste, and other materials." (Burn Pits Definition) The other materials disposed of in these pits can include ammunition, unexploded ordinance, paint, and anything else that the soldiers, marines, or contractors need to dispose of. As one can imagine inhaling the abundance of toxins coming from said burn pits is not good for one's health in the long term. The U.S. Veterans Affairs, the organization responsible for the medical care of returning veterans, has said burn pits can lead to "respiratory diseases other than allergies, with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, emphysema and chronic bronchitis" (Kine) as well as high blood pressure and "higher rates of insomnia, liver conditions, chronic multisymptom illnesses and decreased physical function, such as walking, running or climbing steps." (Kine). If these ailments are affecting soldiers and marines years after their service has concluded in their theater of operations, it is a logical

deduction that the same ailments are affecting the Iraqi civilians that lived near any one of the multitude of foreign military burn pits throughout Iraq.

When taking into account all of these factors and the overall impact they had on Iraq, the civilians that live there, and the region as a whole; it is undeniably clear that Operation Iraqi Freedom in no way met the clause of *proportionality*.

## Jus In Bello (Right in War)

### *-Discrimination-*

The first tenet of *jus in bello*, which was previously touched on in Chapter I, is that of *discrimination*. To reiterate; “The principle of discrimination concerns who are legitimate targets in war.” (Malese). This principle also deals with the idea of noncombatant immunity, which is “the intentional targeting of civilians and or noncombatants” and is totally prohibited by the vast majority of Just War Theories. There are a multitude of ways in which one could weigh the principle of *discrimination* in the framework of Operation Iraqi Freedom. However, the two of which to be discussed herein are the number of civilian deaths directly attributed to combat and what is known as the “Shock and Awe” campaign.

The number of civilians killed in Iraq, as we have seen thus far, is staggering. However, in order to add further perspective to these numbers, they will be compared with equivalent populations of American towns and cities in order to further illustrate the severity of the situation. “About 6 in 10 civilian deaths at the hands of coalition forces from 2003 to 2011 were a function of airstrikes, according to IBC data “(Bump), meaning that the other 4 in 10 were caused by direct small arms engagements or due to the failing of Iraqi infrastructure post

invasion as well as American failure to implement its restoration. In the year 2004, one year after the initial invasion “4.5 out of every 10,000 Iraqis were killed. Equivalent to 130,000 American deaths, the population of McKinney, Texas, in 2010” (Bump). In 2005, 6.1 out of every 10,000 Iraqis were killed. Equivalent to 181,000 American deaths, this would be like eliminating Tallahassee, Florida” (Bump). In 2006, “10.7 out of every 10,000 Iraqis were killed. Equivalent to 318,000 American deaths — the population of St. Louis” (Bump). Finally, in 2007, when the American “surge” of troops began, “9.2 out of every 10,000 Iraqis died. Equivalent to 277,000 American deaths — the population of Newark.” (Bump). As one can see, the amount of Iraqi civilian deaths caused by Operation Iraqi Freedom is nothing short of awful. If the proverbial shoe had been on the other foot, America would have lost the entire populations of McKinney, Texas, Tallahassee, Florida, St. Louis, and Newark, New Jersey in the span of just four years.

Another illustration of the principal of *discrimination* in Operation Iraqi Freedom is that of the “Shock and Awe” campaign of the initial invasion. The American led “Shock and Awe” campaign was launched on March 19, 2003, shortly after the declaration of War with Iraq; it was a relentless bombing campaign “aimed” predominantly at destroying the Iraqi government’s morale and will to oppose the invading force. While some may argue that this tactic was militarily effective, it failed on two fronts. First, the number of civilian casualties it caused. “On a per-day basis, the highest intensity of civilian killings over a sustained period occurred during the first three “Shock and Awe” weeks of the 2003 invasion, when civilian deaths averaged 317 per day and totaled over 6,640 by April 9th, nearly all attributable to US-led coalition-forces, reaching 7,286 by the time of President GW Bush’s “Mission Accomplished” speech of 1st May 2003” (IBC). To reiterate; 6,640 Iraqi civilians; men, women, and children were killed by U.S. led bombing runs in a matter of weeks; increasing to 7,286 by the beginning of May 2003. The



second way in which the “shock and awe” campaign failed is that it did relatively nothing to decrease the amount of time it took to resolve Operation Iraqi Freedom. Yes, it did provide for an easier ingress for American ground forces, however it had no such impact on American egress from Iraq; as American forces remained in country for an additional eight long years inflicting and suffering more losses of human life throughout the duration. Again, it is relatively plain to see that Operation Iraqi Freedom did not meet the standard of the tenet of *discrimination* and is as such, per Just War Theory, an unjust war.

### -Proportionality-

The final tenet of *jus in bello* and Just War Theory as a whole to be applied to Operation Iraqi Freedom is that of *proportionality*. In an effort to be precise it bears reiteration that this type of *proportionality* “is to be assessed against individual military attacks launched in the framework of this operation.” (Steenberghe). A good example to utilize in this application are the two separate battles for Falluja which took place in 2004. There is a third and most recent battle in Falluja which took place in 2016 and was conducted by the Iraqi government, thus it has no bearing on our Just War analysis.

The first battle for Falluja took place from April 4 to May 1 of 2004. This battle was fought in an effort “to pacify the Iraq city of Fallujah, rid it of extremists and insurgents, and find those responsible for the March 31 ambush and killing of four American military contractors.” (Swift). U.S. forces successfully retook one third of the city in three weeks through intense urban combat, but due to the heavy civilian casualties they inflicted in the process and the destruction to the city American forces were pressured to withdraw from Falluja on May 1, 2004. Thus, all

of the civilians that perished during this battle, died for ultimately zero tactical gain. That is “an approximate 600 Iraqi civilians, 300 of them believed to be women and children” (Swift) that perished for arguably no reason whatsoever.

The second battle for Falluja was fought five months later from November 7 to December 23 of 2004 in an “effort to retake the city from a growing insurgency and the remnants of “Saddam Hussein’s Baath Party” (Swift). In April, Fallujah had been defended by an estimated 1,500 insurgents. By November, it was estimated that the numbers had doubled.” (Hamourtziadou). Thus, a joint effort of American led Coalition forces including British and Iraqi military took part in an assault on the city. Knowing from past experience what was to come some “300,000 civilians fled the city” (Swift). Prior to initiating intense house to house fighting, Falluja was bombarded with ordnance from November 7 to the early hours of November 8, 2004. Once the fighting began “a great deal of destruction was caused by troops blowing holes in the walls of houses rather than risk a possibly booby-trapped door” (Swift) but after several days of heavy urban conflict the city was for the most part retaken; with several small groups of resistance fighters still pushing back against Coalition Forces for several more weeks. As a result of this battle “The insurgents in Fallujah were largely destroyed” (Swift) but at yet another high cost. “Some 110 coalition forces were killed and some 600 wounded in the battle; some 3,000 insurgents were killed or captured. An unknown number of civilians, estimated to be in the thousands, were also killed.” (Swift). A report put together by an agency of the United Nations, the IRIN or Integrated Regional Information Networks, attempted to account for civilian casualties during the second battle for Falluja. Although they were successful in gathering *some* data “The IRIN report is limited to bodies recovered ‘from rubble where houses and shops stood,’ and doesn’t include earlier recoveries of bodies from open areas and streets”

(Hamourtziadou). Additionally, the report only covers 9 of the total 27 neighborhoods in Falluja where fighting took place. The IRIN had “‘more than 700’ bodies recovered, of which over 550 ‘were women and children’; ‘a very small number of men were found in these places and most were elderly’.” (Hamourtziadou). In summary, the city of Falluja was ultimately retaken from the hands of resistance fighters but at yet another high cost. 300,000 Iraqi civilians were displaced by the fighting, and thousands more died as a direct result of the bombings and urban combat, predominantly women and children.

In conclusion, Operation Iraqi Freedom has come up short yet again in accordance with the Just War Theory’s principle of *proportionality*. As between the two battles for Falluja the military gain was control of the city and the killing or capturing of 3,200 resistance fighters. The loss however was 300,000 Iraqi civilians displaced, an untold number’s worth of physical damage to homes and businesses, and the direct deaths of nearly as many civilians (most women and children) as resistance fighters that were captured or killed (3,200).

## Conclusion

Operation Iraqi Freedom, all wars for that matter, are exhausting and painful endeavors. The concept of Just War Theory is in essence a framework for morally and ethically determining if individual wars are worth the physical, financial, mental, and spiritual effort required to complete them. “Is the juice worth the squeeze?” as it were. This moral framework has been in existence in one way or another for effectively thousands of years and has been applied to a plethora of conflicts and wars throughout human history; both in favor of and against.

