



*A belief analysis of the build-up to the 2003 Iraq War*

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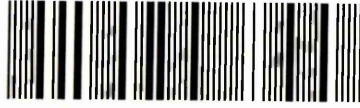
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**A Belief Analysis of the Build-up to the 2003 Iraq War**

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of  
Sheffield Hallam University  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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## Abstract

This project aims to analyse the build-up to the 2003 Iraq war from a doxastic perspective, taking the nuclear and terror belief propositions as the paradigm of the professed rationale for the war. The Bush administration expressed a belief in favour of the given rationale under conditions epistemically inadequate to warrant belief. I will explore the concept of belief in relation to acceptance and faith in a bid to highlight the distinctive character of belief. The research aims to examine a possible attribution of belief and acceptance in light of the evidential conditions at the time. In an attempt to establish the epistemic status of the given paradigm belief propositions, taking them at face value, the research explores a commonsensical, internalism, and a non-commonsensical, externalism, justification theory along with deontologism as a possible source of motivation behind the internalist constraint on justification. This research concludes, in light of the evidential conditions at the time, that the given supposed beliefs can be rightly characterised as neither paradigmatic nor non-paradigmatic cases of belief. That is, it concludes that neither belief nor pragmatic belief can be rightly attributed to the given supposed believing subjects. Rather, it concludes - in light of the new security environment, the nature of the alleged threat in question, the certainty thresholds and evidential standards considered appropriate to accept a given threat in a post-9/11 era, the inadequacy of the available supporting evidence along with the risk asymmetries associated with accepting or rejecting that  $p$  - that the given alleged cases of belief are more apt to be characterised as cases of mere propositional acceptance. That is, of course, if the given supposed beliefs were genuine propositional attitudes rather than pretended beliefs or mere public display. The originality of this thesis emanates from the epistemological approach I have taken to examine the Bush administration's case for the war. In light of what I have concluded in relation to the epistemic status of the given supposed beliefs, my contribution to knowledge is also the demonstration that the commonsensical view of justification - represented by the internalist account - is the theory that is most consistent with our intuitions of the rationality of belief. I argue that internalism receives its intuitive appeal from our commonsensical convictions of epistemic justification rather than from deontological considerations, as claimed by rival externalists.

To  
My loving family  
and  
the memory of my deceased uncle, Kareem

## **Acknowledgment**

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## Chapter One

### Introduction

#### 1.1. The Build-up to the 2003 Iraq War

In an attempt to introduce the relevant propositions under inquiry and present an overall picture of the Bush administration's case for the war, this chapter explores the lead-up (2001-3) to Iraq war, taking into account the principal charges levelled against Iraq in a bid to justify the war. The nuclear and terror propositions are taken to be the paradigm of the case for war, and they comprise the focus of the inquiry in this research. In an attempt to address the conditions that need to be taken into account when establishing the attribution of pragmatic belief or mere propositional acceptance, this chapter touches on regime change as the Bush administration's principal pragmatic end in the Iraqi conflict along with the alleged Iraqi threat to the US homeland security and the region. That is, in order to establish the attribution of pragmatic belief, we need to take into account the pragmatic ends at play at the time of an apparent belief formation. In this case, regime change was the hub of all pragmatic ends at the time of the alleged belief that  $p$ . In addition, the practical desire to ward off the allegedly feared threat from Iraq also comprised a key part of the given pragmatic ends. There was, on the part of the Bush administration, an alleged fear that Iraq might, at some point, attack or pose a threat to the US homeland security or its interests in the region through transferring WMD stockpiles, knowledge or material to terrorists, dominating the Middle East and thereby rivalling America's pre-eminence or endangering its naval forces in the region or through acquiring nuclear weapons and attempting to blackmail the United States. Though regime change as a pragmatic goal might have favoured a collective mere manifestation of belief in favour of the professed rationale behind the war, I rule out the nature and force of such a pragmatic goal to have promoted or caused pragmatic belief that  $p$ . That is, it is possible that the Bush administration perceived the expression of a belief in the given propositions as a convenient way of garnering the public support they needed to pursue their regime-change policy.

But it would be bizarre to argue that the Bush administration officials wanted to believe the professed rationale behind the war because their pragmatic goal of regime change depended on such a belief state. The realisation of such a pragmatic goal might have required or favoured a collective mere manifestation of belief in favour of the professed rationale in order to make such a goal politically acceptable by the general public, in which case the manifested belief would have been a matter of mere pretence or mere public display rather than genuine belief. But it would be unreasonable to argue that the realisation of such a goal required genuine belief in the professed rationale behind the war. Thus, we cannot take their acting or even reasoning as if  $p$  as evidence that they genuinely believed the given professed rationale. Mere acceptance, like belief, that  $p$  disposes us to reason and act appropriately to  $p$  too, as explained in chapter four. Further, there are situations where we pursue a practical goal under the guise of a false premise. That is, we sometimes pursue a practical end under a premise we neither believe nor accept. Consider the fraudulent applicants who apply for disability or unemployment allowance under a premise ( $p$ ) they neither believe nor accept. Though these agents might act appropriately to  $p$  if suitable situations arise, they neither reason as if  $p$  nor do they feel it true that  $p$ . They pursue an end whose manifested rationale they neither believe nor accept. They just feign belief in  $p$  in a bid to realise their goal or make it acceptable. In the case at hand, the more likely candidate to have had the kind of pragmatic force to promote or cause pragmatic belief that  $p$  would be the alleged fear that Iraq was in possession of chemical or biological weapons, a reconstituted nuclear weapons program, in league with Al-Qaeda, or the alleged fear that Iraq, if left unchecked, would sometime attack or pose a threat to the US homeland security or its interests in the region.

But this research argues that merely fearing that  $p$  in the absence of good evidence whether  $p$ , where  $p$  is of major concern, normally promotes mere propositional acceptance rather than belief. The pilot who dreads the feared eventualities of  $p$ , but who lacks good evidence whether or not that  $p$ , is more likely to accept  $p$  rather than not  $p$  if he had to act or proceed on some basis. Richard is a pilot who operates night-time flights in a region marked by very high mountains. The plane he flies neither has a co-pilot nor is it fitted with an autopilot. He briefly falls asleep during a flight, waking up to a faulty electronic system on board. He can still descend or ascend the



plane should he choose to do so, but the device responsible for communicating the altitude of the plane is faulty, giving unrealistic figures. Due to such an electronic breakdown, he is unable to determine the altitude of the aircraft, and it is too dark or foggy to make any sound judgment about the aircraft's altitude on the basis of his own phenomenology. He takes the eventualities of flying at low altitude (*p*) to be too costly due to the high mountains that surround the area. Due to the high cost of error, he does not just take it for granted that not *p*. Driven by the risk asymmetries he associates with accepting or rejecting that *p*, Richard comes to accept that *p*. Just like the field commander (see p. 98), he is in a position where he has to act on some basis. Therefore, he, for practical reasons, takes it for granted that *p*, using it as a premise for practical reasoning. It is, however, not the case that he has good evidence to regard *p* as more likely than not *p*. But he takes the feared eventualities of *p* - crashing into a mountain - to be more costly than those of not *p*. It is, after all, safer to err on the side of prudence or caution, as noted on p. 105. Richard takes belief in *p* to be unwarranted from his own cognitive perspective on the issue for he takes *p* to be unsupported by evidence. It would, therefore, be inappropriate to characterise the propositional attitude that guides his action as one of belief. He merely accepts that *p* and acts accordingly.

The Bush administration's case for war was constructed on the basis of two<sup>1</sup> key stated rationales. First, the *stated* belief that Iraq was in possession of WMD<sup>2</sup> at the time. The Bush administration officials manifested a belief in the allegation that Iraq had chemical and biological weapons stockpiles along with a reconstituted nuclear<sup>3</sup> weapons program before the war. Second, the *stated* belief that Iraq had a relationship with Al-Qaeda<sup>4</sup>. The invasion of Iraq has been covered from many different perspectives – primarily from political<sup>5</sup>, historical<sup>6</sup>, and military<sup>7</sup> perspectives – examining the relevant aspects of the war. I aim to analyse the build-up to Iraq war from a doxastic perspective, examining whether the given beliefs were cases of belief or mere propositional acceptance. In inquiring into the given beliefs, I will also

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<sup>1</sup> Human suffering in Iraq was mentioned on occasions by the Bush administration, but it was not adduced as the major rationale for the war.

<sup>2</sup> Refer to appendix (pp. 2-7, 8-14, and 15-32).

<sup>3</sup> Refer to appendix (pp. 15-32).

<sup>4</sup> Refer to appendix (pp. 33-61).

<sup>5</sup> See Record (2010).

<sup>6</sup> See Keegan (2004), Malone (2006), and Duelfer (2009).

<sup>7</sup> See Keegan (2004).

investigate whether or not such beliefs can be appropriately characterised as cases of pragmatic belief.

Pragmatic beliefs are acquired on the basis of pragmatic considerations. That is, our cognition is pragmatically driven when we set out to bring about a pragmatic belief, whereas it is epistemically driven when our object in an inquiry is to get the truth rather than the pursuit of desire satisfaction. Further, under indifferent circumstances where our doxastic tendencies are epistemically motivated and our goals are accuracy-driven, we tend to test a hypothesis and come to believe or disbelieve the outcome on the basis of truth-conducivity. That is, our propositional attitudes are driven and shaped by truth or truth-conducivity in situations where we feel emotionally impartial towards the hypothesis in question. But this does not reflect how we always come to acquire doxastic attitudes. As we will learn later on, our cognition is not always sensitive or responsive to truth; we sometimes tend to arrive at the conclusions we want to arrive at. Further, we sometimes want to believe what we want to be the case or what satisfies our (non-epistemic) desires, interests and goals. Our cognition, as noted in chapter four, is directionally driven towards the embrace of a desired conclusion in situations where certain pragmatic desires, interests or goals are at play. Epistemologists recognize that we are sometimes emotionally biased in favour of the doxastic attitude we want to bring about (as explicated in chapter four). Barnes and Scott-Kakures rightly argue that our being emotionally biased in favour of a particular doxastic attitude serves certain pragmatic ends.

The reason, they argue, we are biased in favour of belief in a particular conclusion is that the belief attitude we aim at is in the service of the realisation of our pragmatic goals, desires and interests. Moreover, epistemologists distinguish between desire and fear driven beliefs as cases of (non-epistemically) motivated believing with the former being the more common phenomenon. The way the Bush administration officials approached evidential considerations - resisting disconfirming evidence, ignoring living doubts that *p*, and focusing on confirming evidence - might give rise to the possibility of pragmatic belief as an appropriate doxastic attribution. But this research argues that given the nature of the given propositions, the new security environment along with the evidential conditions at the time, neither belief nor pragmatic belief can be rightly attributed to the Bush administration officials. In situations where a

proposition is merely feared, due to the risk asymmetries we associate with accepting or rejecting that  $p$ , we normally tend to accept the feared proposition. In the case of the Bush administration's case for war, the given propositions were inadequately supported by the available evidence. They were unwelcome propositions. In situations where we fear that  $p$  but have no good evidence whether  $p$ , we do not normally come to believe that  $p$ . Fearing that  $p$  in the absence of good evidence whether  $p$  normally promotes propositional acceptance rather than belief. By contrast, wishful propositions normally promote or encourage belief. Accepting something you fear to be the case is prudentially justified by the practical reasons that promote such acceptance. But from a deontological perspective, one is epistemically obligated to withhold belief in situations where there is no good evidence whether  $p$ .

The invasion of Iraq was a military operation waged by a US-led coalition on 19 March 2003 and declared accomplished on 01 May 2003. It was launched with a stated mission to realise the objectives called for by the two rationales outlined earlier: ridding Iraq of the alleged WMD, thwarting a potential transfer of WMD to terrorists and preventing further training and assistance between the two. Resolving the issue of Iraqi WMD was vested with the UN. Following the invasion of Kuwait in 1990, the UN founded UNSCOM as an inspection regime to uncover and destroy Iraq's WMD stockpiles and dismantle the relevant programs and materials. Following the departure of the UN inspectors from Iraq in December 1998, the issue of Iraq's WMD and their threat were on the wane. They took less centre stage on the global media coverage as well as the international political arena. After the terrorist attacks of 9/11, the issue of Iraq's WMD was reignited and re-emerged with a more dramatic turn which led to new rising tensions between the USA and Iraq. In effect, the post-9/11 rhetoric of American politics towards Iraq got increasingly tougher. This came after a relative calm and a relatively soft rhetoric between the two countries. There are dramatic rhetorical shifts from 2001 through 2003 in the discourse of the Bush administration as far as assessing the status of Iraqi WMD and its alleged threat are concerned.

On 24 February 2001, seven months prior to 9/11, the US Secretary of State Powell meets with the Egyptian Foreign Minister Moussa in Cairo, Egypt. In a press conference held by the two authorities in Cairo on the same day, Powell is asked

about America's air strikes and continuing sanctions against Iraq for which he responds: "frankly they [the sanctions] have worked. He [Saddam Hussein] has not developed any significant capability with respect to weapons of mass destruction. He is unable to project conventional power against his neighbors" (see appendix, p. 2). Moreover, on 29 July 2001 then US National Security Adviser Rice corroborates Powell's position on the status of the Iraqi WMD and observes: "we are able to keep arms from him [Saddam Hussein]. His military forces have not been rebuilt" (see appendix, p. 2). The discourse of both statements signifies how soft and promising American rhetoric was towards the Iraqi WMD issue prior to 9/11. Powell makes it clear that the imposed sanctions on Iraq have achieved the intended objective and that Iraq has not developed a substantial capability with regard to WMD and is incapable of dominating its neighbourhood. Likewise, Rice asserts that the Bush administration is capable of disarming Iraq, pointing out that Iraq's military is weak. Further, she stresses that his military has not regained the power it once had before the first Gulf War.

The US-Iraqi relations were complicated by Iraq's regional ambitions and its continued interest in unconventional weapons. Experiencing over a decade of tense diplomatic relations, matters with Iraq were eventually brought to a head to *prevent* a potential shift in the balance of power and preserve America's economic and geopolitical interests in the region. Sharing certain strategic regional interests such as combating Iran, the US and Iraqi governments enjoyed close diplomatic relations during the 1980s. But they finally fell out in 1990 over Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. Iraq's regional domination could have allowed Iraq to challenge America's pre-eminence in the region. The fall out was, thereby, primarily due to Iraq's veering away from the strategy of the US foreign policy in the region. The possession or use of WMD did not appear to be much of an issue to the US government in the 1980s when Iraq was in line with the US policy objectives in the region.

Three factors reinforced the notion of Iraq as a threat to both the US homeland security and its strategic interests in the Middle East. First, Iraq's alleged possession of unconventional weapons. Second, its manifested willingness to use such weapons against hostile regimes. Third, its alleged relationship with terrorist networks. Iraq posed a threat to the peace and security of the international community through its

flagrant aggression against Kuwait (1990-1) and Iran (1980-8). But despite Iraq's glaring aggressions, regime change as a public policy objective was not pursued by the consecutive American governments. It was pursued by the Bush administration only after Iraq was perceived to be a future threat to its national security at home, its strategic oil interests, the security of its naval forces and its supremacy in the region. In addition to that, Iraq was also considered a continued threat to America's staunchest ally in the region, Israel. Eliminating the threat to Israel was regarded by some as a rationale behind the Bush administration's determination to confront Iraq. Speaking of the alleged Iraqi threat, Philip Zeliko, then member of President Bush's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, states (10 September 2002):

Why would Iraq attack America or use nuclear weapons against us? I'll tell you what I think the real threat is and actually has been since 1990 – it's the threat against Israel. And this is the threat that dare not speak its name, because the Europeans don't care deeply about that threat, I will tell you frankly. And the American government doesn't want to lean too hard on it rhetorically, because it is not a popular sell (<http://ipsnews.net/interna.asp?idnews=23083>).

Though the UN inspection process continued to make tangible progress<sup>8</sup> and produce good evidence that not *p*, the Bush administration officials persisted in their public assertions that Iraq was an immediate present threat to the US national security. Throughout the build-up to the war, Iraq was portrayed by the Bush administration officials as presenting an emerging threat (Cheney, 17 March 2002), a mortal threat (Cheney, 29 August 2002), a fundamental danger potentially to the US (Cheney, 8 September 2002), a serious threat to the US, its friends and allies (Cheney, 31 January 2003), a serious threat to the US and the world (Bush, 4 September 2002), a grave and gathering danger (Bush, 12 September 2002), a true threat to the US and a threat to Israel (Bush, 26 September 2002), a threat of unique urgency (Bush, 2 October 2002), the most serious dangers of our age (Bush, 7 October 2002), an urgent challenge to the US national security (Bush, 12 October 2002), a unique and urgent threat (Bush, 20 November 2002), a serious and mounting threat to the US, its friends and allies (Bush, 28 January 2003), a direct and growing threat to the safety of the American people (Bush, 26 February 2003), a direct, true and real threat to the US (Bush, 6

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<sup>8</sup> See appendix (pp. 89-101).

March 2003), a clear threat to the US (Rice, 8 September 2002), a nuclear, chemical or biological 9/11, a great and immediate threat to the security of the American people and the stability of the world, an immediate biological threat, a growing danger to the safety and security of the American people and the world, a vastly great present danger, a grave and gathering danger, a threat to its neighbors, a threat to the US (Rumsfeld, 18 September 2002), a great and immediate threat to the security of the American people, a grave and gathering danger (Rumsfeld, 19 September 2002), a clear and present danger to the security of the US and the region (Senator Hutchinson, 19 September 2002), a present threat and an immediate challenge to the international community (Senator Warner, 19 September 2002), a unique and dangerous threat to the US national security (Congressman Gephardt, 2 October 2002), real and present dangers to the region and to the world (Powell, 5 February 2003), and an imminent threat (McClellan, 10 February 2003)<sup>9</sup>.

The discourse of the Iraqi threat as mortal, imminent, immediate, unique, urgent, present, growing, mounting, grave, serious, and direct constitutes what is essentially considered an imminent threat – the kind of threat that warrants self-defense or preemptive war. But no adequate evidence was adduced to substantiate the claim that Iraq presented a present or imminent threat to the US national security. Before the Bush administration assumed office, Defense Secretary Cohen asserted that Saddam Hussein “cannot pose a threat to his neighbors”<sup>10</sup> (10 January 2001). Cohen reiterated his position a day after his earlier statement and argued that “He [Saddam Hussein] does not pose a threat to his neighbors at this point, and I don't believe will be in a position to do so”<sup>11</sup> (11 January 2001). Reinforcing the same position, Tenet also argued that “his [Saddam Hussein's] ability to project power outside Iraq's borders is severely limited”<sup>12</sup> (7 February 2001). Furthermore, on 3 October 2002 Pelosi also rejected the allegation that Iraq posed an imminent threat to the US: “As the ranking Democrat on the House Select Committee on Intelligence, I have seen no evidence or intelligence that suggests that Iraq indeed poses an imminent threat to our nation. If the Administration has that information, they have not shared it with the Congress” (see appendix, p. 69). Moreover, the classified version of the National Intelligence

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<sup>9</sup> For further details, refer to appendix (pp. 62-80).

<sup>10</sup> See appendix (p. 62).

<sup>11</sup> See appendix (p. 62).

<sup>12</sup> See appendix (p. 63).

Estimate (1 October 2002) also recognized the lack of any specific information to substantiate the administration's claims of Iraqi threat to the US homeland: "we have no specific intelligence information that Saddam's regime has directed attacks against US territory" (see appendix, p. 73).

Following the military offensive against Iraq, these perceptions were corroborated by Robert Baer, a 21-year CIA veteran who spent ninety percent of his time as a career agent in the Middle East. He argues that "The only person Saddam was a threat to ... was to Iraq. ... he wasn't scaring anybody. He certainly wasn't scaring the Iranians, or the Turks or the Saudis or anybody else" (in Greenwald 2004). Moreover, on 10 July 2003, Gregory Thielmann, then director of intelligence bureau at the US State Department, also observes: "I believe the Bush administration did not provide an accurate picture to the American people of the military threat posed by Iraq. ... Iraq posed no imminent threat to either its neighbours or to the United States" (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2003/jul/10/iraq.julianborger1>). But despite the lack of substantiating evidence, the Bush administration's intimidatory rhetoric permeated through most of their statements about Iraq's WMD and its alleged threat, provoking a sense of urgency to act. There was no adequate evidence to warrant belief in the proposition that Iraq was a present or imminent threat to the US homeland.

## **1.2. Iraq and Al-Qaeda**

In his host meeting with the Republican governors at the White House on 20 September 2002, President Bush introduced the Iraqi issue as an extension of the war on terror: "It is important to know that Iraq is an extension of the war on terror" (in McClellan 2008: 139). Throughout the campaign to rally political support and rationalise the case for war, the Bush administration officials persisted in their argument that there was a connection between Iraq and Al-Qaeda. But establishing such connection was complicated by the lack of adequate supporting evidence and a pervasive understanding that the two were ideologically different to make common cause. But the Bush administration was still persistent in its endeavour to portray Iraq as an ally of Al-Qaeda. Though this research finds it inappropriate to attribute belief or pragmatic belief to the Bush administration officials, Richard Clarke, then US chief counter-terrorism adviser on the US National Security Council, argues that they

wanted to believe that there was a connection between the two: “they [the Bush administration officials] wanted to believe that there was a connection, but the CIA was sitting there, the FBI was sitting there, I was sitting there saying ‘we have looked at this issue for years, there is just no connection’” (in Greenwald 2006).

Lacking current adequate supporting evidence, the inquiry into the terror proposition focused on possible intentions, motivations and the alleged past contacts between the two. These considerations were the core of the premise behind the alleged relationship between Iraq and Al-Qaeda. This was recognized, on 8 September 2006, by the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence as what gave rise to the alleged relationship: “One key aspect of prewar analysis focused on the intentions and motivations for a potential Iraq-al-Qa’ida partnership” (<http://www.intelligence.senate.gov/phaseiiaccuracy.pdf>). The other consideration instrumental in drawing the conclusion that there was a relationship between the two was *data mining* which is defined by the CIA veteran Robert Baer as “going back over old information coming up with new conclusions” (in Greenwald 2004). In their 2006 report, the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence acknowledged the practice of data mining as what motivated the Bush administration to draw such connections:

In prewar assessments, the Intelligence Community had little specific intelligence reporting that revealed Saddam Hussein’s personal opinion about dealing with al-Qa’ida. Instead, analysts looked at Saddam’s record of support for secular terrorist organizations like the Palestinian Liberation Front (<http://www.intelligence.senate.gov/phaseiiaccuracy.pdf>), p. 63.

### **1.3. Regime Change**

Ever since his invasion of Kuwait in 1990, Saddam Hussein had been perceived by consecutive US governments as an undesirable character not in line with the US foreign policy objectives in the region. Regime change had, therefore, long been perceived as the only panacea for the Iraqi issue, which is why it was eventually publicly adopted by the Clinton and Bush administrations as a statutory policy objective. It was the policy objective on which key economic and geopolitical interests depended. Thus, the so-called inquiry into the charges levelled against Iraq was launched against the background of a practical agenda that had regime change as the ultimate end. Iraq was, therefore, in a no-win situation. Saddam Hussein had to go



regardless of WMD existence or Iraq's compliance with the UN disarmament resolutions. It was an un-winnable battle for Iraq. Then head of MI6, Richard Dearlove, explains how the Bush administration fixed the available evidence to suit their regime-change policy. Following his return from consultations in Washington, Dearlove meets with Tony Blair at number 10 Downing Street on 23 July 2002 where he asserts that "Bush wanted to remove Saddam, through military action, justified by the conjunction of terrorism and WMD. But the intelligence and facts were being fixed around the policy" (<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/05/12/AR2005051201857.html>). Moreover, Tyler Drumheller, then top CIA chief of clandestine operations in Europe, observes that during the lead-up to Iraq war, there was, on the part of the Bush administration, an "unprecedented drive for intelligence justifying the Iraq War" (2006: 4). He further argues:

It may suit this White House to have Americans believe a black-and-white version of reality – that it could have avoided the Iraq War if the CIA had only given it a true picture of Saddam's armaments. But the truth, as all CIA officers know, is always several shades of gray. The truth is that the White House, for a number of reasons, believed what it wanted to believe (Ibid: 5).

That is, regime change was the ultimate policy goal, which is why the Bush administration pursued every lead of intelligence, no matter how unprobative it was, that conduced to the rationalisation of such goal. But this research denies the possibility of pragmatic belief which Drumheller attributes to the White House officials. Moreover, removing Saddam Hussein as a policy objective was also upheld by the leading neoconservative think tank PNAC. In January 1998, PNAC submitted a policy statement to President Clinton urging him to remove Saddam Hussein from power because of a future threat he may pose to the USA, his failure to comply with the UN resolutions, and his reluctance to cooperate with the UN inspection teams. The statement reads: "We urge you to articulate this aim [regime change], and to turn your Administration's attention to implementing a strategy for removing Saddam's regime from power" (<http://www.newamericancentury.org/iraqclintonletter.htm>). Subsequently, the US House of Representatives passed an act, *Iraq Liberation Act*, which was then signed by President Clinton in October 1998. The act was specifically designed to support and promote a regime-change policy through Iraqi opposition

groups. The act argued that “It should be the policy of the United States to support efforts to remove the regime headed by Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq and to promote the emergence of a democratic government to replace that regime” ([http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=105\\_cong\\_public\\_laws&docid=f:publ338.105.pdf](http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=105_cong_public_laws&docid=f:publ338.105.pdf)).

Furthermore, President Bush himself explicitly manifested his desire to see regime change as the end result: “yes, we'd like to see a regime change in Iraq. That's been the longstanding policy of the U.S. government. Nothing is new there. That's precisely what has been said since I became President of the United States”<sup>13</sup> (22 March 2002). Reiterating, on 8 September 2002, regime change as Bush's policy objective towards Iraq, Cheney observes: “The president's made it clear that the goal of the United States is regime change. He said that on many occasions. ... the president's objective for the United States is still regime change” (<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/bush/meet.htm>). In addition, in his host meeting with the Republican governors on 20 September 2002 at the White House, Bush<sup>14</sup> outlines his strategy to confront the alleged threat posed by Iraq with Saddam Hussein as the sole target: “Iraq is a threat we will deal with in a logical way. If we have to act, my choices are really three. One, someone kills him [Saddam Hussein]. Two, the population rises up and overthrows him. Three, military action” (in McClellan 2008: 140). Further, in his interview with the CBS's 60 Minutes program on 23 April 2006, Drumheller argues that the Bush administration was looking for corroborating intelligence to fit into the regime-change policy, pointing out that they ignored intelligence counter to the position they were defending:

[In September 2002] he [Naji Sabri] told us that they had no active weapons of mass destruction program. ... The policy was set. The war in Iraq was coming. And they were looking for intelligence to fit into the policy, to justify the policy. ... The group that was dealing with preparation for the Iraq war came back and said they're no longer interested. And we said, well, what about the intel, and they said, “well, this isn't about intel anymore. This is about regime change” ([http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2006/04/21/60minutes/main1527749\\_page2.shtml](http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2006/04/21/60minutes/main1527749_page2.shtml)).

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<sup>13</sup> See appendix (p. 87).

<sup>14</sup> See appendix (pp. 87-88) for further statements vis-à-vis the regime-change policy.

The idea of going after Iraq was U.S. policy. It was going to happen, one way or the other. ... I think it [the intelligence community's conclusions] mattered [to the administration] if it verified this basic belief that had taken hold in the U.S. government that now is the time, we had the means, all we needed was the will [to remove Saddam Hussein]  
(<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2006/04/21/60minutes/main1527749.shtml>).

Moreover, Mel Goodman, a 20-year senior CIA analyst, also observes:

The Bush Administration made up its mind to go to war on September the 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001. From that time on, you were dealing with rationalisation and justification for the war. You weren't dealing with real causes for the war, or real reasons for the war. There was never a clear and present danger, there was never an imminent threat (in Greenwald 2004).

In terms of legality, Iraq war was in stark violation of the UN Charter, Articles 41<sup>15</sup> and 42<sup>16</sup>. That is, whereas enforcing the UN mandates or giving effect to them is solely vested with the UN Security Council, the US-led military action went ahead in the absence of the UN Security Council authority, there was no imminent or present threat to the peace and security of the international community, Iraq war was waged contrary to the terms and conditions of the UN Charter. Though the invasion was conducted multilaterally with some international support, it was not intended to maintain or restore international peace and security. The war can, thereby, be rightly considered an act of aggression under international law. It could not have been a preemptive response for there was no imminent threat from Iraq. Preemptive military action, according to the 2002 Pentagon *Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, is defined as "an attack initiated on the basis of incontrovertible evidence that an enemy attack is imminent" (in Shue and Rodin 2007: 6). There was, as observed earlier, no imminent threat to the peace and security of the US homeland or any other states. It was a preventive war even according to the 2002 Pentagon's aforementioned dictionary which defines preventive war as "a war initiated in the belief that military conflict, while not imminent, is inevitable, and that to delay would involve greater

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<sup>15</sup> "The Security Council may decide what measures not involving the use of armed force are to be employed to give effect to its decisions, and it may call upon the Members of the United Nations to apply such measures. These may include complete or partial interruption of economic relations and of rail, sea, air, postal, telegraphic, radio, and other means of communication, and the severance of diplomatic relations" (<http://www0.un.org/en/documents/charter/chapter7.shtml>).

<sup>16</sup> "Should the Security Council consider that measures provided for in Article 41 would be inadequate or have proved to be inadequate, it may take such action by air, sea, or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security. Such action may include demonstrations, blockade, and other operations by air, sea, or land forces of Members of the United Nations" (Ibid).

risk” (Ibid: 6). Moreover, Jeffrey Record, a former professional staff member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, also observes:

Preventive war is ... prompted not by a looming enemy attack, but rather by long-range calculations about power relationships<sup>17</sup> ... Preventive war assumes that conflict with the rising state is inevitable, and therefore striking before the military balance worsens becomes imperative (2004: 12).

This chapter has examined the lead-up to Iraq war, outlining the professed rationale behind the war, providing a background insight into the issue of the Iraqi WMD and laying out the reasons that gave rise to the idea of Iraq being allegedly a threat to the US homeland security and its interests in the Middle East. In a bid to highlight the palpable absence of the evidential conditions that render a war an act of self-defence or preemption, I have touched on the nature of Iraq war in relation to preemptive and preventive wars, outlining the substantive differences that obtain between the two such as the imminence of a given threat or attack, the associated intent of action, and the probity of evidence required for action. Preemptive responses are characterised by the imminence or presence of a threat or an attack ( $p$ ), probative evidence that  $p$ , and good-faith (the intention to defend yourself against an imminent or a present danger). By contrast, preventive responses are characterised by the absence of the imminence criterion. They are acts of aggression carried out for reasons other than self-defence. That is, preventive responses are neither driven nor constrained by the probity of evidence that  $p$ . In the case of the Bush administration's military response to the alleged Iraqi threat, there was a tangible absence of the kind of probative evidence that we normally require before engaging in acts of self-defence or preemption. It is the patent absence of probative evidential conditions that renders questionable the sincerity of the Bush administration's apparent belief that Iraq was an imminent threat, in possession of chemical and biological weapons along with a reconstituted nuclear weapons program, and in league with Al-Qaeda.

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<sup>17</sup> Preventive war is, therefore, a political concept, whereas preemptive war is a military concept as pointed out by Strachan: “Preemption was an idea that grew from the operational level of war; it was a military concept, whereas preventive war was a political one” (in Shue and Rodin 2007: 27).

#### 1.4. The Research Question

This research seeks to answer two fundamental questions concerning the build-up to the 2003 Iraq war. I have chosen to examine the nuclear and the terror propositions as a paradigm of the stated rationale behind the war. First, it aims to examine the justificatory status of the asserted beliefs in light of the available evidence for and against the given propositions, establishing what their epistemic status would have been if they were genuine cases of belief. Second, it aims to establish, in light of the evidential conditions at the time, whether the given asserted beliefs were cases of belief, pragmatic belief or mere propositional acceptance. To this end, I have undertaken a philosophical approach. Belief, propositional acceptance and epistemic justification form the basis of the philosophical methodology I have employed to pursue the inquiries in question. The philosophical methodology is developed with an inquiry into the nature of belief, acceptance and epistemic justification. Belief is a subjective mental attitude whose existence does not supervene on its manifestation. That is, neither the expression of a belief nor our acting appropriately to a belief can be taken as evidence for holding the belief. One might firmly assert a belief on a given matter, but still lack the corresponding belief. There are situations where we want to get others to believe a proposition we do not believe ourselves. I might feign belief in a proposition ( $p$ ) in an attempt to get others to believe that  $p$ . Consider the conqueror who conquers other states under the guise of a threat of some sort. He feigns belief in a proposition ( $p$ ) in a bid to get the public to believe that  $p$ . It could be the case that the conqueror needs public support in order to pursue his conquest of other lands and perceives the assertion of such a belief as a convenient way of garnering such a support. That is, we sometimes present ourselves as having a certain propositional attitude on an issue in an attempt to induce the corresponding attitude in others.

Moreover, there are situations where we want to convince others of the truth or probability of our beliefs or where we want to get others to believe what we want them to believe. Further, Paul Grice argues that the asserter who engages in *protreptic* discourse intends, "via imparting a belief that he has a certain propositional attitude, to induce a corresponding attitude in the hearer" (1989: 123). That is, often when we engage in hortatory communication, we typically intend to, through conveying the

impression that we have a certain propositional attitude about the given matter, induce in the addressees the corresponding attitude regardless of whether or not the given attitude represents the actual state of our mind. It could be the case that I genuinely believe what I intend to induce in the addressees. But it could also be the case that the attitude I intend to induce in the addressees is one which I do not believe myself. I might just accept a proposition for practical reasons, but intend to induce it in the addressees in the way of belief. Further, there are situations where we want to get others to believe a proposition we merely accept for practical reasons in the absence of the corresponding belief. That is, it could be the case that I engage in protreptic communication with the intention of inducing in the addressees a belief I am not holding myself. Consider a situation where the American Medical Association requires the public's approval in order to test an intriguing hypothesis on cloning the human embryos. It is a hypothesis they merely accept for practical purposes, that is to test it in an attempt to discover whether  $p$  or not  $p$ . They might engage in a protreptic campaign in a bid to gain the public's approval by getting them to assent to or, preferably, believe the essence of the hypothesis. Under such conditions, we might engage in protreptic communication in an attempt to induce in the addressees a belief whose essence we merely accept for practical reasons.

Though we often, when engaged in protreptic communication, intend to induce in the audiences the attitude we hold or pretend to hold about a given matter, and that belief, as noted on p. 47, normally takes the form of an assertion, assertion alone or the assertion of a belief alone cannot be ipso facto taken as a demonstration that the asserter necessarily holds the belief he asserts or implies. He may be lying. Human beings can be deceptive. That is why observing the manifestation of the behavioural dispositions - whether they be verbal or actional - we typically associate with a certain belief cannot be taken as the sole linchpin for the attribution of the belief. Sometimes we, for some ulterior motive, just feign belief and engage in manifesting the core behavioural dispositions that one typically takes to imply the existence of a particular belief. He who does wrong under the pretence of belief deserves moral blame. But he who does wrong in the presence of a reasonable belief deserves a justification for doing the wrong. This is, of course, as far as the reasonable belief view of justification is concerned. It, therefore, for purposes of assigning moral blameworthiness, matters whether we attribute reasonable belief to the agent who does wrong. Belief is not only

thought of as a propositional attitude here; it is also a moral attribute when acquired on the basis of sufficient evidence. This, however, might imply epistemic deontologism which I do not uphold as a way of looking at how rational belief is acquired or what confers such a rationality status on a belief. But it, at least, makes sense as to why it matters whether or not to attribute belief to an agent who acts under the pretence of belief. In a bid to examine whether the evidential conditions at the time were in favour of belief or mere acceptance, and thereby establish whether the given asserted beliefs are most apt to be thought of as cases of belief or mere acceptance, I have chosen to draw a systematic distinction between belief and propositional acceptance (see chapter four). In an attempt to individuate belief as a propositional attitude unwilling in character, I have chosen to explain belief in relation to will (see chapter three). I have also looked into the concepts of acceptance and faith in order to further demonstrate the differentiae of belief as an attitude normally responsive to truth and usually shaped by epistemic evidence (see chapter four).

Taking belief and acceptance into account is, therefore, appropriate and necessary for the nature of the inquiry pursued in this research. They are inextricably related to the research questions pursued. Belief and acceptance are both partly associated with action. They both dispose us to act appropriately to what we believe or accept as true. Belief often guides, motivates, influences and shapes action (Ramsey 1929, Peirce 1877, and Clifford 1999). That is, belief often, though it need not, disposes us, from a Baineian (1859) and Rylean (1949) perspective, to act in a way appropriate to a certain belief. The philosophers who draw a sharp distinction between belief and acceptance look at acceptance as a pragmatic premissory policy for action (acting as if *p*). But they also take it that one necessary element of acceptance is to reason about a given matter as if *p*. Cohen is one of the leading philosophers who take acceptance to be radically different from belief. He argues that acceptance, despite being a premissory policy to act as if *p*, is "a policy for reasoning [as if *p*]" (1992: 5). Though neither belief nor acceptance is reducible to behaviour, behaviour is often guided or motivated, consciously or unconsciously, by a propositional attitude whether it be belief or acceptance. Most perceptual or memory beliefs unconsciously guide behaviour. But acceptance, by virtue of being a conscious assent to a proposition, normally concerns reflective behaviour. Here we are not concerned with mechanical

behaviour. I will be, in part two of chapter nine, aiming to establish whether the Bush administration's conduct towards Iraq can be appropriately characterised as being guided by belief, mere acceptance or regime change. In addition to denying the possibility of belief as an appropriate guiding attitude, I will be arguing that even if their behaviour was driven by regime change, it still does not follow that they did not accept the given propositions.

Doxastic acceptance is normally driven by good epistemic evidence, whereas mere propositional acceptance is neither driven nor constrained by evidence of such probity. It is logically possible to think that the Bush administration officials were being insincere in their presentation of  $p$  as the real reason for the war but still, for practical purposes such as safety precautions in the battlefield, accepted that  $p$  in their war planning policy. That is, it might be that they invaded Iraq because they just wanted to get rid of Saddam Hussein. But even if this is necessarily the case, it still does not follow that they rejected  $p$  altogether. It is possible that they lied about the real reason for the war but still took it for granted, at least in their war plans, that Iraq was in possession of some chemical or biological weapons or some enriched uranium capable of causing some toxic or infectious diseases or some radiation in the battlefield. Further, it is logically possible to think that though the Bush administration lied about the real reason for the war, the charges they levelled against Iraq were of some concern to them. It could be that they perceived the given propositions to be poorly supported by the current evidence, but still deemed it irrational to reject them in a post-9/11 security environment. Thus, lying about the real reason for the war does not mean the ultimate rejection of  $p$ . It could be that they lied about why they wanted to invade Iraq in which case  $p$  would not be the real reason as to why they went after Iraq, but still accepted  $p$  as a premise for planning possible war scenarios.

That is, it is likely that they accepted  $p$  as a premise for their contingency war plans due to the risk asymmetries associated with waging a war taking it for granted that not  $p$  while it turns out that  $p$  and waging a war taking it for granted that  $p$  while it turns out that not  $p$ . After all, it is, as noted on p. 105, safer to err on the side of prudence or caution, and it is such considerations that guide or shape our reasoning under conditions where we do not know, are not certain or have no good evidence whether  $p$



or not  $p$  but where  $p$  is of major concern to us. Moreover, it is also logically possible to think that they neither believed nor accepted that  $p$ . That is, it could be that they just feigned belief in  $p$  in an attempt to gather some public support for the cause they were pursuing. But it is unlikely that they would have gone to war, taking it for granted that not  $p$ , against a country with a history of WMD possession and use. Though Saddam Hussein's past use of WMD was no good evidence to believe that  $p$ , it was good evidence to believe or accept his brutality and ruthlessness in the battlefield. It is also logically possible to think that they genuinely believed that  $p$  and it was due to such a belief that they waged the war against Iraq. But I argue that belief attribution to them is inappropriate given the evidential conditions at the time. It is equally possible to think that they merely accepted that  $p$  and it was due to such a propositional acceptance that they confronted Iraq. But the more likely explanation of all is that they wanted to take down Saddam Hussein's regime and it was this regime-change objective that was the real reason for the war. But it still does not follow that they, at least the war planners, did not accept  $p$  as a premise for practical reasoning during the planning and operational phases of the war. That is, as a premise for the contingency war plans.

The Bush administration officials, following the events of 9/11 and in the presence of scant evidence of unprobative nature, embarked on a public relations campaign endorsing the given propositions as if they believed them or knew them to be true. That is, they set out on a hortatory campaign endeavouring to garner public and political support for war with Iraq, adducing the given charges as the rationale behind the legitimacy of the war. That is why they can be rightly described as intending, whether consciously or unconsciously, to induce in the addressees a belief that Iraq had chemical and biological weapons, a reconstituted nuclear weapons program and was in league with Al-Qaeda. In light of belief and acceptance along with the evidence available at the time, I aim to establish whether they can be rightly characterised as holding the corresponding belief or whether it is more apt to think of the given asserted beliefs as mere propositional acceptances. Furthermore, I will also establish whether the given supposed beliefs can be appropriately characterised as pragmatic beliefs. Taking belief, acceptance and pragmatic belief into account is, therefore, appropriate and necessary for the nature of the inquiry pursued in this research. Part one of chapter nine seeks to establish the justificatory status of the

given supposed beliefs, taking them at face value, demonstrating what their rationality status would have been if they were genuine beliefs sincerely held. To this end, I have chosen to take into account epistemic justification and its central theories in the philosophical literature: the internalist, the deontological and the externalist theories of justification. In pursuing this object, I also aim to show the most plausible justification theory. I have weighed up the utility, plausibility and viability of the foregoing philosophical justification theories in a bid to demonstrate the indispensability of the common-sensical view, the internalist theory being its equivalent in philosophy, of justification. In order to show what justification is or what justifiability status amounts to in philosophy, I have first examined justification in relation to truth (see chapter five). I have shown that epistemic justification is just an ordinary expression for good evidence that neither entails truth nor does it preclude falsehood. Rather, justification is, in Bonjour's terms, just "a *means* to truth" (1985: 7).

Further, I have also shown that having justification to believe a proposition does not entail having the corresponding belief. Thus, I might have justification to believe in God, but might not possess the corresponding belief. Justification is construed here as objectively good reason. Moreover, sometimes we have reason to believe something or somebody, yet might not possess or might never come to possess the corresponding belief. The Bush administration officials might have had some reason, but not justification, to believe the given propositions, yet they might not have held the corresponding belief. Thus, having justification or reason to believe something cannot be equated with holding the corresponding belief. It is possible that by asserting or implying belief in the given propositions, the Bush administration officials were just referring to or just meant having reason to believe them rather than holding the corresponding belief. In fact, Cheney explicitly refers, at least on two occasions, to having reason to believe the nuclear proposition rather than holding the corresponding belief. On 17 March 2002, prior to the November 2002 resumption of the UN inspections in Iraq, he argues that they "have reason to believe they're [the Iraqis] pursuing the acquisition of nuclear weapons" (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/vicepresident/news-speeches/speeches/vp20020317.html>). Further reiterating this very position on the Iraqi nuclear issue, he, on 24 March 2002, states: "now, of course, for the last three years there've been no inspectors and there's

good reason to believe that he continues to aggressively pursue the development of a nuclear weapon” (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/vicepresident/news-speeches/speeches/vp20020324.html>).

Exhibiting that justification implies no truth entailment is appropriate and necessary for the nature of the inquiry pursued in this research because it is necessary that the conditions for the conferment of justificatory status are made manifest. In other words, it is necessary that it is made clear that justificatory status is, on the internalist, deontological and externalist views of justification, bestowed on a belief on the basis of truth-conducivity rather than truth itself. This truth-conducivity is understood by internalists as basing a belief on good evidence, by deontologists as responsibly or blamelessly acquiring a belief, and by externalists as reliably forming a belief. The externalist view of justification leans more towards restricting rationality status to truth alone by virtue of its insistence that such a status supervenes on the reliability of the cognitive process that generates a certain belief and that a process is reliable only if its preponderant realisations culminate in getting the truth. Thus, it is necessary to understand that if we deprive the given supposed beliefs from rationality status, it would not be because the Bush administration officials missed the truth. That is if the propositional attitudes they asserted were ever genuine beliefs. Rather, it would be because they either, on the internalist and the commonsensical view of justification, failed to *base* their apparent beliefs on adequate evidence and also failed to heed to the overwhelming contrary evidence (in the case of the nuclear proposition) and the serious living doubts raised by the CIA, DIA, DOE, and INR concerning both the nuclear and the terror propositions; or it would be, on the externalist view of justification, because the given supposed beliefs were the result of unreliable cognitive processes - a condition we cannot accurately determine due to the generality problem which externalism suffers from; or it would be, on the deontological view of justification, because they failed to properly fulfil their intellectual or epistemic obligations such as acquainting themselves with good evidence, being attentive to doubts and contrary evidence and other relevant intellectual obligations.

Just like possessing justification to believe something does not necessarily mean possessing the corresponding belief, asserting *p* or acting as if *p* does not necessarily mean holding the corresponding belief that *p* either. Though we normally act

appropriately to our beliefs if we have to act, our acting as if  $p$  cannot be taken as evidence for holding the belief that  $p$ . But behaviourists reduce belief to behavioural manifestations. That is, the behaviourist dispositional theory of belief associates belief with our dispositions to act in a certain way. If belief were solely a behavioural disposition to act in a certain way, then we could determine whether or not one holds a certain belief solely through determining whether or not one conforms with the behavioural dispositions - whether actional or verbal - we normally associate with the belief. But belief attribution cannot solely supervene on publicly observable behaviour for even mere acceptance that  $p$  might involve acting as if  $p$ , as noted in chapter four. Besides, I can just pretend to believe that  $p$  and act as if I genuinely hold the corresponding belief I imply while in fact lacking the belief that  $p$ . That is why publicly observable behavior is neither necessary nor sufficient for the attribution of belief. Rather, the necessary criterion for the attribution of belief is the disposition to "feel it true that  $p$  and false that  $not-p$ " (Cohen 1992: 4). But in the absence of easy access to empirical evidence whether or not one feels it true that  $p$  and false that  $not p$ , we need to consider the conditions under which belief normally obtains or the conditions under which belief is normally psychologically impossible. This, however, does not mean that in order to establish whether or not attributing a particular belief is appropriate, we have to consider every conceivable situation under which belief obtains or is psychologically impossible. Instead, it is done through studying the conditions that normally cause belief or render belief likely or possible such as the presence of good supporting evidence and the absence of sufficient contrary evidence along with the absence of living doubts. But this shall not imply that the obtaining of such conditions always causes or necessitates belief. I might have good evidence to believe that humans have evolved from apes but nevertheless lack such a belief. Many people believe in the Judgment Day, the divinity of the Quran or Moses' opening of the Red Sea on the basis of bad evidence. That is, we sometimes hold or retain a certain belief even in the face of degenerate supporting evidence or contrary evidence. Akritic or religious beliefs are the paradigm of such beliefs. Thus, belief is not always formed in response to evidence or good evidence. Practical reasons can sometimes indirectly cause belief, as noted in chapters three and four.

Thus, belief attribution requires knowledge of the conditions outlined earlier. It is, therefore, necessary to lay out the conditions that normally cause belief or render it psychologically possible, explaining what belief is and what belief is not as well as demonstrating the modes belief is normally taken to exist in such as the dispositional or state mode as opposed to the conscious occurrence mode. I will look into the nature and differentiae of belief in chapters two and three. Furthermore, the attribution of propositional acceptance also requires knowledge of the conditions that constitute this propositional attitude. It is, therefore, necessary to lay out the conditions under which a given propositional attitude can be rightly characterised as doxastic acceptance or mere acceptance. The nature and differentiae of propositional acceptance are explored in chapter four. In practical situations where we have to act, we typically act out of belief or acceptance that *p*. That is, our behaviour is either driven by belief or acceptance that things are a certain way. In chapter four we will learn that we do not always accept what we believe. In situations where we accept what we believe, our behaviour is driven by doxastic acceptance if the belief leads to some action. But under evidentially unprobative conditions where, due to the nature of the condition, we have to act on some basis, our action is normally driven by mere propositional acceptance (acceptance without the corresponding belief). That is, under such poor epistemic conditions, the propositional attitude that prompts or guides our action is more apt to be construed as mere acceptance rather than belief for we, due to the lack of good evidence whether *p* or not *p*, normally take belief in either possibility to be unwarranted from our own cognitive perspective.

Consider a situation where I, in the midst of touring a very complex and confusing maze, deliberate on which route to take in order to get out of the maze quicker. It is a situation where I am in possession of no good evidence to consider any route closer than the others. They all look equally puzzling to me, and I have no good evidence to believe that the route I will be taking eventually is closer than other routes. Under such evidential conditions, though I might have a hunch that *p*, it will be inappropriate to characterise the propositional attitude that guides my action as one of belief. It is more likely that I, due to the lack of good evidence to settle doxastic opinion on the issue, just accept that one of the routes is the closest and act accordingly. Or I might just guess that *p* or follow my instincts on the issue. But the build-up to the 2003 Iraq war was not a situation lacking sufficient contrary evidence (at least in the case of the

nuclear proposition), nor was it a situation devoid of living doubts. Rather, it was a situation where there was adequate evidence, the IAEA's empirical findings<sup>18</sup>, to disbelieve the nuclear proposition or abandon belief, if it was ever a genuine belief, in the nuclear proposition. There were also grave doubts<sup>19</sup> sufficient to, at least, suspend judgment on the terror proposition. It is logically possible to think that the Bush administration officials took the available contrary evidence along with the available living doubts to be insufficient to disbelieve or reject the given propositions, and took the available supporting evidence to be a reason to believe but insufficient to warrant belief in the given propositions and therefore had neither belief nor disbelief about the given matters. That is, it is possible that they did not trust the available contrary evidence.

Given their demonstrated vulnerabilities as a result of the 9/11 attacks and their contention that evidential standards and certainty thresholds should be scaled down in a post-9/11 security environment (see pp. 249-250), it is likely that they perceived accepting that  $p$  as more prudent or safer than rejecting that  $p$ . Moreover, it is also a logical possibility that they eventually came to disbelieve that  $p$  or believe that not  $p$  but still perceived the acceptance of such a propositional attitude as irrational, unsafe or potentially costly in a post-9/11 security environment. There are situations where, due to the high cost of error or the importance of what is at stake, our acceptance of a proposition requires knowledge or certainty whether or not that  $p$ . That is, sometimes we perceive mere belief to be insufficient to accept a proposition for propositional acceptance can have unwelcome consequences (see p. 108). Belief is a fallible notion. I can have a very well-grounded belief and still be wrong. That is why in situations where I perceive the cost of error to be too high, I am normally driven to pursue knowledge, certainty or at least a diachronically justified belief whether  $p$  or not  $p$ . Under such conditions, our intuitions or gut feelings might not be satisfied with mere belief that  $p$ . Consider a situation where on the basis of visual evidence, I come to believe that the lake opposite my house is completely frozen ( $p$ ). If I were to be asked whether  $p$  or if I were to consider whether  $p$ , I would feel it true that  $p$ . But if I were to consider whether to walk on the lake, I might not just take it for granted that  $p$  in spite of believing that  $p$ . It is very likely that the high cost of error prompts me to seek

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<sup>18</sup> See appendix (pp. 17-32).

<sup>19</sup> See appendix (pp. 33-61).

greater reassurance such as knowledge or certainty that  $p$  before I were to accept  $p$  as a premise for practical reasoning. Under such circumstances, propositional acceptance is normally driven by knowledge or certainty. But mere propositional acceptance is normally driven by practical reasons. That is, it does not require good epistemic evidence, belief, knowledge or certainty. I might believe a boat to be unsafe for use, yet still accept it for practical purposes when I see danger looming. Though I disbelieve the safety conditions of the boat, in my accepting it to be safe, I just reason and act as if it were safe for use. That is, I just treat it as if it were safe for use.

Because belief sometimes results from our practical needs, it would be inappropriate for any account of belief attribution to be solely based on the conditions that we typically take to cause belief or render it likely. That is, we will be doing injustice if we were to base our belief attribution theory solely on the Lockean premise that belief “cannot be afforded to any thing but upon good reason” (in Plantinga 1993: 13). But we would equally be doing injustice if we were to take the given beliefs at face value, attributing them belief solely on the basis of publicly observable behaviour. It is possible that they were just lying about the given propositions and the given supposed beliefs did not, therefore, represent their actual state of mind about these propositions. This research will, therefore, look into the given beliefs from four different perspectives: belief, pragmatic belief, acceptance and lying. But pragmatic belief is not a moral to possess. The pragmatically motivated believing subject does not track the truth in his inquiries or in his quest for a state of belief. In other words, pragmatic beliefs are irrational because they are formed on the basis of practical considerations rather than a concern for truth. The conventional wisdom is that we always want to know or believe the truth and it is this truth goal to which we are committed in our inquiries. Though truth is normally taken to be the most valued cognitive desideratum, it is not always sought-after (Brown and Dutton 1995). That is, we sometimes want to believe what we want to be the case rather than what actually is the case.

Further, in our inquiries, we often arrive at a particular decision or conclusion when we arrive at a firm or reasonable belief about the object of inquiry (Pierce 1877). Though we normally launch our inquiries with the goal of getting the truth, truth might not necessarily be the outcome of our inquiries. Just like truth, firm belief has

the epistemic force to cease the doubts that prompt the need for inquiry (Pierce 1877). Moreover, truth's not being immediately and unproblematically accessible to us is the reason why the need for justification arises, and it is due to the immediate inaccessibility of truth that belief proves indispensable in settling opinion on matters (BonJour 1985). It is also due to the lack of immediate access to truth that we often act on the basis of what we believe to be the truth rather than the truth itself. States launch preventive wars on the basis of a belief that an enemy attack or a perceived threat – though not looming – is inevitable to confront (Luban 2004 and the 2002 Pentagon *Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*). Even evidence is construed as consisting of a belief attitude on some evidential condition. That is, since we often conceive of evidence as admissible, inadmissible, misleading, conclusive and inconclusive, epistemologists argue that evidence should be, for purposes of generality and accuracy, construed as consisting of beliefs rather than facts (Alston 2005). Thus, even preemptive or defensive wars – initiated on the basis of good evidence that an enemy attack is imminent – are prompted by what we believe to be the truth. In part two of chapter nine, I will be looking into the possibility whether the given supposed beliefs can be rightly characterized as pragmatic beliefs, but will eventually rule out pragmatic belief as an appropriate characterization of the given beliefs.

For reasons associated with the self-serving bias, sometimes we, in our doxastic cultivations, tend to seek or embrace favourable rather than accurate data (Brown and Dutton 1995). That is, our beliefs are not always driven or motivated by truth-considerations. They are sometimes motivated by pragmatic desires, gains and goals (Barnes 1997 and Scott-Kakures 2000). In other words, we sometimes indirectly come to believe what we want to believe or what we want to be the case. Lacking adequate perceptual evidence, it is possible that some people just want to believe in God rather than believing it in actual fact. That is, being a repository of optimistic feelings and thereby pleasant thoughts, it is probable that a great number of people believe or want to believe in God for the positive promises and happy eventualities such a belief rewards. Due to the emotional attachment to the belief proposition and the consequent psychological pleasures such believing generates, we often tend to retain our belief in God even in the presence of good evidence to the contrary. In a given situation, it is highly likely to find creationists not wanting to believe evidence,



even if adequate, that debunks creationism or that confirms evolutionism. The same can be said with evolutionists. This, however, shall not imply that we normally believe what we want to believe. It is, rather, to stress the self-serving bias (Brown and Dutton 1995; and Winters 1979) and the emotional attachment (Alston 2005) that obtain in some of our belief acquisitions where certain pragmatic ends dominate or guide our cognition directionally.

Religious beliefs are one type of pragmatic belief which owe their existence to pragmatic considerations. However, the desire to believe cannot be taken as evidence for holding the belief. There might be situations where one had long wanted to believe in God or Santa Claus without holding the corresponding belief. Belief, though sometimes susceptible to or even caused by practical considerations in an indirect way, does not normally arise nor can it normally be retained in the face of clear evidence that not  $p$  or in the face of grave doubts that  $p$ . Exceptional cases such as self-deception or akratic beliefs are, however, logically possible. Normally when we want to believe a proposition, we tend to focus on the supporting evidence and disregard evidence to the contrary. Though the Bush administration's public discourse reflects a clear focus on the supporting evidence, this cannot be taken as evidence that they wanted to believe the given propositions. We usually do not *want* to believe a proposition that creates or heightens tension or anxiety. When I see an armed stranger walking up to me with his gun pointed at me, I just come to believe that he is a present danger to me ( $p$ ). It is not that I want to believe that  $p$ . Such a proposition is not a welcome proposition to be desired. Faced with clear evidence that  $p$ , I just come to believe that  $p$ . But if the situations were different and I therefore did not have good evidence whether or not that  $p$ , I might have just accepted that  $p$  due to the high cost of error or the risk asymmetries I would have associated with the eventualities of  $p$  and not  $p$ . Under such epistemically degenerate conditions where I merely fear or suspect that  $p$  where the eventualities of  $p$  are more costly than those of not  $p$ , it is not the case that I am more likely or more willing to believe than to disbelieve that  $p$ . It is, rather, the case that I am more likely or more willing to accept rather than to reject that  $p$ . That is, due to the given practical pressures, the high cost of error and the risk asymmetries associated with the two possibilities of  $p$  and not  $p$ , these evidentially unprobative conditions normally promote or lead to the acceptance of the most feared (Bratman 1992). That is if we were to take on an attitude on the given proposition or

if we had to act on some basis. This research, therefore, rules out the possibility of pragmatic belief as an appropriate characterization of the given beliefs. It, rather, argues that if the given beliefs were ever genuine propositional attitudes, they are better characterised as mere propositional acceptances. That is, in light of the evidential conditions at the time and given the new security environment along with the associated risk asymmetries, it is more apt to characterise them as mere propositional acceptances.

Part one of chapter nine aims to show what their rationality status would have been if they were ever genuine cases of belief. The rationale for establishing their would-be epistemic status is to stress how irrationally, from an internalist perspective, and how irresponsibly, from a deontological perspective, those beliefs would have been acquired if they were to be genuine beliefs. The rationality of belief in the philosophical literature is typically taken to be either an internal or an external matter or purely a matter of duty fulfillment from a deontological perspective. The internalist theory of justification corresponds with the common-sensical view of justification. From an internalist standpoint, a belief is justified if and only if it is *based on* good evidence, acquired in the absence of sufficient contrary evidence and if the believing subject has some potential cognitive grasp of the evidence on which he came to acquire the belief. The common-sensical view of justification shares the core fundamentals of internalism. If we were to establish the rationality of a belief from a common-sensical perspective, our intuitions would compel us to look at the nature of the evidence on which the belief is said to be *based*, looking into the overall evidential conditions at the time to see whether the belief has been acquired contrary to the majority evidence. I take it that any common-sensical view of justification would take it for granted that believing subjects normally have what it takes to determine what is responsible for the rationality of their beliefs, unless extraordinary conditions obtain such as forgetting the original evidence on which they came to acquire a belief. The externalist theory of justification bases the rationality of belief solely on the reliability of the cognitive process which generates a certain belief, and the deontological theory solely on duty fulfillment or being blameless in acquiring a belief. This research takes these conditions as unnecessary for the rationality of belief. I will be arguing that externalist and deontological conditions are neither necessary nor sufficient for the rationality of belief. The rationale for taking the externalist and the deontological

theories of justification is to draw a contrast between the intuitive plausibility of these philosophical theories and that of the internalist theory which advocates a common-sensical view of justification.

I will be arguing that the internalist theory of justification remains the only competent account that can adequately, in line with our intuitions, address the epistemic status of beliefs of all modes whether stored or occurrent. This, however, excludes certain limited cases of lost or forgotten evidence. The intuitive force of the internalist constraint on justification far outweighs the objections raised against it by rival externalists. In a similar fashion, the intuitive uneasiness to count a belief as justified in the absence of any actual or potential grasp of the justifying condition far outweighs the so-called solution externalism promises to deliver to the problems internalism faces – a solution doomed by an insurmountable generality problem and rendered unattractive by the subjective irresponsibility and epistemic irrationality which externalism generates due to its argument that internalist conditions are not required for the rationality of belief. Because of the intractable generality problem, the externalist theory of justification cannot account for the epistemic status of the given beliefs (if they were ever genuine beliefs), whereas the internalist theory accounts for their epistemic status without risking the access issues associated with internalism. This research also addresses the untenability of the deontological conception of justification. It contests the necessity of duty fulfillment as sufficient for epistemic justification. But it recognizes that epistemic deontology can be thought of as a possible, but not primary, explanation for the internalist constraint on justification.

I contend that the justificatory view that is most coherent with our intuitions is internalism (the common-sensical view of justification). Our intuitions and common-sensical convictions underlie the very foundation of the internalist theory of justification. I have, therefore, chosen to employ the internalist theory of justification as the philosophical equivalent of the common-sensical view on justification. That is, I have chosen to use the internalist theory of justification in order to stress the intuitive force of the common-sensical view of justification. In philosophy, the choice of a particular justificatory theory rather than another is not rationalised through the nature of the belief in question. It is, rather, rationalised by its force to generate to scepticism the kind of response that is most consistent with our intuitions. There are

two explanations as to the motivation behind the internalist constraint on justification. The first explanation arises from our commonsensical view of justification as a cognitive desideratum supervenient on a belief's being *based* on good evidence with the believing subject's possessing some potential cognitive access to such evidence. The second one arises from the ethics of our intellectual endeavours: duty fulfilment. This deontological explanation concerns the access requirement on justification - a requirement which internalism is committed to. Deontologists argue that we have an epistemic duty to guide our doxastic cultivations by good evidence. But I can only do this if I have access to such evidence. This is one explanation behind the access requirement on justification. I have taken the deontological account of justification to show its untenability as a better response to scepticism, its inefficiency as a sufficient condition for justification, and its implausibility as a better explanation for the motivation behind the internalist constraint on justification. Furthermore, I also test the intuitive force of internalism against its rival theory: externalism. That is, in a bid to demonstrate the intuitive plausibility of internalism as a more tenable response to scepticism, I examine the force of externalism as a necessary condition for the justifiability of belief. Examining it against its rival theory (externalism) and its possible motivational source (deontologism), I aim to show (weak non-deontological) internalism, the philosophical formulation of our common-sensical view of justification, to be the justification theory most consistent with our intuitions. Philosophers diverge over what justification theory better responds to our intuitions of what it is to be epistemically justified in holding or arriving at a belief. Further, there is disagreement among philosophers as to whether it is internalism or externalism that better accommodates our commonsensical convictions of justification. I am of the view that the internalist theory of justification aligns better with such convictions; though externalists would disagree. Bergmann, a fervent externalist, contends that "externalism fits very well with our commonsense attributions of knowledge and justified belief" (2006: 238). But Bonjour disagrees. He argues that externalism provides "an intuitively unsatisfactory" account of justification (2002: 265). He further argues:

it seems to me quite doubtful that the commonsense conviction is that our beliefs are justified in [an externalist sense] ... because it is doubtful that common sense really has any inkling of that specific conception of justification ... On the contrary, the commonsense conviction seems to me to

be simply that we have good reasons for thinking that our beliefs are true [the internalism's *raison d'être*] (2003: 199-200).

This long-standing debate over what justification theory better responds to our commonsensical convictions of positive epistemic status is hardly surprising for philosophy is, in the minds of key philosophers such as Thomas Reid<sup>20</sup> and George Moore<sup>21</sup>, profoundly rooted in the principles of commonsense. Reid famously argued that "Philosophy ... has no other root but the principles of Common Sense; it grows out of them, and draws its nourishment from them" (in Lemos 2004: xi). Moreover, BonJour holds that

the judgments of common sense are at least one central part of the basis for philosophical reflection about knowledge and justification, as about anything else; to reject them as having no weight would arguably leave not enough of a starting point to give us any real chance of getting anywhere in our epistemological inquiries (2002: 265).

To conclude, belief, acceptance and justification underlie the philosophical methodology I have taken to explore the research questions. Being justified in holding a belief endows us with an epistemic status which polarises epistemologists as to whether it is an internal or an external matter to a believing subject. Internalists argue that it is *counter-intuitive* to accept a belief as justified in the absence of any inkling on the part of the believing subject as to what is responsible for the truth of the belief. That is, it is our intuitions, our common-sensical convictions, which underlie the internalist theory of justification. There is just something psychologically amiss with the idea of taking a belief as justified in the absence of any knowledge of the truth-making features of the belief. But externalists go against such intuitions, regarding such knowledge as irrelevant to the rationality status of a belief. It is these two positions that dominate the philosophical literature regarding the rationality status of a belief. Internalists are driven by our intuitions, which is why they take a common-sensical position on the rationality of belief. But, in a bid to detract from its intuitive plausibility, externalists charge internalism with a deontological origin. That is, they argue that the internalism's access requirement on justification is motivated by deontology. Deontologists contend that we can be rational in holding a belief only if

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<sup>20</sup> See Thomas Reid, *Inquiry and Essays* (1983).

<sup>21</sup> See George Moore, *Philosophical Papers* (1959).

we have responsibly or blamelessly arrived at the belief. That is, they argue that we have epistemic duties which we should abide by in our doxastic cultivations. But we can guide our doxastic cultivations in accordance with our epistemic duties only if we have knowledge of such duties. These epistemic duties, deontologists argue, consist of basing our beliefs on good evidence, seeking evidence for and against the proposition in question, not ignoring contrary evidence, not suppressing doubts, the pursuit of truth and the avoidance of falsehood. But we cannot be reasonably expected to guide our beliefs by such considerations when we have no inkling of such considerations.

In other words, I cannot be reasonably expected to conduct my intellectual life by good evidence when I have no knowledge of such evidence. Externalists argue that it is these deontological considerations from which the internalist requirement on justification originates. I argue that internalism is motivated by our intuitions, and belief is not a willable mental phenomenon from an intuitive perspective, whereas the deontological account of justification implies doxastic voluntarism by associating justificatory status with being blameless in forming a belief. But we can be blamed for doing something only if we have voluntary control over whether or not to do that thing, as observed by René Descartes: "*The supreme perfection of man is that he acts freely or voluntarily, and it is this which makes him deserve praise or blame*" (1985: 205). The deontological theory of justification, therefore, runs counter to our intuitions of how belief is acquired. I cannot be blamed for a belief I had no voluntary control over its acquisition, no matter how false or unjustified the belief is. It is appropriate to talk about the application of blame or responsibility only where we have voluntary control over the object of application. Here we have no direct control over our beliefs. From a non-deontological internalist perspective, neither belief nor justificatory status is up to us, whereas from a deontological perspective both belief and justificatory status are up to us. It is, therefore, not appropriate to think of deontology as the origin of internalism. I have explored the essence of deontology in chapter seven in an attempt to show its implausibility as the source of the internalist requirement on justification. Our endeavours to establish the rationality status of a belief normally take either a philosophical or a common-sensical form. Philosophers pursue a philosophical approach, whereas journalists pursue a common-sensical approach. Internalism represents our common-sensical convictions of justification for it is motivated by our intuitions of what it is to be justified in holding a belief.

Externalism is the philosophical justificatory theory that profoundly conflicts with such intuitions. I have examined the essence of externalism in chapter eight in a bid to show the implausibility of justificatory theories that are unmotivated by our intuitions of the rationality status of belief.

### **1.5. The Research Argumentative Strategy**

Chapter one outlines the stated rationales behind the war in order to establish, in light of the evidential conditions at the time, whether the Bush administration's asserted belief in the given rationales could be rightly characterised as a case of belief, pragmatic belief, or mere propositional acceptance. It also touches on regime change as the key Bush administration's policy objective regarding Iraq. It is appropriate and necessary that regime change as the Bush administration's overriding pragmatic end is addressed for examining the possibility of pragmatic belief as the right characterisation of the given supposed beliefs requires consideration of the pragmatic ends at play during the build-up to the war. Furthermore, addressing regime change is necessary because in my attempt to establish the nature of the given beliefs - whether they are most apt to be construed as beliefs, pragmatic beliefs or mere propositional acceptances - I will also examine the possibility whether the Bush administration was being insincere in presenting *p* as the rationale for the war while regime change was the ultimate policy objective regarding the Iraqi issue. Further, the first chapter also addresses the alleged Iraqi threat to the US national security. Iraq was portrayed as posing a multi-faceted threat of a variety of nature ranging from emerging, grave, gathering, mounting, growing, uniquely urgent, immediate, and imminent. The entirety of these threats were all alleged fears that Iraq might, if left unchecked, dominate the Middle East, threaten the US economic and geopolitical interests in the region, or transfer WMD technology, equipment or stockpiles to terrorist networks and thereby pose a threat to the US homeland security.

In a bid to highlight the potential risk asymmetries the Bush administration might have weighed up in their considerations whether *p* or not *p*, this research addresses the alleged Iraqi threat with an extended part (six) in the appendix outlining the threat statements asserted by the Bush administration officials during the lead-up to the war. Taking into account these epistemically ill-supported and allegedly feared threats is

necessary to further the attribution of propositional acceptance for mere acceptance of a feared or unwelcome proposition is, as argued by Bratman on p. 104, normally prompted by practical pressures or the risk asymmetries we associate with accepting or rejecting that *p*. Here, if the alleged Iraqi threat was genuinely feared, then it would have naturally generated practical pressures on the part of the Bush administration officials or rendered them consider the risk asymmetries between the acceptance and the rejection of *p*. The philosophical methodology undertaken to address the research questions is developed in chapter two with an examination of the nature of belief and its differentiae. Explaining the concept of belief is necessary to further the attribution of belief and pragmatic belief. That is, in order to establish an appropriate attribution of belief, it is necessary to understand the nature of belief like its being a mental or a psychological state, its being a dispositional rather than an occurrent state, its natural responsiveness to truth along with its being occasionally sensitive to practical desires. In an attempt to stress the conditions under which belief is normally taken to exist and explain why the attribution of belief under certain epistemically degenerate conditions is inappropriate, I will examine the unwillability of belief in chapter three. The fundamental task of belief attribution is establishing, in light of the evidential conditions at the time, whether or not a given belief could have been warranted from the perspective of a given believing subject. In chapter three, I will be arguing that we cannot be rightly described as believing a proposition we take to be unwarranted from our own cognitive perspective. In an attempt to address the attribution of propositional acceptance, I will, in chapter four, examine the nature of acceptance and explain the differentiae that individuate such a mental act from mere public display or pretence. In addition, in a bid to further highlight the distinctive nature of belief as an involuntary propositional attitude normally shaped by epistemic evidence, I will also touch on faith in chapter four. Faith and belief are often used interchangeably in ordinary language. But we will learn in chapter four that faith is distinguished by its practical essence, whereas belief is individuated by its epistemic essence. It is because of this that we cannot will belief.

Part one of chapter nine seeks to establish the justificatory status of the given beliefs, taking them at face value, demonstrating what their rationality status would have been if they were genuine beliefs. Furthering this requires an understanding of the nature of epistemic justification and what justifiability status amounts to. In an



attempt to emphasise that a belief's enjoying justificatory status neither guarantees the belief's being true nor does it preclude its being false, I will explore the connection between epistemic justification and truth in chapter five. It is necessary to understand that the conferment of justificatory status on a belief does not supervene on truth per se, but, rather, on truth-conducivity or good evidence along with the basing relation. This is our common-sensical perception of what it is for a belief to be epistemically justified. I intend to show that the prevailing view of epistemic justification is that of the internalist. The internalist account of justification is the philosophical equivalent of the common-sensical view of justification. That is, the internalist account of justification is fundamentally driven by our intuitions or commonsense. I aim to establish the justificatory status of the given supposed beliefs from the perspective of three central philosophical theories of justification: internalism, deontologism and externalism. I will explore such theories along with their drawbacks in chapters six, seven, and eight, respectively, in a bid to explain what it takes for a belief to be epistemically justified from such perspectives. There are two perspectives from which we normally establish the rationality of belief: a philosophical and a common-sensical perspective. I have chosen to employ the internalist theory as the philosophical stipulation of the common-sensical view of justification. Further, deontologism and externalism are employed in this research as two philosophical theories of justification in an attempt to demonstrate the intuitive plausibility of the common-sensical view of justification which is represented by the internalist theory. In chapter nine, I will, in light of belief, acceptance and justification, examine the given Bush administration belief propositions with the nuclear and terror propositions being the paradigm of the professed rationale for the war. In part one of chapter nine, I will examine the rationality status of the given beliefs, establishing whether or not the available evidence constituted justification to believe that *p*. In part two of chapter nine, I will analyse the nature of the given beliefs, establishing whether they can be rightly characterized as cases of belief, pragmatic belief or mere propositional acceptance. The findings of the research will highlight what their rationality status would have been if they were genuine beliefs and establish an appropriate characterization of these beliefs in light of the evidential conditions at the time. In chapter ten, I will draw the conclusion of the research.

## Chapter Two

### 2.1. The Concept of Belief

This chapter examines the character of belief as an involuntary propositional attitude and its constitutive properties such as its typical truth-directedness, its being dispositional, its being a psychological or mental state and its entailing a dispositional feeling that  $p$  is true. Looking into the nature of belief is necessary to further the attribution of belief. That is, establishing whether or not belief attribution is appropriate in a given context requires an informed insight into the distinctive nature of belief as opposed to other voluntary propositional attitudes such as acceptance or faith. Belief is individuated from other propositional attitudes by its constitutional aim to get the truth, as we will learn on p. 67. In other words, belief is ideally motivated by truth considerations or acquired on the basis of epistemic reasons. But, as explained in chapters three, four and seven, our beliefs do not always originate from epistemic considerations. Rather, our desires cause some of our beliefs, but only through indirect routes. Ryle argues that belief belongs to the motive word family: “‘believe’ is of the same family as motive words, where ‘know’ is of the same family as skill words; so we ask how a person knows this, but only why a person believes that” (1949: 129). Thus, whenever we question a cognizer’s belief, we seek or question the cognizer’s grounds for believing a proposition. In this research, we question the adequacy of the stated rationale behind the Bush administration’s seeming belief that Iraq was in possession of WMD and in league with Al-Qaeda prior to the war. We will look into the evidential conditions at the time in an attempt to both establish whether or not belief attribution to the given subjects is appropriate, and determine what the given beliefs’ rationality status would have been if they were genuine beliefs at all. Defining what it is to believe, Swinburne argues that belief is someone’s “view of the world, what they hold to be true about it, what they accept as true” (2001: 32). In other words, belief is an attitude that we take up towards a given proposition which we take to be true or probable. Swinburne, however, does not seem to distinguish between belief and acceptance here, but we will learn in chapter four that they are two different propositional attitudes. Furthermore, defining it as a feeling, James associates belief with the feeling or emotion that stops the state of doubt and anxiety:

*In its inner nature, belief, or the sense of reality, is a sort of feeling more allied to the emotions than to anything else. ... What characterises both consent and belief is the cessation of theoretic agitation through the advent of an idea which is inwardly stable, and fills the mind solidly to the exclusion of contradictory ideas (2007: 283).*

That is, to believe is to make sense of some reality. By defining it as a feeling or emotion, James upholds the thesis that beliefs are unwillable. He rightly argues that to arrive at a belief is to have the doubt or anxiety that initially prompted the quest for a state of belief cease. In other words, to arrive at a belief is to be psychologically at ease as far as the proposition in question is concerned. But, as noted on p. 71-72, belief and consent are not the same propositional attitudes. They are different in the sense that the latter is a voluntary act of assent whereas the former is not. Further to what it is to believe, Armstrong holds that "Our beliefs *are* our interpretation of reality" (1973: 4). That is, to believe a proposition is to conceive of it as true or probable. It is to have a conception of what the reality is from our subjective perspective. But a proposition should not necessarily be true in order to be believed as Armstrong argues that beliefs "point to the existence of a certain state of affairs though there may be no such state of affairs" (Ibid: 4); whereas a proposition should be true in order to constitute knowledge. Thus, truth is not a prerequisite for belief. Belief is, therefore, a fallible notion. Furthermore, belief is, argues Moser, as perspectival as justification, assenting and knowledge: "believing and assenting are perspectival in the sense that they are relative to a person, knowledge is similarly perspectival. My knowing that *P* does not entail your knowing that *P*, since my knowing that *P* does not require your believing or assenting to *P*" (1989: 23). In a similar fashion, my believing that *p* neither entails nor requires your believing that *p*.

Neither the information at our disposal always generates a belief state, nor do we always believe what we assert to be our belief. Sometimes we just accept or assent to the proposition we assert, or our assertion that *p* might be the result of a mere guess or a hunch that *p*, or we might just feign belief in a proposition we do not genuinely believe. Further, sometimes we accept or assume a hypothesis to be true till we arrive at a state of belief about the hypothesis. States of belief are not attainable through the practice of free will as is the case with volitional propositional attitudes such as acceptance or consent. It is not at my disposal whether to believe that the human race

has evolved from apes when I take the available supporting evidence to be insufficient to warrant such a belief. But it is at my disposal whether to accept this to be true. Thus, once presented with such a theory, I might, for practical reasons, just accept or assent to it, though I hold no such beliefs. That is why Armstrong argues that “We must distinguish between beliefs and mere thoughts: between believing that the earth is flat and merely entertaining this proposition while either disbelieving it or having no belief one way or the other” (1973: 4). Furthermore, Hume also argues that “We conceive many things, which we do not believe” (2008: 80). That is, we do not always form beliefs about the things we conceive of. But the data our sensory system registers is almost always belief-entailing, unless some untoward circumstances obtain. I join Reid in thinking that the perception of an object implies belief of some sort about the object. He contends that “the perception of an object implies both a conception of its form, and a belief of its present existence. ... this belief is not the effect of argumentation and reasoning; it is the immediate effect of my constitution” (2000: 168). Reid further argues:

My belief is carried along by perception, as irresistibly as my body by the earth. And the greatest sceptic will find himself to be in the same condition. He may struggle hard to disbelieve the informations of his senses, as a man does to swim against a torrent; but ah! It is in vain (Ibid: 169).

I do subscribe to the contention that perception is almost always belief-entailing, but there are situations where one comes to disbelieve the evidence of one's senses. For example, Oliver lives in an area where massive hawks can hardly be differentiated from eagles. It is an area where the heads of hawks turn white when they mature. He is generally ill-informed with birds. Jessica, his mother, is a keen bird watcher who often teaches Oliver about the different varieties of birds. On one occasion, Oliver learns that eagles can be identified by their white head and white tail. But he quickly forgets such details. One day, he goes to the nearby coast. He sees a big red-tailed bird which appears to him to be an eagle by its white head, not remembering at the time that eagles have white tails. Oliver wonders whether it is an eagle. Moments within such consideration, he recollects that it is diagnostic of eagles to have white tails. He, therefore, comes to disbelieve his visual evidence that the bird is a type of eagle. There are other situations where we come to disbelieve the evidence of our senses for their being unsatisfactory or unclear or because of other contradictory

memorial beliefs entering our reasoning at the time. But in most situations, perception or noticing is belief-entailing.

My seeing or noticing a loose rhino on the driveway entails a belief of some sort about the physical object I perceive. Though it results from my perception, the belief could be false. The rhino I perceive might turn out to be a fake one. That is, though I have visual evidence that *p*, such evidence might be false. It is because of the fallibility of evidence that some epistemologists argue that evidence shall be construed as consisting of beliefs rather than facts or knowledge, as ordinarily conceived. Moreover, it is due to the fact that *misleading* evidence pertains, Alston contends that it is more appropriate to construe evidence as belief: "In ordinary language the tendency is to think of it [evidence] as consisting of *facts* the subject knows to obtain, 'factual evidence' ... [but] for complete generality we need to speak of evidence as consisting of beliefs rather than facts" (2005: 82-3). Moreover, since evidence is often qualified as conclusive, inconclusive, incontrovertible, misleading, admissible, or inadmissible, it is more accurate to think of evidence as belief rather than facts or knowledge. This, however, does not reciprocate that every belief constitutes (admissible) evidence; nor does it reciprocate that all evidence constitutes belief. A mere belief that *p* might not constitute admissible evidence in the court in the same way that inadequate evidence might not trigger a belief state. Belief and evidence are, however, both fallible notions. Evidence is a fallible notion; that is why one's believing that *p* on good evidence does not necessitate the truth that *p*. Further, one's belief can be based on good evidence, but can still turn out to be false, as explained by Chisholm:

We have good evidence, presumably, for believing that there are nine planets. This evidence consists of various other facts that we know about astronomy, but it does not itself include the fact that there are nine planets. It would seem to be logically possible, therefore, for a man to have good evidence for a belief which is nevertheless false (1977: 4).

Thus, no matter how good our reasons are for our beliefs, our mental representations of the world can still be false. Moore argues that assertion normally implies belief or knowledge of what is being asserted, unless the asserter does not mean what he asserts: "Whenever we make any assertion whatever (unless we do not mean what we say) we are always *expressing* one or other of two things - namely,

either that we *think* [believe] the thing in question to be so, or that we *know* it to be so" (in Black 1952: 26). Moore further argues that "Even when I do not mean what I say, my words may be said to *imply* either that I think that *A* is *B* or that I know it, since they will commonly lead people to suppose that one or other of these things is the case" (Ibid: 26). Moreover, Cohen also argues that "the speech-act of making a statement normally implies that the speaker possesses the corresponding belief or web of beliefs" (1989: 376). This is normally the case, so far as we mean what we state or assert. In addition, Williams takes belief to be normally manifested as a belief-free assertion (refer to p. 47). That is, belief normally takes the form of an assertion. But asserting a proposition need not necessarily amount to believing the proposition. There are conditions where we disbelieve what we assert to be true. Guilty defendants in denial normally disbelieve what they assert to be the case. They know or believe that what they are asserting is false, yet they still assert it with the hope that they can escape their guilt with impunity or in a bid to convince the judge or jury that they are innocent. That is, there are situations where we, for practical reasons, pretend to believe what we in fact disbelieve to be the case. Furthermore, there are situations where we assert what we accept as true, though not necessarily believing it to be true, as we will learn in chapter four. Thus, we do not always believe what we assert to be the case.

There are circumstances where we intend to deceive under the pretence of belief. That is, we sometimes insincerely assert a belief in *p* for practical reasons in a bid to get others to believe *p*. This could well be the case with the Bush administration's seeming belief that Iraq had a reconstituted nuclear weapons program, was in possession of chemical and biological weapons and in league with Al-Qaeda. Nick is a long-standing dear friend of mine whom I taught a philosophy module during his undergraduate studies. I take him to lack the kind of intellectual rigour and necessary cognitive sophistication to undertake his postgraduate studies in philosophy. Yet in writing a reference to him, I, for practical reasons, assert a very firm, but insincere, belief that he has what it takes to carry out such a project. I just want to get the intended personnel to believe what I myself do not believe. Here I intend to induce in the addressee a belief I am not holding myself. Neither the title of this thesis nor any discussions of belief hereafter are intended to ascribe belief to the Bush administration officials. For the purposes at hand, we will just treat what they manifested as their

belief about the status of the Iraqi WMD and its relationship with Al-Qaeda as an alleged case of belief. In chapter nine, I will establish whether or not the given apparent case of belief was a case of belief.

The expeditioner who clearly sees an avalanche coming their way automatically and immediately, without first engaging in any doxastic deliberation or decision, formulates a belief that an avalanche is occurring, approaching them or that they are seeing an avalanche or that what they are seeing is an avalanche. This belief is the output of a perceptual experience. We will leave the questions this example might provoke such as the properties that confer justificatory status on belief, the nature of such a status and the alleged willability of belief for other ensuing chapters (3, 5, 6, 7, and 8). Epistemologists would typically take this perceptual belief to establish two fundamental realities about the nature of belief. First, they would argue that this belief that  $p$  is an involuntary, mechanical response to some perceptual experience or some evidentiary condition. Second, this belief that  $p$  guides the behaviour or reaction of the expeditioner. In other words, they would argue that this belief that  $p$  is what motivates the expeditioner in their reaction towards the avalanche or is responsible for how they behave under the given perceptual condition. But not all beliefs are action-guiding, as will be noticed on pp. 52-53. That is, not every belief that we form ends up guiding or motivating some action.

Epistemically rational beliefs aim at truth. In fact it is this aim that constitutes rational and psychological constraints on belief, and it is due to this aim, as we will learn in the next chapter, that we cannot will ourselves to believe something we take to be unsupported by evidence. If belief did not have this truth aim, then generating beliefs would have been as willable as any other voluntary actions. But we do not always aim at getting the truth when we believe. That is, we sometimes deviate from this aim when we believe. It is because of this that truth cannot be regarded as the sole constitutive aim of belief. Some of our beliefs, such as akratic beliefs, aim at practical desire satisfaction. Thus, to state that belief solely aims at truth as a constitutive goal of its formation is to disregard the kind of beliefs we form for practical reasons. When I aim to acquire a belief on the basis of a practical goal, I want the world to correspond to what I aim to believe. That is, I desire that the world be as I want or aim to believe it to be. I just want the world to be a certain way, the way I want it to be,

and have a belief in how I want it to be. But when I form a belief on the basis of truth as a goal, I want my belief to correspond to how the world is. That is, I care about truth as an overriding goal. I, therefore, seek and focus on the kind of evidence that conduces to that goal. Shah argues that "When we deliberate whether to believe some proposition, e.g., whether to believe that it is snowing outside, we feel immediately compelled to look for evidence of its truth: we look outside" (2006: 481). That is, he argues that "the question *whether to believe that p* seems to collapse into the question *whether p is true*" (2003: 447). In fact this is the true essence of paradigmatic cases of belief formation. This is what typically crosses our mind first and foremost when we consider whether to believe something. But akratic beliefs, if they are ever possible, cannot be said to aim at truth. I cannot be rightly described as aiming at truth when I, in the presence of adequate evidence to the contrary, come to believe that my girlfriend still loves me. What undermines the argument that truth is the sole constitutive aim of belief is that belief is not always truth-directed or epistemically-oriented. That is, belief is neither always encouraged, nor is it always caused by epistemic considerations. Sometimes practical considerations promote and indirectly cause belief, as demonstrated in chapters three and four.

Shah and Velleman argue that "being regulated for truth is part of the very concept of belief" (2005: 498). But they rightly contend that it cannot be a necessary condition for belief to have a literal aim: "belief cannot be required to have a literal aim, since only some instances of belief are caused by the goal-directed activity of their subjects; many others are the product of processes such as perception, which don't involve any agential goals or intentions" (Ibid: 498-9). Thinking whether *p* is true is, as argued by Shah before, a necessary part of whether to believe *p* where *p* is the sort of proposition that is not clear or clear enough in a way to generate belief outright in the absence of such deliberation. Thus, taking aim at truth is part of the deliberative process that we undergo when we acquire a belief through doxastic deliberation. But most of our perceptual beliefs are formed without first engaging in any such deliberative processes. That is, we normally do not first consider or wonder whether to believe the kind of perceptual experiences we are having, unless we have reason to doubt our perception or perceptual experiences. We usually just form them unconsciously without first engaging in any goal-directed activity or without consciously aiming at the truth. That is, we normally want our perceptual beliefs to be



true. But it does not follow that we aim at getting the truth when form them. There is no such explicit or conscious aim contained in the mechanical process of generating such beliefs. Walking down the nearby zoo, I suddenly come across a loose lion. Upon such perceptual experience, I immediately - providing that I know how lions look like - form a belief that I am seeing a lion or that what I am seeing is a lion. That is, before forming the belief, I do not first engage in any kind of deliberation, wondering whether what I am seeing is a lion or wondering whether to believe it. I just form the belief immediately upon the perceptual experience in a non-intentional and unconscious manner. But of course sometimes we wonder whether the perceptual experience we are having is true or deliberate whether to believe it. Imagine that I was sat on a beach during the night. I happen to see some flying object that I take to be unclear whether it is an unidentified flying object (UFO). I just wonder whether it is an alien spacecraft. I, therefore, reach out to my night vision monocular to take a closer look at it, seeking evidence to see whether it is an alien spacecraft. Being convinced that it is, I come to believe the flying object to be an alien spacecraft. Here my perceptual belief can be characterized as aiming at truth or being formed in a goal-directed manner. That is, the belief is the result of a doxastic deliberation characterized or settled by whether *p* (whether *p* is true).

But not all our beliefs are preceded by deliberations such as entertaining whether to believe *p* or wondering whether *p*. Perceptual beliefs are the paradigm in this regard. That is why entertaining a proposition cannot be a necessary condition for belief in the proposition. But some leading philosophers argue that believing entails entertaining. Braithwaite argues that my belief that *p* in "the sense of actual belief and not of a disposition to believe" entails "(1) I entertain *p* ... and (2) I have a disposition to act as if *p* were true" (1933: 132). Price takes the same position too. He argues that "believing and disbelieving contain entertaining. It can occur without them but not they without it" (1935: 233). He, therefore, defines belief as "reasoned assent to an entertained proposition" (Ibid: 240). I take assent to be as voluntary as acceptance. In fact, acceptance and assent are often used interchangeably in the philosophical literature. But Price associates belief with assent. He argues that our assenting to *p* involves "(a) the preferring of *p* to *q* and *r*; (b) the feeling a certain degree of confidence with regard to *p*" (Ibid: 237). Thus, he identifies belief with some feeling of confidence, which we later on examine whether it can be tenably associated with

belief as a key differentia. Price, therefore, takes assent to be involuntary as he associates it with feelings, and feelings are involuntary. Disbelieving a proposition occurs only when the proposition has been entertained and rejected. Thus, disbelief entails entertaining. But belief need not, as illustrated in the lion example. Belief is generally characterised as a propositional attitude, a cognitive, mental or psychological state. But there is no identity among philosophers as to what constitutes that attitude or what it is like to be in such state. The following is how Russell characterises the essence of belief in philosophy:

Belief ... is the central problem in the analysis of mind. Believing seems the most "mental" thing we do ... The whole intellectual life consists of beliefs, and of the passage from one belief to another by what is called "reasoning". Beliefs give knowledge and error; they are the vehicles of truth and falsehood. Psychology, theory of knowledge and metaphysics revolve about belief, and on the view we take of belief our philosophical outlook largely depends (2008: 151).

Few philosophical spheres have so far been at the centre stage of a decisive scrutiny of such magnitude in a way the concept of belief has been for all the right reasons. Belief plays an indispensable role in explaining behaviour. It, therefore, is a fundamental centrepiece in both the philosophy of action and the philosophy of mind. But I do not think it the case that the whole intellectual life revolves around belief alone. Much of our intellectual life comprises of other cognitive attitudes such as acceptance, faith, and judgement. Nor do I think that all our beliefs are formed as an upshot of reasoning. If it was the case that we passed from one belief to another through an act of reasoning or deliberation, then the entertainment of the target proposition would be a necessary condition for the constitution or attribution of belief. In fact, as we will observe later, some distinguished philosophers such as Hume and Price consider the consciousness or entertainment of a proposition a necessary requirement for belief in the proposition.

But I take it that by passing from one belief to another through reasoning, Russell refers to the beliefs we acquire through deductive reasoning. For example, my belief that Washington is the capital of the United States entails a belief that Washington is a city not a village. Moreover, Russell recognizes that "Most of our beliefs, like most of our wishes, are "unconscious"" (Ibid: 157). He nevertheless argues that "What is

believed, and the believing, must both consist of present occurrences in the believer" (Ibid: 152). It is not clear whether Russell is committed to the occurrent or non-occurrent view of belief. Beliefs are propositional bearers of truth and falsity values. That is, a belief can be true, but it can also be false. If a belief is true and the believing subject has good evidence that adequately supports the truth of the belief, then the belief confers knowledge. This is according to Plato's definition of knowledge as justified true belief. Russell rightly argues that the way we conceive of belief fundamentally determines our philosophical outlook, primarily that of cognition whether it is active or passive. There are two key arguments in the philosophical literature about the status of cognition with it being partially settled by whether we take the Humean or Cartesian view of belief. If we take belief as the sole product of cognition, which I do not, and conceive of it as an act of will in the way that Descartes does, then cognition can be said to be an active phenomenon. The following is how Descartes classifies the modes of thinking:

*We possess only two modes of thinking: the perception of the intellect and the operation of the will.* All the modes of thinking that we experience within ourselves can be brought under two general headings: perception, or the operation of the intellect, and volition, or the operation of the will. Sensory perception[s], ... are simply various modes of perception; desire, aversion, assertion, denial and doubt [disbelief or belief] are various modes of willing (1985: 204).

That is, Descartes takes mental states such as desire, belief or doubt to be under voluntary control. Whether or not I assert a particular proposition is surely up to me. I can assert a proposition that I believe to be true, but I can equally assert a proposition that I disbelieve, doubt or know to be false. The same is true with denial. One can deny a charge one knows or believes to be true. Many defendants deny charges they know to be true. These are voluntary operations of free will. But it is not up to me whether I doubt a proposition that I know or believe to be true. I cannot help doubting a proposition that I perceive to be doubtful or unsupported by the current evidence. Furthermore, I cannot help believing a proposition I take to be true. Similarly, it is not up to me to desire something I abhor. These are mental states that cannot be manufactured by a direct act of will. But if we take cognition to be a phenomenon that always culminates in belief or disbelief, which I do not think it does always, and think of the resulting doxastic attitude from a Humean perspective, then cognition can be

said to be passive. Hume argues that belief is "an operation of the soul" which is as involuntary as it is to "feel the passion of love" (2008: 35).

I do not think that the way we conceive of belief can establish whether cognition is active or passive. We can assign both activity and passivity to cognition, depending on the resultant cognitive attitude in question. In light of the emerging evidence I have, I consider whether Mars has ever been a habitable environment in the past. Being convinced of the probativeness of the evidence, I just come to believe that Mars has been, at some point in life, a habitable planet. My cognition here generates an attitude that is a passive state of mine. Thus, cognition can be aptly characterized as passive under such circumstances. Now suppose that NASA's Curiosity Mission to Mars proved a success and the robot managed to take some samples of rock which I take to be unprobative but still accept, for practical reasons, the hypothesis that Mars has been habitable in the past. Here cognition produces a voluntary attitude and it can, therefore, be aptly described as an active phenomenon. For certain practical considerations, I just assent to *p* or accept it to be true through a volitional act of will. We will learn more about acceptance as a volitional propositional attitude in chapter four. For now, we will focus on belief. Belief neither entails knowledge, nor does it entail certainty. Though it could involve both, as explained on pp.47-49, it is not a necessary condition that it should. Armstrong observes that "certainty entails belief" (1973: 140). He further argues: "certainty is a stronger notion than mere belief. 'A is certain that *p*' entails that 'A believes that *p*', for it is a contradiction to say that A is certain that the earth is flat but does not believe it to be flat. At the same time, that A believes *p* to be true does not entail that A is certain that *p* is true" (Ibid: 139). That is, we sometimes hold or assert our cognitive attitudes in the way of belief out of uncertainty. Consider the following example:

when asked where John is, I might reply, "I believe that he is upstairs, but you had better check for yourself". In saying I believe that John is upstairs, rather than simply saying that he is upstairs, I am implying that I do not know with certainty where he is. From these facts it is concluded that my believing consists in my not being quite sure where John is; for if I were quite sure (and if John were where I am quite sure that he is), then I would *know* where he is, not merely believe that he is there (Swain 1981: 29).

Williams and Alston argue that we normally manifest our beliefs as belief clauses when we do not know them to be true or are not certain whether they are true. That is, beliefs are not always manifested in a belief-stipulated manner. Sometimes we communicate a belief without verbalising it as a belief clause such as *I believe that the coffee is too hot*. Williams argues that the most straightforward manifestation of a belief is a belief-free assertion rather than a belief-stipulated utterance:

the most straightforward, basic, simple, elementary expression of a belief is an assertion. That is, the most straightforward way of expressing my belief that *p*, is to make a certain assertion. ... the assertion that I make, which is the most straightforward or elementary expression of my belief that *p*, is the assertion *that p*, not the assertion 'I believe that *p*'. The most elementary and straightforward expression of the belief that it is raining is to say 'it is raining', not to say 'I believe that it's raining'. 'I believe that it's raining' does a rather special job. As a matter of fact, it does a variety of special jobs. In some cases, it makes what is very like an autobiographical remark; but very often in our discourse it does a special job of expressing the belief that *p*, or asserting that *p*, in a rather qualified way. On the whole, if somebody says to me, 'Where is the railroad station?' and I say 'I believe that it's three blocks down there and to the right', he will have slightly less confidence in my utterances than if I just say 'It's three blocks down there and to the right' (1973: 137-8).

Furthermore, Alston observes that "In most contexts, when one says, 'I believe that *p*', that is taken to imply that the speaker is disavowing knowledge that *p*" (in Jordan and Howard-Snyder 1996: 8). In other words, a belief clause typically implies the lack of knowledge or certainty. Thus, we often manifest a belief in a belief-stipulated manner when we do not know it to be true or are not certain whether it is true. That is, a belief-stipulated statement often communicates a qualified message for the notion of belief typically implies the lack of knowledge or certainty. Thus, we usually manifest a belief as a belief-free assertion when we are certain or know the belief to be true. Williams' argument in favour of a belief-free assertion as the most straightforward way to manifest a belief entitles us to regard a number of the Bush administration assertions regarding the charges levelled against Iraq as their apparent beliefs about such charges. The Bush administration's belief-free assertion about the alleged Iraqi connections to Al-Qaeda is, therefore, considered their seeming belief about such connections. Further, in our daily discourse, we communicate many of our beliefs without manifesting them as belief clauses. But our manifesting a belief as a belief-

stipulated assertion does not necessarily mean that we are not certain of the belief or that we do not know the belief proposition to be true, as pointed out by Swain:

When I say that I believe something, I usually imply that I am not absolutely certain. ... [But] it is a mistake to claim that 'I believe' is *always* used in such a way that uttering it implies one is not quite sure about what one believes. Even though we often use 'I believe' with this force, we sometimes do not. Suppose I am visiting a friend in Alaska, and one day he tells me that there is a palm tree growing in the park nearby. When I express serious doubt about this, he takes me to the park and shows me the tree. Having seen many palm trees, I am easily able to tell that it is indeed a palm tree. I might very well remark to my friend, "All right, now I believe you"! In making this remark I am saying that I have been convinced there is a palm tree in the park. I am *not* saying that I do not know with certainty whether there is, nor am I implying any such thing; instead, I imply that I do know that a palm tree is there. In other words, my saying I believe something does not always imply that I do not know whether what I believe is true (1981: 29).

Further, being in suspense to see a plausible sign of extraterrestrial life, most of us would be in disbelief to hear that an alien spacecraft has landed in California and is making contact with humans. Being told about such an event, Natalia comes to disbelieve the possibility of such an occurrence. She is then taken to the alien spacecraft landing site by her husband to witness the phenomenon herself. Having seen the aliens herself and clearly identifying them as aliens, Natalia turns to her husband, saying: *now I believe extraterrestrial life exists* or *now I believe alien spacecrafts are real*. By manifesting her belief in a belief-stipulated manner, she does not imply a lack of certainty or knowledge. Having seen the alien crew herself and thus been convinced of their existence, she is certain of her belief and manifests it in a belief clause with this connotation. Furthermore, being in possession of a true belief and a warranted certainty, Natalia can be rightly credited with knowledge rather than mere belief. Thus, belief clauses do not necessarily imply a lack of knowledge or certainty on the part of the believing subject. Though belief neither entails knowledge nor certainty, it might well be used to imply knowledge or certainty. Philosophers diverge over whether belief entails a feeling of conviction or certainty. Price holds that belief entails such a feeling. He argues that "When we believe something, we feel a feeling of *sureness* or *confidence* with regard to it" (1935: 234). But Audi rightly argues that belief "does not preclude *some* degree of doubt; but typically, if one believes a proposition, one does not doubt it" (2008: 97). Furthermore, Braithwaite

argues that since we do not have this feeling of conviction for all the beliefs we hold, or since we sometimes hold beliefs without experiencing any such feeling, belief does not entail this feeling:

This is the point to say something about the feelings of conviction which we frequently associate with our beliefs, and which have been made the *differentia* of belief by many philosophers. I do not wish to deny that in a great number of cases I have a feeling of conviction when I believe: indeed I think that this feeling of conviction may reasonably be used as evidence for the existence of the belief. But I seem to have a belief frequently with no feeling of conviction: I believe quite thoroughly that the sun will rise tomorrow, but experience no particular feeling attached to the proposition believed. And it seems possible to have the feeling of conviction without believing a proposition. So I cannot accept the feeling as part of the essence of belief. ... I am convinced that belief and feeling are different, and that the latter is not part of the former although we may reasonably use it as a criterion (1933: 141-2).

There is a correlation between the proportion of evidence on which we base a belief and the feeling of conviction we might experience towards the belief. The more probative the evidence, the more likely we experience some feeling of conviction for what we believe. But since we do not always perceive the evidence on which we come to believe a proposition to be probative or sufficiently probative as in the case of pragmatic beliefs, we do not always have this feeling of conviction when we believe. Belief would entail certainty if we were to believe nothing other than things for which we have what we take to be probative or sufficiently probative evidence. In fact if we were to perceive the evidence on which we acquire a belief as probative or sufficiently probative, and if the belief is true, then we can be rightly credited with knowledge rather than mere true belief. This, however, shall not imply that whenever we lack this feeling of conviction which we often associate with belief, we perceive the evidence in such a way that leaves room for some reasonable doubt. Normally we do not have belief where we have reasonable doubt. I am inclined to think that we often have some feeling of conviction about what we believe whenever we perceive the evidence for the belief to be probative or, in some cases, sufficiently probative of the belief proposition in question. That is, we often lack such feeling whenever we take the evidence to be less than probative or, in some cases, less than sufficiently probative of the truth of the given belief or when we take the evidence to be indicative of the truth of the belief but not quite sufficiently. It sometimes happens that we take

the evidence at hand to be conducive of the truth of a belief proposition without having this feeling of conviction towards the belief in question. These are primarily situations where the given belief proposition is of special practical or scientific importance for which we often require sufficiently probative or incorrigible evidence in order for us to believe with certainty. Thus, we are normally compelled to seek sufficiently conclusive evidence when we try to resolve doxastic opinion on a proposition that has a special practical importance for us. Steglich-Petersen argues that

The reason why we are sometimes more meticulous about the evidence we require in order to form a belief is that the truth of the propositions we believe varies in importance for us. If I am deciding whether to believe that *The Simpsons* is on TV tonight, I am a lot less fussy about the evidence I rely on in forming my belief than I would be if I were a scientist deciding whether to believe that global warming is caused by human activities (2006: 509).

That is, it is the value of the proposition in question or our curiosity that compels us to seek higher evidential standards under certain conditions. A paradigm case would be the science of medicine, when a pharmacologist comes to believe with certainty that a particular medicine has certain effects and side-effects once applied. Due to the practical difference medicinal drugs make to our life, when pharmacologists form a belief about the effects of a particular medication, they normally do so on the basis of good evidence. But it is often the case that in order for them to believe with certainty, they require higher standards of evidence, something like sufficiently probative evidence or incorrigible evidence in some cases. It could be the case that they have good evidence to believe that a certain medicine has such and such effects when applied on a patient, and they come to so believe on the basis of such evidence, but given their awareness of the practical difference such medicines make to our health, for them believing with certainty normally requires sufficiently probative evidence or something close to such evidential standards. Braithwaite considers it a possibility that we sometimes feel convinced or certain that  $p$  is true without believing it to be true. I find this far from convincing. There are, however, situations where we are certain that  $p$  is true but do not want to believe it due to some overwhelming practical interest. Under such circumstances, belief is, despite the presence of good evidence, not desired. The following is one of such cases. It is a case where a woman is certain that her husband is dead but does not want to believe it:



A woman appears to know that her explorer-husband has perished. She has been given the proofs, and she verbally acknowledges their force. Yet, at the same time, much of her conduct appears to belie her acknowledgements. She does and says all sorts of things which would be naturally interpreted as expressions of a belief that he is still alive. She may say of herself that, although she knows he is dead, she cannot bring herself to believe it (Armstrong 1973: 143).

It is counter-intuitive to say that I am certain that John F. Kennedy is dead but I do not believe that he is dead. If we were to establish, from a behaviorist<sup>1</sup> dispositional perspective, what propositional attitude is attributable to the given woman, we might attribute the belief that her husband is still alive (*p*) for she acts appropriately to such a belief. That is, she does and asserts the kind of things that she would normally do or that we would expect her to do if it was the case that her husband was alive, things that we would normally associate with the kind of dispositions that we identify with such belief. If it is the case that she believes *p*, then such believing is akratic for she is believing something that she knows is unwarranted by the current evidence. But I am inclined to think that she knows that her husband is dead, but, for some practical reason, does not *want* to believe it. Or it is likely that she unconsciously believes her husband to be dead for "it is logically possible to be ... unaware of the existence of any of our own current mental states just as much as any other state of affairs in the world", observes Armstrong (Ibid: 146). But I take it to be more likely that she believes her husband is dead, but does not want to accept it. If we think of her cognitive attitude as such, we can then think of her behavior as an attempt to resist or repress the belief she does not want to accept. We will later, in discussions about acceptance, learn that we can believe something we do not accept for accepting or being committed to a belief might have undesirable implications. This seems to be a good description of the cognitive attitude of the given woman. That is, she believes her husband to be dead, but accepting or being committed to such belief and therefore acting appropriately to the belief will bring more misery, distress and hardship upon her life. Given the IAEA's probative findings which clearly demonstrated that Iraq had not reconstituted its nuclear weapons program, it is likely that the Bush administration knew that Iraq did not have a reconstituted nuclear weapons program

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<sup>1</sup> We will later on learn on pp. 62-63 that behavioural dispositions are neither necessary nor sufficient for the attribution of belief. Instead, it is the feeling dispositions that count as necessary for the attribution of belief.

at the time, but did not *want* to believe it or that they believed it but did not want to accept such belief for practical reasons. That is, there was a true proposition and they had sufficient evidence to be certain that it was true, but it is probable that they, just like the woman, could not bring themselves to believe it or believed it but did not want to accept such belief as a premise for action or theoretical reasoning.

The Bush administration's supposed belief that *p* apparently motivated and guided their conduct towards Iraq. Beliefs are often associated with action due to their role in influencing the choice of action. The concept of belief as action-guiding is attributed to Frank Ramsey in his *General Propositions and Causality* (1929). He defines belief as "a map of neighbouring space by which we steer" (1990: 146). By a map, Ramsey demonstrates the representational capacity of beliefs, and by steer, he denotes that beliefs guide our actions. Peirce also argues that "Our beliefs guide our desires and shape our actions" (1877: 5). Furthermore, Clifford argues that "If a belief is not realised immediately in open deeds, it is stored up for the guidance of the future" (1999: 73). It is due to this fundamental role which beliefs play in the way of motivating or guiding our behaviour that Alston argues: "Without beliefs we would be thrown back on instinct as our only guide to behaviour" (2005: 30). But not all beliefs are action-guiding. There are certain beliefs, like some perceptual or memorial beliefs, that we possess without their guiding any of our actions. Some beliefs do not lead to any action in the same way that sometimes evidence does not lead to belief, as observed in chapter seven on pp. 168-169. But should I undertake to perform some action, my beliefs would normally motivate or guide my action through influencing my reasoning.

Beliefs are, therefore, best thought of as abstract recourse for guiding behaviour or reasoning. They influence the choice of action we make, how we reason, how we proceed and respond to practical situations. But since not every belief is action-guiding, Ramsey's account of belief would be more applicable, as Armstrong observes, if linked to "the notion of a man's holding a belief *for a certain reason*" (1973: 5). For example, the belief a jury or judge arrives at is held for a certain reason: to guide some decision or action, whether to send the defendant to prison or set him free. But this does not necessitate every case of holding a belief for a certain reason being followed by action guided by that belief. One can hold a belief for a

certain reason with one's relevant subsequent action or decision being guided or motivated by factors other than the belief. A jury might arrive at a belief that the defendant is guilty, but pass their judgment out of resentment rather than on the basis of the belief they have arrived at. The Bush administration might have genuinely believed that Iraq was in possession of WMD and in league with Al-Qaeda, but their invasion of Iraq might have been guided or motivated by something else – by, for instance, their long-standing policy objective or urge to change the Iraqi regime. But in most cases, we are influenced in our reasoning, guided and motivated in what we do by what we believe to be the case in a given situation.

Belief is normally driven by epistemic reasons and it is these reasons that are credited with the force to render a belief justified. Epistemic reasons are, argues Fumerton, grounds that “make likely the truth of what is supported by those reasons” (in Moser 2002: 205). In other words, epistemic reasons do not guarantee the truth of a belief. They, rather, support the truth of the belief or render the belief proposition probable. Epistemologists differ as to what confers positive epistemic status, justificatory status, on beliefs. Internalists credit being based on good accessible epistemic grounds as the repository of epistemic justification. Externalists regard such status as the function of the reliability of the belief-forming process, whereas deontologists regard it as being blameless or responsible in acquiring a belief. That is, basing a belief on adequate epistemic grounds, or reliably forming a belief or being epistemically responsible in acquiring a belief are all different ways of articulating the contention that justificatory status obtains only when such a status – whether it be internalist, externalist or deontological – secures some truth-conducivity for the belief in question. From an internalist perspective, we should have some inkling as to what is responsible for such a truth-conducivity if we were to be rational in holding the belief. But externalists deny the necessity of such inkling. They argue that as long as the belief is reliably formed, we are justified in holding the belief irrespective of whether or not we have any knowledge as to what is responsible for the truth of the belief. Further, a belief's enjoying positive epistemic status implies the belief's counting, in some way, towards the truth of the belief for epistemic justification, argue Fantl and McGrath, has “a special relationship to truth-acquisition and falsehood-avoidance” (in Sosa et al 2008: 743). We will examine this special connection between epistemic justification and truth in chapter five. Moreover, the

possession of good evidence is a necessary condition for the conferment of justificatory status on a belief, but this alone cannot suffice for according such a status. No matter how adequate the evidence at our disposal is, no belief can be endowed with such a status unless it is *based on* such evidence. That is, the basing relation between a belief and its supporting evidence is a necessary condition for epistemic justification. Further, explaining the indispensability of the basing relation, Pollock observes:

To be justified in believing something it is not sufficient merely to *have* a good reason for believing it. One could have a good reason at one's disposal but never make the connection. ... [In the absence of the basing relation, you are not justified in believing a proposition even if] you have impeccable reasons for it at your disposal. [under such circumstances] What is lacking is that you do not believe the conclusion *on the basis of* those reasons (1986: 36-7).

This basing relation also holds in ethics. Kant argues that for an action to count as morally good, it should be motivated by and done because of the moral law: "For if any action is to be morally good, it is not enough that it should *conform* to the moral law – it must also be done *for the sake of the moral law*" (in Greco 1990: 255). So far as beliefs are concerned, Alston defines this basing relation between a belief and its evidence as what gives *rise* or what *leads* to the belief: "My preference is to think of what a belief is based on as *what gives rise* to the belief, what *leads* S to form the belief. Or ... as what strengthened or preserves the belief" (2005: 84). This is how I will construe the *basing* relation as in this research.

## 2.2. Hume's Conception of Belief

The characteristic feature of Hume's account of belief is the consciousness he associates with the attribution and constitution of belief. Hume defines belief as "a lively idea related to or associated with a present impression" (2008: 81). He further argues that "It is the present impression, which is to be considered as the true and real cause of the idea, and of the belief which attends it" (Ibid: 86-7). Hume holds that our ideas are derived from our impressions and that impressions are the true cause of both ideas and accompanying beliefs. That is, the Humean conception of belief considers the presence of an impression a necessary condition for belief in that impression. Thus, his necessary components for the attribution of belief are vivacity and a present

impression. From a Humean standpoint, I can be attributed belief only if I have a vivid idea of the object of belief; that is, only if I am conscious of the impression that initially caused my belief. Hume argues that “The idea of an object is an essential part of the belief of it” (Ibid: 80). This is where Hume’s element of consciousness arises as a necessary condition of attributing or constituting belief. Moreover, he further observes that “we must have an idea of every matter of fact, which we believe. ... this idea arises only from a relation to a present impression. ... the belief super-adds nothing to the idea, but only changes our manner of conceiving it, and renders it more strong and lively” (Ibid: 86).

That is, we would have an idea of an object only when there is a present impression of the object for it is the present impression that causes the idea. Thus, to believe something is to have a present idea of that thing and that the belief is not distinct from the idea itself – rather, it is just the idea conceived of stronger and livelier. In other words, the belief only changes the way we think about the idea in the sense that we feel it to be true. The problematic feature of Hume’s account of belief is his consciousness element. We are not always conscious of our beliefs, yet we still hold them. Being conscious of a belief cannot be a necessary condition for the attribution of that belief. Armstrong argues that there is no rational ground to deny the unconscious or sleeping agent a belief he unconsciously holds: “it is perfectly intelligible to attribute a belief to somebody although there is no relevant vivid idea in his consciousness. We can, for instance, intelligibly attribute a current belief that the earth is round to a man who is sleeping dreamlessly or is unconscious” (1973: 7). Thus, holding a belief does not entail being conscious of that belief. In other words, being conscious of a belief is not a necessary condition for the attribution of the belief because “Beliefs are states of mind which, so far from us being currently conscious of, we need not even know that we possess” argues Armstrong (Ibid: 21).

Hume gets more explicit about his bizarre conception of belief, arguing that the liveliness that individuates belief and distinguishes it from mere idea comes “from the present idea ... this idea is not here considered as the representation of an absent object, but as a real perception in the mind, of which we are intimately conscious” (2008: 89). He goes on, saying: “I would willingly establish it as a general maxim in the science of human nature, that when any impression becomes present to us, it not

only transports the mind to such ideas as are related to it, but likewise communicates to them a share of its force and vivacity” (Ibid: 84). But I can be intimately conscious of an idea, without the idea’s striking me in the way of belief. Rather, the force that individuates belief originates from what corroborates the belief. That is, what individuates the belief that *p* is our feeling it to be true that *p* regardless of whether or not we are conscious of such feeling at the time of holding the belief. This feeling is normally dispositional that might be activated upon attending to the relevant proposition. There are two fundamental flaws in Hume’s account of belief. First, it does not take into account non-occurrent beliefs. Second, its conception of the force that individuates belief is misguided. Further to the challenges Hume’s conception of belief faces, Armstrong observes:

The difficulty faces any theory which equates a man’s current belief with some current content of his consciousness, whether it be a vivid idea of *p*, an inward motion of assent to the proposition ‘*p*’, or whatever. For it always seems intelligible to suppose that the content of consciousness should be absent and yet that the believer held the relevant belief at that time (1973: 7-8).

If Hume’s account of belief holds, then we can only be credited with occurrent beliefs – an eventuality that dramatically diminishes our doxastic outputs. Given Hume’s conception, belief is a transient attitude that is contingent on the believing subject’s being conscious of a given belief. But no human intuition can corroborate this: I currently believe that *p*, but cannot be credited with such belief when I am asleep or unconscious of such belief. Thus, Hume’s account of belief cannot represent the apparent beliefs we are concerned with in this research.

### **2.3. The Dispositional Theory of Belief**

The most prominent account of belief in the contemporary philosophical literature is that of the behaviorist or functionalist for which Bain, *The Emotions and the Will* (1859), takes the credit. The following is how he conceives of belief in his second edition of *The Emotions and the Will*:

It will be readily admitted that the state of mind called Belief is, in many cases, a concomitant of our activity. But I mean to go farther than this, and to affirm that belief has no meaning, except in reference to our actions ... no

mere conception that does not directly or indirectly implicate our voluntary exertions, can ever amount to the state in question (1865: 524).

Furthermore, in his third edition of *The Emotions and the Will*, Bain argues that belief is "essentially related to Action, that is, volition" and that "Preparedness to act upon what we affirm [believe] is admitted on all hands to be the sole, the genuine, the unmistakable criterion of belief" (2004: 505). Moreover, in his subsequent work, *Mental and Moral Science* (1868), Bain echoes the very behaviorist account of belief he lays out in his earlier work (1859). He holds that "The difference between mere conceiving ... and belief is acting, or being prepared to act, when the occasion arises" (2004: 372). Bain takes a radically behaviourist view of belief, regarding it as a mental state whose attribution is solely determined by the believing subject's aptness to, where appropriate, act as if it was the case that *p*. That is, he associates belief with the disposition to act in line with the belief in question. Of the leading proponents of the dispositional account of belief is Ryle. He argues that:

to believe that the ice is dangerously thin is to be unhesitant in telling oneself and others that it is thin ... in objecting to statements to the contrary, in drawing consequences from the original proposition, and so forth. But it is also to be prone to skate warily, to shudder, to dwell in imagination on possible disasters and to warn other skaters. It is a propensity not only to make certain theoretical moves but also to make certain executive and imaginative moves, as well as to have certain feelings (2000: 129).

Echoing Bain's conception of belief, Ryle associates belief with a set of dispositions relevant to a given belief. That is, from a Rylean standpoint, to believe that *p* is to be disposed to, under appropriate circumstances, assert *p*, reason and act as if *p*. Moreover, Braithwaite holds that the disposition to act as if *p* is "the *differentia* of actual belief from actual entertainment" (1933: 132). He further argues that the behavioural disposition is not only "a criterion of genuine belief", but "it is part of the actual meaning of believing" (Ibid: 133). Further to the disposition to act in a certain way, Braithwaite observes:

My belief that Locke was born in 1632 is just the sort of belief which it might be alleged could have no effect upon my actions. Yet it would prevent my buying an autograph letter alleged to be written by Locke, if there were strong evidence that it was written before that date ... there is always one form of behaviour which depends upon my beliefs - my verbal behaviour. If I am

asked when Locke was born, and wish to inform my questioner, I shall answer "1632" if I believe that he was born in 1632, and "1633" if I believe that he was born in 1633 (Ibid: 138-139).

That is, the dispositional profile Braithwaite associates with the belief that *p* comprises both actional and verbal behaviour. Thus, if I were to be attributed belief in democracy and if I were in a position of power, an external observer would expect to see me acting in accordance with an acceptable set of democratic principles, engaging in the kind of activities that would affirm the existence of such belief, not condoning undemocratic practices, condemning dictatorial practices of governance, asserting such belief were I asked about my favourite forms of governance or the kinds of governance forms I take to be the best, and manifesting other kinds of both verbal and actional behaviour that are indicative of holding such belief. Thus, from a dispositional perspective, in order to "have a particular belief" is "just to match to an appropriate degree and in appropriate respects the dispositional stereotype for having that belief", observes Schwitzgebel (1999: 289). Schwitzgebel further argues that "the greater the proportion of stereotypical dispositions a person possesses, and the more central those dispositions are to the stereotype, the more appropriate it is to describe her as possessing the belief in question" (Ibid: 289).

Though possessing the kind of dispositions that we typically associate with a certain belief is often characteristic of genuine believers, exhibiting such stereotypical dispositions need not necessarily amount to having the corresponding belief. I can just pretend to have a certain belief and manifest the kind of dispositions we normally identify with the belief in question. Or I can genuinely hold the belief, but do not exhibit all the dispositions we ordinarily take to be characteristic of the given belief or fail to exhibit the kind of dispositions that we take to be central to the belief in question. For example, the CIA interrogator who sincerely believes the institution's *raison d'être*, guiding principles and interrogation techniques such as waterboarding to be antithetical to all that he stands for never exhibits the kind of dispositional profile we take to be most central and most characteristic of such belief, namely belief in the right to privacy, in treating detainees humanely and with dignity, in not coercing or putting detainees under duress and other relevant propositions.



He never asserts his belief that waterboarding is wrongful even when specifically asked for his opinion about the rightfulness of such technique, nor does he ever act appropriate to such belief. He just follows the institution's instructions, executing them for practical reasons even in the presence of the firm belief that does not favour such actions. That is, he simply does not want to lose his job. Though he fails to exhibit any dispositions that we take to be central to such belief, he can still be rightly attributed the belief in question. He just acts akratically contrary to what he believes on good evidence. Furthermore, we sometimes genuinely hold a specific belief but fail to exhibit all the dispositions we typically associate with the belief in question as argued by Schwitzgebel: "A person may be absolutely persuaded of the truth of a proposition in the sense of reaching a sincere, unequivocal, unmitigated, unqualified, unhesitant judgment, and yet that judgment may fail to penetrate her entire dispositional structure" (2010: 546). He further argues that under certain circumstances, there might be excusing conditions that would not preclude the attribution of belief:

In some ... cases, maybe, there are what we might call 'excusing conditions': Ryle's thin-ice believer doesn't warn the other skaters because he doesn't see the other skaters or because he'd enjoy watching them fall through. ... If he doesn't warn the other skaters out of *schadenfreude* or because he's blinded by the sun, that deviation from the typical dispositional manifestation counts not at all against ascribing him the belief that the ice is thin (Ibid: 534).

There are situations where we hold a genuine belief, but fail to assert it either because we do not encounter any chance to assert it in response to a question, contrary propositions or because the belief is never challenged in a way to provoke a defence or an activity of justifying the belief - a process during which we might assert the belief. We might, nevertheless, act favourably to the belief in question. For example, the illiterate country layman who is told, on good authority, that believing in God is beneficial and rewarding comes to believe in God, acting appropriately to the given belief without encountering any chance to assert such a belief. Similarly, we sometimes hold a certain belief, frequently asserting the belief in response to contrary propositions, but might still fail to act appropriately to the belief. Many drug users believe that taking drugs is bad for their health and explicitly assert such belief in response to the health effects of drug consumption, yet they fail to act appropriately to the belief in question. Furthermore, Bain, despite his firm contention that belief is

explainable only in relation to the kind of actions it disposes us to perform, recognizes that we sometimes fail to act upon our beliefs:

We often have a genuine belief, and yet do not act upon it. One may have the conviction strongly that abstinence from stimulants would favour health and happiness, and yet go on taking stimulants. ... Belief is a motive, or an inducement to act, but it may be overpowered by a stronger motive - a present pleasure, or relief from a present pain. ... The second apparent exception is furnished by the cases where we believe things that we never can have any occasion to act upon. Some philosophers of the present day believe that the sun is radiating away his heat, and will in some inconceivably long period cool down far below zero of Fahrenheit. ... [There are many such propositions that] are beyond our sphere of action, and are yet believed by us. ... many men that will never cross the Sahara desert, believe what is told of its surface, of its burning days and chilling nights. It is not hard to trace a reference to action in every one of these beliefs. ... When we believe the testimony of travellers as to the Sahara, we view that testimony as the same in kind with what we are accustomed to act upon. A traveller in Africa has ... told us of Sahara, and we have fallen into the same mental attitude in this case, although we may not have the same occasion to act it out. We express the attitude by saying, that *if* we went to Africa, we would do certain things in consequence of the information (2004: 372-373).

Moreover, Quine and Ullian also define belief as a latent disposition that does not necessarily have to be manifested or observed off behaviour in order for a belief to obtain or to be ascribable:

believing is not itself an activity. ... It is not something that we feel while it lasts. Rather, believing is a disposition that can linger latent and unobserved. It is a disposition to respond in certain ways when the appropriate issue arises. To believe that Hannibal crossed the Alps is to be disposed, among other things, to say "Yes" when asked. To believe that frozen foods will thaw on the table is to be disposed, among other things, to leave such foods on the table only when one wants them thawed (1970: 3-4).

Quine further argues that beliefs are not reducible to behaviour as a single determinant for holding a certain belief: "Mental states and events do not reduce to behaviour, nor are they explained by behaviour" (1979: 167). I do not think that behavioural dispositions can account for all cases of belief. The examples mentioned earlier clearly demonstrate this. Schwitzgebel argues that in order for the dispositional account of belief to be more representative, we should also consider the "dispositions to undergo certain kinds of private experiences (such as surprise or disappointment)

and to engage in certain sorts of cognition (such as drawing conclusions)" (1999: 292). Price associates belief with such feeling dispositions too. He argues that when we learn that a belief we have been holding is false, we find ourselves with a feeling of "surprise and disappointment" (1935: 238). Furthermore, Audi also observes that believing that  $p$  entails a "tendency to be surprised upon discovering not- $p$  to be the case" (2008: 98). That is, suppose that I, on good authority, came to believe that there is an alien spacecraft on the ground in Ladybower. Trusting the source of the testimony, I just come to feel it true that there is an alien spacecraft in Ladybower. The possession of such belief cognitively disposes me to conclude that there is extraterrestrial life. I, therefore, reason accordingly, at least during the time I am holding the given belief to be true. Being so ardent about extraterrestrial life, I drive there to see it myself. I go over there out of curiosity, but also because I am not certain of the veracity of the belief I am currently holding. I want to verify it. I can have a feeling that it is going to rain today, though I am not certain that it will. Upon realising that the alleged alien spacecraft is a complete hoax by the local residents, I will be immediately and automatically struck by a profound sense of shock, surprise and disappointment.

These are private internal experiences that are often detectable from external appearances or behaviour. But even the presence of such appearances need not necessarily amount to holding a certain belief. I can just pretend to be in a state of shock, surprise, or disappointment in the same way that I can pretend to be in a state of a belief I am not holding. But, for purposes of generality, it is important that we take into account of such non-behavioural dispositions. There are human agents that can have genuine beliefs without possessing the necessary capacity to engage in verbal or actional behaviour whose dispositions are taken by behaviourists to be indicative of a corresponding belief. Furthermore, Schwitzgebel argues that behavioural dispositions fail to explain the attribution of belief in situations where "behavior is severely limited, such as in cases of paralysis, or ... in the first few months of an infant's life. ... Both the quadriplegic person and the infant can feel surprise and anxiety" (1999: 292). The quadriplegic can, on good testimony, come to be in a genuine belief state that the Sahara desert is unbearably hot during the day without possessing the necessary physical capacity to act upon such belief. They can continue to be in such belief state without the belief's influencing their practical

behaviour. However, the belief can guide or influence their theoretical reasoning and verbal behaviour. That is, if one of their family members or friends were to visit the Sahara desert, they would warn them of its unbearable heat or they can infer other beliefs from the given belief. They can infer the belief that it is necessary to wear a hat or put on some special cream in order to avoid sunburn or the belief that it is necessary to have a supply of water. But none of these verbal or theoretical moves are necessary to be performed in order for the given belief to obtain. It could be the case that the quadriplegic acquires such belief and subsequently forgets it, or never entertains it or just never encounters any occasion to assert it or use it as a premise for theoretical reasoning.

Now suppose that the family member who visits the Sahara desert and takes the quadriplegic's advice on board reports back to the quadriplegic that the Sahara desert is not really unbearably hot. It is, rather, unbearably cold. The quadriplegic will feel disappointed or surprised at learning that they have been holding a false belief. This is, of course, if the quadriplegic trusts the testimony of the family member. Furthermore, a pre-linguistic infant will presumably recognize the milk bottle he takes to be the container with what he takes to be milk. He has sufficient experience of how milk tastes to recognize the taste of milk. Of the fluids provided to infants, the given infant only drinks milk. Now suppose that the infant cries for milk and I am holding a milk bottle I have insulated with a material that gives its content the appearance or colour of milk in order to trick the perceptual experiences of the infant. I just want the infant to drink other necessary liquids like water. But he never drinks anything that does not taste like milk. Now suppose that I pass on the bottle to the infant. He grabs it and drinks it, and then he drops it. Upon realising that the fluid is not what he associates with the taste of milk, the infant undergoes an internal experience that we typically characterise as one of disappointment or surprise. Here we can rightly describe the infant as initially believing that that the milk bottle contained milk. Though he has neither the linguistic capacity to assert such belief, nor does he have the physical capacity to act upon it. That is why belief cannot be solely associated with a disposition to act in a way appropriate to a given belief. Rather, belief is, as argued by Cohen, a disposition to feel it true that  $p$  and false that not  $p$ : "belief that  $p$  is a disposition, when one is attending to issues raised, or items referred to, by the proposition that  $p$ , normally to feel it true that  $p$  and false that *not*- $p$ , whether or not

one is willing to act, speak, or reason accordingly" (1992: 4). Further to the feeling dispositions he identifies belief with, Cohen observes:

Belief that  $p$  ... is a disposition to feel it true that  $p$ , whether or not one goes along with the proposition as a premiss. Such a feeling takes many different forms. One may feel convinced by the evidence of its being true that  $p$ , one may feel surprised to learn of an event that is evidence against its being true that  $p$ , one may feel pleased at its being true that  $p$ , and so on (1989: 368).

Moreover, Cohen argues that "a belief-disposition can exist before it is activated" (1992: 6). He further observes:

though many beliefs only commence at the time of their first being felt, there are many others that apparently antedate this, just as by being dried in the sun a lump of clay may become brittle long before pressure is applied and it breaks. Thus, if you have long believed that London is larger than Oxford and that Oxford is larger than St Andrews, then you will most probably (though not necessarily ...) have long believed that London is larger than St Andrews, even if the belief has never explicitly occurred to you until you were asked. Indeed, even if you have never consciously believed anything implying that London is larger than St Andrews, your answer to the question 'Do you believe that London is larger than St Andrews?' would most probably still be 'Yes'. That is to say, a present feeling that London is larger than St Andrews would be taken to display a pre-existing disposition to feel this (Ibid: 5).

Thus, we can be legitimately credited with many beliefs that have never and might never occur to us. These are mainly beliefs in the deductive consequences of the propositions we already believe. To sum up, believe is "a tendency verb" (Ryle 1949: 128). Further, the dispositional notion of belief, argues Armstrong, stems from the fact that one can possess beliefs even if they are never manifested in the same way that a physical object can possess a disposition even if the disposition never materialises:

We distinguish between a thing's disposition and the manifestation of that disposition; between the brittleness of a piece of glass and its actually breaking. We recognize further that having the disposition does not entail manifestation of the disposition: a piece of glass may be brittle and yet never break. In similar fashion, we distinguish between a belief and its manifestation, or, as we also say, its expression<sup>2</sup>: between A's belief that  $p$  and

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<sup>2</sup> Armstrong deploys the term *expression* in the same sense as *manifestation*. He uses *expression* as the speech-act of *holding* a belief. But *expressing* a belief might not necessarily entail *holding* the belief.

the speech-act and other actions or occurrences in which the belief is manifested or expressed; and we recognize that having the belief does not entail manifestation or expression of the belief. Such a distinction enables us to give a plausible account of the case of the sleeping or unconscious believer (1973: 8).

It is this dispositional conception of belief which constitutes a comprehensive theory of belief, accounting for both occurrent and non-occurrent beliefs. Outlining the difference between the manifestations of the two, Armstrong observes that beliefs have multi-form manifestations whereas dispositions have single-form manifestations:

If brittleness is manifested, it can be manifested in only one sort of way: by the brittle object breaking if struck. But there is no one such way that a belief that the earth is flat must manifest itself, if it does manifest itself. ... If A believes that the earth is flat and is an Anglo-Saxon he may well manifest his belief, on a particular occasion, by uttering the English sentence 'the earth is flat'. Such a manifestation must surely figure in any list of possible manifestations of A's belief. But what makes it a manifestation of A's belief? Only the fact that the rules of English are such that uttering these phonemes would be a natural way *of expressing such a belief* (Ibid: 17).

This corroborates what we earlier observed that a belief can be manifested both in a belief-stipulated manner and as a belief-free utterance. Furthermore, Armstrong argues that "beliefs, if manifested, are manifested in indefinitely many ways" (Ibid: 21). That is, there is no single rule for manifesting a belief, but there is only one way through which a disposition can manifest what constitutes the disposition. I can manifest my belief that Iraq has WMD in a variety of different ways: there are WMD in Iraq; WMD exists in Iraq; Iraq has WMD; Iraq possesses WMD; the possession of WMD by Iraq is a given; I contend that Iraq has WMD; I contend that there are WMD in Iraq; I hold that Iraq possesses WMD; I hold that there are WMD in Iraq, and other relevant forms of manifestation. Belief is also often described as a mental or psychological state. The state view of belief runs fairly parallel to the dispositional view of belief in the sense that "dispositions are a species of state", though "not all states are dispositions", argues Armstrong (Ibid: 10). That is, all dispositions are states, but not every state is a disposition. For example, a piece of glass can be in a state of being dusty, though being dusty is not a disposition of glass. Thus, dispositions entail states, but states do not entail dispositions. According to the state view of belief, "A's believing that p is a matter of A's being in a certain *continuing*

*state*, a state which endures for the whole time that A holds the belief”, observes Armstrong (Ibid: 9). In other words, given the state view of belief, a belief can be attributed to us so long we continue to hold the belief, regardless of whether or not we are conscious of the belief or of the fact that we hold such belief. That is, as long as I continue to hold a belief, I continue to be in such belief state. The enduring state of my belief is not contingent on my being aware of being in such belief state. Armstrong attributes the enduring state of belief to our “mind being *imprinted* or *stamped* in a certain way” whenever we come to believe something (Ibid: 9).

The inquiry into the nature of belief provides a touchstone against which the possible attribution of belief to the given alleged believing subjects will be investigated in chapter nine. This chapter has examined the constitution of belief as a propositional attitude we normally take involuntarily in response to evidence which we take to be adequate or satisfactory from our own cognitive perspective on a given issue. It has also established the essence of belief as a psychological state that entails a dispositional feeling that *p* is true. Belief is a propositional attitude we can, but should not, be conscious of. Many beliefs, such as perceptual beliefs, are formed and held unconsciously. Thus, consciousness is not a necessary part of the formation or retention of belief. The previous chapter presented the Bush administration's case for war with the nuclear and terror propositions identified as the objects of the inquiry in question. This chapter has provided an explanation as to what it is like to believe a proposition. The Bush administration expressed a belief in the professed rationale behind the war under epistemic conditions inadequate to warrant belief. Thus far, we have been concerned with how paradigmatic cases of belief obtain, but given the typical epistemic conditions under which they are formed, it is unclear how the Bush administration officials could have come to believe that *p* in the face of debunked evidence that *p* (in the case of the nuclear proposition) or unprobative evidence that *p* (in the case of the terror proposition). The next chapter will explore the possibility whether non-paradigmatic cases of belief are attainable through the exercise of free will.

## Chapter Three

### Belief and Will

The subject who allegedly believes a proposition he takes to be unwarranted or evidentially unsupported from his own cognitive perspective cannot be rightly described as believing that  $p$ . That is, we cannot be rightly attributed belief in  $p$  when we take the available evidence that  $p$  to be inadequate or unsatisfactory from our own perspective. We normally take what we believe to be warranted or evidentially supported from our perspective. Furthermore, we normally take the evidence on which we come to believe a proposition to be adequate or satisfactory from our perspective. Normally belief does not obtain in situations where we take the available evidence for  $p$  to be inadequate, unsatisfactory or unprobative or where we take  $p$  to be evidentially unsupported. In a bid to stress the conditions that make the attribution of belief inappropriate, this chapter examines the constitutional unwillability of belief. We, as explained later, normally will a belief when we take the available evidence for  $p$  to be inadequate or when we take belief in  $p$  to be unwarranted or evidentially unsupported from our perspective on the given issue. But I cannot be rightly attributed belief that  $p$  when I merely desire such belief in the absence of any supporting evidence for  $p$ , in the presence of clear evidence that not  $p$ , or when I take belief that  $p$  to be unwarranted from my perspective. This chapter explains why belief is not a willable mental phenomenon. We cannot will ourselves to believe that  $p$  in the presence of clear evidence that not  $p$  or in the presence of inadequate evidence that  $p$ . In the case of the given nuclear proposition, there was clear evidence that not  $p$ , and unprobative evidence that  $p$  in the case of the terror proposition. Belief is partly individuated by its constitutional unwillability. Examining the psychological unwillability of belief is necessary to further the attribution of belief, one of the key research questions, for it explains why we cannot be rightly attributed belief that  $p$  when we take the available evidence for  $p$  to be inadequate or when we take belief in  $p$  to be unwarranted from our own cognitive perspective. In chapters nine and ten, we will learn that one of the conditions that render the attribution of belief to Cheney inappropriate is his taking the available supporting evidence to be inadequate. This is besides his knowledge of the presence of clear evidence that not  $p$ .



One of the perplexing issues in philosophy is the potential willability of belief and the extent to which beliefs are under direct voluntary control, if they are subject to our direct control at all. Believing at will occurs when one believes the available evidence to be inadequate to warrant the willed belief as observed by Cook: “the notion of trying to will myself to believe something would only occur to me when I find the evidence for  $p$  insufficient to warrant belief in the normal way” (1987: 441). In other words, willing a belief transpires in an epistemic situation where “the subject is swimming against either a preponderance of contrary evidence or a lack of sufficient evidence either way”, observes Alston (2005: 73). There is also the case of doxastic incontinence (*akrasia*) where one motivationally believes that  $p$  and is simultaneously conscious of or simultaneously believes that there is adequate evidence for one’s disbelieving  $p$ . It is a situation where one knows or believes that one’s cognitive context contains sufficient evidence to disbelieve what one currently motivationally believes.

It is, in a sense, the *typical* eventuality where we would find ourselves in if we were to succeed in willing a belief – ending up believing the willed belief while simultaneously believing that the willed belief is false, acquired at will, unwarranted, unsupported by evidence or while simultaneously believing that there is sufficient evidence for us to disbelieve the willed belief ( $p$ ) or to believe that not  $p$ . Such a paradoxical outcome would be the typical upshot of succeeding in willing a belief. But due to psychological constraints on belief, “no one believes that  $p$  if she also believes that the belief that  $p$  is unsupported by any consideration having to do with the truth of  $p$ ” (in Scott-Kakures 1994: 87). Furthermore, Winters also observes that “it is impossible to believe that one believes  $p$  and that one’s belief of  $p$  originated and is sustained in a way that has no connection with  $p$ ’s truth” (1979: 243). In other words, I cannot believe  $p$  and also believe that my belief that  $p$  has no connection with  $p$ ’s being true because, argues Williams, to believe that  $p$  is just to believe that  $p$  is true: “beliefs aim at truth ... to believe that  $p$  is to believe that  $p$  is true. ... to say ‘I believe that  $p$ ’ itself carries, in general, a claim that  $p$  is true” (1973: 136-7).

That is, since believing is a psychological state, I cannot believe  $p$  to be true and simultaneously believe it to be unwarranted or false. This is just counter-intuitive. The psychological impossibility of such cases is what underlies Williams’,

O'Shaughnessy's and Alston's conception of belief. Despite presenting a powerful case for the unwillability of belief, Scott-Kakures does not rule out the logical possibility of believing at will, which is why he argues that "there is no good *a priori* reasoning to support the claim that anomalous belief state transitions are impossible" (1994: 87). Though beliefs are ideally formed on the basis of epistemic considerations, we also at times try to acquire certain beliefs on the basis of pragmatic considerations. Sometimes we succeed, and sometimes we fail in our efforts (intentions) to acquire the belief we want to hold. Epistemologists who rule out doxastic voluntarism contend that we cannot will ourselves into a desired belief state directly, in Williams' terms, "just like that" (1973: 148). That is, they argue that we can succeed in willing a belief only indirectly through "selective exposure to evidence and deliberate attention to supporting considerations, seeking the company of believers and avoiding nonbelievers", points out Alston (2005: 72). But doxastic voluntarism implies that we can bring about a willed belief directly in the same way that we can bring about the realisation of any intentional action. In other words, it presupposes that beliefs can be induced directly and immediately *just like that* through willing them alone. The philosophical principle of epistemic deontology is long-standing and dates back to Descartes who observes that:

*We have free will, enabling us to withhold our assent in doubtful matters and hence avoid error. ... we ... experience within us the kind of freedom which enables us always to refrain from believing things which are not completely certain and thoroughly examined. Hence we are able to take precautions against going wrong on any occasion* (1985: 194).

We will later on learn that propositional attitudes like assent, consent, acquiescence, and acceptance differ from belief in the sense that the former are intentional acts and can therefore respond to free will whereas belief cannot. But Descartes even associates free will with belief. There are many propositions that are not beyond reasonable doubt or are not completely certain, yet we are still not at liberty to withhold belief from them. Upon entertaining them, we come to either believe or disbelieve them or, as Plantinga<sup>1</sup> (1993) points out, we find ourselves with no belief about them. Being in possession of good confirming evidence, I come to

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to p. 90 for Plantinga's example in which we find ourselves with no belief upon entertaining certain propositions.

believe that humankind went to the moon upon considering such proposition. Eris is a dwarf planet that I have hardly even heard of it and thus have no inkling of its extraterrestrial components. Lacking any evidence pro or con, I come up with no belief as to whether there is some special sort of rock *x* on Eris upon being asked about such possibility. Just as I have no knowledge about things I have no inkling about, I find myself with no belief about propositions I have no reason to believe or disbelieve. But my being void of any doxastic attitude toward a given proposition is not a matter of withholding belief at will. It is a matter of human nature and the nature of belief. Withholding is an intentional action, whereas believing or disbelieving is not. The two are, therefore, incompatible.

But doxastic voluntarists take the voluntary control we exercise to satisfy the desire to believe or the direct control we have over initiating an inquiry to suffice rendering belief voluntary. Losonsky argues that “It is especially difficult to see how belief itself will not be voluntary if it is allowed that the inquiry leading to belief is voluntary” (in Engel 2000: 105). The essence of initiating an inquiry is that we do not know whether or not the proposition under inquiry is true, and we lack the capacity to take up any attitude we please, which is why we initiate the inquiry. We do sometimes want to believe the things that please us even when we lack sufficient evidence in their favour. But, argues Wood, the desire to believe “would give us a reason to *want* to believe, but it does not give us the belief itself, or indeed any means at all of satisfying the want” (2002: 83). I want to believe many things without holding the actual belief itself. Possessing the desire to believe in the absence of some evidence in no way equips us with a direct causal factor which can bring about a desired belief directly upon willing it. Kant argues that our will has no direct influence on our beliefs:

The will does not have any influence immediately on assent<sup>2</sup>; this would be quite absurd ... If the will had an immediate influence on our conviction concerning what we wish, we would constantly form for ourselves chimeras of a happy condition, and always hold them to be true. But the will cannot struggle *against* convincing proofs of truths that are contrary to its wishes and inclinations (2007: 36).

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<sup>2</sup> We treat *assent* as voluntary in this research, but Kant treats it as involuntary along with conviction. But we can take the involuntariness Kant associates with psychological states to reflect how other psychological states such as belief are acquired.

That is, if we had free will over our beliefs, and should we want to believe, we could knowingly and directly come to believe even the most irrational or the patently false. But we lack direct control over our beliefs, which is why Kant argues that the will to believe disappears in the face of good reason to disbelieve, and vice versa. He contends that we lack free will over our psychological states, which is why we are unable to withhold belief or conviction that  $p$  in the face of clear evidence that  $p$ :

a businessman, e.g., who sees from his bills that he owes much, more than he possesses or can hope to possess, will of course not be able to withdraw his approval and consent from this cognition, which is so evident, however much he might like to ... since he is too much and too evidently convinced of the correctness of the arithmetic in this matter, and the account of the debts contains far too much evidence ... The free *arbitrium* [free will] in regard to approval ... disappears entirely in the presence of certain degrees of the grounds, and it is always very hard, if not utterly impossible, to withhold approval (Ibid: 36).

Kant, however, recognizes that free will can have an indirect influence on belief through a close direction of mind to corroborating grounds:

Insofar as the will either impels the understanding toward inquiry into a truth or holds it back therefrom, however, one must grant it an influence on the *use of the understanding*, and hence indirectly on conviction itself, since this depends so much upon the use of the understanding (Ibid: 37).

If approval does not arise immediately through the nature of the human understanding and of human reason, then it still requires closer direction of choice, will, wish, or in general of our free will, toward the grounds of proof (Ibid: 37).

It is this indirect influence of the will which most contemporary epistemologists subscribe to when it comes to the influence of free will on belief. Sometimes a judge or a jury ends up with no verdict due to the lack of decisive evidence. That is, they come up with no belief as to whether it is  $p$  or not  $p$ . They are in a state of no belief – they just do not possess what it takes to believe or disbelieve a proposition. Being able to withhold belief at will implies being able to control our doxastic attitudes directly – a physiological capability we lack. There are situations where we believe things in the absence of justification. We just cannot help believing them because we do not choose or decide what stance to take on as our attitude on a given issue as pointed out below by Swinburne. If we had, over our doxastic attitudes, the same autonomy we have

over our intentional actions, we would rarely go wrong in our beliefs. If beliefs were willable – capable of being acquired directly just through an intention, a choice or decision – then we would have been responsible and liable to blame for holding a false belief. The willability of belief is the underlying thesis of deontological justification, a notion that leads to doxastic voluntarism. But justification understood in epistemic terms obviates the assignment of blame or responsibility to belief by virtue of one's inability to control what one takes up as one's attitude towards a proposition or in virtue of one's inability to withhold belief until the truth is known or emerges. Ideally, we believe when we have reason to. In the absence of such reason, we either disbelieve, reject, or we just have no belief. In many, but not all, situations, we believe because we are not certain.

Blasting off to Mars, I believe my astronaut brother will touch down safe and sound because he has always made a sound descent in the past, although it is not the case that I am certain that he will do so this time. Further, many people believe in the existence of God without being certain of its existence. Though they lack such certainty, they are psychologically incapable of withholding or refraining from such belief at will. One reason is because “we believe our beliefs because we know that we do not choose them but because we believe that they are forced upon us by the outside world”, argues Swinburne (2001: 40). Of the famous advocates of doxastic voluntarism is William James. He, though withdrawing from his voluntarist position later, observes that: “*Will and Belief, in short, meaning a certain relation between objects and the Self, are two names for one and the same PSYCHOLOGICAL phenomenon*” (2007: 321). Moreover, James speaks of belief as “acquiescence” (Ibid: 283), and defines consent as “a manifestation of our active nature” (Ibid: 283). Newman also defines assent as a voluntary act for which we can be held to account: “Assent is an act of the mind ... it, as other acts, may be made both when it ought to be made, and when it ought not. It is a free act, a personal act for which the doer is responsible” (2010: 232). Doxastic voluntarists contend that belief responds to free will in the same way that other voluntary acts do, which is why they do not differentiate between belief and acceptance. But Gale rightly argues that belief is not an act of accepting, acquiescing or consenting to a proposition. He holds that the foregoing, unlike belief, are all intentional acts for they:

have an Austinian performatory use as illocutionary force indicators, [whereas] “believe” does not. “I hereby consent (acquiesce, accept)” is in order, but not “I hereby believe”. ... Furthermore, one can consent to or accept a proposition that she does not believe, as might happen in the course of a debate in which one consents to or accepts a proposition just for the sake of argument. Thus, James is wrong to identify belief with consent; and this holds even for internal acts of consenting in the sense of committing oneself to treating a certain proposition as if it were true, for one can commit such an internal act without believing the proposition (1999: 89).

Doxastic voluntarists associate belief with volitional activities like decision, choice, acceptance, consent, and intention. That is, the way they conceive of belief implies that we exert voluntary control in forming our beliefs as we do in performing any of the foregoing intentional acts. Beliefs fall into two categories with respect to their causal ancestry. Some beliefs’ causal ancestry entails the activities of evidence gathering that we carry out voluntarily, and some do not entail such activities for their being immediately clear to be true. The latter comprise perceptual, memory or introspective beliefs or beliefs about self-evident a priori propositions. Though sometimes even the causal ancestry of some perceptual beliefs involves the carrying out of voluntary actions instrumental in bringing about a given doxastic attitude, the attitude that eventuates in such cases would still count as one arrived at involuntarily. These cases are recognized by doxastic involuntarists; they contend that the voluntary intermediate activities only have an *indirect* influence on the resultant belief, as can be observed, for example, in Alston’s arguments in chapter seven. For example, I can bring it about that I have or form an attitude on the shape of a remote iceberg by making a trip to town, buying a telescope to look at the iceberg. Appearing clearly to be mushroom-like, I come up with a belief that the iceberg is in the shape of a mushroom. I form that belief because it is supported by my visual evidence. We voluntarily engage in such intermediate steps to gather evidence in order to settle opinion on issues that are not self-evident. If I had direct control over my doxastic attitudes, I could have brought about such belief directly solely through an intention or decision to so believe. Furthermore, if the telescope was of bad quality, producing invisibly grainy images and I was hence unable to determine the shape of the iceberg, I would end up with no belief about its shape. I have reason neither to believe nor to disbelieve.

We surely possess free will over things we have direct (voluntary) control and we routinely exercise such power in making choices or decisions. In any given situation where the object in question is something I can control directly, I am at liberty as to the decisions or choices I make about that object. That is, I have free will as to whether to choose or decide  $p$  or not  $p$ . Talking of free will is, therefore, coherent here. I have free will whether or not to launch an inquiry into an alleged sighting of an alien spacecraft in California. In other words, I have the autonomy to decide whether or not to settle opinion on such matter. I could just ignore it at will and remain in a state of no belief. But once I launch an inquiry, I am not at liberty as to what conclusion I arrive at or what doxastic attitude I take up as an upshot of the inquiry. Everything else about the inquiry I can control with no psychological constraints. I can decide to initiate the inquiry on Monday rather than Friday, I can choose to have ten witnesses rather than fifteen to testify, I can choose to hold the inquiry in London rather than California, I can also choose what analytical approaches to employ to examine the testimonies or the evidence. With the totality of the available evidence showing the familiarity of the spacecraft and thereby disconfirming the possibility of its being alien ( $p$ ), I am not at liberty whether I take  $p$  or not  $p$  as my attitude toward the given matter.

In other words, I cannot directly will myself to believe that  $p$  while simultaneously believing that the available evidence does not warrant belief in  $p$ . It is the essence of believing at will, as will be articulated later, that for a belief to be brought about at will, we shall be able to acquire the willed belief directly, independent of truth considerations, immediately, intentionally, and with full consciousness of how the willed belief is being acquired. There are two arguments as to the viability of the resultant willed belief. Williams and O'Shaughnessy argue that given the nature of believing at will, it is necessarily the case that after the willed belief is acquired, if it can ever be acquired at will, we will be conscious of how we arrived at the willed belief and thus end up holding, aside from the willed belief, a simultaneous belief that the willed belief is not supported or warranted by evidence. The other argument shows that, following the acquisition of the willed belief, it is likely that we forget how we came about the willed belief or falsely believe that we arrived at the willed belief as a result of evidential considerations. But no argument can show that we can bring about a willed belief directly without going against our intuitions. I can,

however, just like the atheist<sup>3</sup> who wants to believe in God, bring about the belief that *p* indirectly through cultivating an atmosphere that makes it psychologically alright for me to believe *p* – an atmosphere brought about through manipulating evidence, changing the analytical approaches, taking testimonies from believers rather than sceptics or disbelievers, or reading about similar incidents where the sighting had eventually turned out to be that of an alien spacecraft. Given the fact that perception, memory, and introspection are normally irresistible sources of belief whereas testimony is not at all times, there is a *prima facie* stronger case to support the phenomenon of withholding testimony-based beliefs. Audi espouses such position and argues that:

There is a sense in which testimony-based belief passes through the will – or at least through agency. ... The recipient commonly can withhold belief, if not at will then indirectly, by taking on a highly cautionary frame of mind (I am taking withholding to be *roughly* a kind of blocking of belief formation when a proposition is presented) (2006: 40).

He goes on to say that so far as attested propositions are concerned, “commonly whether we withhold belief is ‘up to us’” for testimony “is not an irresistible [source of belief]” (Ibid: 41). But he recognizes that “we cannot withhold belief from propositions strongly supported directly by experience or by reason” (Ibid: 40). Furthermore, Depaul also holds that a cautious doxastic tendency is the optimal epistemic *policy* to avoid error:

It is, in my opinion, very often epistemically best for us to withhold belief. Failure to withhold when the circumstances call for it, as I think they often do, can wreak havoc with a person’s system of belief. Just think of gullibility and jumping to conclusions. Both involve failures to withhold. ... I am very strongly inclined to say that the cautious policy is epistemically better (in Sosa and Villanueva 2004: 97-98).

Though the discourse of both Depaul and Audi implies that we have some control over what doxastic attitude we take up once presented with a proposition, they both qualify their statements, implying the difficulty of withholding belief at will. They both suggest taking on a cautionary frame of mind to enable one to withhold belief, thus trying to avoid the direct control withholding itself implies. As observed earlier

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<sup>3</sup> Refer to p. 174 for the atheist example.



in Audi's arguments, doxastic voluntarists employ *withholding* to mean, as it naturally implies, blocking belief formation, preventing belief, restraining or refraining oneself from belief. But all this counts as an active phenomenon that implies agency and voluntary control, whereas belief is a passive state of mind as we have already learned in chapter two. But doxastic voluntarists (epistemic deontologists) treat belief as an active state under the direct influence of the will. We could have blocked belief formation or prevented belief at will if we had, over our doxastic attitudes, the direct voluntary control doxastic voluntarism implies. In other words, it would have been possible if we were at liberty to choose *what* attitude we take up once presented with a proposition. But sometimes although there is no good evidence to believe something, we find ourselves powerless to withhold belief. Though there is no adequate evidence to believe that God or extraterrestrial life exists, many will find themselves powerless to withhold such belief upon being presented with such a proposition. Free will does not speak for belief, which is why whether we believe or disbelieve is not up to us.

When I entertain or inquire into a proposition and eventually come up with no good satisfactory grounds to either believe or disbelieve it, I end up with neither belief nor disbelief. I just do not happen to take up any doxastic attitude because I lack what it takes to hold one. Thus, I am withholding nothing, neither belief nor disbelief. I am in a state of no belief or, more accurately, no doxastic attitude; and my being in such state just happens to me. It does not involve agency. In other words, it is not a matter of me doing something to bring about such state. It is a state whose realisation happens mechanically and non-intentionally in the same way a genuine belief state obtains, whereas withholding belief entails both intention and agency. It is a voluntary action. To withhold belief is to resist belief. That is, doxastic voluntarism implies that withholding, believing or disbelieving is up to us, subjecting belief to deontological treatment and thus rendering it liable to blame. In this way, doxastic voluntarists treat neither belief nor justification as something that happens to us, but, rather, as something we have direct voluntary control over and thus can bring about at will. Further, Plantinga argues that to epistemic deontologists

Justification (unlike, say, a strong constitution) is not something that *happens* to a person; it is instead a result of her own efforts. ... As the classical deontologist sees things, justification is not by faith but by works; and whether we are justified in our beliefs is up to us (1993: 15).

In other words, deontologists treat positive epistemic status as a matter of fulfilment of intellectual responsibilities and epistemic obligations – something whose realisation we have voluntary control over and can therefore be blamed for neglecting them in coming to acquire a belief. They, therefore, argue that whether or not we are justified in holding a belief relies on whether or not we have responsibly conducted ourselves in coming to acquire the belief. Justification so construed surely does not just happen to us. It, rather, is conferred on the basis of duty fulfilment. This I shall return to it in chapter seven where the adequacy and necessity of duty fulfilment is examined with the conclusion that one can possess deontological justification but lack epistemic justification for a belief. But for now, we are concerned with whether beliefs can be acquired at will. To bring about something at will is to have direct control over that thing. Beliefs can, from a doxastic voluntarist perspective, be brought about at will. Epistemologists are divided on the possibility of doxastic voluntarism. Those who conceive of belief as an ethical matter hold that we do have such control, whereas those who conceive of belief as an epistemic matter deny such possibility.

Feldman holds that “our beliefs typically result from the functioning of our cognitive systems in response to environmental stimuli, or to the evidence those stimuli provide us. Control over beliefs is, therefore, in this way inside of us, and even inside our minds” (2008: 343). Furthermore, Scott-Kakures also observes that our “will is captive with respect to belief” (1994: 101). In other words, belief and will are not on the same par. Doxastic voluntarism treats belief as if it is a type of intentional action that can be brought about at will. But, as argued by Montmarquet, “belief and action are ‘asymmetrical’ with respect to direct voluntary control” (1986: 49). I can, therefore, “make myself act like a fool if I wish to, but I cannot make myself believe that I am a fool in the absence of adequate evidence for it, even if I really desire to or if I have practical reasons for so believing it” states Booth (2007: 115). Withdrawing from his earlier voluntarist position, James also argues that “If belief consists in an emotional reaction of the entire man on an object, how *can* we believe at will? We cannot control our emotions. Truly enough, a man cannot believe at will abruptly” (2007: 321). That is, the prevailing wisdom among doxastic involuntarists is that “nothing could be a belief and be willed directly” (in Scott-Kakures 1994: 77). They, however, recognize that some beliefs are inducible *indirectly* through practical desires

or interests as we will learn later. But the general consensus among doxastic involuntarists is that “beliefs are often acquired willy-nilly”, states Alston (1989: 205-206). Thus, “If the fact is I *am* sad and I consider this proposition, then whether or not I accept<sup>4</sup> it is simply not up to me”, points out Plantinga (1993: 38). Speaking from his lately adopted involuntarist position, James further demonstrates the preposterousness and impotency of believing at will:

Does it not seem preposterous on the very face of it to talk of our opinions being modifiable at will? Can our will either help or hinder our intellect in its perceptions of truth? Can we, by just willing it, believe that Abraham Lincoln’s existence is a myth, and that the portraits of him in McClure’s Magazine are all of someone else? Can we, by any effort of our will, or by any strength of wish that it were true, believe ourselves well and about when we are roaring with rheumatism in bed, or feel certain that the sum of the two one-dollar bills in our pocket must be a hundred dollars? We can *say* any of these things, but we are absolutely impotent to believe them (2006: 4-5).

Though I rule out the willability of belief in the greatest majority of our doxastic cultivations for the principal intuition shared by most involuntarist epistemologists that there are psychological and rational constraints on belief, I believe that there are situations where our will colours our perceptions of reality in a way that can, in the long run, cause belief, but only indirectly. That is, sometimes will, once driven by an irresistible desire, derails our intellect in its perceptions of reality in the direction of a preferred or desired attitude. But we can succeed in bringing about such willed belief states only indirectly. Further, Scott-Kakures notes that “a subject can alter what she believes through circuitous or instrumental means by bringing it about that she comes to have reason to believe that *p*” (1994: 81). This is attainable, he argues, when the subject “brings about conditions under which she comes to have reason for believing that *p*” (Ibid: 80). For example, Basanio does not now believe that Portia likes him for he knows of no signals, indications or gestures that might indicate her affection for him. But he adores her and wants her affection dearly. That is why he wants to believe that Portia likes him. He knows that she is impressionable to romantic gestures. He, therefore, brings about conditions he knows would produce some reason to believe that she likes him. One day Basanio takes her out for dinner at her favourite

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<sup>4</sup> We have already observed that belief and acceptance are two different propositional attitudes, but not all epistemologists differentiate between the two. But here Plantinga uses *accept* to mean *believe* in this example.

restaurant. Being grateful to his generosity and his being gallant towards her, Portia manifests certain gestures which Basanio wrongly takes to be an indication that she likes him. He, thereby, comes to believe that she likes him on the basis of such gestures which he takes to be evidence for his belief. But he did not believe at will. He, rather, got himself to believe that Portia likes him in an indirect way. Epistemologists of all bents recognize that we can bring about desired belief states through indirect routes. Williams argues that we can bring it about that we believe something we want to believe through roundabout routes that are neither motivated by truth considerations nor are causally truth-conducive: "there is room for the application of decision to belief by more roundabout routes. For we all know that there are causal factors, unconnected with truth, which can produce belief: hypnotism, drugs, all sorts of things could bring it about that I believe that *p*" (1973: 149). Furthermore, O'Shaughnessy, though denying the willability of belief as a general phenomenon, also recognizes occasional cases of willed belief:

Believing is in itself essentially inactive. Nonetheless, our desires cause some of our beliefs, as do some of our intentions. Thus, there exist acts which fall under the instrumental description 'the installing of belief in the mind', and in this sense belief can sometimes owe its existence to the will (2008: 66).

But he argues that any such act of willing a belief "necessarily is irrational and practiced self-deceptively" (Ibid: 65). Rejecting voluntary believing as a viable mental phenomenon, O'Shaughnessy attributes the source of the intuition behind the logical unwillability of belief to belief's "intimate bond with reason" (Ibid: 60). Furthermore, Scott-Kakures also observes that it is due to the "truth-directedness of belief, beliefs are not psychological states which can be willed directly" (1994: 81). It is this intimate bond with reason or truth-conducivity that constitutes rational and psychological constraints on belief. And it is precisely due to such constraints that "neither belief, nor desires ... could ever immediately be willed", states O'Shaughnessy (2008: 61). Moreover, he argues that belief, unlike actions or events, is a continuous state rather than a processive continuant: "while belief is a continuous state, it is not a processive continuant, just as the continuity of time or of some object's shape is not, whereas that of a whistle or skid is a processive continuant" (Ibid: 65). That is why belief cannot be an action type to be brought about at will directly and immediately.

This, however, does not imply that every processive continuant can be willed directly and immediately. Heartbeat is a processive continuant – the continuity of which relies on the occurrence of other actions such as, among other things, pumping blood to the heart – that cannot be brought about just like that. But things we have voluntary control over can be brought about at will immediately. Thus, if the act of immediately willing belief “were possible, an irrational belief would have to be actively and instantaneously installed in a mind by the use of an act-mechanism”, states O’Shaughnessy (Ibid: 62). This, the bringing about of belief at will, is regarded by epistemologists ruling out the willability of belief as “a phenomenon that logically falls outside the domain of willable phenomena” (in O’Shaughnessy 2008: 67). That is why Bennett considers this whole idea of believing at will chokingly unswallowable: “There is indeed something so chokingly unswallowable about the idea of someone’s voluntarily coming to believe something that I have to suspect that this is ruled out at a deeper level than the contingent powers of our minds” (1990: 90). The following are what Winters argues to be the conditions for a belief to meet in order to qualify as being brought about at will:

To constitute a genuine case of *believing at will* ... three necessary conditions must be met. First, the belief must have been acquired directly and as a result of intending to hold it, rather than by some indirect route such as concentrating only on the favourable data or discrediting uncongenial evidence through considerations of fallibility of testimony. ... A second necessary condition is that the belief be acquired independently of any consideration about its truth: that is, one does not utilize data relevant to the truth or falsity of *p* in coming to believe *p*. ... Finally, it is required that the action of acquiring the belief at will be performed with the agent fully aware that he or she is attempting to arrive at the belief in this way. ... The agent thus must realize that truth considerations play no role in the attempt. Believing at will, then, requires the acquisition of a belief directly, independently of truth considerations, and in full consciousness (1979: 244-245).

That is, in order to successfully will a belief, we must be able to self-consciously will the belief with no heed to its truth values, with the intention to hold it, with full awareness that the belief we are willing is unwarranted or irrational and be able to find ourselves in the willed belief state immediately after willing it. One of the factors that give rise to the phenomenon of voluntary believing is our being emotionally biased in some of our doxastic cultivations. That is, our belief acquisitions are not always motivated by epistemic considerations. We sometimes nourish beliefs for

practical reasons. There are, argues Winters, situations where non-evidential factors play an instrumental part in the acquisition or retention of a belief:

non-evidential factors play a large role in belief sustainment. We are not emotionally neutral toward all the things we believe; we often have much at stake in their being true and will maintain them at all costs. Sometimes such factors are the causally relevant ones; we can hold beliefs solely because certain needs and desires are satisfied in doing so (Ibid: 247).

But even though we are not always emotionally neutral in all our belief acquisitions, we can only arrive at the beliefs we want to arrive at indirectly through, as Alston pointed out earlier, selective exposure to evidence or manipulating evidence. If the given Bush administration beliefs were cases of pragmatic belief - a possibility which this research considers inappropriate in light of the nature of the given propositions along with the evidential conditions at the time - then it might be said that the key non-evidential factor instrumental in giving rise to such beliefs was the fear that *p*. This research argues that fearing the possibility that *p* in the absence of good evidence whether *p* normally promotes propositional acceptance rather than belief or pragmatic belief. I, however, recognize that some beliefs, notably wishful or welcome beliefs, originate from pragmatic considerations. That is, in situations where our pragmatic desires override truth considerations, the force of such desires renders our doxastic tendencies doctrinally oriented or desire-oriented. The possibility of pragmatic belief might give rise to doxastic voluntarism. But pragmatic beliefs can only be brought about indirectly, whereas doxastic voluntarism implies direct control over our beliefs. The contemporary arguments trying to debunk doxastic voluntarism have concentrated on Bernard Williams endeavour to refute such mental phenomenon. He holds that one of the reasons behind our inability to bring about belief at will just like that is attributable to "the characteristic of beliefs that they aim at truth" (1973: 148). In other words, we cannot, just like that, will ourselves to bring about that we believe that *p* regardless of whether or not it is true that *p*. That is, since we know that to believe that *p* is just to believe it to be true, we cannot will ourselves to believe that *p* irrespective of any consideration to the truth values of *p*. It is for this reason that O'Shaughnessy argues that "an overt self-conscious b-believer [wilful believer] openly performs a deed that negates the very foundations of the phenomenon of belief in a self-conscious consciousness" (2008: 64). There are two

principal theses that underlie Williams' attempt to refute the willability of belief: a prospective thesis and a retrospective thesis:

If I could acquire a belief at will, I could acquire it whether it was true or not; moreover I would know that I could acquire it whether it was true or not. If in full consciousness I could will to acquire a 'belief' irrespective of its truth, it is unclear that before the event I could seriously think of it as a belief, i.e. as something purporting to represent reality. At the very least, there must be a restriction on what is the case after the event; since I could not then, in full consciousness, regard this as a belief of mine, i.e. something I take to be true, and also know that I acquired it at will. With regard to no belief could I know ... that I had acquired it at will. But if I can acquire beliefs at will, I must know that I am able to do this; and could I know that I was capable of this feat, if with regard to every feat of this kind which I had performed I necessarily had to believe that it had not taken place? (1973: 148).

The underlying theme of his prospective argument is that it is impossible to think of a willed attitude as belief while trying self-consciously to acquire the intended attitude with no regard to whether the attitude one wants to acquire is true. But this is not a plausible reason for ruling out doxastic voluntarism because the whole point behind my conscious endeavour to bring about that I believe  $p$  is because I know that I do not believe  $p$  now at  $t$ , but I want to believe it. So of course at  $t$  I do not and cannot think of  $p$  as a belief or as one of my beliefs because I do not yet believe it. Responding to Williams' prospective argument, Scott-Kakures argues that whether one regards  $p$  as a belief before one succeeds in one's trial to get oneself to believe  $p$  is irrelevant to whether one can will oneself to believe something one does not currently believe:

It is true that before I believe the target proposition, I cannot believe it since I believe it is not true. Nonetheless, I can seek to believe that proposition. If somehow I succeed, and also forget that the belief was produced by volitional fiat, the fact that before success I could not regard the aimed at state as belief is irrelevant (1994: 82).

The primary logic of Williams' retrospective argument is that every act of believing at will, if it ever succeeds, necessarily ends up with the believer's realising *how* the willed belief has been arrived at. But the reason he outlines behind such inevitable outcome fails to convince our intuitions. He argues that in order to be able to acquire beliefs at will, we must know that we have such ability: "But if I can acquire beliefs at will, I must know that I am able to do this". But such a conception is false. We

possess many capacities – voluntary or involuntary – we do not know we possess. That is, the existence of a capacity is independent of our knowledge of the capacity. I possess many neurological capacities I have no inkling about. This, however, shall not imply that we are necessarily unaware of (some of) our capacities. But it is not a prerequisite that to be able to do something, we must know that we can do so. If believing at will were to require knowledge of such capacity, then cognitively unsophisticated individuals who hardly possess any grasp of such doxastic capacities should be unable to will a belief. But if they can consciously and intentionally exercise other capacities they have no knowledge about, so could they exercise the capacity to believe at will. If believing at will is an intentional conscious action, which clearly is, and is a real possibility, then we should be able to acquire beliefs at will without knowing that we possess such capacity in the same way that we are able to consciously and intentionally exercise other capacities without knowing that we even possess them. I do not find anything distinctive between believing at will and other intentional actions to merit an exemption in this respect. Moreover, Winters argues that:

it is certainly not true of every capacity that to have it we must know we have it ... to acquire a belief at will one must be aware of what one is doing. But even given this fact, it does not follow that if I can acquire beliefs at will, I am aware that I have this ability. Evidently many of us, under suitable guidance, can lower our rate of heartbeat directly, as a basic action, in full consciousness (not by indirect means such as thinking of calm spring days, etc.). However, very few of us are aware of having this ability. Thus, the possession of an ability to perform a basic action in full consciousness does not entail awareness of that possession (1979: 255).

That is, though believing at will is necessarily done consciously and intentionally, my being conscious of willing a belief does not entail my knowing that I possess such capacity. I can consciously exercise a capacity without knowing that I possess such capacity. For example, Talia is a non-contemporary uninformed individual who lacks knowledge of our basic capacities. She has never considered the question of how long she can hold her breath, nor has she ever tried holding her breath. Talia is completely ignorant of such capacity. She is once taken for a flight tour to learn about some basics of human advancement. Talia boards the plane. The flight manager forgets to read out the flight instructions. Thus, Talia is necessarily unaware of how breathing



conditions are sustained onboard and what might happen to her if the cabin goes depressurised. En route to its destination, the cabin goes depressurised, and Talia ends up holding her breath for two minutes till a faulty mask is repaired for her. Before the event, Talia did not know that she could even hold her breath, let alone knowing that she can hold it for two minutes. But she was still able to exercise such capacity without knowledge of its possession. Holding breath, like acquiring belief at will, is necessarily done consciously and intentionally. Thus, the absence of knowledge of a capacity neither neutralises the capacity, nor does it preclude us from exercising such capacity.

Moreover, Williams also argues that to know that we can acquire beliefs at will is to, in any given case of successfully willing a belief, necessarily believe that the given belief has been acquired at will – that we have exercised the capacity to believe at will in arriving at the given belief – otherwise we could not know that we have such capacity: “and could I know that I was capable of this feat, if with regard to every feat of this kind which I had performed I necessarily had to believe that it had not taken place?”. In other words, he associates knowledge of the capacity to believe at will with observation of such capacity. But Winters rightly argues that “[The] principle that one can learn one has an ability only from observing that one has exercised it... is surely false: I can become aware of capacities I have as a result of extrapolation from other data I have about myself or through the reliable testimony of others” (1979: 254). In other words, knowledge is not necessarily attained through observation or experience. For example, I know I can hold my breath for two minutes and through extrapolation I can come to know or learn that I have the capacity to stay under the water without oxygen for two minutes, although I have not yet observed the exercise of such capacity. Testimony and extrapolation (inference) are all legitimate means of acquiring knowledge and learning about our capacities. If I can withhold belief at will just like that when I have good evidence to believe, through extrapolation I can come to learn that I have the capacity to believe at will. Though I have not yet observed such capacity in order to know it on the basis of observation or experience, I can, through extrapolation, come to know that I possess such capacity. Thus, the premise behind Williams’ retrospective argument fails to recognize that we can exercise the capacity to believe at will even in the absence of knowledge of such capacity and that we can know of such capacity through other non-observational means.

The question of the retrospective awareness of *how* one has come about a willed belief becomes relevant only when one makes a successful transition from *t* where one wills to believe *p* and thereby does not yet believe *p* to *t1* where one believes *p*. O'Shaughnessy explores this transition by first raising the question whether there can be "an act that is the bringing about of belief in the way there is an act that is the immediate bringing about of arm rise" (2008: 61). He then goes on arguing that "the existence of such an act [the act of bringing about belief immediately at will] would seem to entail the existence of the capacity voluntarily at a certain instant light-fingeredly to install a certain belief in one's mind" (Ibid: 61). O'Shaughnessy observes that if there is ever an act of immediately willing a belief, then such act must be "caused by an act-desire" (Ibid: 61). But desires or volitions cannot bring about belief immediately and directly just like that through willing it alone when at the time of willing the belief at *t* we believe the available evidence to be insufficient to warrant the belief we are aiming at. That is why if a successful transition transpired from the cognitive perspective from which we will to believe *p* at *t* to the cognitive perspective where we believe *p* at *t1*, then "something must have interposed causally between the act-desire [the act of willing the belief at *t*] and the [willed] belief [at *t1*]", points out O'Shaughnessy (Ibid: 62). Moreover, we cannot enter from a non-belief state to a willed belief state without having our reasoning causally interrupted during the period of such transition in a way that makes the willed belief possible for us to believe. In the absence of such causal interruption, no such transitions are possible so long we believe the available evidence to be inadequate to warrant the belief we are aiming at. It is this causal interposition between the two cognitive perspectives that Scott-Kakures takes to be the source of the unwillability of belief:

the only way of making sense of th[ese] transactions ... is to imagine a cognitive rift between the two states, a more or less dramatic alteration of the agent's cognitive perspective. It is just this fissure or blind spot which allows us to comprehend the source of the unwillability of belief (1994: 95).

That is, Scott-Kakures takes this cognitive rift between the cognitive perspective from which we generate the intention to bring about a willed belief (*p*) and the cognitive perspective where we come to believe *p* to both show how a willed belief can possibly be brought about and demonstrate the source of the unwillability of belief. First, he argues that it is this cognitive rift that makes the willed belief (*p*)

possible through rendering the intentional action to bring about the willed belief unmonitored and thereby enabling us to abandon the intention to bring about such willed belief. Second, he argues that the fact that the willed belief is brought about in virtue of a cognitive rift that renders the intentional action unmonitored before we come to believe that *p* shows that the willed belief is not brought about at will for believing at will is necessarily an intentional action and an intentional action is necessarily monitored till fulfilled. In other words, he argues that the intentional action to bring about the willed belief is rendered unmonitored by the cognitive rift half way through before we come to believe the willed belief. Thus, he rightly regards the willed belief as being brought about indirectly whereas wilful belief is, as noticed earlier, necessarily brought about directly, consciously and intentionally. Therefore, he argues, believing at will is impossible. This is the logic of Scott-Kakures' argument for the unwillability of belief. The following is how he proceeds:

Beliefs, unlike arm-rises, are, we might say, constitutive of my cognitive perspective. ... They [beliefs] along with desires, etc., are the background against which I formulate my plans, intentions, etc. So when I do formulate my here-and-now intention, "Now I will believe that *p*", my current cognitive perspective, the one from which that intention is generated, includes the beliefs that I do not now believe that *p* and that nothing I do currently believe is sufficient epistemic justification for my believing that *p*. These two beliefs are importantly related. I do not believe that *p* because it is the case that I also believe that nothing I currently believe epistemically justifies the belief that *p*. We are granting that I cannot believe that *p*, and also believe that belief is sustained solely as a matter of the will. And note that when I formulate my intention to believe that *p* I must regard my current cognitive perspective as not sanctioning the belief that *p*. That is why I do and must formulate the intention to believe that *p* if I am to believe it (Ibid: 94-5).

Furthermore, the epistemic situation where I will to believe *p* is such that I do not currently believe *p* because nothing I am currently aware of or nothing I currently believe warrants such belief. Thus, the willed belief I aim to bring about is one that I would normally disbelieve or consider irrational in the absence of the desire that prompts me to bring it about, or just end up having no belief when there is evidence neither in support nor against it. Though at *t*, where I will myself into a desired belief state, I neither believe that *p* nor consider it rational the belief that *p*, I still want to believe that *p*. In other words, the current cognitive perspective from which I will myself to believe *p* at *t* is one which I believe to contain no evidence to support the

proposition I intend to believe. Thus, from my current cognitive perspective, the willed belief I want to bring about is not epistemically justified. I might even have sufficient evidence to disbelieve it or to believe the opposite. If believing at will were psychologically possible, I should have been able to take up the cognitive perspective that contains the willed belief just like that directly through willing it alone. But if I were able to take on the willed belief directly just like that, then I should have also been able to revert directly at will to my previous cognitive perspective where I did not believe that  $p$ . But this is not how we come about our doxastic attitudes. That is why if I were to move on from the cognitive perspective where I want but do not currently believe  $p$  to the cognitive perspective where I believe  $p$ , there must be a causally effective factor interposing between the two cognitive perspectives. And it is this cognitive rift that Scott-Kakures takes to be the causally effective factor that makes believing  $p$  possible through rendering the intentional action to bring about the belief that  $p$  unmonitored and thereby enabling us to abandon or become unconscious of the intention we formulate at  $t$  from the non-belief state cognitive perspective:

Once I have – somehow or other – produced the belief that  $p$ , my current cognitive perspective [at  $t/$ ] contains the belief that  $p$ . My cognitive perspective at  $t+1$  contains nothing immediately available which rules out the belief that  $p$ . Recall that the belief that  $p$  is ruled out, at  $t$ , by other beliefs and that the transition from  $t$  to  $t+1$  is meant to be one which is accomplished directly by an act of will. If the above descriptions of the belief state transition and the relevant aspects of my cognitive perspectives are correct, then there must be a cognitive blind spot, or fissure, between  $t$  and  $t+1$ . [Otherwise] I cannot, from my cognitive perspective at  $t$ , see my way through to my altered cognitive perspective at  $t+1$  (Ibid: 95).