This undertaking is no different, we have simply taken a predetermined standard and applied to a contemporary conflict in the hopes of determining whether the war was “just” or “unjust”, “right” or “wrong”. In order to come to a summary conclusion, let us revisit the individual conclusions of each tenet or principle of the Just War Theory. First, are the conclusions of *jus ad bellum* when applied to Iraqi Freedom. In terms of *just cause* this conflict was found wanting heavily due to the fact that nearly all of the intelligence provided to Congress before authorizing military action was either altogether fraudulent or drastically misrepresented. Therefore, the war should have never taken place in the framework of Just War. With regard to the principle of *proper authority*; legally speaking, President Bush did have the *proper authority* to declare war even if he attained said authority under false pretenses. In the sense of *last resort*, Iraqi Freedom again did not meet the standard. As was demonstrated, there were several viable alternatives presented to avoid engaging Iraq in warfare. This war failed to meet the requirements of *genuine intent* as well, giving the fact that most if not all of the intelligence which “caused” the initial provocation was false. The U.S.’s *reasonable chance of success* was acceptable in terms of the Just War Theory with regard to combatting Iraqi troops, Saddam’s Republican Guard, and the alleged Al Qaeda insurgents. In terms of *proportionality* Operation Iraqi Freedom failed to meet the standard yet again as while the war as a whole has been deemed by some as a success it served to not only destroy the entire infrastructure of Iraq and cause generational health issues for Iraqis; but it also proved to further destabilize the entire region.

As with *jus ad bellum*, Operation Iraqi Freedom also failed to meet the tenets of *jus in bello*; *discrimination* and *proportionality*. The standard of *discrimination* not being met was illustrated through the number of civilian deaths caused by combat and the utilization of the “shock and awe” campaign which was a detriment to not only the lives of noncombatants but the

Iraqi infrastructure as well. Finally, Iraqi Freedom's failing to meet the tenet of *proportionality-jus in bello* was illustrated via civilian death and displacement during the battles for Falluja. With all of that being said; these failings are not solely linked to Iraq but also apply to conflicts throughout a multitude of time and geographical location. For as we have seen throughout history "the whole world is wet with mutual blood, and murder, which is admitted to be a crime in the case of an individual, is called a virtue when it is committed wholesale." (Corey and Charles, pg. 38)

### Chapter III. The Day I Died

“What do you think, Flip? Right or left?” Hollinsworth said to me with a grin as our gun truck rumbled down a dusty street on a swelteringly hot September day in Baghdad. With a scoff and a grin, I reply “Well, being that the bomb is on the right, my vote is...we go left.”. Our command had been notified by an informant that insurgents had planted an IED nearby and we were ordered to investigate before returning to the Forward Operating Base to rearm and refit. “You know we can’t do that.” Hollinsworth says with a big smile on his face. Just as he finished his sentence “Gunnery down! Gunnery down!” our Platoon Sergeant barked over the net (radio). This was often the order that was issued when we were driving into an area known for contact with sniper fire. I’m sure I grumbled under my breath as my knees buckled under the weight of my armor and I slumped down into the turret and sat on the sling we were given to sit in. It’s important to note that the next few things that take place happen within the span of a few seconds. As the gun truck continues to rumble down the road in our small convoy, I hear something strike the roof which sets my mind in motion. “Did a kid just throw a rock at us?”, I think. “If there’s a kid I should stand up and tell him to get out of here, there could be a bomb.”- “Nah, the truck tire probably just threw a rock up”- “What was that? Was it a rock?”. Then, I remember another voice entering my head, I mean, it was my voice; but I wasn’t speaking to myself in the normal fashion. It was a very brief “conversation” but there were words like “you” instead of “I” that were used. Years later I began to assume that this voice was God stepping in on my behalf, that is the only semi-rational thing I can think of. “You should probably stand up”, I heard in my head. “Nah, the order was gunners down” ...” You should stand up.” ...” STAND UP!”. I quickly grab the handle in the turret and hoist myself up and begin looking around. As I stand the truck is rocked by a nearby explosion, as a response I shoulder my 240 B machine gun, flick it from safe to fire, and begin scanning for hostiles to

engage. There are none. “A fucking ambush” I think as I continue to scan rooftops and windows. A millisecond or so later I begin to feel a very strange heat streaming down my left leg. It doesn’t take long for me to come to the realization that the heat I am feeling is a large amount of blood running down my leg. “You’re dreaming dude, wake up.” I tell myself. “This isn’t happening, it’s not real. Open your eyes.” I tried telling myself, then reality set in. “If I’m hit, I need to check on them; and I need help.” I think. So, I leaned down into the turret to check on my driver (the Platoon medic), Hollinsworth (my Section Sergeant and good friend), and our interpreter, “Sam”. As I leaned down, I felt a shift in my left leg and an amount of pain that I had never felt and will hopefully never feel again as I collapsed down into the truck. It was a pain I can only describe as “crushing”, it took the very air from my lungs. I turned to Hollinsworth who was now inches from my face and said “I’m hit, man!”. He was in the same exact position he had been moments earlier. Still with the grin on his face, his arm resting on the radio, and a slight amount of blood. I knew in that moment he was dead. I turned to our driver, our platoon medic, and repeated “I’m hit! I’m fucking hit bad!” as I was bleeding profusely and the thought of my own death began to creep into the back of my mind. He didn’t respond, the look on his face was sheer panic and the only reaction he gave was to push harder on the accelerator. I was busy making a conscious effort to avoid looking at my wound as I didn’t want to lose consciousness. A few moments later the truck stopped and other members of the platoon ran up to the rear door of the truck and began to carefully pull me from where I lay. I remember looking into the eyes of the Truck Commander of our follow vehicle and saying “5 (Hollinsworth) is dead.” as I wept, both from the physical pain I was in and from the loss of my friend. “I know, man.” he replied. Thankfully “Doc” Olson was out in sector with another element of our troop that day and was able to render aid when I was wounded. My teammates laid me down on the side of the street



and “Doc” Olson began to assess the situation. As he did, I remember asking him “Doc, don’t bullshit...am I going to make it?” his reply was a simple and profound “I don’t know, shut the fuck up and let me work.”. At this point I was bleeding out rather quickly. A small amount of gunfire erupts to my left as another member of my team laid himself on top of me and grabbed my hand, he began to talk to me face to face. Both in an effort to shield me from the small arms fire and keep me mentally in the proverbial fight of my life. “Doc” Olson then looks me in the face and says “Okay, I have to do something and it’s going to hurt.”. I tried to catch my breath for a moment and replied “Okay. Do it.” At this point Olson shoved his hand inside of the wound in my leg, which I later found out was about the size of a football and a man’s fist deep, for what I assume was to check on or pinch off my femoral artery. The morphine that had been administered up to then did absolutely zero to shield me from that pain. When he was finished doing whatever it was he was doing inside my leg I breathed what can only be described as a sigh of relief. I was still in an indescribable amount of pain but it was now less than it was moments before. When I breathed this sigh of relief, I laid my head back onto the gravel beneath me and for the first time that day noticed how incredibly deep the blue in the sky was. Almost fifteen years later and I have yet to see a sky that deep of blue again. I remember clearly the thought that “Well, today isn’t a bad day to die.” and I began to pray. “Okay God, if today’s the day...I’m good with it, just take care of my family.”. It was a short and simple prayer but afterward I was overcome with an incredible calm and sense of peace. I don’t know if that was the morphine or if it was the fact that I was truly ready to die. But I can say two things with regard to that feeling; first, in the years of medical care that followed I have been re-exposed to morphine several times and second, I have never again felt a peace like the one I did laying in the street that day. Both of these facts combined lead me to the conclusion that the peace I felt came

from being truly ready to die. As I began to relax into that sense of peace, I was lifted off the street in a litter by my team and loaded into the back of the lead gun truck. My good friend Kimble was in the gunners' seat holding my hand and I heard him arguing with the Truck Commander. The decision was being made to drive me to the Combat Support Hospital or CSH rather than call for "Dust-Off" (a medical evacuation Blackhawk helicopter) as driving would be faster. At one point as the gun truck rips through Baghdad on that ten-minute drive to the CSH I remember beginning to chuckle. At which point Kimble, without missing a beat says "What the hell are you laughing at?!". I simply replied "I'm going home.". Before I knew it, we were at the CSH and I was being carried by my team into what I assume was the operating room. At this point I was laid on a table with a blinding bright light above me and was immediately badgered by a nurse "What's your name?!" "Philippus, Joshua", "What's your social?!" I answered him in kind, "What's your blood type?!" "It's written on my fucking boot.", "What's your blood type?!" "O pos". The male nurse I had been speaking to then turned to another nurse and said "Hit him", by the time I had turned to see who he was talking to she was already injecting me with something and just like that; it fades to black.