If I were to succeed in bringing about a willed belief directly, so far as the willed belief is concerned, the two cognitive perspectives must necessarily be the same epistemically and I must be able to move on from my current cognitive perspective where I believe the willed belief to be unwarranted by what I currently believe to the cognitive perspective that contains the willed belief directly just like that. In the case at hand, the only marked difference between the two is that the cognitive perspective that contains the willed belief is clear of the intention we formulate from the cognitive perspective where we do not yet believe the willed belief. And it is the absence of such intention or its awareness at  $t/$  – brought about by the cognitive rift's rendering the intentional action unmonitored – that renders me unaware of the fact that the

cognitive perspective where I come to believe  $p$  at  $t/$  is the same as the cognitive perspective where I did not believe  $p$  at  $t$ . In the absence of the awareness that both cognitive perspectives are the same epistemically, I become unaware that the willed belief is as unwarranted at  $t/$  as it was at  $t$ , unless it is the case that between  $t$  and  $t/$  I encounter some supporting evidence as we will notice later. But in both cases, the bringing about of the willed belief fails to meet the requirements of believing at will. Thus, the cognitive fissure just makes it possible that I am unaware of the intention I formulate at  $t$  and thereby rendering me unaware that the cognitive perspective at  $t/$  is epistemically the same as the one at  $t$ , providing that I do not come across supporting evidence between the two perspectives which even if I were I would still fail to satisfy what it takes to bring about a belief at will.

Thus, Scott-Kakures' argument of the cognitive fissure just provides an explanation of how a transition from a non-belief state to a willed belief state could possibly transpire from  $t$  to  $t/$ . At  $t$  we, as Scott-Kakures pointed out earlier, formulate the intention to bring about the willed belief that  $p$  because we know that we do not currently believe  $p$  at  $t$ , but want to bring it about that we believe it. Thus, our formulating such intention at  $t$  is directly related to the fact that we do not currently believe the intended belief we want to bring about. In other words, the formulation of the intention is related to our consciousness that  $p$  is unwarranted by our cognitive perspective at  $t$ , but we want to bring it about that we believe it. That is why if I become unaware of such intention, I consequently become unaware that  $p$  is unwarranted by what I currently believe. Thus, if I abandon such intention or become unconscious of it as a result of the cognitive fissure, I no longer consciously believe  $p$  to be unwarranted by what I currently believe. And if I necessarily become unaware of such intention at  $t/$  as a result of the cognitive rift, then at  $t/$  I do not consciously believe  $p$  to be unwarranted by my cognitive perspective at  $t/$ . It is because of this that I am able to believe  $p$  at  $t/$ . But if I were still conscious of the intention at  $t/$ , and if my cognitive perspective at  $t/$  remains the same epistemically as the one at  $t$ , then I cannot come to believe  $p$  at  $t/$  because even at  $t/$  I still consciously believe  $p$  to be unwarranted by my cognitive perspective. Thus, it is due to my belief or awareness that  $p$  is unwarranted by my cognitive perspective at  $t$  that a transition to  $t/$  where I come to believe  $p$  is attainable only when I abandon the intention or become unaware

of it at  $t1$ . That is why Scott-Kakures argues that the intention to bring about the willed belief must be abandoned before I come to believe  $p$  at  $t1$ :

I formulate this intention because I want to believe that  $p$  and do not currently believe it. But a content like the one possessed by this intention cannot carry me to the belief state of believing that  $p$  – and this because there must be a cognitive fissure between the intention and the state I am aiming at. For if I aim directly at believing that  $p$ , then I must leave behind the intention to believe that  $p$  before I am to believe that  $p$ . In a standard case of successful intentional basic action (e.g., raising one's arm), the intention is abandoned once its satisfaction conditions are realised (or rather once the agent believes they are realised). But if the above argument is correct the intention to believe that  $p$  must be abandoned before one could believe that  $p$ . This is why the behaviour must be unguided and thus, unmonitored. ... As long as I intend to believe that  $p$  (i.e., so long as I inhabit the cognitive perspective which generates that intention), I cannot believe that  $p$ . This is because the beliefs which generate the intention are incompatible with my believing that  $p$ . Thus the intention must be abandoned before its satisfaction conditions are realised. If the intention that I formulate must be abandoned before I succeed in bringing about the state of affairs it represents, then that intention cannot be one by which I direct and monitor my activity until success. There must be a cognitive fissure between the intention or willing to believe and the arrival at the belief state (Ibid: 95-96).

That is, the willed belief I aim to bring about is one that is both incompatible and incoherent with what I currently believe. And I know that the willed belief is not warranted by my current beliefs or by my current cognitive perspective on the whole, which is why I formulate the intention to bring it about that I believe it. Thus, the intention to bring about the willed belief is prompted and produced by beliefs that reject the willed belief as a viable or rational belief. That is why so long I sustain such intention or am aware of it, I cannot believe  $p$  because being aware of the intention, possessing or sustaining it just means that I believe  $p$  to be unwarranted by what I currently believe. I, therefore, cannot believe the willed belief and simultaneously believe it to be unwarranted by my cognitive perspective. Hence, the intention must be abandoned before I could come to believe  $p$  (the willed belief). But even then, my coming to believe  $p$  at  $t1$  fails to constitute a successful case of bringing about belief at will due to the intentional action's being rendered unmonitored through the cognitive rift before its success and thereby failing to count as a successful intentional action as observed by Scott-Kakures: "since the arrival at the belief state at  $t+1$  is ungoverned or unmonitored, my arrival at that belief state cannot count as something I

succeed in willing directly, as I do when I succeed in directly willing an arm rise” (Ibid: 95). That is, believing at will is, as observed earlier, an intentional action carried out directly with full consciousness. And we have already learned that in a successful case of intentional action, the intention is abandoned when the agent believes that the aim of the action is realised. But in this case of the cognitive rift, the intention to bring about a willed belief is, as it must be, abandoned before the willed belief is brought about. It is abandoned through the intentional action’s going unmonitored in virtue of the cognitive fissure. Thus, the intentional action to bring about the willed belief fails to meet the conditions of a successful intentional action for its failure to be monitored and thereby its failure to have the intention sustained till success is made or till the action goal is believed to be realised as observed by Scott-Kakures:

The intention guides or governs the relevant activity that it causes and in such a way as to permit the monitoring of the relevant behaviour. ... Basic intentional actions are ... guided and controlled and so monitored by the intentions by which they are caused. ... To say that an intention directs activity is just to say that I monitor and guide my activity against the background of the intention. Thus, when I intend to raise my arm and I succeed, I know when to stop trying (Ibid: 90-91).

In the case of intending to raise my arm, I know when to stop trying because I monitor the activity. That is, I know when the action goal is realised because I monitor the activity till the goal of my intention is realised. That is why as far as non-doxastic attitudes are concerned, the intention is abandoned when the action goal is believed to be realised. But this cannot be the case with the intention to bring about a willed belief. In the case of willing a belief, if I were to monitor my activity till I come to know that the goal of the intention is realised – till I come to know that I now believe the willed belief – and abandon the intention only then, then the outcome is paradoxical: I will end up believing the willed belief and simultaneously believing it to be false, irrational or unwarranted by what I currently believe. So long I monitor the activity of bringing about a willed belief, I do so against the background of an intention produced by beliefs that rule out the willed belief as rational, and as long as I sustain such intention, I necessarily believe that the belief I am trying to bring about is irrational or unwarranted, and as long as I believe the willed belief to be unwarranted by what I currently believe, believing the willed belief remains a

psychological impossibility for me. It is because of this that the intention must be abandoned before I am able to believe the willed belief. But an intentional action is necessarily monitored and has its intentionality abandoned once the action goal is believed to be realised. This cannot, for the reasons outlined earlier, apply to the intentional action to bring about a willed belief if we were to be able to believe the willed belief. Thus, in order for me to be able to bring about that I believe the willed belief, the activity must necessarily be unmonitored. But all intentional actions are monitored. If the intentional action must necessarily be unmonitored in order for me to be able to believe *p*, then that action cannot count as an intentional action. It is because of this, argues Scott-Kakures, that we cannot succeed in directly bringing about a willed belief:

If an event is to count as an intentional basic action it must be produced by some contentful mental state(s) which guides the activity. It is this guidance which makes for the obvious way in which we may say that intentional activity is monitored activity. I argue ... that the reason I cannot succeed in directly willing to believe that *p* is that the process which results in the generation of the belief would have to be unmonitored or ungoverned by the content of the intention or the plan. ... My intention to believe that *p* just like that cannot initiate a process whereby that very intention directs or guides activity the result of which is the coming to believe that *p*. No one can will a belief that *p*, because nothing could count as *willing* a belief ... nothing could count as initiating a guided and monitored process which succeed[s] in producing a belief (Ibid: 92).

That is, if I am able to bring it about at will that I believe *p*, then I must be able to bring it about directly, just like that, that I believe *p*, but for such action to count as an intentional action is for the action to be monitored, and for the action to be monitored is for me to be aware of the intention that guides and enables the monitoring of the activity, and for me to be aware of such intention is for me to necessarily believe that the willed belief I am aiming to bring about is unwarranted by what I currently believe. I cannot come to believe *p* so long I believe it to be unwarranted by my current cognitive perspective. Therefore, the action to bring about that I believe *p* must be unmonitored. Believing at will is an intentional action, and intentional actions are necessarily monitored. If the action to bring about that I believe *p* must necessarily be unmonitored, then such action cannot count as an intentional action. Therefore, this cannot count as an instance of believing at will. Believing at will is, thereby,



impossible. Scott-Kakures' argument of intentional activity as one that is necessarily monitored could give rise to some confusion between intentionality and consciousness. He argues that intentional action is either consciously or unconsciously monitored, but is necessarily monitored. Furthermore, he observes that the fact that we must lose sight of the intention before we could come to believe *p* is sufficient evidence that we cannot come to believe *p* as a direct result of will:

it is a necessary condition of something's counting as basic intentional activity that it be monitored. ... We must certainly distinguish between conscious and unconscious monitoring of activity. And surely it is likely that most of the processes which result in basic action are unconsciously monitored. In a familiar way my raising my arm in order to open the window, or my grasping a key in order to start the car are actions which are intentional, but which are, at least typically, unconsciously guided and monitored. So the point is not that all intentional behaviour is *consciously* guided or monitored but rather that behaviour, if it is to count as basic intentional action must be guided and monitored. ... These [actions of bringing about belief at will] are after all cases in which a subject intends *fully consciously*, "I will believe that *p*". But if someone must lose sight of this intention, if the intention must, that is, first become *unconscious* before it can be pursued, then that is enough to show that one can't directly will a belief. Rather something else must first occur – the pushing into unconsciousness of the intention – before it can be pursued. Thus one comes to believe only as a by-product and not as a direct result of the will (Ibid: 92).

If believing at will were psychologically possible, then a direct transition from *t* to *t+1* must have been possible. But doxastic involuntarists rule out the possibility of such direct transition and contend that "there are no transitions of the following kind: At *t*, an agent does not believe that *p* and at *t+1* the agent believes that *p*, and the transition from the one belief state to the other is accomplished by a direct and unmediated willing to believe that *p*" (in Scott-Kakures 1994: 77-78). Thus, if I were to bring about a belief at will, my epistemic situation at *t+1* must necessarily be the same as the one at *t* where I believe the willed belief to be unwarranted by what I currently believe, and I must be able to make a direct transition from *t* to *t+1* just like that. This, as shown earlier, is not something we are psychologically capable of. I, however, could come to believe *p* indirectly if between *t* and *t+1* I came across some supporting evidence that warranted the willed belief from my cognitive perspective. But that could not count as bringing about the belief as a direct result of will. Rather, I would come to believe *p* on the basis of evidence as argued by Scott-Kakures:

If I had, first [between  $t$  and  $t+1$ ], come to believe something else which rendered rational my believing that  $p$  then I would not have succeeded in willing the belief directly; rather I would have come to believe that  $p$  indirectly by coming to believe something else first. Indeed, in urging that I can directly will a belief that  $p$ , the advocate for believing at will should agree that I do not, between  $t$  and  $t+1$ , *first* come to believe things that make rational my coming to believe that  $p$  (Ibid: 93).

We have already observed Cook and Scott-Kakures arguing that believing at will occurs when I find the current evidence insufficient to warrant belief in something that I want to believe or when I believe the willed belief to be unwarranted by my current cognitive perspective, but for some pragmatic reason want to bring it about that I believe it. This is how doxastic voluntarism is generally conceived of. Therefore, believing at will must be practically motivated. In other words, if believing at will is ever possible, we will ourselves to bring about belief in order to satisfy some pragmatic interest. Believing at will is, as already observed, necessarily carried out consciously with the intention to hold the willed belief. We can, following an initial success to enter the willed belief state, hold the willed belief only if we become unaware of *how* we arrived at the willed belief. To become unaware of how we came about the willed belief is construed as either forgetting how we arrived at the willed belief or falsely believing that we came about the willed belief on the basis of evidence. That is, Scott-Kakures observes that:

The fact that I self-consciously will to believe that  $p$ , does not thereby entail that if I succeed, I must also believe that [I have brought about the willed belief independently of its truth] ... Thus I might succeed in willing a belief, and simultaneously forget that I have willed it (Ibid: 82).

He further argues that “If I succeed [in willing a belief] ... my inability to believe that it was produced at will is irrelevant to an evaluation of the success or failure of my original project” (Ibid: 82). This surely cannot be contested, if I succeed in willing myself to believe  $p$ , then the fact that after success I do not (come to) believe that I have brought about the willed belief independently of its truth does not negate the fact that I came about the willed belief as a direct result of will. Furthermore, Winters argues that the self-conscious nature of willing a belief shall not be construed as being necessarily retained until after the success to enter the willed belief state; she argues

that after success we might falsely believe that we have come about the willed belief on the basis of evidence:

since the acquisition of beliefs at will is always performed in full consciousness, it might seem that it is a necessary truth that if  $x$  acquired a belief at will, there would be a time (perhaps immediately after the acquisition) at which  $x$  was aware both that  $x$  believed  $b$  and that  $b$  was sustained at will. ... [but] the "in full consciousness" stipulation requires only that, at the time of the attempt, one be aware that one is trying to believe something at will; it is not required that at such time as one fully succeeds in believing it, the awareness of the voluntary nature of the acquisition be retained. Afterwards, I might falsely think that I had not succeeded in acquiring  $b$  at will and hold that my belief of  $b$  was due to other (evidential) factors. A person might lower his heart-beat through the direct effort of will, although he may think that he did so indirectly (say, by swallowing a placebo); his belief in this false causal efficacy does not alter the fact that he performed the basic action (1979: 255-256).

But if believing at will were to be a viable mental phenomenon, then a direct transition from  $t$  to  $t/I$  must be possible, and therefore it must be possible for a willed belief to be brought about just like that immediately after willing it in the same way we bring about an arm rise immediately after willing it. If that is necessarily the case, then it is unclear how we can forget the way we come about a willed belief during such a very short period of time. Moreover, if after success I falsely believe that I have arrived at the willed belief as a result of evidential considerations, then at least some of this evidence should be accessible to me upon entertaining the belief. After all, I will to bring about such belief in order to satisfy some practical desire that matters to me. It is, therefore, rarely the case that the willed belief just fades away from sight soon after successfully willing it. Following the initial success, there should come a time where I entertain such belief and attend to its credentials. This, however, shall not imply that holding a belief is necessarily a conscious mental phenomenon. But since the desire that prompts me to will such belief is one that makes a difference to my mental and psychological life, it is often the case that the desire will at some point enter my consciousness following a successful willing of the belief. After all, the willed belief is just belief in the content of the desire. I cannot feel the desire's satisfaction without believing it to be a certain way or the way I want. That is, I cannot feel my desire to be satisfied that my deceased uncle be alive without believing him to be alive. And if this is necessarily the case, then it is inevitable that I

will, sometime after successfully willing it, come to entertain the willed belief in a way that exposes it to be a belief with no evidence in its favour.

If Williams' argument for the unwillability of belief were altogether true, then believing at will would be impossible at all times and under all circumstances. He presents a no-win situation for the agent who wills belief. That is, he argues that in order for us to be able to acquire a belief at will, we must know that we have such capacity otherwise we could not do it. The inevitable failure for one who wills belief, given Williams' argument, comes after one succeeds in willing a belief. He argues that after successfully willing a belief, one must necessarily believe that one has arrived at such belief at will otherwise one could not know one has the capacity to believe at will, and for one to not know one has such capacity is to be unable to will belief. But for one to believe that one has acquired a belief at will is just to believe that one has arrived at the belief irrespective of its truth, and for one to so believe is to be in two contrary belief states: believing  $p$  to be true and believing that  $p$  is false or unwarranted by one's cognitive perspective. Believing  $p$  at will is, therefore, not possible. Thus, considering Williams' argument, in any given case of willing a belief, even if one initially succeeds to enter the willed belief state, it is inevitable that after the initial success, the agent eventually realises *how* the willed belief has been arrived at.

That is, the fundamental reasoning behind Williams' retrospective thesis is that even if we initially succeed in willing ourselves to believe a proposition, we, after the initial success, become necessarily conscious of the fact that we had acquired the belief at will. With this being necessarily the case, we cannot believe something to be true and simultaneously believe it to be false or unsupported by evidence. Thus, given his conception of the unwillability of belief, we either cannot will belief or if we could, we ineluctably end up realising that we have reached the given belief as a direct result of will – an eventuality that inevitably leads to the abandonment of the willed belief and therefore a failure to believing at will. This is how we end up at both ends of the no-win situation – either incapable of acquiring belief at will for not knowing we have such capacity or ending up doomed to abandon the willed belief even after an initial success to enter the willed belief state. That is, we will abandon the willed belief upon realising that we have come about it independently of its truth

for it is human nature that “If a man recognises that what he has been believing is false, he thereby abandons the belief he had”, contends Williams (1973: 137).

Moreover, Nottelman also argues that we normally cannot maintain a belief while consciously believing that we have good evidence to disbelieve it: “In typical cases I cannot stably hold on to a belief while consciously believing that I have a good reason for believing its opposite” (2007: 120). Given Williams’ retrospective thesis, after the initial success of willing a belief and then realising how the willed belief has been arrived at, the wilful believing subject’s epistemic condition would be as such: *s* believes *p* to be true while concurrently believing that *s*’s belief that *p* is false, unwarranted or while simultaneously believing that *s*’s current evidence supports not *p* rather than *p*. But this is not how genuine belief obtains for in any “epistemic case, when I have a good reason to believe a proposition, I have an equally good reason not to believe its opposite”, states Nottelman (Ibid: 120). In addition, reiterating Williams’ retrospective thesis that the agent who wills a belief is, following an initial success to enter the willed belief state, necessarily conscious of *how* one has arrived at the willed belief, O’Shaughnessy observes:

[A] belief that occurs in a self-conscious consciousness self-consciously aims at the true ... Self-conscious belief that *p* is the belief that *p* is true, which is the belief that the world is such that *p* is true. Then a self-conscious *b*-believer ought to be able to make such alarming utterances as: ‘This belief that *p*, this belief that the world is such that the claim *p* is true, is purely and simply engendered by a desire that is wholly insensitive to such concerns’. Conceivably, he might even say: ‘My *b*-believed belief that it is raining is one that I hold irrespective of the state of the weather’ (2008: 64).

The retrospective self-consciousness phenomenon of how one inevitably comes to believe, after successfully willing a belief, that one has come about the willed belief at will is representative of how all willed beliefs end up, providing that one does not subsequently forget how one came about the willed belief. If I will to bring about that I believe something I know to be unwarranted by what I currently believe, then I cannot be said to be epistemically motivated in my doing so. There must be some pragmatic considerations that prompt me to will such belief. Believing at will is, therefore, a case of motivated believing which is thought to be brought about to serve some practical interest, as we will learn in Barnes’ and Scott-Kakures’s discussions

about motivated believing in chapter four. It is, therefore, rarely the case that we forget how we came about a willed belief because the sorts of propositions that we will to believe against all odds are primarily the ones that matter to us, hence we want to believe them because a key aspect of our life depends on them. They are the sorts of things whose presence, in our psyche, in the way of belief makes a difference to our mental or psychological life; they are the sorts of things that we care about. They are the sorts of things that serve an interest and that we consider to be congenial to our reasoning and belief system. In general, they are propositions that, once believed, respond to and satisfy some psychological or emotional need. I do not believe that we are psychologically capable of willing beliefs. But if willing a belief were ever possible which I contend is not, typically the kind of propositions outlined earlier would be the object of the willed belief.

That is why after the initial success to enter the willed belief state, we will, at some point, entertain the willed belief, attend to it, consult it, reflect on it, or assert it. Thus, since we bring about the willed belief to serve some practical interest, reflection on any ensuing willed belief becomes normally inevitable. It is this reflection (the retrospective consciousness of the willed belief) that dooms willed beliefs to abandonment. This, however, shall not imply that epistemically-driven beliefs do not end up being reflected on. It is, rather, to emphasize the special purpose such reflection serves in the case of willed beliefs. Entertaining a belief entails attending to its truth values. Therefore, reflecting on a willed belief almost always results in the realisation that the belief in question has been acquired at will with no regard to its truth. If one forgets how one came about a willed belief, then surely the willed belief becomes psychologically sustainable. One can, therefore, be said to have succeeded in willing the belief. Under such circumstances, doxastic voluntarism can account for belief. This might pertain to people with cognitive deficiencies or memory problems. But as far as the overall willability of belief is concerned, I cannot see how any rational or normal human being can possibly move on from a non-belief state to a willed belief state directly just like that through willing it alone. Unless one is, as Alston points out below, psychologically abnormal, otherwise such *direct* belief state transitions are psychologically impossible:

If I, not currently believing that X loves me, were to set out to bring about that belief in one fell swoop, that is, during a period of activity uninterruptedly

guided by the intention to produce that belief, then, unless I am markedly abnormal psychologically, I am doomed to failure. We just don't work that way (1989: 133).

To sum up, we lack what it takes to be psychologically capable of taking up doxastic attitudes at will: "we are not so constituted as to be able to take propositional attitudes at will", observes Alston (2005: 62). And it is because of the lack of such direct control over our doxastic attitudes that the notions of belief and will do not pan out on the same par. Alston contends that it is highly unlikely that we can succeed in willing a belief or manipulating our doxastic tendencies to bring about a willed belief for "most of our beliefs spring from doxastic tendencies that are too deeply rooted to permit of modification by deliberate effort" (Ibid: 73). He further argues that volitional notions of choice or decision are incompatible with psychological states such as belief: "Volitions, decisions, or choosings don't hook up with propositional attitude inaugurations" (Ibid: 63). In addition, Alston observes that our inability to take up doxastic attitudes at will applies to both patently false propositions as well as patently true propositions: "our inability to believe at will is [not] restricted to what is obviously false. It also extends to beliefs that are obviously true. ... voluntary control attaches to sets of contraries" (Ibid: 63). He further argues that "If the sphere of my effective voluntary control does not extend both to A and to not-A, then it attaches to neither" (1989: 123). In other words, if I could bring about at will that I believe something I take to be patently false, then I must also be able to bring about at will that I disbelieve something I take to be patently true. But we just do not have what it takes to bring about doxastic attitudes at will. I can set out to bring it about that I believe some desired proposition I do not currently believe, but, observes Alston, my doxastic state after the trial would remain as it was before the trial:

If I were to set out to bring myself into a state of belief that *p*, just by an act of will, I might assert that *p* with an expression of conviction, or dwell favourably on the idea that *p*... All this I can do at will, but none of this amounts to taking on a belief that *p*. It is all show, an elaborate pretence of believing. Having gone through all this, my doxastic attitudes will remain just as they were before (Ibid: 122-3).

Thus far, we have only considered clear-cut cases where a proposition is either patently false to be believed at will or patently true to be disbelieved at will. The following is a case which Alston presents to show that bringing about doxastic attitudes at will is not only impossible where the proposition in question is evidently true or evidently false, but also impossible where the agent has reason neither to believe  $p$  nor to disbelieve  $p$ . It is a case where the agent has no reason to believe that  $p$  is true, but also has no reason to believe that  $p$  is false. In other words, it is a situation where the agent has reason neither to embrace nor to rule out belief in any given possibilities. It is a situation where the agent feels that neither belief nor disbelief is licensed under the given epistemic conditions. If he had direct control over his doxastic attitudes, he could just choose or decide to take up some belief or any doxastic attitude he may have fancied. The case is about a field commander who just does not have what it takes to settle doxastic opinion on the current disposition of the enemy forces, but given the urgency of the military situation, he must dispose his forces in some way and on some basis. And in doing so,

he must act on some assumption about the enemy's forces. Hence he is forced to decide on a hypothesis as to that disposition [of the enemy forces] and act on that basis. ... [or he] may be *resolving to act as though it is true that  $p$* , adopting it as a basis for action without actually believing it. This could well be a correct description of the military commander. He may have said to himself: "I don't know what the disposition of enemy forces is. I don't even have enough evidence to consider one hypothesis much more likely than any other. But I have to proceed on some basis or other, so I'll just assume that it is  $H$  and make my plans accordingly". If that's the way the land lies, it would be incorrect to describe the commander as believing that the disposition of enemy forces is  $H$  or having any other belief about the matter. He is, self-consciously, proceeding on an assumption concerning the truth of which he has no belief at all (2005: 64-65).

This chapter has examined the potential willability of belief. We have learned that due to their close connection with reason, beliefs are not the sort of propositional attitudes that can be brought about as a direct result of will. If beliefs were willable at all, then we would be able to bring about belief in an evidentially unsupported proposition directly and consciously through willing it alone or solely through formulating an intention to bring it about just like any other intentional action. But as we have already learned, the intentional action to bring about a willed belief succeeds only through the occurrence of a cognitive fissure between the cognitive perspective



(*t*) where we will a belief and the cognitive perspective (*tI*) where we come to believe the willed belief. That is, the intention to bring about a willed belief should be abandoned before we can come to believe the willed belief. This intention or its awareness should be abandoned or forgotten before the end of the intentional action is realised for we cannot come to believe that *p* in the presence of such intention or its awareness. So long as we retain the intention to bring about the willed belief or so long as we are conscious of such intention, we will be conscious of the fact that the belief we are aiming to bring about is unwarranted or evidentially unsupported from our perspective. But as we have observed earlier, it is characteristic of intentional actions that the intention of a given intentional action is abandoned only after the end of the intentional action is realised or is believed to be realised. In the case of wilful believing, the end of the intentional action can only be realised if the intention or its awareness is abandoned before the intentional action succeeds otherwise the endeavour to bring about the willed belief would be doomed.

In other words, we should forget that *p* is evidentially unsupported or we should forget that *p* is the same proposition that we willed at *t* otherwise we cannot come to believe *p* at *tI*. We cannot come to believe *p* in the presence of a conscious judgment that *p* is evidentially unsupported. It is the occurrence of this cognitive rift between *t* and *tI* that makes possible the unconsciousness, forgetting or abandoning of the intention we formulate at *t*. That is, the occurrence of the cognitive rift renders the intention of the intentional action abandoned through rendering the intentional action unmonitored. Intentional actions are necessarily monitored, whether consciously or unconsciously, till their ends are believed to be realised. The intentional action to bring about a willed belief cannot succeed unless rendered unmonitored prior to the realisation of its end. In other words, it cannot succeed if it were to be monitored till success is made. The intention to bring about a willed belief cannot, therefore, count as an intentional action for intentional actions are necessarily monitored till fulfilled. Believing at will is necessarily an intentional activity. Believing at will is, thereby, psychologically impossible. This chapter has underlined the special relationship between belief and reason, and established that it is this relationship that underlies the rational and psychological constraints on belief and it is due to this relationship that beliefs cannot be brought about directly through the practice of free will alone. While the objects of the given inquiry were not welcome propositions to have been willed,

this chapter has stressed the rational and psychological constraints on belief. It is psychologically impossible to believe a proposition you take to be unwarranted from your perspective. It is these rational and psychological constraints on belief that prompt us to challenge the sincerity of a belief expressed in the presence of clear evidence that not  $p$  or in the absence of any supporting evidence that  $p$ .

## Chapter Four

### 4.1. Propositional Acceptance

The agent who merely fears or suspects that  $p$ , but who has no good evidence whether or not that  $p$ , is better understood as merely accepting that  $p$ . That is if there were to obtain, on the part of the given agent, any genuine attitude regarding  $p$ . This section examines the nature of acceptance in a bid to further the attribution of propositional acceptance, one of the key research questions. This research argues that the Bush administration's manifested belief that  $p$  is more characteristic of mere propositional acceptance than genuine belief. It is, therefore, appropriate and necessary that the nature of propositional acceptance along with its differentiae are addressed in this research. There is a substantive difference between belief and acceptance. Though some epistemologists use them interchangeably, they are not the same propositional attitudes. There are four distinguishing features that individuate the notion of belief. First, beliefs are "normally shaped by evidence", argues Engel (2000: 3). The second distinguishing characteristic, observes Engel, is that "belief is a passive state of mind, rather than an active one" (Ibid: 3). The third characteristic is that beliefs are involuntary for they are "states which we can't help having", argues Engel (Ibid: 3). Fourth, believing is, as pointed out on p. 76, a feeling. Further, Cohen argues that belief is "a disposition ... normally to feel it true that  $p$  and false that *not-p*" (1992: 4). Alston also takes this to be one of the key differences between believing that  $p$  and merely accepting that  $p$ , arguing that when we believe a proposition, we tend to feel it to be true that  $p$  whenever the question of whether it is the case that  $p$  arises: "If S believes that  $p$ , then if S considers whether it is the case that  $p$ , S will tend to feel it to be the case that  $p$ , with one or another degree of confidence" (in Jordan and Howard-Snyder 1996: 4); whereas "accepting  $p$  will definitely not include a tendency to feel that  $p$  if the question of whether  $p$  arises" (Ibid: 9). Further to the feeling a belief entails, Alston observes:

I have used the term "feel" [in the definition of belief] ... in order to convey the idea that it possesses a kind of *immediacy*, that it is something one *experiences* rather than something that one *thinks out*, that it is a matter of one's being *struck by* (a sense of) how things are rather than deciding how things are (Ibid: 5).

Further, Cohen holds that beliefs are “states of mind that are normally responsive to the truth, not to our own decisions” whereas acceptance “occurs at will, whether by an immediate decision or through a gradually formed intention. This is because at bottom it executes a choice” (1992: 22). That is, acts of acceptance respond to free will. It is, therefore, up to us whether to accept *p* or not *p*, but it is not within our direct control to believe something we merely please for beliefs are, typically, shaped and constrained by reason, as pointed out earlier by Engel. Further to the voluntariness that distinguishes these two propositional attitudes, Alston observes:

belief is something that one *finds* oneself with, something that springs into consciousness spontaneously when the question is raised. Whereas acceptance of a proposition is, at least in the first instance, a deliberate voluntary act of accepting a proposition as true. ... [In accepting *p*], *S* does commit himself to *p*'s being true. He “takes it on board” as one of the things he acts on and draws consequences from. It is, we might say, just like belief except that the commitment to *p*'s being true doesn't arise spontaneously but, at least at the outset, has to be kept in activation by a deliberate voluntary act (2005: 66).

Moreover, acceptance of a proposition is “the *adoption*, the *taking on*, of a positive attitude to the proposition. It is something one *does* at a particular time”, argues Alston (in Jordan and Howard-Snyder 1996: 8). Thus, just like belief, acts of acceptance involve a positive attitude with a commitment to the truth of the proposition accepted. But, unlike belief, in accepting *p*, the commitment to the truth of *p* does not entail feeling it true that *p*. Rather, the commitment associated with propositional acceptance is through a volitional act. Further, to accept that *p* is “to have or adopt a policy of deeming, positing, or postulating that *p* – i.e., of including that proposition or rule among one's premises for deciding what to do or think in a particular context” (Cohen 1992: 4). Thus, when we accept a proposition for practical reasons, we voluntarily commit ourselves to its truth, employing it as a basis for some decision, using it as a premise for practical reasoning, taking it on board as a policy to guide some action or proceed accordingly. Some epistemologists discriminate between belief and acceptance in a bid to highlight the involuntary character of belief. But they are used interchangeably by others. Chisholm argues that “it will sometimes be convenient to replace the word ‘believe’ by the word ‘accept’” (1977: 6). Furthermore, Clarke also holds that “Coming to believe in something seems to be a species of acceptance” (in Engel 2000: 31). He, therefore, argues that “there can be no

acceptance without belief" (Ibid: 51). Deontologists do not find significant sense in differentiating between belief and acceptance for they treat belief as a willable mental phenomenon. That is, since belief is construed by deontologists as a voluntary propositional attitude, there would be little point for them to distinguish it from acceptance which is itself a constitutionally voluntary propositional attitude.

But I take it that there is a legitimate distinction between believing a proposition and merely accepting it for practical reasons. Driven by practical considerations, we often accept things even in the absence of the corresponding beliefs. Acceptance is not necessarily driven by evidence, though it could be. That is, we may have evidence for what we accept as in the case of the physician who, on good evidence, accepts that a patient has tuberculosis, and therefore reasons and acts accordingly. Or the bomb squad who, on good evidence, accepts that the bomb planted on the main road will explode in thirty minutes and therefore reasons and acts accordingly. Or the fighter jet pilot who, on good evidence, accepts that the enemy target to be struck is *t* and therefore reasons and acts accordingly. These are all cases of acceptance driven by evidence and presumably coexistent with the corresponding beliefs. But there are situations where acceptance arises from a lack of evidence whether it be confirming or disconfirming evidence to settle doxastic opinion, as the example of the field commander illustrates (see p. 98). Further, the expeditioner lost in the vastness of North Pole with no evidence either way as to which direction is the closest to safety might just accept a certain hypothesis *p*, taking it as a premise to reason and act accordingly. This is a case of acceptance in the absence of the corresponding belief. In fact Price argues that "it is not true that in acceptance (or taking for granted) we have evidence for what we accept; though we could have it" (1935: 240). That is, Price and Alston both argue that acceptance often arises when we have no evidence to settle doxastic opinion in the way of belief or disbelief. The following is a paradigm of this. It is a case of acceptance driven by the uncertainty of whether *p* or not *p* and a caution to avoid unaffordable risks:

I am planning for a major construction project to begin next month. I need to decide now whether to do the entire project at once or instead to break the project into two parts, to be executed separately. The rationale for the second strategy is that I am unsure whether I presently have the financial resources to do the whole thing at once. I know that in the case of each sub-contractor - carpenter, plumber, and so on - it is only possible at present to get an estimate

of the range of potential costs. In the face of this uncertainty I proceed in a cautious way: In the case of each sub-contractor I take it for granted that the total costs will be at the top of the estimated range. On the basis of these assumptions I determine whether I have at present enough money to do the whole project at once. In contrast, if you offered me a bet on the actual total cost of the project - the winner being the person whose guess is closest to the actual total - I would reason differently. In this example I take for granted, in a certain practical context, something which I do not believe. Further, my taking the top of the estimated range for granted seems reasonable of me even though I would not take this for granted in a different context. I proceed in this way largely because of my uncertainty and the high costs of certain kinds of errors in prediction. Of course, I thereby run an increased risk of unnecessarily delaying the completion of my project. But I have made a judgment that the error of going ahead with the total project when it turns out to cost too much is less acceptable than the error of not going ahead when I could in fact have afforded to. When I bet with you on the actual total cost, in contrast, there isn't such an asymmetry; for here there is no relevant difference between errors of overestimating and errors of underestimating the costs (Bratman 1992: 6).

That is, under such circumstances, we are often driven in our acceptances by the gravest of possible consequences or worst case scenarios. In the case at hand, Bratman accepts the hypothesis whose ignorance, in his mind, is costly enough that he cannot safely overlook. That is if he went ahead with the total project all at once with the project's ending up costing far too much - more than he could afford - or with the project's being eventually abandoned due to the overall cost underestimation or an error in the overall cost estimate. This is the eventuality Bratman considers unaffordably costly. Though he is aware that what he accepts about the overall cost estimate for the construction project is just a mere possibility, if he were to bet on the actual total cost of the project, he might accept a different hypothesis to the one he initially accepts in a context where the risk asymmetries are too substantial. Bratman, therefore, argues that "pressures of risks ... typically shape what one accepts in the context" rather than "what one believes" (Ibid: 6). He further argues that "reasonable acceptance ... really is affected by asymmetries in the costs of errors, and not solely by relevant degrees of confidence" (Ibid: 7). Consider the Iranian nuclear issue vis-à-vis the American or Israeli response to allegations that Iran is weaponising its nuclear power. Suppose they want to bring the Iranian issue to a head.

Though there is still no good evidence to show that Iran is weaponising its uranium, if they were to consider the issue against the background of the current evidence which is not sufficient to warrant belief, their cognitive attitudes would be driven not

only by the force of the current evidence, but also by the risk asymmetries associated with the two possibilities they might consider: whether to accept that the Iranian nuclear program is solely intended for peaceful purposes, or accept the proposition ( $p$ ) that Iran is weaponising its uranium. Due to the substantial risk asymmetries involved, it is more likely that they would opt to accept the proposition that Iran is weaponising its uranium. Though they might not believe what they accept - they may even doubt what they accept - they might still accept that  $p$  because for them, just like for Bratman, the error of standing idle taking it for granted that the Iranian nuclear program is for peaceful means when it eventually turns out that Iran has already been weaponising its uranium is less acceptable than the error of confronting Iran on the basis of the accepted proposition ( $p$ ) with Iran eventually turning out to have neither a nuclear bomb nor any weaponised uranium. That is, they both involve potential risks, but the risks of the former are unacceptably higher than the risks of the latter. Thus, under such circumstances, we are driven by a consideration that it "is safer to err on the side of prudence" (Engel 1998: 146). In light of the evidential conditions at the time along with the new security environment, I take this to be a more appropriate explanation for the Bush administration's apparent belief that Iraq was in possession of WMD and in league with Al-Qaeda. The following example further demonstrates the risk asymmetries that influence our acceptances:

I have a chair and a two-storey ladder. In each case I think it equally and highly likely that it is in good condition. Indeed, if you offered me a monetary bet about whether the chair/ladder was in good condition I would accept exactly the same odds for each object. But when I think about using the chair/ladder things change. When I consider using the chair I simply take it for granted that it is in working order; but when I am about to use the ladder I do not take this for granted. When I am considering using the objects the differential costs of error with respect to a chair and a two-storey ladder explain differences in what I accept in the context. It is one thing to fall off a chair, another to fall off the top of a two-storey ladder (Bratman 1992: 7).

Similarly, it is one thing to have a hostile adversary emerging as a nuclear power, but another to have it confronted under a false premise. Frankish argues that to accept a proposition that  $p$  "is to be committed to a policy of taking  $p$  as a premise in one's conscious reasoning and decision making" (2012: 24). He, therefore, defines acceptances as "personal commitments to deliberative policies, which are conscious, controlled" (Ibid: 24). Furthermore, Cohen also defines acceptance as "a conscious

adoption of a policy about premisses" (1992: 27). Frankish, therefore, argues that the "direct influence [of acceptance] is confined to reflective behaviour (that is, behaviour that is the product of conscious reasoning)" (2012: 25). Moreover, Bratman contends that whenever we accept a proposition, we do not only act as if  $p$ , but also reason as if  $p$ : "In accepting that  $p$  I do not simply behave as if I think that  $p$ : I also reason on the assumption that  $p$ " (1992: 9). In other words, acceptance, argues Folely, requires "a degree of intellectual engagement that need not be present when you are merely acting as if a claim were true. Commitment requires intellectual resolve, a resolve, for instance, to think about matters in a certain way" (1991: 382). He further argues that "merely acting as if the proposition were true. ... can be entirely a matter of public display. Commitment cannot be. It is a deeper phenomenon" (Ibid: 382). The distinction between merely acting as if  $p$  and accepting  $p$  - acting and reasoning as if  $p$  - is also drawn by Price. He argues that "there are two practical analogues. There is the deciding to act as if  $p$  was true [acceptance], and there is the mere acting as if  $p$  was true, from habit or possibly from instinct" (1935: 240). Thus, "acting as if it is true that  $p$ ", argues Cohen, "is not necessarily a way of declaring that you accept that  $p$ " (1992: 14). That is, to accept that  $p$  is not only to act as if  $p$ , it is, as pointed out earlier by Bratman and Folely, also to be intellectually committed to reason as if  $p$ . Thus, the expeditioner who accepts a certain hypothesis  $p$  does not only act as if he thinks that  $p$ , but also reasons as if  $p$ , taking  $p$  as a premise for his practical reasoning. That is, he is intellectually committed to the truth of  $p$ . But the person who pretends to be a statute does not reason as if he is a statute. Though he acts as if he is a statute. That is, his acting as if  $p$  is just a matter of public display with no intellectual commitment to think about matters as if  $p$ . The following is how Mosterin differentiates between belief and acceptance:

*We often use the same word "belief" to refer to two different cognitive attitudes. Both of them are dispositions to behave in the same way, but one of these dispositions is involuntary and context independent (and will continue to be called belief here), while the other one is voluntary and context dependent (and will be called acceptance). Belief, like perception, is the result of the automatic workings of our biological cognitive apparatus. Acceptance is the result of a decision, which can be guided by a variety of goals. Acceptance can be accompanied by belief, but need not, and very often is not (2002: 313).*



Further to the involuntariness that individuates belief, Mosterín observes:

Think of love. You find yourself in love, you fall in love. Love is nothing you decide upon. Love is the result of unconscious brain mechanisms you neither know nor control. Dating, sharing the same apartment or marriage, on the contrary, are things you decide upon. You can choose whether to date, to marry or to share your apartment, but you cannot choose whether to fall in love or to be in love. Believing is like being in love, acceptance is like dating or marriage (Ibid: 318-319).

Moreover, Cohen also argues that "Beliefs are said to come over you, arise in you, or grow on you, like anger or affection does. You cannot don, raise, or grow them yourself. You can plant them in others, but not in yourself" (1992: 21). That is, belief and love are not the kind of mental phenomena that we can will ourselves to be in, whereas acceptance is a cognitive attitude that we can adopt at will. But, unlike Mosterín, I do not think of belief solely as a disposition to behave. Understanding belief solely as a behavioural disposition to act in a certain way, as if  $p$ , makes it difficult whether to attribute belief or acceptance or both to an agent who acts appropriately to  $p$ . This is because acceptance, like belief, is partly associated with a tendency to act as if  $p$ . Thus, thinking of belief purely as a disposition to act in a certain way does not help lay out a systematic distinction between belief and acceptance. If I believe that  $p$ , I necessarily feel it true that  $p$ , but, as observed in chapter two, I might never encounter any chance to assert  $p$  or act appropriately to  $p$ . That is why I take the Baineian and the Rylean behaviourist account of belief to be subservient to Cohen's account of belief as a feeling disposition. Behavioural dispositions alone are neither necessary nor sufficient for the attribution of belief. We sometimes assert  $p$  or act as if  $p$  for practical reasons while lacking the belief that  $p$ . Cohen defines acceptance as "a mental act ... or policy of mental action, rather than a speech-act" (1989: 368). He further argues that "acceptance implies commitment to a pattern, system, or policy - whether long or short term - of premising that  $p$  as a basis for a decision" (1992: 12). That is, whenever we accept a proposition for practical purposes, we tend to use the proposition as a premise in our practical reasoning, asserting that  $p$  or acting as if  $p$ . But Cohen rightly denies that such acceptance is necessarily reflected in our verbal or behavioural manifestations: "What a person accepts may in practice be reflected in how he or she speaks or behaves, but it need not be" (1989: 368). Thus, just like belief, I might accept a hypothesis in a debate

about the possibility of a certain rock on Venus, but no appropriate situations might subsequently arise to render me to use it as a premise in my practical reasoning, assert that  $p$  or act as if  $p$  if I were to visit Venus or I might just forget what I have accepted altogether.

Furthermore, Cohen argues that acceptance and belief can, though need not, coincide: "There is a natural tendency for states of belief that  $p$  to be associated with policies of acceptance that  $p$  and vice versa, but it is always conceptually possible for one of the two to exist without the other" (1992: 1). He further argues that "a person can fully believe that  $p$  without accepting it. That is to say, he could be convinced that  $p$  while nevertheless rejecting the use of that proposition as a premiss for any proofs, deliberations, etc." (1989: 369). Foley takes the same position too: "Just as you might commit yourself to hypotheses that you do not really believe, so, too, you might not commit yourself to a hypothesis that you do believe, since commitment might have unwelcome consequences" (1991: 382). That is, since acceptance entails a commitment to premising  $p$  as a basis for practical reasoning or action, and since such commitment might bring about undesirable eventualities, there are situations where we do not accept or do not want to accept a proposition we believe. Consider the person who believes in God, but does not accept such belief proposition as a premise for practical reasoning or as a premise to act accordingly. He might just find acting as if  $p$  too dull. Or the police officer who believes blacks to be inferior to whites, but does not commit himself to such proposition as a premise for action or practical reasoning in his career; or the woman who believes herself to be inferior to men, but does not commit, at least in public, herself to such proposition as a premise to act or reason accordingly. These are all examples of belief without the corresponding acceptance of the proposition believed. We have already learned that belief is normally driven by epistemic reasons, but practical reasons can also sometimes cause belief, though not outright. Similarly, we sometimes accept a proposition on the basis of very good epistemic reasons. But acceptance can also be driven by practical reasons. Cohen argues that "reasons for accepting that  $p$  can ... be ethical, professional, prudential, religious, aesthetic, or otherwise pragmatic instead of evidential" (1992: 20). Further to the influence which belief and acceptance might have on each other, Cohen observes:

though acceptance that  $p$  sometimes causes or helps to cause belief that  $p$ , the fact that a person accepts that  $p$  is (rightly) not taken by him as a reason for believing that  $p$ . Otherwise he could manufacture a reason for believing anything. But having a belief that  $p$  could normally be taken to be some at least *prima facie* reason for accepting that  $p$ , even though it may well not be the only, or the best reason, or even a sufficient one (1989: 369).

He takes the same position in his subsequent work on belief and acceptance:

acceptance does quite generally tend to promote belief. Not that acceptance that  $p$  can ever be taken as a reason for believing that  $p$ . For if it could be so taken we should be in the absurd position of being able at will to manufacture a reason for believing anything, simply by deciding to take it as a premiss. (There is a definite asymmetry here between belief's normally being a reason for acceptance and acceptance's never being a reason for belief). But acceptance that  $p$  very often *causes* belief that  $p$  - in the long run if not in the short run (1992: 18).

That is, sometimes our acceptance of a proposition promotes and eventually causes belief in the proposition. The sceptic who wants to believe that Islam is not inherently violent might initially just accept that Islam is a peaceful religion and that his followers are peace-loving. That is, he does not currently hold any such beliefs, but he wants to, probably because he has a good Muslim friend or because he might find the lack of such belief damaging his perception of or harming his friendship with his Muslim friend. In a bid to improve his perception of Islam and eventually acquire the intended belief, he just accepts Islam to be peaceful, taking this as a premise to think about Islam and treat its followers accordingly. That is, he is intellectually committed to what he accepts. His acceptance of  $p$  can encourage and cause belief in the end. That is if the acceptance leads him to forge a good friendship with them, improving his perception of them. In other words, if the acceptance culminates in some evidence that favours belief from his own perspective. But it could also be the case that the acceptance ends up neither promoting nor causing any corresponding belief in the proposition. Thus, acceptance need not promote or cause belief. Nevertheless, we often come to believe the hypotheses we accept for practical reasons if they end up being positive or corroborated by evidence that favours belief. I have no good epistemic reasons to believe that the combination of two rare radioactive materials produces a certain by-product  $p$  - a detrimental material that causes infertility. But for practical reasons, I just accept that the combination will generate  $p$ , reason and act

accordingly. If the experiment proves positive, it is most likely that I will come to believe what I originally accepted in the absence of this corresponding belief. Further, the police have reason to believe or suspect that a neighbourhood guy is engaged in illicit drug trafficking. The reason they have is somehow indicative of this alleged activity, but it is not good enough to produce or warrant belief in the matter. On the basis of this reason, they obtain a warrant to monitor his movements. That is, they just accept that he is engaged in illicit drug trafficking, reason and act accordingly. In other words, they just reason and act as if *p*. If the activities they subsequently engage in - such as tracking his movements, tapping his telephones, or intercepting his emails - corroborate what they initially accepted as their cognitive attitude, it is very likely that they eventually come to believe it. Moreover, Cohen argues that "One common case" of acceptance followed by belief is:

when in learning a skill, and acquiring fluency in its exercise, we pass from accepting what has to be done to believing it. A detailed acceptance of appropriate instructions eventually promotes a corresponding disposition to *feel* what has to be done at any particular point of the skill's operation. That way, for example, a driver becomes able to feel the coexistence of several different requirements. Perhaps he needs at the same time to depress his car's clutch pedal, move his gear lever forward, relax pressure on his accelerator, and turn the steering wheel to the left. But, if he were still at the stage of *accepting* each requirement as taught by his instructor, he would have to do so sequentially (Ibid: 19).

Other paradigms of this acceptance-belief transition would be learning how to cycle or fly a plane. These are cases where belief might ensue acceptance. Similarly, the person who believes in God but does not currently accept it as a premise for behaviour or practical reasoning might eventually come to accept it and thereby reason and behave appropriately to such belief. That is if the retention of the belief generates desirable or good reasons for such acceptance. We have observed earlier that belief in a proposition can be a reason to accept the proposition, but it might not be enough or it might not be a good reason for such acceptance. That is, we might need other reasons beyond our belief in the proposition in order to accept what we believe for, as pointed out earlier by Foley on p. 108, acceptance could have implications at odds with our desires and practical interests, as the possible acceptance of the belief in God illustrates. That is why Foley argues that "belief is neither necessary nor sufficient for commitment" (1991: 382). Further to this belief-

acceptance transition or coexistence, Cohen argues that we often undergo some verification to see whether the credentials of a belief warrant acceptance of the belief or whether they make the belief worthy of acceptance:

though a person who accepts nothing that he believes is intellectually self-paralysed, a person who habitually accepts everything that he believes is recklessly uncritical. One often needs to go through some process of checking or monitoring the relevant facts in order to determine whether acceptance is justifiable and such a process may well reveal deviant elements in the genesis of the belief. Visual illusion, mishearing, linguistic misunderstanding, numerical miscalculation, misinformation from others, and many other such factors may have played their part in generating a belief that does not deserve acceptance. Moreover, while such a belief will often cease to exist when found undeserving of acceptance, there are other kinds of belief that may be maintained even though acceptance is thought inappropriate. A person might be convinced that *p* while nevertheless not accepting the use of that proposition as a premiss for any proofs, deliberations, etc. For example, this sometimes happens with beliefs due to racial or sexist prejudice (1992: 19).

That is, we often check whether acceptance of a belief is warranted because we do not want to commit ourselves to something false. This is especially the case with commitment to reflective behaviour. My belief that a certain political party is more patriotic than others will, upon being subjected to some scrutiny to see whether its acceptance is warranted, fade away when I discover that the bulk of my belief owes its existence to media disinformation, unreliable testimony, credulity, a bias of affiliation with the party itself and other non-alethic factors. I, therefore, refuse to accept the belief as a premise for behaviour or practical reasoning upon being exposed to such non-truth-conducive factors causally instrumental in the generation of my belief. Most children with a belief that Santa Claus exists will, at some point at their teenage or adulthood life and with their gradual cognitive development, wonder whether their belief deserves acceptance any longer or whether to accept such belief any longer. That is if the belief has not already been extinguished by the force of reality. Most of them will presumably cease to accept such belief upon discovering the mythical origin of the belief and the belief itself will, most probably, eventually evaporate. These are some of the cases where considerations of truth encourage such scrutiny, rendering the acceptance of a belief unwarranted, and eventually dispelling the belief from mind. But sometimes, when deeming it costly, we refuse to accept a particular belief not because of discovering non-evidential factors in the causal history

of the belief, but because of practical interests. The racist police officer might refuse to accept his racist beliefs as a premise for behaviour or practical reasoning, at least in his work circle, for pragmatic considerations. Similarly, the woman who believes men to be superior to women might not, due to pragmatic considerations, accept, at least in public, such belief as a premise for behaviour or practical reasoning. She might be an important public figure who does not want to come across perceiving herself to be of inferior social status. Though she might have some subjectively good reasons for her belief, she also has good reasons not to accept such belief, at least in certain contexts. That is, due to pragmatic considerations, neither the police officer nor the woman commits themselves to their beliefs in public.

Furthermore, Cohen argues that "there may ... be circumstances in which it is reasonable to accept that  $p$  and yet not to believe that  $p$  ... there may also be circumstances in which it is reasonable to believe that  $p$  and yet also reasonable not to accept that  $p$ " (1989: 373). Thus, certain practical considerations might make it reasonable for the expeditioner to accept a hypothesis, but not reasonable to believe it. The person who believes in God might have some good epistemic reasons that make it reasonable for him to so believe, but certain practical considerations might also make it reasonable for him not to accept such belief as a premise for behaviour or practical reasoning. Mosterin argues that "belief is context independent or context invariant, whereas acceptance is context dependent" (2002: 319). Engel also observes: "Unlike belief, acceptance is context-dependent. ... I believe (to a degree) that  $p$  independently of a context. But my acceptances are contextual: I may withdraw them in other contexts" (1998: 147). Moreover, Stalnaker argues that "what a person accepts can be compartmentalized in a way in which what he believes cannot be. A person may accept something in one context, while rejecting it or suspending judgment in another" (1987: 80). That is, the commitment that arises from our acceptance of a proposition is, argues Foley, context-relative: "When you commit yourself to a proposition ... you are ordinarily prepared to do so only in a limited range of situations. ... Genuine belief, by contrast, is not like this. You don't believe a hypothesis relative to a context. You either believe it or you don't" (1991: 382). In this way, "what we reasonably take for granted [accept], in contrast with what we believe, can vary across different contexts and be in part shaped by various practical

considerations", argues Bratman (1992: 4). Further to the practical considerations that issue practical reasons for acceptance, Bratman observes:

I might reasonably accept that  $p$  relative to one context but not relative to another. Such acceptance can be driven by a wide range of practical considerations, considerations that provide practical reasons for acceptance rather than evidence for the truth of what is accepted (Ibid: 9).

Thus, because acceptance is a voluntary propositional attitude not necessarily shaped by epistemic reasons, and because it does not entail any feeling that what is accepted is true, we might withdraw our acceptances in other contexts, as pointed out earlier by Engel. Frankish therefore argues that "a lawyer may accept that her client is innocent in her professional life, but not in private" (2012: 24). Similarly, the racist police officer may accept his racist beliefs in his private life, but might withdraw acceptance from them in public or in his work environment. The Bush administration claimed to have knowledge<sup>1</sup> and manifested a belief-free assertion<sup>2</sup> that Iraq had a relationship with Al-Qaeda and that it was harbouring, training and aiding the Al-Qaeda elements at the time. The available evidence corroborating such claims met with plausible caveats raised by the US intelligence community, demonstrating the anecdotal, conflicting, contradictory, fragmentary and opaque nature of the evidence. Given the presence of such caveats along with the absence of adequate evidence for and against the possibility whether  $p$ , it is likely that the Bush administration just accepted the proposition that Iraq had a relationship with Al-Qaeda. Lacking what it takes to possess a state of belief, sometimes we, for practical reasons, just accept a proposition. It is often the case that when a judge or jury is presented with a proposition for which they lack what it takes to settle doxastic opinion, they provisionally accept that  $p$ , employing it as a basis for inquiry in order to discover the truth or arrive at a state of belief whether  $p$ . Lacking the kind of appropriate evidence to be certain that not  $p$ , the Bush administration might have found it imprudent to take it for granted that not  $p$ . They might have, therefore, just accepted that  $p$  due to the risk asymmetries associated with accepting or rejecting that  $p$ . It is also logically possible to think that they just feigned belief in the terror proposition in a bid to

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to appendix (pp. 131-140) for the Bush administration's knowledge-constituted statements about the Iraqi connections to Al-Qaeda.

<sup>2</sup> Refer to appendix (pp. 33-61) for the Bush administration's belief-free statements about the Iraqi connections to Al-Qaeda.

demonise Iraq in the face of the international community and discredit its side of the story. The notion of propositional acceptance is further examined in relation to the Bush administration's case for war in chapter nine.

This section has examined the essence of acceptance as a voluntary propositional attitude that entails reasoning appropriately to the accepted premise. That is, propositional acceptance differs from pretence or mere public display in the sense that accepting that  $p$  necessarily involves reasoning as if  $p$  whereas the latter does not. In other words, propositional acceptance entails, as noted earlier, an intellectual commitment to the truth of the proposition accepted. But it is not a necessary condition of acceptance that we act appropriately to the proposition we accept. Thus, neither belief nor acceptance entails acting as if  $p$ . We have learned that belief is normally driven by good or satisfactory epistemic reasons, whereas propositional acceptance by practical reasons. Though there are situations where we are compelled to accept a proposition only on good epistemic grounds or that our acceptance of such propositions requires good epistemic grounds due to the high cost of error as the case of the physician and the surgeon demonstrates (see pp. 250-251), mere propositional acceptance is normally driven by practical reasons or the risk asymmetries associated with accepting or rejecting that  $p$ . While doxastic acceptance is normally driven by epistemic reasons, mere propositional acceptance is neither driven nor constrained by epistemic reasons. Furthermore, propositional acceptance is context-dependent. In other words, acts of acceptance are withdrawable. I can accept that  $p$  in one context, but not in others. The UN weapons inspector who has no good evidence to believe that Iraq is weaponising its uranium ( $p$ ) might just take it for granted that  $p$  while on a mission to discover whether  $p$ . Though in his private life he might not accept that  $p$ , he might well reason and act as if  $p$  once on duty on a suspect Iraqi uranium enrichment site. By contrast, if I believe that  $p$ , I will be in a continuing state of holding such belief and I will feel it true that  $p$  whenever the question whether  $p$  arises. That is, I do not believe  $p$  relative to a context, but not relative to others. There might, however, be situations where I might not assert such belief even upon being asked whether  $p$ . But this does not mean that I do not feel it true that  $p$  under such circumstances. The racist police officer might not assert his racist belief that blacks are inferior to whites upon being asked whether  $p$ . But it does not follow that he does not feel it true that  $p$  when the question whether  $p$  arises. That is, believing that  $p$  does



not entail acting - whether verbally or behaviourally - as if  $p$ . Nonetheless, it entails feeling it true that  $p$ . Similarly, accepting that  $p$  entails reasoning as if  $p$ , but it does not entail acting as if  $p$ . Thus, neither belief nor propositional acceptance is reducible to behaviour.

#### 4.2. Pragmatic Belief

Though beliefs are normally responsive to truth, non-alethic considerations promote and cause some of our beliefs indirectly. Non-truth-conducive beliefs are normally referred to as pragmatic or practical beliefs in the philosophical literature. Epistemologists classify pragmatic beliefs into two categories: wishful beliefs and unwelcome (fearful) beliefs. This research examines whether the Bush administration's manifested belief that  $p$  can be rightly characterised as a case of pragmatic belief. Thus, in an attempt to further the attribution of pragmatic belief, one of the core research questions, this section analyses the essence of pragmatic belief. The post-9/11 security environment along with the 2002 *US National Security Strategy* (NSS) were shaped and driven by an alleged fear that any unmet security challenges might pose a grave and sudden threat to the US homeland security or its interests overseas. Further, the 2002 NSS was fundamentally preventive in nature, as we will learn in chapter nine. That is, the essence of the 2002 NSS was to bring any feared or perceived threats to a head, no matter how ill-supported the imminence of those feared threats were epistemically (see p. 249). After all, preventive responses do not supervene on the probity of evidence whether a feared threat would materialise if left unchecked or unattended. This research aims to explore the possibility whether the Bush administration's apparent belief that  $p$  could be appropriately characterised as a fear-driven belief. It is, therefore, appropriate and necessary for this research to take account of the nature of pragmatic beliefs.

In chapter three we learned that the principal reason behind our inability to will a belief is belief's intimate connection with reason. But philosophers, notably Kant and Peirce, recognize that our will can shape our doxastic attitudes, but only indirectly through focus on supporting evidence, stifling doubts and ignoring contrary evidence. That is, they argue that we are not always emotionally indifferent in the attitudes we take towards the propositions we entertain or the hypotheses we test. Epistemologists distinguish between epistemically motivated beliefs and pragmatically motivated

beliefs. Once epistemically driven in our quest for a state of belief, we seek, embrace or want to believe the truth; but once our quest for a state of belief is motivated by some pragmatic end, our doxastic cultivation is driven by pragmatic desires, preferences, hopes, and wishes, as will be observed later. Furthermore, epistemologists argue that our beliefs are either accuracy driven or directionally driven. That is, they contend that we are motivated in our beliefs either by accuracy goals (the truth) or by directional goals (pragmatic ends). Kunda argues that both goals influence reasoning through influencing the strategies we employ to settle opinion on an issue:

both kinds of goals affect reasoning by influencing the choice<sup>3</sup> of beliefs and strategies applied to a given problem. But accuracy goals lead to the use of those beliefs and strategies that are considered most appropriate, whereas directional goals lead to the use of those that are considered most likely to yield the desired conclusion (1990: 481).

That is, directional and accuracy goals influence our doxastic attitudes indirectly through influencing the way we approach evidential considerations. I want to know the truth about the possibility of extraterrestrial life. Once setting out to acquire a state of belief, I tend to seek the evidence that conduces to the truth about the possibility of such life. Wanting to believe the truth is both an epistemic goal and an epistemic desire. My desire to know the truth has an indirect influence on what doxastic attitude I end up with in my quest for a state of belief. But if I am pragmatically motivated in my quest for a state of belief, then I would seek and focus on the evidence that conduces to the satisfaction of the pragmatic end in question. That is, as far as wishful believing is concerned, “our cognition is driven and directed by desire<sup>4</sup>”, argues Scott-Kakures (2000: 349). In other words, in situations where we are pragmatically driven and thereby want to arrive at the doxastic attitude we desire, we are more responsive and sensitive to our pragmatic desires and what conduces to the satisfaction of those desires than to the pursuit of truth: “In cases of wishful believing, cognition, it seems, is responsive and sensitive to hedonic interests”, observes Scott-Kakures (Ibid: 360).

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<sup>3</sup> This is not intended to imply that beliefs are a matter of choice. The choice of beliefs here refers to the choice of supporting evidence in the way of the (background) beliefs one considers or adduces in support of a given belief.

<sup>4</sup> We have epistemic and pragmatic desires, but here desire refers to pragmatic desire, unless stated otherwise.

In addition to the pragmatic desires, interests and goals that give rise to wishful believing, wishful believing, argues Scott-Kakures, is also motivated by “reflection upon the cost incurred by failing to believe the relevant proposition” (Ibid: 366). The cost of failing to believe a desired proposition or sustain a desired belief might be the absence or loss of the pleasures or psychological comfort such believing brings about. That is, it might be the prevention or abortion of some pragmatic end. It could also be a sacrilege to a belief system. Sometimes we think of the failure to believe what is entailed or upheld by our belief system as a sacrilege to that belief system. Being a devout Muslim entails a commitment, faith or belief in the divinity of the Quran. Thus, Muslims would normally regard the failure to believe – no matter how poor the given epistemic conditions are – what is entailed or upheld by Islam as a sacrilege to the Muslim faith. In situations like this, the cost of failing to believe a desired proposition might be the loss of the peace of mind.

Under circumstances where a doctrinal value is at stake, pragmatic considerations normally override epistemic considerations. That is, we feel more committed to what supports or conduces to the doctrinal value than to the pursuit of truth. Kunda argues that “people are more likely to arrive at conclusions that they want to arrive at” (1990: 480). It is true that we normally want to believe what conduces to the pragmatic end that prompts our quest for a state of belief, but this cannot be taken as evidence that we normally come to believe what we want to believe. Belief has a special connection to truth, as noted on pp. 67 and 80. Furthermore, Scott-Kakures also observes that where the quest for a state of belief is pragmatically motivated, our “cognition is directionally driven and, apparently, insensitive to truth” (2000: 371). This reinforces Winters' argument (p. 80) that we are not always emotionally neutral in our doxastic attitudes. Thus, we are more likely to affirm the conclusion we desire in situations where there is an emotional bias in favour of that conclusion. The other kind of motivated<sup>5</sup> belief is the case of unwelcome or fearful believing. Lacking good evidence to settle doxastic opinion, we, argues Scott-Kakures, sometimes come to believe what we do not want to be the case: in cases of unwelcome believing “individuals come, on the basis of poor evidence, to believe just what they want not to be so” (Ibid: 349). Further, Pears also argues that fears “often lead people to form intrinsically unpleasant beliefs” (in Scott-Kakures 2001: 322). That is, Scott-Kakures

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<sup>5</sup> The unmodified *motivated* belief refers to pragmatically motivated belief.

and Pears argue that in cases of unwelcome believing, our cognition is more responsive or sensitive to our fears in the same way that it is to our desires and interests in the case of wishful believing, as observed earlier. That is why motivated believing is considered a perversion of reason:

Motivated beliefs ... are driven by psychical states of unease, by hedonic interests rather than epistemic ones. It is this view, in part, that gives substance to the claim that motivated believing is a real perversion of reason; for, in such cases, cognition is directed by or sensitive to pleasures and pains rather than to how things stand in the world (Scott-Kakures 2000: 350).

Thus, motivated believing leads to epistemic irrationality; Scott-Kakures argues that what constitutes such irrationality is “that the cognizer’s reasons for believing that *p* are not good reasons for believing that *p* (is true)” (Ibid: 370). Unlike accuracy driven beliefs where truth values are overriding, motivated beliefs are driven by pragmatic considerations. That is why most epistemologists, among them Barnes, contend that there “must be some perceived gain” behind motivated believing (1997: 46). Further to the perceived gain in question, Scott-Kakures argues that “motivated believing is in the service of the realization of the subject’s goals and values” (2000: 350). That is, the perceived gain behind wishful believing is the realisation of certain pragmatic ends and values. But the perceived gain behind unwelcome believing is said to be the avoidance of feared eventualities: “In the case of fear[ful believing], we may conjecture that the ulterior goal is avoiding the [feared] danger” (Pears 1986: 42-3). Further to the perceived gain behind unwelcome believing, Scott-Kakures observes: “What motivates the unwelcome beliefs is the desire to avoid ... fearsome possibilities” (2001: 323). He further argues that in the face of a feared eventuality and the desire to preempt that feared eventuality, we can only be more willing to believe the unwelcome than disbelieve it: “the subjects [of fearful believing] are willing to incur the short-term magnification of anxiety (embrace of the unwelcome belief) in order to avoid the potential greater anxiety associated with the realisation of the feared possibility” (Ibid: 323-324). The following is what Scott-Kakures argues to be the paradigm of unwelcome believing:

Barbara, a busy young attorney, leaves home on her daily commute, late for an important meeting. As she nears the freeway entrance, she is suddenly taken with worry that she has left her gas stove on. She begins to rehearse her morning’s routine: she made hot water for tea as usual, but cannot recall

whether she replaced the tea kettle on the burner (realizing that had she done so, the whistling kettle would have warned her to extinguish the flame), or left it on the counter by the sink. She considers, as well, the fact that she and her husband had a disagreement as to which of them had agreed to pick up their daughter from after-school care; and she notes that this could well have distracted her from her routine. She does recognize that she has had such concerns before and they have very nearly invariably proved unwarranted, but she immediately notes that relying on the past in this way when her routine was upset is none too compelling. (She thinks as well, with horror, of what she would say to husband and friends if she has not turned off the stove and tragedy does result: "But I always had turned it off in the past, so I thought I must have done so this time"). She desperately tries to visualize turning off the burner, but she cannot. Convinced now that she has left the stove burning, she calls her husband, but he has already left home. At great inconvenience, she returns home – to discover that the burner is off (Ibid: 314-315).

I disagree that Barbara can be rightly attributed belief in the feared possibility that *p*. That is, the propositional attitude that prompts her to act as if *p* cannot be rightly described as one of pragmatic belief driven by fear. She has no good reason to regard *p* as more likely than not *p*. The only reason she has is a memory belief that her routine was upset by a disagreement with her husband. But such reason is not directly related to whether or not that *p*. I take it that she merely accepts that *p* without holding any corresponding beliefs. In the case of wishful believing, pragmatic ends bias our cognition in the way of predisposing us to favour the conclusion that conduces to the realisation of such ends. Believing a proposition in a bid to head off a feared danger is far too bizarre. Though belief is normally action-guiding, practical purposes of such nature under such poor epistemic conditions are normally associated with mere propositional acceptance. That is, merely fearing that *p* in the absence of good evidence whether *p* normally promotes mere acceptance that *p*. In the case at hand, we can take neither Barbara's acting as if *p* nor her reasoning as if *p* as evidence that she believes that *p*. She considers the eventuality if *p*. That is, she weighs up the consequences of *p* and not *p*. Being driven by the high cost of error or the risk asymmetries associated with *p* or not *p*, she comes to accept that *p* and acts accordingly. Just like Bratman's case of the ladder, it is one thing to have your house burnt down, another to experience the inconvenience of a journey back home.

Furthermore, pragmatic belief is like faith in the sense that they are both motivated by practical considerations. That is, religious belief is just one type of pragmatic belief. Russell argues that faith does not arise from evidential considerations. It, he

observes, emanates from our emotions and practical needs: "Where there is evidence, no one speaks of 'faith'. We do not speak of faith that two and two are four or that the earth is round. We only speak of faith when we wish to substitute emotion for evidence" (1954: 215). That is, faith differs from belief in the sense that the essence of faith has a practical origin. Further, one of the distinguishing characteristics between belief and faith is that belief is involuntary, whereas faith is voluntary. Faith, argues Sartre, is by "decision" (in Engel 2000: 139). Moreover, Kant also defines faith as "assent from a need of reason" (in Wood 2002: 82). In this sense, faith is equivalent to mere propositional acceptance. He further describes it as an attitude stemming from a "voluntary determination of judgement" (Ibid: 82). That is, faith is a matter of choice and can therefore respond to free will. I can decide to have faith in my wife's fidelity till I properly inquire into an alleged case of infidelity. But I cannot decide to believe that my wife is faithful with this alleged infidelity being accessible to my consciousness. That is, I normally cannot come to believe that *p* in the presence of grave doubts that *p*. Moreover, Marti associates faith with "an alignment" (1946: 33). Furthermore, Eagleton also defines it as "a commitment and allegiance" (2009: 37). That is, faith differs from belief in the sense that faith arises from one's voluntary commitment to a proposition whereas belief *typically* stems from one's truth-considerations of a proposition. I uphold libertarianism. This is my political alignment and it is to this that I am committed. It is to such principle I give my allegiance. Given such background of mine, upon being presented with any proposition entailed by the libertarian philosophy, I can normally come to have faith in it just through an act of decision even if I lack good evidence in its favour. I will have faith in it simply because I do not want to go against my political philosophy. I want to stay true and loyal to its values, and in doing so, I ensure some psychological comfort. Freud describes faith, religious belief, as an illusion arising from our desires and wishes:

Religious ideas ... which are given out as teachings, are not precipitates of experience or end-results of thinking: they are illusions, fulfilments of the oldest, strongest and most urgent wishes of mankind. The secret of their strength lies in the strength of those wishes. As we already know, the terrifying impression of helplessness in childhood aroused the need for protection – for protection through love – which was provided by the father; and the recognition that this helplessness lasts throughout life made it necessary to cling to the existence of a father, but this time a more powerful one. Thus the benevolent rule of a divine Providence allays our fear of the dangers of life (in Wood 2002: 59).

Further, Wood also argues that religious beliefs are “motivated by wish-fulfilment rather than on the basis of the evidence” (Ibid: 68). That is, faith does not normally arise from sensory evidence or reflective reasons, but from our desires and wishes. This, however, shall not imply that we are epistemically motivated in all our believings. Some of our beliefs are pragmatically motivated as noted earlier. The acquisition or sustenance of faith is not influenced by truth-values. It is, as observed earlier, driven by doctrinal considerations such as one’s commitment, allegiance, affiliation or attachment to something. It is because of this that Alston argues that the epistemic position of faith is weak in contrast to that of belief: “‘faith that’ has at least a strong suggestion of a weak epistemic position vis-à-vis the proposition in question. One would say that one has faith that Jim will be promoted only when one’s evidence is less than conclusive” (in Jordan and Howard-Snyder 1996: 12). Many people believe or continue to believe in God even though they know that their evidence for such belief is less than conclusive or adequate. They continue to believe in the existence of God for such belief provides them with the joy and happiness they seek. Wood argues that it is this very joy that motivates religious belief:

Religious beliefs ... are ...consoling, they bring us joy, they give our lives meaning, and we hold them by “faith” – not through the operations of our intellect but with the warmth and fervor of our desires. It is often said that people have a “hunger” for faith – “for something they can believe in”. ... The hunger for faith is the wish to find some teaching that is not rationally credible, but is still capable of captivating us emotionally so as to persuade us that life has some meaning or other that we wish that it had. This hunger is a wish to be protected from reality. ... religious beliefs portray reality to us as we wish it to be, that we hold them either in order to give ourselves pleasure or to ease the pain of life, and that in forming and maintaining these beliefs, we indulge our feelings and wishes rather than facing up to our lives as they are (2002: 62-63).

This section has examined the nature of pragmatic belief in a bid to further the research question that concerns the attribution of pragmatic belief to the given alleged believing subjects. Though I recognize the possibility of pragmatic belief, I contend that conditions, such as that of Barbara's, where we merely fear or suspect that *p* in the absence of any good evidence whether *p* normally promote or lead to mere pragmatic acceptance rather than pragmatic belief. Normally we have a practical reason when we desire belief in a wishful or welcome proposition for which we lack good epistemic evidence. The practical reason that promotes such wishful beliefs

might be the satisfaction of some practical interest such as bringing about the peace of mind, harmony or some psychological comfort. In situations where we dread the eventualities of a merely feared proposition for which we possess no good epistemic evidence, the given practical pressures, the high cost of error or the risk asymmetries we associate with accepting or rejecting that  $p$  normally promote or lead to mere propositional acceptance if an attitude had to be taken on whether or not that  $p$ . That is, they normally prompt or lead us to accept what we fear most. It is, however, not the case that we normally want to believe what we fear most under such conditions. Nor is it the case that we normally are more willing to believe than to disbelieve what we fear most. I take it that we are more likely or more willing to accept than to reject what we fear most under such circumstances. Even if we grant that we are more willing to believe than to disbelieve what we fear most under such conditions, it still does not follow that the willed belief obtains given the unfavourable epistemic conditions at the time. That is, in light of the degenerate evidential conditions at the time, it is still more appropriate to characterise the propositional attitude that guides our action as mere acceptance than pragmatic belief.

I am inclined to think that most cases of pragmatic acceptance are mistaken for so-called evidentially unsupported fear-driven beliefs. In situations where I have no good evidence whether  $p$  or not  $p$  but where I fear or suspect that  $p$  or where I dread the feared eventualities of  $p$  more than those of not  $p$ , I am more likely to accept rather than reject that  $p$ . Fearful epistemically degenerate conditions normally promote or lead to mere propositional acceptance rather than belief of a pragmatic essence. That is, if we had to act on some basis and for that reason had to take a stance on the given issue on the basis of the unprobative evidential conditions at the time. Consider the ship captain who cannot, due to poor visibility conditions, the lack of a telescope and a faulty electronic system on-board, determine with any reasonable degree of certainty or belief whether the object looming up in the distance is an iceberg ( $p$ ) or just a thick patch of cloud (not  $p$ ). He is faced with a worrisome situation where he has no good evidence whether to believe  $p$  or not  $p$  but where he must act on some basis, just like the field commander (see p. 98). That is, he lacks what it takes to settle doxastic opinion on the issue. In such a situation, it would be inappropriate to characterise the basis on which he acts as one of belief or pragmatic belief. Due to the high cost of error, it is very unlikely that the captain just takes it for granted that not  $p$ , providing



that he is a rational human being. That is, due to the risk asymmetries he associates with whether  $p$  or not  $p$ , it is very likely that he just accepts that  $p$  and acts accordingly.

Further, the more appropriate characterisation of the captain's stance on the given issue would be that the fearsome epistemically unprobative condition prompts him to accept  $p$  as a premise for practical reasoning under the circumstances. The following example further illustrates this. Rose is a ship captain who, on one of her voyages, suddenly plunges into a state of confusion as a result of invisible weather conditions along with a concurrent breakdown in the electronic system on-board. We can assume that the ship she is sailing is not equipped with a telescope or other related equipments. Not being able to see through the thick foggy weather worries her as to whether she is sailing through safe waters. When she considers the possibility whether there are any icebergs ahead ( $p$ ), she, due to the factors outlined above, cannot determine with any reasonable degree of certainty or belief whether or not there is one on the route she is sailing. That is, she has no evidence whether it is the case that  $p$  or not  $p$ . She considers both possibilities but lacks evidence to believe either. Faced with the feared eventualities of  $p$ , she just does not take it for granted that not  $p$ . Due to the high cost of error and given the risk asymmetries associated with the eventualities of the two possibilities, Rose just accepts that  $p$  and reasons accordingly. That is, she, for practical reasons, just accepts that there is an iceberg ahead and therefore anchors the ship till visibility conditions improve. It is, however, not the case that she believes that  $p$ . We have already learned in our discussions on propositional acceptance that mere acceptance that  $p$ , just like belief that  $p$ , disposes us to reason and act as if  $p$ . I contend that such conditions normally lead to mere propositional acceptance rather than pragmatic belief. In the case of the Bush administration and in light of the considerations outlined on p. 256, one can argue that though there was no good evidence to believe that  $p$ , it was safer or more prudent to accept than to reject that  $p$ .

## Chapter Five

### 5.1. Epistemic Justification

One of the fundamental aims of the given inquiry is to determine the epistemic status of the given supposed beliefs, demonstrating what their justificatory or rationality status would have been if they were genuine cases of belief. Establishing the justificatory status of a belief requires an insight into the differentia of (epistemic) justification as opposed to other types of justification such as prudential justification. In an attempt to further the argument on the properties required for the conferment of justification on a belief, this chapter examines the essence of justification and investigates its supposed connection with truth. Though justification is conferred on the basis of the truth-conducivity of a given belief, it is not a necessary condition that a belief be true in order to possess such an epistemic desideratum. It is, therefore, appropriate and necessary that the connection between justification and truth is made clear. That is, it is necessary to understand that the rationality of a belief does not supervene on the truth of the belief. Thus, justification does not require incorrigible or indefeasible evidence. It, rather, requires adequate or good evidence. This is the basis on which the rationality of the given beliefs will be judged in chapter nine.

Epistemic justification is one of the underlying fundamentals of epistemology. It is an epistemic property whose existence determines the rationality or justifiedness of a belief. There is no unanimity among epistemologists as to whether justification<sup>1</sup> obtains internalistically, deontologically or externalistically. This section aims to explore the nature of justification, delineating the state and the activity conceptions of justification. Upon being challenged for one of our beliefs or for a proposition we claim to have knowledge about, we tend to adduce the grounds that make us rational in holding the belief or show the truth of the proposition we claim to know. This is what some epistemologists consider to be the essence of epistemology, and it is because of this Pollock argues that justification is the primary bedrock of epistemology:

Epistemology is “the theory of knowledge” and would seem most naturally to have knowledge as its principal focus. But that is not entirely accurate. The theory of knowledge is an attempt to answer the question, “How do you

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<sup>1</sup> The unmodified term *justification* or *justified* refers to *epistemic* justification.

know”, but this is a question about *how* one knows, and not about knowing *per se*. In asking how a person knows something, we are typically asking for his grounds for believing it. We want to know what *justifies* him in holding his belief. Thus epistemology has traditionally focused on epistemic justification more than on knowledge (1986: 7).

Moreover, Chisholm also argues that epistemic justification is the core thesis of epistemology: “The theory of knowledge [epistemology] could be said to have as its subject matter the *justification of belief*” (1977: 5). That is, epistemology is committed to one central issue, epistemic justification, which defines the *raison d’être* behind the theory of knowledge. Epistemology concerns both knowledge *how* and knowledge *that*, and in both cases the presence of epistemic justification is a necessary condition for the attribution of knowledge. To demonstrate my knowledge that the threat under which I resorted to defensive force was existential, I necessarily have to adduce the grounds on which I came to truly believe that the threat was existential. This is to show my knowledge of the threat (knowledge *how*). But even if my knowledge of the threat were not to be challenged, or even if I were not to show such knowledge, I still must have access to the grounds responsible for the truth of my belief that the threat was existential, that is if I were to be credited with knowledge about the threat.

Thus, epistemic justification is the essence of epistemology whether it is primarily concerned with knowledge *how* or knowledge *that*. In legal philosophy, the presence of justifying conditions determines the rightfulness of conduct. That is, guilt or innocence is assigned on the basis of the presence of justifying conditions. But in epistemology, justification plays a different role. The presence of justifying conditions and our being motivated by them render us epistemically rational or deontically responsible in our doxastic cultivations. In other words, the presence of epistemic justification is employed to gauge the epistemic status of our beliefs, establishing their probability or truth-conducivity. Truth-conducivity is what internalists take to be a necessary condition for a ground to count as epistemic justification, whereas the reliability of a belief-forming mechanism is what externalists take to be the necessary condition for the obtaining of epistemic justification, and being blameless in holding a belief is what deontologists take to be the necessary condition for the obtaining of epistemic justification.

Internalists argue that a ground should be truth-conducive or adequate in order to count as epistemic justification. Alston takes truth-conducivity to be not only entailing that a given belief is likely to be true, but also rendering the belief likely to be true or being responsible for the truth of the belief: “in order to count as TC [truth-conducive], they [the grounds] must be so construed that their realization renders or tends to render beliefs that have them probably true” (2005: 50). Thus far, there is no unanimity among epistemologists as to what constitutes epistemic justification. They have different conceptions of what it is for a belief to possess positive epistemic status: justification. The most credible account of justification is the truth-conducivity conception which internalists subscribe to. But both internalists and externalists concur that justification does not entail the truth of the belief it supports, as we will learn later. Alston observes that to be epistemically justified in holding a belief is just to be in an epistemically strong position to know the truth of what is believed. He argues that we may conceive of epistemic justification as “a matter of being in a strong position to get the truth in believing that *p*” (1989: 175).

Of the contemporary epistemologists, Alston provides the most lucid and detailed analysis of what it is for a belief to possess justificatory status. Constituting his formulation of justified belief, he submits that *s*'s belief that *p* is justified if “*S*'s belief that *p* is based on adequate grounds, and *S* lacks overriding reasons to the contrary” (1989: 177). Further, following a critical survey of a variety of different concepts of epistemic justification, Alston singles out the candidate he thinks most apt for epistemic justification: “*S* is [justified] in believing that *p* iff *S*'s believing that *p*, as *S* did, was a good thing from the epistemic point of view<sup>2</sup>, in that *S*'s belief that *p* was based on adequate grounds and *S* lacked sufficient overriding reasons to the contrary” (1985: 77). That is, what emerges from his formulation of justified belief is a triad of necessary conditions: the presence of adequate supporting evidence, the absence of sufficient overriding evidence and the basing relation.

The absence of the basing relation means the absence of epistemic justification, no matter the sheer volume of adequate supporting evidence available at the time of belief. Stressing the indispensability of the basing relation, Lehrer observes: “if a person has evidence adequate to completely justify his belief, he may still fail to be

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<sup>2</sup> Refer to p. 89 (footnote 2) for what *epistemic point of view* implies.

completely justified in believing what he does because his belief is not *based* on that evidence” (in Roth and Galis 1970: 56). I can have impeccable evidence to believe a proposition, but might come to believe it on the basis of things other than the evidence in my possession. One could be in possession of good evidence to disbelieve evolutionism, but might come to disbelieve it on the basis of the sacrilege it constitutes against one’s religious creed rather than the better evidence available at the time. That is why Alston stresses the stipulation “*as s did*” in his formulation of justified belief:

The qualification ‘as S does’ is inserted to make it explicit that in order for S to be [justified] in believing that *p* it need not be the case that any believing of *p* by S would be a good thing epistemically, much less any believing of *p* by anyone. It is rather that there are aspects of *this* believing of *p* by S that make it a good thing epistemically (1985: 70).

The aspects that render a belief epistemically justified are the triad of the necessary conditions we outlined earlier. There are many ways whereby we come to acquire a belief, ways that are epistemically desirable, but not necessarily justification-conferring. The following are just some of the ways through which a belief can be acquired. They are all epistemically desirable but do not necessarily count towards the truth of a given belief proposition:

having a belief formed by a reliable belief-producing mechanism; *knowing* that one’s beliefs are formed by a reliable belief-producing mechanism; being ... rational with respect to one’s beliefs; ... believing on the basis of a reliable indicator; believing on the basis of an *accessible* reliable indicator; believing on the basis of an accessible reliable indicator you *know* or *justifiably believe* is reliable; and many more. The rejectees as well as the lucky winner are all epistemically desirable; each is an epistemically valuable state of affairs (Plantinga 1993: 187).

Samuel Huntington’s belief that religion is the source of the clash of civilisations could be the outcome of a reliable belief-forming process or it could be a belief acquired in the absence of violations of epistemic duties, but the way through which the belief is arrived at could still fail to render the belief epistemically justified, no matter how true the belief might be. However epistemically valuable, but reliable belief-forming processes do not necessarily make it rational from the perspective of an epistemic agent to hold a belief, as noted in chapter eight; similarly, epistemic

dutifulness does not necessarily generate the kind of adequate evidence necessary to warrant belief, as observed in chapter seven. By being a good thing from the epistemic point of view, Alston refers to the triad of conditions explained earlier. Introducing his second stipulation “much less any believing of  $p$  by anyone”, Alston reiterates that a belief is justified only if it meets the given three conditions. If Huntington acquired his belief satisfying the three conditions in question, then his belief can be endowed with justificatory status. That is, it was rational for him to arrive at such belief and it is rational for him to retain his belief providing that the epistemic situations remain the same. But someone else, not Huntington, might come to acquire the same belief on the basis of a personal resentment against a particular race or religion; or they could arrive at such belief solely on the basis of corroborating evidence, disregarding counter-evidence, and stifling doubts. Furthermore, the same belief might result from one's being too subservient or credulous in a way to believe things unreflectively without regard to evidential considerations. Under such circumstances, belief is not justified.

Alston's conception of epistemic justification is what underlies the principal thesis behind weak internalism, and it is such conception which this research advocates. Epistemologists diverge over what confers epistemic justification on a belief. Internalists understand justificatory status as being based on adequate grounds which the believing subject has some potential cognitive access to, externalists understand it as the reliability of the cognitive process which produces the belief, and deontologists understand it as duty fulfilment in a given doxastic situation. But there is broad consensus that justification is an evaluative concept, a term of epistemic appraisal. Plantinga observes that “such terms as ‘justification’ and ‘justified’ are ...terms of epistemic appraisal; to say that a proposition is *justified* for a person is to say that his believing or accepting it has positive epistemic status for him” (1986: 3). Moreover, Chisholm also observes that “The term ‘justify’, in its application to a belief, is used as a term of epistemic appraisal – a term that is used to say something about the reasonableness of belief. The term ‘reasonable’ itself, therefore, may also be used as a term of epistemic appraisal” (1977: 6). Furthermore, the following is what Alston thinks to be the nature of justification:

- (1) It [epistemic justification] applies to beliefs. ... This is the common philosophical concept of belief, in which  $S$ 's believing that  $p$  entails neither

that S knows that *p* nor that S does not know that *p*. It is not restricted to conscious or occurrent beliefs. (2) It is an evaluative concept, in a broad sense in which this is contrasted with 'factual'. To say that S is justified in believing that *p* is to imply that there is something all right, satisfactory, in accord with the way things should be, about the fact that S believes that *p*. It is to accord S's believing a positive evaluative status. (3) It has to do with a specifically *epistemic* dimension of evaluation. Beliefs can be evaluated in different ways. One may be more or less prudent, fortunate, or faithful in holding a certain belief. Epistemic justification is different from all that. Epistemic evaluation is undertaken from what we might call the "epistemic point of view". That point of view is defined by the aim at maximizing truth and minimizing falsity in a large body of beliefs. The qualification "in a large body of beliefs" is needed because otherwise one could best achieve the aim by restricting one's beliefs to those that are obviously true. ... it remains true that our central cognitive aim is to amass a large body of beliefs with a favorable truth-falsity ratio. For a belief to be epistemically justified is for it, somehow, to be awarded high marks relative to that aim. (4) It is a matter of degree. One can be more or less justified in believing that *p*. If, e.g., what justifies one is some evidence one has, one will be more or less justified depending on the amount and strength of the evidence<sup>3</sup> (1985: 58-59).

That is, the broad consensus among epistemologists is that epistemic justification is an evaluative status that pertains to our beliefs, endowing them with a status in the absence of which we are deemed irrational to hold or retain a certain belief. Being justified in holding a belief is just a state of rationality we are in. This is what epistemologists refer to as the state (property) conception of justification where it does not involve a believer to carry out any defense or act of justification in order to possess justificatory status for holding a belief. Alston defines the state conception of justification as a:

state or condition one is in, not anything one does or any upshot thereof. I might *be* justified in believing that there is milk on the table because I see it there, even though I have done nothing to show that there is milk on the table or to show that I am justified in believing there to be (1985: 58).