I remember fading in and out to the screams and moans of fellow servicemen over the next few weeks. I "came to" in Walter Reed Hospital a few weeks later, I had been heavily sedated throughout my time at the hospital in Landstuhl, Germany because I was still in a tremendous amount of pain and evidently heavily combative with nurses and doctors that were trying to help me. I had a feeding tube for my time in Germany as well as for some of my time in Walter Reed as I was either incapable or unwilling to feed myself. These events were followed by scores of surgeries and several years of physical therapy. Years later, I went through my medical records for the first time and found out that my heart stopped that day in Baghdad. I was

resuscitated and stabilized, but my heart stopped. For how long, the record doesn't say; but how did I get there? How did an average 21-year-old American boy end up dead on a table in Baghdad like so many of his brothers and sisters?

I feel it necessary to make a clarification before proceeding. I do not want to be mistaken as some jaded veteran who is angry because his life was forever altered by his participation in a war, as that is simply not the case. I signed the contract, I willfully deployed with my unit, and I do not regret it in the least. I met some of the finest men I have ever known during those years and I have gained a lifetime of experience in that same timeframe. I have seen what men will do out of love, hate, vengeance, and every other emotion that stems from the human condition. I have grown from an angry little boy into a much different man than I could have been had I not joined the military. So, please do not misunderstand me. I am not regretful. Quite the contrary, I am thankful for the bonds forged throughout my time in the military, the growth I experienced through the pain and rehabilitation of my injuries, and ultimately for the trail I have blazed throughout my life. However, the story I have told before and the ones that will follow in this chapter I feel need to be shared. They need to be heard. Both in an effort to let other combat veterans know that they are not the only ones who feel the way they feel and to let the civilian populous know the entirety of our story. So that when an individual says "Thank you for your service", they truly know what it is they are thankful for. After many years of shouldering the physical, spiritual, psychological, and emotional burdens of war I also believe it is necessary to hold myself accountable for my own personal actions and to hold the warrior subculture of America, of which I am fortunate enough to be a part, accountable for our actions as a whole. These are the reasons I have chosen to share these stories of my experiences in warfare. These stories and the thoughts regarding them are my own, I am incapable of speaking on behalf of all

those who have served in some aspect of combat during Operation Iraqi Freedom, I do not possess that intent or that right. However, it is my sincere hope that this work will inspire other combat veterans to take the difficult road of introspection. To take the long and difficult look at what it is we did, both individually and as a whole. Not in an effort to induce any sense of self-loathing or distress, but rather to induce a sense of accountability accompanied by personal and perhaps spiritual growth. These are my reasons and this is my hope.

Now, I would like to take a brief moment to explain where these stories are coming from and why I have chosen them. I want to share this in an effort to dispel any thoughts of the information herein being bogus or misremembered. When I deployed to Baghdad in 2007, I was dating a young lady, as many of us were. Her favorite movie was “The Notebook”. A movie in which a soldier deploys and writes the woman he loves every day; she never receives the letters and moves on with her life. Anyhow, as a scout I suspected that I would be on the move or working quite frequently, which I was, so I promised this young lady that I would write her every day. In order to fulfill my promise, I started writing daily at the end of mission in a couple of notebooks that I aimed to give her upon my return. When I actually did finally make it home, like many other soldiers and marines, I found myself alone; as she had found someone new in my absence. This fact is neither here nor there, it is shared merely to explain where the stories came from, when they were written, and that they are as accurate and truthful as a 20 to 21 year old man is capable of being. The reason I have chosen to share these specific stories is twofold. First, they are the stories that I personally have the clearest memories of and second, I believe they illustrate some of the strongest characteristics of the human condition; pain, emotion conflict, mortality, cooperation, failure, loss, and love. Henceforth I intend to link one of these stories with either an individual emotion or an element of the human condition that has been

listed. Pain however, I believe to have been covered in detail. To reiterate, although the soldiers and marines that fought this war were more or less conned in the same manner as Congress into fighting, it does not change the fact that the war was fought. A generation of American men and women stood up and answered a call for what we genuinely believed was to protect our families and our country for what became a sustained twenty years of combat. To clarify, I personally know men who fought in the “War on Terror” in an effort to keep it from reaching their family only to watch their sons come of age and serve in the same war. Twenty years of combat...that is seven thousand and three hundred days that are filled with memories and emotions like the ones that follow.

*-The Reality of War-*

Following is an excerpt from the journal I wrote in during my deployment that I believe woefully illustrates the moment that a twenty-year-old me truly began to realize what I had gotten myself into. The afternoon that follows had a profound impact on me for not only the remainder of my deployment but for years to come. It was very early on our deployment and I had recently been moved from the position of driver to the position of dismount, a position I had begged for. This meant that I was now responsible for conducting any operations that required dismounting the truck i.e., raids, observation posts, overwatch, listening posts, dismounted reconnaissance teams, and the like.

“March 24, 2007

...We picked up the Iraqi National Police because they had received a report of a body. They led us in a convoy to where the body was and when we got there, we turned down this alley and the truck stops. So, I do what I always do when the truck stops, I get out and walk the streets checking rooftops, alleys, doors, windows, the ground, for enemies or IEDs. As I began walking further down the alley I saw it, the body of a man between

his 30s and 40s shot in the chest and shot in the head, his eyes open, frozen, like they were staring up at me. I continued walking down the alley and saw the body of another man around the same age also shot in the head. Then came the body of a grown woman who the dogs must have gotten to before we arrived because there was hair everywhere and her scalp had been chewed all the way to the skull, she had also been executed. Then I see the two worst things I have ever seen in my life. The body of a 13 or 14-year-old girl, shot in the head, her eyes were clenched shut and her hands and arms were frozen stiff in a way that looked like she had spent the last few seconds of her life begging and pleading not to be killed. Laying next her was what I assume was the body of her little brother. He was probably 5 years old and shot in the head at really close range. You could tell from the burns on his forehead. There was a basketball sized black grease spot on the wall behind where his head had been when they shot him. His brain matter was hanging out the back of his head and there was just a big pool of half dried blood. I don't think I'll ever forget the way the blood stuck to the bottoms of my boots. Sort of like stepping in half dried juice or Kool aid. What gets me the most is the way the Iraqi National Police handled the bodies. They just through them in the bed of a pickup truck on top of each other, uncovered, and drove around like that like it was no big deal. Everything changed when I walked down that alley...I want to go home..." (Philippus, Book 1, pg. 2-4)

Reflecting on that day, the things I saw, and the emotions I felt lead me to the conclusion that since the time I have been home, my feelings about this particular incident haven't changed. I am still filled with anger, sorrow, and regret. Regret that my friends and I weren't there to prevent the deaths of that little boy and his family. The difference is, that I know now as much as we felt like supermen at the time; we were not. There is no way that we could have known that was going to happen, because if we did, we surely would have been there to stop it. "Sectarian violence" is a phrase that many people the world over have heard as they watch their evening news on their couch and wind down for the evening. But this is what it looks like on the ground. This was the day I realized the truth of what war is. It is a vile and disgusting thing and while there are fleeting moments of valor, honor, and incredibly uncommon feats of selflessness; the vast majority of it is comprised of what is seen and felt in the previous story; death and sorrow.

*-The Necessary Loss of Humanity-*

I believe Nietzsche said it best when he said “He who fights with monsters might take care lest he thereby becomes a monster. And if you gaze for long into an abyss, the abyss gazes also into you.” (Nietzsche, and Zimmern). However, what he failed to mention is that in some instances fighting with monsters necessitates the becoming of a monster or perhaps the lapse of one’s humanity, even if only for a time. This story occurs towards the end of a 48-hour DRT mission or Dismounted Reconnaissance Team mission. Essentially a small squad or section sized element conducts dismounted reconnaissance throughout specific points within the unit’s area of operation. The dismount team predominantly conducts reconnaissance utilizing the cover of darkness and night vision equipment while alternating rest and overwatch in a preferably abandoned but sometimes occupied house during the day.