But sometimes we carry out a justification of our beliefs, warding off criticism against them. This is what is referred to as the activity (process) conception of justification where it involves the believer engaging in the process of justifying, adducing supporting evidence against skepticism, and thereby trying to show justification for the belief in question. That is, the activity conception of justification

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<sup>3</sup> Justification is treated as absolute in this research.

entails, points out Alston, one's "*doing* something to show that *p*, or to show that one's belief was justified, or to exhibit one's justification" (Ibid: 58). Audi argues that justification – whether as process or property – possesses a teleological connection with truth:

I have spoken of a request for justification and an answer to it. Here 'justification' denotes a *process*. We may also ask whether someone *has* justification for a belief; and there the term designates a *property*. There are still the same two faces [property and process], however; for even in the latter case the justifiers succeed only if they show or at least support the truth of the belief ... [Thereby] we can hold that justification, both as process and as property, has a teleological connection with truth: the aim of the process of justification is to show truth (or at least an objective probability of it) (1993: 26-7).

Thus, since justification – whether it obtains as property or as process – aims at showing or supporting the (probable) truth of a belief, justification has a teleological connection with truth. That is, both conceptions of justification entail an aim which is to conduce to the truth of a belief. This, however, shall not imply that justification as a status necessarily entails a process. But, argues Alston, to successfully exhibit justification for a belief or to successfully respond to challenges against the belief's credentials, we "must specify an adequate ground of the belief, a ground that provides a sufficient indication of the truth of the belief" (1989: 225). That is, we shall adduce good evidence if we were to be successful in our endeavour to show the rationality of our doxastic attitudes. Epistemologists diverge over the fundamentality of the state and activity conceptions of justification. Alston rightly argues that the state conception is of a "more fundamental epistemological interest" (1985: 58) because "Most human subjects are quite incapable of carrying out a justification of any perceptual or introspective beliefs" (Ibid: 84). That is, had the practice of justification been a necessary requirement for justificational status, we would have had very few justified beliefs and consequently very little knowledge.

This, however, shall not imply that we do not engage in the practice of justification at all. We often engage in the process of justifying the core beliefs we champion. Political and religious figures often engage in the practice of justifying their beliefs or belief systems, trying to show the rationality of their beliefs and convince others of the virtues of their beliefs. In relation to the supposed beliefs in question, the Bush



administration officials were engaged in the practice of justifying what they professed to be their beliefs about the charges levelled against Iraq. In order to cite some supporting evidence in defense of a belief, we must have access to the evidence. That is, the evidence shall be within our cognitive perspective. That is why the internalist account of justification is indispensable for the activity conception of justification. Internalist access is, therefore, essential to a successful process of justifying a belief. Further, Audi argues that an advantage of internalism is “its capacity to help us answer skepticism by positive refutation, which requires showing, and thereby (normally) becoming justified in believing” (1993: 31).

Though the state conception of justification is of prime importance, Alston argues that the activity conception of justification is fundamental to the concept of being justified in holding a belief: “though the activity of responding to challenges is not the whole story, I do believe that in a way it is fundamental to the concept of *being justified*” (1989: 236). The activity conception of justification is fundamental to the concept of being justified in holding a belief for our ability to successfully engage in the practice of justification ensures our cognitive grasp of what it is that is responsible for the truth of the belief, and our cognitive grasp of what is responsible for the truth of a belief is the essence of internalism which Alston subscribes to and also one of the necessary repositories of epistemic justification from an internalist perspective. But overall, they are both essential to our doxastic outputs. They are both complementary in their accounting for the epistemic status of our beliefs. Audi observes that the state of being justified can be construed as recourse to the activity of justifying a belief: “having the property of justification [justifiedness as a state] equips one to engage in the process of justification” (1993: 31). That is, if I were to be in a state of being justified in holding a particular belief, I would be able to engage in the practice of justification as long as I have some recollection of the credentials responsible for the truth of the belief I am holding. But not all human agents are able to engage in a practice of justification. Unsophisticated or verbally unskilful people might not be able to realize this cognitive potential for reasons outlined by Alston on p. 130 of the thesis. He argues that though the concept of epistemic justification has developed against the background of critical reflection on our beliefs and the practice of justifying them, but it does not follow that for a belief to be epistemically justified it should have been put into such test and emerged successful:

My suggestion is that the background against which the concept of epistemic justification has developed is the practice of critical reflection on our beliefs, the practice of the epistemic assessment of beliefs (with respect to the likelihood of their being true), the challenging of beliefs and responses to such challenges. To respond successfully to such a challenge one must specify an adequate ground of the belief, a ground that provides a sufficient indication of the truth of the belief. It would, of course, be absurd to suggest that in order to be epistemically respectable, laudatory, or acceptable (justified), a belief must have actually been put to such a test and have emerged victorious. In suggesting that the concept has developed against the background of such a practice the idea is rather that what it is for a belief to be justified is that the belief and its ground be such that it is in a position to pass such a test; that the subject has what it takes to respond successfully to such a challenge (1989: 225-226).

## **5.2. Epistemic Justification and Truth**

This section explores the supposed connection between justification and truth. In ordinary language, we sometimes think that our justification for a belief entails the truth of the belief. This is not only, at times, a common conception among ordinary language users, but also a plausible one for some epistemologists. But being justified in holding a belief does not entail that the belief in question is true. A justified belief could be true, but it could also be false. This is recognized by both internalist and externalist epistemologists as observed later. Lehrer and Cohen argue that the appeal that justification and truth are conceptually related and that there is an internal connection between them is “rooted in the conviction that knowledge does not arise when a belief merely happens to be true. Justification must be connected with truth in an appropriate way” (1983: 191). The justification required for knowledge is surely indefeasible. But it does not follow that justification itself entails, at all times, the truth of what it supports.

It is because of this that we have merely justified beliefs as well as knowledge. Not all justified beliefs count as knowledge for the justification that supports them could be defeasible. We have knowledge when the justification we possess for a belief is indefeasible, but merely justified belief if the given justification were to be defeasible but good enough to warrant belief. Furthermore, Cohen observes that the argument that justification is required for a true belief in order for it to constitute knowledge is, in a way, just to connect justification to truth: “The motivation for requiring that a true

belief be justified in order for it to count as an instance of knowledge just is, in some sense, to provide a connection to truth" (1984: 279). I do not believe this to be the rationale behind the argument that a true belief must be justified from the perspective of a potential knower in order for it to count as an instance of knowledge. The real reason for requiring that a true belief be justified in order for it to amount to knowledge is that knowledge does not obtain when a belief happens to be accidentally true from the perspective of a given cognizer.

This is the traditional reasoning behind knowledge which dates back to Plato. That is, if we were to claim knowledge of  $p$ , then we must be in possession of some infallible reason which renders  $p$  true. Lehrer and Cohen provide another explanation for the alleged connection between justification and truth. They argue that this conceptual connection might emanate from the fact that "a person is justified in believing  $P$  only if the person is justified in believing that  $P$  is true. [but] This connection is trivial, because to believe that  $P$  is just to believe that  $P$  is true" (1983: 191). Descartes takes a radical approach to the connection between justification and truth. For him, justification entails the truth of the belief it supports. That is, according to the Cartesian view, "justification logically entails truth. To put it schematically: It is a conceptual truth that, if conditions  $C$  justify belief  $B$  for subject  $S$ , then  $C$  logically entails that  $B$  is true" (in Cohen 1984: 280). Thus, Descartes takes justification to be infallible. But we have already learned that justification and belief are both perspectival and fallible notions (see pp.37 and 39). Cohen further argues that even if:

*C* comprises facts about sensory data, and where  $B$  is a belief about the truth of some empirical proposition, it is always logically possible that the evil demon has arranged for  $C$  to obtain where  $B$  is false. ... [Thus] given any plausible specification of  $C$  for any  $S$ , it will always be logically consistent to suppose that not  $B$  (Ibid: 280).

Further, we sometimes come to acquire a perceptual belief under optimal epistemic conditions without the belief's turning out to be true. The belief is, nevertheless, a justified belief. Under impeccable visual conditions, we have often come to believe some unusual flying object to be an alien spacecraft. Being based on adequate visual evidence, our belief could not have been irrational or unjustified. It, nevertheless, has always been false. The flying object has always turned out to be either a hoax or a top

secret military plane in the shape of an alien spacecraft intended to communicate to possible real alien spacecrafts. It is, therefore, wrong to equate a belief's justifiability with how things are in real. Many of our beliefs are false, nevertheless justified. That is why epistemic justification shall be construed as perspectival and fallible, and this is how most contemporary epistemologists understand justification. They advocate a fallibilist conception of justification which, argues Cohen, is an account that "allows that where *C* makes *B* justified for *S*, it is still possible that *B* is false" (1984: 280). We are, thereby, justified in believing many things that are false or non-existential, providing that our believing them is based on good evidence. Justified beliefs are, therefore, not restricted to true propositions alone. Moreover, Audi rightly argues that the only type of justification that entails truth is the strong axiomatic justification possessed by beliefs of self-evident propositions:

Whatever the connection between justification – whether as process or property – and truth, justification does not entail truth. Granted, there may well be strong axiomatic justification: a kind possessed by beliefs which are based simply on understanding the proposition believed and cannot be unjustified, e.g. beliefs of simple self-evident propositions, say that if some dogs are mammals, some mammals are dogs. Strong axiomatic justification apparently does connect the concepts of justification and truth; for it is a kind of justification whose possession seems to entail truth (1993: 300).

That is, only the incorrigible justification possessed by self-evident beliefs entails truth. But this does not constitute a general account of the connection between justification and truth. A general account of such connection shall not only take into account instances of knowledge or self-evident beliefs, but all possible cases of justified believing. That is why the connection between justification and truth cannot be construed as one of entailment or necessitation of the latter. Cohen provides an explanation for such connection. He argues that this connection could be understood as one of probabilification at a doxastic or subjective level rather than an objective level:

we might consider the possibility that the connection between justification and truth is to be found at the subjective or doxastic level. To put it schematically, one might propose that it is a conceptual truth that if *C* justifies *B* for *S*, then *C* entails that *S* believe that certain conditions obtain which make it probable that *B* is true (1984: 285).

In other words, if I come to believe  $p$  on the basis of  $c$ , then  $c$  entails that  $p$  is probable from my cognitive perspective. Thus, from my subjective perspective,  $c$  entails the probable truth of  $p$ . But this is just the same trivial connection we observed earlier. My believing that  $p$  is just my believing that  $p$  is true. Thus,  $c$  entails the probable truth of  $p$  from my cognitive perspective, and that is why I base my belief that  $p$  on  $c$ . But it does not follow that  $p$  is true from an objective standpoint. Thus, there is no objective truth entailment for the connection between justification and truth. However, there are accounts of epistemic justification that border with the Cartesian view of the connection between justification and truth. Reliabilism leans towards the Cartesian view of such connection due to its argument that a reliable belief-forming process is one that tends to produce true or mostly true beliefs. Thus, according to reliabilism, a belief is justified if the preponderant realisations of the given belief-forming process eventuate in true belief. Hence, on a reliabilist view, our being justified in believing that  $p$  entails, at least in most realisations of the given belief-forming process, that  $p$  is true. The most plausible explanation for the connection between justification and truth is that justification only conduces to the truth of the belief it supports. The argument in favour of a truth entailment would have been plausible only if justification were to require incontrovertible evidence. Moser recognizes that justification is closely related to the cognitive goal of truth, but argues that it only conduces to that goal rather than entailing that things are as they are in real:

epistemic justification is essentially related to the so-called cognitive goal of truth, insofar as an individual belief is epistemically justified only if it is appropriately directed toward the goal of truth. More specifically, on the present conception, one is epistemically justified in believing a proposition only if one has good reason to believe it is true. To accept a proposition in the absence of good reason is to neglect the cognitive goal of truth. Such acceptance ... is epistemically irresponsible. On this conception, one has an epistemic responsibility to believe only those proposition[s] which are likely to be true on one's evidence; and thus one has an epistemic responsibility to believe only those propositions one has good reason to believe are true (1985: 4-5).

Here Moser treats belief as being subject to epistemic responsibilities – a subject we attend to in chapters three and seven. If justification were to entail or necessitate truth, then truth would be a necessary requirement for justificational status. But if the truth of a belief were to be a necessary condition for being justified in holding that

belief, then we would end up having fewer justified beliefs than we would normally have. But most epistemologists do not regard the truth of a belief as a necessary condition for being justified in holding the belief. Alston attributes the reason why justificationist epistemologists take the truth of a belief as not counting in favour of its being justified to “the fact that truth – in contrast to having strong evidence or reasons, being based on an adequate ground ... having direct accessibility to the ground of one’s belief ... is too external to the process of acquiring, retaining, and using beliefs” (2005: 40). That is, it is the truth’s external nature or the lack of easy access to it, as pointed out below, at the time of belief that creates the need for justification. In other words, we have no easy access to truth, and it is for this reason that justification becomes necessary. Bonjour argues that the need for justification arises because truth is often not immediately accessible. He contends that the essential role of justification is that of a means to truth and that the concept of justification would be of little importance were truth somehow immediately and unproblematically accessible:

What makes us cognitive beings at all is our capacity for belief, and the goal of our distinctively cognitive endeavours is *truth*; we want our beliefs to correctly and accurately depict the world. If truth were somehow immediately and unproblematically accessible (as it is, on some accounts, for God) so that one could in all cases opt simply to believe the truth, then the concept of justification would be of little significance and would play no independent role in cognition. But this epistemically ideal situation is quite obviously not the one in which we find ourselves. We have no such immediate and unproblematic access to truth, and it is for this reason that justification comes into the picture. The basic role of justification is that of a *means* to truth, a more directly attainable mediating link between our subjective starting point and our objective goal. We cannot, in most cases at least, bring it about directly that our beliefs are true, but we can presumably bring it about directly (though perhaps only in the long run) that they are epistemically justified (1985: 7-8).

That is, truth is neither a requisite for justification nor is it a prerequisite for belief. If we had immediate or easy access to truth, then most of our belief attitudes would be true. We would, thereby, rarely go wrong in our affairs or beliefs. Consequently, most of our beliefs or conduct would be in need of no justification – an eventuality that diminishes the role of justification in our doxastic and also behavioural life. But, due to the lack of immediate access to truth, we often arrive at our beliefs on the basis of good evidence and act on the basis of what we reasonably believe to be the case rather

than what is actually the case. There is also no consensus among legal philosophers as to whether justification requires truth. In epistemology, due to the lack of immediate or easy access to truth, both internalists and externalists argue in favour of excluding truth as a necessary requirement for epistemic justification. But in legal philosophy, aside from the lack of immediate access to truth, we take into account a fundamental practical eventuality when laying out conditions for justificatory defense: the unlawful harm inflicted upon someone who had no intention to cause harm (mistaken self-defense). Some legal philosophers tie justification to reasonable belief; some tie it to truth. One of the key proponents of the reasonable belief view is Baron.

Baron argues “in favor of tethering justification to reasonable belief rather than to truth (thus allowing that mistaken self-defense should count as justified as long as the mistaken belief is reasonable)” (2005b: 387). Moreover, Stewart also espouses the reasonable belief conception of justification and therefore recognizes reasonably mistaken defensive force as justified. He argues that “what one responds to, and what one is justified in responding to, in a situation of defensive force, is not the attack itself, but something else: the *reasonable appearance* of an attack” (2003: 324). Further, the legal philosophers’ reference to reasonable belief is equivalent to the justified belief which internalist epistemologists subscribe to. Stewart argues that “The use of the word ‘reasonable’ in criminal law is ... normative. It marks out behaviour which, whatever other deficiencies it may have, is not subject to criminal punishment” (Ibid: 329). But he cautions against the entailment this could imply, that is, whatever conduct that is not criminally punishable is reasonable. He rules out such entailment and argues that he does not mean to “suggest that all behaviour that is not criminally punishable is reasonable, rather that all behaviour that is reasonable is not criminally punishable. Thus, a reasonable mistake of fact should always be a good defense to a criminal charge” (Ibid: 329). Further to the use of reasonable belief in legal philosophy, Baron observes:

There is an ambiguity in ‘reasonably believes’ and (especially) ‘reasonable belief’ that needs to be disambiguated. ‘Reasonable belief’ is ambiguous between *a belief for which there are reasonable grounds*, and *a belief that is in fact held on reasonable grounds*. I intend the latter meaning. Although it is not always made clear in law, I take the reasonable belief requirement (e.g., for self-defense) to be a requirement that the agent held the belief in question on reasonable grounds. It would not be good enough that the agent held a

belief for which, as it happens, there are reasonable grounds; she has to have held it *on reasonable grounds* (2005a: 377).

Thus, we – no matter how reasonable an imminent or threatened attack appears to be – cannot be credited with justification if we are not *motivated* in our use of defensive force by the reasonable appearance of the attack. This is similar to the way internalist epistemologists attribute justification to belief. They also argue that a belief cannot be endowed with justificatory status if the belief is not motivated by or if it is not based on the evidence that supports it. But other legal philosophers disagree with the reasonable belief view of justification. They argue that a reasonable belief that justifying conditions obtain is not sufficient to accord justificatory defense. Hurd observes: “It literally makes no sense to maintain that an action is justified if and only if the actor reasonably believes that the action is justified” (1999: 1559). She further argues that “for an actor to *reasonably* believe that an action is justified, his beliefs must approach truth about the matter. There thus must be a truth about the matter separate from his beliefs about it” (Ibid: 1559). Furthermore, Fletcher, the leading truth view advocate, also contends that “Justification is an objective phenomenon. Mere belief cannot generate a justification, however reasonable the belief might be” (1985: 972). But Stewart argues that:

The law cannot ask us to base our conduct on facts that we cannot reasonably be expected to know, particularly where in many situations all the facts will never be known. For these reasons, in any theory of criminal liability that takes attributions of wrong-doing seriously, it is more plausible to treat reasonably mistaken defensive force as a justification (2003: 336).

This chapter has examined the essence of justification and investigated its alleged connection with truth. Justification is an epistemic desideratum that underlies the epistemic assessment of belief. It is an epistemic status that is conferred on the basis of truth-conducivity but not dictated by truth itself. Justificatory status obtains regardless of the truth or falsity of a belief. We have learned that justification is necessarily an epistemic state, but it could also involve the practice of justification. Being justified in holding a belief does not entail the activity of justifying the belief. Justificatory status is, rather, a state of being rational in holding a belief. It could, however, be shown by adducing evidence or engaging in the practice of justification. In fact, we often engage in such a practice when one of our beliefs is challenged or



when we want to convince others of the rationality of a belief. But engagement in such a practice is not a necessary condition of being justified in holding or retaining a belief. Epistemologists diverge over whether the rationality of a belief is an internal or external matter to a believing subject. Internalists take it to be an internal matter, whereas externalists take it to be an external matter. I will explore such possibilities in chapters six and eight.

## Chapter Six

### 6.1. The Internalist Theory of Epistemic Justification

Establishing the rationality of a belief normally takes either a common-sensical or a philosophical form. Investigative journalists pursue the common-sensical form, whereas epistemologists pursue the philosophical form. That is, in ordinary life, investigative journalists exhibit the rationality of a belief though establishing the probity of the evidence behind the belief. Their criterion for the conferment of rationality status on a belief is the adequacy of the evidence behind the belief. Further, from a common-sensical perspective, a belief is justified only if it is based on adequate or good evidence. This is what underlies the internalist theory of justification too. Internalists regard a belief as justified or rational only if it is based on adequate or good evidence that is accessible to the believing subject. In fact, the essence of the internalist theory originates from our common-sensical conviction of justification. The internalist theory just philosophises such a conviction and converts it into a three-fold premise: the adequacy of the supporting evidence, the basing relation, and the accessibility requirement. This triad is what underlies our most fundamental intuitions about the rationality of belief. Though our common-sensical convictions of justification seem to be primarily guided by the adequacy requirement and the basing relation, the accessibility requirement underlies the heart of our common-sensical convictions of the rationality of belief.

That is, our gut feelings or common-sensical convictions do not go along with the idea of accepting a belief as justified in the absence of any cognitive access on the part of the believing subject as to what is responsible for the truth of the belief. That is why I take (weak) internalism to be merely a philosophical or an orderly interpretation of our common-sensical convictions of justification. In an attempt to set out the philosophical equivalent of our common-sensical view of justification, this chapter examines the internalist theory of justification and explores the different ways through which internalism is conceived of in the philosophical literature. It also lays out the objections levelled against the plausibility of internalism. Establishing the epistemic justificatory status of a belief requires an orderly description of the differentiae of such a status as opposed to the differentiae of the statuses conferred by other types of justification such as prudential or moral justification. I contend that the

differentiae of epistemic justificatory status are inspired by and originally emanate from our most fundamental common-sensical convictions of justification: adequate supporting evidence, the basing relation, and the accessibility requirement. These are the *raison d'être*s behind the internalist theory of justification. I intend to show the intuitive plausibility of the common-sensical view of justification which is represented by internalism. It is, therefore, necessary to address the differentiae of the internalist theory of justification and explain what it takes for a belief to be justified from an internalist perspective.

One of the key polarizing issues in epistemology is whether epistemic justification is of internalist or externalist nature. Externalists contend that justification is conferred on the basis of external factors such as the reliability of the cognitive process that generates the belief, thus denying the necessity of any actual or potential cognitive access to what it is that gives rise to the belief. In contrast, internalists argue that justification obtains only if the believer has access to what gives rise to the belief, providing that what gives rise to the belief that *p* makes it likely that *p* is true. That is, the fundamental thesis of internalism is some cognitive access to what motivates – the justifying condition – an agent in coming to believe something. It is this accessibility requirement on justifying conditions that individuates internalism as an account of epistemic justification.

There are three ways to understand what it is for a justifying condition to be accessible to a believer: mentalism, accessibilism and perspectival internalism. Mentalism holds that the justification of a belief resides in factors that are metaphysically internal to the believing subject's psyche in the sense of being the subject's properties or mental states: "*justification supervenes upon introspectively accessible properties of the believer*", observes Brueckner (2009: 13). In other words, mentalists argue that "justification depends only on states, like experience and belief, that are in a recognizable ...sense internal to the believer" (Plantinga 1992: 48). Moreover, Pollock also argues that internalism is the view according to which only a given believer's internal states can bestow justification: "Internalism in epistemology is the view that only internal states of the cognizer can be relevant in determining which of the cognizer's beliefs are justified" (in Greco and Sosa 1999: 394). Thus, mentalism restricts justifying conditions to a cognizer's mental states or properties.

The mentalist account of internalism diminishes what could count as justifying conditions. It cannot account for the epistemic status of beliefs whose justificatory conditions are not a matter of the cognizer's properties or state. For example, it fails to account for the epistemic status of the belief that I base on good authority. I, on testimony, come to believe that Pluto is the biggest dwarf planet. The testimony on which I base my belief is neither a state of mine nor is it a feature of mine, yet I can still be justified in holding such belief so long I have some memory as to what gave rise to my coming to acquire such belief. Mentalism is espoused by its proponents, Conee and Feldman, on the basis that "the special kind of access on which many internalist theories rely can reach only mental items" (in Kornblith 2001: 233). Restricting justifying conditions to a cognizer's internal states alone seems plausible if internalism were to provide for the epistemic status of empirical beliefs only and if the access required for justification were to be direct rather than indirect. Furthermore, they argue that "The justificatory status of a person's doxastic attitudes strongly supervenes on the person's occurrent and dispositional mental states, events, and conditions" (Ibid: 234). In other words, Conee and Feldman contend that one's being epistemically justified in one's doxastic attitudes is "settled by what goes on inside of cognitive beings" (Ibid: 235). They, therefore, argue that "on any account of internalism ... internalism is nothing more than a broad doctrine about the location of the determining factors for epistemic justification" (Ibid: 256). But Bonjour rightly argues that the internal of internalism does not refer to what is metaphysically internal to a cognizer in the sense of being a state or feature of the cognizer:

the basic internalist requirement is sometimes misconstrued as saying that justification must depend only on the believer's *internal* states, that is, on states that are, from a metaphysical standpoint, properties or features of that individual person. ... But in fact this understanding of the internalist requirement is simply mistaken. ... the "internal" of internalism refers to what is internal to the person's first-person cognitive perspective in the sense of being accessible from that perspective, *not* necessarily to what is internal in the sense of being metaphysically a state or feature of that person. Thus the contents of conscious mental states satisfy the internalist requirement, not simply because they are features of internal states of the person, but rather because those contents are arguably accessible in the right way. And if self-evident *a priori* knowable truths are also accessible from the first-person cognitive perspective (as both moderate empiricists and rationalists hold), then those truths are equally acceptable as part of the basis for internalist justification (2002: 223).

That is, the internalist condition on justification does not require that a justifying condition be necessarily internal to a believer in a metaphysical sense. It, rather, requires that a justifying condition be internal to the believer's first-person cognitive perspective in the sense of being accessible to the believer from his or her own first-person cognitive perspective. Thus, being internal implies falling within a believer's first-person cognitive perspective and thereby making it accessible in some way from that perspective, rather than being metaphysically internal to the believer as mentalists hold. Falling within one's first-person cognitive perspective on the world does not, however, necessitate being accessible from that perspective as we will learn in discussions on perspectival internalism. It is misguided to argue that the access or awareness that internalism requires can only be satisfied by a state or feature of the cognizer. We are and can be conscious of many things that are not internal to us in a metaphysical sense or that do not constitute a feature of us or our mental life. Reading through a reliable medical article, I come to learn that nausea is one of the symptoms of pregnancy and thereby acquire a belief in such proposition. Being nauseous is neither a state of mine nor is it a feature of my mental life, yet I can still acquire cognitive access as to what gave rise to my coming to form such belief through reflection or *a priori* reasoning. As long as I have some way of remembering the basis that makes it rational for me to hold such belief, I hold the belief justifiably. There is no good reason for excluding such conditions from meriting internalist access. The location of the justifying condition being internal to me in a metaphysical sense is, therefore, irrelevant to my being justified in holding a belief.

The other account of internalism is accessibilism. The accessibilist account of justification requires that justifying conditions be in some way – directly or indirectly – accessible to the cognizer. Cognitive accessibility is normally construed as “a relation holding between a subject *S* and what *S* can discover on reflection alone”, argue Staley and Cobb (2010: 3). Further, Pryor also defines it as “meaning that one can *know by reflection alone* whether one is in one of the relevant states. By ‘reflection’ I mean *a priori* reasoning, introspective awareness of one’s own mental states” (2001: 103-104). Explaining the routes whereby we acquire cognitive access to what gave rise to a belief we are now holding, Audi observes: “introspection can be simply focusing on what is in consciousness and reflection can be as brief as considering a proposition” (2003: 238).

Further, Audi associates a justifying condition's accessibility to our *being* conscious or our being *able* to become conscious of such condition through introspection or reflection: "To have (internal) access to something is either to have it in consciousness or to be able through ... reflection ... to become aware of it" (Ibid: 238). BonJour argues that "an epistemological theory counts as *internalist* if and only if it requires that all of the elements needed for a belief to satisfy this condition [justification] must be *cognitively accessible* to the person in question" (in Moser 2002: 234). Furthermore, Plantinga also observes that "The basic thrust of internalism in epistemology ... is that the properties that confer warrant upon a belief are properties to which the believer has some sort of special epistemic access" (1993: 6). Thus, argues BonJour, no matter how true a belief is, if I have no accessible reason to think it true, it is not rational for me to hold that belief: "If the subject holding a belief isn't aware, or at least potentially aware, of what that belief has going for it, then, from her perspective, it can only be a matter of dumb luck that that belief is true (if true). But then she has no business holding it; her belief is unjustified" (1985: 41). That is, the accessibilist account of internalism restricts justifying conditions to factors that are, immediately or mediately, accessible to the cognizer's first-person cognitive perspective whether they be mental states or extra-mental conditions. Thus, being accessible to the cognizer's first-person cognitive perspective is what BonJour takes to be the core *raison d'être* behind internalism:

The fundamental claim of internalism ... is that epistemological issues arise and must be dealt with from within the individual person's first-person cognitive perspective, appealing only to things that are accessible to that individual from that standpoint. The basic rationale is that what justifies a person's beliefs must be something that is available or accessible to him or her, that something to which I have no access cannot give *me* a reason for thinking that one of my beliefs is true (though it might conceivably provide such a reason for another person viewing me from the outside) (2002: 222).

In other words, internalist epistemology only responds to first-person epistemological issues. Thus, from an internalist perspective, factors inaccessible to a given epistemic agent do not bear on the justificatory status of the agent's beliefs even if they were to provide sufficient indication of truth to those beliefs. Epistemologists associate the intuitive appeal of an internalist requirement on justifying conditions to both the deontological and the rationalist conceptions of justification. There is a

strong appeal for the contention that “the acceptance of the belief must be epistemically rational, that it must not be epistemically irresponsible”, observes BonJour (1980: 53). Moreover, Langsam also argues that “What underlies internalism is the idea that if our beliefs are to be justified, they must be held in a rational way” (2008: 100). He further argues that “We act in a rational way when we exercise our rationality, that is, when we engage in conscious deliberation, for when we engage in conscious deliberation, we can become conscious of reasons for beliefs” (Ibid: 100).

That is, our consciously deliberating on a belief renders its justifying conditions accessible for us, providing that they are not forgotten. That is why rationalists hold that conscious deliberation is a necessary condition for being rational and thereby justified in holding a belief. Thus, according to the rationalist conception of justification, a belief is “justified if and only if it stands in a certain kind of relation to an actual or possible instance of conscious deliberation that would endorse that belief”, contends Langsam (Ibid: 88). The internalist condition on justification arises from the contention that we need to know whether we are justified in holding a belief if we were to be justified in holding that belief. It is because of this that a “subject needs access to his justification so that he can figure out whether or not he is justified, for what would be the point of having access to one’s justification if one could not know *that* one was justified?”, argues Langsam (Ibid: 82).

Being epistemically rational in holding a belief is not only a matter of possessing some actual or potential access to what it is that makes it rational the belief I hold. Epistemic rationality could also be understood as being epistemically responsible in holding a belief as BonJour pointed out earlier. I subscribe to the contention that to be epistemically justified in a belief, we must be epistemically rational in holding the belief. But the rationalist conception of justification runs into trouble if it is understood as being epistemically responsible in holding a belief or if it is understood as implying that all beliefs are consciously formed or formed as a result of conscious deliberation. Though it sounds appealing to accept that being epistemically rational is just being epistemically responsible in holding a belief, given the untenability of such view vis-à-vis beliefs, I shall take epistemic rationality as basing a belief on good evidence along with some epistemic access to the evidence on which I acquire the belief. Further to the rationale behind internalism, BonJour argues that “the central

rationale for internalism ... arises when I ask simply whether or not I have good reasons for thinking that my various beliefs are true" (in Moser 2002: 237).

He further argues that internalism requires some cognitive access to justifying conditions for "the internalist approach pertains to ... the situation where I ask what reasons *I* have for thinking that *my own* beliefs, rather than someone else's, are true" (in Moser 2002: 234). That is, the rationale behind the internalist requirement on justification arises primarily from an intuitive unease to count a belief as justified in the absence of some first-person epistemic access to the justifying condition. Examining the irreducible relevance of the epistemic accessibility of justifying premises, Alston observes that whenever one lacks any basis, ground, or sign that can support a given belief or show its truth "we feel uneasy in taking S's belief to be *justified*. Thus it looks as if there is a basic, irreducible, requirement of *epistemic accessibility of ground for the belief* that attaches to our concept of epistemic justification" (1989: 225). Furthermore, there seems to be something amiss to consider a belief rational in the absence of any inkling as to what it is that makes the belief rational.

The other conception which critics of internalism take to be what fundamentally motivates internalism is the deontological conception of justification. Plantinga argues that "internalism flows from deontology and is unmotivated without it, and justification is at bottom and originally a deontological notion" (1993: 29). The reasoning behind associating internalism with epistemic deontology is the deontologists' contention that we have an epistemic duty to guide our doxastic cultivations by good evidence. It is a conceptual fact that we can guide our doxastic attitudes by evidence if we have access to such evidence. Similarly, we can guide our conduct according to our duties if we know what our duties are. We can, therefore, be rightfully blamed for failing to fulfil an obligation we know to be our duty, providing that there is no excuse or justification for such failure. That is, the argument goes like this: if an agent is "not in a position to know what his duties are or whether or not he is violating them, then he cannot be held *responsible* for violating (or not violating) them, and therefore he cannot be blamed for violating them (or praised for not violating them)", points out Langsam (2008: 83). Further, the following is what Goldman argues to be the origin of the internalist constraint on justification:



What motivates or underlies this rationale for internalism? Historically, one central aim of epistemology is to guide or direct our intellectual conduct ... The guidance and deontological conceptions of justification are intimately related, because the deontological conception, at least when paired with the guidance conception, considers it a person's epistemic duty to guide his doxastic attitudes by his evidence, or by whatever factors determine the justificational status of a proposition at a given time. ... There is an intimate connection, then, between the GD [guidance-deontological]<sup>1</sup> conception of justification and the requirement that justifiers must be accessible to or knowable by the agent at the time of belief. If you cannot accurately ascertain your epistemic duty at a given time, how can you be expected to execute that duty, and how can you reasonably be held responsible for executing that duty? (in Kornblith 2001: 208-209).

That is, critics of internalism rightly assume, as deontological justification itself implies, that in order to be held responsible for dereliction of duty or in order to be expected to fulfil one's duties, one must know what one's duties are. But Langsam argues that "it is not at all obvious that in order to be held responsible for violating one's duties, one needs *this* kind of access to the relevant facts" (2008: 83). I disagree. I cannot be rightfully blamed for violating a norm whose obedience I do not know to be my duty. I have an excuse in violating such norm. For example, Nikki leads a secluded life and is ignorant of the customs, traditions and legal duties beyond her borders. She lives in an area where certain norms are public practice and are, therefore, not regarded as reprehensible conduct. Nikki once decides to break her secluded lifestyle and for that reason moves to a new living environment where exercising those norms is considered a violation of one's legal duties and a contravention of one's responsibility as a civilized being. Ignorant of such customary differences, Nikki is once seen violating one of the public orders she takes to be normal practice. In the absence of any knowledge that what she practises is a violation of a public order or a customary norm, Nikki shall be entitled for an excuse to her conduct.

She violates the norm inculpably for she neither knows her relevant duties nor does she know whether what she does is a violation of her duty. Langsam recognizes that "certain kinds of ignorance can provide the violator with a legitimate excuse" (Ibid: 83). But he argues that "ignorance is not an excuse for violating one's *legal*

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<sup>1</sup> Explaining what GD denotes, Goldman argues: "The GD conception implies that justifiers must be readily knowable" (in Kornblith 2001: 222).

obligations, for a person is *expected* to know what his legal obligations are, and is thus held responsible for violating them even if he fails to know them” (Ibid: 83-4). But, as we noticed in chapter five, even in legal matters we are entitled, according to the reasonable belief view of justification, for justification as long as what we do is something we reasonably believe to be the right thing to do. In the case at hand, Nikki reasonably believes that what she does is normal practice. She would have been rightfully reproached and held culpable for what she did if she knew her relevant duties or if she knew what she was doing was a violation of public order. However, what Nikki does is still wrongful, but excusable and does not therefore merit blame. She is inculpable in her conduct. We have already observed on pp. 32 and 147 that blame and responsibility can be *rightfully* attributed to one’s conduct only when one *knows* what one’s relevant duties are or when one *knowingly* violates one’s duties without any legitimate excuse or justification.

It is because of the wrongdoer’s necessary relevant *knowledge* that conditions the attribution of blame and responsibility that he along with Plantinga rightly argue that epistemic deontology implies internalism. We have already learned that epistemic deontology implies that epistemic duties guide our intellectual conduct and that deontological justification presupposes that we are able to determine what and when to believe. But an epistemic duty cannot guide my doxastic cultivations if I have no knowledge of such duty. I should *know* what my duties are if I were to proceed accordingly or if I were to be held responsible for dereliction of such duties. It is because of the necessity of such *knowledge*, that I share the position that deontological justification implies an internalist constraint on epistemic justification. Being deontologically justified in holding a belief implies having fulfilled relevant epistemic duties in arriving at such belief. The principal epistemic duty is to guide our beliefs by evidence. We can guide our beliefs by evidence only if we have access to such evidence. Deontological justification implies internalism. However, that being said, I take the internalist constraint on justification to be primarily motivated by a rationalist conception of justification – that we are epistemically justified in holding a belief only if we are epistemically rational in holding such belief.

## 6.2. Perspectival Internalism

Thus far, we have touched on mentalism and accessibilism as conceptions of the internalist constraint on justification. The accessibilist account of justification is sometimes referred to as access internalism. We will now explore a different conception, perspectival internalism, which Alston takes to be a way of understanding what it is for a justifying condition to be internal to a cognizer. We have already learned that the awareness requirement on justifying conditions is understood as either direct (immediate or non-conceptual<sup>2</sup>) or indirect (potential, mediate or conceptual) through reflection. If the internalist theory were to provide for the epistemic status of all beliefs – with the exception of beliefs whose justifying grounds are forgotten – it shall not constrain justifying grounds to conditions that are internal to one's mind in a metaphysical sense such as one's states or features. It shall also recognize extra-mental factors that are beyond one's psyche or are beyond one's features or states. Further, in order not to risk impoverishing or diminishing the number of justified beliefs one would otherwise possess, internalism shall speak of the accessibility requirement as potential rather than actual. We have already learned that the tenable account of internalism, accessibilism, holds that what makes for the justification of a belief is internal to a given agent's cognitive perspective and that only factors accessible to the agent bear on the justification of a belief. Alston points out two ways of understanding what it is for a justifying factor to be internal to an agent:

First there is the idea that in order to confer justification something must be within the subject's "perspective" or "viewpoint" on the world, in the sense of being something that the subject knows, believes, or justifiably believes. It must be something that falls within the subject's ken, something of which the subject has taken note. Second, there is the idea that in order to confer

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<sup>2</sup> Moser defines non-conceptual awareness as "awareness that does not essentially involve the application or the consideration of a concept" (1989: 80). Moreover, Bergmann also defines non-conceptual awareness as:

awareness that doesn't involve the application of any concepts to the object of awareness. Cows and dogs presumably experience pain of some sort. And presumably these animals are *aware* of such experiences. Yet although they are aware of these experiences, it seems likely that they do not apply any concepts to them. Humans too can be nonconceptually aware of experiences they undergo. The difference is that we are also able to be *conceptually* aware of those experiences (by applying concepts\* to them) whereas dogs and cows presumably aren't able to be conceptually aware of their experiences (2006: 19).

\* In the conceptual account of awareness, Bergmann refers to applying concepts to a given object of awareness as "conceiving of the object of awareness in a certain way" (Ibid: 19).

justification, something must be accessible to the subject in some special way, for example, directly accessible (1989: 186).

That is, Alston puts forward two construals as to how to understand the internalist constraint on epistemic justification. First, the perspectival internalism account (PI) according to which what confers justification on a belief falls within a cognizer's ken such as, paradigmatically, the knowledge, beliefs, or justified beliefs that fall within the cognizer's perspective on the world – something of which the believer is or can become cognizant of. Second, the access internalism account (AI) whose underlying thesis is some sort of access to the justifying condition, preferably direct access. Formulating his perspectival internalism account, Alston observes that PI argues that “Only what is within the subject's ‘perspective’ can determine the justification of a belief” (1989: 188). We noticed earlier that Alston restricts the scope of an agent's perspective on the world to, typically, one's knowledge, beliefs or justified beliefs about the world. Specifying an agent's perspective on the world, Alston chooses justified beliefs over beliefs for he holds that an unjustified belief cannot transfer to a given belief a justification it does not itself possess: “it seems that beliefs cannot acquire justification by being brought into relation with unjustified beliefs. One belief cannot ‘transfer’ to another belief a justification it does not possess” (Ibid: 193). In addition to that, he chooses justified belief over knowledge (justified true belief) as well and thus requires that the supporting belief to a given belief be justified rather than true as he considers requiring a supporting belief to be true an overkill: “To require that my supporting beliefs be *true* might be appropriate it [if] we were laying down requirements for knowledge, but it is clearly too strong a requirement for justification” (Ibid: 190).

Specifying an agent's perspective on the world as justified beliefs, Alston constitutes a more specific formulation: “The only thing that can justify S's belief that *p* is some other justified beliefs of S” (Ibid: 191). Furthermore, Schmitt also argues that perspectival internalism is “the view that justified belief is belief sanctioned by the subject's epistemic perspective” (1992: 116). He, thus, observes that “*S* is justified in believing *p* just in case *S* is justified in believing that the belief *p* is reliable [justified]” (Ibid: 116). That is, one's perspectival context is tethered to justified belief as perspectival internalism's optimal determinant of the epistemic status of belief.

With respect to how a justifier should be related to a given belief in order to function as a justification for the belief, Alston specifies adequate support for the truth of the belief as a requirement for the candidate justifier: "the way in which any justifier has to be related to a belief in order to do its job is to provide 'adequate support' or 'adequate evidence'; it must be an 'adequate reason'" (1989: 196). Moreover, he defines the adequacy of justifying grounds in terms of truth-conducivity: "I take a ground, G, of belief B to be adequate if and only if it is sufficiently indicative of the truth of B" (Ibid: 240-241). Thus, from a perspectival internalism's perspective, a justifying ground should be truth-conducive of the belief in question and also be in the form of a justified belief falling within a given epistemic agent's perspective on the world. That is, the agent should justifiably believe the justifying ground.

If we are to determine whether or not a given belief enjoys justificational status, we need to determine whether the evidence on which one acquires the belief is adequate and whether one justifiably believes the evidence. Though we often tend to believe the evidence on the basis of which we come to acquire a belief, requiring that a justifying condition itself be a justified belief creates otherwise avoidable complications to the epistemic assessment of belief. Perspectival internalism introduces a dispensable requirement without which epistemic justification would still obtain as long as other internalist requirements are met. The underlying thesis of perspectival internalism is to navigate how a justifying factor can be accessible to a potential believer. It argues that if a justifying factor is something one has come across in the past, then it is within one's perspective on the world and thus one can become conscious of it in some way either through reflection or through recollection. The argument perspectival internalism advances is similar to memory retrieval.

If one has encountered something in the past, it would have been preserved in one's memory. One can, thereby, become aware of it through recollection so long as it is not irretrievably lost or forgotten. Subjecting a justifying condition to a justified belief is just another way of endorsing the second-order internalist requirement on justifying conditions. Internalists diverge over whether the internalist constraint shall apply only on justifying conditions or on their adequacy as well. The internalist account of justification potentially implies two orders of access to justifying conditions with the first-order being necessary and the second immaterial. The first-order internalism

argues that “justified belief requires access to *what justifies* the belief” whereas the second-order internalism holds that justified beliefs “require introspective access to *how what justifies does so*”, observes Audi (1989: 311). That is, the second-order internalism holds that for a belief to count as justified, the cognizer should not only have access to the justifying condition, but also to its adequacy. I join Alston in his contention that the second-order internalist constraint on justifying conditions is immaterial and unattractive for it leads to an infinite regress:

it would seem that internalist conditions concerning adequacy are neither necessary nor sufficient for justification. And so the view here being defended is resolutely and uncompromisingly externalist, so far as adequacy of grounds is concerned. In order for my belief that *p*, which is based on ground *G*, to be justified, it is quite sufficient, as well as necessary, that *G* be sufficiently indicative of the truth of *p*. It is in no way required that I know anything, or be justified in believing anything, about this relationship. No doubt, we sometimes do have justified beliefs about the adequacy of our grounds, and that is certainly a good thing. But that is icing on the cake. ... it is both necessary and sufficient that the world be such that the ground be “sufficiently indicative of the truth” of the belief, both necessary and sufficient that this actually be the case, and neither necessary nor sufficient that the subject have any cognitive grasp of this fact. Thus my position has definite affinities with reliabilism ... But it differs from a pure reliabilism by holding that the justification of a belief requires that the belief be based on a “ground” that satisfies an AI constraint ... (1989: 243-244).

Thus, having justified belief or knowledge about the adequacy of a justifying condition is epistemically valuable, but unnecessary for a belief to count as justified. The second construal of the internalist constraint on justification is characterised as access internalism (AI) according to which “possible justifiers are restricted to items to which we have a specially favored access. This special access is variously specified as direct, incorrigible and obtainable just by reflecting”, points out Alston (Ibid: 211). That is, Alston speaks of the accessibility requirement as direct. But, as we have already learned, we can have direct access to a condition or state if we can be directly aware of its obtaining without conceiving of it or without having to reflect on it to gain such awareness or access. However, his associating the obtaining of the necessary access to the justifying condition with reflection implies that he has indirect access in mind.

I endorse a moderate version of internalism that regards the first-order internalist requirement as necessary whereas the second-order one as immaterial, and recognizes *potential* access to justifying conditions. Thus, we can determine whether one of our beliefs is justified if we have direct access to the justifying condition in the way of the condition's being the content of our consciousness or a conscious state of ours or if we, upon reflection on the belief proposition, come to realise what gave rise to the belief in question. So long our access to the justifying condition obtains in one of the aforementioned ways with the justifying condition's adequately counting towards the truth of a given belief, the belief in question enjoys positive epistemic status. But Ginet pursues a direct recognizability view of justifying conditions: "there can be no set of facts giving S justification for being confident that p that has an essential part that is n[ot] directly recognizable to S" (1975: 36). But associating the direct recognizability of justifying conditions with reflection shows his lack of confidence in the viability of the direct accessibility thesis. The following is how he demonstrates this:

Every one of every set of facts about S's position that minimally suffices to make S, at a given time, justified in being confident that p must be *directly recognizable* to S at that time. By 'directly recognizable' I mean this: if a certain fact obtains, then it is directly recognizable to S at a given time if and only if, provided that S at that time has the concept of that sort of fact, S needs at that time only to reflect clear-headedly on the question of whether or not that fact obtains in order to know that it does (Ibid: 34).

But, as observed earlier, my finding out through reflection that a fact obtains just demonstrates that I have indirect access over whether or not that fact obtains. Direct accessibility is too high a requirement to render the majority of our beliefs justified. In most non-axiomatic situations, we do not have direct access to what is responsible for our being justified in our beliefs. Direct accessibility is achievable in the case of most occurrent or self-evident beliefs whose nature is axiomatic enough that we can know directly what gives rise to our believing them or what is responsible for our being justified in holding them. To require direct accessibility for justification will mean that many non-occurrent or non-self-evident beliefs will count as unjustified. The logic behind associating potential access to justifying conditions with reflection is that whenever we reflect on a belief, we entertain its truth values and thereby come to realise what makes the belief truth-conducive or what gave rise to our coming to

acquire such belief; that is if the evidence on which we acquired the belief is preserved in our memory.

Thus, according to access internalism, a justified belief is “one that *could* survive a critical reflection. But then the justifier must be accessible to the subject. Otherwise the subject would be in no position to cite it as what provides a sufficient indication that the belief is true”, points out Alston (1989: 226). That is, for a belief to have survived a critical reflection is for the believer to have had *some access* to what had given rise to the belief, or some access to the belief’s credentials or to what is responsible for the belief’s being true – a situation that satisfies the access internalism requirement on justification. Given the fact that PI and AI are both different conceptions of the internalist constraint on justification, it may seem tempting at face value to lump them together. But Alston argues that PI cannot be a special case of AI for one’s entire perspective is not, normally, directly accessible. That is, he observes that the totality of one’s justified beliefs is too vast to be readily retrievable and thus directly accessible. He argues that PI can be a special case of AI,

Only if one’s own perspective is directly accessible, and this does not seem to be the case. The sum total of my justified beliefs cannot be depended on to spread themselves before my eyes on demand, not even that segment thereof that is relevant to a particular belief under consideration. I may know something that provides crucial evidence for *p* and yet fail to realize this even on careful reflection. ... It may be that the sheer volume of what I know about, for example, ancient Greek philosophy is too great for my powers of ready retrieval; or some of this material may be so deeply buried as to require special trains of association to dislodge it. We are all familiar with cases in which something we knew all along failed to put in an appearance when it was needed to advance a particular inquiry (Ibid: 213).

That is, though we might have access to some stored justified beliefs relevant to a belief in question, this is not sufficient to consider perspectival internalism a special case of access internalism. For PI to be a case of AI is for our entire cognitive perspective on the world to be accessible to us. But, as noticed earlier, we might have encountered something in the past, and by virtue of our observing it, it becomes part of our perspective on the world, but we might still not be able to retrieve it or access it even on reflection. In addition, in answer to whether access internalism is a special case of perspectival internalism, Alston points out: “Only if nothing other than my



knowledge<sup>3</sup> and justified beliefs is directly accessible to me. But that is clearly not the case. My feelings and other conscious experiences are directly accessible if anything is" (Ibid: 214). In other words, we have access to many of our feelings, yet the fact that I have access to some feeling does not imply that AI is a case of PI for the feeling I have access to might not necessarily count as a justified belief in order to qualify as my perspective on the world. One's perspective on the world here is limited to one's justified beliefs on the world. That is why not everything that is accessible to us falls within our perspective on the world to render AI a case of PI.

### 6.3. Objections to Internalism

Though the internalist theory of justification has the most of intuitive support, it too has its own drawbacks. It leads to infinite regress if the adequacy of justifying conditions is subjected to an internalist requirement. In addition, the three most common objections levelled against internalism are its alleged inability to account for the justification of *stored* beliefs, beliefs whose original *leading* evidence has been *lost* or *forgotten*, and also its inability to respond to the epistemic condition of *unsophisticated* agents. We have already noticed that there are two trends among internalists regarding the internalist constraint on justification. One argues in favour of direct accessibility in the sense of the justifying condition's being a conscious state of the believer. The other argues in favour of indirect accessibility in the sense of the believer's being able to become aware of the justifying condition in question. First, the drawback of stored beliefs: this is a difficulty that faces internalism only if the internalist constraint on justification is required to be *direct* access. But if the internalist requirement is taken to be potential accessibility, then internalism escapes this criticism. Even if the justifying condition is not the content of our consciousness at the moment, we can reflect on the belief and gain cognitive awareness as to what gave rise to our coming to believe as we do. The internalists' direct awareness requirement on justifying conditions is fatal as far as stored beliefs are concerned and therefore untenable in the case of the majority of our beliefs.

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<sup>3</sup> We have already noticed that of the three candidates (knowledge, belief, and justified belief) mentioned for the specification of one's perspective on the world, Alston singles out *justified belief*. He, in this quote, includes knowledge as well because knowledge necessarily entails justified belief given the definition of knowledge as *justified true belief*.

The majority of our beliefs are stored beliefs and thereby non-occurrent as argued by Goldman: "At any given time, the vast majority of one's beliefs are stored in memory rather than occurrent or active. Beliefs about personal data ... about world history, about geography ... are almost all stored rather than occurrent at a given moment" (in Kornblith 2001: 212-3). Moreover, Conee and Feldman also recognize that the problem facing the direct awareness requirement arises from the fact that almost nothing we know is consciously entertained: "The problem is this. At any given moment almost nothing of what we know is consciously considered" (in Kornblith 2001: 243). Thus, if the cognitive awareness necessary for justification were required to be direct, then we would have very few justified beliefs and even those very few justified beliefs would lose their justificatory status the moment we stop entertaining them consciously. Consequently, our doxastic life would be tremendously diminished as observed by the internalist's leading critic Goldman: "Strong internalism<sup>4</sup> threatens a drastic diminution in the stock of beliefs ordinarily deemed justified, and hence in the stock of knowledge, assuming that justification is necessary for knowledge" (in Kornblith 2001: 213). Internalism, therefore, cannot escape the objection of stored beliefs unless it relaxes its awareness constraint on justification to incorporate the indirectly accessible as pointed out by Goldman:

The obvious solution to the problem of stored beliefs is to ... allow justifiers to be merely indirectly knowable. ... simply allow knowledge of justifiers to include memory retrieval. Stored evidence ... can qualify as justifiers because the agent can know that they obtain by the compound route of first retrieving them from memory and then introspecting their conscious contents (Ibid: 213-214).

Thus, most of our beliefs are stored in our memory. We come to believe something, and then the belief becomes part of our stored memory. There is no good epistemic reason to deprive non-occurrent beliefs from epistemic justification. No good rational explanation can account for the reasoning that only occurrent beliefs enjoy justificatory status or that only what is in our current consciousness can provide us with what it takes to be epistemically justified in holding a belief. Only a very tiny minority of our beliefs can satisfy the strong internalist requirement. Internalism would lose its intuitive appeal if it were to require that justifying conditions be the

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<sup>4</sup> Strong internalism is the view that requires direct awareness of justifying conditions.

content of current consciousness. But the internalism's leading proponents, Conee and Feldman, ward off the criticism of stored beliefs by proposing a dispositional and an occurrent sense of justification, arguing that such stored beliefs can be justified dispositionally:

there are occurrent and dispositional senses of "justified", just as there are occurrent and dispositional senses of "belief". In the most fundamental sense of "justified" a belief can be justified for a person only by the person's current evidence, and one's current evidence is all conscious. In this sense, non-occurrent beliefs are typically not justified. However, in the same way that there are stored beliefs, one can have "stored justifications" for these beliefs. That is, one can have in memory reasons that justify the belief. Beliefs like this are dispositionally justified. Thus, although stored beliefs are seldom justified in the most fundamental sense, they are often dispositionally justified (in Kornblith 2001: 244).

But the proposal to distinguish between an occurrent and a dispositional sense of justification to account for the justification of stored beliefs is just one way of recognizing the indispensability of potential awareness. To require direct access for justifying conditions is, as observed earlier, to risk doxastic impoverishment. The dispositional view of justification resolves the problem of stored beliefs so long the stored evidence is not irretrievably lost or forgotten – a problem that we now attend to. The second drawback of internalism is that of *forgotten* evidence: this is a problem that faces any account of internalism regardless of whether the internalist constraint on justification is required to be direct or indirect awareness. Though such criticism is not as severe as the problem of *stored* beliefs as we do not often irretrievably forget evidence for a great number of our beliefs, it presents internalism with a puzzling situation where some sort of cognitive access needs to be attainable in order for justificatory status to obtain. Goldman argues that we have many justified beliefs whose evidence, on the basis of which we came to believe, we have forgotten. He puts forward an example where Sally justifiably acquires a belief about the health benefits of broccoli but does not recall the original evidence on the basis of which she came to acquire such belief while still retaining the belief:

Many justified beliefs are ones for which an agent once had adequate evidence that she subsequently forgot. At the time of epistemic appraisal, she no longer possesses adequate evidence that is retrievable from memory. Last year, Sally read a story about the health benefits of broccoli in the "Science" section of

the *New York Times*. She then justifiably formed a belief in broccoli's beneficial effects. She still retains this belief but no longer recalls her original evidential source (and has never encountered either corroborating or undermining sources). Nonetheless, her broccoli belief is still justified, and, if true, qualifies as a case of knowledge. Presumably, this is because her past acquisition of the belief was epistemically proper (in Kornblith 2001: 214-215).

In the absence of any cognitive access as to what makes it rational for Sally to hold such belief, internalists, no matter how true it is, would deny the belief positive epistemic status. But Goldman argues that Sally's belief is justified as long as it was acquired in an epistemically proper or reliable manner, and that her cognitive access to the original evidence is not necessary to the question of whether or not the belief enjoys positive epistemic status. In a fundamental sense of internalism, Sally's belief is not justified because she neither has direct cognitive awareness of the evidence that gave rise to her coming to acquire such belief, nor does she recall it. But Conee and Feldman provide a roundabout answer to the justification of Sally's belief, arguing that her justification consists of a triad of the conscious qualities of her recollection, her associated feeling of confidence and her background belief in the reliability and accuracy of what she remembers:

Our internalist answer to this question is that Sally's justification consists in conscious qualities of the recollection, such as its vivacity and her associated feeling of confidence. ... We note that not all memory beliefs are justified according to this theory. Some memory beliefs are accompanied by a sense of uncertainty and a lack of confidence. Other memory beliefs are accompanied by a recognition of competing evidence. This competing evidence can render vivacious memory beliefs unjustified. ... If Sally is a normal contemporary adult, she is likely to have quite of a bit of readily retrievable evidence supporting her belief about broccoli. The healthfulness of vegetables is widely reported and widely discussed. ... Finally, she, like most people, probably has supporting evidence consisting in stored beliefs about the general reliability and accuracy of memory. She knows that she is generally right about this sort of thing. So Sally would have justification for her broccoli belief, though it is not her original evidence. If Sally lacks any supporting background information and also lacks any reason to trust her memory, then we doubt that her belief about the broccoli really is justified (in Kornblith 2001: 246).

But the conscious qualities of recollection are not the sort of things that constitute memorial evidence to confer justification. The only thing that has that force is the substance or outcome of recollection. The most plausible internalist answer for the

justification of Sally's belief about the health benefits of broccoli is her confidence or background belief in the reliability and accuracy of her memory and thereby in what she remembers to be true. Goldman recognizes that Sally has some such evidence for the belief, but argues that such evidence is not sufficient for justification:

It might be replied that Sally does currently possess evidence in support of her broccoli belief. One of her background beliefs, we may suppose, is that most of what she remembers was learned in an epistemically proper manner. So does she not, after all, now have grounds for the target belief? Admittedly, she has *some* evidence, but is this evidence sufficient for justification? Surely not (in Kornblith 2001: 215).

Given the fact that the internalists' necessary requirement for justification is direct or indirect awareness of the justifying condition that gives rise to a belief, Sally's belief is not justified from a strictly internalist standpoint as Sally has neither direct nor potential awareness of the original evidence that led her to acquire such belief. But such cases of *forgotten* evidence are not preponderant in our doxastic life and are not representative of most normal people who possess a cognitive capacity to recollect at least some original supporting evidence that gave rise to a belief. The problem of forgotten evidence is, therefore, not fundamentally sufficient to rule out or undermine internalism as an account of justification. That is, although cases of forgotten evidence obtain, we, often in most cases, have some sort of cognitive access to what it is that makes our beliefs true as Bonjour argues that our fundamental commonsense conviction is that we normally have reasons within our ken for thinking that our beliefs are true:

Our fundamental commonsense conviction ... [is] the conviction that in general we actually do have *good reasons* within our cognitive grasp for thinking that our various beliefs about the world are true .... Indeed that anyone who denies such things is flying in the face of reason and good sense (2003: 39-40).

The third charge levelled against internalism is its alleged inability to account for the justification of people who are not or are less cognitively sophisticated or do not have the necessary intellectual capability to exhibit what it is that justifies their beliefs. This is a criticism that can best speak to the *activity* conception of justification. The logic of such criticism against internalism makes it sound like

internalism is solely concerned with being able to show one's justification for a belief or successfully defend a belief against criticism – a phenomenon for which a reasonable degree of sophistication and some basic communication skills are required. It might appear, at face value, that being aware or being able to become aware of one's evidence for a belief entails one's being able to exhibit such evidence. But sometimes one is or can become aware of one's evidence for a belief, but might not necessarily be able to adduce the evidence in response to challenges to the legitimacy or credentials of the belief due to being unsophisticated or not being sufficiently sophisticated to possess the necessary verbal skills to present such evidence in response to criticism as pointed out by Alston on p. 130 of the thesis.

This chapter has analysed the essence of the internalist theory of justification and assessed the weight of the objections raised against the intuitive superiority of internalism. Strong internalism is plagued with the problem of stored beliefs by virtue of requiring direct access to justifying conditions. It is this direct accessibility requirement that undermines the intuitive plausibility of the internalist theory. That is, internalism cannot account for the justification of stored beliefs if direct access is required for justifying conditions. Furthermore, strong internalism also leads to an infinite regress by subjecting the adequacy of justifying conditions to an access requirement. Through its tendency to result in an infinite regress, strong internalism generates a profound scepticism as to whether any of our beliefs can ever be justified. But the objection that internalism cannot account for the justification of the beliefs of unsophisticated subjects does not undermine the intuitive plausibility of internalism for the internalist theory is not committed to the practice of justification. I contend that weak internalism is the theory that is most consistent with our intuitions of what justifiability status amounts to. Weak internalism requires indirect access for justifying conditions. That is, from the perspective of weak internalism, a belief is justified as long it is based on good evidence with some potential cognitive accessibility on the part of the believing subject. The only problem it faces is that of lost or forgotten evidence which is not a common phenomenon. In addition, the problem of lost or forgotten evidence can be resolved indirectly through appeal to the believing subject's confidence in the reliability of his memory.

## Chapter Seven

### The Deontological Theory of Epistemic Justification

Epistemologists disagree over the source of the motivation behind internalism's access requirement on justification. Non-deontological internalists argue that the accessibility requirement is motivated and driven by our intuitions of what it is to be justified in holding a belief. But externalists and critics of internalism argue that the internalism's accessibility requirement is motivated by epistemic deontology. The reason behind lumping internalism and deontology together is the conviction that underlies epistemic deontology – the conviction that we have an epistemic duty to direct or guide our doxastic cultivations by good evidence. That is, it is the conviction that we have an epistemic responsibility to conduct our intellectual life in accordance with good evidence. It is this conviction that apparently connects the internalist constraint on justification and deontology. I can conduct my intellectual life in accordance with good evidence only if I have access to such evidence. I can be rightly expected to abide by an epistemic duty, or I can be rightly blamed for violations of such a duty only if I have knowledge of the duty. Though I recognize that subjecting beliefs to epistemic duties provides us with a possible explanation as to the origin of the internalists' accessibility requirement, I deny the validity of such an explanation. Deontologists argue that it is epistemically irresponsible to believe that  $p$  in the absence of good evidence that  $p$ . Such beliefs, they argue, are epistemically blameworthy. Internalists argue that it is irrational to believe that  $p$  in the absence of any inkling as to what is responsible for the truth of  $p$ .

Epistemic deontology implies doxastic voluntarism, which is profoundly at odds with our common-sensical convictions of belief. Internalism, by contrast, is profoundly motivated by our intuitions. This chapter explores epistemic deontology in an attempt to show the untenability of deontology as a possible source of motivation behind internalism. Epistemic deontology fails to account for the motivation behind internalism for its *raison d'être* conflicts with the intuitions that motivate internalism. From an intuitive perspective, beliefs are not willable. But from a deontological perspective, beliefs are willable. I aim to examine the essence of epistemic deontology in an attempt to expose the counter-intuitive nature of its premise which is considered by some epistemologists to be behind a theory, internalism, motivated by our very

intuitions. It is just counter-intuitive for me to accept a belief of mine to be justified in the absence of any knowledge on my part as to what is responsible for the truth of my belief that *p*. Our gut feelings do not go along with the idea of accepting a belief as justified in the absence of any inkling on the part of the believing subject as to what renders the belief to be true. I aim to show that the deontic premise, though giving rise to an accessibility requirement on justifying conditions, fails to be a tenable explanation for the motivation behind internalism due to the premise's being antithetical to the intuitions that both motivate and underlie internalism itself.

In the end, we will notice that it is our intuitions that better explain the motivation behind internalism rather than a deontic premise which fundamentally conflicts with our intuitions of belief. Beliefs are not subject to epistemic duties, nor are they assessable in terms of blame. It is epistemically desirable to be dutiful to our intellectual obligations such as basing our beliefs on good evidence, not suppressing doubts or ignoring contrary evidence. But, as we will learn later, duty fulfilment is neither necessary nor sufficient for epistemic justification. Justificatory status does not supervene on being blameworthy or blameless in holding a belief. Belief is not a voluntary propositional attitude to merit praise or blame. We can be blamed for something only if we have voluntary control over that thing. We cannot decide or control what to believe and what to disbelieve, which is why we cannot be blamed for what we believe or disbelieve. It is because of this that our beliefs cannot be assessed in relation to blame or responsibility. But deontologists argue that one's justification for a belief resides in one's fulfilling one's epistemic duties in acquiring the belief. They argue that we have epistemic duties in our doxastic cultivations, duties such as looking for evidence pro and con, not ignoring counter-evidence, not suppressing doubts, not nourishing belief in the absence of good supporting evidence and other relevant epistemic responsibilities. They, therefore, conceive of justification as freedom from blame as far as one's epistemic obligations are concerned. Deontologists are, thereby, criticised for assuming voluntary control over doxastic attitudes. They view justification as a normative concept and believing as epistemic permissibility.



The motorist who speeds up can be blamed for doing so because he can choose not to do so. That is, he has free will over whether or not to speed up. Thus, he can be held responsible for violating his duty to abide by the speed limit because fulfilling such duty is within his power. If epistemic deontology is correct, then this is the basis on which the epistemic status of beliefs should be evaluated. Epistemic deontology implies doxastic voluntarism. Doxastic voluntarists regard beliefs as “legitimate objects of blame and praise” (in Nottelman 2007: 106). Similarly, epistemic deontology also “includes, among other things, a commitment to the idea that we can legitimately be reproached, scorned, and blamed for not believing what we ought to believe and that we can be legitimately praised and the like for believing what we ought to believe”, observes Ryan (2003:48). In other words, epistemic deontology implies that “beliefs are typically voluntarily formed, that we are responsible for them, and we deserve praise and blame for them”, points out Feldman (2008: 355). Thus, given the deontological conception of epistemic justification, to be justified in holding a belief is “to be without blame, to be within your rights, to have done no more than what is permitted, to have violated no duty or obligation, to warrant no blame or censure”, argues Plantinga (1993: 26). That is, on the deontological view of justification, “a belief that is epistemically justified is a belief that is epistemically permissible, a belief for which the subject cannot be blamed, or a belief the subject is not obliged to drop”, observes Steup (1999: 375). In this way, given what the deontological treatment of belief implies, epistemic justification, argues Plantinga, is “entirely within my power; whether or not my beliefs are justified is up to me, within my control” (1993: 19). This notion of epistemic deontology dates back to Descartes and Locke. Descartes argues that we are epistemically obligated to refrain from believing propositions we do not have good evidence in favour:

But if I abstain from giving my judgment on any thing when I do not perceive it with sufficient clearness and distinctness, it is plain that I act rightly. ... But if I determine to deny [disbelieve] or affirm [believe], I no longer make use as I should of my free will, and if I affirm what is not true, it is evident that I deceive myself; even though I judge according to truth, this comes about only by chance, and I do not escape the blame of misusing my freedom; for the light of nature teaches us that the knowledge of the understanding should always precede the determination of the will. It is in the misuse of the free will that the privation which constitutes the characteristic nature of error is met with (in Plantinga 1993: 12-13).

Locke also observes that one must be held accountable for believing something that is not true:

Faith [belief] is nothing but a firm assent of the mind; which, if it be regulated, as is our duty, cannot be afforded to any thing but upon good reason, and so cannot be opposite to it. He that believes, without having any reason for believing, may be in love with his own fancies; but neither seeks truth as he ought, nor pays the obedience due his maker, who would have him use those discerning faculties he has given him to keep him out of mistake and error. He that does not this to the best of his power, however he sometimes lights on truth, is in the right but by chance; and I know not whether the luckiness of the accident will excuse the irregularity of his proceeding. This at least is certain, that he must be accountable for whatever mistakes he runs into; whereas he that makes use of the light and faculties God has given him, and seeks sincerely to discover truth by those helps and abilities he has, may have this satisfaction [justification] in doing his duty as a rational creature, that though he should miss truth, he will not miss the reward [justification] of it; for he governs his assent right, and places it as he should, who in any case or matter whatsoever believes or disbelieves according as reason directs him. He that does otherwise, transgresses against his own light, and misuses those faculties which were given him (in Plantinga 1993: 13).

Both Descartes and Locke view doxastic attitudes and their respective epistemic status as if we are at liberty whether or not to believe something. Descartes holds that we are epistemically obligated to abstain from belief unless we perceive the object of belief with sufficient clearness or unless we have sufficient epistemic grounds that warrant such belief. But, argues Alston, one “can be obliged to do A only if one has an effective choice as to whether to do A” (1989: 118). Furthermore, Plantinga observes that it is not within my power whether to believe something I perceive to be true: “Driving down the road I am confronted with what appears to be an approaching automobile; it is ordinarily not, in such a case, up to me whether I believe that there is an automobile approaching” (1993: 24). Alston also states: “When I look out my window and see rain falling, water dripping off the leaves of trees, and cars passing by, I [do not have] ... control over whether I accept those propositions... I form the belief that rain is falling willy-nilly. There is no way I can inhibit this belief” (1989: 129). This is as far as perceptual beliefs are concerned, which Alston observes: “With respect to almost all normal perceptual, introspective, and memory propositions, it is absurd to think that one has any such control over whether one accepts, rejects, or withholds the proposition” (Ibid: 129).

But our inability to choose whether to believe something also extends to testimonial propositions. Facing clear evidence that the American Civil War started in 1861, I find myself incapable of making a choice as to whether to believe this. I just happen to believe it upon what I believe to be reliable evidence without first – at the moment of belief formation – deciding whether to believe this. This, however, does not mean that I am totally impotent to make use of my free will vis-à-vis the proposition in question. We will later on learn that whenever we are presented with a non-self-evident proposition for which we lack the necessary grounds to settle doxastic attitude, we are at liberty whether to take up an attitude towards the given proposition. We can choose to ignore such propositions. But we are not at liberty as to *what* doxastic attitude we take up towards any such propositions. If I did not know the date on which the American Civil War started, but wanted to settle doxastic opinion on such proposition, I can decide to go to the library. Once in the library, I can decide to go to level five. Then I can decide to look for specific historical books. Once I find a collection of relevant books, I can choose to read some and ignore the rest. While in possession of the most relevant books, I can make a decision as to what chapters to read.

These are all *processes* that respond to my free will. But, as we noticed in chapter three, believing is not a process. “Believing a proposition is”, argues Price, “a disposition and not an occurrence or ‘mental act’” (1954: 15). That is, believing is neither a process nor an occurrence or action. Thus, once I am in possession of good evidence as to the issue at hand, it is not up to me whether to believe that the American Civil War started in 1861. I just happen to believe it. Furthermore, many people believe, on testimony, that Moses miraculously had God open the waters of the Red Sea for him and his fellow Israelis in order to cross the sea unharmed. They hold such belief without possessing sufficient epistemic grounds for it. No matter how ill-supported a proposition epistemically is, sometimes we just cannot help believing such propositions. Being objectively probative or probable is not a prerequisite for belief. Belief is psychologically possible as long as we perceive the supporting evidence to be satisfactory from our own subjective perspective. It is the conferment of epistemic justification that supervenes on objectively good evidence, not the attribution of belief. Belief that *p* is, however, not psychologically possible when we ourselves take such belief to be unwarranted from our own cognitive perspective.

Belief is a subjective mental or psychological phenomenon, whereas justification is an objective desideratum. After all, we do not choose or decide what to believe or what to disbelieve. We believe many things that are false. If we had the doxastic control implied by epistemic deontology, we could have suspended belief until truth came to light. Descartes argues that unless we misuse our free will, otherwise we could discover the truth or believe truly and therefore escape reproach.

But as Alston's cultural isolation case demonstrates later (see p. 181), we could make proper or reasonable use of our free will in the way of evidence gathering or attention to evidential considerations but still miss the truth or still believe something for bad reasons. That is why fulfilment of intellectual obligations is not a necessary condition for a belief to possess positive epistemic status. Further, Descartes argues that: "But if I determine to deny or affirm, I no longer make use as I should of my free will... the light of nature teaches us that the knowledge of the understanding should always precede the determination of the will". He speaks of belief and free will as if we make a decision when we believe or disbelieve something, or as if it is a matter of choice whether to believe a proposition following our understanding of the proposition. But once I know or understand a proposition to be true, it is not a matter of choice for me to decide whether or not to believe it.

It is not up to me whether to believe that the Liberty Spring is sweeping through the streets of the Middle East when I see it happening. Knowing or understanding it to be a true occurring phenomenon, I mechanically happen to believe it. If it was up to me whether to believe it, or if it was a matter of choice or decision whether to believe it, then I must have also been able to voluntarily believe otherwise even in the face of my perceiving the phenomenon with the sufficient clarity that warrants, from my perspective, belief in the given proposition. We will later on learn that if I were psychologically able to voluntarily believe *p*, then I must also be able to voluntarily believe *p*'s negation just like that. Given the Lockean conception of believing, belief is attributed only upon good evidence. But, as we have learned in chapters three and four, some of our beliefs owe their existence to our pragmatic desires. Furthermore, Scott-Kakures argues that "In certain circumstances, some desires may ... generate a belief the content of which matches that of the desire" (1994: 89).

Deontologists conceive of epistemic justification as a normative concept characterised by epistemic permissibility. In this way, a belief enjoys justificatory status only if it is epistemically permissible for us to hold such belief: “a justified belief is, by definition, an epistemically permissible belief”, argues Steup (2000: 25). Furthermore, deontological justification, observes Alston, is “most centrally a concept of freedom from blameworthiness, a concept of being ‘in the clear’ so far as one’s intellectual obligations are concerned” (1985: 63). In other words, normative considerations of being free from blame as far as one’s intellectual obligations<sup>1</sup> are concerned are the sole fundamental conferring factors of deontological justification. Furthermore, deontologists view justification as a matter of fulfilling one’s epistemic obligations in coming to believe something and regard believing as a matter of epistemic permissibility. Pollock argues that “A justified belief is one that it is ‘epistemically permissible’ to hold. Epistemic justification is a normative notion. It pertains to what you *should* or *should not* believe. But it is a uniquely epistemic normative notion” (1986: 7). In line with such deontological reasoning, BonJour also observes that “the concept of epistemic justification is fundamentally a normative concept. It has to do with what one has a duty or obligation to do, from an epistemic or intellectual standpoint” (1980: 55). Thus, from a deontological standpoint, one’s “being justified in holding a belief is having fulfilled one’s epistemic duties in forming or continuing to hold that belief”, argues Plantinga (1993: 14). That is, being epistemically responsible in one’s doxastic cultivations is what deontologists take to be the necessary condition for being epistemically justified:

[O]ne’s cognitive endeavors are epistemically justified only if and to the extent that they are aimed at this goal, which means very roughly that one accepts all and only those beliefs which one has good reason to think are true. To accept a belief in the absence of such a reason, however appealing or even mandatory such acceptance might be from some other standpoint, is to neglect the pursuit of truth; such acceptance is, one might say, *epistemically irresponsible*. My contention here is that the idea of avoiding such irresponsibility, of being epistemically responsible in one’s believings, is the core of the notion of epistemic justification (BonJour 1985: 8).

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<sup>1</sup> Alston defines intellectual obligation as “the obligation to refrain from believing that *p* in the absence of adequate evidence” (1985: 64). Feldman also observes that “what we epistemically ought to do is follow our evidence” (2000: 695). Moreover, James argues that “There are two ways of looking at our duty in the matter of opinion ... *We must know the truth; and we must avoid error* – these are our first and great commandments as would-be knowers” (2006: 17). That is, to fulfil epistemic obligations is to believe, whenever we take an attitude on something, what is supported by our evidence and abstain from believing whenever we judge the available evidence to be insufficient to warrant belief.

BonJour looks at epistemic justification as a prescriptive notion and as an epistemic status whose obtaining hinges on fulfilling one's epistemic obligations in coming to believe a proposition. Moreover, Feldman argues that in a doxastic situation where only one attitude is licensed, we are epistemically obligated to take on the attitude sanctioned by the evidence: "It seems to me reasonable to say that when only one attitude is permitted, then one has an *epistemic obligation* to have that attitude" (2000: 676). Thus, he holds that "we do have a form of voluntary control over a substantial number of beliefs" (Ibid: 695). That is, deontologists assume that we have effective voluntary control over our doxastic attitudes and that we are psychologically constituted in a way that we are capable to take on such attitudes at will or by choice. That is why they think of justification as a normative concept whose presence or absence, according to deontologists, dictates what one *should* or *should* not believe in a given situation and regard justificational status as freedom from blame as far as one's epistemic obligations are concerned. Ginet, a fervent deontologist, argues that one *ought* always to possess belief whenever one possesses justification and *ought* always to abstain from belief whenever one lacks justification or *ought* always to, at least, withhold belief in the absence of justification:

Assuming that S has the concept of justification for being confident that p, S *ought* always to possess or lack confidence that p according to whether or not he has such justification. At least he ought always to withhold confidence unless he has justification. This is simply what is meant by having or lacking *justification*. But if this is what S ought to do in any possible circumstance, then it is what S *can* do in any possible circumstance (in Alston 1989: 214).

That is, given Ginet's conception of justification, we ought always to believe anything we have adequate evidence in favour of and ought always to abstain from or withhold belief in the absence of such evidence. But this is not how we normally find ourselves in doxastic situations. For example, a fervent American patriot might possess substantiating evidence sufficient to warrant belief in the conspiracy theories behind the events of 11 September 2001, but might still not come to believe them in spite of possessing such evidence. Conversely, a devout Muslim might come to believe that the Quran is divine even in the absence of good epistemic evidence. It is just a psychological fact that we cannot help believing what we believe or disbelieving what we disbelieve. It is true that we ideally tend to believe only when

we possess adequate supporting evidence for the object of belief. But it is not the case that we are epistemically obligated to possess belief whenever such evidence obtains.

The presence of adequate supporting evidence, rather, points out Alston, entitles us to possess belief: "The presence of justification gives me a *right* to believe, but I am not obliged to exercise that right; I have a choice as to whether or not to do so. ... if I were obligated to believe everything for which I have a justification, I would be in a pretty pickle" (Ibid: 217). Thus, the presence of good evidence provides us with a justification to believe, but having the justification to believe does not entail having a justified belief. There is a difference between having justification for a belief and having a justified belief. Alston argues that "S's *having a justification* for believing that *p* is independent of whether S does believe that *p*; I can have adequate grounds for believing that *p*, and so *have* a justification, even though I do not in fact believe that *p*" (1985: 74). Furthermore, Fumerton also observes:

There seems to be a perfectly clear sense in which there may be enormously strong epistemic reasons for me to believe a given proposition even though I don't end up believing it. In such a situation we can say that there was justification for me to believe the proposition even though I didn't, of course, have a justified belief (or a belief at all) in the relevant proposition (in Moser 2002: 206).

Moreover, Alston argues that "to say that a belief was deontologically justified is not to say that the subject was obligated to believe this, but only that he was permitted to do so, that believing this did not involve any violation of relevant obligations" (1985: 60). Thus, the presence of justification entitles us to believe, but does not oblige us to exercise such right. One of the fundamental drawbacks of the deontological conception of belief is that it treats doxastic attitudes as if they are subject to obligation – that, we are epistemically obligated to possess, abstain from or withhold belief depending on whether or not we possess justification. The following is what Alston thinks the deontological treatment of belief implies if doxastic attitudes were subject to obligation:

As I see it, the major divide in this terrain has to do with whether believing, and refraining from believing, are subject to obligation, duty, and the like. If they are, we can think of the favourable evaluative status [justificatory status] of a certain belief as consisting in the fact that in holding that belief one has

fulfilled one's obligations, or refrained from violating one's obligations, to achieve the fundamental aim in question<sup>2</sup> (Ibid: 59).

Thus, given Ginet's deontological conception of belief, Cheney had to either abstain from or withhold belief in the Iraqi nuclear proposition for he was in possession of no justifying evidence to believe. But in coming to, apparently, believe that Iraq had a reconstituted nuclear weapons program, he flouts his core epistemic duty to withhold or refrain from belief in the absence of good evidence. And since he, seemingly, comes to believe something when the evidence does not call for belief, he is rightly to blame for his so believing. Thus, he cannot be afforded deontological justification for what he supposedly believes. Even if we assume that the IAEA's findings either did not exist or were not accessible to him at the time of belief, Cheney would still not escape epistemic blame for his alleged belief. Given what epistemic deontologism implies and considering the fact that Cheney was a rational being, it would have been within his power to properly look into the given matter before arriving at his alleged belief that *p*. Had he done what he was epistemically obligated to do in the way of intellectual responsibilities, he would have either suspended or refrained from belief in the matter. That is if he ever genuinely came to believe that *p*.

Thus, deontological justification resides in the fulfilment of one's epistemic obligations in coming to believe a proposition. That is, I am deontologically justified in holding the doxastic attitude I hold so long I abide by my epistemic obligations in holding such attitude regardless of whether or not, prior to the acquisition of the attitude, the fulfilment of my epistemic duties had culminated in good epistemic reasons for the attitude I now hold. For deontologists, what counts as justification-conferring is being blameless in holding a belief. They explicitly treat doxastic attitudes as if they are open to choice or decision. In fact Pollock believes this to be one of the fundamental issues of epistemology: "I have taken the fundamental problem of epistemology to be that of deciding what to believe. Epistemic justification, as I use the term, is concerned with this problem. Considerations of epistemic justification guide us in determining what to believe" (1986: 10). But

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<sup>2</sup> By the fundamental aim in question, Alston refers to the epistemic point of view which he defines as being "characterised by a concern with the twin goals of believing the true and not believing the false" (1989: 116). The epistemic point of view is the perspective from which the epistemic evaluation of belief is carried out.



Plantinga rightly argues that believing is not up to us to be able to choose or decide whether to believe *p* or not *p*:

the fact is in typical cases I neither undertake to believe (anymore than I undertake to breathe) nor make any decisions as to what to believe. I have too little direct control over my beliefs for that. ... I find myself with an ineluctable inclination to believe that this proposition is true and indeed necessarily so. You ask me what I had for breakfast: I find myself believing that what I had for breakfast was a grapefruit. I am appeared to redly; I find myself with the belief that I am perceiving something red. I consider the question what Caesar had for breakfast the morning he crossed the Rubicon: I find myself with no belief on that topic. In each of these cases (as in general), I have little or no direct or conscious control. ... I can't just decide not to believe that I had a grapefruit for breakfast; and I can't just decide to form a belief as to what Caesar had for breakfast that fateful morning (although I can decide to go to the library and look it up) (1993: 177).

Ginet associates justifiability status with doxastic permissibility. He argues that one is justified in believing that *p* so long as one is epistemically permitted in so believing: "One is *justified* in being confident that *p* if and only if it is not the case that one ought not to be confident that *p*: one could not be justly reproached for being confident that *p*" (1975: 28). That is, just like the rest of other deontologists, Ginet associates justificatory status with the permissibility of belief. Alston observes that it is this permissibility that underlies this whole notion of the deontological evaluation of belief: "for an action or whatever to be justified in a deontological sense is for it to be *permitted*, rather than required. Thus it is the necessity of an effective choice for something to be *permitted* that is crucial here" (1989: 118). In other words, he argues that the deontological assessment of belief concerns the permissibility rather than the obligation to believe, and that for the concept of permissibility to apply in any given context, the agent must be able to make an effective choice as to whether to believe *p* or not *p*. This rightly counters Ginet's contention that we ought to believe whenever we have evidence that warrants such believing. Thus, given the deontological conception of belief, we can be rightly reproached for believing something that is not permitted by our evidence. But Alston argues that a "person cannot be blamed for having something she can't help having" (Ibid: 148). We do not have voluntary control over our beliefs, which is why we cannot help believing what we believe; and in the absence of such control, the concept of blame or responsibility will have no legitimate application.

That is why Alston argues that the notion of doxastic permissibility holds only if we, in any given doxastic situation, had the freedom to make an effective choice whether to believe *p* or not *p*: “it makes no sense to speak of S’s being permitted or forbidden to do A if S lacks an effective choice as to whether to do A” (Ibid: 118). He argues that we could be blamed for believing *p* if prior to believing *p*, there were epistemic duties that we could and should have fulfilled, and that had we fulfilled them we would not now be believing *p*: “we may say that I am subject to reproach for believing that *p*, provided that I am to blame for being in that doxastic condition, in the sense that there are things I could and should have done, such that if I had done them I would not now be believing that *p*” (1985: 66). Putting it into a formula, he further states:

S is justified in believing that *p* iff it is not the case that if S had fulfilled all her intellectual obligations, then S’s belief-forming habits would have changed, or S’s access to relevant adverse considerations would have changed, in such a way that S would not have believed that *p* (1989: 143).

That is, the underlying thesis of the deontological conception of justification is that we can be justified in believing *p* only if we have blamelessly come to believe *p*. But, as observed earlier, the concepts of blame and permissibility pertain only if we have voluntary control over our beliefs or only if we had the freedom to choose whether to believe *p* or not *p*. Deontologists, however, treat belief as an appropriate object of epistemic blame. That is why they contend that it is within our power to prevent belief whenever an epistemic obligation obtains such that had we, before coming to believe that *p*, fulfilled the obligation, we would not have come to believe what we now believe: “Whenever a belief is an appropriate object for the attribution of epistemic blame, it must have been within the agent’s power to do something that would have led him to refraining from this belief” observes Steup (1988: 72).

In chapter three, we learned that the desire or intention to believe does not carry us directly to the belief state we aim at. But since our doxastic cultivations are not always epistemically motivated or oriented; there is still some *prima facie* intuitive appeal in favour of some control over some of our beliefs. We are, as noted on pp. 79-80, not emotionally neutral in all our believings. That is, sometimes we are emotionally biased towards a particular proposition in favour of satisfying a desire, a

need, an emotion, being (or remaining) faithful or committed to a doctrine or a principle. That is, in certain doxastic situations, our beliefs either stem indirectly from our desires or their acquisition is influenced indirectly by our desires. Propositional attitudes that are so acquired primarily consist of faith, religious, love or political beliefs. Alston argues that such beliefs are often acquired in a non-truth-conducive manner, paradigmatically with an irresistibly or unshakably strong emotional attachment, commitment, or allegiance to the proposition in question:

For many people their religious or irreligious beliefs have this status [irresistible and unshakable strong emotional attachment to something], as do beliefs concerning one's country, one's close relations, or one's political party. Such beliefs are often not formed in a truth-conducive way that would render them likely to be true (2005: 79-80).

That is, such beliefs are often acquired under the indirect influence of a certain desire, a doctrinal commitment or allegiance that overrides truth-conducivity or the epistemic goal of our cognitive endeavours. Further, Yee, herself a voluntarist, argues that "what I believe stems from what I want" (2002: 446). But, faced with the implausibility of the direct control voluntary believing implies, she states: "Doxastic voluntarism is not about believing what one wants. Rather, it is about how one's wants influence what one believes" (Ibid: 446). But the way our desires influence what we come to believe cannot count as bringing about belief at will just like that. The only way such desires constitute doxastic voluntarism is if they can bring about belief directly after my desiring to be in a particular belief state. Desires, as already explained, have an indirect influence over our believings in the way of rendering us to primarily or solely consider or look for corroborating evidence in a bid to get ourselves to believe what we want to believe. If I could bring about belief directly solely through desire, I could bring it about that I believe John Kennedy is still the President of the United States just through my desiring this to be the case.

But, lacking any adequate supporting evidence, I'm psychologically incapable of bringing about such belief state solely on the basis of the desire that it be true. Thus, the proposition that Kennedy is still the President of the United States remains solely as a desired belief, I do not hold any such belief. The role desires play in our belief acquisitions cannot provide for the kind of direct voluntary control which doxastic

voluntarism presupposes. Yee recognizes that beliefs are not under direct control but argues that the lack of such control shall not amount to the involuntariness of belief: "We do not have direct influence over what we believe. We, as agents, do not cause our beliefs. ... But our lack of direct control need not amount to involuntariness" (Ibid: 454). Furthermore, she takes the voluntary control we exercise over some desire to account for doxastic voluntarism: "the role that desires play in belief is sufficiently significant to justify calling beliefs voluntary" (Ibid: 446). Explaining the logic of her argument in practice, Yee instantiates the role of desire in affording us with direct control over our beliefs with the case of an atheist who wants to believe in God:

It must be noted that the desire to believe ... requires the intervention of practical desire in order to be satisfied. For the atheist who wants to believe, actions such as frequenting places of worship, reading sacred texts, and spending time with believers will satisfy some of the practical desires that pave the road to the desired belief that God exists. ... In order for desired beliefs to be formed, practical desires need to be satisfied. *The forming of a belief requires the satisfaction of some practical desire.* Belief is inextricable from desire and action. ... Without desire, there can be no belief. Belief, desire and action are interdependent. Belief is inextricably caught up in the flow of action and desire satisfaction. The subject plays an active role in the forming of his belief (Ibid: 452-453).

Yee provides us with two contradictory theses. She first argues that "The subject plays an active role in the forming of his belief", later on she retracts this, stating that "We, as agents, do not cause our beliefs". We certainly play an active role in the causal ancestry of any belief whose acquisition entails some inquiry. But this cannot count as actively causing or forming a belief. "Belief", argues Frankish, "does not seem to be the sort of state that can be actively created and sustained. It seems, rather, to be a dispositional state, which is passively formed and cannot be altered by a simple act of will" (2007: 523). Ignoring the perceptual, memory or introspective beliefs or other beliefs whose existence owes not to active agency or the satisfaction of any practical desire, Yee contends that all instances of belief formation require the satisfaction of some practical desire or there can be no belief. I am stood in the balcony of my flat overlooking River Don, a duck crosses my vision, and I thereby acquire a belief that there is a duck in the river. It is a perceptual belief that I acquire without satisfying any practical desire, without performing any action or playing an active role in the formation of such belief. Not only she conceives of belief formation

as voluntary, Yee even argues that holding a belief is, at best, relatively less voluntary than its formation: “The holding [of a belief] may be relatively less voluntary than forming, but it is difficult to see how it could be involuntary given that it occurs between the voluntarism of its forming and the agency of the action<sup>3</sup> of which it forms the root” (2002: 453). But if holding beliefs were voluntary which I contend is not, then I can voluntarily retain a belief even in the presence of a conscious belief that the grounds that first gave rise to the given belief are now defeated or undermined by the emergence of new counter-evidence. Similarly, I can voluntarily abandon, if I so desire to, a held belief I take to be warranted from my perspective.

Epistemologists disagree over whether doxastic attitudes are under the influence of direct control. Doxastic involuntarists concede that we possess some indirect voluntary control over certain belief acquisitions in the way of initiating inquiries or seeking evidence. That is, they submit that voluntary control obtains in the causal ancestry of certain beliefs, but deny that such control has any direct influence on the resultant belief. Further, Alston observes that “One certainly has voluntary control over whether to keep looking for evidence or reasons, and voluntary control over where to look, what steps to take to find relevant considerations, and so on” (2005: 69). But doxastic voluntarists hold that belief formations are themselves voluntary. There are two considerations that could give rise to doxastic voluntarism and make it *prima facie* plausible. First, we are not always driven in our believings by epistemic considerations. That is, our beliefs are sometimes directionally driven, as clarified in chapter four; driven by certain pragmatic goals, we sometimes arrive at the belief we want to arrive at even if the belief is not supported by the majority evidence. Second, the provenance of the concept of justification. Alston argues that given the original use of justification as an exculpatory status deployed in relation to actions performed voluntarily, it is plausible to assume this to be the origin where epistemic justification emanates from, and therefore equally plausible to conceive of the justification of belief in terms of epistemic responsibilities, obligations and duties and regard believing as being liable to requirement, permission and prohibition:

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<sup>3</sup> Yee speaks of belief formation as if every belief, after its being formed, is going to be action-guiding or is going to be used as a ground for doing something afterwards. She argues that once a belief is formed, one “holds it and *uses* it to satisfy some desire” (2002: 453). She also argues that “Because beliefs are part of the causes of action, they are formed *in order* for actions to occur” (Ibid: 454).

it is plausible to suppose that 'justified' came into epistemology from its more unproblematic use with respect to voluntary action. I am justified in doing something, for example, appointing someone to a Teaching Assistantship on my own, provided my doing so is in accordance with the relevant rules and regulations, provided it is *permitted*<sup>4</sup> by those rules and hence that I could not rightfully be *blamed* or *held to account* for it, and was acting *responsibly* in doing so. The rules could be institutional, as in the above example, or legal or moral. Thus I would be morally justified in failing to make a contribution to a certain organization provided my doing so doesn't violate any moral rule. Because of this provenance it is natural to think of believing, when taken to be subject to being justified or unjustified, as subject to requirement, prohibition, and permission. We say things like "You shouldn't have supposed so readily that he would not return", "You have no right to assume that", "You shouldn't jump to conclusions", and "I ought to have trusted him more than I did". Locutions like these seem to be interchangeable with speaking of a belief as being, or not being, justified (Ibid: 59).

In addition, Alston also observes that we "often seem to suggest the voluntary control of belief: 'I finally decided that he was the man for the job', 'Make up your mind...', 'I had to accept his testimony; I had no choice'" (1989: 119). And it is because of such linguistic background of the concept of justification that he argues: "My linguistic intuitions tell me that 'justified' and its cognates are properly used only in a deontological sense. To be justified in doing or believing something just *is* to not have violated any relevant rules, norms, or principles in so doing, believing" (Ibid: 143). Thus, given the background against which our use of epistemic justification has developed, it is normal to associate volitional terminology such as *requirement*, *prohibition* and *permission* with epistemic justification. Just as actions are explainable in terms of their permissibility and blameworthiness and the actors' justifiability status in terms of the fulfilment of their legal, moral or institutional obligations, responsibilities and duties, deontologists explain beliefs in terms of permissibility and blameworthiness and the believers' justifiability status in terms of the fulfilment of their epistemic or intellectual obligations, responsibilities and duties. But in practice, the background use of justification proves incompatible with its use as epistemic evaluative status for beliefs are not actions. But Chisholm argues that if we have self-

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<sup>4</sup> Alston points out that one cannot be rightfully faulted for violating a rule if one has a valid excuse for the violation, but once such excuse is not mentioned in the text, then it is presupposed that there is no such excuse for the violation: "I don't suggest that doing what is not permitted by the rules is coextensive with being subject to blame for doing it. One might have a valid excuse for doing it despite the rules. When I speak of violating a rule as being blameworthy, it is presupposed that there is no such excuse" (2005: 59).

control over our activities, then some of our beliefs whose causal ancestry entails activities of evidence-gathering would seem to be actions:

If self-control is what is essential to activity, some of our beliefs, our believings, would seem to be acts. When a man deliberates and comes finally to a conclusion, his decision is as much within his control as is any other deed we attribute to him. If his conclusion was unreasonable, a conclusion he should not have accepted, we may plead with him: "But you needn't have supposed that so-and-so was true. Why didn't you take account of these other facts?" We assume that his decision is one he could have avoided and that, had he only chosen to do so, he could have made a more reasonable inference. Or, if his conclusion is not the result of a deliberate inference, we may say, "But if you had only stopped to think", implying that, had he chosen, he could have stopped to think. We suppose, as we do whenever we apply our ethical or moral predicates, that there was something else the agent could have done instead (in Alston 2005: 69).

That is, we often encounter retrospective statements about our doxastic attitudes. This retrospective discourse appears to put instances of believing under voluntary control. In retrospect, I come to realise that I should not have so readily trusted a messenger or accepted some testimony. In hindsight, I reproach myself for unreflectively accepting the reliability or competence of an employee. Through self-reflection or retrospection, I come to blame myself for being too credulous towards some political promise, or I come to reproach myself to so readily accept or believe in the fidelity of my girlfriend. These are retrospective evaluations of my propositional attitudes that seem to imply that I could and should have been more sensitive or attentive to epistemic or evidential considerations or more reflective of testimony. In turn, they imply that I could have drawn a better or a more informed conclusion or that I could have refrained from such beliefs had I only chosen to do so. But I cannot be said to possess direct control over my beliefs in retrospect while impotent to successfully exercise such power at the time of belief formation. These retrospective statements should, therefore, serve a different purpose. Furthermore, we observed earlier that Chisholm takes the voluntary control we exercise in the intermediate steps of a belief as voluntary control over the belief formation itself. But Alston argues that the self-control we have over the activities we undertake in the causal ancestry of a belief cannot amount to direct control over the resultant belief:

the mere fact that one often looks for evidence to decide an unresolved issue does not show that one has voluntary control over one's propositional attitudes. ... In order that the phenomenon of looking for more evidence would show that we have voluntary control over propositional attitudes, it would have to be the case that the search for evidence was undertaken with the intention of taking up a *certain* attitude toward a *specific* proposition. For only in that case would it have any tendency to show that we have exercised voluntary control over *what* propositional attitude we come to have. ... the only voluntary control I have over my propositional attitudes is to enter onto an investigation that will eventuate in some propositional attitude or other on what is being considered (2005: 70-71).

But even if I were to set out seeking evidence with the intention to take up a certain doxastic attitude towards a specific proposition, this still would not count as having direct voluntary control over my doxastic attitudes. If I had such control, I could take up the willed belief directly, just like that, without focus or heed to corroborating evidence. My setting out to gather evidence with the intention to bring about a certain doxastic attitude is just an indirect route of getting myself to believe the willed belief. I lack direct control over my beliefs, which is why I engage in a search for confirming evidence with the hope or intention that I can bring it about that I believe what I want to believe. We exercise voluntary control in the intermediate steps of certain belief acquisitions. Faced with a non-self-evident proposition, I cannot just take up any doxastic attitude I desire without some supporting ground. I, therefore, initiate a process of evidence gathering voluntarily if I wanted to settle doxastic opinion on the given issue. I seek evidence both pro and con if I were to acquire a truth-conducive belief, or just seek confirming evidence and ignore disconfirming evidence if I were to satisfy some pragmatic desire in my quest for a state of belief as the case of the atheist demonstrated.

A coroner voluntarily launches an inquest into a suspicious death, seeking evidence pro and con to resolve doxastic opinion on the issue. The inquest comes up with conclusive evidence that the victim was drowned. The coroner has voluntary control over the activities associated with the process of gathering evidence such as initiating a forensic examination or choosing the witnesses to testify. But this voluntary control does not imply that the resultant doxastic attitude which the coroner eventually comes up with is arrived at voluntarily. Faced with adequate evidence, the coroner cannot help believing that the victim was drowned. This kind of voluntary control only



makes it possible that a doxastic attitude is brought about or that doxastic opinion is settled on the matter. Furthermore, Alston argues that the voluntary control we exercise in the intermediate steps of such belief acquisitions just “shows that I have long-range voluntary control over whether I take up *some* propositional attitude toward *some* proposition” (Ibid: 70). But, he argues, deontologists “locate the voluntary control in the moment of attitude formation rather than in the preliminary investigation” (Ibid: 71).

Moreover, Alston argues that voluntary control obtains in the intermediate steps of certain doxastic attitudes rather than at the moment of attitude formation, that is why the deontological evaluation of belief as being subject to blame is “a derivative one. It is the (actual or possible) voluntary acts in the causal ancestry of the belief to which blameworthiness and other deontological terms of evaluation apply in a primary way” (Ibid: 74). Thus, if beliefs were ever subject to blame, I would be primarily blamed for failing to fulfil some intellectual obligation in the intermediate steps of a belief and derivatively blameworthy for holding the belief I hold. Alston does not rule out the significance of fulfilling intellectual obligations in settling doxastic opinion. Rather, he argues that “fulfilment of intellectual obligations has an intrinsic cognitive value that is independent of truth” (Ibid: 78). He contends that we can blamelessly believe something for bad reasons: “I may have done what could reasonably be expected of me in the management and cultivation of my doxastic life, and still hold a belief on outrageously inadequate grounds” (1985: 67). That is, he rightly argues that being in the clear with regard to our intellectual obligations does not always necessitate the possession of good epistemic evidence for belief. It cannot be an alternative to good evidence. Though he has recently retracted from his earlier deontological position, Bonjour was one of the pioneers of the premise that epistemic dutifulness is a necessary condition of (epistemic) internalist justification. The following is his current position on such alleged necessity:

While I am, alas, one of those responsible for the idea that being epistemically responsible or satisfying one's epistemic duties is tantamount to being justified in the internalist sense, it is in fact relatively easy to see that this is wrong, indeed that being epistemically responsible or satisfying one's epistemic duties is not even *sufficient* for internalist justification. ... one main reason for this is the possibility of situations of what I will refer to as epistemic poverty. Suppose that a group of people is in a situation where the kinds of evidence or the methods of inquiry available to them are so limited as to make it

difficult or even impossible to come up with strong evidence or good epistemic reasons for answers to many important questions. In fact, it is clear that many human beings living in earlier eras have found themselves in such situations, and perhaps less clear than is often thought that we are not still in one to a considerable extent. It is quite implausible to insist that in a situation of this kind, epistemic duty still requires accepting only beliefs for which there are strong reasons, since this would mean that the people in question are required to have no beliefs at all about many important issues. To insist on such a view is in effect to give the avoidance of error an absolute and unwarranted priority over the discovery of truth. But while it is plausible to think that it is no violation of epistemic duty to accept beliefs on a weaker basis in such a situation, it remains the case that the people in question fail to possess good reasons for thinking that beliefs accepted in this way are true and hence that their beliefs are not justified to any substantial degree in the main internalist sense, even though the requirements of epistemic duty have been satisfied. (I think that virtually all internalists would accept this result and that their occasional suggestions to the contrary are a result of focusing on situations of at least approximate epistemic plenty). Cases of epistemic poverty are cases in which it seems possible to fulfil one's epistemic duty without being epistemically justified in the main internalist sense. ... [but there are] also cases of the opposite sort, cases in which a person has good, truth-conducive reasons for his or her beliefs, but still fails to satisfy the requirements of epistemic duty, thereby showing that the satisfaction of duty is ... not *necessary* for internalist justification ... It is plausible to suppose that ... [one] is violating an epistemic duty [in one's doxastic cultivations], but it also seems entirely possible that he or she might still happen to have good reasons for the beliefs that result and so be justified in the internalist sense. ... For these reasons, it seems to me clear that epistemic justification cannot be simply identified with the fulfilment of epistemic duty as the deontological conception claims. What is true, I would suggest, is rather something substantially weaker: seeking good epistemic reasons and believing on the basis of them is, at least in situations of relative epistemic plenty, *one* important requirement of epistemic duty and arguably the most central of all. This makes it easy to understand how some internalists, myself included, were led to overstate the connection between the two concepts. But it remains the case that the idea of satisfying epistemic duty turns out to be quite distinct from the main internalist conception of epistemic justification (2003: 175-177).

That is, though the epistemic poverty agent might come to believe a proposition blamelessly, his so believing will not be epistemically justified. These epistemically poor or restricted conditions warrant an epistemic excuse which, in turn, renders a potential believing subject blameless in his believing under such conditions. But, as far as epistemic justification is concerned, the existence of an epistemic excuse in a given doxastic situation does not supersede the necessity of good epistemic reasons. Thus, being blameless or epistemically dutiful in arriving at a belief is not tantamount

to being epistemically justified in holding the belief. One might be epistemically responsible in one's doxastic cultivations, but still lack epistemic justification for one's beliefs, as observed above. Similarly, one might come to believe a proposition on the basis of good epistemic reasons, but still be in violation of some relevant epistemic obligation. Fulfilling the entirety of one's relevant epistemic obligations is too difficult a requirement to be satisfied, which is why epistemic obligations, if they are ever necessary for epistemic justification which I contend are not, shall be construed as a reasonable fulfilment of such obligations, as pointed out on p. 183. Furthermore, in an attempt to show that fulfilment of epistemic obligations is insufficient to confer epistemic justification on belief, Alston presents a case of *cultural isolation* where everyone blamelessly, but for bad epistemic reasons, believes the tribal traditions to be authoritative just because they are traditions of the tribe:

there is what we might call "cultural isolation". If I have grown up in an isolated community in which everyone unhesitatingly accepts [believes] the traditions of the tribe as authoritative, then if I have never encountered anything that seems to cast doubt on the traditions and have never thought to question them, I can hardly be blamed for taking them as authoritative. There is nothing I could reasonably be expected to do that would alter that belief-forming tendency. And there is nothing I could be expected to do that would render me more exposed to counter-evidence. (We can suppose that the traditions all have to do with events distant in time and/or space, matters on which I could not be expected to gather evidence on my own). I am [deontologically justified] in believing these things. And yet the fact that it is the tradition of the tribe that *p* may be a very poor reason for believing that *p* (1985: 67-68).

Under such circumstances, we can be attributed deontological justification for being blameless in what we believe, but cannot be endowed with epistemic justification for basing our belief on bad evidence. The logic behind the obtaining of the deontological justification is this: since verifying or properly looking into the matter has never crossed my mind nor have I ever encountered anything either to prompt such inquiry or doubt the veracity of such traditions, and since obtaining evidence or additional evidence is beyond my capacities, I have a legitimate epistemic excuse to believe the tribal traditions on the basis of their being the traditions of the tribe I am a part of, and since I have a legitimate epistemic excuse for holding such belief on this basis, I believe blamelessly. I, therefore, am entitled to deontological justification. But Steup counters this drawback against epistemic deontology and

argues that “Cultural isolation, or a lack of opportunities to get second, critical, opinions, just isn’t good enough for an epistemic excuse” (1988: 78). He holds that: “No matter how grim the circumstances are, if an agent holds a belief contrary to evidence, it is within his power, given that he is a *rational* agent, to *reflect* upon his belief and thereby to find out that he had better withhold it, or even assent to its negation” (Ibid: 78). But Alston argues that:

what can reasonably be expected of a subject with respect to, for instance, critical examination of beliefs and their bases will differ across cultures. We require adults in our culture to be critical of “tradition”, but this is a relatively recent phenomenon, given the time humans have been on earth; it cannot be reasonably required of everyone in every society. Note that I am not saying that what *is* adequate evidence varies with the culture. I am no cultural relativist. On the contrary. My judgment that S’s belief lacks adequate grounds was based on the supposition that there are objective standards for adequacy of grounds that hold whatever is accepted in one or another culture. ... Deontological justification is sensitive to cultural differences because it depends on what can reasonably be expected of one, and that in turn depends on one’s social inheritance and the influences to which one is exposed. But truth conductivity does not so depend. Hence they can diverge (1989: 146).

Steup bases his response to Alston’s cultural isolation case on the assumption that the deontological treatment of belief pertains only to rational agents who possess the necessary intellectual sophistication to properly reflect on a proposition, scrutinising its credentials before taking up any doxastic attitude towards the proposition. That is why he argues that “as long as we are dealing with rational agency, it seems to me, beliefs as much as actions are appropriate objects for deontic evaluation” (1988: 73). Thus, the only counter-example to the deontological treatment of belief Steup recognizes is the case of the incapacitated agent: “there is just one condition that epistemically excuses believing contrary to evidence, namely the condition of being incapacitated as a rational agent” (Ibid: 78). In other words, however in violation of the deontological norm that forbids belief contrary to evidence, the incapacitated agent, due to his being incapacitated, is inculpable in his so believing and therefore rightly entitled for deontological justification. But non-deontologists deprive such beliefs from epistemic justification due to the absence of acceptable epistemic grounds. That is why Alston argues that “the deontological conception of justification ... fails to deliver what is expected of justification if those expectations include truth

conducivity” (1989: 150). Thus, deontological justification does not entail epistemic justification.

Moreover, the agent who, on testimony, comes to believe in the opening of the Red Sea or the divinity of the Quran can be afforded deontological justification, but lacks epistemic justification for basing the belief on epistemically degenerate grounds. That is, we can be endowed with deontological justification – but not necessarily epistemic justification – for most of our testimony-based beliefs because, argues Alston, in “most cases in which I uncritically accept testimony I have done as much as could reasonably be expected of me” (Ibid: 148). He further argues that “even if we had the time to check up on each authority, in most cases we lack the resources for making an informed judgment” (Ibid: 148). Aside from the voluntary control it presupposes, Alston argues that one of the difficulties that pose a challenge for the deontological treatment of justification is the impossibility to fulfil one’s entire relevant epistemic obligations and one’s inability to know whether that limit is reached. That is why he suggests that fulfilling one’s epistemic obligations be understood as what could reasonably be expected of one:

Consider the obligation to look for relevant considerations pro and con when it is not clear whether the proposition in question i[s] true. ... To require that every conceivably relevant consideration must be taken into account would be a counsel of perfection that is beyond any of our powers, not to mention the fact that we couldn’t know whether that limit had been reached. It seems that to make the notion of fulfilling intellectual obligations usable we have to build in a limitation to what could reasonably be expected of a subject ... [But] what could be reasonably expected along this line will vary for different people in accordance with their abilities, experience, education, propensities, and so on (2005: 78).

To conclude, given the original use of justification, the deontological argument seems, at face value, plausible in associating epistemic justification with one’s being blameless in holding or retaining a belief. But the original use of justification demonstrates the provenance where the concept of epistemic justification first emanates from. It is not representative of how the concept of epistemic justification is applied or how its presence is assessed. The object of application for epistemic justification is not the same as the one for act justification. Beliefs are not actions. Thus, the two objects of application are not the same to share the same assessment

criteria. It is not like a metaphor where the originating source of the metaphor conveys its characteristics and relevant assessment criteria to the metaphorised object. The metaphorised object is, therefore, explainable in terms of the characteristics of the originating source of the metaphor. But this is not the case with epistemic justification and the originating source (act justification) of its use. The deontological account of justification faces profound counter-intuitive difficulties. On the one hand, fulfilling all relevant intellectual obligations with respect to a given proposition is too difficult a requirement to be met. On the other hand, doing what one is reasonably expected to do in the way of intellectual obligations does not necessarily lead to good epistemic grounds to warrant an epistemic settlement of doxastic opinion. Fulfilling relevant intellectual obligations is important in resolving doxastic opinion on a proposition. But it does not necessitate good epistemic grounds to ensure epistemic justification. That is why fulfilling intellectual obligations is neither necessary nor sufficient for the conferment of epistemic justification. This is apart from the fact that doxastic attitudes are not under the direct control which epistemic deontology implies.

From a deontological perspective, we are epistemically obligated to guide our doxastic cultivations by good evidence. But we can do so only if we have knowledge of such evidence. It is this deontological premise which critics of internalism take to be the motivation behind the internalist constraint on justification. On the deontological view, belief is a willable mental phenomenon for deontologism presupposes voluntary control over doxastic attitudes. But the notion of doxastic voluntarism is inconsistent with the very intuitions that both motivate and underlie internalism. The deontological premise cannot, therefore, tenably account for the motivation behind internalism without countering the very intuitions that motivate internalism itself. The motivation behind an internalist access on justifying conditions arises from the common-sensical conviction that justification normally obtains when there is some inkling on the part of the believing subject as to what is responsible for the truth of his belief that *p*. In the absence of such inkling, we feel uneasy to accept a belief as justified. The failure of the deontological premise to tenably account for the internalist constraint on justification further reinforces the intuitive plausibility of the common-sensical convictions that underlie internalism.

## Chapter Eight

### 8.1. The Externalist Theory of Epistemic Justification

The underlying issue among justificationist epistemologists is whether justification is an internal or external matter to a believing subject. From a common-sensical or an internalist perspective, it is an internal matter. But from an externalist perspective, it is an external matter. I have argued in favour of internalism thus far. This chapter examines the essence of externalism in an attempt to demonstrate the untenability of justificatory theories that do not issue from our common-sensical convictions of justification. The analysis of externalism further reinforces the intuitive plausibility of the common-sensical convictions that underlie internalism. Externalism does not assume any actual or potential awareness requirement on justifying conditions. From an externalist perspective, the fundamental and necessary repository for justification is the reliability of the cognitive process that generates the belief. It is a theory which appears to provide a solution to the problems internalism faces. But as we will learn below, externalism cannot function as an efficient justificatory account for three reasons. First, the theory lacks specificity as to what process type among the relevant process types of a given process token shall be assessed for its reliability. Second, due to its denial of the necessity to have some sort of cognitive access to justifying conditions, the theory tends to render cognizers epistemically irrational for believing something in the absence of any inkling as to what is responsible for the truth of the belief. Third, the underlying thesis of externalism runs counter to the intuitions that explain the *raison d'être* behind epistemic justification. The *raison d'être* behind the existence of epistemic justification is a common-sensical or an internalist conviction that we can be justified in believing that *p* only if we possess some inkling as to the evidence that led us to such a belief. This is, of course, if our believing that *p* is based on good evidence. It is our intuitions that explain the *raison d'être* behind justification. From an intuitive standpoint, justification obtains only when there is, on the part of the believing subject, some inkling as to its conferring premise. That is only if we have some knowledge of what is responsible for the truth of our belief that *p*. In the absence of such knowledge, we feel an intuitive unease to accept a belief as justified.

The fundamental thesis of the externalist account of justification is that we can be justified in holding a belief without our being actually or potentially aware of its

justifying conditions. That is, the relationship between the cognizer and the justifying premise has no bearing on conferring justification according to externalism. Externalism considers cognitive access to justifying conditions extraneous to our possessing justificational status for a belief. We have already outlined three different conceptions of internalism. First, mentalism – a theory contending that justifying factors are internal to the cognizer in a metaphysical sense. Second, accessibilism or access internalism (AI) – a theory requiring that justifying conditions be actually or potentially accessible to the cognizer. Third, perspectival internalism (PI) – a theory requiring that justifying conditions be within the cognizer's perspective on the world with the cognizer's perspective on the world being paradigmatically specified as the cognizer's justified beliefs. Of the three internalist conceptions, mentalism turned out to be the least tenable. On the whole, internalists require that in order to be justified in holding a belief, the believer should have some actual or potential awareness of the justifying condition. It is this awareness requirement on justifying conditions that polarises internalists and externalists. The core fundamental of externalism is the reliability of the belief-forming process that produces the belief. That is, externalists regard such reliability as the necessary and sufficient requirement for justification. Externalist (reliabilist) accounts of justification contend that a belief is justified only if it is acquired through a reliable process that makes it objectively likely that the belief in question is true without the believer being required to be aware that the belief is reliably produced:

According to the reliabilist, the main requirement for epistemic justification is roughly that a belief be produced or caused in a way or via a process that makes it objectively likely that the belief is true. Such a mode of belief production is thus a *reliable* source of true beliefs. ... But what is *not* required for justification on any such view is that the person for whom the belief is justified be in any way *aware* (whether justifiedly or not) that the belief is produced in a reliable way. In the absence of such an awareness, that person will also in general be aware of no reason of any sort for thinking that the belief is true. It is the insistence that the cognitive availability of such a reason is unnecessary for epistemic justification that is the distinctive – and problematic – feature of externalism (BonJour 2003: 25-26).

That is, according to externalists, the necessary and sufficient requirement for epistemic justification is the reliability of the cognitive process through which one acquires a belief – a reliable process being construed as a process that makes it objectively likely that the belief in question is true. Thus, from an externalist



standpoint, *S* is justified in believing *p* or retaining the belief that *p* providing that *p* has been acquired through a reliable process. On externalist views, for a belief to possess justificational status, the believer is not required to be aware of the fact that the belief is reliably produced or that the believer's relevant cognitive process is reliable. Furthermore, in his reliabilist account of justification, Goldman contends that the justificational status of a belief "is a function of the reliability of the process or processes that cause it, where (as a first approximation) reliability consists in the tendency of a process to produce beliefs that are true rather than false" (in Pappas 1979: 10). Goldman's theory of justified belief is, therefore, related to the provenance or causal history of a belief. He calls it Historical Reliabilism which "makes the justificational status of a belief depend on its prior history" (Ibid: 14). He, then, constitutes his formulation of a justified belief as: "If *S*'s believing *p* at *t* results from a reliable cognitive belief-forming process (or set of processes), then *S*'s belief in *p* at *t* is justified" (Ibid: 13). And as to the characterisation of such cognitive processes, Goldman observes:

Let us mean by a 'process' a *functional operation* or procedure, i.e., something that generates a *mapping* from certain states – 'inputs' – into other states – 'outputs'. The outputs in the present case are states of believing this or that proposition at a given moment. On this interpretation, a process is a *type* as opposed to a *token*. This is fully appropriate, since it is only types that have statistical properties such as producing truth 80% of the time; and it is precisely such statistical properties that determine the reliability of a process (Ibid: 11).

In other words, by a cognitive process Goldman refers to whatever process – whether it be visual, memorial, introspective or reasoning – that generates a belief output from a given input (whatever it may be). But Goldman does not specify what relevant process type of a given process token (whether it be memorial, visual, introspective or reasoning) shall be assessed for its reliability in order to determine whether or not a belief is reliably acquired. Externalism as a whole suffers from a lack of such specificity. The theory of justified belief Goldman advocates is founded on a *general* basis: "A theory of justified belief of the kind I seek ... must be couched at a suitably deep, general, or abstract level" (Ibid: 2). It is this lack of specificity that creates the problem of *generality* to externalism as we will learn later in *Objections to Externalism*. Reliability is defined in terms of generating true beliefs in preponderant realizations of a given process. Bonjour defines a reliable belief-producing process as

“a process of a general kind that in fact produces true beliefs in a high proportion of the cases in which it occurs” (2002: 221). That is, reliability is understood as a *propensity* notion rather than a *track-record* one as observed by Alston:

reliability is not a matter of actual track record but rather is a *dispositional* or *propensity* notion. To say that a thermometer, medicine, or atlas is reliable is not to make a report of the relative frequency of favourable outcomes in the cases in which it has been used. It may never have been used, but that doesn't keep it from being reliable or unreliable. We may not be able to tell how reliable it is if it hasn't yet been used, but here as elsewhere it is a great mistake to conflate *X's being P* with *our ascertaining or being able to ascertain that X is P*. An atlas may be very reliable even though no one ever consults it. ... In parallel fashion a reliable type of belief formation is one that *would* generate preponderantly true beliefs in a large run of suitable cases (2005: 119).

Thus, reliability is associated with and determined by the tendency of a cognitive process to generate favourable outcomes in preponderant realisations of the process. That is, reliability's assessment criterion requires a process's realisations to generate preponderantly favourable outcomes rather than requiring that the totality of the process's realisations be favourable. Reliability is, therefore, usually understood as a non-absolute notion. As far as belief formations are concerned, the reliability of the cognitive process that generates an output belief is not required to be total in order for the process to be considered reliable. That is, because of our fallible character and thus logical vulnerability to error, our beliefs or belief-producing processes could go wrong at times, that is why the reliability of our beliefs or belief-forming processes shall not be required to be total or absolute, as pointed out by Vogel:

reliability, whether it pertains to beliefs or to processes, need not be total or absolute. Something may do *Y* reliably, even if it would fail to do *Y* under very extreme or extraordinary conditions. An alarm clock may be reliable, despite the fact that it would not ring if the power went out, or if the ceiling collapsed on it. ... Thus, perception, or particular beliefs formed by perception, may count as reliable, despite the fact that perception, or particular beliefs arrived at by perception, can go wrong under certain circumstances (2000: 603-604).

That is, since we are not logically infallible or cognitively invulnerable to error, our cognitive processes, though usually reliable, could go wrong and thus produce false output beliefs. But malfunctioning under certain circumstances does not mean a

particular cognitive process cannot be reliable under other circumstances to produce true beliefs as occasional cognitive malfunctioning is likely to occur even to the most rational people. Thus, an occasional cognitive malfunctioning does not necessarily render a cognitive process permanently unreliable. Externalists take the reliability of a belief-forming cognitive process as the sole linchpin that suffices for the justification of a belief. Goldman argues that when one enjoys justificational status for a belief, one is not necessarily unaware of such status, rather, one is not required to be aware of such status in order to be entitled to possess the status. He, therefore, considers one's justificational status for a belief as one of the things for which one lacks cognitive access:

There are many facts about a cognizer to which he lacks 'privileged access', and I regard the justificational status of his beliefs as one of those things. This is not to say that a cognizer is necessarily ignorant, at any given moment, of the justificational status of his current beliefs. It is only to deny that he necessarily has, or can get, knowledge or true belief about this status. Just as a person can know without knowing that he knows, so he can have justified belief without knowing that it is justified (or believing justifiably that it is justified) (in Pappas 1979: 15).

There is a general consensus that there are many facts about one to which one has no privileged access. Being ignorant of a particular fact or of details about the fact does not render the fact non-existent from an objective perspective, but the lack of any potential cognitive grasp of some basic details about the fact renders one unjustified were one to claim belief about the fact or one of its relevant aspects. Justification, as we have already learned, is perspectival and relative to a cognizer's perspective alone. In other words, my justificational status for a belief is assessed from the perspective of what is accessible to me rather than someone else. Thus, the objective existence of a justifying condition does not obviate the necessity of some sort of cognitive access to such condition if I were to be rational in holding a relevant belief. What puzzles internalists is the argument that if factors external to one's consciousness can bestow justification on a belief, why reliability, why not truth while truth is the most fundamental rationale for believing something. Of such internalists is Bonjour who argues that if a factor, such as reliability, external to one's cognitive perspective, can confer justification, why not truth, while truth is the best reason for holding a belief:

if features of a belief that are in this way external to the believer's cognitive perspective can yield justification, why not truth itself? Surely the fact that a belief is true is, in a way, the best possible reason for holding it, so that if access to the justifying feature by the believer is not required, why doesn't it simply follow that any true belief is justified simply by virtue of being true, no matter how or why it was arrived at or how irrational or careless or even crazy the person in question may have been. In fact, no externalist is willing to go this far, but in a way that merely heightens the puzzling character of the externalist view: why should some external facts and not others be relevant to justification? (2002: 222).

There are two things to note here. Externalists hold that "If a method is justificatory, it must at least be *possible* that all beliefs the method yields are true", observes Leplin (2009: 34). But they also recognize that a belief can be false but justified: "there can be justified beliefs that are false", argues Goldman (in Pappas 1979: 11). Thus, though externalists associate a reliable cognitive process with the tendency to produce true beliefs and thereby identify a justificatory process as one for which it is at least possible that all the beliefs it produces are true, they still constrain justification to reliability rather than truth. One reason is because to associate justification with truth is to require justification to be infallible or incorrigible – a condition necessary for knowledge rather than belief. The other reason is because they, as do internalists, recognize that a belief can be true but unjustified if, from an externalist standpoint, it is produced by an unreliable cognitive process. Since being justified in a belief is just being rational in holding such belief, surely the most plausible explanation to why a belief is unjustified from my perspective is my being ignorant of what is responsible for the belief's being true or my being ignorant of what it is that makes it rational for me to hold such belief rather than the unreliability of the belief-forming process, not only because reliability is unnecessary to confer justification, but also because it is impossible, given the current form of externalism, to establish the reliability of a belief-forming process as we will learn in the generality objection to externalism. Internalists contend that when a belief is justified, there is, on the part of the cognizer, some sort of accessible evidence or basis that initially gave rise to the belief. But externalists deny that there is something in the form of evidence possessed by one when one's belief is justified. That is, externalist accounts of justification do not assume that there is something possessed by a cognizer in the form of evidence (*justification*) when one of the cognizer's beliefs is justified, as observed by Goldman:

I do not ... assume that when a belief is justified there is something "possessed" by the believer which can be called a "justification". I do assume that a justified belief gets its status of being justified from some processes or properties that make it justified. In short, there must be some justification-conferring processes or properties. But this does not imply that there must be an argument, or reason, or anything else, "possessed" at the time of belief by the believer (Ibid: 2).

We have already learned that, from an internalist perspective, one has justificational status – whether as property (state) or process (activity) – only if one has actual or potential cognitive access to the justifying condition behind the belief. Given the internalist considerations that explain the background against which epistemic justification has developed, the externalist account of justified belief faces serious intuitive problems. From an internalist standpoint, so far as the *activity* conception of justification is concerned, a belief is justified for one if one is able to successfully adduce the justifying grounds that gave rise to the belief. But in the case of the *state* conception of justification, one is justified in holding a belief if one has the potential to be cognitively aware of the justifying condition behind the belief or can recollect why or how one came to acquire such belief. Thus, on internalist views, both the activity and the state conception of justification require some sort of access to justifying conditions as we have observed in the problem of memory beliefs in the objections to internalism. Whether the account in question is the *state* or *activity* conception of justification, and whether or not skepticism is raised against the merits of a given belief, we just find our intuitions disapprove of conferring justificatory status in the absence of some inkling of its truth values. The externalist conception of justification is, therefore, incompatible with the background against which the concept of epistemic justification has developed. We have already observed on p. 41 that the concept of epistemic justification has developed from the practice of critical reflection on our beliefs, the practice of epistemic evaluation of beliefs, the challenging of beliefs and responses to such challenges.

Thus, the background against which the concept of epistemic justification has developed strongly suggests an internalist constraint on justifying conditions. Since belief has an intimate connection with reason, we normally believe when we have some reason to believe. In the absence of such reason, we do not tend to believe. And it is because of this intimate connection between belief and reason that we are

psychologically unwilling to regard a belief as justified when no supporting reason can be attainable on reflection. We, by nature, want to know why a proposition is true or probable before forming a belief about it. Similarly, we, also by nature, tend to consider it irrational to accept a belief as justified when none of its good-making features are attainable on reflection. Further to the background against which the concept of epistemic justification has developed and in response to why do we have the concept of *being justified in holding a belief* and why is it important to us, Alston points out:

I suggest that the concept [epistemic justification] was developed, and got its hold on us, because of the practice of critical reflection on our beliefs, of challenging their credentials and responding to such challenges – in short the practice of attempting to *justify* beliefs. Suppose there were no such practice; suppose that no one ever challenges the credentials of anyone's beliefs; suppose that no one ever critically reflects on the grounds or basis of one's own beliefs. In that case would we be interested in determining whether one or another belief *is* justified? I think not. It is only because we participate in such activities, only because we are alive to their importance, that the question of whether someone is in a state of *being justified* in holding a belief is of live interest to us. I am not suggesting that being justified is a matter of engaging in, or successfully engaging in, the activity of justifying. I am not even affirming the less obviously false thesis that being justified in believing that *p* is a matter of *being able to* successfully justify the belief. Many persons are justified in many beliefs without possessing the intellectual or verbal skills to exhibit what justifies those beliefs. Thus the *fact* of being justified is not dependent on any particular actual or possible activity of justifying. What I am suggesting is that those facts of justification would not have the interest and importance for us that they do have if we were not party to a social practice of demanding justification and responding to such demands. ... [but] it seems that we must allow cases in which the basis of a belief is blocked from consciousness through some special features of that situation. Thus we are free to recognize cases of justification in which the complexity of the grounds or the rapidity of their appearance and disappearance renders the subject unable to store and retrieve them as she would have to in order to cite them in answer to a challenge (1989: 236-237).

Moreover, we cannot always in all cases of believing recollect the grounds that give rise to a belief in order to be in a position to attain some cognitive access to the belief's justifying premise. This, the problem of forgotten evidence, is a situation which seems to be most adequately treated, from an internalist perspective, through one's confidence in one's memory, as explained in chapter six. Sometimes a believer can recollect the original supporting grounds behind a belief, but does not possess

what it takes to exhibit or adduce such grounds for the lack of the necessary verbal skills or the lack of intellectual capacity to do so. But this can only be an objection to the activity conception of internalist justification. This case is, however, still solvable on an internalist view. It is, just like the problem of forgotten evidence, most adequately treated through one's confidence in what one recollects to be true. That is, if I, on good authority, had acquired a belief about the origin of the universe when I was in high school, even if I do not now possess the necessary intellectual capacity to adduce what it is that led me to acquire such belief, I can still be internalistically justified in holding such belief as long as I have confidence in what I remember to be true or reliably acquired. These are the sort of objections levelled against internalism. But, though lacking some cognitive access to the justifying condition itself, internalism can still account for the epistemic status of such beliefs through roundabout routes that imply the indispensability of some internalist access to the justifying condition.

## 8.2. Objections to Externalism

Though externalism helps resolve the problem of regress caused by the second-order internalist requirement on justifying conditions, it has much more profound drawbacks than internalism. They are of much greater magnitude. The difficulties externalism faces are three: first, the problem of accidentally true belief (fortuitousness) where a belief-forming process is reliable and its resultant belief true but the believer has no reason to assume it to be true (the clairvoyant case); second, the problem of indistinguishable worlds where a belief-forming process is unreliable and its resultant belief false but justified (the demon world case); third, the problem of generality, which is associated with externalism's lack of specificity as to what process type of a given process token shall be chosen to check for its reliability in order to establish whether or not a belief is reliably produced. First, the clairvoyant case; Norman, a completely reliable clairvoyant, possesses psychic powers in the absence of any evidence for or against both the possibility of such cognitive powers and whether he has such clairvoyant powers. Norman, one day, happens to truly believe that the US president is in New York City in the absence of any evidence or reason for or against the belief in question:

Norman, under certain conditions that usually obtain, is a completely reliable clairvoyant with respect to certain kinds of subject matter. He possesses no evidence or reasons of any kind for or against the general possibility of such a cognitive power, or for or against the thesis that he possesses it. One day Norman comes to believe that the President is in New York City, though he has no evidence either for or against this belief. In fact the belief is true and results from his clairvoyant power under circumstances in which it is completely reliable (BonJour 1980: 21).

Norman's clairvoyant true belief is justified on the reliabilist view of justification by virtue of being the output of a reliable cognitive process. But it is not justified on the internalist view for Norman has no cognitive awareness of what it is that makes his belief true. That is, he is in possession of no reason to think that his belief is true. Given the internalist reasoning that the possession or retention of belief is rational only when we have some grasp as to what it is that makes a belief probable, Norman's belief is irrational for he has no reason to so believe. Internalists would, therefore, hold that believing that *p* in the absence of any cognitive access as to what is responsible for the truth of *p* engenders first-person epistemic irrationality or epistemic irresponsibility – a problem externalism is plagued with. Furthermore, in response to the justifiability of Norman's clairvoyant true belief and why externalism might initially appear plausible, BonJour observes:

I submit, Norman's acceptance of the belief about the President's whereabouts is epistemically irrational and irresponsible, and thereby unjustified, whether or not he believes himself to have clairvoyant power, so long as he has no justification for such a belief. Part of one's epistemic duty is to reflect critically upon one's beliefs, and such critical reflection precludes believing things to which one has, to one's knowledge, no reliable means of epistemic access. We are now face-to-face with the fundamental – and seemingly obvious – intuitive problem with externalism: *why* should the mere fact that such an external relation obtains mean that Norman's belief is epistemically justified, when the relation in question is entirely outside his ken? ... One reason why externalism may seem initially plausible is that if the external relation in question genuinely obtains, then Norman will in fact not go wrong in accepting the belief, and it is, *in a sense*, not an accident that this is so. But how is this supposed to justify Norman's belief? From his subjective perspective, it *is* an accident that the belief is true. Of course, it would not be an accident from the standpoint of our hypothetical external observer who knows all the relevant facts and laws. Such an observer, having constructed the justifying argument ... would be thereby in a position to justify *his own* acceptance of the belief. ... And the suggestion here is that the rationality or justifiability of Norman's belief should be judged from Norman's own perspective, rather than from one that is unavailable to him (Ibid: 22-23).



That is, from Norman's perspective, it is mere luck that his belief is true. Deontologists would argue that Norman had an epistemic duty to reflect properly on the given proposition, and had he done so, he would have discovered that he had no reason to embrace such belief. From a deontological perspective, Norman should have withheld belief in such proposition for such belief was unwarranted from his own cognitive perspective. By knowingly coming to acquire such belief in the absence of evidence, Norman has culpably violated his epistemic obligations and is therefore blameworthy in his belief. He has proceeded irrationally and irresponsibly in his doxastic cultivation. Norman's belief cannot, therefore, be credited with deontological justification. It is also unjustified from a non-deontological internalist perspective for he lacks access to what is responsible for the truth of his belief. The denial of the internalist constraint on justification is to embrace first-person subjective epistemic irrationality, epistemic irresponsibility and epistemic fortuity. Further, rejecting the first-person cognitive awareness requirement on justification would make sense only if we were to evaluate the justifiability of a belief from a perspective inaccessible to a given believing subject – from someone else's viewpoint to whom what confers justification is cognitively accessible (as explained earlier by BonJour). But, from an externalist perspective, Norman is justified in his belief for he is required to have cognitive access to neither the justifying premise behind his belief, nor to the reliability of the cognitive process in question, nor to the fact that the belief is reliably produced. But, argues BonJour, one is epistemically irresponsible and unjustified in accepting an objectively reliable belief without having any cognitive grasp that the belief is reliable:

the fact that a given sort of belief is objectively reliable, and thus that accepting it is in fact conducive to arriving at the truth need not prevent our judging that the epistemic agent who accepts it without any inkling that this is the case violates his epistemic duty and is epistemically irresponsible and unjustified in doing so (Ibid: 24).

No matter how externally reliable a belief or a belief-forming process is, reliability is not sufficient to obviate the necessity to possess some cognitive grasp of a justifying condition. Further, BonJour argues that reliability cannot offset subjective irrationality or epistemic irresponsibility:

external or objective reliability is not enough to offset subjective irrationality. If the acceptance of a belief is seriously unreasonable or unwarranted from the believer's own standpoint, then the mere fact that unbeknownst to the believer its existence in those circumstances lawfully guarantees its truth will not suffice to render the belief epistemically justified and thereby an instance of knowledge (Ibid: 20).

The second objection to externalism is the demon world case – a possible world versus the actual world. This is how Alston characterises the case: “Consider a possible world that is indistinguishable from the actual world so far as we can tell, but in which a Cartesian demon has rigged things so that our perceptual beliefs concerning external physical objects are all false, since there are no such objects” (1989: 222). The contrast between the two worlds is drawn to show whether reliability has any epistemic bearing on conferring justification. Suppose that an agent (*s*) comes to acquire a perceptual belief (*p*) about an external physical object (*x*) in the demon world. Reliabilists would argue that *s* is not justified in believing *p* because *p* is not reliably formed for *s*'s cognitive processes in the demon world are not reliable. The reason why *s*'s cognitive processes are unreliable in the rigged world is because a reliable process is one that has a tendency to produce preponderantly true beliefs. Further, all perceptual beliefs in the demon world are false because there are no such objects in that world. The cognitive apparatus of the agent in the demon world is, therefore, unreliable to produce true perceptual beliefs. Thus, according to externalism, *p* is not justified in the demon world while the object of belief (*x*) has the same shape in both worlds and is, thus, indistinguishable from the *x* of the actual world. That is, both *x*s are indistinguishable from *s*'s perspective. In his analysis of such propositions that are the same in both worlds, Foley argues that the demon world propositions that are indistinguishable from the ones in the actual world are as epistemically rational as the ones in the actual world:

If we are willing to grant that in our world some of the propositions *S* perceptually believes are epistemically rational, then these same propositions would be epistemically rational for *S* in *w* [the demon world] as well. After all, world *w* by hypothesis is one which from *S*'s viewpoint is indistinguishable from this world. So, if given *S*'s situation in this world, his perceptual belief *p* is rational, his belief *p* would be rational in *w* as well. Even if, contrary to what we believe, our world is world *w*, it still can be epistemically rational for us to believe many of the propositions we do, since the epistemic situation in world *w* is indistinguishable from the epistemic situation in a world which has the characteristics we take our world to have.

The point here is a simple one. In effect, I am asking you: aren't some of the propositions you believe epistemically rational for you to believe? And wouldn't whatever it is that make those propositions epistemically rational for you also be present in a world where these propositions are regularly false, but where a demon hid this from you by making the world from your viewpoint indistinguishable from this world (so that what you believed, and what you would believe on reflection, and what you seemed to remember, and what you experienced were identical to this world)? (in Alston 1989: 222-223).

Furthermore, Alston observes that since we cannot distinguish the demon world from the actual world "whatever justifies a certain belief in the one world will ipso facto justify that same belief in the other world" (Ibid: 223). In other words, if the epistemic situations of the two worlds are the same and thus indistinguishable from *s*'s viewpoint, then the same perceptual evidence that justifies *s*'s belief that *p* in the actual world would also be present in the demon world that could do the same job. Thus, due to the indistinguishability of the two worlds from *s*'s viewpoint, *s*'s belief that *p* in the demon world is no less justified than *s*'s belief that *p* in the actual world as they both share the same perceptual evidence and the same epistemic situations, as Alston explains:

Since such a world [the demon world] is indistinguishable by us from our world, we would have just as much justification for our perceptual beliefs there as we actually do. But *ex hypothesi* those beliefs would not be reliably formed. Hence reliability is not necessary for justification (Ibid: 222).

Moreover, externalists and internalists both recognize that the justification of belief is not required to be incorrigible. Thus, *s*'s belief that *p* in the demon world should count as justified unless we demand infallibility for doxastic justification. Furthermore, we already learned on p. 46 that the fundamental role of justification is that of a medium or means to truth and that the concept of justification would be of little importance had truth somehow been immediately and unproblematically accessible to us, and it is due to our lack of immediate and unproblematic access to truth that the need for justification arises. That is why justification should be understood in terms of one's evidence rather than truth. Thus, as long as *s* believes on adequate evidence in either world, *s*'s beliefs are justified whether or not they are reliably formed. The demon world case demonstrates that reliability is not a necessary condition for justification. The absence of reliability does not, therefore, mean the

absence of justificatory status. Externalists completely disregard epistemic accessibility of justifying conditions in favour of a feature, reliability, whose determination or obtaining is neither viable nor necessary to confer justification.

The third problem facing reliabilism is *generality*. Goldman himself recognizes the problem of generality and argues that "A critical problem concerning our [reliabilist] analysis is the degree of generality of the process-types in question" (in Pappas 1979: 12). This is how BonJour outlines the problem:

What the simple reliabilist says ... is that a belief is justified if the *general* sort of cognitive process from which it results is reliable ... But at what *level* of generality should the relevant process be characterised? Consider my present visually induced belief that there is a white cup sitting on my computer table, and consider some of the different ways in which the cognitive process from which it results might be described (assuming as a part of all of these that my eyes are functioning normally): as the visual perception of a cup under good lighting at close range; as the visual perception of a cup (under unspecified conditions and at an unspecified distance) ... as visual perception in general ... And this is only a small sampling of a much larger range of possibilities. Which of these descriptions of the cognitive process in question, we must ask, is the relevant one for applying the simple reliabilist's principle of justification? One reason that this question poses a very serious problem for reliabilists is that the proportion of true beliefs that is produced by the processes specified in these various ways seems to vary extremely widely: I am much less likely to make a mistake about cups that are perceived at close range under good conditions than I am about cups under a wide range of conditions and distances (in Moser 2002: 250-251).

If we were to determine the justifiability of such a visually induced belief from an externalist perspective, we would be plagued with unlimited possibilities of cognitive process types that could generate the same belief, with each process type involving different descriptions and characteristics of the process and situation in which the belief is produced. They are all perceptual processes, but they differ in their characteristics (as pointed out by BonJour). In the absence of a stipulative rule as to which cognitive process type shall be selected to be checked for its reliability in order to determine whether or not the belief in question was reliably produced, accurate judgement on the justificational status of the belief from an externalist perspective will be impossible. Externalism, therefore, generates intuitively unacceptable results. There is no safe resolution for externalism. If it drops reliability, it loses its fundamental thesis but saves itself from the problem of generality. But even then, it

would still suffer from subjective epistemic irresponsibility and epistemic irrationality. Externalism is, therefore, not compatible with the intuitions that explain the background against which epistemic justification has evolved. Further, the generality problem is also outlined by Feldman as follows:

The specific process token that leads to any belief will always be an instance of many process types. For example, the process token leading to my current belief that it is sunny today is an instance of all the following types: the perceptual process, the visual process, processes that occur on Wednesday, processes that lead to true beliefs, etc. Note that these process types are not equally reliable (in Alston 2005: 116).

The problem of generality is an insurmountable problem that originates from reliability *per se*. It arises from the externalists' contention that reliability is a necessary condition for justification. That is, in order to determine whether or not a belief is justified on an externalist view, we need to determine whether or not the given belief-forming process is reliable. And in order to establish whether that reliability obtains, we need to assess the process type for its reliability, rather than the process token, because only process types are repeatable and thereby possess the statistical properties necessary to determine the reliability of a process, as pointed out earlier by Goldman. Reliability, thus understood, is a notion, observes Alston, which is associated with processes that are repeatable:

Reliability or the reverse attaches only to what is repeatable, to what has, actually or potentially, a number of instances. At least this is true if we are thinking of events or processes, as reliabilists in epistemology typically are. It is more common in ordinary speech to attribute reliability and unreliability to mechanisms like thermometers ... clocks, or to medicines or sources of information. 'Repeatability' or 'instances' does not apply directly to them. Nevertheless, repeatability comes in more indirectly. Though a clock or an encyclopedia or a medicine is not "repeatable", it is something that can be operated, consulted, or used many times, and so there is something like repeatability here, namely, repeated employments. So the general point holds that to be assessable as reliable or the reverse, something must, actually or potentially, provide a range of cases of the appropriate sort. For reliability is always a matter of the incidence of favourable outcomes in a multitude of instances or employments of the item in question. ... [That is why] a particular process that takes place at a particular precise time is not the sort of thing that does or does not enjoy a favourable ratio of true beliefs among its products. It occurs just once; the one belief it produces is either true or false, and there's an end to it. Hence, as is regularly said by both friend and foe, it is a *type* of

cognitive process rather than a particular process (a token) that can be assessed for reliability (2005: 116).

Thus, reliability or unreliability is not associated with single employment or single instance processes or items. They come into play when there is an actual track record of multiple employments or instances or when there is a potential for the process or the item to generate such track record upon realisation or consultation. As we have noticed earlier, each process output is a token of many different types. In other words, each process token outcome could be generated by many different process types. Externalism, therefore, suffers from an intractable generality problem whose solution is viable only if reliability is dropped as a necessary requirement for justification, in which case reliabilism loses its key *raison d'être*. Thus, the generality problem remains unresolved for the following reason. Reliability is a dispositional frequency notion associated with things that have a range of instances or employments as observed earlier. In order to determine whether or not a belief is reliably produced, we shall determine whether or not the belief-forming process type is reliable as reliability is assessable only against processes that have a range of manifestations, not only one manifestation as is the case with a process token. And since there is no rule as to which, among the relevant process types, process type to choose for assessing its reliability in order to establish whether or not a given belief is reliably generated, reliabilism remains as a general theory of epistemic justification. That is why, though suffering from its own intuitive but less severe problems, internalism stands out as the only efficient account for justified belief because, argues Alston, there are widely shared and strong intuitions in favour of some sort of accessibility requirement for justification:

I find widely shared and strong intuitions in favour of some kind of accessibility requirement for justification. We expect that if there is something that justifies my belief that *p*, I will be able to determine what it is. We find something incongruous, or conceptually impossible, in the notion of my being justified in believing that *p* while totally lacking any capacity to determine what is responsible for that justification. Thus when reliability theorists of justification maintain that any reliably formed belief is *ipso facto* justified, most of us balk. For since it is possible for a belief to be reliably formed without the subject's having any capacity to determine this, and, indeed, without there being anything accessible to the subject on which the belief is based ... it seems clear to many of us that reliable belief formation cannot be sufficient for justification (1989: 234-235).

Putting externalism into perspective, an externalist would view the justifiability of President Bush's alleged belief<sup>1</sup> that Saddam Hussein possesses WMD solely from the perspective of the reliability of the cognitive process through which the belief was apparently acquired. They will count the grounds that gave rise to the belief as unnecessary to the conferring of justificational status. To determine the justifiability of Bush's supposed belief, the externalist would face the task of determining the belief-forming process token that generated the belief – investigating whether it was a visual, memorial, introspective or reasoning process. The most plausible candidate seems to be reasoning. But the reasoning process token can be an instance of many reasoning process types such as reasoning processes under emotional circumstances, reasoning processes under the influence of faith or a given belief-system, reasoning processes under the influence of a particular ideology, reasoning processes under the influence of a desire, hope, wish, political strategy or objective, reasoning processes under tiring conditions, reasoning processes in a desert alone, reasoning processes driven by wishful thinking, reasoning processes under informed circumstances, reasoning processes in the presence of sufficient counter-evidence, reasoning processes under evidential circumstances, reasoning processes under fear, reasoning processes in a reflective or critical person, reasoning processes in a credulous person, reasoning processes in a reliable person, reasoning processes in an impulsive person, reasoning processes in a psychologically abnormal person, reasoning processes in a competent person and other relevant reasoning processes.

The supposed belief in question could have been acquired by any of the foregoing processes. But the externalist has to choose one of these aforementioned process types to assess for its reliability in order to determine whether or not the belief was reliably produced and determine its justifiability accordingly. But so far, externalism has failed to provide for a rule to choose a process type, among relevant process types, to check for its reliability. Thus, reliabilism faces serious insurmountable problems in determining whether or not a belief is justified. It is submerged with the generality problem in a way that renders reliabilism too general a theory to be competent as an account of justified belief. This is despite our intuitive understanding that reliability is not required in order for justification to obtain.

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<sup>1</sup> Bush (3 December 2002): "we *believe* [Saddam Hussein] has weapons of mass destruction" (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/12/text/20021203-3.html>).

In the philosophical literature, the nature of justification is taken to be either an internal or an external matter to a believing subject. Externalists oppose the common-sensical view of justification represented by internalism. But as we have observed in discussions about the theory, externalism leads to the very eventuality, epistemic irrationality, which the presence of epistemic justification is supposed to eliminate. That is, it is the obtaining of justificatory status that eliminates the possibility of being irrational in holding a belief. But externalism generates epistemic irrationality by denying the necessity to possess some inkling as to what is responsible for the truth of a given belief. From an intuitive perspective, I cannot be said to be rational in holding a belief I have no knowledge of its truth-making features. What renders me rational in holding a well-grounded belief is my knowledge of what is responsible for the well-groundedness of the belief. If I have no knowledge of such a factor, then it is unclear what constitutes my rationality for holding the belief. The fact that the belief is objectively probable has no bearing on my subjective rationality when I have no knowledge as to what is responsible for such an objective probability. My rationality for holding such a belief is determined by my knowledge of the factor responsible for the truth of my belief that  $p$ . In the absence of such knowledge, I cannot rightly claim to be rational in holding such a belief, no matter how truth-conducive the belief is from an objective standpoint. Our intuitions do not go along with the notion of accepting a belief as justified in the absence, on the part of a believing subject, of any knowledge as to what is responsible for the truth of the belief. Thus, externalism conflicts with the very *raison d'être* behind the conferment of justificatory status on a belief by leading to an outcome, epistemic irrationality, whose possibility is supposed to be ruled out by the obtaining of justificatory status. This is besides the generality problem which renders externalism too general a theory to produce any accurate reliability assessment of the process type responsible for the generation of a given belief. The failure of externalism to undermine the internalist theory of justification further reinforces the intuitive plausibility of our common-sensical convictions of justification.



## Chapter Nine

### Part One: An Inquiry into the Rationality Status of the Given Beliefs

This chapter examines the nuclear and terror belief propositions as a paradigm of the professed rationale for the war, demonstrating what their rationality status would have been if they were genuine beliefs. I will carry out the analysis in light of internalism, deontologism and externalism. The first part of the analysis focuses on establishing the rationality status of the given supposed beliefs in light of the evidential conditions at the time. The findings of the first part of the analysis will demonstrate the unprobative nature of the available supporting evidence that *p*. The second part of the analysis investigates the possible attribution of belief, pragmatic belief and acceptance in light of the evidence available at the time.

#### 9.1.1. A Background Analysis

The failure of the Iraq Survey Group to uncover any WMD following the invasion of Iraq confirms the fact, already confirmed by Ritter<sup>1</sup> in June 2000, that the UN inspection regime was fundamentally responsible for the destruction of a substantial part of the Iraqi chemical and biological weapons stockpiles and the elimination of its nuclear weapons program. The rest was unilaterally destroyed by Iraq in the absence of the UN inspection personnel in 1991, as pointed out by Ritter<sup>2</sup>. Thus, by 1998, Iraq was fundamentally disarmed from its chemical and biological weapons stockpiles – as confirmed by Ritter in June 2000 – with its nuclear weapons program eliminated as confirmed by ElBaradei on 9 February 2003: “in ‘98 we eliminated Iraq’s nuclear program”, see appendix (p. 17). The containment strategy was, therefore, successful – a conclusion corroborated by the former US Defense Secretary Cohen on 11 January 2001, before the Bush administration assumed office: “We have successfully contained Saddam Hussein. ... That containment strategy and policy has worked”, see appendix (p. 2). There were only some remaining unresolved disarmament questions with regard to some unaccounted for chemical and biological material as pointed out by both ElBaradei<sup>3</sup> and Ritter<sup>4</sup> – questions that were still lingering even

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to appendix (p. 15) for Ritter’s statement.

<sup>2</sup> Refer to appendix (p. 15) for Ritter’s statement.

<sup>3</sup> ElBaradei (22 November 2002): “It is not true that the operation [the UN inspection process] has been open-ended. In the case of the nuclear file, for example ... we were able in 1997 to say that we ... now believe at that time that we have neutralized Iraq’s nuclear program. The situation was different in the

up to the moment when Secretary Cohen rightly asserts that Iraq has been successfully contained. That is, the UNMOVIC's, the IAEA's and the Bush administration's learning process to find answers for the unresolved issues commenced against such background: a contained Iraq with some unresolved disarmament issues. The terrorist attacks of 9/11 along with the subsequent security environment, America's demonstrated vulnerability to unprecedented harm, the alleged link between Iraq, Al-Qaeda and 9/11, and the absence of the UN inspection personnel in Iraq all contributed to dramatically enhance the urgency to resolve the outstanding Iraqi disarmament issues. That is, these were all contributing factors behind the urgency to discover whether or not the absence of the UN inspection personnel in Iraq had changed the status quo there.

The status quo - regardless of the validity of the charges levelled against Iraq - was deemed unsustainable with Saddam Hussein still in power (see appendix, pp. 87-88). Many high profile influential Bush administration officials were right-wing neo-conservatives with a long-standing tendency to take out Saddam Hussein regardless of the veracity of the stated rationale for the war. That is, some key Bush administration officials – such as Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz, Richard Perle (the Chairman of the Defense Policy Board Advisory Committee during the build-up to Iraq war), and John Bolton (the Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security during the build-up to Iraq war) – were signatories to the PNAC January 1998 letter urging President Clinton to implement a regime-change strategy towards Iraq. The post-9/11 security environment provided them with an opportunity to pursue the regime-change strategy they had already proposed to President Clinton.

Thus, removing Saddam Hussein from power had long been a key policy objective in the US foreign policy. It dates back to the early 1990s. Following the end of the Cold War, a classified preventive war policy initiative (*Defense Planning Guidance*, February 1992) with Iraq being one of the primary case studies was drafted by then-

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chemical and biological and missile, where UNSCOM, the predecessor of UNMOVIC, were reporting that there were still a number of *open questions*" ([http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/middle\\_east/july-dec02/iraq\\_11-22.html](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/middle_east/july-dec02/iraq_11-22.html)).

<sup>4</sup> Ritter (15 November 2005): "[by 1998] we had ascertained that we could account verifiably for 90 to 95% of Iraq's weaponry. We had questions about a certain small percentage of unaccounted-for material" (<http://www.buzzflash.com/interviews/05/11/int05045.html>).

under Secretary of Defence for Policy Paul Wolfowitz<sup>5</sup>. Subsequently, the US policy objective towards Iraq was officially shifted from containment to regime change by the passage of *Iraq Liberation Act* in October 1998. The Act – calling for regime change in Iraq – was a bipartisan congressional legislation unanimously supported by the Congress and the Senate, which later on became the statutory policy of the US government. The same regime-change policy initiative was subsequently adopted and approved by the Bush administration (see appendix, pp. 87-88).

The bases of the supposed beliefs manifested by the Bush administration were controversial satellite photos, phoney defectors, detainees, and conflicting intelligence reporting riddled with qualifications and reservations. Further, evidential considerations were complicated by a mutual mistrust between the Iraqis and the Americans that was driven partly by ideology and partly by experience. But even if the Bush administration had some reason to be wary of the evidence provided by the Iraqi government, they had good reason to consider the counter-evidence presented by the UNMOVIC and the IAEA following their return to Iraq on 25 November 2002. Though the return of the UN inspection personnel to Iraq did not offset the prevalent mistrust between the two, it provided for the lack of authoritative human sources effectively operating on the ground to verify the veracity of the charges levelled against Iraq. But neither the increasing progress of the inspection bodies nor the empirical evidence they were providing seem to have been considered by the Bush administration appropriate enough to accept that not *p*. The Bush administration's reasoning towards threat calculation seems to have been fundamentally influenced and guided by the events of 9/11.

That is, the experience of 9/11 was, apparently, the background against which the Bush administration officials were examining the appropriateness of evidence and the imminence of threats. In a prepared testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee on 9 July 2003, Rumsfeld demonstrates that the advent of the new security environment changed the way they used to think about the probity of evidence: “The coalition did not act in Iraq because we had discovered dramatic new evidence of

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<sup>5</sup> The draft initiative argues: “Our first objective is to prevent the re-emergence of a new rival. This is a dominant consideration underlying the new regional defense strategy and requires that we endeavor to prevent any hostile power from dominating a region whose resources would, under consolidated control, be sufficient to generate global power” (<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/iraq/etc/wolf.html>).

Iraq's pursuit of WMD; we acted because we saw the existing evidence in a new light – through the prism of our experience on 9/11" (<http://armed-services.senate.gov/statemnt/2003/July/Rumsfeld.pdf>). Further, his post-war testimony echoes the pre-war testimony he gave on 18 September 2002 to the House and Senate Armed Services Committee in which he argued that the new security environment along with the high cost of error required that certainty thresholds and evidential standards be scaled down:

On September 11<sup>th</sup>, we were awakened to the fact that America is now vulnerable to unprecedented destruction. That awareness ought to be sufficient to change the way we think about our security, how we defend our country – and the type of certainty and evidence we consider appropriate (<http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=283>).

Thus, the so-called inquiry into the given propositions was launched against the background of a security environment shaped by the experience of 9/11, a long-standing regime-change strategy and a pre-established reasoning marked by expectations, historical precedent and the high cost of error. Holding pre-established opinions about a given proposition often renders us averse to consider evidence contrary to our pre-established reasoning. This is especially the case when the pre-established reasoning is ideological or doctrinal. It is this that normally leads to pragmatic belief. Though the Bush administration exhibited marks of pragmatic belief by disregarding doubts and ignoring counter-evidence, this research argues that pragmatic belief is not an appropriate attribution of attitude. There was reason to be extra cautious of the vulnerabilities exposed by the experience of 9/11, but there was little evidence to support the given propositions or the notion that Iraq was a threat to the US homeland security. There were, at the time, living doubts against the possibility that *p* along with good contrary evidence presented by the IAEA, UNMOVIC, the US DOE, and the US intelligence communities such as the CIA, DIA and the INR.

### **9.1.2. The Nuclear Proposition**

The WMD rationale for the war was three-fold: the possession of chemical and biological weapons along with a reconstituted nuclear weapons program. As a prime example of the Bush administration's belief-constituted assertions regarding the status

of the Iraqi WMD, I have opted to analyse Cheney's belief-stipulated assertion that Saddam Hussein had a reconstituted nuclear weapons program before the war: "we believe<sup>6</sup> he [Saddam Hussein] has, in fact, reconstituted nuclear weapons"<sup>7</sup> (16 March 2003). The rhetorical apparatus through which the rationale for the war was manifested was two-fold: belief and knowledge-based. The majority of the Bush administration charges against Iraq fall within the knowledge and belief category, primarily the knowledge category. But the IAEA and the UNMOVIC presented their findings regarding the veracity of the WMD rationale with a definitive language. I aim to critically analyse, in light of the evidential conditions at the time, the character of the supposed nuclear belief proposition and establish whether or not such belief would have been justifiably acquired or retained.

Following the departure of the UNSCOM in December 1998, the Iraqi regime removed all the UN-mandated monitory cameras at its known and suspect WMD sites. Thus, from then on up to the resumption of the UN inspections on 27 November 2002, there was no authoritative source operating on the ground in Iraq to report on the status of its WMD. Consequently, the Bush administration's gathering of evidence became highly reliant on controversial Satellite photos, misleading detainees, unreliable defectors, historical precedent, out-dated evidence, the previous reports of the UNSCOM and the IAEA dating back to the 1990s, and other roundabout routes of intelligence gathering such as the dubious intercepted communications presented by Powell in his address to the UN Security Council on 5 February 2003. In the espionage world, such techniques and modalities are, though not always reliable, part of the mechanism to gather intelligence or acquire knowledge. But the process of gathering evidence did not stay fettered up to the brink of Iraq war. On 25 November 2002, the UNMOVIC and the IAEA were allowed back to Iraq to verify the Bush administration claims of proscribed WMD activities and find out whether Iraq had resumed WMD production in the intervening four years.

The inspection regime produced concrete results as to the veracity of the nuclear proposition. Based on meticulous and intrusive on-the-ground inspections, verification and monitoring, the IAEA categorically denied that there was any

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<sup>6</sup> The emphases are mine in statements by the Bush administration as well as the Iraqi government.

<sup>7</sup> See appendix (p. 106).

evidence or plausible indication to support the assertion that Iraq had reconstituted its nuclear weapons program, as stressed by ElBaradei on 7 March 2003: "After three months of intrusive inspections, we have to date found *no evidence* or *plausible indication* of the revival of a nuclear weapons programme in Iraq" (<http://www.un.org/News/dh/iraq/elbaradei-7mar03.pdf>). He, even before then, demonstrated the IAEA's *knowledge* that Iraq had no nuclear capability. On 13 December 2002, ElBaradei observes: "We *know* that Iraq ... has no [nuclear] capability whatsoever to produce either a weapon or weapon-usable material" (<http://edition.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0212/13/lt.01.html>). Furthermore, one month following the resumption of the UN inspections in Iraq, on 28 December 2002 ElBaradei reported that "Iraq have [has] not restarted its nuclear weapons program" (<http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0212/28/smn.02.html>). This is besides Saddam Hussein's pre-war categorical denial in an interview on 4 February 2003 with the British Labour party politician Tony Benn:

There is only one truth and therefore I tell you as I have said on many occasions before that *Iraq has no weapons of mass destruction whatsoever*. ... If the purpose was to make sure that Iraq is free of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, then they can do that. These weapons do not come in small pills that you can hide in your pocket. These are weapons of mass destruction and it is easy to work out if Iraq has them or not. We have said many times before and we say it again *today that Iraq is free of such weapons* (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/2726831.stm>).

Moreover, Naji Sabri<sup>8</sup> also emphatically denied the WMD allegations made against the Iraqi government. Thus, belief in the nuclear proposition was asserted at a time when the evidence adduced in support of such proposition was overridden by the IAEA (see appendix, pp. 17-32). In addition to that, on the brink of the transition of power from the Clinton administration to the Bush administration, the Secretary of Defense Cohen asserted that Saddam Hussein has been successfully contained, that he

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<sup>8</sup> On 19 September 2002, Naji Sabri addressed the UN General Assembly and stated "Ladies and Gentlemen, *I hereby declare before you that Iraq is clear of all nuclear, chemical and biological weapons*. If there are any one amongst you who might still worry that the fabrications announced by American officials about Iraq may possibly be true, our country is ready to receive any scientific experts accompanied by politicians you choose to represent any one of your countries to tell us which places and scientific and industrial installations they would wish to see, particularly those about which the American officials have been fabricating false stories, alleging that they contain prohibited materials or activities. If such experts and politicians visit Iraq, we shall provide them with all the facilities they need to achieve their objective, that is to see the true facts as they are" (<http://www.un.org/webcast/ga/57/statements/020919iraqE.htm>).

is not in a position to pose a threat to his neighbours<sup>9</sup>, and that the containment policy and sanctions regime have worked<sup>10</sup>. Thus, by 11 January 2001, there was an authoritative US inner-circle government source testifying to the fact that Iraq was, at the time, successfully contained – WMD and threat-free. Following Cohen's statements, no good intelligence reporting or adequate evidence emerged to override his assertive testimonies. On the contrary, authoritative evidence emerged from the IAEA, corroborating Cohen's attitude on the given matters.

### 9.1.3. An Internalist Analysis of the Nuclear Belief Proposition

This section aims to establish whether or not the given nuclear belief would have been justifiably acquired in light of the internalist conception of justification. The findings of the analysis will, in effect, demonstrate whether or not there was justification for the Bush administration officials to believe that Saddam Hussein had a reconstituted nuclear weapons program before the war. We have already learned that the fundamental *raison d'être* behind internalism is some sort of actual or potential grasp on the part of the believing subject as to what gives rise to a given belief or what is responsible for the truth of the belief. The given nuclear belief satisfies the internalist access requirement by virtue of the subject's being engaged in a public relations campaign to justify the belief. Defending a belief requires cognitive access to the belief's credentials. Further, the given belief satisfies the internalist access requirement by virtue of Cheney's being a normal human being with a reasonable degree of cognitive sophistication capable of reflecting on the belief's credentials to know what gave rise to his belief. If Cheney ever held the belief he manifests in his interview with NBC's Meet the Press, it is either that he had already acquired the belief before the interview and (re)-manifests it then or it could be that he comes to believe the given proposition upon being asked by the moderator about the Iraqi nuclear weapons program. In any case, we need to consider Cheney's broader

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<sup>9</sup> Secretary Cohen (11 January 2001): "*We have successfully contained Saddam Hussein. He does not pose a threat to his neighbors at this point, and I don't believe will be in a position to do so*" (<http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=251>).

<sup>10</sup> Secretary Cohen (11 January 2001): "*We have contained him in a way that he has not been able to rebuild his military and he's not been able to threaten his neighbors. That containment strategy and policy has worked. ... the sanctions have been responsible for curtailing Saddam's military ambitions*" (<http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=251>).

perspectival context to determine what gave rise to his alleged belief rather than solely focusing on the supporting data he presents in the interview.

Four charges gave rise to the nuclear proposition. First, the allegation that Iraq had attained high-strength aluminum tubes believed to be intended to (in the US State Department's terms), that are only really suited to (in Rice's terms), that are necessary to (in Cheney's terms), that are used to (in Bush's terms), that can be adapted (in Powell's terms) to be used in, and that could be used in (in the unclassified NIE's terms) its centrifuge program to enrich uranium in an attempt to make a nuclear bomb, see appendix (pp. 22-26). Second, the allegation that Iraq had sought to obtain yellow cake (pure uranium) from Niger in 2001 and uranium ore from Somalia and Congo, see appendix (pp. 29-31). Third, the alleged negotiation for the purchase of a magnet production plant in 1999 and 2000 between Iraq and firms in Romania, Slovenia, India and Russia as well as Iraq's alleged attempt to acquire magnets that can be used in a gas centrifuge program to enrich uranium, see appendix (pp. 31-32). Fourth, the alleged activities at several suspect nuclear sites as well as satellite photographs indicating that Iraq was rebuilding facilities previously associated with its nuclear weapons program, see appendix (pp. 19-20).

Establishing Cheney's cognitive perspective on the given proposition bears on his overall reasoning behind the alleged reconstitution of the Iraqi nuclear weapons program (*p*). In the immediate context, the interview, he does not adduce any substantiating details behind his apparent belief that *p*. He only appeals to the historical precedent of the Iraqi nuclear program such as the program's dating back to the late 1970s when they got their first nuclear reactor from France, the Israelis' 1981 preventive strike against Iraq's first nuclear reactor (Osirak) and Iraq's continued efforts throughout the 1980s to acquire nuclear weapons, see appendix (p. 106). Further, prior to the interview where he manifests the given belief, he also, on 26 August 2002, appeals to the 1995 testimony of Iraq's minister of industry and military industrialization Hussein Kamel: "we now know that Saddam has resumed his efforts to acquire nuclear weapons. Among other sources, we've gotten this from the firsthand testimony of defectors – including Saddam's own son-in-law, who was subsequently murdered at Saddam's direction" (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/08/20020826.html>). Following his



defection to Jordan in 1995, Kamel was debriefed on 22 August 1995 by the UN inspection personnel. During the debriefing, he demonstrated that Iraq had already destroyed all its WMD: "I ordered destruction of all chemical weapons. All weapons – biological, chemical, missile, nuclear were destroyed" (<http://www.un.org/Depts/unmovic/documents/hk.pdf>), p. 13.

Thus, Kamel's testimony was no evidence to support the alleged reconstitution of the Iraqi nuclear weapons program. On the contrary, it was evidence that Iraq had already dismantled its nuclear weapons program while the UNSCOM and the IAEA were still functional in Iraq. But Cheney skews and misrepresents the testimony in a bid to reinforce his position on the matter. The way Cheney tries to justify the proposition that Iraq had resumed prohibited nuclear activities is analogous to the way people try to justify the existence of God in a sense that they both appeal to historical evidence or historical precedent<sup>11</sup>. There was no good current evidence to support the nuclear proposition. That is, belief in the nuclear proposition was ruled out by the evidence available at the time. Of the four-fold rationale behind the nuclear proposition, Cheney makes specific reference only to the pursuit of aluminum tubes in his public statements. Stressing Iraq's alleged attempt to acquire centrifuge-usable aluminum tubes, he, on 8 September 2002, observes: "Specifically aluminium tubes. ... he has been seeking to acquire ... the kinds of tubes that are necessary to build a centrifuge" (<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/bush/meet.htm>). Moreover, in his interview with NBC's *Meet the Press* on 8 September 2002, Cheney also refers to the overall intelligence as to what gives rise to belief in the nuclear proposition: we are able "to conclude, based on intelligence ... that he has reconstituted his nuclear

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<sup>11</sup> Similarly, Bush also refers to outdated reporting in his remarks on 7 September 2002: "when the inspectors *first* went into Iraq and were ... finally denied access, a report came out of the ... IAEA that they [the Iraqis] were six months away from developing a weapon. I don't know *what more evidence we need*" (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/text/20020907-2.html>).

Furthermore, in his unclassified report to Congress (1 January through 30 June 2001), Tenet also refers to Iraq's historical precedent while judging whether or not Iraq had reconstituted its WMD programs following the departure of the UN inspectors in December 1998: "the automated video monitoring systems installed by the UN at known and suspect WMD facilities in Iraq are still not operating. Having lost this on-the-ground access, it is more difficult for the UN or the US to accurately assess the current state of Iraq's WMD programs. Given Iraq's *past behavior*, it is likely that Baghdad has used the intervening period [1998-2001] to reconstitute prohibited programs" ([https://www.cia.gov/library/reports/archived-reports-1/jan\\_jun2001.htm](https://www.cia.gov/library/reports/archived-reports-1/jan_jun2001.htm)).

This further demonstrates how the Bush administration officials were making reference to historical precedent or outdated reporting in a bid to substitute it for the lack of current good evidence.

program to develop a nuclear weapon” (<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/bush/meet.htm>). By virtue of being the Vice President and also his reference to the overall intelligence behind the nuclear proposition, Cheney would have been aware of the other three rationales behind the given proposition. Thus, we can rightly regard the four-fold rationale as what apparently gave rise to the Bush administration's apparent belief in the nuclear proposition.

#### 9.1.4. The Adequacy of the Four-fold Rationale

The adequacy of justifying grounds is, from an internalist perspective, understood as truth-conducivity or sufficient indication of truth or a reliable indicator of truth. Internalists, thus, do not require that a belief be based on *incorrigible* evidence in order for it to be justified. They, rather, speak of justification as a medium or a means to truth. That is, though they concur that truth is, ideally, the ultimate goal of our cognitive endeavours in any learning or doxastic situation, they do not regard truth as a necessary requirement for epistemic justification. There is a general consensus among epistemologists that truth is not immediately or unproblematically accessible to us in most non-axiomatic learning situations. It is because of this that epistemologists of all bents regard the truth of a belief as irrelevant to the belief's rationality status. The given rationale was not sufficient to warrant belief in the nuclear proposition. There was a perceptible sense of doubt in responses by part of the US intelligence community about the probability of the nuclear proposition. In addition to that, there was a perceptible lack of confidence in the probity of the supporting evidence that *p*. That is, the discourse of the supporting evidence abounded with caveats, reservations and qualifications such as *probably*, *likely*, *may (be)*, *assess*, *could (be)*, *possibly*, and *suggest*, see appendix (pp. 15-32). By contrast, the IAEA's findings were probative. There was a clear sense of confidence in the discourse of the IAEA's empirical evidence that not *p*, see appendix (pp. 17-32).

The IAEA's findings were the outcome of a thorough field investigation, document and equipment analysis on the ground in Iraq. They were conclusions drawn by an independent, competent and authoritative panel mandated by the UN Security Council. Moreover, the IAEA arrived at some of its conclusions, such as the refutation of the alleged uranium transactions between Iraq and Niger, with the

concurrence of other independent international experts. There was no good evidence to defeat, challenge, or undermine the IAEA's findings. They were good enough to have defeated the four-fold rationale behind the nuclear proposition. But the supporting evidence that *p* was seriously doubted by the state department's intelligence and research bureau (INR). On 1 October 2002, the INR expressed grave doubts about the probability of the nuclear proposition, counting the available corroborating evidence as inadequate and unpersuasive to support the nuclear proposition, see appendix (pp. 18-19). The INR further challenged the supporting evidence that *p*, regarding it as unpersuasive the argument that the aluminum tubes sought by Iraq were intended to be used as centrifuge rotors. They, therefore, concluded that the tubes were not intended for use in Iraq's nuclear weapons program, see appendix (p. 22). Moreover, the INR also concurred with the DOE's judgment that the aluminum tubes were poorly suited for use as centrifuge rotors, see appendix (p. 22). In addition, the INR also concluded on 1 October 2002 that "the claims of Iraqi pursuit of natural uranium in Africa are, in INR's assessment, *highly dubious*", see appendix (p. 29). The unprobativeness and inadequacy of the supporting evidence was also recognized by the Bush administration itself. In his remarks on 8 September 2002, Cheney himself acknowledges the inadequacy of the supporting evidence that *p*:

What we know is just bits and pieces we gather through the intelligence system. ... So we have to deal with these bits and pieces, and try to put them together in a mosaic to understand what's going on. ... We have a tendency – I don't know if it's part of the ... American character – to say, 'Well, we'll sit down and we'll evaluate the evidence. We'll draw a conclusion'. But we always think in terms that we've got all the evidence. Here, we don't have all the evidence. We have 10 percent, 20 percent, 30 percent. We don't know how much. We know we have a part of the picture. And that part of the picture tells us that he is, in fact, actively and aggressively seeking to acquire nuclear weapons (<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/bush/meet.htm>).

#### **9.1.5. A Mentalist Analysis of the Nuclear Belief Proposition**

Mentalism is an internalist conception of justification that restricts justifying conditions to factors internal to us in a metaphysical sense whether they be occurrent or dispositional states or features of us. Proponents of mentalism support the mentalist location of justifying conditions for they contend that only mental states can provide

for the kind of access we need in order to possess justificational status for a belief. But all internalists, whether or not espousing mentalism, concur that a justifying condition must be adequate or truth-conducive aside from being accessible (directly or indirectly) to a given believing subject. The truth-conducivity condition of justifying factors is often presupposed in discussions about mentalism. Though the given subject satisfies the internalist access requirement on justification as already observed, the given belief does not satisfy the mentalist constraint on justification.

None of the four-fold rationale behind the given belief was internal to Cheney in a metaphysical sense being a state or feature of him. Thus, from a mentalist perspective, none of the four-fold rationale qualifies to function as a justifying condition for the belief in question. The belief could, therefore, not have been justifiably acquired according to mentalism for its grounds fail to meet both the mentalist and the truth-conducivity condition. We have already observed that mentalism fails to provide for a comprehensive account of justification. If the mentalist argument holds, we would be justified only in beliefs whose rationale is internal to us in a metaphysical sense being a state or feature of us. Mentalism, therefore, detracts from the tenability of the (potential) awareness constraint on justifying conditions. It shall, thereby, be ruled out as a conception of the accessibility condition on justifying grounds. From a non-mentalistic internalist perspective, the given belief would not have been unjustifiably acquired for failing to satisfy the mentalist requirement on justification, but for failing to meet the adequacy condition on justifying grounds. Violations of the mentalist requirement on justification are no good reason to deny a belief positive epistemic status.

#### **9.1.6. A Perspectival Internalist Analysis of the Nuclear Belief Proposition**

Perspectival Internalism (PI) is one of the internalist conceptions through which the awareness constraint on justification is construed. It is an internalist account whose underlying thesis is that what confers justificatory status on a belief falls within our cognitive perspective on the world with *justified belief* being singled out as the typical candidate among what falls within our ken. The idea is, if something is within our cognitive perspective on the world, then it is the sort of thing that we have already taken note of. We are or can, therefore, become conscious of it if it is not forgotten or

lost irretrievably. We have already determined Cheney's perspective on the given nuclear proposition as the four-fold rationale which apparently gave rise to belief in such proposition. But examining whether or not such belief would have been justifiably acquired according to perspectival internalism is complicated by the fact that we do not know whether or not he believed the four-fold rationale behind the supposed belief in question. The four-fold rationale was too unprobative to have been trusted. Its epistemic force was overwhelmingly doubted and Cheney was aware of its inadequacy to warrant belief. But even if we assume that he trusted the four-fold rationale and therefore came to believe it, such belief could not have been justifiably acquired for the four-fold rationale was debunked by the IAEA's empirical evidence that not *p*.

Belief in the four-fold rationale could not, therefore, have counted as a justified belief of Cheney's cognitive perspective on the nuclear proposition. It is because of this that such belief cannot satisfy the perspectival internalism requirement in order for it to qualify as a justifying premise for the belief in question. The supposed belief in the nuclear proposition could not, thereby, have been justifiably acquired from the standpoint of perspectival internalism. In accordance with Alston's conception of perspectival internalism, a belief that does not have as its justifying premise a justified belief does not enjoy justificational status for he argues that an unjustified belief cannot transfer to another belief a justification it does not itself possess. I, however, contend that belief in the nuclear proposition could not have been justifiably acquired for its failure to meet the adequacy condition of justification rather than its failure to meet the perspectival internalism requirement. We possess justificational status for many of our beliefs whose justifying conditions we have no justified belief about. Epistemic justification obtains as long as we have some potential awareness to what confers such positive epistemic status regardless of the form such awareness takes – whether it takes the form of belief, justified belief, knowledge or just plain cognitive awareness.

#### **9.1.7. An Access Internalist Analysis of the Nuclear Belief Proposition**

Accessibilism is also one of the internalist avenues through which internalists conceive the awareness requirement on justification. The fundamental thesis of access internalism is that what bestows justification on a belief shall be, in some way,

accessible to the believer. We have already established that the supposed nuclear belief does not suffer from accessibilism in the sense of its four-fold rationale being accessible to the alleged believing subject. This, however, shall not denote that being cognitively accessible renders a ground justification-conferring. The truth-conducivity of justifying grounds is often presupposed here. If the doxastic attitude Cheney manifests as his position on the given matter was ever a genuine belief, it would not have been justifiably acquired for knowingly basing it on defeated evidence. Given Iraq's historical precedent in relation to its WMD, it is logically possible to think that the four-fold rationale behind the given belief had, at some point before the resumption of the UN inspections, appeared probable to Cheney. But even before the inspections resumed, they (the aluminium tubes and the yellow cake claims) were undermined by the INR's assertive counter-evidence and were, all four, eventually debunked by the emergence of the IAEA's authoritative findings.

#### **9.1.8. An Externalist Analysis of the Nuclear Belief Proposition**

Unlike internalism, externalism does not require any cognitive access to justifying conditions. Instead, externalists argue that a belief's justifiability status is solely a matter of the reliability of the cognitive process that generates the belief. But whenever we try to establish whether or not a belief possesses justificatory status, our intuitions are satisfied only if we can establish the adequacy of the evidence that gave rise to the belief, whether there was sufficient overriding evidence accessible to the believing subject at the time of belief, and whether the subject has some cognitive grasp as to what it is that is responsible for the truth of the belief. These are the foremost considerations that cross our mind whenever the question of the rationality of belief arises. But the externalist argument goes against such intuitions. Externalists argue in favour of a requirement, reliability, which is not only unnecessary for epistemic justification, but impossible to establish given the current form of externalism. The cognitive process token that might have generated the nuclear belief would have been one of reasoning and that process token could have been an instance of each of the process types outlined in the analysis of Bush' supposed belief attitude (see p. 139-40). That is, the belief could have been acquired by any of the outlined process types. In the absence of a stipulative rule to make an informed choice as to which of the process types to choose to check for its reliability, determining whether

or not the given belief would have been reliably acquired cannot be accurately established.

### 9.1.9. A Deontological Analysis of the Nuclear Belief Proposition

Epistemic deontology implies doxastic voluntarism. Doxastic voluntarists argue that we have voluntary control over our doxastic attitudes. That is, they regard the permissibility of belief, fulfilment of intellectual obligations, and being blameless in holding a belief as the repository of epistemic justification. We have already learned that some of our intellectual obligations are to believe only on the basis of good evidence, seek evidence pro and con, not stifling doubts, and not ignoring contrary evidence when engaged in the resolution of doxastic opinion on an issue. In other words, to fulfil epistemic obligations is, as already explained, to pursue the truth and avoid the error. That is, to fulfil a relevant epistemic obligation is to attend to epistemic considerations that ensure or are conducive of such outcome. Prior to the emergence of the IAEA's findings, there was some flimsy supporting evidence behind the given nuclear proposition. That is, there was no sufficient contrary evidence of the IAEA's character to completely rule out belief in the given proposition. Due to the lack of sufficient clarity on whether  $p$  or not  $p$ , an inquiry was initiated by the IAEA on the ground in Iraq on 27 November 2002. This is aside from the so-called investigation launched by the Bush administration itself. It is this initiation of inquiry that comprises one of the core intellectual obligations. We normally feel compelled to launch an inquiry into a proposition when it is not clear for us whether  $p$  or not  $p$ . This is, of course, if we wanted to settle opinion on the proposition. Peirce argues that the need for inquiry usually arises whenever there is real and living doubt about a proposition:

The irritation of doubt causes a struggle to attain a state of belief. I shall term this struggle *inquiry* ... The irritation of doubt is the only immediate motive for the struggle to attain belief. ... [in order to] stimulate the mind to any struggle after belief. There must be a real and living doubt (1877: 6).

Peirce also argues that the object of inquiry is to settle opinion – acquiring a firm belief – sweeping away expectations of proof as the sole end of inquiry:

the sole object of inquiry is the settlement of opinion. We may fancy that this is not enough for us, and that we seek, not merely an opinion, but a true

opinion. But put this fancy to the test, and it proves groundless; for as soon as a firm belief is reached we are entirely satisfied, whether the belief be true or false. ... That the settlement of opinion is the sole end of inquiry is a very important proposition. It sweeps away, at once, various vague and erroneous conceptions of proof (Ibid: 6).