“June 2, 2007

...The past two days we have been watching activity in this house that insurgents are supposedly using to manufacture IEDs (improvised explosive device). I’ve had different faces in the reticle of my scope for the past two days, it’s a weird feeling knowing that you could take someone’s life without them even knowing you were there. Anyway, the sun was starting to rise when we finally stopped walking and got to the house we were going to use for our overwatch position. As we entered, there was a horrible smell and we couldn’t figure out where it was coming from until we got to the second floor. There was a man’s body lying on its stomach with his hands tied behind his back. The corpse was so old that it had started bloating so the rope used to bind him was cutting into his wrists and there was this green liquid oozing everywhere. I think it was bile or something. I don’t know. But the sun was coming up so we couldn’t change houses and risk being seen. So, we stayed there with it. We had to be able to see outside so one of us had to be in the room with the corpse. After a couple of hours, we realized that the dude didn’t have a head. At first, we thought his shirt was pulled up over it but nope, he was headless. Our lieutenant for some reason ordered us over the radio to find the head and take pictures for evidence. But we couldn’t find it. After a few more hours we couldn’t stand the smell anymore so we collapsed our position and moved back to the trucks. My clothes still smell like that corpse. I’m glad that I’m here instead of you or my family. It’s a horrid place.” (Philippus, Book 2, pg. 1-6)

Years later, reflecting on spending several hours in close proximity to a headless corpse draws on the same feelings as it did back then; indifference and thoughts of necessity. While one may argue that the proper human response would have been to bury that man or change houses, as soldiers we were afforded no such luxury. The neighborhood we were in, much like the city, state, and country surrounding it, was a literal war zone. Should my team and I have made the decision to change houses and or come back and bury that man we would have exposed ourselves to unnecessary risk. Thus, running the chance of ending up in the same predicament as the gentleman we found ourselves sharing a house with. Unfortunately, warfare quite often necessitates the separation of natural human emotion or “humanity” from action. A rather stark separation at times as unfortunately to my team and I in that moment; it never entered our mind that our “roommate” had at one time been a human being with friends and a family. No, to us at the time he was nothing more than a pile of inconvenience. It appears what Nietzsche says is true, sometimes to fight monsters you have to become one.

*-Vengeance-*

In early 2007 I lost one of many very good friends of mine to Operation Iraqi Freedom. Out of respect for him and his family I will not mention him by name nor will I mention dates in this portion of the thesis as there are some rather graphic details to follow. The coming story and emotions that accompany it are known all too well to anyone who has ever actually engaged in combat. Simply put, they are the desire for swift and absolute vengeance.



“June 15, 2007

...I was providing overwatch on 35<sup>th</sup> street, like I always do during the day, all was quiet until about halfway through the afternoon. An explosion shattered the silence. I could see the smoke rising from my overwatch position, it wasn't far. This isn't a rare occurrence, but we called it up to higher on the net (radio). They responded by informing us that our sister troop had been hit by an IED and needed help. Hollinsworth almost immediately called up to me on the radio and said "Shooter, get down here. It's time to go." I grabbed my kit (equipment) and headed down the stairs of the apartment building I had been occupying, passing my replacement as I went. As soon as I got to the truck, we took off to our sister troop's sector. We pulled up just around the corner from where they had been hit and the roads were blocked by debris and other gun trucks, so we stopped and dismounted. Hollinsworth and I took off in a dead sprint and I soon as we hit the corner I could hear screaming and crying. Something told me to stop but I kept running. A friend from our sister troop stopped me we rounded the corner and said "Don't go over there man, it's bad." I should've listened. But being as stubborn as I am I replied "I have to. It's my job." And kept moving alongside Hollinsworth. As I walked past one of our sister troop's trucks, I could see that an IED detonated directly under someone's seat. There was nothing left of that part of the truck and there was blood and engine oil everywhere. The truck commander of that vehicle just sat there crying with his head in his hands. A few feet away laid my friend in a pool of his own blood. Both of his legs were gone from about mid-thigh down and he was still bleeding profusely. "Doc", one of our medics, was still trying his damndest to save him. But his skull had taken quite a bit of damage, he was unrecognizable without the name tape on his uniform. His helmet laid next to him with blood in it...it was horrible. The worst thing I have ever seen by far. His uniform was charred from where he seemed to have caught fire. "Doc" looked up and asked for a body bag. I don't know for sure but someone told me it took more than one bag to get the pieces of him out of there. After I saw my friend like that, I looked at Hollinsworth and we both just knew what was coming without saying a word. I walked back to the truck and told Jimmy "Give me the bitch. (shotgun)" His reply was simple "Lethal or nonlethal.". "Lethal." I said. Jimmy proceeded to quickly unload the nonlethal rubber shotgun rounds from the shotgun and load it with buckshot. When he was done, he threw it to me and off Hollinsworth and I went. We breached several doors with the shotgun and cleared several empty houses. Finally, we got to the house that was right in front of where the IED had been placed that killed our friend. We breached the door and cleared the house, herding all of the occupants into the living room. There was a man, a woman, a boy of maybe 13, and a girl of about 10. We asked several times "Who planted it?! Who killed our friend?!" to which the male owner of the house repeatedly responded in English, oddly enough; "I don't know. I was sleeping on the couch." At this point nobody was above suspicion... so either this guy did it himself or he knew who did. We asked him one more time; "Who did it?!" ... "I don- "I grabbed him by the collar of his white shirt and literally dragged him out of his bedroom, and into the living room forcing him to his knees while he was surrounded by his screaming family. "Last chance." I said. The man still wouldn't tell us what we wanted to know. So, I racked (loaded) a shell into the chamber and put the barrel about an inch from his face. As his families screams grew louder my finger inched towards the trigger. The owner of the house then finally began to give us a description of the three people he saw running immediately after the explosion.

After rambling off a pretty good description he told us that they had run into the house on the corner of the street. Without a word we took off running...I hope God sees fit to forgive us for the things we've done here. I really do. Well, my buddy's killers are rotting in an Iraqi prison cell but that isn't helping me sleep any better. I can still see his face...I can still smell the blood." (Philippus, Book 2, pg. 27-28)

Unlike the past few stories, my feelings about this particular instance have changed significantly over the years. In that moment, what I did felt as if it was the right thing to do and I automatically assumed that because that man didn't want to provide us with the information we wanted, that he was an insurgent himself. For these reasons, I was prepared to grievously harm or kill that man in his own living room in front of his family as a consequence of the death of my friend. What I failed to consider and what weighs on me now is the idea that perhaps that man just didn't want to get involved in the war he found himself surrounded by. Perhaps his silence was his willful and peaceful protest to the unrelenting violence encircling him and his family. Violence that I was prepared to perpetuate. In reality, I no longer feel as though that man was an insurgent trying to buy his friends time to escape. Now I believe that he was a husband and father that was doing his best to protect his family both from the American military (me) and the insurgency that we were engaged in combat with and because of this idea I am still deeply conflicted by this incident. On the one hand, we got the information that ultimately led to the capture of our friend's killers and on the other, I was prepared to harm or kill an innocent man in order to do so. Which is right and which is wrong? Due to the circumstances we found ourselves in, that proverbial line in the sand very quickly fades.

*-Love-*

Warfare is a terrible and disgusting thing, of this there is no doubt. However, there are fleeting beautiful moments interwoven within the fabric of chaos that make war as we know it. Life defining moments of valor, undying loyalty, compassion, and love. The next story conceals in it one of those moments. While like all of the stories in this chapter it is told through my point of view with regard to a specific experience within the larger frame of Iraqi Freedom, before proceeding I would like to clarify some things. First, people in general when it comes to warfare seem to throw around words like “hero”, I do not consider myself to be a hero or in any way special. I did a job that I felt at the time needed to be done and I did it to the best of my ability. Second, I feel that the amount of love a warrior has for those around him doesn’t get the attention it deserves. The vast majority of warfighters do not fight because they hate what is in front of them, they fight because they love what is behind them. A man (or woman) is capable of loving just as fiercely as he (or she) is capable of fighting. Please, keep these things in mind as you read the following story.

“April 9, 2007

...Our platoon’s convoy was moving down one of the main roads in our sector when suddenly a large amount of gunfire erupted to the north of our position. Our command decided we needed to go investigate so the decision was made to split our six truck convoy into two sections. The first three trucks (Alpha Section) were going to attempt to flank around the gunfire and locate the shooters, while my section (Bravo Section) was going to advance toward the gunfire. We split and my section rounded the corner towards the enemy. Immediately rounds started whizzing by my head, as I was the machine gunner on the top of the truck (gunning) today. There’s a distinct difference in the sounds of gunfire. When you hear whizzing that means that the rounds are being fired around your general location. Then, more often than not when you hear cracks or popping that means the rounds are being fired directly at you. So anyway, these rounds were whizzing as we rounded the corner. I remember looking at Sanchez who was gunning on the 4 Truck and he looked back at me. We just knew it was about to get wild. The dismounts get out of the trucks and move through a small hole in a fence to our left and into the field with mud huts where the gunfire seems to be coming from. About three

minutes after I lost sight of them the gunfire increases in tempo. The dismounts come over the net not long after saying that they're pinned down. I almost immediately ordered the driver of the truck to drive through the fence to our left and get us over there. He sort of gave me a double take and then complied. We drove through the fence without much issue and I could see the mud huts on my right and the dismount team (6-8 soldiers) on my left huddled behind what was left of a wall. I told my driver to put the truck in front of the dismounts. After all, the truck was armored. Once we pulled in front of them all of those whizzing rounds started turning into pops and cracks. The insurgents had shifted fire from the dismount team to me. I identified muzzle flashes coming from the mud huts and immediately returned fire. In a pretty short amount of time, I realized that my rounds weren't penetrating the mud huts as the insurgent AK fire wasn't letting up, which meant I hadn't killed any of them yet. To fix this I made the decision to order my driver to ram the wall of one of the mud huts. Again, he gave me a look like I was crazy...but he did it. As he drove into the wall of the hut, I was firing my 240 B machine gun into the windows and doors until right before we hit, then I'd brace for impact, then he would reverse and I would fire again at the doors and windows. This process repeated on each of the mud huts, 3 in total. At certain points I was firing into a structure that the truck was partially sitting in. After ramming the third house my driver went to reverse in order to give me a better position to continue engaging and when he did something smacked me in the helmet, knocked me into the side of the turret, and I fell down into the truck. I remember sitting there for a moment sort of stunned. I looked at my driver and asked if I was bleeding. He had me remove my helmet and checked me over quickly and couldn't find any blood. What we did find was a gash in my Kevlar helmet where an AK round had just hit it. I had just been shot in the helmet. In the few seconds that I was down inside the truck a lot of things ran through my mind. You, home, and my boys that were still on the ground in a hell of a fight. So, without really thinking about it, I stood back up and continued to engage the enemy and provide cover for the dismount team. Shortly thereafter some of our drivers dismounted and started to fire .203 HE rounds (a high explosive round from a grenade launcher) into the mud hut complex. Then, as quickly as it began, it was over. There's something about the silence after a fight like that, it has a certain beauty to it. It's just so surreal, the moments after a gunfight. Anyway, most firefights last a matter of a few minutes, this one lasted for about two and a half hours. When it was all said and done, I burned through about 500 rounds in my 240 and we didn't suffer any casualties. The worst of it was a gnarly headache and some aches in my shoulders and neck. No big deal. Thank God. Anyway...more tomorrow...I miss you." (Philippus, Book 1, pg. 42-46)

I've had a lot of people ask me if I would do it all again. That's a complicated question with a complicated answer. Knowing what I know now, the facts about fraudulent intelligence, civilian casualties, and how long we would actually end up occupying Iraq; it would be difficult to answer that question in the affirmative in good conscious. But there's a caveat. If for some

hypothetical reason the men that I know and love, the men that I fought with were still going to go and fight, well, in that case I would be on the plane right beside them. For any reason other than that I wouldn't run that gauntlet again. It's a peculiar kind of bond shared between men in combat, a bond that anyone who hasn't been there would never understand. You eat together, sleep together, laugh together, cry together, fight together, drink together...you do everything together. That bond just continues to grow and solidify until you deploy to combat and then, some would say it's sealed forever. I've had many a conversation with the men I deployed with about things like this, about the bond we share. I think that part of it stems from an unspoken promise. An unspoken trust. A trust that should I perish on the field of battle that they will carry on the most important part of me...the memory of me. They will tell my children how good of a man I was, even if at times I wasn't. They will tell my wife how much I loved her. They will tell my parents how brave I was and how hard I fought, right up until the end. Then, when this is all said and done, they will carry the memory of me with them for the rest of their lives. As Shakespeare wrote in Henry the V "But we in it shall be remembered, we few, we happy few, we band of brothers.". That's why I stood back up after taking a round to the helmet, out of love for my brothers. They were still in a pretty hellacious fight and they were depending on me, so I stood up. Not because I hated who I was shooting at (although getting shot has the tendency to make you angry) but rather because I loved the men I was defending. And that decision, I would make again in an instant. As a side note there is an article published by a military reporter about this incident should anyone care to view it; "<https://www.dvidshub.net/news/11525/raider-pinned-valor>" additionally my LT's sworn statement about this event can be viewed in Appendix IV.

*-Rage & Restraint-*

I have experienced a lot of anger in my life. Both as a child and as an adolescent as my life has been rather...turbulent. But these are stories for another time. The reason I mention it is because most, if not all the instances of anger I have experienced in my life thus far pale in comparison to the utter rage that I felt when I lost my friend Christopher "Goose" North. North was killed by an IED or mine attack in Baghdad on April 21, 2007. Now, for the most part the soldiers in my troop were all on a friendly basis. But, as in all things, there were certain groups that hung out with each other more than others. North was one of the guys that I chose to spend some of my time with. We went mudding (driving around in a muddy field), drinking in the barracks, horsing around in Aggieville (a town just outside of Ft. Riley), partying, things that 20 year old soldiers do. When he was killed I, like the rest of our unit, was devastated. The letter that follows describes the events that occurred in sector two days after North was killed and exhibit the rage experienced by warfighters and the restraint they sometimes have to show.

"April 23, 2007

...This morning we go to roll out on mission and as we got about half way to the gate our commander comes over the net (radio) and informs us that the "mission has changed". He continued that we were now in possession of the name, description, and place of residence for the man responsible for North's death. I was initially slotted to be the gunner today but because the Truck Commander knew North and I were close, he had me kit up and dismount. We rolled to the house and as the trucks set up an outer cordon to keep him from escaping the dismount team and I moved on foot toward the target house. Once I identified the house, we breached. In a matter of moments we had cleared almost the whole first floor. As I entered the living room I saw him, the guy they told me killed North, Hussein Ali Hussein...I'll never forget that name as long as I live. He and I locked eyes as I moved towards him and took him to the ground, hard. I put my knee in the base of his skull burying his face in the carpet while the rest of the dismount team cleared the remainder of the house. I rolled him over and looked him in the eyes and asked him why he killed my friend. He just seemed to smirk. I hadn't seen real evil until today, I mean true uncut evil. It took every ounce of strength I had to keep from killing him right there. When the dismount team finished clearing the house, they came back down the stairs and had me move Hussein into the kitchen. The whole time I was visibly

shaking from anger and Johnson kept telling me “Cool it, Flip. Cool it.”. The Platoon Sergeant, LT, and a few others came into the kitchen with us and ran an x-spray kit on him. It popped positive which meant that he had physically handled explosives in the last 48 hours. He was the guy. Right then he starts saying in plain English “If you think I am guilty, just kill me now.” Right after he said that my team left me alone with him again. I think they went to go look for phones, computers, and shit. You know, intelligence. Anyway, he just keeps repeating it “Just kill me now”. I wanted to put one in his face more than anything. Instead, I unbuckled my rifle from my shoulder and put it on the counter a couple of steps away from him and said “If you want to die, reach for it.” As I unsnapped my k bar knife and rested my hand on the hilt. I could see that he was thinking about it so I encouraged him “Grab it man, come on, you could get out of here. You’ve just got to kill me... the door is right there.” The whole time knowing full well the second he grabbed that rifle I was going to open him up. One or two minutes go by and he doesn’t move. He made up his mind. So, I grabbed my rifle, hooked it back up to my vest, and zip cuffed him. After a couple more minutes of me calling him a bitch for not grabbing my rifle my team came back in and began to move him out to the trucks. He bumped his head a few times on the way. They put him in my truck in the seat next to me for the ride to the DHA (Detainee Holding Area) so I had to sit with him for a few hours with a loaded rifle and not do anything...” (Philippus, Book 1, pg. 80-84)