We have already observed on p. 136 that the object of our cognitive endeavours is, ideally, to acquire the truth in any learning situation. This is also what deontologists take to be one of our principal epistemic obligations. But, as pointed out by Peirce, often the doubts that motivate inquiry cease whenever we arrive at a firm belief. That is, even though we normally initiate an inquiry with truth being our end, we are often psychologically satisfied whenever we arrive at a conclusion about which we hold a firm belief. Though we aspire to know the truth of the matter and it is to this end that we initiate the inquiry, we end up psychologically at ease in our inquiry with the arrival of a firm belief about the existence of God, the origin of the universe, or the possibility of extraterrestrial life. That is why belief plays an indispensable role in settling opinion on matters whose truth is not immediately knowable. Furthermore, we tend to hold a belief about the patently true as well; we believe them to be true. Peirce argues that apart from truth, belief is the only propositional attitude that renders an inquirer to be in "a calm and satisfactory state" (Ibid: 5). But the calm and satisfactory state which belief tends to bring about is attainable normally on good evidence - evidence that we take to be adequate or satisfactory.

Believing in the absence of good evidence is, from a deontological perspective, a violation of our intellectual responsibilities. Epistemic deontologists contend that we have an intellectual obligation to refrain from belief in the absence of good evidence. The supporting evidence adduced in favour of belief in the nuclear proposition was too unprobative to warrant belief. There was sufficient evidence against the possibility that *p*. Thus, from a deontological perspective, the Bush administration was intellectually obligated to refrain from belief the nuclear proposition. Clifford argues that it is "wrong to believe on insufficient evidence or to nourish belief by suppressing doubts and avoiding investigation" (1999: 74). This is the fundamental reasoning behind the ethics of belief. If the given belief was ever a genuine belief, the alleged believing subject is to blame for violating his most sacred intellectual obligation. The alleged belief is, therefore, blameworthy from a deontological standpoint.



Deontologists hold that it is a fundamental intellectual responsibility to conduct proper inquiry where there is doubt that  $p$  and we shall avoid or suspend belief in the absence of good evidence. The given nuclear belief would not have been epistemically permissible under the evidential conditions at the time. On the deontological view, justificational status cannot be attributed to a belief whose causal ancestry involves violations of intellectual obligation. The given belief could not, therefore, have been justifiably acquired. From a deontological perspective, it is epistemically irresponsible to ignore contrary evidence or suppress doubts. In the case of the nuclear proposition, the totality of the available evidence was against belief in such proposition.

#### **9.1.10. The Terror Proposition**

The terror proposition was one of the professed rationales behind the 2003 invasion of Iraq. In this section, I aim to outline what gave rise to belief in the proposition that Iraq was in league with Al-Qaeda and establish, in light of the evidential conditions at the time, whether such belief could have been justifiably acquired. I have chosen to take Rice's belief-free assertion as the paradigm of the statements that assert such a relationship between the two. She, on 25 September 2002, asserts that "there are contacts between Iraq and al-Qaida. ... there clearly are contacts between al-Qaida and Iraq that can be documented. There clearly is testimony that ... there's a *relationship* here" ([http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/international/july-dec02/rice\\_9-25.html](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/international/july-dec02/rice_9-25.html)). Unlike Cheney's belief-stipulated assertion, Rice's assertion is manifested in a belief-free manner. We have already learned that belief propositions manifested as belief-free assertions normally imply certainty on the part of the asserter. But we will learn below that there was no good evidence available at the time to warrant any reasonable degree of certainty that  $p$ .

Three reasons were adduced by the Bush administration to support the proposition that there was a relationship between Iraq and Al-Qaeda. First, the presence of Al-Qaeda operatives in Saddam Hussein's controlled Iraq. Most Bush administration officials underscored the presence of Al-Qaeda elements in Iraq. On 8 September 2002, Cheney appeals to perceptual evidence to support the given proposition: "since the operations in Afghanistan – we've *seen* al-Qaeda members operating physically in Iraq" (<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/bush/meet.htm>). But he does not provide

any photographic evidence – satellite or otherwise – to substantiate his perceptual assertion. Similarly, on 18 September 2002, Rumsfeld claims to have *knowledge* that Al-Qaeda is functional in Iraq: “We *know* that al-Qaeda is operating in Iraq *today*” (<http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=283>). Second, the claim that Iraq was aiding and training Al-Qaeda in document forgery, poisons, bomb-making, combat operations, chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear weapons. For example, on 28 January 2003, Bush states: “Evidence from intelligence sources, secret communications, and statements by people now in custody reveal that Saddam Hussein *aids* and *protects* terrorists, including members of al Qaeda” (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030128-19.html>). Furthermore, on 31 January 2003, Cheney underlines the same thesis: “His regime *aids* and *protects* terrorists, including members of al Qaeda” (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030131-13.html>). In his Cincinnati speech on 7 October 2002, Bush also argues: “We’ve learned that Iraq has trained al Qaeda members in bomb-making and poisons and deadly gases” (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021007-8.html>). Further to Iraq’s training of Al-Qaeda, Bush states (8 February 2003):

Iraq has sent *bomb-making* and *document forgery* experts to work with al Qaeda. Iraq has also provided al Qaeda with *chemical* and *biological* weapons training. And an al Qaeda operative was sent to Iraq several times in the late 1990s for help in acquiring *poisons* and *gases* (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030208.html>).

Third, the claim that Iraq was involved in the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001. What gave rise to such a proposition was the allegation that one of the 9/11 hijackers, Atta, had met up with a senior Iraqi intelligence officer in Prague before the 9/11 attacks, as underscored by Cheney in his appearance on NBC’s *Meet the Press* on 9 December 2001: It has “been pretty well confirmed, that he [Mohammed Atta] did go to Prague and he did meet with a senior official of the Iraqi intelligence service in Czechoslovakia last April, several months before the [9/11] attack” (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/vicepresident/news-speeches/speeches/vp20011209.html>).

### 9.1.11. The Adequacy of the Corroborating Evidence

The supporting grounds adduced to defend the given terror proposition do not constitute sufficient evidence to show current connections between Iraq and Al-Qaeda or to warrant belief in such proposition. They are of a variety of hypothetical considerations along with evidence of some past contacts between the two. First, they consist of a hypothetical, contingent and possible outcome. That is, *if* Iraq and Al-Qaeda were to link up. For example, on 22 March 2002, Bush states: “a nightmare scenario, of course, would be *if* a terrorist organization such as al Qaeda were to link up with a barbaric regime such as Iraq and, thereby, in essence, possess weapons of mass destruction” (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/03/20020322-10.html>). Similarly, in his remarks on 24 March 2002, Cheney also argues: “We're worried about the *possible marriage*, if you will, on the one hand between the terrorist organizations and on the other, weapons of mass destruction capability, the kind of devastating materials that Saddam used against his own people in '88” (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/vicepresident/news-speeches/speeches/vp20020324.html>). Second, they consist of likely past contacts between the two sides, as pointed out by Rice in her interview with CNN's *Late Edition* on 8 September 2002: “it's just more of a picture that is emerging that there may well have been contacts between al Qaeda and Saddam Hussein's regime” (<http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0209/08/le.00.html>).

Further to the past contacts between the two, Rumsfeld argues (18 September 2002): “We also know that there *have been* a number of contacts between Iraq and al-Qaeda *over the years*” (<http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=283>). Rice again stresses the past contacts between the two and observes (25 September 2002): “We clearly know that there were *in the past* and have been contacts between senior Iraqi officials and members of al-Qaida going back for actually quite a long time” ([http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/international/july-dec02/rice\\_9-25.html](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/international/july-dec02/rice_9-25.html)). Third, what incentives Iraq might have had that could have led to making common cause and cultivation of a relationship with Al-Qaeda, as emphasized by Rumsfeld on 18 September 2002: “He has *incentives* to make *common cause* with terrorists. He shares many *common objectives* with groups like al-Qaeda, including an antipathy for

the Saudi royal family and a desire to drive the U.S. out of the Persian Gulf region” (<http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=283>). Echoing the same theme, Cheney states (8 September 2002):

The fact of the matter is, if you look at Osama bin Laden and the al-Qaeda organization, on the one hand, and Saddam Hussein on the other, while they come from different perspectives, one’s religiously motivated, the other is secular, etc., the fact of the matter is they have *the same objective*: to drive the United States out of the Middle East, to strike the United States, if at all possible. So to suggest there’s not a *common interest* there, I think, would be wrong (<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/bush/meet.htm>).

In addition, the discourse through which the proposition in question was asserted abounded with expressions of uncertainty such as maybe, could be, sources of varying degrees of reliability, possible training, assumptions, contradictory information, second hand details, unspecified training, suggestions, and unconfirmed reports. For instance, recognizing the absence of probity in the available corroborating evidence, Rumsfeld observes (26 September 2002):

The knowledge that the intelligence community ... has of the al Qaeda relationship with Iraq is evolving. It’s based on a lot of different types of sources of *varying degrees of reliability*. Some of it, admittedly, comes from detainees, which has been helpful, and particularly some high-ranking detainees [Al-Libi] (<http://www.defense.gov/Transcripts/Transcript.aspx?TranscriptID=3669>).

Further, in his testimony to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence on 17 September 2002, Tenet also communicates a lack of confidence in the available supporting evidence: “As with much of the information on the overall relationship, details on training are *second-hand* or from sources of *varying reliability*” ([http://www.leadingtowar.com/PDFsources\\_claims\\_training/2002\\_02\\_22\\_SenatePostwarReport.pdf](http://www.leadingtowar.com/PDFsources_claims_training/2002_02_22_SenatePostwarReport.pdf)). This demonstrates the uncertainty which the Bush administration officials were feeling about the given terror proposition. That is, it shows that they did not believe the available supporting evidence to be adequate in a way to warrant belief in the given proposition.

### 9.1.12. The Adequacy of the Counter-Evidence

Unlike the nuclear proposition, the terror proposition was an emerging issue with an openly recognized lack of probity in the available supporting evidence. The absence of sufficient evidence pro and con constituted evidential complications in settling doxastic opinion on the issue. That is, resolving opinion on the issue was hindered by the lack of an authoritative source such as the IAEA to verify the possibility of such a relationship between the two. Lacking good evidence to warrant a firm doxastic attitude, the approach to understand – both affirmatively and negatively – the possibility of such connections was based on understanding the political ideologies of the two, their mutual antipathy towards the US government, Iraq's history of supporting terrorist groups, its past contacts with Al-Qaeda, and coerced evidence taken from detainees. Therefore, the alleged relationship between the two remained elusive until after the war. However, prior to the war, there were opposing views as to the possibility of such connections. The US intelligence community communicated a clear sense of doubt in the veracity of the available corroborating evidence.

First, with respect to the overall links between the two, the CIA (21 June 2002)<sup>12</sup> asserts that their approach in examining the issue is *purposefully aggressive* with their knowledge of the link containing *critical gaps*, reporting on the issue *limited* and the reliability of many of their sources *questionable*. They also demonstrate that their assessment of such connections is based on *fragmented* and *conflicting* reporting from sources of *varying reliability*. Further, the CIA<sup>13</sup> concludes on 29 January 2003 that the two are far from being natural partners, submitting that the information on which the relationship is based is at times contradictory and is obtained from sources of varying degrees of reliability. Second, regarding the presence of Al-Qaeda operatives in Iraq, the CIA (21 June 2002)<sup>14</sup> recognizes that they lack *positive indications* to show that Iraq is complicit in their presence in the country. They<sup>15</sup> again, in September 2002, reiterate that they lack certainty as to whether Iraq is actively complicit in its territory being used as a safehaven by Al-Qaeda. Moreover, in a

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<sup>12</sup> See appendix (pp. 34-5).

<sup>13</sup> See appendix (pp. 44-5).

<sup>14</sup> See appendix (p. 35).

<sup>15</sup> See appendix (p. 36).

testimony answering Senator Carl Levin's questions on 11 February 2003, Tenet<sup>16</sup> himself underscores the lack of knowledge as to whether the terrorists who found refuge in Baghdad were under the control or sponsorship of the Iraqi government.

Third, the intelligence community expressed serious doubts about the possibility of the alleged Iraqi training of Al-Qaeda. The allegation was primarily based on the misleading debriefings of Al-Libi. The DIA, CIA, and NIE all express serious doubts about Al-Libi's claims. The DIA (22 February 2002)<sup>17</sup> challenges the veracity of Al-Libi's claims, arguing that he lacks specific details regarding the Iraqis involved, the type of WMD material involved and the location of the training. They, further, argue that it is more likely that he is deliberately misleading the debriefers and that Iraq is unlikely to provide assistance to Al-Qaeda. They (28 February 2002)<sup>18</sup> also point out that all-source intelligence has not confirmed Iraq's involvement in Al-Qaeda's WMD acquisition efforts in the way of providing knowledge or material. Moreover, the DIA (31 July 2002)<sup>19</sup> reiterates the position they take on 22 February 2002, adding that despite the lack of the specific details already mentioned, Al-Libi's information is second hand and not from his own personal experience. They<sup>20</sup>, therefore, assert that there is no compelling evidence to support the training or direct cooperation between the two and also regard the information adduced by the Bush administration to support such claims as *anecdotal*.

In addition, the CIA (29 January 2003)<sup>21</sup> also expresses strong doubts about the allegation that Iraq provided WMD training and assistance to Al-Qaeda. Describing it as *possible* cooperation *suggested* by some reports, the CIA notes that most of the reports lack clarity as to whether the training initiatives remained in the planning stages or were implemented. They regard reports on training as *opaque* and of *varying reliability*, touching on future intentions rather than presenting evidence of completed training. Further reiterating the lack of clarity and specificity in such reports, the CIA asserts that in about half of the reports they (the CIA) could not determine whether the Iraqi nationals involved in training Al-Qaeda had any relationship with the Iraqi

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<sup>16</sup> See appendix (p. 47).

<sup>17</sup> See appendix (p. 48).

<sup>18</sup> See appendix (p. 49).

<sup>19</sup> See appendix (p. 51).

<sup>20</sup> See appendix (p. 52).

<sup>21</sup> See appendix (pp. 53-54).

government or were expatriate or freelance engineers or scientists. The CIA also recognizes that some of the reports are based on hearsay, and some are just simple declarative accusations with no substantiating details. Overall, the CIA is sceptical of the source on which a substantial part of the Iraqi-Al-Qaeda training is based.

Al-Libi claimed that Al-Qaeda sent two of its associates to Iraq in December 2000 in order to be trained by the Iraqis in chemical and biological weapons acquisition. But the CIA (29 January 2003)<sup>22</sup> argues that Al-Libi was not in a position to know if any training had occurred for the two Al-Qaeda associates departed for Iraq but did not return. The classified version of the NIE (1 October 2002)<sup>23</sup> also shares the doubts and concerns raised by the CIA and DIA about the reports of the Iraqi-Al-Qaeda relationship as well as the alleged training. It observes that much of the information about the alleged training and the relationship between the two is second-hand and from sources of varying reliability. Underlining the pervasive lack of clarity and specificity in reports on chemical and biological weapons training, the NIE also points out that the intelligence community could not determine whether the Iraqi individuals allegedly involved in training the Al-Qaeda were directed by the Iraqi government or whether or not the training initiatives were implemented at all.

Fourth, the intelligence community had grave doubts about the alleged Iraqi role in the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001. The claim that the Iraqi government had a role in 9/11 was based on the alleged meeting of one of the leading 9/11 hijackers, Mohammed Atta, with a senior Iraqi intelligence officer in Prague in April 2001. But the CIA (21 June 2002)<sup>24</sup> regards the reports on their meeting as *contradictory*, arguing that his travels to Prague have not been verified. They also point out that some of their analysts agree that intelligence reports provide no conclusive evidence to support the idea that the two had cooperated on certain terrorist operations. Further, the CIA (29 January 2003)<sup>25</sup> asserts that the most reliable reporting at the time casts doubt on the possibility of the given meeting in Prague. Considering it complicated and sometimes contradictory the information about Atta's visits to Prague, they point out that a CIA and FBI review of intelligence and open-source reporting leads them to

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<sup>22</sup> See appendix (p. 55).

<sup>23</sup> See appendix (p. 52).

<sup>24</sup> See appendix (p. 59).

<sup>25</sup> See appendix (pp. 60-1).

doubt the information claiming that such alleged meeting had taken place. Thus, by January 2003, the CIA<sup>26</sup> concludes that they have no credible information to support the thesis that Iraq was complicit in 9/11 or in any other Al-Qaeda operations. Moreover, the DIA (31 July 2002) also expresses serious doubts about reports claiming that the given meeting had taken place. They assert that "There are significant information gaps" in such reports, arguing that "there is no photographic, immigration or other documentary evidence indicating Atta was in the Czech Republic during the timeframe of the meeting"<sup>27</sup>.

Thus, the intelligence community judges the available supporting evidence to be inadequate to warrant belief in the given terror proposition. That is, they demonstrate a genuine and living sense of doubt about the probity of the evidence corroborating the proposition in question. The intelligence community clearly communicates its perception of the available supporting evidence as conflicting, contradictory, fragmentary, anecdotal, inconclusive, second-hand, opaque, and hearsay. They also recognize that the corroborating information is from sources of varying degrees of reliability. From their cognitive perspective, belief in the given proposition was not, therefore, warranted. We have also already observed a real sense of doubt in the discourse of those administration officials asserting the relationship between the two. Thus, though the sense of doubt about the available supporting evidence was more clearly manifested by the intelligence community, it was also shared by the administration officials. Therefore, from the perspective of both the intelligence community and the given administration officials, the available supporting evidence could not have been regarded as adequate in a way to warrant belief in the given proposition.

Thus, given the living sense of doubt they show towards the available supporting evidence, it is highly unlikely that the intelligence community (DIA, CIA, and NIE) had any belief in favour of the terror proposition. The serious doubts they raise against the probability of the given proposition are sufficient to have discouraged belief in such proposition. The doubts they manifest show that they had thought of the given proposition as unlikely. Yet despite such grave doubts about the probity of the

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<sup>26</sup> See appendix (p. 61).

<sup>27</sup> See appendix (p. 60).



supporting evidence, the Bush administration officials kept asserting the alleged relationship between Iraq and Al-Qaeda. Evidential conditions of such character normally discourage belief. Normally we cannot come to believe a proposition we take to be doubted by the available evidence. That is, belief is normally psychologically impossible in the presence of a conscious judgment that belief is unwarranted by the current evidence. It is unclear how Cheney could have come to genuinely believe the nuclear proposition in the face of debunked supporting evidence.

It is also equally unclear how Rice could have come to genuinely believe the terror proposition in the presence of such unprobative supporting grounds along with the serious doubts expressed by the intelligence community. From a deontological perspective, neither the nuclear belief nor the terror belief was epistemically licensed by the available evidence. Therefore, on the deontological view of epistemic justification, both Rice and Cheney are to be held accountable for dereliction of their epistemic duties. That is if their manifested attitudes represented their actual state of mind on the given matters. The only way Rice could be attributed belief in favour of the terror proposition would be if she had forgotten about or disbelieved the doubts raised by the intelligence community or if she had believed or judged the available supporting evidence to be adequate to warrant such belief. But such belief would have been unjustifiably and irrationally acquired for ignoring doubts, avoiding inquiry, and basing the belief on inadequate evidence. From a deontological standpoint, she had no right to believe the given proposition. That is, she had to either withhold belief in such proposition or believe the opposite. She would have been epistemically irresponsible to have believed a proposition she had no good evidence in favour of.

## Part Two

### An Inquiry into the Nature of the Given Beliefs

#### 9.2.1. The Attribution of Belief

Following the events of 9/11, the Bush administration officials set out on a hortatory public relations campaign asserting, in the absence of decisive evidence, a belief that Iraq had a reconstituted nuclear weapons program, was in possession of chemical and biological weapons and was in league with Al-Qaeda. We have already observed on pp. 39-40 that assertions normally imply belief or knowledge of the proposition in question, providing that the asserter means what he asserts; we have also observed on p. 47 that the simplest form of expressing a belief is just an assertion. Thus, the assertion *it is cloudy* is just one way of expressing the belief that it is cloudy. The Bush administration was on the offensive trying to get the public to believe the charges they were levelling against Iraq. Normally when we lack what we take to be sufficient or good evidence to warrant belief in a proposition, we neither hold nor assert belief, at least not when we lack ulterior motives. In the case at hand, the Bush administration officials made no secret, as demonstrated in the appendix (pp.87-88), that their ultimate goal was, regardless of the veracity of the given charges, regime change in Iraq rather than the pursuit of truth. What complicates or renders the attribution of belief inappropriate here is not only the public declaration of such an overriding non-epistemic goal, but also the lack of what it normally takes to hold or arrive at a belief under such conditions. Unlike acceptance or suppositions, belief is normally truth-oriented and is, therefore, normally responsive to (epistemic) evidence. This, however, shall not imply that any evidence, as long as truth-conducive in some way, has the necessary epistemic force to bring about belief. We sometimes have evidence conducing to the truth of a proposition and yet hold no such corresponding beliefs. Many of us have, at least, some evidence that corroborates the truth of the proposition that God exists and yet do not possess any such corresponding beliefs. Belief normally arises when we take the available corroborating evidence to be good, adequate or satisfactory.

In this section, I aim to establish, in light of the evidence available at the time, whether belief in the nuclear and terror propositions can be rightly attributed to the Bush administration officials. In situations where we have a hunch or suspect that a

particular proposition ( $p$ ) is or might be true but do not have what we take to be good or sufficient evidence to warrant belief in  $p$ , we normally, if  $p$  is of particular interest or importance, launch a dispassionate and impartial inquiry into the possibility whether or not that  $p$ . This is, of course, if we are epistemically driven and therefore have the pursuit of truth as our object. Under such circumstances, we take  $p$  as the premise of the inquiry. That is, we provisionally accept  $p$  for purposes of the inquiry in the same way a judge might accept a murder case in a court of law for purposes of discovering the truth whether  $p$  or not  $p$ . If the inquiry culminates in evidence adequately supportive of the truth of  $p$ , normally we come to believe that  $p$ . But whether or not we eventually accept the belief that  $p$  is up to us. If we take  $p$  to be the given nuclear proposition here, the inquiry, given the evidential conditions at the time, would have naturally culminated in neither belief nor epistemic acceptance that  $p$ . That is, we normally come to disbelieve  $p$  if our inquiry into the possibility whether  $p$  results in clear evidence that not  $p$ . Or, if we were already in possession of a belief that  $p$ , we will just abandon belief in  $p$  upon discovering that not  $p$ . But we might still go ahead and accept  $p$  - what we have eventually come to disbelieve - for practical reasons. That is if we perceive the consequences of being mistaken in our belief that not  $p$  to be grave enough or if we perceive the cost of being wrong in our belief that not  $p$  to be higher than what follows from our acceptance that  $p$ . This is because mere propositional acceptance is often driven by the risk asymmetries we associate with the eventualities of whether  $p$  or not  $p$ , as noted on p. 104.

The possibility of mere propositional acceptance as a likely characterisation of the given beliefs will be explored in detail on pp. 239-257. There are two perspectives from which philosophers normally establish whether or not it is apt to attribute a particular belief to a given agent. I will rule out the validity of the first, but uphold the plausibility of the second. First, the behaviourist or the functionalist perspective: if we look into the alleged belief cases at hand from a functionalist perspective, we can notice that there is an appropriate match between the given beliefs and the given alleged believing subjects' behavioural dispositional profile which functionalists normally associate with a certain belief. Their verbal and actional behaviour was consistent with such beliefs. That is, the Bush administration officials continued asserting the given beliefs till the war started and they acted appropriately, at least from an American perspective, to such beliefs. They apparently believed that Iraq was

in league with Al-Qaeda and was a serious and imminent threat to the US national security, had a reconstituted nuclear weapons program and was in possession of chemical and biological weapons. These seeming beliefs, from the Bush administration's perspective, required that action be taken against Iraq. Thus, there was, on the part of the given alleged believing subjects, no shortage of the publicly observable behaviour which functionalists associate with belief. If belief were just a behavioural disposition, then we could rightly attribute belief to the given agents. But belief must be something else. Belief is a feeling disposition which might, but should not, be accompanied by behavioural manifestations. This is the second perspective from which we shall look into the given beliefs. Establishing whether one feels it true that  $p$  and false that not  $p$  requires empirical evidence which we, as external observers, are often not privy to in the analysis of belief. But we can reasonably determine whether belief is psychologically possible under certain given conditions by looking into the properties that normally cause or give rise to belief or by considering the conditions under which belief is normally taken to be likely or psychologically possible. The parader's public assertion that the Emperor is wearing such and such new beautiful clothes ( $x$ ) cannot be rightly described as sincere while he is aware of the clear present evidence that the Emperor is actually naked. This is, of course, providing that the parader's vision is normal. That is, the parader cannot be appropriately characterised as believing the Emperor to be wearing  $x$  when he clearly sees that the Emperor is naked. In other words, we cannot feel it true that  $p$  in the face of clear evidence that not  $p$ . Belief, under such conditions, is psychologically impossible.

During the lead-up to Iraq war, the given nuclear proposition was persistently asserted even in the face of the majority evidence that not  $p$ . The Bush administration was well aware that the nuclear proposition was refuted by the IAEA's findings (see appendix, pp. 17-32) which were based on thorough field investigations, document and equipment analysis on the ground in Iraq. There was good reason to trust the epistemic force of such findings – empirical evidence attained by an investigative body characterised by impartiality, competence and authority. We normally come to disbelieve  $p$  or at least suspend judgment – not construed as belief – on  $p$  when we take the majority evidence to count against the possibility that  $p$ . There is no good reason to attribute belief that  $p$  in the face of clear evidence that not  $p$ . It is likely that

one might have a hunch, suspect or just fear that  $p$ . But we have already observed in chapter three that we cannot come to believe  $p$ , nor can we be rightly attributed belief that  $p$  if we take  $p$  to be evidentially unsupported or if we take the available evidence for  $p$  to be insufficient. Under such circumstances, belief in  $p$  is unwarranted from our own perspective, and we cannot come to believe a proposition we take to be unwarranted from our perspective. This is an apt description of the evidential conditions under which belief in the nuclear proposition was asserted by the Bush administration officials – Cheney being the paradigm of them. He verbally acknowledges (see p. 213) the insufficiency of the evidence adduced by the Bush administration to support the nuclear proposition. Belief is a psychological state. I recognize that we are neither psychologically nor intellectually all the same. My psychological or intellectual constitution might differ from someone else's. Some of us are credulous, yet some are critical. But as long as we are dealing with rational agency and so long as the agent in question is psychologically normal, we can rightly assert that one cannot come to believe a proposition one takes to be unwarranted from one's own cognitive perspective. If this is necessarily the case, then we cannot rightly attribute belief to Cheney. He takes belief in the nuclear proposition to be unwarranted from his own cognitive perspective for he himself takes the available supporting evidence for  $p$  to be insufficient. My taking the available evidence for  $p$  to be inadequate or unsatisfactory is just taking belief in  $p$  to be unwarranted from my cognitive perspective. If the rest of the Bush administration officials took the available supporting evidence to be inadequate and thereby perceived belief in  $p$  to be unwarranted from their own perspective, then our conclusion, the denial of belief, stands as an appropriate characterisation of the apparent collective belief in the nuclear proposition.

The evidence available prior to the resumption of the UN inspections in Iraq was neither good nor sufficient to warrant belief in the nuclear proposition, as openly acknowledged by Cheney himself (see p. 213). Even if the Bush administration officials had a belief of some strength in  $p$  prior to the emergence of the IAEA findings, the reasons on which they might have come to believe  $p$  were, to their consciousness, defeated or at least sufficiently undermined. Thus, they had no good reason to retain their apparent belief that  $p$ . In situations where we come across or are confronted with clear evidence that not  $p$ , we normally come to disbelieve  $p$  or

abandon belief in  $p$  if we had already, prior to the discovery of clear evidence that not  $p$ , held a belief of some strength in  $p$ . We have already observed that belief is not always formed in response to good or sufficient evidence. There are beliefs based on objectively inadequate, but subjectively satisfactory, reasons such as Alston's belief case of the culturally isolated agent on p. 181 of the thesis. The evidence supporting the nuclear proposition was fed to the Bush administration officials through the CIA, DIA, INR and DOE. But all the foregoing sources clearly highlighted, in their reports, the unprobative nature or the inadequacies of the available supporting evidence that  $p$  (see appendix, pp. 16-31). And the Bush administration officials were all aware of such inadequacies for they were clearly manifested in the reports they were receiving from the foregoing sources. Thus, there is no good reason to support a case of ignorance, on the part of the Bush administration officials, of such inadequacies. It is unclear how they could have possibly taken the given supporting evidence for  $p$  as subjectively satisfactory while being aware of the unprobative nature of such evidence. Even if we assume that they disbelieved the IAEA's empirical findings that not  $p$ , belief in  $p$  would still have been unwarranted from their own cognitive perspective given their awareness or recognition of the insufficiency of the supporting evidence that  $p$ . Belief in the nuclear proposition ( $p$ ) cannot, therefore, be rightly attributed to the Bush administration officials.

But despite the presence of clear empirical evidence that not  $p$ , the Bush administration officials persistently asserted the belief that  $p$  in the same way the parader brazenly commends the Emperor's would-be new clothes in the face of clear evidence that the Emperor is actually naked. In the case of the terror proposition ( $p$ ), though there was no such evidence empirically acquired on the ground in Iraq, the unprobative nature of the supporting evidence along with the grave doubts raised by the CIA, DIA and the NIE (see appendix, pp. 33-61) were sufficient to discourage belief in  $p$  or at least suspend judgment on the issue. The evidence adduced to support the terror proposition was epistemically degenerate. Further, the rationale for belief in the terror proposition partly consisted of some hypothetical reasoning, such as what would happen if Al-Qaeda and the Iraqi regime were to link up, and their apparent concern about such a possible marriage between the two. The supporting evidence was also partly premised on some likely past contacts between the two along with considerations of potential incentives for Iraq to align itself with Al-Qaeda. This is in

addition to the evidence coercively taken from detainees such as Al-Libi. Like the nuclear proposition, there was no shortage of the sort of publicly observable behaviour which behaviourists typically associate with a particular belief. The Bush administration officials continued asserting their seeming belief that  $p$  whenever the question whether  $p$  was arising. This is as far as their verbal behaviour was concerned. But they also acted appropriately, at least from an American perspective, to  $p$ . That is, from the Bush administration's standpoint, the belief or acceptance that Iraq was in league with Al-Qaeda, training and aiding them, providing them with chemical, biological, nuclear and radiological knowledge and material required that action be taken against Iraq. Thus, from a behaviourist perspective, belief in the terror proposition can be appropriately attributed to the Bush administration officials. But belief cannot solely be a disposition to act in a certain way for even mere propositional acceptance disposes us to act appropriately to what we accept as true. If belief was solely a behavioural disposition, then we could rightly attribute belief even to those who merely accept a proposition. Furthermore, if belief was reducible to publicly observable behaviour, then we could appropriately attribute belief even to those who feign belief or are insincere in their assertions. But belief is more than a disposition to act as if  $p$ . It is a disposition to feel it true that  $p$  regardless of whether or not we act, verbally or actionally, appropriately to  $p$ .

Normally I cannot feel it true that  $p$  in the face of supporting evidence of unprobative nature or in the face of serious doubts that  $p$ . The intelligence community, the CIA, the DIA and the NIE, conveys very serious doubts about the possibility that  $p$  and considers the available supporting evidence for  $p$  to be inadequate. Thus, belief in  $p$  was unwarranted from their perspective. It is, therefore, inappropriate to attribute belief that  $p$  to the intelligence community. This very evidence - characterised by the intelligence community as contradictory, conflicting, fragmentary, anecdotal, inconclusive, and hearsay - was the basis on which the Bush administration officials asserted their apparent belief that  $p$ . The kind of evidence adduced to support the terror proposition, though not unthinkable, lacks the necessary epistemic force that normally renders us feeling it true that  $p$ . It is not clear how any rational or psychologically normal human agent can feel it true that  $p$  in the face of degenerate evidence of uprobative nature or in the face of grave doubts against the possibility that  $p$ . No doubt one might still fear, suspect or have a hunch that  $p$ .

Fearing that  $p$  might be a sufficient reason to accept  $p$ . But belief does not, normally, obtain in the presence of supporting evidence of such nature or in the face of such living doubts that  $p$ . But, as already observed, evidence shall not necessarily be objectively good or adequate to render belief likely or psychologically possible. However, evidence shall necessarily be objectively good or adequate to render a belief justified or rational. But we can come to believe  $p$  as long as we, from our own cognitive perspective, take the evidence for  $p$  to be good or satisfactory. In this way, we can attribute belief in  $p$  to the Bush administration officials only if they had taken the available evidence for  $p$  to be good or satisfactory for belief in  $p$ . But I find it highly unlikely that rational or psychologically normal agents can ordinarily come to take evidence of such nature to be good or satisfactory for belief. By the same token, I find it highly unlikely that rational or psychologically normal agents can normally come to feel it true that  $p$  in the face of bad evidence for  $p$  or in the face of grave doubts against the possibility that  $p$ . It is because of this that I, given the evidential conditions at the time, find it inappropriate and unreasonable to attribute belief in the terror proposition to the Bush administration officials.

### **9.2.2. The Attribution of Pragmatic Belief**

This section aims to establish whether the Bush administration's asserted belief in the nuclear and terror propositions can be rightly described as a case of pragmatic belief. We have already learned that we are not always epistemically driven in our doxastic cultivations, see chapters three (pp. 79-80) and four (pp.115-123). Unlike epistemic beliefs, pragmatic beliefs are not acquired with a concern for truth. They are, rather, acquired on the basis of pragmatic considerations. In other words, they are brought about to satisfy some pragmatic end, as illustrated on pp. 115-123. We have also learned that in order to bring about a pragmatic belief, focus shall be solely or primarily directed to evidence conducing to the desired belief (see p. 68). That is, we normally tend to disregard disconfirming evidence when we set out to bring about a desired belief. Under such situations, we will be emotionally biased in favour of the belief we aim to bring about. Being a pleasant thought and given my growing psychological need for the desired belief that  $p$ , I might, through primary focus on the evidence corroborating  $p$ , just come to believe that my ex-lover still loves me. That is, I somehow in such an indirect way might just convince myself that  $p$ . My endeavour



to bring about such a desired belief might either succeed or fail. It is likely that I might still be longing for such a belief without possessing the actual belief itself. But if I pass into the desired belief state, I, upon being asked whether *p* or upon considering whether *p*, necessarily feel it true that *p*. The disposition to feel it true that *p* is a necessary condition of belief in *p*, as pointed out by Cohen on pp. 62-63 of the thesis. Following the successful acquisition of a desired belief, we must, as observed in chapter three, forget how we came about such a belief. That is, we must forget that we came about such a belief on the basis of evidentially irrelevant considerations or on the basis of evidence that we ourselves took to be unprobative otherwise we cannot feel it true that *p* and false that not *p* upon considering whether *p*. This is, of course, if after the acquisition of the desired belief, the epistemic position of the proposition in question stayed the same - as evidentially unsupported as it was before. And if I do not possess any such dispositional feelings, it is normally unlikely that I would feel surprised, disappointed or shocked upon discovering that not *p*. That is, of course, if I were to pass into the desired belief state and at some point considered whether *p*. I cannot be rightly described as believing that *p* when I am fully conscious or in full recognition that *p* is not supported by the available evidence. If this is how a supposed pragmatic belief is perceived from my own cognitive perspective, then my reasoning and acting as if *p* is nothing other than mere propositional acceptance driven by some practical reason.

Pragmatic beliefs are, as explained on pp. 115-123, either wishful or unwelcome by nature. Wishful beliefs are driven by pragmatic desires, whereas unwelcome beliefs are driven by fears or worries. I do not currently believe in Paradise (*p*) for I take the available evidence to be inadequate to support such a belief. But by virtue of being a pleasant thought and a comforting premise for reasoning about life, I want to believe it. The acquisition of such a desired belief might bring about some happiness or some peace of mind. If I succeed in getting myself to believe that *p*, then I will genuinely feel it true that *p* upon considering or being asked whether *p*. But I think that merely fearing a potential eventuality (*p*) in the absence of good evidence that *p* normally promotes or leads to mere propositional acceptance rather than unwelcome belief. I concur with Bratman that practical pressures or risk asymmetries normally determine what we accept rather than what we believe in a given context (see p.104). If the supposed beliefs in question were cases of pragmatic belief at all, they would be most

appropriately construed as unwelcome beliefs. It is not apt to characterise as wishful a belief that generates or heightens fear, tension or anxiety. But I do not think that they can be rightly characterised as unwelcome beliefs either. In situations where I have no good evidence whether  $p$  or not  $p$  but where  $p$  is of major concern to me, it is more appropriate to characterise the propositional attitude that prompts me to act as if  $p$  as one of mere acceptance rather than belief that  $p$ . I have no good evidence for or against the proposition that I have left my car unlocked in the car park ( $p$ ). But I, in the middle of watching a film, am suddenly struck with a fear that I might have left my car unlocked. Fearing the potential implications of  $p$ , I rush back to the car park only to discover that not  $p$ . My acting as if  $p$  does not mean that I acted because I believed that  $p$ . Taking action to prevent a feared eventuality is not solely driven by doxastic attitudes. Mere propositional acceptance disposes us to act appropriately to  $p$  as well. That is, belief is not the only propositional attitude that motivates action appropriate to a given belief. In the case at hand, I weigh up the risks of the eventualities of the two possibilities: whether  $p$  or not  $p$ . Being driven by the risk asymmetries I associate with accepting or rejecting that  $p$ , I come to accept that  $p$ . In other words, given the high cost of error, I just do not take it for granted that not  $p$ . Instead, I will proceed cautiously in my considerations whether  $p$  or not  $p$ . I will just accept that  $p$ , taking it as a premise in my practical reasoning about the given matter and act accordingly. Just like Bratman's case of the ladder, it is one thing to experience the inconvenience of a trip back to the car park, another to have your car stolen. It would be inappropriate to characterise the propositional attitude I am driven by in my acting and reasoning as if  $p$  as one of belief that  $p$  while I have no good evidence to consider either possibility, whether  $p$  or not  $p$ , more likely than the other. The motivation or ulterior end behind unwelcome believing is, as observed in chapter four, a supposed prevention or avoidance of a feared danger. But wanting to prevent a feared eventuality ( $p$ ) when there is no good evidence whether  $p$  normally promotes or leads to mere acceptance rather than belief that  $p$ . That is if an attitude had to be taken on the given proposition under the current evidential conditions or if the agent had to act on some basis in light of the evidential conditions at the time. This research, therefore, concludes that the given Bush administration beliefs cannot be rightly characterised as pragmatic beliefs.

It is likely that the Bush administration officials, due to his ruthless oppression of his own people and his brutal aggressions against his neighbouring countries in the past, had long believed Saddam Hussein to be a danger of some sort to the international community. This belief might have had an overarching influence on their reasoning about the alleged Iraqi threat to the US homeland security. It could be that they had taken his homicidal nature as a reason to fear him or believe him to be a danger to the international security, or it could be that they had taken the sanctions they imposed on Iraq as a reason to fear retaliation from his regime. No doubt Saddam Hussein was an existential threat to his own people, but there was no good evidence to indicate that he was a threat to the US homeland security. Though there was reason to fear his regime, there was no good evidence to believe that the Iraqi regime was an imminent threat to the US national security, as stressed by the Bush administration on numerous occasions. It is logically possible to think that they, due to their distrust of him along with his past possession of such weapons, suspected or feared that he might have retained at least some of his WMD stockpiles or produced some more or had his nuclear weapons program resumed following the departure of the UN inspectors in December 1998. If we cannot trust one that not  $p$ , it is highly unlikely that we can be certain of one's relevant intentions or testimonies that not  $p$ . This could be thought of as a fear factor, but I doubt that such fear factors are sufficient on their own to cause intellectual belief. Feared propositions of no evidentiary basis normally promote or lead to mere propositional acceptance rather than intellectual belief. That is if, due to the nature of the situation, the agent were or had to take an attitude on the basis of the degenerate epistemic conditions at the time or if the agent had to act at the time on some basis. There is no consensus among philosophers as to whether fear entails belief or whether fear is caused by belief. Walton holds that "It seems a principle of common sense ... that fear must be accompanied by, or must involve, a belief that one is in danger" (1978: 6-7). Morreall counters Walton's conception of fear and argues that his "account of fear is a standard application of the cognitive theory of emotions, according to which emotions involve or are caused by beliefs" (1993: 359). He rightly observes that in order for one to fear an object, "one need not believe that the object is dangerous to him [or that one is endangered by that object]" (Ibid: 360). He further argues that fear "does not require us ... to recognize danger" (Ibid: 361). Morreall provides some strong counter-examples to the thesis that fear entails or requires belief. He draws our attention to "the fear of public speaking" (Ibid: 363). Many

people experience the fear of public speaking without believing that they are endangered by the object of their fear or that the object of their fear poses a threat to them. That is, they do not believe that the audiences are a danger to them, yet they still exhibit the kind of behaviour and experience the kind of feelings that we normally associate with fear. Further instantiating his argument, Morreall observes:

When young children are put to bed in an unfamiliar house, for example, they may feel fear without judging the bed, the chair, or anything else to be dangerous. Adults can experience this kind of fear when beginning a new job or moving to an unfamiliar place. ... What the child is afraid of, for instance, is said to be the bedroom or the whole house; the object of the adult's fear is the new workplace or new life. ... If [however] asked whether the bedroom or house, or the workplace or new life, is dangerous, the child or the adult are just as likely to say no as they are when asked whether specific things in those situations are dangerous (Ibid: 362).

Morreall takes such a fear to be "caused by excessive novelty" (Ibid: 362). He argues that belief is not the only mental state that can engender emotions in us. Rather, mere thoughts, imaginations, or entertainment can also bring about emotions:

The ... problem with the claim that to fear something known to be dangerous I have to believe it is dangerous to me, lies in the word 'believe'. The cognitive theory of emotions requires beliefs, but there are emotions that are easily caused by mental states less epistemically committed than beliefs. Sexual arousal, for example, is easily caused by fantasies - that is how pornography works. Disgust can be caused by imagining fictional scenes of torture or cannibalism. The fact that what I am imagining in such cases is not real and I know that, does not prevent the emotion (Ibid: 364).

Moreover, Hume argues that though fear is usually caused by a probable evil, passions such as fear can be caused by evils that are perceived by the person feeling the fear as improbable or even impossible:

It is a probable good or evil, that commonly produces hope or fear ... [but] the passions of fear and hope will arise, even though there be no probability ... We find that an evil, barely conceived as *possible*, does sometimes produce fear; especially if the evil be very great. ... But they are not only possible evils, that cause fear, but even some allowed to be *impossible*; as when we tremble on the brink of a precipice, though we know ourselves to be in perfect security ... This proceeds from the immediate presence of the evil, which influences the imagination in the same manner as the certainty of it [the evil] would do ...

Evils, that are *certain*, have sometimes the same effect in producing fear, as the possible or impossible (2010: 243-244).

Thus, merely imagining a WMD-9/11, a transfer of WMD to Al-Qaeda, or a nuclear-armed Iraq (*p*) would have been sufficient to cause, in the Bush administration officials, a feeling of fear that *p*. Merely imagining a shipwreck, while on board a ship, might frighten me. Further, merely imagining being attacked by a piranha, a crocodile or a shark while on board a fishing boat might terrify me. Merely imagining a nuclear-armed Iran (*p*) can cause a feeling of fear that *p*. It is likely that the Bush administration merely feared that *p* due to the lack of the kind of certainty deemed appropriate to accept or act upon in a post-9-11 security environment. Though there was good empirical negative evidence in the case of the nuclear proposition, they might have distrusted such evidence or its source. There are situations where feelings of uncertainty cause fear. That is, sometimes we come to fear that *p* because of our uncertainty whether or not that *p*. Hume argues that "all kinds of uncertainty have a strong connection with fear" (Ibid: 244). In short, my fearing that *p* neither entails nor requires my believing that *p*. Morreall, therefore, argues that "fear is not as epistemically fussy as the cognitive theory would have us believe. ... Beliefs are not required [to fear a proposition]" (1993: 366). That is, fearing that *p* neither requires nor entails any epistemic commitment to *p*. Thus, the Bush administration's fearing that *p*, if they ever feared that *p*, cannot be taken to entail the belief that *p*.

### 9.2.3. The Attribution of Propositional Acceptance

Under epistemically outlandish conditions where there is a palpable presence of unprobative supporting evidence that *p* along with serious living doubts against the possibility whether *p*, we feel compelled to question the sincerity of a *p*-belief asserted by an agent fundamentally driven by pragmatic ends and potential risk asymmetries. In situations like this, one would normally have grave qualms in attributing belief to a given agent. We have already observed that belief does not normally arise in the face of clear evidence that not *p* or in the face of grave doubts that *p*. This section aims to establish whether the Bush administration's asserted belief in the nuclear and terror propositions can be rightly characterised as a case of mere propositional acceptance. We have learned in chapter four that we can accept a

proposition for practical reasons independently of its truth or belief in it. That is, we can accept a proposition we have no belief about. But we can also accept a proposition we believe or even disbelieve. That is, doxastic attitudes of belief or disbelief are no constraining factors to mere propositional acceptance. We have already observed three clear-cut cases of mere propositional acceptance such as Alston's field commander (p. 98), Bratman's construction project (pp. 103-104) and ladder cases (p. 105). We have also observed Foley's remark (p. 108) that acceptance can have unwelcome consequences and Bratman's contention (p. 104) that mere acceptance is often driven by risk asymmetries. It is because of this that we sometimes accept what we disbelieve or refuse to accept what we believe to be the case. Under conditions where I perceive danger to be increasingly looming or where there is a present danger to my safety, I, for practical purposes like an escape route, might accept a faulty boat whose safety conditions I disbelieve. That is, despite my belief to the contrary, I might just accept that the boat is in good working conditions and might therefore reason as well as act accordingly. Here I consider the cost of rejecting the safety conditions of the boat to be considerably higher than the cost of accepting it to be safe. For practical reasons, I might eventually come to accept what I disbelieve to be the case. Now suppose that there was neither a looming nor a present danger to me and I believed the boat to be in good working conditions (*p*). But, like Bratman's case of the ladder, when I think about using the boat for a sailing mission to cross the Atlantic Ocean, I do not just take it for granted that (*p*). That is, though I believe that *p*, due to the high cost of error, I do not accord it acceptance solely on the basis of my belief that *p*. Understanding what is at stake and given my knowledge of how tempestuous the Atlantic Ocean can get, I might require a greater reassurance or a propositional attitude epistemically superior to mere belief in order to accept the boat as safe for use. I might need knowledge or certainty. That is why before accepting the boat as safe for sea, I will most probably be driven to verify my belief that it is.

Belief is, as explained in chapter two, a feeling disposition to undergo certain internal experiences such as feeling it true that *p* and false that not *p*, feeling pleased upon realising that a belief we have been holding is actually true or, conversely, feeling disappointed, shocked or surprised upon discovering that not *p*. If the Bush administration officials ever believed the nuclear proposition (*p*), they would have felt

surprised to learn about the IAEA's empirical evidence that not  $p$  or they would have felt disappointed or shocked at how misguided they have been regarding  $p$ . If they had a nuclear-free Iraq as their desired end, they would have even felt delighted to learn that not  $p$ . There are two possible answers as to why the Bush administration went along with the nuclear proposition despite the presence of clear evidence that not  $p$ . I aim to establish that it was either a matter of mere propositional acceptance or mere public display (lying or pretence). Part of the reason that might give rise to mere public display is that the Bush administration made it known that their objective in this whole Iraqi conflict was regime change regardless of whether  $p$ , but still based their case for war on  $p$  rather than regime change. It looks similar to the assailant who stabs his victim for robbery, but states being threatening or dangerously armed ( $p$ ) as a reason for stabbing him. It could well be the case that the victim is in fact dangerously armed and that the assailant truly believes him to be so. We can assume that the assailant admits, in his private conversations with his wife, that he acted for reasons other than his belief that  $p$ . That is, the assailant stabs the victim not out of putative self-defence, but, rather, to rob the gun he is carrying. If that is the case, then the assailant is lying about the reason behind stabbing the victim. But it does not follow that he is lying about his being dangerously armed. That is, we can still attribute him belief that the victim was dangerously armed when stabbed, though he was not motivated in his action by such a belief. But in his advancement to stab him, he might take extra precautions due to his belief that  $p$ . That is, he might advance appropriately to such a belief in the way of fighting or stabbing techniques such as how to stab or fight someone who is carrying a gun (I do not mean acting appropriately to  $p$  in the way of being motivated, in his stabbing him, by  $p$ ).

In the case at hand, the question is whether the Bush administration officials accepted the nuclear proposition ( $p$ ) or were just being insincere in their assertions that  $p$ . The fact that they made it clear that they would still go ahead with regime change as their ultimate end regardless of whether or not that  $p$  calls into question whether they were sincere in stating  $p$  as their rationale behind invading Iraq. This is good reason to argue that the Bush administration was being insincere in stating  $p$  as their rationale for the war while they would have gone ahead with the war regardless of whether or not that  $p$ . But this alone cannot be good reason to argue that they were just lying about  $p$ . It could be the case that they accepted  $p$  and the action such a

propositional acceptance required or favoured coincided, from their perspective, with the action they have long wanted to pursue in the way of regime change. Further, Iran is perceived as a hostile regime in the eyes of many Western countries. There are many states that want to take out the Iranian regime for its riches or its being a hindrance to their economic interests. But it might not be preferable to invade it on the basis of economic interests. It is, rather, more preferable or doable to do it on the basis of a rationale that is acceptable to your fellow citizens and the international community as well. In making a case for war or in going ahead with the invasion, the invading force might state the Iranian nuclear issue as the sole reason behind the invasion, genuinely believing, for good reasons, that Iran is weaponising its uranium ( $p$ ), while having oil as the true reason behind the invasion. We can assume that the invader does not care whether or not Iran goes nuclear. It, rather, is interested in conquering the Iranian oilfields. Here, the invading state lies about the true rationale for the invasion, but it does not follow that they did not believe that  $p$ . It just means that their action was not motivated by  $p$ .

That is, though they lie about the true reason for the war, it does not follow that they also lie about  $p$  itself. In other words, though their reference to  $p$  as the sole reason for the war is insincere, it does not follow that they do not believe that  $p$ . Thus, their being insincere in their reference to  $p$  as the sole reason for the war does not preclude them from having the belief that  $p$ . We can still rightly attribute them the belief that  $p$ . Moreover, though they are driven in their action by factors other than  $p$ , since they have a belief that  $p$ , in mobilising and equipping their forces, they might plan, proceed and act appropriately to  $p$ . They might even equip their forces with the equipment necessary to evade radiation or embed within their armed forces special medical teams designed to provide medical treatment to those who might be exposed to radiation. That is, just like the assailant, they might act appropriately to  $p$  in the way of combating needs and techniques, though they are not motivated by  $p$  in their decision to take out the Iranian regime. In the case at hand, it could well be that the Bush administration's rationale for the war was two-fold: regime change (oil) and the acceptance that  $p$ . But even if the true reason for the war was regime change, it still does not follow that they did not accept that  $p$ . They might have still accepted  $p$ , but their reference to  $p$  as the sole reason for the war would have been insincere. That is,



their being insincere in their reference to  $p$  as the sole reason for the war would not have precluded them from accepting  $p$ .

Furthermore, even if the true rationale for the war was regime change rather than the professed rationale ( $p$ ), it still does not follow that they rejected  $p$ . Due to the potential risk asymmetries associated with the eventualities of the two possibilities of  $p$  or not  $p$ , it is very unlikely that the Bush administration officials, at least at the time of planning the war or while considering what equipment would be most apt for the safety of their troops and the success of their mission, would have just taken it for granted that Iraq was free of all the chemical and biological weapons, deadly radiological material or enriched uranium ( $p$ ). In fact the Bush administration acted as if there were such materials in Iraq, equipping their troops with protective clothing and gas masks. That is, they acted appropriately to  $p$ . But, of course, their acting as if  $p$  cannot be taken as a good reason for attributing them belief in  $p$ . Their acting as if  $p$  just implies that they, at best, might have accepted  $p$  for practical purposes. Moreover, we often act on the side of caution or prudence in situations where the risk asymmetries between rejecting and accepting  $p$  are unacceptably high. Though the Kennedy administration had no adequate evidence as to the imminent use of the nuclear missiles that were being installed on the Cuban soil by the Soviet Union, they still accepted that the presence of such offensive enemy nuclear missiles in the Western hemisphere constituted an imminent threat to the US national security ( $p$ ). Taking it for granted that  $p$ , they contemplated all possible actions including an all-out nuclear response to the threat, but eventually chose to launch a naval blockade against Cuba. That is, they acted as if  $p$  or appropriately to  $p$ , though they had no adequate evidence that  $p$ . Given the fact that the risk asymmetries between rejecting and accepting  $p$  were unacceptably high, it would have been irrational for the Kennedy administration to reject  $p$ .

The unacceptably high risk asymmetries involved in situations like this constitute prudential justification for the agent to act. From the Kennedy's perspective, rejecting  $p$  might have resulted in a sudden and massive nuclear attack on the US homeland or even in the US being wiped out by the force of such offensive nuclear weapons. Or it could, at least, have resulted in a nuclear-armed Cuba that could have bullied or rivalled the US supremacy in the Western hemisphere and contributed to the

intolerable expansion of Communism in the region. By contrast, accepting that  $p$  had these potential dangers eliminated. Furthermore, my acceptance that the person I take to be dangerously armed is a present threat to my safety is also driven by the unacceptably high risk asymmetries associated with the relevant two possibilities. Even though I have no good evidence to believe that he is a present threat to me and I do not hold any such beliefs, due to practical reasons like self-defence, I might still accept that he is. Thus, if I were to act, my action would still be prudentially justified, though not epistemically. After all, it is, as noted on p. 105, safer to err on the side of prudence or caution and this is how our reasoning is driven under such conditions. Thus, it is, just like Bratman's case of the ladder, one thing to mistake a nuclear threat to be imminent, another to suffer a sudden nuclear annihilation. It is one thing to have a few of your cities or even half of your country nuked in a nuclear war, another to suffer a sudden and massive nuclear annihilation of the entire country. It is one thing to lose some of your armed forces countering a threat mistaken for being imminent, another to have a nuclear-armed Cuba at your door step bullying, rivalling, blackmailing you, or spreading Communism in the Western hemisphere. It is one thing to suffer the inconvenience of mobilising your armed forces to blockade a country taken to be the platform of an imminent threat, another to have the threat fully materialise on your soil. In the case of the Bush administration's likely acceptance that  $p$ , it is one thing to mistake Iraq for possessing chemical and biological weapons, lethal radiological material, enriched uranium or a reconstituted nuclear weapons program, another to have your armed forces suffer from radiation or a chemical or biological attack in the battlefield. It is one thing to experience the inconvenience of overloading your armed forces with all these gas masks and protective clothing, another to suffer from a lack of them in the battlefield. In my case, it is one thing to mistake a dangerously armed stranger for being an aggressor, another to suffer the consequences of not defending myself when I had to.

In the attribution of belief, we noticed that belief in the nuclear ( $n$ ) and terror ( $t$ ) propositions would have been unwarranted from their own cognitive perspective given their taking of the available supporting evidence to be inadequate, their knowledge of the presence of clear empirical evidence that not  $p$  ( $n$ ), their knowledge of the unprobative nature of the available supporting evidence, and their knowledge that  $p$  was overwhelmingly doubted by the majority evidence ( $t$ ). I cannot, normally,

be rightly attributed belief in  $p$  when I take belief in  $p$  to be unwarranted from my own perspective, when I take the available evidence for  $p$  to be inadequate, unprobative or degenerate, when I know of the presence of clear evidence that not  $p$ , when I know that the majority evidence casts sufficient doubt on the possibility that  $p$ , or when I take  $p$  to be evidentially unsupported. No doubt we sometimes hold belief in the presence of some degree of doubt against the possibility that  $p$ , notably belief in God. After all, belief, as observed on p. 48, does not necessarily preclude some degree of doubt on the part of the believing subject. Many people come to believe in God or retain such a belief in the presence of some doubt against the possibility whether  $p$ . Many retain their belief in God despite their knowledge of the contrary evidence presented by the evolutionists. But people who come to believe  $p$  or retain such a belief in the presence of some degree of doubt normally take the supporting evidence for  $p$  to be good or at least satisfactory, no matter how unprobative such evidence is from an objective perspective. That is, they take the available supporting evidence to be more convincing, satisfactory or probative than the doubts raised against the possibility that  $p$ . That is why they take belief to be warranted from their cognitive perspective. It is because of this that belief is psychologically possible under conditions where there is some degree of doubt on the part of the potential believing subject. But, of course, belief is normally unwarranted from our own cognitive perspective and is, thereby, psychologically impossible if we take  $p$  to be overwhelmingly doubted by the available evidence or if we take the majority evidence to cast doubt or to count against the possibility that  $p$ .

In the case of the nuclear proposition, Cheney takes the available supporting evidence to be inadequate. Belief in the nuclear proposition would have, therefore, been unwarranted from his cognitive perspective. This is despite his knowledge of the presence of clear empirical evidence that not  $p$ . That is why belief cannot be rightly attributed to Cheney. In the case of the terror proposition, the intelligence community takes  $p$  to be overwhelmingly doubted by the available evidence. That is, they take the majority evidence to count against the possibility that  $p$ . It is not clear how the White House officials could have taken as satisfactory the so-called supporting evidence characterised by the US intelligence community as unprobative. That is why I find no good reason to attribute to the Bush administration officials belief in the terror proposition. We normally take belief in  $p$  to be unwarranted from our own cognitive

perspective whenever we take the evidence for  $p$  to be inadequate, unprobative or unsatisfactory. An agent's taking belief in  $p$  to be unwarranted from his own perspective or his taking  $p$  to be doubted by the majority evidence is good reason to deny him belief in  $p$ . Unlike mere acceptance, belief, as noted in chapter three, is constrained by rationality and psychological restraints that originate from belief's intimate connection with reason. Denying or granting the attribution of mere acceptance that  $p$  solely supervenes on whether the accepting subject reasons as if  $p$  regardless of whether or not he goes along with acting as if  $p$ . That is, acting as if  $p$  is neither necessary nor sufficient for the attribution of mere propositional acceptance. I can pretend to be a statute ( $p$ ), acting as if I am a statute. But from my acting as if  $p$  it does not follow that I accept that I am a statute for I do not reason as if I am a statute. My acting as if I am a statute is a matter of mere pretence or public display for I am not intellectually committed to my being a statute. In other words, I do not reason as if I am a statute. There is no intellectual commitment on my part to the truth of my being a statute. The acceptance of a proposition might, but should not, involve acting as if  $p$ . But it entails reasoning as if  $p$  or being intellectually committed to the truth of  $p$ . Furthermore, propositional acceptance should not necessarily be manifested as a speech act of assertion like *I accept that the boat is in good working order*. Acceptance, as observed on pp. 107-108, is a mental act or an internal act of assent that might, but should not, be manifested in language or action. My acceptance of the boat as safe for use did not involve any act of assertion in either occasion.

But acceptance can also be an inner speech act, as argued by Clarke: "Acceptance (and also rejection) need not be publicly expressed by assent or assertion (dissent or denial). ... [Rather, it can be] "inner speech" ... [or] an internal assent to or assertion of mental analogues of sentences" (1989:32). Thus, during my acceptance of the boat as safe, I might have made an inner assertion to myself when I perceived the danger to be looming: *it is safe, come on, use it*. We have already observed that belief is a disposition to feel it true that  $p$  and that acceptance is a policy for reasoning as if  $p$  regardless of, in both cases, whether or not we assert that  $p$  or act appropriately to  $p$ . Though, in both cases of belief and acceptance, we normally are disposed to assert that  $p$  and act appropriately to  $p$  if suitable situations arise, it is a necessary condition of neither belief nor acceptance that such disposition be manifested or activated. It could well be the case that in his meeting with the sub-contractors, Bratman accepts

the top of the estimated range as the total cost of the construction project (*p*) and therefore reasons accordingly. But no suitable situations might subsequently arise in order for him to assert that *p* or act as if *p* in the way of, for example, ordering construction materials in line with his acceptance that *p*. Following his acceptance that *p*, he may go broke as a result of a robbery or an unfortunate gambling or, simply, he might die in a car accident following his meeting with the sub-contractors. In his practical reasoning, Bratman might accept his chair to be safe, but soon after giving it mental acceptance, his house might, as a result of an earthquake, collapse with the chair crushed to the ground. Thus, no appropriate occasions might arise in order for him to act as if *p*. That is if he himself was lucky enough to escape the earthquake unharmed. Furthermore, I might suffer a stroke soon after coming to believe or accept the boat to be safe for use in the ocean. Thus, our failure to act – verbally or actionally – as if *p* or appropriately to *p* cannot be taken as a reason to deny us belief or acceptance that *p*. Nor can our acting as if *p* be taken as a reason for attributing us belief or acceptance that *p*. I might act appropriately to *p*, yet hold no such corresponding beliefs. Instead, I might just be feigning belief in *p* or I might act as if I am a statute, though I do not accept that I am a statute. I am just pretending to be a statute. That is, neither the attribution of belief nor that of acceptance supervenes on publicly observable behaviour. The Bush administration officials acted as if *p*, but their acting as if *p* cannot be ipso facto taken as a reason for attributing them propositional acceptance.

Denying them mere acceptance that *p* would leave us with the possibility that they just lied about the nuclear and the terror propositions for we have already established that neither belief nor pragmatic belief can be rightly attributed to them. But it is important to differentiate between lying about *why* they wanted to invade Iraq and lying about *p*. We have already noticed that even if they were insincere in their reference to *p* as the real rationale for the war, it still does not follow that they did not accept *p* in their practical reasoning. That is, it still does not follow that they rejected *p* in their considerations such as how to go about confronting the Iraqi forces or what military equipment would be necessary to pursue such a confrontation with minimal casualties. I can accept *p* as a premise in my practical reasoning and subsequently refer to *p* insincerely as a reason for doing something driven by considerations other than my acceptance that *p*. Suppose that Osama Bin Laden was still at large and that

the search for him was still underway. Though the Bush administration lacks what they take to be good evidence to believe that he is hiding in Pakistan, given the inherent mistrust between the two countries, the Bush administration does not just take it for granted that he is not there. Though Pakistan repeatedly denies the presence of the elusive Bin Laden there, considering the risk asymmetries associated with accepting and rejecting the good-faith of Pakistan, the Bush administration might just accept that Bin Laden is either hiding or is harboured by Pakistan ( $p$ ). That is, they, for practical purposes, might come to accept that  $p$  and therefore reason as if  $p$ . In fact, they might even launch a covert reconnaissance mission following their acceptance that  $p$ , tasking their drones, satellites and even clandestine ground civilian forces with verifying whether  $p$ . Thus, they act and reason appropriately to  $p$ , but hold no such corresponding beliefs. Suppose that the Bush administration has, for reasons other than  $p$ , long wanted to take out the Pakistani regime and now deems  $p$  an appropriate reason to make the case for war. Taking out the Pakistani regime is what the Bush administration is driven by in its waging war against Pakistan. That is, this is what their goal is in waging the war. But for purposes of convenience like rallying public support and ensuring international acceptance for the war, they just present  $p$  as the rationale for the war. Here, though they lie about why they want to invade the country, it does not follow that they do not accept that  $p$ . In war planning preparations, they might well task a special search team with tracking Bin Laden. That is, though they are insincere in presenting  $p$  as the reason for the war, it does not follow that they reject  $p$  or do not take the truth of  $p$  for granted. They might still accept  $p$  as a premise in their practical reasoning and might even act appropriately to  $p$  by, among other things, tasking a special battalion with searching the locations identified by their imagery specialists as possible hideouts of Bin Laden.

In the case at hand, given the Bush administration's public declaration that they would still go ahead with regime change in Iraq whether or not that  $p$ , we can reasonably argue that they were being insincere in presenting  $p$  to be the rationale for the war while they would have gone ahead with the war regardless of whether or not that  $p$ . But it still does not follow that they did not accept that  $p$ . In light of the Bush administration's post-9/11 security discourse, we can rightly argue that propositions of such nature were deemed more rational to accept than to reject. Though preventive war as a policy vision is hardly a new concept in the US foreign policy, it was

flagrantly adopted as the centrepiece of the US foreign policy by the Bush administration. They brazenly embraced preventive war as a policy objective following the events of 9/11, and their apparent reason for that was the new security environment brought about by their experience of 9/11. Taking preventive action as a response to contemporary threats of the twenty first century is at the heart of the September 2002 US *National Security Strategy*, known as the *Bush Doctrine*. Though presented to the public as a preemptive security strategy, the doctrine is fundamentally preventive in essence. As observed on pp. 13-14, preemptive war is driven solely by the imminence of an attack, whereas preventive war normally by the inevitability of a potential conflict or by perceived future power relationships. The central underlying premise of the *Bush Doctrine* is the contention that the concept of imminence must be understood in relation to the new security environment at play rather than the kind of certainty or good evidence that is normally responsible for our justifiably believing a threat to be imminent: "We must adapt the concept of imminent threat to the capabilities and objectives of today's adversaries" (<http://merln.ndu.edu/whitepapers/USnss2002.pdf>), p. 15. The doctrine further argues: "To forestall or prevent ... hostile acts by our adversaries, the United States will, if necessary, act preemptively", "even if uncertainty remains as to the time ... of the enemy's attack" (p. 15). Thus, the doctrine concludes that the US military "must be transformed to focus more on how an adversary might fight rather than ... when a war might occur" (p. 29). That is, the obtaining of temporal imminence as a necessary condition for self-defense or a preemptive response is seen by the Bush administration as unviable in a post-9/11 security environment. That is why the given doctrine argues that "America will act against ... emerging threats before they are fully formed"<sup>28</sup>. That is, the Bush administration's conception or definition of a preemptive response relies on the intentions and capabilities of a potential adversary rather than on the temporal imminence of a threat or an attack. Thus, their model of preemption is fully scrapped from the conventional property, the imminence of an attack, which underlies the very essence of preemption. Furthermore, in his testimony to the House and Senate Armed Services Committee on 18 September 2002, Rumsfeld stresses that even the kind of evidence or certainty required to act upon shall be understood in relation to the post-9/11 security environment:

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<sup>28</sup> This is stated on the second page of the introduction to the given doctrine. The introduction pages are not numbered.

"[Regarding] the kind of evidence we consider to be appropriate to act in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In our country, it has been customary to seek evidence that would prove guilt "beyond a reasonable doubt" in a court of law. That approach is appropriate when the objective is to protect the rights of the accused. But in the age of WMD, the objective is not to protect the "rights" of dictators like Saddam Hussein - it is to protect the lives of our citizens. And when there is that risk, and we are trying to defend against the closed societies and shadowy networks that threaten us in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, expecting to find that standard of evidence, from thousands of miles away, and to do so before such a weapon has been used, is not realistic. And, after such weapons have been used it is too late. I suggest that any who insist on perfect evidence are back in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and still thinking in pre-9/11 terms. On September 11<sup>th</sup>, we were awakened to the fact that America is now vulnerable to unprecedented destruction. That awareness ought to be sufficient to change the way we think about our security, how we defend our country - and the type of certainty and evidence we consider appropriate. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when we were dealing largely with conventional weapons, we could wait for perfect evidence. If we miscalculated, we could absorb an attack, recover, take a breath, mobilize, and go out and defeat our attackers. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, that is no longer the case, unless we are willing and comfortable accepting the loss not of thousands of lives, but potentially tens of thousands of lives - a high price indeed. We have not, will not, and cannot know everything that is going on in the world. Over the years, even our best efforts, intelligence has repeatedly underestimated the weapons capabilities of a variety of countries of major concern to us. We have had numerous gaps of two, four, six or eight years between the time a country of concern first developed a WMD capability and the time we finally learned about it" (<http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=283>).

In situations where we lack the kind of certainty or good evidence that is normally responsible for our being devoid of some reasonable doubt that  $p$ , our reasoning on  $p$  is normally driven by the relevant risk asymmetries associated with accepting or rejecting that  $p$ . That is, of course, if we had to take a stance on  $p$  under the evidential conditions at the time or if we had to act at the time on some basis whether it be acceptance or rejection of the given proposition. We have observed in chapter four that mere propositional acceptance requires neither certainty nor epistemic evidence for acceptance, unlike belief, is not constrained by rationality or psychological factors. Rather, it is practical purposes that promote or shape mere propositional acceptance and it is the associated risk asymmetries that underlie our choice of accepting  $p$  rather than not  $p$  or vice versa. This, of course, excludes situations where, due to the high cost of error, our acceptance of a particular proposition requires or is driven by knowledge, certainty or justified belief, such as a physician's acceptance that a certain medicine aggravates or cures an illness, a surgeon's acceptance that a certain



anaesthetic is local rather than general, or a nuclear scientist's acceptance that a certain level of radiation is harmless to humans. But these are normally doxastic acceptances. Thus, due to the unacceptable cost of error, in certain situations where we lack knowledge, certainty or justified belief that  $p$ , normally we do not just take it for granted that  $p$ . The mere acceptance driven by the associated risk asymmetries concerns situations where, due to the very nature of the situation, we cannot or are unlikely to obtain, in a timely manner, good evidence whether or not  $p$ . In the case of the Bush administration, there was no adequate evidence to support the nuclear or the terror proposition, and this was recognized by them, as demonstrated in the case of Cheney's nuclear assertion (see p. 213). But, of course, there was, at the time, adequate evidence that not  $p$  in the case of the nuclear proposition. The presence of adequate contrary evidence that  $p$  would, however, been no constraining factor on mere acceptance that  $p$  for mere acceptance is governed by neither epistemic evidence nor doxastic attitudes whether it be belief or disbelief.

The greater the risk of error, the more cautious we become in our choice whether or not to take something for granted. Rumsfeld stresses that the appropriateness of evidence and certainty shall be assessed against the background of what is at stake along with the nature of the threat in question. He warns against expectations of high evidential standards, arguing that the principle of evidence beyond reasonable doubt is no longer viable in a world where unconventional threats arise from "closed societies and shadowy networks" far beyond national borders. That is, from Rumsfeld's perspective, given the high cost of miscalculation in a security environment characterised by the threat of unconventional weapons, evidence and certainty shall be looked at in relation to the new security environment. He, therefore, argues that it is the experience of 9/11 that they should take as the touchstone for assessing the appropriateness of the kind of evidence and certainty required to act upon in the twenty first century. Moreover, Rumsfeld's argument that evidential standards and certainty thresholds shall be reduced in a security environment shaped by the experience of 9/11 is apparently driven by his contention that nowadays their "margin of error is notably different"<sup>29</sup> due to the new security environment where the threat of unconventional weapons arises from rogue states and shadowy terrorist networks. Part seven of the appendix (pp. 81-86) illustrates the risk asymmetries the Bush

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<sup>29</sup> See appendix (pp. 82-83).

administration officials seem to have weighed up in their considerations of the Iraqi issue. The majority of their statements concern the risk of accepting that Saddam Hussein would neither use WMD against the US homeland nor would he transfer them to terrorist organizations. This is the risk that they vehemently warn of even in the absence of good evidence that Saddam Hussein had any of those alleged WMD stockpiles or any connections to terrorist networks at all. It is likely that the Bush administration officials neither believed the IAEA's empirical evidence that not  $p$  nor did they believe the inspection process to be some sort of a reassurance or a guarantee that Saddam Hussein did not possess or was not producing weapons of mass destruction. This is clearly demonstrated by the White House's press secretary Fleischer on 3 September 2002: "inspections in and of themselves, inspectors in and of themselves, are not a guarantee that Saddam Hussein is not developing weapons of mass destruction" (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020903-1.html>). Moreover, on 26 September 2002, Rumsfeld echoes this very same line of reasoning: "the idea that if you had an appropriate inspection regime, that they'd come back and say you were wrong is - is so far beyond anyone's imagination that it's not something I think about" (<http://www.defense.gov/Transcripts/Transcript.aspx?TranscriptID=3669>). Further, in his interview with *Meet the Press* on 16 March 2003, Cheney expresses a lack of trust in the competence of the inspection regime as well as a lack of reason to believe their findings (see appendix, p. 106). That is, the Bush administration officials seem to have rejected the reliability and competence of the UN inspectors to produce the kind of evidence or certainty deemed appropriate to act upon in a post-9/11 security environment.

Propositional acceptance can be either doxastic or mere acceptance. In the case of doxastic acceptance, we accept a proposition we either merely believe, know it or are certain of. This is because belief can amount to knowledge if it is true and justified, and that our believing a proposition might involve certainty. In situations where the cost of error is deemed unacceptably high as in the case of a physician's potential acceptance that a certain medication is harmless ( $p$ ), we normally feel compelled to accept  $p$  as a premise in our practical reasoning only if we have good evidence that  $p$ , know or are certain that  $p$ . If the situation was one of the former but where we lack knowledge, certainty, or good evidence whether  $p$  or not  $p$  but where  $p$  is of major

concern to us, we normally do not just take it for granted that not  $p$  even if we had to act on some basis. Instead, we would proceed cautiously if we had to act on some basis. The basis on which we would be acting will normally be fundamentally driven by the risk asymmetries associated with our choice whether  $p$  or not  $p$ . Given the high price at stake, we might just accept the proposition we fear most, reason and proceed accordingly. After all, it, as already pointed out by Engel on p. 105 of the thesis, is "safer to err on the side of prudence". I might well accept the stranger looming out of the dark shadows to be a present danger to me ( $p$ ) when I take him to be dangerously armed, and I might well act on my acceptance that  $p$ . Though the cost of error is unacceptably high either way, and I have no good epistemic reasons to accept  $p$  rather than not  $p$  nor do I have any good epistemic reason to consider either more likely, given the risk asymmetries associated with my choice of whether  $p$  or not  $p$ , I might well accept that  $p$ . There are potential risks in accepting either proposition. I might be causing harm to someone who had no intention to inflict harm upon me. But for me, the risks of taking it for granted that not  $p$  when he turns out to be a present danger outweigh the risks of taking it for granted that  $p$  when he turns out to be harmless to me. It is one thing to suffer harm, another to cause it. Under such poor epistemic conditions, I cannot, without a supposed unacceptable cost, be reasonably expected to obtain, in a timely manner, good epistemic evidence before deciding whether  $p$  or not  $p$ , and since my acceptance that  $p$  is not based on good epistemic evidence, I cannot be said to be epistemically justified in my accepting that  $p$ . Nevertheless, my acceptance that  $p$  is prudentially justified. I have a good practical reason to accept that  $p$ : defending myself against an accepted present danger.

It is likely that the Bush administration just took it for granted that  $p$  due to the lack of knowledge, certainty or good evidence that not  $p$  - the kind of certainty or evidence deemed appropriate to accept in a post-9/11 era. Though the IAEA's empirical evidence that not  $p$  was sufficiently probative, it is likely that the Bush administration had low confidence in the competence and reliability of the inspection regime as implied by Fleischer and Rumsfeld earlier or it is likely that they, as stated by Cheney on p. 106 of the appendix, did not trust the inspection regime at all, let alone believe its findings. It is, therefore, likely that they, given the new security environment along with their acute awareness of the power and willingness of hostile regimes to inflict unprecedented sudden damage, deemed it irrational to put their faith and the security

of the American people in the words of the IAEA or anyone else. That is, given the new security environment - characterised by the apparent threat of unconventional weapons in the hands of rogue states in league with terrorist networks - they might have thought that it was safer to err on the side of prudence or caution and might have, therefore, opted for accepting that  $p$  rather than not  $p$ . In fact, on 7 October 2002 Bush argues that given the nature of today's threats along with the deceptive character of the Iraqi regime, they have every reason to accept the worst of all possibilities: "Understanding the threats of our time, knowing the designs and deceptions of the Iraqi regime, we have every reason to assume the worst, and we have an urgent duty to prevent the worst from occurring" (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021007-8.html>). Just like Bratman's case of the ladder, it is one thing to have a war reproached for its false premises, another to have Iraq turning out to be in possession of WMD and in league with Al-Qaeda, another to suffer a WMD attack, another to have the Dark Winter exercise<sup>30</sup> materialise at home, another to have a WMD-armed Iraq rivalling your supremacy in the region, or another to confront a WMD-armed Iraq in the future. Furthermore, it is one thing to suffer harm yourself, another to cause it under a false premise.

Moreover, it is logically possible to think that the Bush administration feared that the situations at the time were such that they could not, without unacceptable cost, obtain, in a timely manner, the kind of appropriate evidence necessary to decide whether  $p$  or not  $p$ . In fact, Bush asserts, though in the absence of good evidence, that they could not, without unacceptable cost, wait for the final proof to see whether the Iraqi regime has WMD: "Facing clear evidence of peril, we cannot wait for the final proof - the smoking gun - that could come in the form of a mushroom cloud"<sup>31</sup>. That is, Bush warns of the dangers of waiting for better evidence while ElBaradei (see appendix, pp. 19 and 20) and Blix (see appendix, p. 72) both demonstrate that they have found no smoking gun during their inspections (2002-2003) on the ground in Iraq. Furthermore, the classified version of the NIE (1 October 2002) also shows that the intelligence community has "no specific intelligence information that Saddam's regime has directed attacks against US territory" (see appendix, p. 73). It further

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<sup>30</sup> See appendix (pp. 67, 68, and 85).

<sup>31</sup> See appendix (p. 72).

states: "We have low confidence in our ability to assess when Saddam would use WMD" (<http://www.fas.org/irp/cia/product/iraq-wmd-nie.pdf>). Moreover, the classified NIE also demonstrates "Low Confidence" as to "Whether Saddam would engage in clandestine attacks against the US Homeland" or "Whether in desperation Saddam would share chemical or biological weapons with al-Qa'ida" (Ibid). Mushroom cloud is certainly a highly unacceptable cost if materialised. Fearing that a situation might well culminate in a mushroom cloud on your soil should you fail to ward off a feared danger ( $p$ ) is a good practical reason to accept that  $p$  and act accordingly. Though Bush's claim of a potential mushroom cloud from Iraq ( $p$ ) was unsupported by the evidence available at the time, he would still have had good practical reasons to accept that  $p$  if he was genuinely worried that  $p$ . Talk of a possible attribution of doxastic acceptance would be inappropriate here for we have already concluded that belief in the given propositions could not be rightly attributed to the Bush administration officials.

Mere propositional acceptance can be rightly attributed to them only if their acting as if  $p$  was driven by their reasoning as if  $p$ . Propositional acceptance is necessarily reasoning as if  $p$ . That is, to accept that  $p$  is just to think about a given matter as if  $p$  regardless of whether or not we subsequently take some action appropriate to  $p$ . No doubt we often act appropriately to what we accept as true in our practical reasoning. But our acceptance that  $p$  shall not necessarily be accompanied by behavior appropriate to  $p$ , as explicated in our discussions on propositional acceptance in chapter four. Further, I might act as if  $p$ , but might not necessarily reason as if  $p$ , as the case of pretending to be a statue demonstrates (see pp. 106, 246 and 247). Thus, merely acting as if  $p$  cannot amount to accepting that  $p$ . There are situations where one's acting as if  $p$  is a matter of mere public display or sheer pretence. That is why reasoning as if  $p$  is a necessary condition of accepting that  $p$ . This research concludes that given the Bush administration's explicit declaration that they would still proceed with regime change in Iraq regardless of whether or not the inspectors were allowed back in Iraq, in other words regardless of whether or not that  $p$ , it is likely that they were being insincere in presenting  $p$  as their rationale for the war. But it still does not follow that they did not accept that  $p$ . There are situations where we might be insincere in presenting  $p$  - a proposition we already accept as true in our reasoning about  $p$  - as a rationale for doing something  $x$ , but where we might still accept that  $p$

at least at the planning phases of executing  $x$ , as demonstrated in earlier examples. That is, even if the Bush administration did not initially accept that  $p$ , it is unlikely that they would have just taken it for granted that not  $p$  during the planning phases of prosecuting the war. Though the Bush administration expressed knowledge that  $p$  (see appendix, pp. 115-141), the evidential conditions at the time were not even sufficient for belief that  $p$ , let alone knowledge that  $p$ .

They could not have possibly known that  $p$  for  $p$  was a false proposition anyway. If they were ever genuine in their assertions that  $p$ , then it is more likely that by knowledge that  $p$ , they were referring to some other cognitive attitude rather than the philosophical notion of knowledge as justified true belief. But given their explicit persistent endeavor to rally public and international support for a cause unsupported by the available evidence, it is more likely that they, for practical purposes, just exaggerated their thoughts about  $p$ . In light of their emphasis on their demonstrated vulnerability, their argument of the new security environment where the cost of error or miscalculation was seemingly deemed intolerable due to the nature of the contemporary threats and the willingness of hostile regimes to inflict sudden harm on a massive scale, their national security strategy to bring any conceivable or potential threats to a head, their alleged fear that Iraq might, at some point, transfer some of its alleged WMD to terrorists, their argument that the principle of evidence beyond reasonable doubt is no longer viable in a security environment marked by the threat of unconventional weapons and shadowy terrorist networks, their apparent doubts about the competence and reliability of the inspection regime to ensure knowledge or certainty that not  $p$ , their recognition of the insufficiency of the available supporting evidence that  $p$ , their distrust of the Iraqi regime to come clean on the given issues, this research concludes that the Bush administration's asserted belief that  $p$  is better construed as mere acceptance that  $p$ . This is, of course, if their asserted belief that  $p$  was anything other than mere pretence. Due to the factors outlined above, especially their apparent understanding that their margin of error in the twenty first century was fundamentally different due to the nature of the new security environment, propositions of such nature under such epistemic conditions would have been deemed more prudent to accept than to reject. Moreover, the risk asymmetries associated with accepting or rejecting such propositions along with the new security environment where the cost of error was apparently deemed to be unacceptably high would further

explain why they might have deemed it more rational to accept than to reject that  $p$ . Further, the rationality or the necessity of accepting  $p$  is reflected in their public discourse. In an interview with NBC's *Meet the Press* on 8 September 2002, Cheney explicitly stated: "we have to assume there's more there than we know" (see appendix, p. 129). Bush echoes this very same line of reasoning as well (see p. 254 of the thesis for his statement on this). Thus, due to the given security environment where they apparently perceived themselves to be too vulnerable to attack, the potentially higher risks of rejecting  $p$ , the nature of the given alleged threat along with the deceptive character of the Iraqi regime, the Bush administration officials seem to have considered it more rational to accept than to reject that  $p$ .

## Chapter Ten

### Conclusion

Driven by a conviction that belief and justification are the core fundamentals of epistemology that make a practical difference in human life, this research has undertaken to examine the build-up to Iraq war from that perspective. Beliefs make a practical difference in our life in the way of motivating or guiding our actions. Lacking easy and immediate access to truth, we often come to conclude or act when we arrive at a firm belief. Beliefs play a fundamental role in settling opinion. Had it not been for our capacity to believe, most of our conduct would be guided by our instincts. It is for the lack of immediate access to truth that the need for justification arises. In epistemic deontology, our inability to have immediate access to truth is superseded by our epistemic responsibility to base our beliefs on adequate evidence. That is, on the deontological view, the immediate inaccessibility of truth is superseded by an epistemic duty to seek both confirming and disconfirming evidence and ensure that we do not stifle doubts or suppress evidence when it proves disconfirming or discomforting. These are the essence of epistemic duties which deontologists take to be the repository of epistemic justification.

Though internalists and externalists both concur that a belief can be false but justified and that the truth of a belief does not, therefore, count in favour of its being justified, the externalists' conception of justification permits otherwise. Externalists, however, do not explicitly endorse such reasoning. In addition, there is no agreement among legal philosophers as to what actually confers justification or whether justification is associated with actions or actors. Some, such as Fletcher (1985) and Hurd (1999), tie justification to truth (true belief), whereas some, such as Baron (2005a, b) and Stewart (2003), tether it to reasonable belief. That is, the reasonable belief view permits reasonably mistaken defensive force to count as justified (putative justification), whereas the truth view only recognizes the defensive force motivated by true belief. The truth view has some intuitive appeal due to the undeserved or unjust harm inflicted upon a putative aggressor who has no intention to cause harm against the person who uses putative defensive force on the basis of a reasonable belief that justifying conditions obtain. But adherents of the reasonable belief conception submit that we cannot be reasonably expected to base our conduct on something (truth) we



cannot be reasonably expected to have immediate access to. It is our capacity for belief that makes it possible we have an involuntary attitude of belief's character in situations where we have no immediate access to truth, and it is the presence of justification along with our being motivated by such justification that ensures the rationality of conduct where truth is not immediately knowable.

Rational belief, reasonable belief and justified belief are all used interchangeably in the philosophical literature with the pre-modifiers being epistemic appraisals of the belief in question. Epistemologists are driven by the form the justificational status of a belief takes, whether it is internalist or externalist in nature. They all concur that basing beliefs on good evidence is epistemically desirable. But they diverge on what it is that endows belief with positive epistemic status. Internalists associate such status with a belief's being based on adequate evidence accessible, in some way, to the believing subject. They contend that a belief possesses justificational status only when the believer has some potential access to what confers such status. Externalists tether justification with the reliability of the cognitive process that generates the belief. Deontologists tie it with one's being blameless in holding a belief.

They all face problems in their attempt to provide a tenably comprehensive answer to what it is for a belief to possess justificatory status. In its trial against the supposed beliefs in question, mentalism fails to account for a plausible explanation behind a belief's unjustifiability status. Due to its implausible argument that justifying conditions must be metaphysically internal to a believer, mentalism dooms its cause for a general account of justification. As an extreme brand of internalism, mentalism can only account for the justification of beliefs whose justifying conditions comprise an occurrent or dispositional state or a feature of the believer. The motivation behind such a restrictive account is that only what is internal to a believer in a metaphysical sense can satisfy the internalist access to justifying conditions. But we can attain such access through reflection or recollection without the justifying condition's being internal to us in a metaphysical sense.

If internalism is to function as a leading epistemological theory accounting for the justificatory status of the majority of our beliefs, then it shall restrict the internalist condition to indirect awareness. It needs to avoid conditions, such as direct awareness or the metaphysical location of justifying conditions, which detract from its intuitive

force or its commonsensical appeal. Even if the supposed nuclear belief were to meet the mentalist condition, it would still not have been justifiably acquired for its failure to satisfy the truth-conducivity condition required by internalists. Further, the alleged nuclear belief also fails to satisfy the perspectival internalism's requirement for the rationale that gave rise to such alleged belief – though within the believing subject's ken – fails to count as a justified belief. Given the IAEA's empirical evidence that not *p*, the rationale behind the nuclear belief could not have counted as a justified belief of Cheney's. That is, if Cheney ever came to believe the rationale behind his supposed nuclear belief, then his rationale belief would have lacked epistemic justification for the epistemic force of the four-fold rationale was impugned by the living doubts raised by the US intelligence community and later overridden by the IAEA's findings. Thus, he had no good evidence to believe them.

The fundamental reasoning behind perspectival internalism is that for a condition to be justification-conferring, it should be within our perspective on the world in the way of justified belief. But a justifying condition can be within our perspective on the world without its being a justified belief itself (without our justifiably believing that it possesses adequacy for the belief in question). Any adequate evidence could be justification-conferring as long as we have some cognitive awareness of its existence whether that awareness takes the form of a belief, a justified belief, knowledge or just simple awareness. The fundamental thesis of internalism is that a belief possesses justificatory status only if it is *based* on adequate evidence – directly or indirectly accessible to the believer whether in the way of belief, justified belief, knowledge or other cognitive states – with no sufficient contrary evidence available at the time of belief. Requiring that a justifying condition itself be a justified belief is, therefore, superfluous.

There are two core theses underlying the argument by perspectival internalists. First, they argue that if a justifying condition obtains, we should justifiably believe that it does in the *way* (efficacious) that it does if it were to be justification-conferring. That is, they contend that we should justifiably believe that the justifying condition provides adequate support for the belief in question (having a justified belief about the adequacy of the justifying condition). But this is not the only legitimate way through which we come to be aware of justifying conditions. There are situations where we

become aware of a justifying condition through other cognitive states such as intuitions and immediate apprehensions, as argued by Bonjour (1980). Subjecting the psychological medium between a believer and a justifying condition to justified belief creates a superfluous requirement for positive epistemic status. It complicates the epistemic assessment of belief by leading it to regress – an outcome which strong internalism is plagued with. Second, they contend that only justified beliefs could confer justification, arguing that an unjustified belief cannot be in the role of bestowing an epistemic status it does not itself possess. But this conception cannot account for the epistemic status of all beliefs. We have already observed that we possess justificatory status for many beliefs whose justifying conditions we have no justified belief about.