My thoughts and emotions in regard to this event have changed drastically over the years. I still mourn for the loss of my friend, all of them for that matter. But I now carry them with me daily and attempt to live a life worthy of their sacrifice, a life filled with the things that they never got to see or will never see again in this life. Sunrises, sunsets, beautiful landscapes, stormy afternoons spent with my wife, the laughter of close friends, and time in the present moment with loved ones. How I feel about my behavior that day though is entirely different. In an effort to hold myself accountable I’m going to share my current thoughts both of a tactical and personal nature. Firstly, on the basis of tactics, what I did was unfathomably foolish and reckless. I made the choice out of emotion to potentially give someone, who may have been an insurgent, a loaded rifle with not only an avenue for “escape” but potentially the backs of my dismount team inside of an environment with which he was very familiar, his house. I put the word escape in quotations because real life is not like the movies, he may have wounded or killed me in the scuffle but he most assuredly would not have gotten away. I was accompanied

by at minimum 5 other armed soldiers inside his house with another approximately 20 more outside of his home. That being the case, it in no way excuses my recklessness or the emotionally charged choices I made that day. Enraged or not I had a responsibility to my team and to my platoon to keep their best interests at heart and in this moment, I failed them. I allowed my emotions to cloud my judgement and put others at risk because of it. If anything had happened to any of my platoon that day, I never would have forgiven myself. Let us not even mention the fact that had I been successful in my endeavor I may have been ultimately prosecuted and sentenced to prison time because of it. At the very least it would have been another psychological burden to bear for the rest of my life. Of which, I already have plenty. Now, I would like to take a few moments to touch on personal revelations that I had both that day during this incident and since. First, there is something that I have yet to disclose anything about to any one of the three people that I have told this story; Hussein's eyes. You see, I possess a rather peculiar eye color, somewhere between a very light brown and a hazel of sorts. In fact, it's an eye color that I have only seen once in all of my travels, outside of a mirror that is. I say this not to boast of something that makes me different but because when I rolled Hussein over his eyes were nearly identical in color to mine. So much so that I remember being momentarily taken aback. In the moment it was something that I was able to compartmentalize and brush aside but as the years have passed it is a small detail that has grown more significant to me and something that I will never forget. I think this minute detail is as significant to me as it is because it portrayed Hussein as something I did not want him to be in that moment, human. You see, in that moment I needed Hussein to be anything other than human, "true uncut evil" were my words in the letter, so that I could exact my vengeance. Thankfully that plan never came to fruition. But Hussein's humanity is a good point of transition to my next and final thought on this specific



event. That thought being “I probably would have been doing the same thing.”. Now, there is an important distinction that needs to be made along with that statement. As Hussein was indeed a combatant, I believe he was one of two kinds of fighters. First, he could have been what the military calls “a true believer”, which is a radical extremist that is willing to sacrifice anything and everything up to and including his or her life in order to kill or convert Westerners, more specifically Americans. Second, he could have been what I would consider a resistance fighter. Resistance fighter in this case being a guerilla fighter who is actively resisting the invasion of a foreign power either by him or herself, or as a member of a larger group or organization. With that being said, if Hussein was indeed a resistance fighter, had I been in his shoes; I would have been doing exactly the same thing, including killing his friends. This is not to say that I have brought myself to forgive Hussein for killing North, because that would be a lie. But, in the case that he was indeed a resistance fighter then at the very least I can say I understand him.

### *-Fear-*

Another emotion that runs rampant throughout warfare is that of fear. Any man, woman, marine, or soldier that tells you they fought in combat and were never grasped by fear is either a psychopath or a liar and I have no qualms with stating that openly. The fact of the matter is that an effective warfighter recognizes the fear, wrangles it, and uses it as fuel for the fire. Allowing the fear to gain control of the situation is simply not an option for a true warfighter. This portion of the thesis is intended to share my personal experiences and feelings towards them. For this reason, I have chosen a specific story, as I have with the previously discussed emotions. To reiterate, fear is something that is plentiful within the realm of combat. I could have chosen the

story about the first time I was shot at by an insurgent and returned in kind. I could have chosen the story about the time that insurgents attempted to overrun the position of my Dismounted Reconnaissance Team with superior numbers and were ultimately forced to break contact when support arrived. Instead though, I have chosen to discuss a very specific IED attack, one of many, that I have been fortunate enough to survive. The reason for this is because in my opinion, in a gunfight, there is some semblance of control. One can choose to aggressively move to and destroy the enemy, break contact, flank, call for close air support; there are a myriad of options. However, in an IED attack, unless you spot the IED beforehand, which is a rare occurrence, there are no options; you either survive or you don't. This, for me personally, makes it all the more fear inducing.

“Undated

...We were down right exhausted, as usual after 24 or 48 hour missions. Finally in the trucks on our way back to the FOB (forward operating base) to rearm and refit (get some rest and shower). It was dusk, that weird time in between normal daytime operations and running blacked out under NODs (night vision). Anyway, you know that weird subconscious thing everyone gets about going over high overpasses back home? Well, now I've got a reason for mine. So, we're rolling down the MSR (main supply route- freeway) at about 60 and I'm doing what I usually do on the way back in. Staring out the window of my back seat thinking about that hot shower and some hot food for the first time in a couple of days. We peak this overpass when all of the sudden there's a bright flash, a boom that I felt in my chest, and the whole world begins to spin. I've been in several explosions since I've been here and it's always so weird the way the brain reacts; everything slows down. You know how in the Matrix, Neo can slow time down and dodge bullets? It's like that except we aren't dodging shit. I swear it slows down so much you can take everything in. All of the dust and dirt particles from the floor of the truck are suspended in the air like we're in zero gravity, the radio is going ape shit but it sounds like we're under water “IED! IED!” I can see the faces of the guys in my truck kind of in an “oh shit” sort of pose, and then I see our trucks move past us out the window going the opposite direction. That's when it clicks; now there's a high pitched ringing in my ears and I realize the 5500 pound armored truck we're in has been thrown into a spin...on the top of an overpass. It took what felt like an eternity for us to complete our 360 or whatever it was and for the driver to regain control. When he finally was able to stop the truck, I realized we were probably less than six inches from going off the side of the overpass and through the windshield I could see front end of one of our gun trucks facing the opposite directions. “Everyone good?!” Hollinsworth yells out. After everyone checks themselves and realizes we have all of our fingers and toes the weirdest thing

happens. The truck fills with laughter, including my own. But it wasn't the "haha this is fun" laughter, more of the "haha holy shit we almost died" laughter. Anyhow, we made it through another day. Even if we did have to ride back on flats. I'm going to go get that hot shower and hot food I was thinking about earlier...I miss you babe. Talk soon."  
(Philippus, Undated letter home)

Looking back on this event doesn't necessarily rouse any new or changed emotions. The emotion I feel currently is the same as it was immediately after that IED attack; indifference. It simply is what it is. If you don't see the IED before it detonates one of two things is going to happen; you'll either survive or you won't. With that being said, that is how I felt *after* the attack. Before and during are entirely different animals. For me personally, there was nothing more frightening than IEDs. The reason being is that you can't really fight them. If the explosive is well made, well hidden, and well timed; your only defense is to see it before it detonates, which is a near impossibility. Don't get me wrong; there were several instances in which we found IEDs and diffused or detonated them before our attacker could set them off. But compared to how many were detonated as they intended, the ones we found were minimal. If given the opportunity, I personally would choose a gunfight over an IED any day of the week.

*-Adrenaline and a Sense of Righteousness-*

There are few things in the world that young men crave more than adrenaline and a chance to be the "hero" in their own story. I truly believe this fact is one of the reasons military recruitment is so successful in America. Sure, there are other benefits such as money for college, a chance to see the world, and "free" healthcare. But they pale in comparison in the mind of most young men to the idea of being the "good guy", killing the "bad guy", and saving the day. The

following letter is about one of the few incidents I was involved in that truly felt like the “right” thing at the time.

“June 3, 2007

...Our objective was multiple HVTs (high value targets) for our area of operation. So, basically some of the baddest dudes in the neighborhood we patrol. The idea was to hit all three houses with multiple platoons at the same time. Anyway, we get to the infill point and dismount. We move through the darkness as quiet as possible with our NODs (night vision) and PEQs (IR laser that can only be seen with NODs) about four blocks to the target house. We identify the target house and set up on the wall next to the front gate and wait for the other platoons to get set. I was point man in the stack (lead in the formation). About 3 minutes after we set up the call comes over the radio “Go! Go! Hit ‘em now.” we breach the gate and Jimmy opens the front door for us with the shotgun. We gained entry and dominated. It was complete organized chaos and it was beautiful. After locking it down we searched the house and found an illegal 9 millimeter pistol, multiple cell phones used to trigger IEDs, and the civilian that gave us the tip identified the owner of the house as the man we were looking for. We were almost done and the LT comes over the net (radio) and says we have another house to hit and we need to do it fast. So, we move the detainee up the road top 3<sup>rd</sup> platoon with the evidence and moved out to the second objective. We get there and breach the door to the second house and our HVT comes out of the first room with his hands up. I quickly took him to the ground and the rest of the boys moved past us continuing to clear as I zip cuffed him. In a bedroom down the hall we found the last HVT we were looking for. After we secured the house, we started SSE (looking for phones, computers, and other intelligence). We found \$10,601 in American currency and two trash bags literally filled to the brim with Iraqi dinar. There were women and kids in the house so before we left, we dug out about 500,000 Iraqi dinar and gave it to the woman of the house, which we weren’t supposed to do; but they’ve got to eat too. After that we took the HVTs to the DHA (detainee holding area) and came back to the FOB. 3 more bad dudes down, not bad for a night’s work...” (Philippus, Book 2, pg. 7-11)

For the most part my thoughts on this event haven’t changed much over the years. First, I will tell you that nothing on this earth compares to the feeling one gets right before breaching the door of a house potentially filled with armed combatants. It’s exciting, it’s terrifying, and the rush you get from it is unrivaled. Once the door is breached and the threshold is crossed what transpires in the next few moments is difficult to describe. The only thing I can think of that is even remotely similar would be a well choreographed dance. The room is illuminated under a green hue of your night vision, your teams infrared lasers are moving from corner to corner

searching for combatants, and every member of your team knows their next step. When executed properly anyone unfortunate enough to be on the receiving end would ultimately hear a loud bang and upon further inspection would have 4 to 6 armed men in the room with them before realizing what's happened. Not to mention the fact that for the recipient this entire event takes place in near complete darkness. As one may imagine the thought of this "dance" still gets my heart beating a little faster, but I digress. To this day I still believe that the men we arrested that night were not good men. I will not go into further detail here but in my experience, they were the type of men that did evil solely for the sake of doing evil. Does this change the fact that they too are human? No. However, I am simply stating that I have been involved in a lot of raids. Some of which I questioned and still question why we took the men that we did...but this specific raid; is not one of them.

*-Mortality-*

War is hell. That is a very popular phrase in military culture. There are many reasons that this is true, of them perhaps the most prevalent is the prolonged exposure to death. War forces one to take part in things that they otherwise wouldn't experience; killing of the enemy, the violent deaths of one's close friends, and a very real look at one's own mortality. The following excerpt is from a letter written after the funeral services in theater for my friend Robert Dixon. It provides a glimpse into the warrior culture laying one of their own to rest. An important thing to remember when reading this is that after bidding our friend farewell, we went almost immediately back out into sector to continue on with our objectives. There is no time for grief in combat. We are forced to deal with that loss much later.

“May 11, 2006

...I finally went when the time came and it was the saddest thing I have ever seen. “Amazing Grace” played on the bagpipes and they talked about his two sons and his wife. I think I cried more for Dixon than I did for my own father, is that bad? I don’t know. They showed a picture during the slideshow of Dixon and North together, it was rough babe. They did this thing called the “final roll call” where they call out for multiple soldiers and then the soldier answers, then they call for Dixon, no answer, they call for him two more times, silence, and then the silence is shattered by the 21 gun salute. I know you’re always preaching on how I should keep my head up and try to smile more. But, it’s so hard when so much darkness and death surrounds you...at his battlefield cross I just told him that I would “see him on the other side”. At least there you can escape death, there is no escaping him here. I’ve just got to make it home. I refuse to die here. I have to get back to my momma and my brothers...and you...God willing. I just hope these nightmares stop soon. I can’t deal with much more of this. I want to go home. I wish we never had to come here.” (Philippus, Book 1, pg. 90-92)

As one may imagine my feelings with regard to the events described in this particular letter still weigh heavily on me. A good friend told me long ago “Dealing with grief isn’t about putting down the boulder. It’s about learning how to walk while carrying it.” There are two main differences in the way I feel about the loss of my friends now. The first is that now I have learned to “walk while carrying it”. You see, as a soldier in combat this is something that is all new and very sudden. Sure, you expect to encounter death...but I assure you there is nothing that compare you for the amount of death and the way in which it transpires. So as one can imagine it takes a varying amount of time, years for some (including myself), to learn how to shoulder this burden and still lead a full life. The second thing that has changed is that I now feel a greater responsibility to my friends that were killed. When they died, I felt that I had to keep fighting because if I stopped fighting then I thought their sacrifice was in vain. But now I know that my true responsibility to them is more important than that. It’s that I keep living. I have to carry on their memory and do the things that they will no longer get to do. I have to fill what time I have left with purpose, with love, and with growth; wherever possible.

## Conclusion

The intent of this chapter has been to illustrate the fact that while politicians often dictate when, where, and how wars are fought; for our purposes justly or unjustly. There are men and women on the ground who physically and psychologically carry the burdens of the wars declared and caused by others. This chapter was written in an effort to bring to light some of the emotions and situations that these warfighters find themselves facing as a result. I have chosen to use my own personal experiences in an effort to face parts of my own past, make the content more real to you the reader, and to in a sense attempt to explain what it is that actually occurs in modern combat. To further drive this illustration home, I would like to share a final closing thought. Perhaps one of the best descriptions of warfare I have ever encountered didn't come from a war movie or book about combat but rather a Western. The introduction to the television show "1883" speaks rather eloquently about the ruggedness of the Great Plains. However, when listened to within the lens of warfare, in my opinion, it fits perfectly. The introduction says "I remember the first time I saw it. I tried to find words to describe it but couldn't. Nothing had prepared me...no books, no teachers, not even my parents. I heard a thousand stories but none could describe this place. It must be witnessed to be understood. And yet...I've seen it and understand it even less than before I first cast eyes on this place." Some call it just. Some call it unjust. "But those phrases were invented by professors in universities surrounded by the illusion of order. And the fantasy of right and wrong. To know it, you must walk it. Bleed into its dirt. Drown in its rivers. Then its name becomes clear; it is hell. And there are demons everywhere. But, if this is hell and I am in it, then I must be a demon too." What this means to me is that war for the warfighter, for the one that is there *in* the fight, it is much more than

simply “just” or “unjust” as the theorists in Chapter 1 imply. Simply put, it is everything. Everything is at risk and everything is to gain. Upon arrival to the theater of combat, the “justness” of the war doesn’t weigh as heavily as it did prior to arriving. The concern for “justness” is very quickly overshadowed by the concern for survival. Not only for oneself but for the members of your unit as well. That is why we fight. For each other. It’s the men, not the mission.

I would like to reiterate the idea that to the warfighter, the “man in the arena” as it were, the justness of the conflict they are in the throes of ceases to matter the moment the first round cracks past them. That is not to say that morality is no longer given thought, quite the contrary. What is meant by this is that the concern with the entire conflict being “just” in the terms of Just War Theory is no longer the primary focus. Instead, the soldiers and marines are forced by the circumstances in which they find themselves to have a paradigm shift towards their survival and the survival of their unit members. You see, war and conflict by their very nature are predominantly unjust. I say “predominantly” because I do believe that there are historical examples of Just War. Such as World War II or the American Revolutionary War. But war, like man, has grown and evolved. War is no longer fought in a “gentlemanly” nature like the knights of the Middle Ages or the British soldiers of the American Revolutionary War supposed. It is vile and it is ugly. It has become something that we, as a species, are so disturbingly skilled at that virtually no party escapes unscathed, including civilians. Perhaps humanity would be better served by the realization that the idea of a “Just War” exists solely in the minds of self-serving politicians and sheltered philosophers.

Combat veterans have an altogether different view of “Just War”. For we have been there. We have seen it. We have waded through the blood, sand, mud, and shit. This offers us a



particular perspective that is not afforded to those who haven't experienced war up close. The perspective which reveals the idea of "Just War" for what it is; a comforting myth. I use the word comforting because whether "just" or "unjust", war is still hell. But for those who are comforted by the idea that what they have done was to accomplish a greater good or to serve a "just" cause are often able to carry on with their lives with slightly fewer sleepless nights. This is not to say that believing in what we did over there is right or wrong. As I have said, I am no one to keep anyone from their peace. However, for those of us who believe the war in which we fought was "unjust" we are denied the comfort of that higher purpose. So, we must spend many days and many nights fighting another war. A war within ourselves to reclaim what we lost along the way; our humanity. This thesis has been my attempt to bring that war within to a decisive conclusion by holding myself accountable for my actions during an unjust war and sharing a perspective that many may never get the chance to see. Much like instinctively believing that a war is just, this is my way of making it make sense.

"If in some smothering dreams, you too could pace  
 Behind the wagon that we flung him in,  
 And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,  
 His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin;  
 If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood  
 Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,  
 Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud,  
 Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,  
 My friend, you would not tell with such high zest  
 To children ardent for some desperate glory,  
 The old lie: Dulce et decorum est  
 Pro patria mori."