Being examined against all accounts of internalism, the fundamental internalist violation responsible for rendering the supposed nuclear belief unjustifiably acquired would have been the subject's disregard to the available living doubts, ignoring contrary evidence and basing the belief on defeated evidence. That is, of course, if the given propositional attitude were to be a genuine belief. But this research has, in light of the evidential conditions at the time, concluded that the attribution of belief to the given subject is inappropriate. However, if challenged, Cheney could defend the possession of his alleged nuclear belief by arguing that he took such belief to be warranted by the evidence available at the time. That is, he could argue that belief in the nuclear proposition was warranted from his own cognitive perspective on the matter. But there was no reasonable or adequate ground to warrant such belief. The IAEA findings clearly demonstrated that there was no evidence to show that Iraq had reconstituted its nuclear weapons program. In addition, the US intelligence community expressed serious doubts about the probability of the nuclear proposition. That is, the available supporting grounds were not sufficient to constitute evidence of any probity to show that Iraq had a reconstituted nuclear weapons program before the war. If what Cheney manifests as his belief represents his real state of mind on the given matter, then such belief would have been unjustifiably acquired.

Enmeshed with an intractable generality problem and a counter-intuitive contention that justificational status obtains regardless of a believing subject's cognitive awareness of what it is that confers such status, externalism fails to explain what the

rationality status of the alleged nuclear belief would have been if it were to be a genuine belief. Embracing belief in the absence of some cognitive grasp of what is responsible for the rationality of the belief leads to epistemic irrationality. In addition to that, the generality problem leaves externalism as a general theory of epistemic justification, rendering us unable to accurately choose the relevant process type to examine its reliability in a bid to establish whether or not a belief is reliably produced. It is due to this generality problem that we cannot, from an externalist standpoint, accurately establish whether or not a given belief is reliably formed. And it is because of our inability to accurately establish the reliability of the process type responsible for the generation of a belief that we cannot accurately establish the epistemic status of the belief from an externalist perspective. In order to determine the justifiability of a belief from an externalist perspective, we have to establish whether or not the cognitive process responsible for the generation of the belief was reliable. As already observed, reliability is a dispositional frequency notion attributable to items that have a range of employments or realisations. It is, therefore, associated with types rather than tokens. But since each token can be a member of an infinite number of types, determining the exact type to check for its reliability will end up undeterminable in the absence of a rule. A given belief could be generated by scores of process types.

So long as externalism continues to have reliability as its *raison d'être*, it will continue to be a general account of justification incapable of providing an accurate epistemic assessment of belief. For externalists, a belief is justified as long as it is the outcome of a reliable cognitive process. But epistemic justifiability is just epistemic rationality, and we are epistemically rational in believing something only when we have some cognitive access to what is responsible for the rationality of the belief. This is, of course, providing that the basis of the belief provides adequate support for the truth of the belief. Even if the supposed nuclear belief were to be generated by a highly reliable cognitive process type, it would still have been epistemically irrational for the given subject to knowingly embrace belief on the basis of defeated evidence. He would have been epistemically irresponsible, from a deontological perspective, to embrace belief in the presence of living doubts and such overwhelming contrary evidence.

Furthermore, even if Cheney had impeccable evidence to trust the reliability of his reasoning, the alleged nuclear belief would still have been unjustifiably acquired due to its being knowingly based on debunked evidence. There is no way that Cheney could not have known that, at the time of manifesting such belief, the four-fold rationale behind the nuclear proposition was overridden or at least fundamentally undermined by the IAEA's probative findings. The subjective or objective presence of reliability can neither supersede nor offset the need for adequate evidence. In addition to the basing relation and the lack of sufficient contrary evidence, the presence of adequate supporting evidence – accessible in some way – is the most fundamental reason behind the obtaining of epistemic justification and the most plausible reason, after truth, for holding a belief. We, once epistemically motivated, tend to hold our beliefs because we have good reason for thinking them to be true.

The alleged nuclear belief would still have been unjustifiably acquired even if the alleged believing subject were to believe or trust the four-fold rationale behind the nuclear proposition for such rationale was no good evidence to warrant belief in the nuclear proposition. Belief and reason are, as already observed, intimately connected. That is why it is psychologically impossible to believe something we take to be unwarranted by the current evidence. The available contrary evidence along with the living doubts were sufficient to disbelieve or discourage belief in the nuclear proposition. That is, they were sufficient to reject belief in favour of the given proposition. Belief in the nuclear proposition was neither favoured nor warranted by the available evidence. The available supporting evidence was defeated. Thus, the totality of the available evidence was against belief in the nuclear proposition. However, we can attribute belief to Cheney, but neither epistemic nor deontological justification to possess the belief, only if he had trusted or believed the available supporting evidence.

That is, only if he took the available supporting evidence to be sufficient or satisfactory to warrant such belief. But Cheney himself was aware that there were serious doubts<sup>1</sup> about the probity of the supporting evidence prior to the resumption of the UN inspections. He was also aware of the IAEA's probative findings which

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<sup>1</sup> For the intake of INR on aluminium tubes, refer to appendix (pp. 22, 23 and 25), on uranium (p. 29), and on the general nature of the available nuclear-related evidence (pp. 18-19). For the intake of DOE on aluminium tubes, refer to appendix (pp. 23 and 30).

assertively demonstrated the absence of any evidence to support the proposition that there were proscribed nuclear activities in Iraq. Moreover, Cheney himself recognizes the uncertainty of intelligence evidence. Addressing the Iraqi nuclear proposition on 29 August 2002, he argues that “Intelligence is at best an uncertain business, even under the best circumstances” (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/08/20020829-5.html>). Most importantly, he takes the available supporting evidence to be insufficient to warrant belief in the nuclear proposition. The following is what he takes to be the case with the corroborating evidence gathered through the intelligence community prior to the resumption of the UN inspections in Iraq:

We have a tendency ... to say, “Well, we’ll sit down and we’ll evaluate the evidence. We’ll draw a conclusion”. But we always think in terms that we’ve got all the evidence. Here, we don’t have all the evidence. ... What we know is just bits and pieces we gather through the intelligence system<sup>2</sup> (8 September 2002).

The four-fold rationale behind the nuclear proposition came to the attention of the intelligence community well before Cheney’s recognition that the available supporting evidence was inadequate. The aluminium tube and the magnet (along with the high-speed balancing machines) allegations emerged prior to April 2001<sup>3</sup>, the Niger uranium yellow cake on 15 October 2001<sup>4</sup>, and the satellite photographs in May 2002<sup>5</sup>. That is, by the bits and pieces of evidence, Cheney is referring to the four-fold rationale behind his manifested belief that Iraq had a reconstituted nuclear weapons program before the invasion. He takes the source of the available supporting evidence (the intelligence community) to be *uncertain* and the available supporting evidence *insufficient*. Thus, Cheney takes belief in the nuclear proposition to be unwarranted by the current evidence. In other words, belief in the nuclear proposition was unwarranted from his cognitive perspective on the given issue.

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<sup>2</sup> See appendix (p. 18).

<sup>3</sup> Further details to be found at: <http://web.mit.edu/simsong/www/iraqreport2-textunder.pdf> (pp. 88 and 126, respectively).

<sup>4</sup> Ibid (p. 36).

<sup>5</sup> Further details to be found at: <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030205-1.html>.

The only thing that would have rendered the four-fold rationale adequate or satisfactory from the perspective of Cheney would have been a subsequent emergence of evidence corroborating the given rationale. But as we have already learned, the subsequent emergence of evidence was the IAEA's sufficient contrary evidence. Following his statement acknowledging the inadequacy of the available supporting evidence, no evidence emerged to corroborate the four-fold rationale. Thus, the four-fold rationale would have still remained inadequate from his perspective on the nuclear issue. It is psychologically impossible to believe something we take to be unwarranted by the current evidence. Thus, belief in the nuclear proposition as well as its rationale would have been psychologically impossible from Cheney's perspective on the given matter. The only way we can attribute belief to Cheney is if he had successfully engaged in a self-serving endeavour re-examining the four-fold rationale, employing different assessment criteria in a bid to convince himself of the adequacy of the given rationale and, in effect, of the probability of the nuclear proposition. But we normally do not convince ourselves of the probability of an evidentially unsupported proposition that generates or heightens anxiety. This is diagnostic of wishful believing rather than fear-driven propositional attitudes such as pragmatic acceptance. Under epistemic conditions where we merely fear that  $p$  but take belief in  $p$  to be unwarranted by the current evidence, we, for practical reasons, normally come to accept rather than believe that  $p$ . That is if we had to act or proceed on some basis at the time; or if we had to take an attitude on  $p$ , whether it be belief, disbelief, acceptance or rejection, on the basis of the evidential conditions at the time.

Though there was a glaring focus on corroborating evidence and a flagrant disregard to dissenting evidence on the part of the Bush administration officials, this cannot be taken as evidence that they wanted to believe the given propositions. Normally we do not desire belief in  $p$  under conditions where we lack good evidence whether  $p$  or not  $p$  but where we perceive the feared eventuality of  $p$  to be too costly. That is, we normally do not prefer to believe an epistemically ill-founded proposition that produces or heightens fear, tension or anxiety. The desire to ward off a feared danger cannot be equated with the desire to believe. The latter normally obtains when the given proposition is desired. The desire to believe can only be satisfied by bringing about the desired belief. But fulfilling the desire to ward off a feared danger is not contingent on possessing any doxastic attitudes. We do not have to necessarily

believe that a perceived danger is imminent or present in order to be prompted to engage in self-defense. Like belief, mere acceptance that  $p$  normally disposes us to act appropriately to  $p$  as well. That is, accepting that my safety is in danger normally prompts me to reason and act accordingly. Poor epistemic conditions where we merely fear that  $p$ , but lack good evidence whether  $p$ , normally promote mere practical acceptance that  $p$  rather than belief that  $p$ . Faced with the feared eventuality of  $p$ , but where we lack good evidence whether or not that  $p$ , we can only be more likely to, for practical reasons, accept than to reject that  $p$ . This is especially the case when the cost of error is too high. The risk asymmetries we associate with accepting or rejecting that  $p$ , where  $p$  is of major concern to us, normally promote pragmatic acceptance that  $p$ . In light of the considerations outlined on p. 256, this research has concluded that neither belief nor pragmatic belief can be rightly attributed to the Bush administration officials. It, rather, has concluded that the given supposed beliefs are more apt to be characterised as mere propositional acceptances. That is if they were ever genuine propositional attitudes, rather than mere pretence.

To sum up, the research has undertaken a three-fold inquiry into the nature of the given alleged beliefs. The first part of the inquiry looked into the possibility of attributing belief, the second part that of pragmatic belief, and the third part that of mere propositional acceptance to the given alleged believing subjects. The inquiry demonstrated that neither belief nor pragmatic belief would be an appropriate characterisation of the given alleged beliefs, given the evidential conditions at the time along with the unwelcome nature of the given propositions. In the philosophical literature, pragmatic belief is described as either welcome or unwelcome. In other words, the essence of pragmatic belief is said to originate from either a) pragmatic ends or wishful thoughts, or, b) fears, anxieties or worries. There are situations where wishful thinking or pragmatic goals can cause or lead to a desired belief state, though only indirectly. Though I do not currently believe in God or that  $x$  has any feelings of affection to me ( $p$ ), my hunger for such a belief state might cause in me the belief that  $p$ . I might be able to bring about such a desired belief through indirect routes such as bringing about conditions which, from my perspective, constitute evidence for  $p$  or by focusing on the available supporting evidence and ignoring the evidence that casts doubt on the possibility that  $p$ . My endeavour to bring about this belief will succeed only if I succeed in getting myself convinced that  $p$  or only if I can pass from the



cognitive purview where I take  $p$  to be evidentially unsupported to a cognitive purview where I take the available evidence for  $p$  to be satisfactory from my own subjective perspective. But it will fail if I eventually fail to take the available evidence for  $p$  to be satisfactory.

It is normal for human agents to desire belief in propositions they do not currently believe. There are many things we want to believe in, though without currently possessing the corresponding beliefs. I want to believe in Paradise, though I am not holding any such corresponding beliefs at the moment. In situations where our cognition is driven by pragmatic desires or practical interests, we normally want to believe propositions that can bring about positive thinking, psychological comfort, mental ease, or peace of mind. That is, we do not normally want to believe a proposition that generates or heightens anxiety or fear. In situations where we merely fear that  $p$  in the absence of good evidence whether or not that  $p$ , but where the feared eventuality of  $p$  is of utmost concern to us just like the feared eventuality of leaving the gas stove on is to Barbara (see pp. 118-119 of the thesis), we normally tend to accept  $p$  if we had to take an attitude on  $p$  under such epistemically degenerate conditions or if we had to act on some basis at the time. That is, it is not the case that we are more willing to believe than to disbelieve  $p$  under such poor epistemic conditions where we want to prevent or avoid a feared eventuality that is epistemically unsupported by the available evidence. Fearing  $p$  neither requires nor entails the belief that  $p$ . Improbable or even impossible evils can cause in us the feeling of fear, as argued by Hume (see pp. 238-239 of the thesis). Further, merely imagining or considering a frightening scene can cause fear in us, as argued by Morreall (see p. 238 of the thesis). Thus, merely imagining what it would be like if the plane my sister is flying on crashes can cause in me the fear that the plane she is flying on might crash (see Radford and Weston 1975: 72-73).

Though I have a fear of some sort that I might miss my flight or that I might not get through a job interview, a driving test or a life-changing operation, it is not necessarily the case that I am holding the corresponding beliefs. It is logically and psychologically possible to fear a proposition without holding the corresponding belief. It is likely that the Bush administration officials merely feared or suspected that  $p$ . But from this, it does not follow that they also held the corresponding belief.

Belief differs from other mental states such as fear or suspicion. The latter can obtain in the absence of the former. Moreover, it is likely that they just accepted  $p$  due to the lack of what they, in a post-9/11 security environment, would have accepted as certainty or good epistemic evidence whether or not that  $p$  or due to the fear that maybe  $p$ . Mere propositional acceptance is, after all, a cognitive attitude that does not require good epistemic evidence. It is, instead, a propositional attitude that could be driven by purely practical reasons. By contrast, by virtue of its constitutional aim at getting the truth, belief is normally committed to epistemic evidence, though we also have beliefs motivated by practical reasons (non-paradigmatic cases of belief). I concur with Bratman (1992) that the practical pressures, the pressures of risks, or the risk asymmetries that arise from epistemically unprobative conditions normally shape what we accept rather than what we believe under such conditions. In other words, they normally promote or shape mere propositional acceptance rather than belief. After all, mere acceptance that  $p$ , just like the belief that  $p$ , disposes us to reason and act as if  $p$ . The difference between them is that our believing that  $p$  entails our feeling it true that  $p$ , whereas our acceptance that  $p$  does not entail such a feeling. This is besides the voluntariness of propositional acceptance and the involuntariness of belief.

The given Bush administration beliefs cannot be appropriately characterised as pragmatic beliefs, that is as beliefs driven or motivated by a pragmatic desire that  $p$  be the case for the propositions they manifested a belief in favour of were not wishful or welcome propositions to be desired. They were unwelcome propositions. We normally do not want to believe a proposition that is unwelcome. That is why an alleged pragmatic belief in an unwelcome proposition cannot be rightly characterised as a belief motivated by a pragmatic desire that  $p$  be the case. It will be conceptually incoherent to characterise a supposed unwelcome belief as a belief driven by a pragmatic desire that  $p$  be the case. If the supposed pragmatic belief is ever a genuine belief, it would be an unwelcome belief motivated by fears or worries. The evidential conditions under which the given alleged beliefs were manifested were unprobative. There was sufficient contrary evidence in the case of the nuclear proposition along with sufficient living doubts in the case of the terror proposition. That is, neither proposition was supported by good epistemic evidence at the time. Though the Bush administration officials made it clear that their policy objective was regime change, it

is still logically possible to think that they were worried that *p* or had a fear that *p*. In light of regime change as their declared policy objective, it can be argued that they were being insincere in presenting *p* as the real rationale behind the war. But even if they were insincere in presenting *p* as the real reason for the war, it still does not follow that they did not fear that *p*. Furthermore, it still does not follow that they did not accept *p* at least in their war plans or in their practical reasoning on how best to go about prosecuting the war itself. But even if they feared that *p*, it still does not follow that they had a fear-driven belief that *p*. Fearing that *p* neither requires nor entails the belief that *p*, as noted on pp. 237-239 of the thesis. In light of the evidential conditions at the time along with the new security environment where the margin of error was, apparently, perceived by the Bush administration to be dramatically different<sup>6</sup>, this research concludes that the given alleged beliefs, if they were ever genuine propositional attitudes, are better understood as mere propositional acceptances rather than paradigmatic cases of belief or pragmatic beliefs. Though the Bush administration's declared policy objective, regime change, might have favoured a collective manifestation of belief in the professed rationale for the war, such a pragmatic end would not have required genuine belief in the given rationale.

The research has also undertaken an inquiry into the justificational status of the given supposed beliefs, taking into account the internalist, the deontological, and the externalist theories of justification. The inquiry into the foregoing justification theories demonstrated that the theory most consistent with our intuitions about justified belief is the internalist theory of justification (the weak non-deontological account of internalism). In the philosophical literature, the primary dispute over what justification theory best accounts for our intuitions about the concept of epistemic justification is between internalists and externalists. I have employed the deontological theory of justification in order to show that internalism is motivated by our intuitions about the rationality of belief rather than by deontological considerations, as claimed by externalists. Moreover, I have employed externalism in order to demonstrate the counter-intuitive nature of justification theories, such as that of externalism, that do not recognize the necessity of internalist constraints on justification. The appeal for a particular justification theory rather than another is, as already observed in articulating the research question, determined by the respective

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<sup>6</sup> See appendix (pp. 82-83) for Rumsfeld's statement on this.

theory's capacity to account for our intuitions about justified belief. Both internalists and externalists take epistemic justification to be an ordinary concept and, thereby, base their arguments for the alleged plausibility of their theories on the respective theory's capacity to appropriately account for our intuitions about justifiable believing. Further reiterating what was articulated in addressing the research question vis-à-vis the reason behind the appeal for a particular justification theory rather than another, Stewart Cohen observes:

While numerous considerations play a role in the assessment of a philosophical theory of ordinary concepts [such as epistemic justification], a major consideration is how well the theory accords with our intuitions. ... We are interested in the concept of justified belief because it plays a central role in the way we view ourselves and our relation to the world. We want to know what we are saying when we describe ourselves as having justified beliefs (or as being justified in believing). So, an important test for a particular theory is how well it fares in accounting for our intuitions about justified belief. Indeed, this is how many philosophers who work on developing these theories have proceeded. ... [Thus] the [justificatory] methodology involves, to a large extent, assessing how well the theories accord with our intuitive judgments about when beliefs are justified (or, equivalently, when it is true to say that beliefs are justified) (1995: 114-115).

That is, according with our intuitions about justified belief is widely recognized by justification theorists as the touchstone for the assessment of a justification theory's commonsensical appeal. It is this harmony with our intuitions of justifiable believing that provides a justification theory with a tenable position or an impervious posture. Thus, in constructing their theories, most justification theorists give us the impression that they are just formulating our commonsensical convictions of justified belief in an orderly manner. But as the inquiry into the leading justification theories demonstrated, the justification theory that best corresponds with our intuitions of justifiable believing is the internalist theory of justification. It is the internalist theory that is committed to our commonsensical judgments on justified belief. So when investigative journalists set out on an inquiry into the truth values or the justifiability of a claim, they would be doing the same thing as what an internalist would be doing when determining the justificational status of a belief proposition. They both would be working within the parameters of the evidence that settles the question of the truth and falsity of the proposition in question. In other words, they both would be pursuing evidence for and against the probability of the given proposition. From both

perspectives, the inquiry into the justifiability status of the given proposition is settled on the basis of two determining factors. First, whether the proposition is supported by the available evidence, if there is any. Second, whether the available supporting evidence is adequate or probative.

Furthermore, any commonsensical view would, of course, take it as essential that a belief is based on the evidence that justifies the belief. I might, as observed on p. 54, be in possession of good evidence that warrants belief in a proposition, but might come to believe it for reasons other than the good evidence at my disposal. Thus, I might have good reasons within my cognitive purview to believe in God, but might come to believe such a proposition on the basis of evidentially irrelevant considerations such as a hunger for such a belief state, a practical end, a practical need, or just because my family, my friends or my tribe members believe it. It is because of such cases that the obtaining of the basing relation between a belief proposition and its justifying premise is a necessary condition for the conferment of epistemic justification on a belief. Any justification theory that takes our commonsensical convictions of justification seriously would recognize the indispensability of the aforementioned factors as a necessary condition for the conferment of justificational status on a belief. Flouting such intuitively compelling considerations, the externalist theory's necessary condition for justificational status supervenes on the reliability of the cognitive process that generates a given belief. In addition to its being unnecessary for the conferment of such a status, the externalists' reliability condition is rendered undeterminable by the generality problem which externalism is plagued with. This is besides the widely shared doubt among epistemologists that commonsense has any such externalist conceptions of justification.

I suggest that future research focus on analysing the Bush administration's knowledge-constituted propositions<sup>7</sup> in light of the different theories of knowledge. Further study can draw upon the findings of this research along with its comprehensive appendix to examine the belief condition of knowledge in the given context as well as the broader political context, determining the nature of the given

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<sup>7</sup> Refer to appendix (pp. 115-141) for a comprehensive account of the Bush administration officials professing to *know* the charges levelled against Iraq to be true.

knowledge claims, and also establishing how political knowledge connects to the theory of knowledge.

**Appendix (the emphases are mine)**  
**Part One**

**Character List**

- **Al-Libi** – a captured Al-Qaeda element. Under the influence of waterboarding, he was coerced to give details about the alleged connections between Iraq and Al-Qaeda. He, consequently, provided his American debriefers with false information.
- **Ari Fleischer** – then White House's Press Secretary.
- **Brent Scowcroft** – the National Security Adviser under President Gerald Ford and George H.W. Bush.
- **Colin Powell** – then US Secretary of State.
- **Condoleezza Rice** – President Bush's National Security Advisor during the build up to Iraq war.
- **Dick Cheney** – then US Vice President.
- **Donald Rumsfeld** – then US Secretary of Defense.
- **Gregory Thielmann** – then director of Intelligence Bureau at the US State Department.
- **Hussein Kamel** – the Iraqi Minister for Military Industrialisation in the 1990s.
- **Mohamed Atta** – the leading 9/11 hijacker.
- **Naji Sabri** – then Iraqi Foreign Minister.
- **Paul Wolfowitz** – then Deputy Defense Secretary.
- **Robert Baer** – a 21-year CIA veteran who spent ninety percent of his time in the Middle East.
- **Scott McClellan** – then Deputy Press Secretary.
- **Scott Ritter** – the chief UN weapons inspector (1991-1998).
- **Tariq Aziz** – then Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister.
- **Tyler Drumheller** – the 26-year top CIA veteran who was the chief of clandestine operations in Europe during the lead up to Iraq war.

**Abbreviations**

- **CIA** – Central Intelligence Agency
- **DIA** – Defense Intelligence Agency
- **DOE** – Department of Energy
- **IAEA** – International Atomic Energy Agency
- **INR** – the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research
- **Iff** – if and only if
- **NIE** – National Intelligence Estimate
- **P** - proposition
- **PNAC** – Project for the New American Century
- **UN** – United Nations
- **UNMOVIC** – United Nations Monitoring, Verification, and Inspection Commission
- **UNSCOM** – United Nations Special Commission
- **WMD** – weapons of mass destruction

## Part Two

### The Iraq War Rationale: Possession of Chemical Weapons

#### The Key Belief Statement

**Powell (5 February 2003):** “Saddam Hussein *has* chemical weapons” (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030205-1.html>).

#### Corroborating Assertions

##### Tenet (1 January through 30 June 2001):

- “We *assess* that since the suspension of UN inspections in December of 1998, Baghdad has had the *capability* to reinitiate its CW programs within a few weeks to months”.
- “Since the Gulf war, Iraq has rebuilt key portions of its chemical production infrastructure for *industrial and commercial use*, as well as its missile production facilities. Iraq has attempted to purchase numerous dual-use items for, or under the guise of, legitimate civilian use. This equipment – in principle subject to UN scrutiny – also *could be diverted for WMD purposes*. Since the suspension of UN inspections in December 1998, *the risk of diversion has increased*”.
- “After Desert Fox [the 1998 bombing campaign], Baghdad again instituted a *reconstruction effort* on those facilities destroyed by the US bombing, including several critical missile production complexes and former dual-use CW

#### Counter Assertions

**Cohen (11 January 2001):** “We have successfully contained Saddam Hussein ... That containment strategy and policy has worked” (<http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=251>).

**Powell (24 February 2001):** “and frankly they [the sanctions] have *worked*. He [Saddam Hussein] has not developed any significant capability with respect to weapons of mass destruction. He is *unable* to project conventional power against his neighbors” (<http://www.usembassy-israel.org.il/publish/peace/archives/2001/february/me0224b.html>).

**Rice (29 July 2001):** “We are able to keep arms from him [Saddam Hussein]. His military forces have not been rebuilt” (<http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0107/29/le.00.html>).



<p>production facilities. In addition, Iraq appears to be installing or repairing dual-use equipment at CW-related facilities. Some of these facilities <i>could be</i> converted fairly quickly for production of CW agents”</p> <p>(<a href="https://www.cia.gov/library/reports/archived-reports-1/jan_jun2001.htm">https://www.cia.gov/library/reports/archived-reports-1/jan_jun2001.htm</a>).</p>	
<p><b>Tenet (6 February 2002):</b> “Baghdad is expanding its civilian chemical industry in ways that <i>could be</i> diverted quickly to CW production”</p> <p>(<a href="https://www.cia.gov/news-information/speeches-testimony/2002/senate_select_hearing_03192002.html">https://www.cia.gov/news-information/speeches-testimony/2002/senate_select_hearing_03192002.html</a>).</p>	
<p><b>US State Department (12 September 2002):</b> “At Fallujah and three other plants, Iraq now has chlorine production capacity far higher than any civilian need for water treatment, and the evidence indicates that some of its chlorine imports are being diverted for military purposes”</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.c-span.org/Content/PDF/iraqdecade.pdf">http://www.c-span.org/Content/PDF/iraqdecade.pdf</a>).</p>	
<p><b>DIA (September 2002):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “A substantial amount of Iraq's chemical warfare agents, precursors, munitions, and production equipment were destroyed between 1991 and 1998 as a result of Operation Desert Storm<sup>1</sup> and UNSCOM</li> </ul>	<p><b>DIA (September 2002):</b> “There is <i>no reliable information</i> on whether Iraq is producing and stockpiling chemical weapons, or where Iraq has – or will – establish its chemical warfare agent production facilities”</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.nti.org/e_research/official_docs/dod/2003/dia0603.pdf">http://www.nti.org/e_research/official_docs/dod/2003/dia0603.pdf</a>).</p>

<sup>1</sup> The first Iraq war is referred to as either the first Gulf war or Operation Desert Storm.

actions. Nevertheless, we *believe* Iraq retained production equipment, expertise and chemical precursors and *can* reconstitute a chemical warfare program in the absence of an international inspection regime. Iraq's successful use of chemical weapons in the past against Iranian troops and Kurdish civilians increases the likelihood of a chemical warfare reconstitution. Iraq has not signed the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)".

- "*Although we lack any direction information, Iraq probably possesses CW agent in chemical munitions, possibly including artillery rockets, artillery shells, aerial bombs, and ballistic missile warheads. Baghdad also probably possesses bulk chemical stockpiles, primarily containing precursors, but that also could consist of some mustard agent or stabilized VX*"

([http://www.nti.org/e\\_research/official\\_docs/dod/2003/dia0603.pdf](http://www.nti.org/e_research/official_docs/dod/2003/dia0603.pdf)).

**NIE – classified version (1 October 2002):**

- "We *judge* that Iraq has *continued* its weapons of mass destruction (WMD) *programs* in defiance of UN resolutions and restrictions".
- "Iraq ... has expanded its chemical ... infrastructure under the cover of civilian production".
- "An array of clandestine reporting reveals

**NIE – classified version (1 October 2002):** "We *judge* that we are seeing *only a portion* of Iraq's WMD efforts ... *We lack specific information on many key aspects of Iraq's WMD programs*" (<http://www.fas.org/irp/cia/product/iraq-wmd-nie.pdf>).

that Baghdad has procured covertly the types and quantities of chemicals and equipment sufficient to allow limited CW agent production hidden within Iraq's legitimate chemical industry”.

- “Although we have *little specific information* on Iraq's CW stockpile, Saddam *probably* has stocked at least 100 metric tons (MT) and possibly as much as 500 MT of CW agents – much of it added in the last year”.
- “The Iraqis have experience in manufacturing CW bombs, artillery rockets, and projectiles. We *assess* that they possess CW bulk fills for SRBM warheads, including for a limited number of covertly stored Scuds, *possibly* a few with extended ranges”.
- “We *assess* that Baghdad has begun renewed production of mustard, sarin, GF (cyclosarin), and VX; its capability probably is *more limited* now than it was at the time of the Gulf war, although VX production and agent storage life *probably* have been improved”

(<http://www.fas.org/irp/cia/product/iraq-wmd-nie.pdf>).

**Powell (5 February 2003):**

- “We also have satellite photos that indicate that banned materials have recently been moved from a number of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction facilities. ... Let's look at one. This one is about a weapons munition facility, a facility that holds ammunition at a place called Taji (ph). This is one of about 65 such facilities in Iraq. We know that this one has housed chemical munitions. ... Here, you see 15 munitions bunkers in yellow and red outlines. The four that are in red squares represent *active chemical munitions bunkers*. How do I know that? How can I say that? Let me give you a closer look. Look at the image on the left. On the left is a close-up of one of the four chemical bunkers. The two arrows indicate the presence of sure signs that the bunkers *are storing* chemical munitions”.
- “In May 2002, our satellites photographed the unusual activity in this picture. Here we see cargo vehicles are again at this transshipment point, and we can see that they are accompanied by a decontamination vehicle associated with biological or chemical weapons activity. What makes this picture significant is that we have a human source who has corroborated that movement of chemical weapons occurred at this site at that time.

**Blix (7 March 2003):** “There have been reports, denied from the Iraqi side, that proscribed activities are conducted underground. ... During inspections of declared or undeclared facilities, inspection teams have examined building structures for any possible underground facilities. In addition, ground penetrating radar equipment was used in several specific locations. *No underground facilities for chemical or biological production or storage were found so far*” (<http://www.un.org/Depts/unmovic/SC7asdelivered.htm>).

**Blix (14 February 2003):** “The presentation of intelligence information by the US Secretary of State [on 5 February 2003] suggested that Iraq had prepared for inspections by cleaning up sites and removing evidence of proscribed weapons programmes. I would like to comment only on one case, which we are familiar with, namely, the trucks identified by analysts as being for chemical decontamination at a munitions depot. This was a declared site, and it was certainly one of the sites Iraq would have expected us to inspect. We have

So it's not just the photo, and it's not an individual seeing the photo. It's the photo and then the *knowledge of an individual* being brought together to make the case”.

- “Our conservative *estimate* is that Iraq *today has* a stockpile of between 100 and 500 tons of chemical weapons agent”.
- “We *know* that Iraq has embedded key portions of its illicit chemical weapons infrastructure within its legitimate civilian industry”.
- “Under the guise of dual-use infrastructure, Iraq has undertaken an *effort* to reconstitute facilities that were closely associated with its past program to develop and produce chemical weapons. For example, Iraq has rebuilt key portions of the Tariq (ph) state establishment. Tariq (ph) includes facilities designed specifically for Iraq's chemical weapons program and employs key figures from past programs” (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030205-1.html>).

noted that the two satellite images of the site were taken several weeks apart. *The reported movement of munitions at the site could just as easily have been a routine activity as a movement of proscribed munitions in anticipation of imminent inspection*”

([http://www.un.org/Depts/unmovic/new/pages/security\\_council\\_briefings.asp#6](http://www.un.org/Depts/unmovic/new/pages/security_council_briefings.asp#6)).

### Part Three

#### The Iraq War Rationale: Possession of Biological Weapons

##### The Key Belief Statement

Rumsfeld (20 January 2003): “Saddam Hussein possesses chemical and *biological* weapons” (<http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=165>).

##### Corroborating Assertions

###### Tenet (1 January through 30 June 2001):

- “Iraq’s failure to submit an accurate Full, Final, and Complete Disclosure (FFCD) in either 1995 or 1997, coupled with its extensive concealment efforts *suggest* that the BW program has continued. Without an inspection-monitoring program, however, it is more difficult to determine the current status of these programs”.
- “Iraq also has continued dual-use research that *could* improve BW agent R&D [Research and Development] capabilities. With the absence of a monitoring regime and Iraq’s growing industrial self-sufficiency, we remain concerned that Iraq *may* again be producing biological warfare agents” ([https://www.cia.gov/library/reports/archived-reports-1/jan\\_jun2001.htm](https://www.cia.gov/library/reports/archived-reports-1/jan_jun2001.htm)).

##### Counter Assertions

**Cohen (11 January 2001):** “We have successfully contained Saddam Hussein. ... That containment strategy and policy has worked” (<http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=251>).

**Powell (24 February 2001):** “and frankly they [the sanctions] have *worked*. He [Saddam Hussein] has not developed any significant capability with respect to weapons of mass destruction. He is *unable* to project conventional power against his neighbors” (<http://www.usembassy-israel.org.il/publish/peace/archives/2001/february/me0224b.html>).

**Rice (29 July 2001):** “We are able to keep arms from him [Saddam Hussein]. His military forces have not been rebuilt” (<http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0107/29/le.00.html>).

<p><b>Tenet (6 February 2002):</b> “We <i>believe</i> it [Iraq] also maintains an active and capable BW program; Iraq told UNSCOM it had worked with several BW agents” (<a href="https://www.cia.gov/news-information/speeches-testimony/2002/senate_select_hearing_03192002.html">https://www.cia.gov/news-information/speeches-testimony/2002/senate_select_hearing_03192002.html</a>).</p>	<p><b>Spratt<sup>1</sup> (18 September 2002):</b> “we don't <i>know for sure</i> what they have in the way of biological agents, and <i>we aren't sure</i> how robust their VX ... might be” (<a href="http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=284">http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=284</a>).</p>
<p><b>Rumsfeld (18 September 2002):</b> “Many of his [Saddam Hussein's] WMD <i>capabilities</i> are <i>mobile</i> and can be hidden to evade inspectors” (<a href="http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=283">http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=283</a>).</p>	

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<sup>1</sup> John Spratt is a US Congressman representing South Carolina's fifth district

**NIE – classified version (1 October 2002):**

- “We *judge* that Iraq has *continued* its weapons of mass destruction (WMD) programs in defiance of UN resolutions and restrictions”.
- “We *judge* that all key aspects – R&D, production, and weaponization – of Iraq's offensive BW program are active and that most elements are larger and more advanced than they were before the Gulf war”.
- “Iraq has largely rebuilt ... biological weapons facilities damaged during Operation Desert Fox and has expanded its chemical and biological infrastructure under the cover of civilian production”.
- “We *judge* Iraq has some lethal and incapacitating BW agents and is capable of quickly producing and weaponizing a variety of such agents, including anthrax, for delivery by bombs, missiles, aerial sprayers, and covert operatives”.
- “*Chances* are even that *smallpox* is part of Iraq's offensive BW program”.
- “Baghdad *probably* has developed genetically engineered BW agents”.
- “Baghdad has *mobile facilities* for producing bacterial and toxin BW agents”  
(<http://www.fas.org/irp/cia/product/iraq-wmd-nie.pdf>).

**NIE – classified version (1 October 2002):** “We *judge* that we are seeing *only a portion* of Iraq's WMD efforts ... *We lack specific information on many key aspects of Iraq's WMD programs*”  
(<http://www.fas.org/irp/cia/product/iraq-wmd-nie.pdf>).



<p><b>Wolfowitz (23 January 2003):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “We <i>know</i> about that capability [Iraq’s mobile biological weapons production facilities] from defectors and other sources”.</li> <li>• “there is every reason to <i>believe</i> that things are being moved constantly and hidden”</li> </ul> <p>(<a href="http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=171">http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=171</a>).</p>	
<p><b>Bush (28 January 2003):</b> “From three Iraqi <i>defectors we know</i> that Iraq, in the late <i>1990s</i>, <i>had</i> several mobile biological weapons labs. These are designed to produce germ warfare agents, and can be moved from place to a place to evade inspectors. Saddam Hussein has not disclosed these facilities. <i>He’s given no evidence that he has destroyed them</i>”</p> <p>(<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030128-19.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030128-19.html</a>).</p>	
<p><b>Cheney (31 January 2003):</b> “We <i>know</i> that he <i>had</i> ... several mobile biological weapons laboratories designed to produce germ warfare agents on the move”</p> <p>(<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030131-13.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030131-13.html</a>).</p>	

Powell (5 February 2003):

- “Saddam Hussein has not verifiably *accounted for* even one teaspoon-full of this deadly material [anthrax]. ... The Iraqis have never *accounted for* all of the biological weapons they admitted they had and we know they had. They have never *accounted for* all the organic material used to make them [biological weapons]. ... they have not *accounted for* many of the weapons filled with these agents [biological] such as there are 400 bombs. This is evidence, not conjecture. This is true. This is all well-documented”.
- “We have *firsthand descriptions* of biological weapons factories on wheels and on rails. ... *an Iraqi civil engineer* [Curveball] in a position to *know* the details of the program, confirmed the existence of transportable facilities moving on trailers. ... A third source, also in a position to know, reported in summer 2002 that Iraq *had manufactured* mobile production systems mounted on road trailer units and on rail cars. ... Finally, a fourth source, an Iraqi major, who defected, confirmed that Iraq *has* mobile biological research laboratories, in addition to the

production facilities I mentioned earlier. ... We *know* that Iraq *has* at least seven of these mobile biological agent factories”.

- “*There can be no doubt* that Saddam Hussein *has* biological weapons and the capability to rapidly produce more, many more. And he *has* the ability to dispense these lethal poisons and diseases in ways that can cause massive death and destruction”

(<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030205-1.html>).

**Powell: (7 March 2003):** there are “[WMD] underground facilities that we know exist” (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/03/20030307-10.html>).

**Blix (7 March 2003):**

- “As I noted on 14 February [2003], intelligence authorities have claimed that weapons of mass destruction are moved around Iraq by trucks and, in particular, that there are *mobile production units for biological weapons*. The Iraqi side states that such activities do not exist. Several inspections have taken place at declared and undeclared sites in relation to mobile production facilities. Food testing mobile laboratories and mobile workshops have been seen, as well as large containers with seed processing equipment. *No evidence of proscribed activities have so far been found*”.
- “There have been reports, denied from the Iraqi side, that proscribed activities are conducted underground. ... During inspections of declared or undeclared facilities, inspection teams have

	<p>examined building structures for any possible underground facilities. In addition, ground penetrating radar equipment was used in several specific locations. <i>No underground facilities for chemical or biological production or storage were found so far</i>" (<a href="http://www.un.org/Depts/unmovic/SC7asdelivered.htm">http://www.un.org/Depts/unmovic/SC7asdelivered.htm</a>).</p>
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## Part Four

### The Iraq War Rationale: The Reconstitution of Nuclear Weapons

#### The Key Belief Statement

Cheney (16 March 2003): “we *believe* he [Saddam Hussein] has, *in fact*, reconstituted nuclear weapons”<sup>1</sup>.

#### Cheney in 2002:

- **17 March 2002** – “we also have reason to *believe* they're pursuing the acquisition of nuclear weapons” (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/vicepresident/news-speeches/speeches/vp20020317.html>).
- **24 March 2002** – “now, of course, for the last three years there've been no inspectors and there's *good reason* to *believe* that he continues to aggressively pursue the development of a nuclear weapon” (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/vicepresident/news-speeches/speeches/vp20020324.html>).

#### The Undesirable Truth: The Inspections Worked

**Ritter (June 2000):** “Verifying Iraq's complete disarmament was complicated by the fact that in the summer of 1991 Iraq, disregarding its obligation to submit a complete declaration of its WMD programs, undertook a systematic program of “unilateral destruction”, disposing of munitions, components, and production equipment related to all categories of WMD. When Iraq admitted this to UNSCOM, it claimed it had no documentation to prove its professed destruction. While UNSCOM was able to verify that Iraq had in fact destroyed significant quantities of WMD-related material, without any documents or other hard evidence, it was impossible to confirm Iraq's assertions that it had disposed of all its weapons. UNSCOM's quantitative mandate had become a trap. However, through its extensive investigations, UNSCOM was able to ensure that the vast majority of Iraq's WMD arsenal, along with the means to produce such weaponry, was eliminated. Through monitoring, UNSCOM was able to guarantee that Iraq was not reconstituting that capability in any meaningful way” ([http://www.armscontrol.org/act/2000\\_06/iraqjun.asp](http://www.armscontrol.org/act/2000_06/iraqjun.asp)).

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<sup>1</sup> See appendix, part ten (p. 106).

File Type	Corroborating Assertions	Counter Assertions
Overall Nuclear Program	<p><b>Tenet (1 January through 30 June 2001):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “We <i>believe</i> that Iraq has <i>probably</i> continued at least low-level theoretical R&amp;D [research and development] associated with its nuclear program”.</li> <li>• “the automated video monitoring systems installed by the UN at known and suspect WMD facilities in Iraq are still not operating. Having lost this on-the-ground access, <i>it is more difficult for the UN or the US to accurately assess the current state of Iraq’s WMD programs</i>. Given Iraq’s <i>past behavior</i>, it is <i>likely</i> that Baghdad has used the intervening period [1998-2001] to reconstitute prohibited programs”.</li> <li>• “The Intelligence Community remains concerned that Baghdad <i>may be</i> attempting to acquire materials that <i>could</i> aid in reconstituting its nuclear weapons program” (<a href="https://www.cia.gov/library/reports/archived-reports-1/jan_jun2001.htm">https://www.cia.gov/library/reports/archived-reports-1/jan_jun2001.htm</a>).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Tenet (1 January through 30 June 2000):</b> “We do not have any <i>direct evidence</i> that Iraq has used the period since Desert Fox [December 1998] to reconstitute its WMD programs, although given its <i>past behavior</i>, this type of activity must be regarded as <i>likely</i>. We assess that since the suspension of UN inspections in December of 1998, Baghdad has had the capability to reinitiate both its CW and BW programs within a few weeks to months. Without an inspection monitoring program, however, it is more difficult to determine if Iraq has done so” (<a href="http://ftp.fas.org/irp/threat/bian_feb_2001.htm">http://ftp.fas.org/irp/threat/bian_feb_2001.htm</a>).</p>

<p><b>Tenet (1 July Through 31 December 2001):</b> “Iraq has ... <i>probably</i> used the period [1998-2001] since it refused inspections to <i>attempt</i> to reconstitute prohibited programs. Without UN-mandated inspectors in Iraq, assessing the current state of Iraq's WMD and missile programs is difficult”</p> <p>(<a href="https://www.cia.gov/library/reports/archive/d-reports-1/july_dec2001.htm">https://www.cia.gov/library/reports/archive/d-reports-1/july_dec2001.htm</a>).</p>	
<p><b>Tenet (6 February 2002):</b> “We <i>believe</i> Saddam never abandoned his nuclear weapons program”</p> <p>(<a href="https://www.cia.gov/news-information/speeches-testimony/2002/senate_select_hearing_03192002.html">https://www.cia.gov/news-information/speeches-testimony/2002/senate_select_hearing_03192002.html</a>).</p>	<p><b>ElBaradei (8 October 2002):</b> “when we left in 1998, we <i>believe</i> that we neutralized the nuclear program”</p> <p>(<a href="http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0210/08/se.06.html">http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0210/08/se.06.html</a>).</p> <p><b>ElBaradei (9 February 2003):</b> “in ‘98 we eliminated Iraq’s nuclear program”</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.iaea.org/NewsCenter/Focus/Iraq/pressconf_09022003.pdf">http://www.iaea.org/NewsCenter/Focus/Iraq/pressconf_09022003.pdf</a>).</p>
<p><b>Cheney (26 August 2002):</b> “we now know that Saddam has resumed his efforts to acquire nuclear weapons. Among other sources, we've gotten this from the firsthand testimony of defectors – including Saddam's own <i>son-in-law</i>, who was subsequently murdered at Saddam's direction. Many of us are convinced that Saddam will acquire nuclear weapons <i>fairly soon</i>”</p> <p>(<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/08/20020826.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/08/20020826.html</a>).</p> <p>* Reference to out-dated reporting.</p>	

<p><b>Bush (7 September 2002):</b> “when the inspectors <i>first</i> went into Iraq and were ... finally denied access, a report came out of the ... IAEA that they [the Iraqis] were six months away from developing a weapon. I don't know <i>what more evidence we need</i>” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/text/20020907-2.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/text/20020907-2.html</a>).</p> <p>* Reference to out-dated reporting.</p>	<p><b>ElBaradei (7 March 2003):</b> “After three months of intrusive inspections, we have to date found <i>no evidence</i> or <i>plausible indication</i> of the revival of a nuclear weapons programme in Iraq” (<a href="http://www.un.org/News/dh/iraq/elbaradei-7mar03.pdf">http://www.un.org/News/dh/iraq/elbaradei-7mar03.pdf</a>).</p> <p><b>Cheney (8 September 2002):</b> “We have a tendency ... to say, “Well, we’ll sit down and we’ll evaluate the evidence. We’ll draw a conclusion”. But we always think in terms that we’ve got all the evidence. Here, we don’t have all the evidence. ... What we know is just bits and pieces we gather through the intelligence system” (<a href="http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/bush/meet.htm">http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/bush/meet.htm</a>).</p>
	<p><b>INR, cited in the classified version of the NIE (1 October 2002):</b> “The Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research (INR) <i>believes</i> that Saddam continues to want nuclear weapons and that available evidence indicates that Baghdad is pursuing at least a limited effort to maintain and acquire nuclear weapons-related capabilities. <i>The activities we have detected do not, however, add up to a compelling case that Iraq is currently pursuing what INR would consider to be an integrated and comprehensive approach to acquire nuclear weapons. Iraq may be doing so, but INR considers</i></p>



		<p><i>the available evidence inadequate to support such a judgment. Lacking persuasive evidence that Baghdad has launched a coherent effort to reconstitute its nuclear weapons program, INR is unwilling to speculate that such an effort began soon after the departure of UN inspectors or to project a timeline for the completion of activities it does not now see happening. As a result, INR is unable to predict when Iraq could acquire a nuclear device or weapon</i></p> <p>(<a href="http://www.fas.org/irp/cia/product/iraq-wmd-nie.pdf">http://www.fas.org/irp/cia/product/iraq-wmd-nie.pdf</a>).</p>
	<p><b>NIE – classified version (1 October 2002):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “if left unchecked, it [Iraq] <i>probably</i> will have a nuclear weapon during this decade”.</li> <li>• “in the view of <i>most agencies</i>, Baghdad is reconstituting its nuclear weapons program”.</li> <li>• “Although we assess that Saddam does not <i>yet</i> have <i>nuclear weapons</i> or <i>sufficient material</i> to make any, he remains intent on acquiring them. Most agencies <i>assess</i> that Baghdad started reconstituting its nuclear program about the time that UNSCOM inspectors departed – December 1998”.</li> <li>• “Iraq's efforts to re-establish and enhance its <i>cadre of weapons</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>ElBaradei (13 December 2002):</b> “We know that Iraq ... has no [nuclear] capability whatsoever to produce either a weapon or weapon-usable material” (<a href="http://edition.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0212/13/lt.01.html">http://edition.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0212/13/lt.01.html</a>).</p> <p><b>ElBaradei (28 December 2002):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “No, I don't think we have any <i>smoking gun</i> [in Iraq]”.</li> <li>• “Iraq have [has] not restarted its nuclear weapons program” (<a href="http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0212/28/smn.02.html">http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0212/28/smn.02.html</a>).</li> </ul>

	<p><i>personnel</i> as well as activities at several suspect nuclear sites further indicate that reconstitution is underway”</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.fas.org/irp/cia/product/iraq-wmd-nie.pdf">http://www.fas.org/irp/cia/product/iraq-wmd-nie.pdf</a>).</p>	
	<p><b>Bush (7 October 2002):</b> “Satellite photographs reveal that Iraq <i>is rebuilding</i> facilities at sites that have been part of its nuclear program in the past”</p> <p>(<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021007-8.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021007-8.html</a>).</p>	<p><b>ElBaradei (7 March 2003):</b> “there is no indication of <i>resumed nuclear</i> activities in those buildings that were identified through the use of <i>satellite imagery</i> as being reconstructed or newly erected since 1998, nor any indication of nuclear-related prohibited activities at any inspected sites”</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.un.org/News/dh/iraq/elbaradei-7mar03.pdf">http://www.un.org/News/dh/iraq/elbaradei-7mar03.pdf</a>).</p>
	<p><b>Powell (5 February 2003) :</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “We have <i>no indication</i> that Saddam Hussein has ever abandoned his nuclear weapons program. On the contrary, we have more than a decade of proof that he remains determined to acquire nuclear weapons”.</li> <li>• “Since 1998, his <i>efforts</i> to reconstitute his nuclear program have been focused on acquiring the third and last component, sufficient fissile material to produce a nuclear explosion” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030205-1.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030205-1.html</a>).</li> </ul>	<p><b>ElBaradei (7 January 2003):</b> “I <i>believe</i> ... that we haven't seen anything to show that Iraq has revived its nuclear weapons program. ... so far, we haven't seen a <i>smoking gun</i>”</p> <p>(<a href="http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0301/07/ltm.05.html">http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0301/07/ltm.05.html</a>).</p> <p><b>Blix (27 January 2003):</b> “The large nuclear infrastructure was destroyed and the fissionable material was removed from Iraq by the IAEA”</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.un.org/Depts/unmovic/Bx27.htm">http://www.un.org/Depts/unmovic/Bx27.htm</a>).</p>

		<p><b>ElBaradei (14 February 2003):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “As I have reported on numerous occasions, <i>the IAEA concluded, by December 1998, that it had neutralized Iraq's past nuclear programme</i> and that, therefore, there were no unresolved disarmament issues left at that time”.</li> <li>• “<i>We have to date found no evidence of ongoing prohibited nuclear or nuclear related activities in Iraq.</i> However, as I have just indicated, a number of issues are still under investigation and we are not yet in a position to reach a conclusion about them, <i>although we are moving forward with regard to some of them</i>”.</li> <li>• “The IAEA's experience in nuclear verification shows that it is possible, particularly with an intrusive verification system, to assess the presence or absence of a nuclear weapons programme in a State even without the full co-operation of the inspected state” (<a href="http://www.iaea.org/NewsCenter/Statements/2003/ebsp2003n005.shtml">http://www.iaea.org/NewsCenter/Statements/2003/ebsp2003n005.shtml</a>).</li> </ul>
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**Rice (8 September 2002):** "We do *know* that there have been *shipments* going into *Iran*, for instance – into *Iraq*, for instance, of *aluminum tubes* that really *are only suited to* – high-quality aluminum tools that are *only really suited* for nuclear weapons programs, centrifuge programs"

(<http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0209/08/le.00.html>).

**Cheney (8 September 2002):** "Specifically aluminium tubes. ... he has been seeking to acquire ... the kinds of tubes *that are necessary* to build a centrifuge. ... we know about a particular shipment. We've intercepted that"

(<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/bush/meet.htm>).

**INR, cited in the classified version of the NIE (1 October 2002):** "In INR's view Iraq's efforts to acquire aluminum tubes is central to the argument that Baghdad is reconstituting its nuclear weapons program, *but INR is not persuaded that the tubes in question are intended for use as centrifuge rotors*. INR accepts the judgment of technical experts at the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) who have concluded that the tubes Iraq seeks to acquire are *poorly suited for use in gas centrifuges* to be used for uranium enrichment and finds *unpersuasive* the arguments advanced by others to make the case that they are intended for that purpose. INR considers it far more *likely* that the tubes are intended for another purpose, most *likely* the production of *artillery rockets*. The very large quantities being sought, the way the tubes were tested by the Iraqis, and the atypical lack of attention to operational security in the procurement efforts are among the factors, *in addition to the DOE assessment, that lead INR to conclude that the tubes are not intended for use in Iraq's nuclear weapon program*"

(<http://www.fas.org/irp/cia/product/iraq-wmd-nie.pdf>).

<p><b>US State Department (12 September 2002):</b> "Iraq has stepped up its quest for nuclear weapons and has embarked on a worldwide hunt for materials to make an atomic bomb. In the last 14 months, Iraq has <i>sought</i> to buy thousands of specially designed aluminum tubes which officials <i>believe were intended</i> as components of centrifuges to enrich uranium"</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.c-span.org/Content/PDF/iraqdecade.pdf">http://www.c-span.org/Content/PDF/iraqdecade.pdf</a>).</p>	<p><b>ElBaradei (9 January 2003):</b> "<i>we believe, at this stage, that these aluminium tubes were intended for the manufacturing of rockets</i>"</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.iaea.org/NewsCenter/Focus/Iraq/un_briefing_9jan.html">http://www.iaea.org/NewsCenter/Focus/Iraq/un_briefing_9jan.html</a>).</p>
<p><b>Bush (12 September 2002):</b> "Iraq has made several <i>attempts</i> to buy high-strength aluminum tubes <i>used to</i> enrich uranium for a nuclear weapon" (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020912-1.html#">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020912-1.html#</a>).</p>	
<p><b>NIE – unclassified version (October 2002):</b> "Iraq's efforts to procure tens of thousands of proscribed high-strength aluminum tubes are of significant concern. <i>All intelligence experts</i> agree that Iraq is seeking nuclear weapons and that these tubes <i>could</i> be used in a centrifuge enrichment program. <i>Most intelligence specialists assess</i> this to be the intended use, but some [INR and DOE] <i>believe</i> that these tubes are <i>probably</i> intended for conventional weapons programs"</p> <p>(<a href="http://ftp.fas.org/irp/cia/product/Iraq_Oct_2002.pdf">http://ftp.fas.org/irp/cia/product/Iraq_Oct_2002.pdf</a>).</p>	<p><b>ElBaradei (14 February 2003):</b> "The IAEA is continuing to follow up on <i>acknowledged efforts</i> by Iraq to import high strength aluminium tubes. As you will know, Iraq has declared these efforts to have been in connection with a programme to <i>reverse engineer conventional rockets</i>. <i>The IAEA has verified that Iraq had indeed been manufacturing such rockets</i>. However, we are still exploring whether the tubes were intended rather for the manufacture of centrifuges for uranium enrichment. In connection with this investigation, Iraq has been asked to</p>

		<p>explain the reasons for the tight tolerance specifications that it had requested from various suppliers. <i>Iraq has provided documentation</i> related to the project for reverse engineering and has <i>committed itself</i> to providing samples of tubes received from prospective suppliers” (<a href="http://www.iaea.org/NewsCenter/Statements/2003/ebsp2003n005.shtml">http://www.iaea.org/NewsCenter/Statements/2003/ebsp2003n005.shtml</a>).</p>
	<p><b>Bush (7 October 2002):</b> “Iraq <i>has attempted</i> to purchase high-strength aluminum tubes and other equipment <i>needed for</i> gas centrifuges, which <i>are used</i> to enrich uranium for nuclear weapons” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021007-8.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021007-8.html</a>).</p>	
	<p><b>Bush (28 January 2003):</b> “Our intelligence sources tell us that he [Saddam Hussein] has <i>attempted</i> to purchase high-strength aluminum tubes <i>suitable for</i> nuclear weapons production” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030128-19.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030128-19.html</a>).</p>	

**Powell (5 February 2003):**

- “Intercepted communications from mid-2000 through last summer show that Iraq front companies *sought* to buy machines that *can be* used to balance gas centrifuge rotors. One of these companies also had been involved in a failed effort in 2001 to smuggle aluminum tubes into Iraq”.
- “Saddam Hussein ... has made repeated covert *attempts* to acquire high-specification aluminum tubes from 11 different countries, *even after inspections resumed* [inspections resumed on 27 November 2002]. ... *Most U.S. experts* think they [the aluminum tubes] *are intended* to serve as rotors in centrifuges used to enrich uranium. Other experts [from the INR and the DOE], and the Iraqis themselves, argue that they are really to produce the rocket bodies for a conventional weapon, a multiple rocket launcher. Let me tell you what is not controversial about these tubes. First, *all the experts* who have analyzed the tubes in our possession agree that they *can be* adapted for centrifuge use” (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030205-1.html>).

**INR's Alternative View: Iraq's Attempts to Acquire Aluminum Tubes, cited in the classified version of the NIE (1 October 2002):** “Some of the specialized but dual-use items being sought are, *by all indications*, bound for *Iraq's missile program*. Other cases are *ambiguous*, such as that of a planned magnet-production line whose suitability for centrifuge operations remains *unknown*. Some efforts involve non-controlled industrial material and equipment – including a variety of machine tools – and are troubling because they would help establish the infrastructure for a renewed nuclear program. But such efforts (which began well before the inspectors departed) *are not clearly linked to a nuclear end-use*”

(<http://www.fas.org/irp/cia/product/iraq-wmd-nie.pdf>).

**ElBaradei (14 February 2003):** “In the course of an inspection conducted in connection with the aluminium tube investigation, IAEA inspectors found a number of documents relevant to transactions aimed at the procurement of *carbon fibre*, a dual-use material used by Iraq in its past clandestine uranium enrichment programme for the manufacture of gas centrifuge rotors. Our review of these documents suggests that the carbon fibre sought by Iraq *was not intended for enrichment purposes*, as the

		<p>specifications of the material <i>appear not to be consistent with those needed for manufacturing rotor tubes</i>. In addition, we have carried out follow-up inspections, during which <i>we have been able to observe the use of such carbon fibre in non-nuclear-related applications and to take samples</i>”</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.iaea.org/NewsCenter/Statements/2003/ebsp2003n005.shtml">http://www.iaea.org/NewsCenter/Statements/2003/ebsp2003n005.shtml</a>).</p>
		<p><b>ElBaradei (7 March 2003):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “With regard to aluminium tubes, the IAEA has conducted a thorough investigation of Iraq’s attempts to purchase large quantities of high-strength aluminium tubes. As previously reported, Iraq has maintained that these aluminium tubes were sought for rocket production. <i>Extensive field investigation and document analysis have failed to uncover any evidence that Iraq intended to use these 81mm tubes for any project other than the reverse engineering of rockets</i>”.</li> <li>• “The Iraqi decision-making process with regard to the design of these rockets was <i>well documented</i>. Iraq has provided copies of design documents, procurement records, minutes of committee meetings and</li> </ul>



		<p>supporting data and samples. <i>A thorough analysis</i> of this information, together with information gathered from interviews with Iraqi personnel, has allowed the IAEA to develop <i>a coherent picture</i> of attempted purchases and intended usage of the 81mm aluminium tubes, as well as the rationale behind the changes in the tolerances”.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Drawing on this information, the IAEA has learned that the original tolerances for the 81mm tubes were set prior to 1987, and were based on physical measurements taken from a small number of imported rockets in Iraq’s possession. Initial attempts to reverse engineer the rockets met with little success. Tolerances were adjusted during the following years as part of ongoing efforts to revitalize the project and improve operational efficiency. <i>The project languished for long periods during this time and became the subject of several committees, which resulted in specification and tolerance changes on each occasion</i>”.</li> <li>• “Based on available evidence, the IAEA team has concluded that Iraq’s efforts to import these</li> </ul>
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		<p>aluminium tubes <i>were not likely to have been related to the manufacture of centrifuges</i> and, moreover, that it was <i>highly unlikely that Iraq could have achieved the considerable re-design needed to use them in a revived centrifuge programme</i>".</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "there is no indication that Iraq has attempted to import aluminium tubes for use in centrifuge enrichment. Moreover, even had Iraq pursued such a plan, it would have encountered practical difficulties in manufacturing centrifuges out of the aluminium tubes in question"</li> </ul> <p>(<a href="http://www.un.org/News/dh/iraq/elbaradei-7mar03.pdf">http://www.un.org/News/dh/iraq/elbaradei-7mar03.pdf</a>).</p>
Uranium Acquisition	<p><b>Cheney (20 September 2002):</b> "We now have <i>irrefutable evidence</i> that he [Saddam Hussein] has once again set up and reconstituted his program to take uranium, to enrich it to sufficiently high grade, so that it will function as the base material as a nuclear weapon"</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.leadingtowar.com/claims_facts_noweapons.php">http://www.leadingtowar.com/claims_facts_noweapons.php</a>).</p>	

	<p><b>NIE – classified version (1 October 2002):</b></p> <p><b>“Uranium Acquisition.</b> Iraq retains approximately two-and-a-half tons of 2.5 percent enriched uranium oxide, which the IAEA <i>permits</i>. This low-enriched material <i>could</i> be used as feed material to produce enough HEU [highly enriched uranium] for about two nuclear weapons. The use of enriched feed material also would reduce the initial number of centrifuges that Baghdad would need by about half. Iraq <i>could</i> divert this material – the IAEA inspects it only once a year – and enrich it to weapons grade before a subsequent inspection discovered it was missing. The IAEA last inspected this material in late January 2002”</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.fas.org/irp/cia/product/iraq-wmd-nie.pdf">http://www.fas.org/irp/cia/product/iraq-wmd-nie.pdf</a>).</p>	
	<p><b>NIE – classified version (1 October 2002):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “A foreign government service reported that as of early 2001, Niger <i>planned</i> to send several tons of “pure uranium” (<i>probably</i> yellowcake [A refined form of natural uranium]) to Iraq. As of early 2001, Niger and Iraq reportedly were still working out arrangements for this deal, which <i>could be</i> for up to 500 tons of yellowcake. <i>We do not know the status of this arrangement</i>”.</li> <li>• “Reports indicate Iraq also has sought uranium ore from Somalia</li> </ul>	<p><b>INR, cited in the classified version of the NIE (1 October 2002):</b> “the claims of Iraqi pursuit of natural uranium in Africa are, in INR's assessment, <i>highly dubious</i>” (<a href="http://www.fas.org/irp/cia/product/iraq-wmd-nie.pdf">http://www.fas.org/irp/cia/product/iraq-wmd-nie.pdf</a>).</p> <p><b>ElBaradei (7 March 2003):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “With regard to <i>Uranium Acquisition</i>, the IAEA has made <i>progress</i> in its investigation into reports that Iraq sought to buy uranium from Niger in recent years. The investigation was centred on</li> </ul>

	<p>and possibly the Democratic Republic of the Congo”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “<i>We cannot confirm whether Iraq succeeded in acquiring uranium ore and/or yellowcake from these sources [Niger, Somalia and Congo]. Reports suggest Iraq is shifting from domestic mining and milling of uranium to foreign acquisition. Iraq possesses significant phosphate deposits, from which uranium had been chemically extracted before Operation Desert Storm. Intelligence information on whether nuclear-related phosphate mining and/or processing has been reestablished is inconclusive, however</i>”.</li> <li>• “<i>Most agencies believe that Saddam's personal interest in and Iraq's aggressive attempts to obtain high-strength aluminum tubes for centrifuge rotors – as well as Iraq's attempts to acquire magnets, high-speed balancing machines, and machine tools – provide compelling evidence that Saddam is reconstituting a uranium enrichment effort for Baghdad's nuclear weapons program (DOE agrees that reconstitution of the nuclear program is underway but assesses that the tubes probably are not part of the program)</i>”</li> </ul>	<p>documents provided by a number of States that pointed to an agreement between Niger and Iraq for the sale of uranium between 1999 and 2001”.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “<i>The IAEA has discussed these reports with the Governments of Iraq and Niger, both of which have denied that any such activity took place. For its part, Iraq has provided the IAEA with a comprehensive explanation of its relations with Niger, and has described a visit by an Iraqi official to a number of African countries, including Niger, in February 1999, which Iraq thought might have given rise to the reports. The IAEA was also able to review correspondence coming from various bodies of the Government of Niger, and to compare the form, format, contents and signatures of that correspondence with those of the alleged procurement-related documentation</i>”.</li> <li>• “<i>Based on thorough analysis, the IAEA has concluded, with the concurrence of outside experts, that these documents – which formed the basis for the reports of recent uranium transactions between Iraq and Niger – are in fact not</i></li> </ul>
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	<p>(<a href="http://www.fas.org/irp/cia/product/ir-aq-wmd.html">http://www.fas.org/irp/cia/product/ir-aq-wmd.html</a>).</p>	<p><i>authentic</i>. We have therefore concluded that these specific allegations are <i>unfounded</i>"</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.un.org/News/dh/iraq/elbaradei-7mar03.pdf">http://www.un.org/News/dh/iraq/elbaradei-7mar03.pdf</a>).</p>
	<p><b>Rumsfeld (29 January 2003):</b> "His [Saddam Hussein's] regime has the design for a nuclear weapon; it was working on several different methods of enriching uranium, and recently was discovered <i>seeking</i> significant quantities of uranium from Africa"</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.defense.gov/Transcripts/Transcript.aspx?TranscriptID=1349">http://www.defense.gov/Transcripts/Transcript.aspx?TranscriptID=1349</a>).</p>	<p><b>ElBaradei (7 March 2003):</b> "there is no indication that Iraq has attempted to import uranium since 1990"</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.un.org/News/dh/iraq/elbaradei-7mar03.pdf">http://www.un.org/News/dh/iraq/elbaradei-7mar03.pdf</a>).</p>
Magnet File	<p><b>Powell (5 February 2003):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "In 1999 and 2000, Iraqi officials <i>negotiated</i> with firms in Romania, India, Russia and Slovenia for the purchase of <i>a magnet production plant</i>. Iraq wanted the plant to produce magnets weighing 20 to 30 grams. That's the same weight as the magnets used in Iraq's gas centrifuge program before the Gulf War. This incident linked with the tubes is another indicator of Iraq's attempt to reconstitute its nuclear weapons program".</li> <li>• "We also have intelligence from multiple sources that Iraq <i>is attempting</i> to acquire magnets and</li> </ul>	<p><b>ElBaradei (7 March 2003):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "With respect to reports about Iraq's efforts to import high-strength permanent magnets – or to achieve the capability for producing such magnets – for use in a centrifuge enrichment programme, I should note that, since 1998, Iraq has purchased high-strength magnets for various uses. Iraq has declared inventories of magnets of twelve different designs. <i>The IAEA has verified that previously acquired magnets have been used for missile guidance systems, industrial machinery, electricity meters and field</i></li> </ul>

	<p>high-speed balancing machines; both items <i>can be</i> used in a gas centrifuge program to enrich uranium” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030205-1.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030205-1.html</a>).</p>	<p><i>telephones. Through visits to research and production sites, reviews of engineering drawings and analyses of sample magnets, IAEA experts familiar with the use of such magnets in centrifuge enrichment have verified that none of the magnets that Iraq has declared could be used directly for a centrifuge magnetic bearing”.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “although we are still reviewing issues related to magnets and magnet production, <i>there is no indication to date that Iraq imported magnets for use in a centrifuge enrichment programme</i>” (<a href="http://www.un.org/News/dh/iraq/elbaradei-7mar03.pdf">http://www.un.org/News/dh/iraq/elbaradei-7mar03.pdf</a>).</li> </ul>

## Part Five

### The Iraq War Rationale: Terrorism Connections

The Key Belief Statement		
<p><b>Rice (25 September 2002):</b> “there are contacts between Iraq and al-Qaida. ... there clearly are contacts between al-Qaida and Iraq that can be documented. There clearly is testimony that ... there's a <i>relationship</i> here” (<a href="http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/international/july-dec02/rice_9-25.html">http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/international/july-dec02/rice_9-25.html</a>).</p>		
File Type	Corroborating Assertions	Counter Assertions
Overall Connections	<p><b>Bush (22 March 2002):</b> “a nightmare scenario, of course, would be if a terrorist organization, such as al Qaeda were to link up with a barbaric regime such as Iraq and, thereby, in essence, possess weapons of mass destruction”</p> <p>(<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/03/20020322-10.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/03/20020322-10.html</a>).</p>	
	<p><b>Cheney (24 March 2002):</b> “We're worried about the <i>possible marriage</i>, if you will, on the one hand between the terrorist organizations and on the other, weapons of mass destruction capability, the kind of devastating materials that Saddam used against his own people in '88”. So this whole subject is at a higher level of concern ... than it was previously” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/vicepresident/news-speeches/speeches/vp20020324.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/vicepresident/news-speeches/speeches/vp20020324.html</a>).</p>	<p><b>Cheney (24 March 2002):</b> “With respect to the connections to al-Qaida [with Iraq], <i>we haven't been able to pin down any connection there</i>” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/vicepresident/news-speeches/speeches/vp20020324.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/vicepresident/news-speeches/speeches/vp20020324.html</a>).</p>

**Rice (8 September 2002):**

- “There is certainly evidence that al Qaeda people *have been* in Iraq. There is certainly evidence that Saddam Hussein cavorts with terrorists”.
- “it's just more of a picture that is emerging that *there may well have been* contacts between al Qaeda and Saddam Hussein's regime”  
(<http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCR IPTS/0209/08/le.00.html>).

**CIA (21 June 2002):**

- “This Intelligence Assessment responds to senior policymaker interest in a comprehensive assessment of Iraqi regime links to al-Qa’ida. Our approach is *purposefully aggressive* in seeking to draw connections, on the *assumption* that any indication of a relationship between these two hostile elements *could* carry great dangers to the United States”.
- “Our knowledge of Iraqi links to al-Qa’ida still contains many *critical gaps* because of *limited reporting* and the *questionable reliability* of many of our sources”.
- “Some analysts ... *believe* that the available signs support a conclusion that Iraq *has had sporadic, wary* contacts with al-Qa’ida since the mid-1990s, *rather than a relationship* with al-Qa’ida that developed over time. These analysts would contend that *mistrust* and *conflicting ideologies and goals probably tempered* these contacts”



		( <a href="http://www.fas.org/irp/congress/2005_cr/CIAreport.062102.pdf">http://www.fas.org/irp/congress/2005_cr/CIAreport.062102.pdf</a> ).
	<p><b>Cheney (8 September 2002):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “since the operations in Afghanistan – we’ve seen al-Qaeda members <i>operating</i> physically in Iraq”.</li> <li>• “The fact of the matter is, if you look at Osama bin Laden and the al-Qaeda organization, on the one hand, and Saddam Hussein on the other, while they come from different perspectives, one’s religiously motivated, the other is secular, etc., the fact of the matter is they have <i>the same objective</i>: to drive the United States out of the Middle East, to strike the United States, if at all possible. So to suggest there’s not a <i>common interest</i> there, I think, would be wrong”</li> </ul> <p>(<a href="http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/bush/meet.htm">http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/bush/meet.htm</a>).</p>	<p><b>CIA: <i>Iraq and al-Qa’ida: Interpreting a Murky Relationship</i> (21 June 2002):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “our assessment of al-Qa’ida’s ties to Iraq rests on a body of <i>fragmented, conflicting reporting</i> from sources of <i>varying reliability</i>”, p. 64.</li> <li>• “Reporting shows that unknown numbers of al-Qa’ida associates fleeing Afghanistan since December have used Iraq – including the Kurdish areas of northern Iraq, Baghdad, and other regions – as a safehaven and transit area. We lack <i>positive indications</i> that Baghdad is complicit in this activity”</li> </ul> <p>(<a href="http://www.intelligence.senate.gov/phaseiiaccuracy.pdf">http://www.intelligence.senate.gov/phaseiiaccuracy.pdf</a>), p. 86.</p>

		<p><b>CIA: <i>Iraqi Support for Terrorism</i> (September 2002):</b> “The presence of al-Qa’ida militants on Iraqi soil poses many questions. <i>We are uncertain to what extent Baghdad is actively complicit in this use of its territory by al-Qa’ida operatives for safehaven and transit</i>” (<a href="http://intelligence.senate.gov/phaseiiaaccuracy.pdf">http://intelligence.senate.gov/phaseiiaaccuracy.pdf</a>), p. 89.</p>
	<p><b>Rumsfeld (18 September 2002):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “We know that al-Qaeda is operating in Iraq <i>today</i> ... We also know that there <i>have been</i> a number of contacts between Iraq and al-Qaeda <i>over the years</i>”.</li> <li>• “He has <i>incentives</i> to make <i>common cause</i> with terrorists. He shares many common objectives with groups like al-Qaeda, including an antipathy for the Saudi royal family and a desire to drive the U.S. out of the Persian Gulf region. Moreover, <i>if</i> he decided it was in his interest to conceal his responsibility for an attack on the U.S., <i>providing WMD to terrorists would be an effective way of doing so</i>” (<a href="http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=283">http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=283</a>).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Brent Scowcroft (15 August 2002):</b> “Saddam's strategic objective appears to be to dominate the Persian Gulf, to control oil from the region, or both. That clearly poses a real threat to key U.S. interests. <i>But there is scant evidence to tie Saddam to terrorist organizations, and even less to the Sept. 11 attacks.</i> Indeed Saddam's goals have <i>little in common</i> with the terrorists who threaten us, and there is <i>little incentive</i> for him to make <i>common cause</i> with them” (<a href="http://www.opinionjournal.com/editorial/feature.html?id=110002133">http://www.opinionjournal.com/editorial/feature.html?id=110002133</a>).</p>

	<p><b>Rumsfeld (18 September 2002):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “They [the Iraqi government] also have Al Qaida currently in the country”.</li> <li>• “There are currently Al Qaida in Iraq” (<a href="http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=284">http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=284</a>).</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Rumsfeld (19 September 2002):</b> “there is no question but that <i>there are al Qaeda in Iraq</i> in more than one location. There have been for a good long period” (<a href="http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=287">http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=287</a>).</p>	<p><b>Sabri (19 September 2002)<sup>1</sup>:</b> “Iraq has no past, current, or anticipated future contact with Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda” (<a href="http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/09/14/AR2006091401545.html">http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/09/14/AR2006091401545.html</a>).</p> <p>* The statement comes from a clandestine questioning of Sabri by a senior CIA officer.</p>
	<p><b>Rice (25 September 2002):</b> “We clearly know that there were <i>in the past</i> and have been contacts between senior Iraqi officials and members of al-Qaida going back for actually quite a long time” (<a href="http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/international/july-dec02/rice_9-25.html">http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/international/july-dec02/rice_9-25.html</a>).</p>	

<sup>1</sup> “Regarding Iraq’s connections to Al-Qa’ida, the high-level Iraqi official [Naji Sabri] allegedly said that Iraq has no past, current, or anticipated future contact with Usama bin Laden and al-Qa’ida. He [Naji Sabri] added that bin Laden was in fact a longtime enemy of Iraq. In contrast to the information about WMD, this information was never disseminated at all. It was not used in intelligence reporting provided to policymakers and was not disseminated as intelligence reporting for analysts. When asked why this information was not disseminated, CIA told the Committee [Senate Select Committee on Intelligence] that the report did not add anything because it did not provide anything new”, Additional Views of Senators Roberts, Hatch, and Chambliss, in *Report of the Select Committee on Intelligence on Post-war Findings about Iraq’s WMD Programs and Links to Terrorism and How they Compare with Pre-war Assessments together with Additional Views* (8 September 2006), 109<sup>th</sup> Congress, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session, Senate (<http://www.intelligence.senate.gov/phaseiiaccuracy.pdf>), p. 143.

	<p><b>Bush (25 September 2002):</b> “you can't distinguish between al Qaeda and Saddam when you talk about the war on terror. And so it's a comparison that is – I can't make because I can't distinguish between the two” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020925-1.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020925-1.html</a>).</p>	
	<p><b>Bush (26 September 2002):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Each passing day <i>could be</i> the one on which the Iraqi regime gives anthrax or VX – nerve gas – or some day a nuclear weapon to a terrorist ally”.</li> <li>• “The regime [Iraqi regime] has long-standing and continuing ties to terrorist organizations. And there are al Qaeda terrorists inside Iraq” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/text/20020926-7.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/text/20020926-7.html</a>).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Brent Scowcroft (15 August 2002):</b></p> <p>“He [Saddam Hussein] is <i>unlikely</i> to risk his investment in weapons of mass destruction, much less his country, by handing such weapons to terrorists who would use them for their own purposes and leave Baghdad as the return address. Threatening to use these weapons for blackmail – much less their actual use – would open him and his entire regime to a devastating response by the U.S. While Saddam is thoroughly evil, he is above all a power-hungry survivor” (<a href="http://www.opinionjournal.com/editorial/feature.html?id=110002133">http://www.opinionjournal.com/editorial/feature.html?id=110002133</a>).</p>
	<p><b>Rumsfeld (26 September 2002):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The <i>knowledge</i> that the intelligence community, the shared intelligence information among the coalition members, has of the al Qaeda <i>relationship</i> with Iraq is <i>evolving</i>. It's based on a lot of different types of sources of varying degrees of</li> </ul>	

*reliability*. Some of it, admittedly, comes from *detainees*, which has been helpful, and particularly some high-ranking detainees [Al-Libi]”.

- “Since we began after September 11<sup>th</sup>, we do have *solid evidence* of the presence in Iraq of al Qaeda members, including some that have been in Baghdad. We have what we consider to be *very reliable reporting* of senior level contacts *going back a decade*, and of *possible* chemical and biological agent training. And when I say contacts, I mean between Iraq and al Qaeda. The reports of these contacts have been increasing since 1998”.
- **Question:** “Are there any indications that senior al Qaeda are in Baghdad or Iraq”?
- **Rumsfeld:** “the problem with it is that when intelligence is gathered, it's gathered at a moment, and then that moment passes, and then there's the next moment and the moment after that. We certainly have evidence of senior al Qaeda who *have been* in Baghdad *in recent periods*. *Whether they're currently there or not one never knows*, because they're moving targets”.
- **Rumsfeld:** “although we know there are al Qaeda in the country, and we know they've *discussed* with Iraq safe

haven. Now whether the ones that are in the country are there under some sort of grant of safe haven or not is – happens to be a piece of intelligence that either we don't have or we don't want to talk about”.

- **Question:** “you said, I think, that you have solid evidence of the presence of al Qaeda in Iraq, including some in Baghdad. And when you said that, I wasn't clear what time frame you were referring to, whether or not that is current. Do you currently believe they're in Baghdad, or are you only talking about al Qaeda in the North in Kurdish-controlled areas”?
- **Rumsfeld:** “Specifically not, with respect to the last part of your question. We're not only talking about al Qaeda in the northern part”.
- **Question:** “So you currently believe there are al Qaeda in Saddam Hussein-controlled areas”.
- **Rumsfeld:** “I thought I said it precisely the way I wanted to. I can't know whether, as we sit here talking, the information that was accurate when we got it is still accurate today” (<http://www.defense.gov/Transcripts/Transcript.aspx?TranscriptID=3669>).

	<p><b>Rumsfeld (27 September 2002):</b> “we ended up with five or six sentences that were <i>bullet-proof</i>. ... they're <i>factual</i>, they're <i>exactly accurate</i>. They [the thoughts or intelligence information] demonstrate that <i>there are in fact al Qaeda in Iraq</i>. But they're <i>not photographs</i>, <i>they are not beyond a reasonable doubt</i>, they in some cases are <i>assessments from a limited number of sources</i>. They're in some cases hard information that were we to release it would reveal a method of gathering it. And it seems to me that if our quest is for proof positive we probably will be left somewhat unfulfilled” (<a href="http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=289">http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=289</a>).</p>	
	<p><b>Bush (28 September 2002):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The regime has long-standing and continuing ties to terrorist groups, and there are al Qaeda terrorists inside Iraq”.</li> <li>• “each passing day <i>could be</i> the one on which the Iraqi regime gives anthrax or VX nerve gas or someday a nuclear weapon to a terrorist group” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020928.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020928.html</a>).</li> </ul>	

<p><b>Bush (2 October 2002):</b> “Countering Iraq's threat is also a central commitment on the war on terror” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021002-7.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021002-7.html</a>).</p>	
<p><b>Bush (7 October 2002):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “We know that Iraq and the al Qaeda terrorist network share a common enemy – the United States of America”.</li> <li>• “We know that Iraq and al Qaeda <i>have had</i> high-level contacts that go back <i>a decade</i>” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021007-8.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021007-8.html</a>).</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Tenet (7 October 2002):</b> “We have solid reporting of senior level contacts between Iraq and al-Qa'ida going back <i>a decade</i>” (<a href="http://www.fas.org/irp/news/2002/10/dci100702.html">http://www.fas.org/irp/news/2002/10/dci100702.html</a>).</p>	<p><b>Tenet (7 October 2002):</b> “Our understanding of the relationship between Iraq and al- Qa'ida is evolving and is based on sources of <i>varying reliability</i>. Some of the information we have received comes from detainees, including some of high rank” (<a href="http://www.fas.org/irp/news/2002/10/dci100702.html">http://www.fas.org/irp/news/2002/10/dci100702.html</a>).</p>
<p><b>Bush (14 October 2002):</b> “This is a man [Saddam Hussein] that we know has <i>had</i> connections with al Qaeda. This is a man who, in my judgment, would like to use al Qaeda as a forward army. And this is a man</p>	



<p>that we must deal with for the sake of peace, for the sake of our children's peace” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021014-3.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021014-3.html</a>).</p>	
<p><b>Wolfowitz (16 October 2002):</b> “We are still assembling the picture, which we know is <i>incomplete</i>, of the Iraqi <i>relationship</i> with al Qaeda. If that is true about the past, think how much more true it is about the future” (<a href="http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=295">http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=295</a>).</p>	
<p><b>Bush (7 November 2002):</b> “he [Saddam Hussein] is dealing with al Qaeda” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/11/text/20021107-2.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/11/text/20021107-2.html</a>).</p>	
<p><b>Rumsfeld (14 November 2002):</b> “our understanding of the relationship between Iraq and al Qaeda is still developing. That there is no question but that there <i>have been interactions</i> between the Iraqi government, Iraqi officials, and al Qaeda operatives. They have occurred <i>over a span of some eight or ten years</i> to our knowledge. <i>There are currently al Qaeda in Iraq</i>” (<a href="http://www.defense.gov/Transcripts/Transcript.aspx?TranscriptID=3283">http://www.defense.gov/Transcripts/Transcript.aspx?TranscriptID=3283</a>).</p>	

<p><b>Cheney (2 December 2002):</b> “His regime <i>has had</i> high-level contacts with al Qaeda <i>going back a decade</i> and <i>has provided</i> training to al Qaeda terrorists” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/12/20021202-4.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/12/20021202-4.html</a>).</p>	
<p><b>Powell (27 January 2003):</b> “we have <i>seen contacts</i> and <i>connections</i> between the Iraqi regime and terrorist organizations, to include <i>al-Qaida</i>. As we have been able to focus on this more and look back in time, I think we're more confident of that <i>assessment</i> and we <i>see no reason</i> not to <i>believe</i> that such contacts and the presence of al-Qaida elements or individuals in Iraq is a <i>reasonable assumption</i>, and we have some basis for that <i>assumption</i>” (<a href="http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB80/new/doc%2021/Briefing%20on%20the%20Iraq%20Weapons%20Inspectors'%20Report.htm">http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB80/new/doc%2021/Briefing%20on%20the%20Iraq%20Weapons%20Inspectors'%20Report.htm</a>).</p>	
<p><b>Bush (28 January 2003):</b> “Evidence from intelligence sources, secret communications, and statements by people now in custody reveal that Saddam Hussein <i>aids</i> and <i>protects</i> terrorists, including members of al Qaeda. Secretly, and without fingerprints, he <i>could</i> provide one of his hidden weapons to terrorists, or help them develop their own” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030128-19.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030128-19.html</a>).</p>	<p><b>CIA: <i>Iraqi Support for Terrorism</i> (29 January 2003):</b> “Saddam Husayn and Usama bin Ladin are far from being natural partners” (<a href="http://www.intelligence.senate.gov/phases/accuracy.pdf">http://www.intelligence.senate.gov/phases/accuracy.pdf</a>), p. 64.</p>

		<p><b>CIA (29 January 2003):</b> “This paper's conclusions – especially regarding the difficult and elusive question of the exact nature of Iraq's relations with al-Qaida – are based on currently available information that is at times <i>contradictory</i> and derived from <i>sources of varying degrees of reliability</i>”</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.gpoaccess.gov/serialset/crereports/pdf/s108-301/sec12.pdf">http://www.gpoaccess.gov/serialset/crereports/pdf/s108-301/sec12.pdf</a>).</p>
	<p><b>Cheney (30 January 2003):</b> “His regime <i>aids and protects</i> terrorists, <i>including members of al Qaeda</i>” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030130-16.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030130-16.html</a>).</p>	
	<p><b>Cheney (31 January 2003):</b> “His regime <i>aids and protects</i> terrorists, <i>including members of al Qaeda</i>” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030131-13.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030131-13.html</a>).</p>	
	<p><b>Powell (5 February 2003):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “We know members of both organizations [Al-Qaeda and Iraqi Intelligence Services] met repeatedly and have met at least eight times at very senior levels since the early 1990s. In 1996, a foreign security service tells us, that bin Laden met with a senior Iraqi intelligence official in Khartoum, and later met the director of the Iraqi intelligence service”.</li> </ul>	

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• “Baghdad has an agent in the most senior levels of the radical organization, Ansar al-Islam, that controls this corner of Iraq. In 2000 this agent offered Al Qaida safe haven in the region. After we swept Al Qaida from Afghanistan, some of its members accepted this safe haven. They remain their [there] today”.</li><li>• “Iraq today <i>harbors</i> a deadly terrorist network headed by Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi, an associated in collaborator of Osama bin Laden and his Al Qaida lieutenants”.</li><li>• “Zarqawi's activities are not confined to this small corner of north east Iraq. He traveled to Baghdad in May 2002 for medical treatment, staying in the capital of Iraq for two months while he recuperated to fight another day. During this stay, nearly two dozen extremists converged on Baghdad and <i>established a base of operations</i> there. These Al Qaida affiliates, based in Baghdad, now coordinate the movement of people, money and supplies into and throughout Iraq for his network, and they've now been operating freely in the capital for more than eight months”.</li><li>• “From the late 1990s until 2001, the Iraqi embassy in Pakistan played the role of liaison to the Al Qaida</li></ul> |  |
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	<p>organization” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030205-1.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030205-1.html</a>).</p>	
	<p><b>Tenet (11 February 2003):</b> “<i>I don't know that [whether the Zarqawi terrorist network is under the control or sponsorship of the Iraqi government], sir, but I know that there's a safe haven that's been provided to this network in Baghdad. ... what we've said is Zarqawi and this large number of operatives are in Baghdad</i>” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2006/09/20060915-4.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2006/09/20060915-4.html</a>).</p>	
	<p><b>Cheney (16 March 2003):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “<i>we know that he has a long-standing relationship with various terrorist groups, including the al-Qaeda organization</i>”.</li> <li>• “But we also have to address the question of where might these terrorists acquire weapons of mass destruction, chemical weapons, biological weapons, nuclear weapons? And Saddam Hussein becomes a prime <i>suspect</i> in that regard” (<a href="http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/bush/cheneymeetthepress.htm">http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/bush/cheneymeetthepress.htm</a>).</li> </ul>	

<p>Training – Al-Libi</p>	<p><b>Tenet (17 September 2002):</b> <i>“There is evidence that Iraq provided al-Qa’ida with various kinds of training – combat, bomb-making, and chemical, biological radiological and nuclear. Although Saddam did not endorse al-Qa’ida’s overall agenda and was suspicious of Islamist movements in general, he was apparently not averse, under certain circumstances, to enhancing Bin Ladin’s operational capabilities. As with much of the information on the overall relationship, details on training are second-hand or from sources of varying reliability”</i> (<a href="http://www.leadingtowar.com/PDFsources_claims_training/2002_02_22_SenatePostwarReport.pdf">http://www.leadingtowar.com/PDFsources_claims_training/2002_02_22_SenatePostwarReport.pdf</a>).</p> <p>* Tenet is referring to the so-called evidence taken coercively from Al-Libi.</p>	<p><b>DIA (22 February 2002):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “This is the first report from Ibn al-Shaykh [al-Libi, a senior Al-Qaeda operational planner] in which he claims Iraq assisted al-Qaida’s CBRN [chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear] efforts. However, <i>he lacks specific details on the Iraqis involved, the CBRN materials associated with the assistance, and the location where training occurred.</i> It is possible he does not know any further details; <i>it is more likely this individual is intentionally misleading the debriefers.</i> Ibn al-Shaykh has been undergoing debriefs for several weeks and may be describing scenarios to the debriefers that he knows will <i>retain their interest</i>”.</li> <li>• “Saddam’s regime is intensely secular and is wary of Islamic revolutionary movements. Moreover, Baghdad is unlikely to provide assistance to a group it cannot control” (<a href="http://levin.senate.gov/newsroom/supporting/2005/DIAletter.102605.pdf">http://levin.senate.gov/newsroom/supporting/2005/DIAletter.102605.pdf</a>).</li> </ul>
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		<p><b>* The Senate Select Committee on Intelligence</b> (8 September 2006): “The Committee [SSCI] noted that after the war, a key detainee (al-Libi) had <i>recanted</i> his claim that al-Qa’ida members travelled to Iraq for chemical and biological weapons training. The Committee noted that no other reporting found in Iraq after that war began had corroborated the CBW [chemical and biological weapons] training reports”</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.leadingtowar.com/PDFsources_claims_training/2002_02_22_SenatePostwarReport.pdf">http://www.leadingtowar.com/PDFsources_claims_training/2002_02_22_SenatePostwarReport.pdf</a>), p. 79. Further information is available from page 79 thereafter.</p>
	<p><b>Rice (25 September 2002):</b> “We know too that several of the detainees, in particular some high ranking detainees [Al-Libi], have said that Iraq provided some training to al-Qaida in chemical weapons development” (<a href="http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/international/july-dec02/rice_9-25.html">http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/international/july-dec02/rice_9-25.html</a>).</p>	<p><b>DIA (28 February 2002):</b> “Iraq has been repeatedly accused of aiding al-Qa’ida’s chemical and biological acquisition efforts. Despite recent information from a senior al-Qa’ida trainer [Al-Libi] currently in custody, <i>all-source intelligence has not confirmed Iraq’s involvement. Iraq is unlikely to have provided bin Ladin any useful CB [chemical or biological] knowledge or assistance</i>”</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.leadingtowar.com/PDFsources_claims_training/2002_02_22_SenatePostwarReport.pdf">http://www.leadingtowar.com/PDFsources_claims_training/2002_02_22_SenatePostwarReport.pdf</a>).</p>

**Rumsfeld (26 September 2002):**

- “We have what we *believe* to be *credible information* that Iraq and al Qaeda have *discussed* safe haven opportunities in Iraq, reciprocal nonaggression *discussions*. We have what we consider to be *credible evidence* that al Qaeda leaders have sought contacts in Iraq who *could* help them acquire weapon of – weapons of mass destruction capabilities. We do have – I believe it's *one* report indicating that Iraq provided *unspecified* training relating to chemical and/or biological matters for al Qaeda members. There is, I'm told, also some other information of *varying degrees of reliability* that supports that conclusion of their cooperation”.
- **Question:** “Do you know what the specific kind of training is without telling us”?
- **Rumsfeld:** “That I'm not – I don't have high confidence in” (<http://www.defense.gov/Transcripts/Transcript.aspx?TranscriptID=3669>).