-Dulce et Decorum Est, Wilfred Owen, 1917

## Appendices

### I. Excerpt of Conclusions from 2004 Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Report 108-301

- Most of the major key judgements in the Intelligence Community's October 2002 National Intelligence Estimate (NIE), Iraq's Continuing Programs for Weapons of Mass Destruction, either overstated, or were not supported by, the underlying intelligence reporting. A series of failures, particularly in analytic tradecraft, led to the mischaracterization of the intelligence.
- The Intelligence Community did not accurately or adequately explain to policymakers the uncertainties behind the judgements in the October 2002 National Intelligence Estimate.
- The Committee found significant short comings in almost every aspect of the Intelligence Community's human intelligence collection effort against Iraq's weapons of mass destruction activities, in particular that the Community had no sources collecting against weapons of mass destruction in Iraq after 1998. Most, if not all, of these problems stem from a broken corporate culture and poor management, and will not be solved by additional funding, and personnel.
- The Central Intelligence Agency, in several significant instances, abused its unique position in the Intelligence Community, particularly in terms of information sharing, to the detriment of the Intelligence Community's prewar analysis concerning Iraq's weapons of mass destruction programs.

- The language in the October 2002 National Intelligence Estimate that “Iraq also began vigorously trying to procure uranium ore and yellowcake” overstated what the Intelligence Community knew about Iraq’s possible procurement attempts.
- Even after obtaining the forged documents and being alerted by a State Department Bureau of Intelligence and Research analyst about problems with them, analysts at both the CIA and DIA did not examine them carefully enough to see obvious problems with them.
- When coordinating the State of the Union, no Central Intelligence Agency analysts or officials told the National Security Council to remove the “16 words” or that there were concerns about the credibility of the Iraq-Niger uranium reporting.
- Numerous intelligence reports provided to the Committee showed that Iraq was trying to procure high strength aluminum tubes. The Committee believes that the information available to the Intelligence Community indicated that these tubes were intended to be used for an Iraqi conventional rocket program and not a nuclear program.
- The Intelligence Community’s position in the National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) that the composition and dimensions of the aluminum tubes exceeded the requirements for non-nuclear applications is incorrect.
- The statement in the key judgements of the October 2002 National Intelligence Estimate that “Baghdad has biological weapons” overstated what was known about Iraq’s biological weapons holdings.

- The statement provided in the key judgments of the National Intelligence Estimate that “chances are even that smallpox is part of Iraq’s offensive biological weapons program” is not supported by the intelligence provided to the Committee.
- The statement in the key judgements of the October 2002 Iraq Weapons of Mass Destruction National Intelligence Estimate that “Baghdad has...chemical weapons” overstated both what was known about Iraq’s chemical weapons building and what intelligence analysts judged about Iraq’s chemical weapons holdings.
- The judgement in the October 2002 Iraq Weapons of Mass Destruction National Intelligence Estimate that Iraq was expanding its chemical industry primarily to support chemical weapons production overstated both what was known about expansion of Iraq’s chemical industry and what intelligence analysts judged about expansion of Iraq’s chemical industry.
- The National Intelligence Estimate assessment that “Baghdad has procured covertly the types and quantities of chemicals and equipment sufficient to allow limited chemical weapons production within Iraq’s legitimate chemical industry” was not substantiated by the intelligence provided to the Committee.
- The Intelligence Community assessment in the key judgements section of the National Intelligence Estimate that Iraq was developing an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) “probably intended to deliver biological warfare agents” overstated both what was known about the mission of Iraq’s small UAVs and

what intelligence analysts judged about the likely mission of Iraq's small UAVs.

- The Intelligence Community's elimination of the caveats from the unclassified White Paper misrepresented their judgements to the public which did not have access to the classified National Intelligence Estimate containing the more carefully worded assessments.
- The names of agencies which had dissenting opinions in the classified National Intelligence Estimate were not included in the unclassified White Paper.
- The key judgements in the unclassified 2002 White Paper on Iraq's potential to deliver biological agents conveyed a level of threat to the United States homeland inconsistent with the classified National Intelligence Estimate.
- The Central Intelligence Agency's assessment that to date there was no evidence proving Iraqi complicity or assistance in an Al Qaeda attack was reasonable and objective. No additional information has emerged to suggest otherwise.

## II. Excerpts of Conclusions from 2006 Senate Report 109-331

- Postwar findings indicate that the Central Intelligence Agency's assessment that the relationship between Iraq and Al Qaeda resembled "two independent actors trying to exploit each other". Postwar findings indicate that Saddam Hussein was distrustful of Al Qaeda and viewed Islamic extremists as a threat to his regime, refusing all requests to provide material or operational support.

- Postwar findings have identified two occasions, not reported prior to the war, in which Saddam Hussein rebuffed meeting requests from an Al Qaeda operative. The intelligence community has not found evidence of any other meetings between Al Qaeda and Iraq.
- Postwar findings support the April 2002 Defense Intelligence Agency assessment that there was no credible reporting on Al Qaeda training at Salman Pak or anywhere else in Iraq.
- Postwar findings indicate that Saddam Hussein attempted, unsuccessfully, to locate and capture Al-Zarqawi and that the regime did not have a relationship with, harbor, or turn a blind eye towards Zarqawi.
- Postwar information reveals that Baghdad viewed Ansar Al-Islam as a threat to the regime and that the IIS attempted to collect intelligence on the group.
- Postwar information supports prewar Intelligence Community assessments that there was no credible information that Iraq was complicit in or had foreknowledge of the September 11 attacks or any other Al Qaeda strike.
- No postwar information indicates that Iraq intended to use Al Qaeda or any other terrorist group to strike the United States homeland before or during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

### III. Excerpts from the Duelfer Report

- There were no stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.
- Iraq destroyed its chemical weapons stockpiles in 1991, and only a few old, abandoned chemical munitions were discovered.

- Iraq abandoned its biological weapons program in 1995. While it could have re-established a rudimentary biological weapons program, there was no indication it was trying to do so.
- Iraq ended its nuclear program in 1991. There was no evidence of any serious effort to restart the program, and Iraq's ability to reconstitute a nuclear weapons program progressively decayed after 1991.
- Saddam Hussein personally controlled all of Iraq's strategic decisions, and he wanted to recreate Iraq's weapons capabilities, if U.N. sanctions were ever lifted, and if Iraq's economy improved.
- Saddam Hussein's main objective of his public blustering was to fool his archenemy Iran into thinking that Hussein had weapons of mass destruction
- The former Regime had no formal written strategy or plan for the revival of WMD after sanctions.

#### IV. LT's Sworn Statement

"PFC Philippus, while on mounted patrol (99-6, 9APR07) responding to a firefight between his platoon's dismount team and insurgents who were fighting from mud huts in Mulhalla 830, southern Baghdad, served valiantly as his truck's gunner. When the Platoon's dismount team became pinned down by 5-7 insurgents with automatic weapons, they requested truck support from the gun trucks positioned behind a 6 foot brick wall. While his driver breached the wall, driving back and forth into it to destroy it, PFC Philippus provided continuous and accurate suppression fire with his 240B machine gun to aid the dismount team. As the firefight continued, PFC Philippus's truck

was positioned in the line of fire to allow the dismount team freedom of maneuver. While providing suppressing fire for the dismounts, PFC Philippus was struck in the Kevlar (helmet) by enemy fire. Smashing his head into the turret and dropping him inside the truck. With disregard for his own life and personal safety, PFC Philippus immediately jumped back on his gun and continued to engage the enemy. His platoon was able to maneuver in a way that forced the enemy to break contact, and then clear the mud hut complex. His selfless actions allowed his platoon to conduct the engagement for approximately 2 hours without receiving any casualties.” (ARCOMV sworn statement)



## Ad Memoriam

(In memory of)

- Staff Sergeant Courtney Hollinsworth, 27, Yonkers, New York, KIA September 9, 2007, Baghdad, Iraq
- Specialist Robert “Bobby” Dixon, 27, Minneapolis, Minnesota, KIA May 6, 2007, Baghdad, Iraq
- Specialist Braden J. Long, 19, Sherman, Texas, KIA August 4, 2007, Baghdad, Iraq
- Specialist Rodney J. Johnson, 20, Houston, Texas, KIA September 4, 2007, Baghdad, Iraq
- Private First Class Aaron Genevie, 22, Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, KIA April 16, 2007, Baghdad, Iraq
- Private First Class Christopher “Goose” North, 21, Sarasota, Florida, KIA April 21, 2007, Baghdad
- Private First Class Michael Pittman, 34, Davenport, Iowa, KIA June 15, 2007
- Private First Class William C. Johnson, 22, Oxford, North Carolina, KIA June 12, 2007, Baghdad, Iraq
- Private First Class Steven J. Walberg, 18, Paradise, California, KIA April 15, 2007, Baghdad, Iraq

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