**CIA (21 June 2002):**

- “Some analysts ... *believe* that the available signs support a conclusion that Iraq *has had sporadic, wary* contacts with al-Qa'ida since the mid-1990s, *rather than a relationship* with al-Qa'ida that developed over time. These analysts would contend that *mistrust and conflicting ideologies and goals probably tempered* these contacts and *severely limited* the opportunities for cooperation. These analysts also do not rule out that Baghdad sought and obtained a nonaggression agreement or made *limited offers* of cooperation, training, or safehaven (*ultimately uncorroborated or withdrawn*) in an effort to manipulate, penetrate, or otherwise keep tabs on al-Qa'ida or selected operatives”.
- “The most ominous indications of Iraqi-al-Qa'ida cooperation involve Bin Ladin's chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) ambitions. Although Iraq historically has



		<p>tended to hold closely its strategic weapons experts and resources, Baghdad <i>could</i> have offered training or other support that fell well short of its most closely”</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.fas.org/irp/congress/2005_cr/CIAreport.062102.pdf">http://www.fas.org/irp/congress/2005_cr/CIAreport.062102.pdf</a>).</p>
	<p><b>Bush (7 October 2002):</b> "We've learned that Iraq has <i>trained</i> al Qaeda members in bomb-making and poisons and deadly gases" (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021007-8.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021007-8.html</a>).</p>	<p><b>DIA (31 July 2002):</b> “It is plausible al-Qa’ida attempted to obtain CB [chemical or biological] assistance from Iraq and Ibn al-Shaykh [al-Libi] is sufficiently senior to have access to such sensitive information. However, <i>Ibn al-Shaykh’s information lacks details concerning the individual Iraqis involved, the specific CB materials associated with the assistance and the location where the alleged training occurred. The information is also second hand, and not derived from Ibn al-Shaykh’s personal experience</i>”</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.leadingtowar.com/PDFsources_claims_training/2002_02_22_SenatePostwarReport.pdf">http://www.leadingtowar.com/PDFsources_claims_training/2002_02_22_SenatePostwarReport.pdf</a>).</p>

<p>NIE (November 2002): “We have credible reporting that al-Qa’ida leaders <i>sought help</i> from Baghdad in acquiring WMD capabilities and that Iraq <i>provided</i> training in bomb-making and according to <i>one detainee</i> [Al-Libi], in the area of chemical and biological agents”</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.leadingtowar.com/PDFsources_claims_training/2002_02_22_SenatePostwarReport.pdf">http://www.leadingtowar.com/PDFsources_claims_training/2002_02_22_SenatePostwarReport.pdf</a>).</p>	<p>DIA: <i>Special Analysis</i> (31 July 2002): “compelling evidence demonstrating direct cooperation between the government of Iraq and al-Qa’ida <i>has not been established</i>, despite a large body of <i>anecdotal information</i>”</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.intelligence.senate.gov/phaseiiaccuracy.pdf">http://www.intelligence.senate.gov/phaseiiaccuracy.pdf</a>), p. 66.</p>
	<p>NIE – classified version (1 October 2002):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “As with much of the information on the overall relationship [between Iraq and Al-Qaeda], details on training and support are <i>second-hand</i> or from <i>sources of varying reliability</i>”.</li> <li>• “... suggest the involvement of Iraq or Iraqi nationals in al-Qa’ida’s CBW [chemical and biological weapons] efforts. <i>We</i> [the intelligence community] <i>cannot determine, however, how many of these Iraqi nationals were directed by Baghdad or how many of the reported plans for CBW training or support were actually realized</i>”</li> </ul> <p>(<a href="http://www.fas.org/irp/congress/2005_cr/NIE.100202.pdf">http://www.fas.org/irp/congress/2005_cr/NIE.100202.pdf</a>).</p>

<p>CIA (29 January 2003):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Iraq ... agreed to provide <i>unspecified</i> chemical or biological weapons training for two al-Qa’ida associates beginning in December 2000”.</li> </ul> <p>*This is according to what Al-Libi told his interrogators.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Regarding the Iraq-al-Qaida relationship, reporting from <i>sources of varying reliability</i> points to a number of contacts, incidents of training, and discussions of Iraqi safehaven for Usama bin Ladin and his organization dating from the early 1990s” (<a href="http://www.gpoaccess.gov/serialset/crereports/pdf/s108-301/sec12.pdf">http://www.gpoaccess.gov/serialset/crereports/pdf/s108-301/sec12.pdf</a>).</li> </ul>	<p>CIA (29 January 2003):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Some of the most ominous <i>suggestions</i> of <i>possible</i> Iraqi-al-Qa’ida cooperation involve Bin Ladin’s CBW [Chemical and Biological Warfare] ambitions. Although Iraq historically has guarded closely its strategic weapons information, experts, and resources, Baghdad <i>could</i> have offered training or other support to al-Qa’ida”.</li> <li>• “<i>Most of the reports do not make clear</i> whether training initiatives offered by Iraqis or discussed by the two sides [Iraqi and Al-Qaeda sides] remained in the planning stages or were actually implemented”.</li> <li>• “<i>In about half of the reports, we cannot determine</i> if the Iraqi nationals mentioned had any relationship with the Baghdad government or were expatriate or free-lance scientists or engineers”.</li> <li>• “[The] reporting touches most frequently on the topic of Iraqi training of al-Qa’ida. Details on training range from good</li> </ul>
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		<p>reports ... [of] <i>varying reliability, often the result of long and opaque reporting chains or discussions of future intentions rather than evidence of completed training.</i> The general pattern that emerges is of <i>al-Qa'ida's enduring interest in acquiring CBW</i> [Chemical and Biological Weapons] expertise from Iraq”.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “At least ... [some] of the reports [about Iraq-Al-Qaeda relationship] appear based on <i>hearsay</i>”.</li> <li>• “[some] of the reports are simple declarative accusations of Iraqi-al-Qa’ida complicity with <i>no substantiating detail</i> or other information that might help us corroborate them” (<a href="http://www.fas.org/irp/congress/2005_cr/CIAreport.012903.pdf">http://www.fas.org/irp/congress/2005_cr/CIAreport.012903.pdf</a>).</li> </ul>
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**Powell (5 February 2003):**

- “Iraqis continued to visit bin Laden in his new home in Afghanistan. A senior defector, one of Saddam's former intelligence chiefs in Europe, says Saddam sent his agents to Afghanistan sometime in the mid-1990s to provide *training* to Al Qaida members on document forgery”.
- “I can trace the story of *a senior terrorist operative* [Al-Libi] telling how Iraq provided training in these weapons [WMD] to Al Qaida. Fortunately, this operative is now detained, and he has told his story. This senior Al Qaida terrorist was responsible for one of Al Qaida's training camps in Afghanistan. His information comes first-hand from his personal involvement at senior levels of Al Qaida. He says bin Laden and his top deputy in Afghanistan, deceased Al Qaida leader Muhammad Atif (ph), did not believe that Al Qaida labs in Afghanistan were capable enough to manufacture these chemical or biological agents. They needed to go somewhere else. They had to look outside of Afghanistan for help. *Where did they go? Where did they look? They went to Iraq.* The support that (inaudible) describes included Iraq

**CIA (29 January 2003):** “Iraq – acting on the request of al-Qa’ida militant Abu Abdullah, who was Muhammad Atif’s emissary – agreed to provide *unspecified* chemical or biological weapons training for two al-Qa’ida associates beginning in December 2000. These two individuals departed for Iraq but *did not return, so al-Libi was not in a position to know if any training had taken place*”

(<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/serialset/crreports/pdf/s108-301/sec12.pdf>).

	<p>offering chemical or biological weapons training for two Al Qaida associates beginning in December 2000. He says that a militant known as Abu Abdula Al-Iraqi (ph) had been sent to Iraq several times between 1997 and 2000 for help in acquiring poisons and gases. <i>Abdula Al-Iraqi (ph) characterized the relationship he forged with Iraqi officials as successful</i>" (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030205-1.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030205-1.html</a>).</p>	
	<p><b>Bush (6 February 2003):</b> "<i>Saddam Hussein has longstanding, direct and continuing ties to terrorist networks. Senior members of Iraqi intelligence and al Qaeda have met at least eight times since the early 1990s. Iraq has sent bomb-making and document forgery experts to work with al Qaeda. Iraq has also provided al Qaeda with chemical and biological weapons training</i>" (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/text/20030206-17.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/text/20030206-17.html</a>).</p>	
	<p><b>Bush (8 February 2003):</b> "<i>Saddam Hussein has longstanding, direct and continuing ties to terrorist networks. Senior members of Iraqi intelligence and al Qaeda have met at least eight times since the early 1990s. Iraq has sent bomb-making and document forgery experts to work with al Qaeda. Iraq has also provided al Qaeda with chemical and biological</i></p>	

	<p><i>weapons training</i>. And an al Qaeda operative was sent to Iraq several times in the late 1990s for help in acquiring <i>poisons and gases</i>” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030208.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030208.html</a>).</p>	
	<p><b>Tenet (11 February 2003):</b> “Iraq has <i>in the past</i> provided training in document forgery and bomb-making to al-Qa’ida. It also provided training in poisons and gasses to two al-Qa’ida associates; <i>one of these associates characterized the relationship he forged with Iraqi officials as successful</i>” (<a href="https://www.cia.gov/news-information/speeches-testimony/2003/dci_speech_02112003.html">https://www.cia.gov/news-information/speeches-testimony/2003/dci_speech_02112003.html</a>).</p>	
	<p><b>Bush (6 March 2003):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “He [Saddam Hussein] has trained and financed al Qaeda-type organizations before, al Qaeda and other terrorist organizations”.</li> <li>• “He provides <i>funding and training</i> and <i>safe haven</i> to terrorists – terrorists who would willingly use weapons of mass destruction against America and other peace-loving countries”.</li> <li>• “It’s a country [Iraq] that trains terrorists, a country that <i>could</i> arm terrorists” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/03/20030306-8.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/03/20030306-8.html</a>).</li> </ul>	

<p><b>Rice (9 March 2003):</b> “The strongest link of – of Saddam Hussein to al Qaeda ... there are a lot of tantalizing meetings that – with people who were involved in 9/11. But the strongest links to al Qaeda are really two. First of all, a poisons master named Al Zakawi who has his own network in Baghdad – or in – in Iraq, not in the north of Iraq where Saddam Hussein is arguably not in control but in central Iraq ... a man who is spreading poisons throughout Europe. And secondly, a very strong link to training al Qaeda in chemical and biological weapons techniques. We <i>know</i> from a <i>detainee</i> [Al-Libi] that – the head of training for al Qaeda, that they sought help in developing chemical and biological weapons because they weren't doing very well on their own. They sought it in Iraq. <i>They received the help</i>”</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2003/03/10/ftn/main543382.shtml?tag=contentMain;contentBody">http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2003/03/10/ftn/main543382.shtml?tag=contentMain;contentBody</a>).</p>	
<p><b>Bush (17 March 2003):</b> “it [Iraqi regime] has <i>aided, trained and harbored</i> terrorists, including operatives of al Qaeda”</p> <p>(<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/03/20030317-7.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/03/20030317-7.html</a>).</p>	



**Cheney (9 December 2001):** It has “been pretty well *confirmed*, that he [Mohammed Atta] did go to Prague and he did meet with a senior official of the Iraqi intelligence service in Czechoslovakia last April, several months before the attack [9/11]” (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/vicepresident/news-speeches/speeches/vp20011209.html>).

**Cheney (24 March 2002):** “We discovered, and it's since been public, the *allegation* that one of the lead hijackers, Mohamed Atta, had, *in fact*, met with Iraqi intelligence in Prague, *but we've not been able yet from our perspective to nail down a close tie between the al-Qaida organization and Saddam Hussein*. We'll continue to look for it” (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/vicepresident/news-speeches/speeches/vp20020324.html>).

**CIA (21 June 2002):**

- “Reporting is *contradictory* on hijacker Mohammad Atta’s alleged trip to Prague and meeting with an Iraqi intelligence officer, and *we have not verified his travels*”.
- “Some analysts concur with the assessment that intelligence reporting provides ‘*no conclusive evidence of cooperation [between Iraq and Al-Qaeda] on specific terrorist operations*’” ([http://www.fas.org/irp/congress/2005\\_cr/CIAreport.062102.pdf](http://www.fas.org/irp/congress/2005_cr/CIAreport.062102.pdf)).

		<p><b>DIA: <i>Special Analysis</i> (31 July 2002):</b> “There are <i>significant information gaps</i> in this reporting that render the issue impossible to prove or disprove with <i>available information</i>. It is unclear why the source did not report on the meeting in April or May. Atta was unknown at the time but he would have been significant as a contact of al-Ani [the Iraqi intelligence chief in Prague], who was under Czech scrutiny at the time. Also, <i>there is no photographic, immigration or other documentary evidence indicating Atta was in the Czech Republic during the timeframe of the meeting</i>”</p> <p>(<a href="http://intelligence.senate.gov/phasesiaaccuracy.pdf">http://intelligence.senate.gov/phasesiaaccuracy.pdf</a>), pp. 95-96.</p>
	<p><b>Cheney (8 September 2002):</b> “there has been <i>reporting that suggests</i> that there have been a number of contacts <i>over the years</i>. We’ve seen in connection with the hijackers, of course, Mohamed Atta, who was the lead hijacker, did apparently travel to Prague on a number of occasions. And on at least one occasion, we have <i>reporting</i> that places him in Prague with a senior Iraqi intelligence official a few months before the attack on the World Trade Center. ... It’s <i>credible</i>. But, you know, I think a way to put it would be it’s <i>unconfirmed</i> at this point”</p>	<p><b>CIA (29 January 2003):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Some information asserts that [Muhammad] Atta met with Prague IIS [Iraqi Intelligence Service] chief Ahmad Khalil Ibrahim Samir al-Ani; <i>but the most reliable reporting to date casts doubt on this possibility</i>”.</li> <li>• “The other two alleged visits [of Muhammad Atta] occurred on 26 October 1999 and on 9 April 2001. <i>The data</i></li> </ul>

	<p>(<a href="http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/bush/meet.htm">http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/bush/meet.htm</a>).</p>	<p><i>surrounding these visits is complicated and sometimes contradictory. A CIA and FBI review of intelligence and open-source reporting leads us to question the information ... [which] claimed that Atta met al-Ani"</i></p> <p>(<a href="http://www.fas.org/irp/congress/2005_cr/CIAreport.012903.pdf">http://www.fas.org/irp/congress/2005_cr/CIAreport.012903.pdf</a>).</p> <p><b>CIA: Iraqi Support for Terrorism (January 2003):</b> "We have no credible information that Baghdad was complicit in the attacks on the Pentagon or the World Trade Center on 11 September or any other al-Qa'ida strike"</p> <p>(<a href="http://intelligence.senate.gov/phaseiia/accuracy.pdf">http://intelligence.senate.gov/phaseiia/accuracy.pdf</a>), p. 94.</p>
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## Part Six

### The Iraqi Threat

Corroborating Assertions	Counter Assertions
<p><b>Cheney (11 December 2001):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “he [Saddam Hussein] is clearly a threat to his neighbors”.</li> <li>• “The policy towards Iraq clearly is going to evolve over time. But they [the Iraqi government] remain very much <i>an area of concern</i> for us because of the threat that Saddam Hussein has represented <i>in the past</i> and <i>does in the future</i>” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/vicepresident/news-speeches/speeches/vp20011211.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/vicepresident/news-speeches/speeches/vp20011211.html</a>).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Cohen (10 January 2001):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Saddam Hussein's forces are in a state where <i>he cannot pose a threat to his neighbors</i> at this point. <i>We have been successful, through the sanctions regime</i>, to really shut off most of the revenue that will be going to build his – rebuild his military”.</li> <li>• “Now he can cheat and smuggle on the margins, and apply that [the oil-for-food program revenue] to his military. But I will tell you <i>his military is not in a position</i> – thanks to what we've been doing with our British friends, and thanks to the sanctions, <i>he's not in a position to threaten his neighbors at this point</i>” (<a href="http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1093">http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1093</a>).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Cheney (15 February 2002):</b> “Iraq is clearly ... very much of <i>concern</i>” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/vicepresident/news-speeches/speeches/vp20020215.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/vicepresident/news-speeches/speeches/vp20020215.html</a>).</p>	<p><b>Cohen (11 January 2001):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “<i>We have successfully contained Saddam Hussein. He does not pose a threat to his neighbors</i> at this point, and I don't believe will be in a position to do so”.</li> <li>• “We have contained him in a way that he has not been able to rebuild</li> </ul>

	<p>his military and he's not been able to threaten his neighbors. <i>That containment strategy and policy has worked</i>"</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=251">http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=251</a>).</p>
<p><b>Cheney (17 March 2002):</b> "it's important that we find a way to deal with that <i>emerging threat</i>"</p> <p>(<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/vicepresident/news-speeches/speeches/vp20020317.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/vicepresident/news-speeches/speeches/vp20020317.html</a>).</p>	<p><b>Tenet (7 February 2001):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "There are still constraints on Saddam's power. His economic infrastructure is in long-term decline, and <i>his ability to project power outside Iraq's borders is severely limited</i>".</li> <li>• "His military is roughly half the size it was during the Gulf War and remains under a <i>tight arms embargo</i>. <i>He has trouble efficiently moving forces and supplies – a direct result of sanctions</i>. These difficulties were demonstrated most recently by his deployment of troops to western Iraq last fall, which were hindered by a shortage of spare parts and transport capability"</li> </ul> <p>(<a href="https://www.cia.gov/news-information/speeches-testimony/2001/UNCLASWWT_02072001.html">https://www.cia.gov/news-information/speeches-testimony/2001/UNCLASWWT_02072001.html</a>).</p>

<p><b>Cheney (29 August 2002):</b> “What we must not do in the face of <i>a mortal threat</i> [the Iraqi threat] is give in to wishful thinking or to willful blindness” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/08/20020829-5.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/08/20020829-5.html</a>).</p>	<p><b>Rice (29 July 2001):</b> “We are able to keep arms from him [Saddam Hussein]. His military forces have not been rebuilt” (<a href="http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/010729/le.00.html">http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/010729/le.00.html</a>).</p>
<p><b>Cheney (8 September 2002):</b> “we believe that he [Saddam Hussein] is a danger, a fundamental danger, not only for the region but potentially the United States, as well” (<a href="http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/bush/meet.htm">http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/bush/meet.htm</a>).</p>	
<p><b>Bush (4 September 2002):</b> Saddam Hussein is “a <i>serious threat</i> to the United States, a <i>serious threat</i> to the world” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020904-1.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020904-1.html</a>).</p>	<p><b>Brent Scowcroft (15 August 2002):</b> “There is little evidence to indicate that the United States itself is an object of his [Saddam Hussein’s] aggression” (<a href="http://www.opinionjournal.com/editorial/feature.html?id=110002133">http://www.opinionjournal.com/editorial/feature.html?id=110002133</a>).</p>
<p><b>Rice (8 September 2002):</b> “he poses a clear threat to the United States. He poses a threat <i>because he is trying to acquire</i> the most terrible weapons, because he is not a status-quo actor” (<a href="http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/020908/le.00.html">http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/020908/le.00.html</a>).</p>	

<p><b>Bush (12 September 2002):</b> “the logic and the facts lead to one conclusion: Saddam Hussein's regime is <i>a grave and gathering danger</i>. To suggest otherwise is to hope against the evidence” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020912-1.html#">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020912-1.html#</a>).</p>	
<p><b>Rumsfeld (18 September 2002):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The question facing us is this: what is the responsible course of action for our country? Do you believe it is our responsibility to wait for <i>a nuclear, chemical or biological 9/11</i>? Or is it the responsibility of free people to do something now – to take steps to deal with the threat <i>before</i> we are attacked”?</li> <li>• “I suspect, that <i>in retrospect</i>, most of those investigating 9/11 would have supported <i>preventive action</i> to preempt that threat, <i>if it had been possible to see it coming</i>. Well, if one were to compare the scraps of information the government had before September 11<sup>th</sup> to the <i>volumes</i> of information the government has today about Iraq’s pursuit of WMD, his use of those weapons, his record of aggression and his consistent hostility toward the United States – and then factor in our country’s demonstrated vulnerability after September 11<sup>th</sup> –</li> </ul>	

the case the President made should be clear”.

- “no terrorist state poses *a greater and more immediate threat* to the security of our people, and the stability of the world, than the regime of Saddam Hussein in Iraq”
- “He [Saddam Hussein] has repeatedly *threatened* the U.S. and its allies with terror – once declaring that ‘every Iraqi become a missile’”.
- “He [Saddam Hussein] has said, in no uncertain terms, that he would use weapons of mass destruction against the United States”.
- “But those who raise questions about the [Iraqi] nuclear threat need to focus on the *immediate threat* from biological weapons”.
- “The case against Iraq does not depend on an Iraqi link to 9/11. The issue for the U.S. is not vengeance, retribution or retaliation – it is whether the Iraqi regime poses a *growing danger* to the safety and security of our people, and of the world. *There is no question but that it does*”.
- “If, in 1998, Saddam Hussein posed *the grave threat* that President Clinton correctly described, then he most certainly poses *a vastly greater danger today*”.



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Every month that goes by, his [Saddam Hussein’s] WMD programs <i>are progressing</i> and <i>he moves closer to his goal</i> of possessing the capability to strike our population, and our allies, and hold them hostage to blackmail” (<a href="http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=283">http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=283</a>).</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Rumsfeld (18 September 2002):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Saddam Hussein regime is <i>a grave and gathering danger</i>. It’s a danger we do not have the option to ignore”.</li> <li>• “But we should be just as concerned about <i>the immediate threat</i> from biological weapons. Iraq has these weapons. They’re simpler to deliver and even more readily transferred to terrorist networks, who <i>could</i> allow Iraq to deliver them without Iraq’s fingerprints”.</li> <li>• “If you want an idea of the devastation <i>Iraq could</i> wreck on our country with a biological attack, consider the recent unclassified Dark Winter exercise conducted by Johns Hopkins University. It simulated a biological WMD attack in which <i>terrorists</i> released smallpox in three separate locations in the U.S. Within two months, the worst case estimate indicated up to 1 million people could be dead and another 2 million</li> </ul>	

<p>infected. Cut it in half, cut it into a quarter, it is not a nice picture”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “He [Saddam Hussein] threatens the regimes of his neighboring countries frequently”.</li> <li>• “Post-9/11, we view Saddam Hussein as a threat to this country”</li> <li>• “he has said in no uncertain terms that he would use weapons of mass destruction against the United States” (<a href="http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=284">http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=284</a>).</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Rumsfeld (19 September 2002):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “If you want an idea of the devastation Iraq <i>could</i> wreak on our country with a biological attack, consider the recent <i>Dark Winter exercise</i> conducted by Johns Hopkins University. It simulated a biological weapon attack in which <i>terrorists</i> release smallpox in three separate locations in the United States. Within two months, the worst-case estimate indicated that 1 million Americans could be dead and another 2 million infected. It's not a pretty picture. Cut it in half. Cut it by three-quarters. It's still a disaster”.</li> <li>• “There are a number of terrorist states pursuing weapons of mass destruction – Iran, Libya, North Korea, Syria, just to name a few – but no terrorist state</li> </ul>	

<p>poses a <i>greater or more immediate threat</i> to the security of our people than the regime of Saddam Hussein in Iraq”.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “his [Saddam Hussein’s] regime is a <i>grave and gathering danger</i>. It’s a danger that we do not have the option to ignore”</li> </ul> <p>(<a href="http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=287">http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=287</a>).</p>	
<p><b>Senator Hutchinson (19 September 2002):</b> “I <i>believe</i> that Saddam Hussein, in fact, does present a <i>clear</i> and <i>present</i> danger not only to the security of the United States but to his region and to the security of other nations in that part of the world”</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=287">http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=287</a>).</p>	<p><b>Nancy Pelosi: (3 October 2002):</b> “As the ranking Democrat on the House Select Committee on Intelligence, I have seen <i>no evidence or intelligence</i> that suggests that Iraq indeed poses an <i>imminent threat</i> to our nation. If the Administration has that information, <i>they have not shared it with the Congress</i>”</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.house.gov/pelosi/prIraqResolution100302.htm">http://www.house.gov/pelosi/prIraqResolution100302.htm</a>).</p>
<p><b>Senator John Warner (19 September 2002):</b> “Saddam Hussein’s relentless pursuit of weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver these weapons represents a <i>present</i> threat and an <i>immediate</i> challenge to the international community”</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=287">http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=287</a>).</p>	

<p><b>Bush (26 September 2002):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Iraq poses “a true threat to freedom. A true threat to the United States. A threat to Israel; a threat to peace in the region”.</li> <li>• “This is a man who is a threat to peace”.</li> <li>• “this man [Saddam Hussein] poses a much graver threat than anybody could have possibly imagined” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020926-17.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020926-17.html</a>).</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Bush (26 September 2002):</b> “The danger [from Iraq] to our country is grave. The danger to our country is growing” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/text/20020926-7.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/text/20020926-7.html</a>).</p>	
<p><b>Rumsfeld (27 September 2002):</b> “no terrorist state poses <i>a greater or more immediate threat</i> to our security than that of Iraq” (<a href="http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=289">http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=289</a>).</p>	
<p><b>Bush (28 September 2002):</b> “The danger [from Iraq] to our country is grave and it is growing” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020928.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020928.html</a>).</p>	

<p><b>Representative Gephardt (2 October 2002):</b> “In our view, Iraq's use and <i>continuing development</i> of weapons of mass destruction, combined with efforts of terrorists to acquire such weapons, pose a <i>unique</i> and dangerous threat to our national security”</p> <p>(<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021002-7.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021002-7.html</a>).</p>	
<p><b>Bush (2 October 2002):</b> “On its present course, the Iraqi regime is a threat of <i>unique urgency</i>”</p> <p>(<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021002-7.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021002-7.html</a>).</p>	
<p><b>Joint Resolution to Authorize the Use of United States Armed Forces Against Iraq (2 October 2002):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Iraq both poses a <i>continuing threat</i> to the national security of the United States and international peace and security in the Persian Gulf region”.</li> <li>• There is a “risk that the current Iraqi regime will either employ those weapons [WMD] to launch a surprise attack against the United States or its Armed Forces or provide them to international terrorists who would do so”</li> </ul> <p>(<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021002-2.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021002-2.html</a>).</p>	

<p><b>Bush (5 October 2002):</b> “The danger to America from the Iraqi regime is grave and growing”</p> <p>(<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021005.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021005.html</a>).</p>	
<p><b>Bush (7 October 2002):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Facing <i>clear evidence of peril</i>, we cannot wait for the final proof – the <i>smoking gun</i> – that could come in the form of a <i>mushroom cloud</i>”.</li> <li>• Iraq poses “a <i>grave</i> threat to peace”.</li> <li>• “While there are many dangers in the world, the threat from Iraq stands <i>alone</i> – because it gathers <i>the most serious dangers of our age in one place</i>”.</li> <li>• The Iraqi regime “threatens us [the USA]”.</li> <li>• “The attacks of September the 11<sup>th</sup> showed our country that vast oceans no longer protect us from danger. Before that tragic date, we had only hints of al Qaeda's plans and designs. <i>Today in Iraq, we see a threat whose outlines are far more clearly defined, and whose consequences could be far more deadly.</i> Saddam Hussein's actions have put us on notice, and there is no refuge from our responsibilities”.</li> <li>• “Some ask how urgent this danger is</li> </ul>	<p><b>ElBaradei (7 January 2003):</b> “I <i>believe</i> ... that we haven't seen anything to show that Iraq has revived its nuclear weapons program. ... so far, we haven't seen a <i>smoking gun</i>”</p> <p>(<a href="http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/030107/ltm.05.html">http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/030107/ltm.05.html</a>).</p> <p><b>Blix (9 January 2003):</b> “we still get <i>prompt access</i> from the Iraqi side; ... the inspections are covering ever-wider areas, and ever more sites in Iraq; ... in the course of these inspections we have not found any <i>smoking gun</i>”</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.iaea.org/NewsCenter/Focus/laea/Iraq/un_briefing_9jan.html">http://www.iaea.org/NewsCenter/Focus/laea/Iraq/un_briefing_9jan.html</a>).</p>

<p>to America and the world. <i>The danger is already significant, and it only grows worse with time</i>"</p> <p>(<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021007-8.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021007-8.html</a>).</p>	
<p><b>Bush (7 October 2002):</b> "We've also discovered through intelligence that Iraq has <i>a growing fleet</i> of manned and unmanned aerial vehicles that <i>could</i> be used to disperse chemical or biological weapons across broad areas. We're concerned that Iraq is exploring ways of using these UAVS for missions targeting the United States"</p> <p>(<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021007-8.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021007-8.html</a>).</p> <p><b>Bush (12 October 2002):</b> "Confronting Iraq is an <i>urgent matter of national security</i>"</p> <p>(<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021012.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021012.html</a>).</p>	<p><b>NIE – classified version (1 October 2002):</b></p> <p>"The Iraqi Intelligence Service (IIS) <i>probably</i> has been directed to conduct clandestine attacks against US and Allied interests in the Middle East in the event the United States takes action against Iraq. The IIS probably would be the primary means by which Iraq would attempt to conduct any CBW attacks on the US Homeland, although <i>we have no specific intelligence information that Saddam's regime has directed attacks against US territory</i>"</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.fas.org/irp/cia/product/iraq-wmd-nie.pdf">http://www.fas.org/irp/cia/product/iraq-wmd-nie.pdf</a>).</p>
<p><b>Bush (16 October 2002):</b> "The Iraqi regime is a serious and growing threat to peace"</p> <p>(<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/text/20021016-1.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/text/20021016-1.html</a>).</p>	
<p><b>Bush (3 November 2002):</b> "he's [Saddam Hussein] a threat"</p> <p>(<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/11/20021103-3.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/11/20021103-3.html</a>).</p>	

<p><b>Bush (7 November 2002):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “we <i>believe</i> the Iraqi dictator is a threat to peace”</li> <li>• “The man [Saddam Hussein] is a threat. ... He's a threat because he is dealing with al Qaeda”.</li> <li>• “He's [Saddam Hussein] a threat. He's a threat to the country, he's a threat to people in his neighborhood. He's a real threat” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/11/text/20021107-2.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/11/text/20021107-2.html</a>).</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Bush (20 November 2002):</b> Iraq poses a “unique and urgent threat” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/11/20021120-4.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/11/20021120-4.html</a>).</p>	
<p><b>Bush (3 December 2002):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “He's [Saddam Hussein] a threat and he's a danger”.</li> <li>• “this man's [Saddam Hussein] a threat; he's a threat to us, he's a threat to you [NATO Allies]” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/12/text/20021203-3.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/12/text/20021203-3.html</a>).</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Bush (31 December 2002):</b> “a Saddam Hussein with weapons of mass destruction is a threat to the security of the American people” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/12/text/20021231-1.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/12/text/20021231-1.html</a>).</p>	



<p><b>Bush (2 January 2003):</b> “He's a <i>danger</i> to the American people, he's a <i>danger</i> to our friends and allies”</p> <p>(<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030102.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030102.html</a>).</p>	
<p><b>Bush (3 January 2003):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The Iraqi regime is a <i>grave threat</i> to the United States. The Iraqi regime is a threat to any American”.</li> <li>• “The Iraqi regime has used weapons of mass destruction. They not only had weapons of mass destruction, they used weapons of mass destruction. They used weapons of mass destruction on people in other countries, they have used weapons of mass destruction on their own people. That's why I say <i>Iraq is a threat, a real threat</i>” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030103.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030103.html</a>).</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Rumsfeld (20 January 2003):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Iraq poses a threat to the security of our people, and to the stability of the world, that is <i>distinct from any other</i>”.</li> <li>• “It [Saddam Hussein's regime] is a danger to its neighbors, to the United States, to the Middle East, and to the international peace and stability. It's a danger we cannot ignore”.</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “<i>In both word and deed, Iraq has demonstrated that it is seeking the means to strike the United States, and our friends and allies with weapons of mass destruction</i>” (<a href="http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=165">http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=165</a>).</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Bush (28 January 2003):</b> Iraq poses “a <i>serious and mounting</i> threat to our country, and our friends and our allies” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030128-19.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030128-19.html</a>).</p>	
<p><b>Rumsfeld (29 January 2003):</b> “This is a country [Iraq] ... that's threatened the United States of America” (<a href="http://www.defense.gov/Transcripts/Transcript.aspx?TranscriptID=1349">http://www.defense.gov/Transcripts/Transcript.aspx?TranscriptID=1349</a>).</p>	
<p><b>Cheney (30 January 2003):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Saddam Hussein's pursuit of weapons of mass destruction poses a <i>grave danger</i> – not only to his neighbors, but also to the <i>United States</i>”.</li> <li>• Iraq poses “a <i>serious threat</i> to our country, to our friends, and to our allies”.</li> <li>• Iraq poses “terrible threats to the civilized world”.</li> <li>• The Iraqi regime poses a “grave danger” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/release">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/release</a></li> </ul>	

s/2003/01/20030130-16.html).	
<p><b>Cheney (31 January 2003):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Iraqi regime poses a “very serious danger”.</li> <li>• “Saddam Hussein's pursuit of weapons of mass destruction poses a <i>grave danger</i> – not only to his neighbors, but also to the <i>United States</i>”.</li> <li>• Iraq poses “a serious threat to our country, to our friends, and to our allies”.</li> <li>• Iraq poses “terrible threats to the civilized world” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030131-13.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030131-13.html</a>).</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Bush (31 January 2003):</b> “He [Saddam Hussein] is a danger to the world” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030131-23.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030131-23.html</a>).</p>	
<p><b>Powell (5 February 2003):</b> The Iraqi deadly weapons <i>programs</i> “are <i>real</i> and <i>present</i> dangers to the region and to the world” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030205-1.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030205-1.html</a>).</p>	
<p><b>Bush (10 February 2003):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “I <i>believe</i> that Saddam Hussein is a threat to the American people”.</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “I <i>believe</i> that Saddam Hussein is a threat to the American people. I also <i>know</i> he's a threat to our friends and allies” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/text/20030210-10.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/text/20030210-10.html</a>).</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Scott McClellan (10 February 2003):</b> “This is about <i>an imminent threat</i> [from Iraq]” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030210-7.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030210-7.html</a>).</p>	
<p><b>Bush (26 February 2003):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The safety of the American people depends on ending <i>this direct and growing threat</i>. Acting against the danger will also contribute greatly to the long-term safety and stability of our world”.</li> <li>• Iraq poses a “<i>direct and growing threat</i>” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/text/20030226-11.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/text/20030226-11.html</a>).</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Bush (26 February 2003):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “There's also <i>a threat gathering</i> in Iraq. It's been gathering for a long period of time”.</li> <li>• “The danger with Iraq is that he can strike <i>in the neighborhood</i>” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/release">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/release</a></li> </ul>	

**Bush (6 March 2003):**

- “I *believe* the [Iraqi] threat is real”.
- “I *believe* Saddam Hussein is a threat – is a threat to the American people. He’s a threat to people in his neighborhood. He’s also a threat to the Iraqi people”.
- “I *believe* Saddam Hussein is a threat to the American people. I *believe* he’s a threat to the neighborhood in which he lives. And I’ve got a good evidence to *believe* that”.
- “Saddam Hussein is a threat to our nation”.
- “There’s a lot of facts which make it clear to me and many others that Saddam is a threat”.
- “Saddam Hussein and his weapons are a direct threat to this country, to our people, and to all free people”.
- “I see a gathering threat [from Iraq]. I mean, this is a true, real threat to America”.
- “If I thought we were safe from attack, I would be thinking differently. But I see a gathering threat. I mean, this is a true, real threat to America. And, therefore, we will deal with it” (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/release>

s/2003/03/20030306-8.html).	
<p><b>Bush (16 March 2003):</b> “The dictator of Iraq and his weapons of mass destruction are <i>a threat to the security of free nations</i>. He is a <i>danger</i> to his neighbors”</p> <p>(<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/03/text/20030316-3.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/03/text/20030316-3.html</a>).</p>	
<p><b>Cheney (16 March 2003):</b> “he [Saddam Hussein] <i>does constitute a threat</i>”</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/bush/cheneymeetthepress.htm">http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/bush/cheneymeetthepress.htm</a>).</p>	
<p><b>Bush (19 March 2003):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The people of the United States and our friends and allies will not live at the mercy of an outlaw regime that <i>threatens</i> the peace with weapons of mass murder. We will meet that threat now, with our Army, Air Force, Navy, Coast Guard and Marines, so that we do not have to meet it later with <i>armies of fire fighters and police and doctors on the streets of our cities</i>”.</li> <li>• The Iraqi regime “threatens the peace with weapons of mass murder”</li> </ul> <p>(<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/03/text/20030319-17.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/03/text/20030319-17.html</a>).</p>	

## Part Seven

### The Associated Risk Asymmetries

#### Bush:

- **29 January 2002:** "States like these [Iraq], and their terrorist allies, constitute an axis of evil, arming to threaten the peace of the world. By *seeking* weapons of mass destruction, these regimes pose a grave and growing danger. They *could* provide these arms to terrorists, giving them the means to match their hatred. They *could* attack our allies or attempt to blackmail the United States. In any of these cases, the price of indifference would be catastrophic"  
(<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/01/20020129-11.html>).
- **12 September 2002:** "To assume this regime's good faith is to bet the lives of millions and the peace of the world in a reckless gamble. And this is a risk we must not take"  
(<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020912-1.html#>).
- **28 September 2002:** "each passing day *could be* the one on which the Iraqi regime gives anthrax or VX nerve gas or someday a nuclear weapon to a terrorist group"  
(<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020928.html>).
- **7 November 2002:** "a true threat facing our country is that an al Qaeda-type network trained and armed by Saddam could attack America and leave not one fingerprint. That is a threat"  
(<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/11/text/20021107-2.html>).
- **6 February 2003:** "One of the greatest dangers we face is that weapons of mass destruction *might be* passed to terrorists, who would not hesitate to use those weapons. Saddam Hussein has longstanding, direct and continuing ties to terrorist networks"  
(<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/text/20030206-17.html>).
- **25 February 2003:** "I worry about the future. I worry about a future in which Saddam Hussein gets to blackmail and/or attack. I worry about a future in which terrorist organizations are fuelled and funded by a Saddam Hussein. And that's why we're bringing this issue to a head"

(<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/text/20030225-6.html>).

- **6 March 2003:** "September the 11<sup>th</sup> changed the strategic thinking, at least, as far as I was concerned, for how to protect our country. It used to be that we could think that you could contain a person like Saddam Hussein, that oceans would protect us from his type of terror. September the 11<sup>th</sup> should say to the American people that we're now a battlefield, that weapons of mass destruction in the hands of a terrorist organization could be deployed here at home"

(<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/03/20030306-8.html>).

#### Cheney:

- **24 March 2002:** "We're worried about the *possible marriage*, if you will, on the one hand between the terrorist organizations and on the other, weapons of mass destruction capability, the kind of devastating materials that Saddam used against his own people in '88". So this whole subject is at a higher level of concern ... than it was previously"

(<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/vicepresident/news-speeches/speeches/vp20020324.html>).

- **2 December 2002:** "There is also a grave danger that al Qaeda or other terrorists will join with outlaw regimes that have these weapons to attack their *common enemy*, the United States of America. That is why confronting the threat posed by Iraq is not a distraction from the war on terror. It is absolutely crucial to winning the war on terror"

(<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/12/20021202-4.html>).

- **16 March 2003:** "the cost [of invading Iraq] is far less than it will be *if* we get hit, for example, with a weapon that Saddam Hussein *might* provide to al-Qaeda ... And the cost will be much greater in a future attack *if* the terrorists have access to the kinds of capabilities that Saddam Hussein has developed"

(<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/bush/cheneymeetthepress.htm>).

#### Rumsfeld:

- **18 September 2002:** "We have entered a new security environment, one that is dramatically different than the one we grew accustomed to over the past half-century. We have entered a world in which terrorist movements and terrorists states are developing the capacity to cause unprecedented destruction. *Today, our margin of*



*error is notably different. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, we were dealing, for the most part, with conventional weapons - weapons that could kill hundreds or thousands of people, generally combatants. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we are dealing with weapons of mass destruction that can kill potentially tens of thousands of people - innocent men, women and children. Further, because of the nature of these new threats, we are in an age of little or no warning, when threats can emerge suddenly - at any place or time - to surprise us. Terrorist states have enormous appetite for these powerful weapons - and active programs to develop them. They are finding ways to gain access to these capabilities. ... In word and deed, they have demonstrated a willingness to use those capabilities. Moreover, after September 11<sup>th</sup>, they have discovered a new means of delivering these weapons - terrorist networks. To the extent that they might transfer WMD to terrorist groups, they could conceal their responsibility for attacks. And if they believe they can conceal their responsibility for an attack, then they would likely not be deterred. ... Iraq has these weapons. They are much simpler to deliver than nuclear weapons, and even more readily transferred to terrorist networks, who could allow Iraq to deliver them without fingerprints. ... Some have argued that even if Iraq has these weapons, Saddam Hussein does not intend to use WMD against the U.S. because he is a survivor, not a suicide bomber - that he would be unlikely to take actions that could lead to his own destruction. ... it is far from clear that he would not necessarily restrain from taking actions that could result in his destruction. For example, that logic did not stop the Taliban from supporting and harboring al-Qaeda as they planned and executed repeated attacks on the U.S. And their miscalculation resulted in the destruction of their regime. Regimes without checks and balances are prone to grave miscalculations. Saddam Hussein has no checks whatsoever on his decision-making authority. *Who among us really believes it would be wise or prudent for us to base our security on the hope that Saddam Hussein, or his sons who might succeed him, could not make the same fatal miscalculations as Mullah Omar and the Taliban? It is my view that we would be ill advised to stake our people's lives on Saddam Hussein's supposed "survival instinct"**

(<http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=283>).

- 18 September 2002:** "Some have argued Iraq is unlikely to use WMD against us because, unlike terrorist networks, Saddam has a "return address". ... there is no reason for confidence that if Iraq launched a WMD attack on the U.S. it would necessarily have an obvious "return address". There are ways Iraq could easily conceal responsibility for a WMD attack. They could deploy "sleeper cells" armed with biological weapons to attack us from within - and then deny any knowledge or connection to the attacks. Or they could put a WMD-tipped missile on a "commercial" shipping vessel, sail it within range of our coast, fire it, and then melt back into the commercial shipping traffic before we knew what hit us. Finding that ship would be like searching for a needle in a haystack - a bit like locating a single terrorist. Or they could recruit and utilize a terrorist network with similar views and objectives, and pass on weapons of mass destruction to them. *It is this nexus between a terrorist state like Iraq with WMD and terrorist networks that has so significantly changed the U.S. security environment.* We still do not know with certainty who was behind the 1996 bombing the Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia—an attack that killed 19 American service members. We still do not know who is responsible for last year's anthrax attacks. The nature of terrorist attacks is that it is often very difficult to identify who is ultimately responsible. Indeed, our consistent failure over the past two decades to trace terrorist attacks to their ultimate source gives terrorist states the lesson that using terrorist networks as proxies is an effective way of attacking the U.S. with impunity" (<http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=283>).
- 18 September 2002:** "Just as there are risks in acting, so too there are risks in not acting. ... we must not forget that the costs of a nuclear, chemical or biological weapons attack would be far worse [than the costs of acting against Iraq]. ... Those are the costs that also must be weighed carefully. And this is not [to] mention the cost to one's conscience of being wrong [in accepting that not *p*]. ... Long before the Second World War, Hitler wrote in *Mein Kampf* indicating what he intended to do. But the hope was that maybe he would not do what he said. Between 35 and 60 million people died because of a series of fatal miscalculations. He might have been stopped early - at a minimal cost of lives - had the vast majority of the world's leaders not decided at the time that the risks of acting were greater than the risks of not acting. Today, we must decide whether the risks of acting are greater than the risks of not acting. Saddam

Hussein has made his intentions clear. He has used weapons of mass destruction against his own people and his neighbors. .... He is hostile to the United States. ... He has said, in no uncertain terms, that he would use weapons of mass destruction against the United States. He has, at this moment, stockpiles chemical and biological weapons, and is pursuing nuclear weapons. If he demonstrates the capability to deliver them to our shores, the world would be changed. Our people would be at great risk. Our willingness to be engaged in the world, our willingness to project power to stop aggression, our ability to forge coalitions for multilateral action, could all be under question. And many lives could be lost. We need to decide as a people how we feel about that. Do the risks of taking action to stop that threat outweigh these risks of living in the world we see? Or is the risk of doing nothing greater than the risk of acting? That is the question President Bush has posed to the Congress, to the American people and to the world community"

(<http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=283>).

- **18 September 2002:** "If you want an idea of the devastation Iraq *could* wreak on our country with a biological attack, consider the recent 'Dark Winter' exercise conducted by Johns Hopkins University. It simulated a biological WMD attack in which *terrorists* released smallpox in three separate locations in the U.S. Within 22 days, it is estimated it would have spread to 26 states, with an estimated 6000 new infections occurring daily. Within two months, the worst-case estimate indicated one million people could be dead and another 2 million infected. Not a nice picture"

(<http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=283>).

**Powell (5 February 2003):** "Given Saddam Hussein's history of aggression, given what we know of his grandiose plans, given what we know of his terrorist associations and given his determination to exact revenge on those who oppose him, should we take the risk that he will not some day use these weapons at a time and the place and in the manner of his choosing at a time when the world is in a much weaker position to respond?" (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030205-1.html>).

**John Spratt<sup>1</sup> (18 September 2002):** “And in particular - this concerns me - we don't *know for sure* what they have in the way of biological agents, and *we aren't sure* how robust their VX, that dusty (ph) VX, persistent VX might be”

(<http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=284>).

**General Richard Myers<sup>2</sup> (8 September 2002):** “I think ... the evidence is ... we don't think so [that Iraq has an atomic weapon], but let me just say that *our intelligence is always imperfect*, and we usually find out that what we don't know is the *most troublesome*, and in this case, so we don't know. But our estimate is that at this point he does not have a nuclear weapon, but he wants one”, in Hershey (2008).

**Fleischer (3 September 2002):** “the history of the inspections, when they took place, did lead to a lot of question marks. That's why I said that inspections in and of themselves, inspectors in and of themselves, are not a guarantee that Saddam Hussein is not developing weapons of mass destruction”

(<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020903-1.html>).

**Wolfowitz (16 October 2002):** “the risk of the Iraqi regime using those terrible weapons [WMD] or giving them to terrorists is unacceptably high. ... The most dangerous assumption of all ... is the assumption that Saddam would not use terrorists as an instrument of revenge. That is the very danger that Secretary Powell warned of ... The use of terrorists as an undeterrable instrument for delivering weapons of mass destruction. ... he cannot be trusted. The risk is simply too great that he will use them or provide them to a terror network”

(<http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=295>).

**The US Congress: Joint Resolution to Authorize the Use of United States Armed Forces Against Iraq (2 October 2002):** “the risk that the current Iraqi regime will either employ those weapons [WMD] to launch a surprise attack against the United States or its Armed Forces or provide them to international terrorists who would do so, and the extreme magnitude of harm that would result to the United States and its citizens from such an attack, combine to justify action by the United States to defend itself”

(<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021002-2.html>).

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<sup>1</sup> John Spratt was a US Congressman representing South Carolina's fifth district at the time of the lead-up to Iraq war.

<sup>2</sup> Richard Myers is a US Military General who was the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff during the Bush administration's first term and the build-up to Iraq war.

## Part Eight

### Regime Change

**Bush (22 March 2002):** “yes, we'd like to see a regime change in Iraq. That's been the longstanding policy of the U.S. government. Nothing is new there. That's precisely what has been said since I became President of the United States” (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/03/20020322-10.html>).

**Fleischer, Press Secretary (3 September 2002):**

- **Fleischer:** “regime change is the bipartisan policy of the United States government, enacted by – enacted by a previous President, enacted as a result of a Democrat President and a Republican Congress agreeing that the world would be safer, the region would be safer if Saddam Hussein was not in control”.
- **Fleischer:** “The policy of the United States is regime change, with or without inspectors [being allowed by Saddam Hussein back to Iraq]”.
- **Question:** “But if those inspectors go back in, have the unfettered access they seek and certify to us that he's honoring those agreements, does he still – does he avoid regime change?”
- **Fleischer:** “the policy of this government has been that regime change will make the world a safer, more peaceful place” (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020903-1.html>).

**Cheney (8 September 2002):**

- **Mr Russert:** “If Saddam did let the inspectors in and they did have unfettered access, could you have disarmament without a regime change”?
- **Cheney:** “Boy, that's a tough one. I don't know. We'd have to see. I mean, that gets to be speculative, in terms of what kind of inspection regime and so forth”.
- **Mr Russert:** “But what's your goal? Disarmament or regime change”?
- **Cheney:** “The president's made it clear that the goal of the United States is *regime change*. He said that on many occasions”.
- **Mr Russert:** “So you don't think you can get disarmament without a regime change”?
- **Cheney:** “I didn't say that. I said the president's objective for the United States is still *regime change*” (<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/bush/meet.htm>).

**Rumsfeld (18 September 2002):**

- “It was Congress that changed the objective of U.S. policy from *containment* to *regime change* by the passage of *the Iraqi Liberation Act in 1998*. The president is now asking Congress to support that policy”.
- “The Congress, of course, has adopted a policy for the United States of America for regime change” (<http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=284>).

**Rumsfeld (19 September 2002):**

- “It was Congress that changed the objective of U.S. policy from containment to *regime change* by passage of the *Iraq Liberation Act in 1998* by, as I recall, something like a ten to one margin in both houses. The president is now asking Congress to support that policy”.
- “*the policy of the United States government, including the Congress, is [Iraqi] regime change*. But I think the reason the Congress came to that conclusion and the president talks of regime change as a policy of the United States is because it's at this stage so difficult to imagine disarmament without regime change”.
- “the connection between *disarming* the [Iraqi] weapons of mass destruction and *regime change* is to me *awfully tight*. It's very difficult to accomplish it without it” (<http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=287>).

**Rumsfeld (26 September 2002):** “the fact is it's [regime change] been the *statutory policy* of the United States government since 1998, in the prior administration, the prior Congress – three congresses ago. And the prior administration adopted that as the policy. This president has accepted that” (<http://www.defense.gov/Transcripts/Transcript.aspx?TranscriptID=3669>).

**Bush (7 October 2002):** “two administrations – mine and President Clinton's – have stated that *regime change* in Iraq is the *only* certain means of removing a *great danger* to our nation” (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021007-8.html>).

**Bush (6 March 2003):** “We will be changing the regime of Iraq, for the good of the Iraqi people” (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/03/20030306-8.html>).

## Part Nine

### The Iraqi Cooperation and the UN Inspections' Progress

The Iraqi Non-cooperation Claims	Counter Evidence
	<p><b>Sabri (16 September 2002):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “I am pleased to inform you [Secretary-General Kofi Annan] of the decision of the Government of the Republic of Iraq to allow the return of the United Nations weapons inspectors to Iraq <i>without conditions</i>”.</li> <li>• “The Government of the Republic of Iraq has based its decision concerning the return of inspectors <i>on its desire to complete the implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions</i> and to remove any doubts that Iraq still possesses weapons of mass destruction. ... the Government of the Republic of Iraq <i>is ready to discuss the practical arrangements necessary for the immediate resumption of inspections</i>” (<a href="http://www.un.org/Depts/unmovic/new/documents/s-2002-1034.pdf">http://www.un.org/Depts/unmovic/new/documents/s-2002-1034.pdf</a>).</li> </ul>
	<p><b>ElBaradei (28 December 2002):</b> “We are doing no-notice inspection” (<a href="http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0212/28/smn.02.html">http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0212/28/smn.02.html</a>).</p>

	<p><b>ElBaradei (6 January 2003):</b> "Iraq is cooperating at least in terms of process, in terms of opening doors to us, in terms of allowing us to do what we want to do"</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/international/jan-june03/elbaradei_1-6.html">http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/international/jan-june03/elbaradei_1-6.html</a>).</p>
<p><b>Powell (27 January 2003):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "The inspectors have also told us that they have evidence that Iraq has moved or hidden items at sites just prior to inspection visits. That's what the inspectors say, not what Americans say, not what American intelligence says, but we certainly corroborate all of that. But this is information from the inspectors".</li> <li>• "Iraq <i>continues</i> to conceal quantities, vast quantities, of highly lethal material and weapons to delivery it. They could kill thousands upon thousands of men, women and children <i>if</i> Saddam Hussein decides to use these against those men, women and children, or, just as frightening, to provide them to others who might use such weapons".</li> <li>• "Today, we heard that the inspectors have not been able to interview any Iraqi in private. We heard that the inspectors have not been allowed to</li> </ul>	<p><b>Blix (9 January 2003):</b> "we still get <i>prompt access</i> from the Iraqi side; ... the inspections are covering ever-wider areas, and ever more sites in Iraq; ... in the course of these inspections we have not found any <i>smoking gun</i>"</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.iaea.org/NewsCenter/Focus/laeaIraq/un_briefing_9jan.html">http://www.iaea.org/NewsCenter/Focus/laeaIraq/un_briefing_9jan.html</a>).</p> <p><b>Blix (27 January 2003):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "It would appear from our experience so far that Iraq has decided <i>in principle</i> to provide cooperation on process, notably access".</li> <li>• "Iraq has on the whole cooperated rather well so far with UNMOVIC in this field [inspection process<sup>1</sup>]. The most important point to make is that access has been provided to all sites we have wanted to inspect and with one exception it has been prompt. We have further had great help in building up the</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Cooperation on process "has regard to the procedures, mechanisms, infrastructure and practical arrangements to pursue inspections and seek verifiable disarmament. While inspection is not built on the premise of confidence but may lead to confidence if it is successful, there must nevertheless be a measure of mutual confidence from the very beginning in running the operation of inspection" whereas "The substantive cooperation required relates above all to the obligation of Iraq to declare all programmes of weapons of mass destruction and either to present items and activities for elimination or else to provide evidence supporting the conclusion that nothing proscribed remains" (27 January 2003).



<p>employ aerial surveillance”.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “If Iraq no longer has weapons of mass destruction, they should willingly give the names of all who were involved in their previous programs to the inspectors for examination and interview”.</li> <li>• “The inspectors told us that their efforts have been impeded by a swarm of Iraqi minders” (<a href="http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB80/new/doc%2021/Briefing%20on%20the%20Iraq%20Weapons%20Inspectors'%20Report.htm">http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB80/new/doc%2021/Briefing%20on%20the%20Iraq%20Weapons%20Inspectors'%20Report.htm</a>).</li> </ul>	<p>infrastructure of our office in Baghdad and the field office in Mosul. Arrangements and services for our plane and our helicopters have been good. The environment has been workable” (<a href="http://www.un.org/Depts/unmovic/Bx27.htm">http://www.un.org/Depts/unmovic/Bx27.htm</a>).</p>
<p><b>Bush (31 January 2003):</b> “Saddam Hussein is not disarming” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030131-23.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030131-23.html</a>).</p>	<p><b>ElBaradei (28 January 2003):</b> “I think in the nuclear area <i>we are making progress</i>” (<a href="http://www.cnn.com/2003/WORLD/meast/01/28/cnna.access.elbaradei/index.html">http://www.cnn.com/2003/WORLD/meast/01/28/cnna.access.elbaradei/index.html</a>).</p>
<p><b>Cheney (31 January 2003):</b> “Saddam Hussein <i>is continuing</i> his decade-old game of <i>defiance, delay and deception</i>. He's <i>blocking</i> unrestricted aerial reconnaissance – as called for in the U.N. resolutions. His security agents are hiding documents and materials from U.N. inspectors. His intelligence agents are posing as scientists. And Saddam Hussein has decreed that real scientists who cooperate with U.N. inspectors will be killed, along with their families” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030131-13.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030131-13.html</a>).</p>	

<p><b>Powell (5 February 2003):</b> “Saddam Hussein and his regime are not just trying to conceal weapons, they're also trying to hide people. You know the basic facts. Iraq has not complied with its obligation to allow immediate, unimpeded, unrestricted and private access to all officials and other persons as required by Resolution 1441”</p> <p>(<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030205-1.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030205-1.html</a>).</p>	
<p><b>Bush (8 February 2003):</b> “<i>the regime is pursuing an elaborate campaign to conceal its weapons materials and to hide or intimidate key experts and scientists.</i> This effort of deception is directed from the highest levels of the Iraqi regime, including Saddam Hussein, his son, Iraq's vice president and the very official responsible for cooperating with inspectors”</p> <p>(<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030208.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030208.html</a>).</p>	<p><b>ElBaradei (9 February 2003):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “I am seeing a beginning of <i>a change of heart</i> on the part of Iraq. We have seen <i>eagerness</i> by them to move on these issues [the remaining disarmament issues]”.</li> <li>• “I think we are <i>moving on these issues</i> [Iraqi nuclear remaining disarmament issues: alleged importation of aluminum tubes, magnets, uranium and the alleged use of high explosives] and hope we will continue to move forward on these issues”.</li> <li>• “The final question is the enactment of a law (prohibiting weapons of mass destruction). They [the Iraqis] assured us this is moving. The two important remaining issues for us are the interviews and the surveillance. <i>We are moving on one, the interviews</i>, and we hope by Friday to move on the question</li> </ul>

	<p>of surveillance planes”.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “I see a beginning of <i>a change of heart and a beginning of a different attitude</i> [on the Iraqi part] ... Change of heart is a process”.</li> <li>• “They [the Iraqis] showed <i>cooperation</i> on documents”</li> </ul> <p>(<a href="http://www.iaea.org/NewsCenter/Focus/IaeaIraq/pressconf_09022003.pdf">http://www.iaea.org/NewsCenter/Focus/IaeaIraq/pressconf_09022003.pdf</a>).</p>
	<p><b>Blix (9 February 2003):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “<i>Iraq has been helpful on process.</i> We distinguish between cooperation on process and cooperation on substance. We have noted repeatedly that <i>access has been given to all sites we’ve wanted to see and this has been prompt in all cases.</i> Not only not just opening doors but also answering, a lot of explaining etc at sites. The general statement would be that <i>cooperation on process has been good</i>”.</li> <li>• “<i>There are some good developments</i> which I’d like to note from these two days: we have been given, I’m talking for my group (UNMOVIC), a number of papers on specific high profile unresolved issues in response to points that were made at our last visit here that Iraq was ready to amplify and to explain further what they stated in their declaration of December. These papers relate to anthrax issues, missile issues, notably to the al-Fatah and to the al-</li> </ul>

	<p>Samoud”.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Smoking gun is different from drastic change. <i>We have seen positive signs</i> [in relation to inspections in Iraq]. We are not asserting that there are weapons of mass destruction. We are also not excluding that there are not such weapons”</li> </ul> <p>(<a href="http://www.iaea.org/NewsCenter/Focus/IaeaIraq/pressconf_09022003.pdf">http://www.iaea.org/NewsCenter/Focus/IaeaIraq/pressconf_09022003.pdf</a>).</p>
	<p><b>ElBaradei (14 February 2003):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Since our 27 January [2003] report, the IAEA has conducted an additional 38 inspections at 19 locations, for a total of 177 inspections at 125 locations. Iraq has <i>continued</i> to provide <i>immediate access</i> to all locations”.</li> <li>• “The IAEA has <i>continued</i> to interview key Iraqi personnel. <i>We have recently been able to conduct four interviews in private – that is, without the presence of an Iraqi observer.</i> The interviewees, however, have tape recorded their interviews. In addition, discussions have continued to be conducted with Iraqi technicians and officials as part of inspection activities and technical meetings. I should note that, during our recent meeting in Baghdad, <i>Iraq reconfirmed its commitment to encourage its citizens to accept interviews in private, both inside and outside of Iraq</i>”.</li> </ul>

- “In response to a request by the IAEA, *Iraq has expanded the list of relevant Iraqi personnel to over 300, along with their current work locations.* The list includes the higher-level key scientists known to the IAEA in the nuclear and nuclear related areas”.
- “I was informed this morning by the Director General of Iraq's National Monitoring Directorate that *national legislation prohibiting proscribed activities was adopted today.* The resolution of this long-standing legal matter was *a step in the right direction for Iraq to demonstrate its commitment to fulfilling its obligations under the Security Council's resolutions*”.
- “*Iraq has accepted the use of all of the platforms for aerial surveillance* proposed by supporting States to UNMOVIC and the IAEA, including U2s, Mirage IVs, Antonovs and drones”.
- “The Government of Iraq *reiterated last week its commitment to comply with its Security Council obligations and to provide full and active co-operation* with the inspecting organizations”.
- “It is my hope that the commitments made recently in Baghdad will *continue* to translate into *concrete* and sustained action”

(<http://www.iaea.org/NewsCenter/Statements/2003/ebsp2003n005.shtml>).

**Bush (20 February 2003):**

- “*he is not complying* with the United Nations demands to destroy them [WMD]”.
- “He is actively *deceiving the inspectors*”.
- “He is actively *hiding the weapons*” (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/text/20030220-2.html>).

**Bush (6 March 2003):**

- “He has no intention of disarming”.
- “Saddam Hussein is not disarming. This is a fact. It cannot be denied” (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/03/20030306-8.html>).

**ElBaradei (7 March 2003):**

- “I should note that, in the past three weeks, possibly as a result of ever-increasing pressure by the international community, Iraq has been *forthcoming in its co-operation*, particularly with regard to the conduct of *private interviews* and in *making available evidence* that could contribute to the resolution of matters of IAEA concern”.
- “As you may recall, when we first began to request private, unescorted interviews, the Iraqi interviewees insisted on taping the interviews and keeping the recorded tapes. Recently, upon our insistence, *individuals have been consenting to being interviewed without escort and without a taped record*. The IAEA has conducted two such private interviews in the last 10 days, and hopes that its ability to

conduct private interviews will *continue* unhindered, including possibly interviews outside Iraq”.

- “In the last few weeks, *Iraq has provided a considerable volume of documentation relevant to the issues I reported earlier as being of particular concern*, including Iraq’s efforts to procure aluminium tubes, its attempted procurement of magnets and magnet production capabilities, and its reported attempt to import uranium”.
- “In conclusion, I am able to report today that, in the area of nuclear weapons – the most lethal weapons of mass destruction – *inspections in Iraq are moving forward*. Since the resumption of inspections a little over three months ago – and particularly during the three weeks since my last oral report to the Council – *the IAEA has made important progress* in identifying what nuclear-related capabilities remain in Iraq, and in its assessment of whether Iraq has made any efforts to revive its past nuclear programme during the intervening four years since inspections were brought to a halt” (<http://www.un.org/News/dh/iraq/elbaradei-7mar03.pdf>).

**Blix (7 March 2003):**

- “Inspections in Iraq resumed on 27 November 2002. In matters relating to *process*, notably prompt access to sites, we have faced *relatively few difficulties and certainly much less than those that were faced by UNSCOM* in the period 1991 to 1998”.
- “In the last month, Iraq has provided us with the names of many persons, who may be relevant sources of information, in particular, persons who took part in various phases of the unilateral destruction of biological and chemical weapons, and proscribed missiles in 1991”.
- “More papers on anthrax, VX and missiles have recently been provided”.
- “There is a *significant Iraqi effort underway* to clarify a major source of uncertainty as to the quantities of biological and chemical weapons, which were unilaterally destroyed in 1991. A part of this effort concerns a disposal site, which was deemed too dangerous for full investigation in the past. It is now being re-excavated. To date, Iraq has unearthed eight complete bombs comprising two liquid-filled intact R-400 bombs and six other complete bombs. Bomb fragments were also found. Samples have been taken. The



investigation of the destruction site could, in the best case, allow the determination of the number of bombs destroyed at that site. It should be followed by a serious and credible effort to determine the separate issue of how many R-400 type bombs were produced. *In this, as in other matters, inspection work is moving on and may yield results*".

- "Iraq has also recently informed us that, following the adoption of the presidential decree prohibiting private individuals and mixed companies from engaging in work related to WMD, further legislation on the subject is to be enacted. This appears to be in response to a letter from UNMOVIC requesting clarification of the issue. What are we to make of these activities? One can hardly avoid the impression that, after a period of somewhat reluctant cooperation, *there has been an acceleration of initiatives from the Iraqi side since the end of January*".
- "the question is now asked whether Iraq has cooperated 'immediately, unconditionally and actively' with UNMOVIC, as required under paragraph 9 of resolution 1441 (2002). The answers can be seen from the factual descriptions I have provided. However, if more direct answers are

desired, I would say the following: The Iraqi side has tried on occasion to attach conditions, as it did regarding helicopters and U-2 planes. *Iraq has not, however, so far persisted in these or other conditions for the exercise of any of our inspection rights.* If it did, we would report it. It is obvious that, while *the numerous initiatives*, which are now taken by the Iraqi side with a view to resolving some long-standing open disarmament issues, can be seen as “active”, or even “proactive”, these initiatives 3-4 months into the new resolution cannot be said to constitute “immediate” cooperation. Nor do they necessarily cover all areas of relevance. They are nevertheless welcome”.

- “we are able to perform professional no-notice inspections all over Iraq and to increase aerial surveillance”.
- “While during our meetings in Baghdad, the Iraqi side tried to persuade us that the Al Samoud 2 missiles they have declared fall within the permissible range set by the Security Council, the calculations of an international panel of experts led us to the opposite conclusion. *Iraq has since accepted that these missiles and associated items be destroyed and has started the process of destruction under our supervision. The destruction undertaken constitutes a*

*substantial measure of disarmament* – indeed, the first since the middle of the 1990s. We are not watching the breaking of toothpicks. Lethal weapons are being destroyed”.

- “To date, 34 Al Samoud 2 missiles, including 4 training missiles, 2 combat warheads, 1 launcher and 5 engines have been *destroyed* under UNMOVIC supervision. Work is continuing to identify and inventory the parts and equipment associated with the Al Samoud 2 programme”

(<http://www.un.org/Depts/unmovic/SC7asdelivered.htm>).

**Rumsfeld (11 March 2003):** “we *know* he *continues* to *hide* biological and chemical weapons, moving them to different locations as often as every 12 to 24 hours, and placing them in residential neighborhoods”

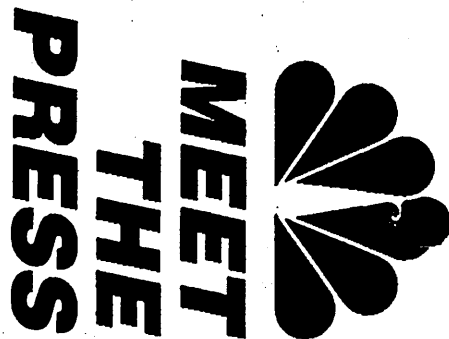
(<http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=2027>).

## MEET THE PRESS

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Guests:

Vice President DICK CHENEY

Moderator: TIM RUSSERT, NBC News

## MEET THE PRESS

**Mr. TIM RUSSERT:** Our issues this Sunday: the president leaves this morning for a final summit meeting on Iraq. What does he hope to achieve? How close are we to war? We know things are very serious when we hear from this man. In a rare Sunday morning interview—with us for the full hour, the vice president of the United States, Dick Cheney.

**Mr. Vice President, welcome to MEET THE PRESS.**

**VICE PRES. DICK CHENEY:** Good morning, Tim.

**Mr. RUSSERT:** How close are we to war?

**VICE PRES. CHENEY:** Well, I think we are still in the final stages of diplomacy, obviously. That's one of the main reasons for the president's meeting today with the British and Spanish prime ministers in the Azores. But there's no question but what we're close to the end, if you will, of the diplomatic efforts. We have done virtually everything we can with respect to trying to organize a second resolution in the U.N. Security Council. And, clearly, the president is going to have to make a very, very difficult and important decision here in the next few days.

**Mr. RUSSERT:** What could Saddam Hussein do to stop war?

**VICE PRES. CHENEY:** Well, the difficulty here is it's—he's clearly rejected, up till now, all efforts, time after time after time. And we have had 12 years and some 17 resolutions now. Each step along the way he had the opportunity to do what he was called upon to do by the U.N. Security Council. Each time he has rejected it. I'm not sure now, no matter what he said, that anyone would believe him. We have, Tim, been down this effort now for six months at the U.N. with the enactment of 1441. We asked for a declaration of all of his WMD come clean. He refused to do that. He's, again, continued to do everything he could to thwart the inspectors.

I'm hard-put to specify what it is he could do with credibility at this stage that would alter the outcome. He's always had the option of coming clean, of complying with the resolution, of giving up all of his weapons of mass destruction, of making his scientists available without fear of

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retribution coming over the anthrax, and the VX nerve agent, and the sarin, and the other capabilities he has developed, and he has consistently refused. And if he were to sit here today and say, "OK, now I'll do it," I'm not sure anybody would think that had credibility.

Mr. RUSSELL: If he did come forward and say, you know, "The British laid out six benchmarks. I have decided to turn a new leaf. Here's the VX, here's the mustard gas, here's the anthrax, here's all the records. I will go on television, denounce weapons of mass destruction, you can take any scientists you want out of Iraq, all I ask is that I can stay here in power."

VICE PRES. CHENEY: Well, I think we are at the point where—it's hard for me to conceive of him doing that. And pure speculation that he might do such a thing. And, of course, the problem we have is what we have seen in the past is that even on those occasions after the '91 Gulf War when we did strip him of certain capabilities, when the inspectors were able to go in through the work of defectors, for example, and destroy significant capabilities that he had acquired, and that as soon as they were gone, he was right back in business again.

And I think that would be the fear here, that even if he were tomorrow to give everything up, if he stays in power, we have to assume that as soon as the world is looking the other way and preoccupied with other issues, he will be back again rebuilding his BW and CW capabilities, and once again reconstituting his nuclear program. He has pursued nuclear weapons for over 20 years. Done absolutely everything he could to try to acquire that capability and if he were to cough up whatever he has in that regard now, even if it was complete and total, we have to assume tomorrow he would be right back in business again.

Mr. RUSSELL: So bottom line, he would have to disarm completely and leave the country?

VICE PRES. CHENEY: I think that would be the only acceptable outcome I can think of at this point, but obviously, we can continue to try to work through the United Nations and work diplomacy to try to arrive at an acceptable outcome. To date, we haven't been successful.

Mr. RUSSELL: Many Americans and many people around the world are asking one question: Why is it acceptable for the United States to

lead a military attack against a nation that has not attacked the United States? What's your answer?

VICE PRES. CHENEY: Tim, we have, I think admittedly, a new and unique set of circumstances we're trying to deal with here. If you think back to the way we were organized in the last century, the 20th century, to deal with threats to the United States, or to our friends and allies, we had to deal with large states, significant military forces, intercontinental ballistic missiles, the kinds of threats we dealt with throughout the period of the Cold War. All of that changed on September 11 of a year and a half ago. Since that time, we've had to deal with the proposition that truly deadly weapons could be delivered to the United States by a handful of terrorists. We saw on 9/11 19 men hijack aircraft with airline tickets and box cutters, kill 3,000 Americans in a couple of hours. That attack would pale into insignificance compared to what could happen, for example, if they had had a nuclear weapon and detonated it in the middle of one of our cities, or if they had unleashed weapons of mass destruction, biological weapons of some kind, smallpox or anthrax, on a major attack on the United States. That's a whole different proposition for us to think about, how we deal with that.

And at the front of our concerns as we try to deal with these issues is the proposition that the al-Qaeda organization is absolutely determined to do everything they can to acquire chemical, biological and nuclear weapons. We found ample evidence of that in the camps and the tunnels and the caves in Afghanistan. We see evidence of it in the interrogations that we have been able to do now on many of the al-Qaeda members that have been captured. We know that they have done everything they could to acquire those capabilities over the years, and we also are confident that if they ever do acquire that kind of capability, there's no doubt they'll use it. There's absolutely nothing to restrain them from doing that.

If you look back at our strategies that we used in the 20th century, specifically, say vis-a-vis the Soviet Union during the Cold War, we had a policy of containment, alliances, NATO in particular very successful at containing the Soviet Union, a policy of deterrence we could hold at risk, those things that they valued with our ballistic missiles and we were able to forestall a conflict throughout that whole period of time; enormously successful policy.

But then you look at the proposition of a handful of terrorists operating in a part of the world where they find sanctuary and safe haven in a rogue

state or in an area that's not even really governed by anybody, developing these capabilities to use against the United States. And how do you apply containment to that situation? How do you deter a terrorist when there's nothing they value that they're prepared to defend, when they're prepared even to sacrifice their own lives in the effort to kill Americans and there's no piece of real estate that they value highly enough so that a concept of deterrence works.

We have to think new thoughts about how we deal with that threat, and so when we look at the kind of strategy we want to pursue, we do a number of things. We, obviously, want to defend the homeland, so we spend an enormous amount of time and effort trying to make it a tougher target, but we know defense isn't enough. You've got to have good offense, and we've gone aggressively after the terrorists wherever we can find them. We worked the financial circuits and the intelligence and law enforcement efforts. We've had great success there recently; Khalid Shaikh Mohammed and others.

But we also have to address the question of where might these terrorists acquire weapons of mass destruction, chemical weapons, biological weapons, nuclear weapons? And Saddam Hussein becomes a prime suspect in that regard because of his past track record and because we know he has, in fact, developed these kinds of capabilities, chemical and biological weapons. We know he's used chemical weapons. We know he's reconstituted these programs since the Gulf War. We know he's out trying once again to produce nuclear weapons and we know that he has a long-standing relationship with various terrorist groups, including the al-Qaeda organization.

Now, if we simply sit back and operate by 20th century standards with respect to national security strategy, in terms of how we're going to deal with this, we say wait until we are hit by an identifiable attack from Iraq, the consequences could be devastating for the United States. We have to be prepared to prevent that from happening. I have argued in the past, and would again, if we had been able to pre-empt the attacks of 9/11 would we have done it? And I think absolutely. I think the American people would have supported it. We have to be prepared now to take the kind of bold action that's being contemplated with respect to Iraq in order to ensure that we don't get hit with a devastating attack when the terrorists' organization gets married up with a rogue state that's willing to provide it with the kinds of deadly capabilities that Saddam Hussein has developed and used over the years.

**Mr. RUSSERT:** French President Jacques Chirac said this morning that perhaps there could be a deadline of 30 days or 60 days and he may be able to buy into that. What would be wrong for the United States to say to the world, "OK. We're going to give Saddam 30 days or 60 days and put some pressure on the French to step up and have a united front against Saddam Hussein"?

**VICE PRES. CHENEY:** Well, that's exactly what we've been doing for 12 years, Tim. And that's what 1441 was all about, the U.N. Security Council resolution that was passed last fall. We negotiated that with the French and with the other members of the U.N. Security Council. We got a 15-to-nothing vote on it. It said that unless he came into compliance, serious consequences would follow. He clearly is not in compliance. He continues to be in material breach. We've now gone through the process that was envisioned in 1441 of extensive consultation with the other members of the U.N. Security Council, and we're approaching the point where further delay helps no one but Saddam Hussein.

The more time passes, the more time he's got to work on developing new capabilities—excuse me—the more time he's got to position his forces to attack or to try to mount and support terrorists operations against our forces in the region or elsewhere. We've run out this string for 12 years and 17 resolutions in the U.N. Security Council. Now, with all due respect to the French, if you look back at their track record, they have consistently opposed efforts to hold Saddam Hussein accountable for his actions.

**Mr. RUSSERT:** Is it because of their financial dealings?

**VICE PRES. CHENEY:** I can't say that. I don't know. Excuse me. I know, for example, in '95, when there was an effort to pass a resolution, the Security Council finding him in material breach, France opposed it. In '96, when there was an effort to pass a resolution condemning Saddam Hussein for his slaughter of the Kurds, France opposed it. In '97, when there was an effort to block travel by his intelligence and military officials, France opposed it. In '98, France announced he was free of all weapons of mass destruction—something nobody believed. And in '99, of course, they opposed the creation UNMOVIC, the existing inspection regime, that they now want to place their total faith in with respect to trying to disarm Saddam Hussein. Given that pattern of behavior, it's

difficult for us to believe that 30 days or 60 more days are going to change anything.

Mr. RUSSERT: That's a non-starter?

VICE PRES. CHENEY: I think it is.

Mr. RUSSERT: *The Los Angeles Times* wrote an editorial about the administration and its rationale for war. And let me read it to you and give you a chance to respond: "The Bush administration's months of attempts to justify quick military action against Iraq have been confusing and unfocused. It kept giving different reasons for invasion. First, it was to disarm Hussein and get him out. Then, as allies got nervous about outside nations deciding 'regime change,' the administration for a while rightly stressed disarmament only. Next, the administration was talking about 'nation-building' and using Iraq as the cornerstone of creating democracy in the Arab/Muslim world. And that would probably mean U.S. occupation of Iraq for some unspecified time, at open-ended cost. Then, another tactic: The administration tried mightily, and failed, to show a connection between Hussein and the 9/11 perpetrators, Al Qaeda. Had there been real evidence that Hussein was behind the 9/11 attacks, Americans would have lined up in support of retaliation."

What do you think is the most important rationale for going to war with Iraq?

VICE PRES. CHENEY: Well, I think I've just given it, Tim, in terms of the combination of his development and use of chemical weapons, his development of biological weapons, his pursuit of nuclear weapons.

Mr. RUSSERT: And even though the International Atomic Energy Agency said he does not have a nuclear program, we disagree?

VICE PRES. CHENEY: I disagree, yes. And you'll find the CIA, for example, and other key parts of our intelligence community disagree. Let's talk about the nuclear proposition for a minute. We've got, again, a long record here. It's not as though this is a fresh issue. In the late '70s, Saddam Hussein acquired nuclear reactors from the French. 1981, the Israelis took out the Osirak reactor and stopped his nuclear weapons development at the time. Throughout the '80s, he mounted a new effort. I was told when I was defense secretary before the Gulf War that he was

eight to 10 years away from a nuclear weapon. We found out after the Gulf War that he was within one or two years of having a nuclear weapon because he had a massive effort under way that involved four or five different technologies for enriching uranium to produce fissile material.

We know that based on intelligence that he has been very, very good at hiding these kinds of efforts. He's had years to get good at it and we know he has been absolutely devoted to trying to acquire nuclear weapons. And we believe he has, in fact, reconstituted nuclear weapons. I think Mr. ElBaradei frankly is wrong. And I think if you look at the track record of the International Atomic Energy Agency and this kind of issue, especially where Iraq's concerned, they have consistently underestimated or missed what it was Saddam Hussein was doing. I don't have any reason to believe they're any more valid this time than they've been in the past.

Mr. RUSSERT: During the 2000 campaign you were on the program when we were talking about the Persian Gulf War and looking back and I asked whether you had any regrets about taking Saddam out at that time. And you said no. And then you added this, and I want to talk about it. Let's watch:

(*Videotape, August 27, 2000*):

Mr. CHENEY: Conversations I had with leaders in the region afterwards, they all supported the decision that was made not to go to Baghdad. They were concerned that we not get into a position where we shifted, instead of being the leader of an international coalition to roll back Iraqi aggression, to one in which we were an imperialist power willy-nilly moving into capitals in that part of the world taking down governments.

(*End videotape*)

Mr. RUSSERT: "Imperialist power," "moving willy-nilly," "taking down governments." Is that how we're going to be perceived this time?

VICE PRES. CHENEY: Well, I hope not, Tim. And of course, in '91, there was a general consensus that we'd gone as far as we should. We'd achieved our objectives when we liberated Kuwait and that we shouldn't go on to Baghdad. But there were several assumptions that was based on.



One that all these U.N. Security Council resolutions would be enforced. None of them has been. That's the major difference. And it was based on the proposition that Saddam Hussein probably wouldn't survive. Most of the experts believed based upon the severe drubbing we administered to his forces in Kuwait that he was likely to be overthrown or ousted. Of course, that didn't happen. He's proven to be a much tougher customer than anybody expected.

We're now faced with a situation, especially in the aftermath of 9/11, where the threat to the United States is increasing. And over time, given Saddam's posture there, given the fact that he has a significant flow of cash as a result of the oil production of Iraq, it's only a matter of time until he acquires nuclear weapons. And in light of that, we have to be prepared, I think, to take the action that is being contemplated. Insist that he be disarmed and if the U.N. won't do it, then the United States and other partners of the coalition will have to do that.

Now, I think things have gotten so bad inside Iraq, from the standpoint of the Iraqi people, my belief is we will, in fact, be greeted as liberators. And the president's made it very clear that our purpose there is, if we are forced to do this, will in fact be to stand up a government that's representative of the Iraqi people, hopefully democratic due respect for human rights, and it, obviously, involves a major commitment by the United States, but we think it's a commitment worth making. And we don't have the option anymore of simply laying back and hoping that events in Iraq will not constitute a threat to the U.S. Clearly, 12 years after the Gulf War, we're back in a situation where he does constitute a threat.

**Mr. RUSSELL:** If we do in fact go into Iraq, would a military operation be successful without the apprehension or death of Saddam Hussein?

**VICE PRES. CHENEY:** Our objective will be, if we go in, to defeat whatever forces oppose us, to take down the government of Saddam Hussein, and then to follow on with a series of actions such as eliminating all the weapons of mass destruction, finding where they are and destroying them, preserving the territorial integrity of Turkey. As I say, standing up a broadly representative government that's preserving the territorial integrity of Iraq and standing up a broadly representative government of the Iraqi people. Those will be our objectives.

Now, what happens to Saddam Hussein, obviously, is of great interest. My guess is under those circumstances, he's likely to be captured if he's not first killed, perhaps by his own people. But the objective isn't necessarily him per se, but it clearly is to get rid of his government and to put a new one in its place. And that's what we think is required in order to achieve the objectives of eliminating his WMD, etc.

But I don't want to say, you know—I can't predict what's going to happen to Saddam Hussein, in particular. Conceivably, he could be captured and ultimately held for trial by the Iraqi government, maybe treated as a war criminal. There are lots of possibilities. He might flee, which, obviously, would be an improvement over the current situation.

**Mr. RUSSELL:** But no Iraqi would step forward as an alternative as long as Saddam Hussein is hovering out there not captured?

**VICE PRES. CHENEY:** That's possible. But I'm not sure where he would go. I mean, the fact of the matter is this is not a man who is an aesthetic like Osama bin Laden who is willing to go live in a cave for a long period of time and be cut off from the outside world. This is a man who's used to his palaces and his luxuries. I think he would find it very difficult. I also think that the hatred and animosity of the Iraqi people towards Saddam Hussein, based on the fact that he has been responsible—Human Rights Watch estimates he's been responsible for the death of as many as a million Iraqi citizens over the course of his tenure. And given his track record of absolute brutality, with respect to his opponents, I think the people in Iraq today, whatever group they are affiliated with, whatever part of the country they live in, the vast majority of them would turn him in a minute if, in fact, they thought they could do so safely.

**Mr. RUSSELL:** If your analysis is not correct, and we're not treated as liberators, but as conquerors, and the Iraqis begin to resist, particularly in Baghdad, do you think the American people are prepared for a long, costly, and bloody battle with significant American casualties?

**VICE PRES. CHENEY:** Well, I don't think it's likely to unfold that way, Tim, because I really do believe that we will be greeted as liberators. I've talked with a lot of Iraqis in the last several months myself, had them to the White House. The president and I have met with them, various groups and individuals, people who have devoted their lives from the

outside to change things inside Iraq. And like Kanan Makiya who's a professor at Brandeis, but an Iraqi, he's written great books about the subject, knows the country intimately, and is a part of the democratic opposition and resistance. The read we get on the people of Iraq is there is no question but what they want to the get rid of Saddam Hussein and they will welcome as liberators the United States when we come to do that.

Now, if we get into a significant battle in Baghdad, I think it would be under circumstances in which the security forces around Saddam Hussein, the special Republican Guard, and the special security organization, several thousand strong, that in effect are the close-in defenders of the regime, they might, in fact, try to put up such a struggle. I think the regular army will not. My guess is even significant elements of the Republican Guard are likely as well to want to avoid conflict with the U.S. forces, and are likely to step aside.

Now, I can't say with certainty that there will be no battle for Baghdad. We have to be prepared for that possibility. But, again, I don't want to convey to the American people the idea that this is a cost-free operation. Nobody can say that. I do think there's no doubt about the outcome. There's no question about who is going to prevail if there is military action. And there's no question but what it is going to be cheaper and less costly to do it now than it will be to wait a year or two years or three years until he's developed even more deadly weapons, perhaps nuclear weapons. And the consequences then of having to deal with him would be far more costly than will be the circumstances today. Delay does not help.

**Mr. RUSSETT:** The army's top general said that we would have to have several hundred thousand troops there for several years in order to maintain stability.

**VICE PRES. CHENEY:** I disagree. We need, obviously, a large force and we've deployed a large force to prevail, from a military standpoint, to achieve our objectives, we will need a significant presence there until such time as we can turn things over to the Iraqis themselves. But to suggest that we need several hundred thousand troops there after military operations cease, after the conflict ends, I don't think is accurate. I think that's an overstatement.

**Mr. RUSSETT:** We've had 50,000 troops in Kosovo for several years, a country of just five million people. This is a country of 23 million people. It will take a lot in order to secure it.

**VICE PRES. CHENEY:** Well, but we've significantly drawn down our forces in Kosovo and in the Balkans. There's no question but what we'll have to have a presence there for a period of time. It is difficult now to specify how long. We will clearly want to take on responsibilities in addition to conducting military operations and eliminating Saddam Hussein's regime. We need to be prepared to provide humanitarian assistance, medical care, food, all of those other things that are required to have Iraq up and running again. And we are well-equipped to do that. We have got a lot of effort that's gone into that.

But the—again, I come back to this proposition—Is it cost-free? Absolutely not. But the cost is far less than it will be if we get hit, for example, with a weapon that Saddam Hussein might provide to al-Qaeda, the cost to the United States of what happened on 9/11 with billions and billions of dollars and 3,000 lives. And the cost will be much greater in a future attack if the terrorists have access to the kinds of capabilities that Saddam Hussein has developed.

**Mr. RUSSETT:** Every analysis said this war itself would cost about \$80 billion, recovery of Baghdad, perhaps of Iraq, about \$10 billion per year. We should expect as American citizens that this would cost at least \$100 billion for a two-year involvement.

**VICE PRES. CHENEY:** I can't say that, Tim. There are estimates out there. It's important, though, to recognize that we've got a different set of circumstances than we've had in Afghanistan. In Afghanistan you've got a nation without significant resources. In Iraq you've got a nation that's got the second-largest oil reserves in the world, second only to Saudi Arabia. It will generate billions of dollars a year in cash flow if they get back to their production of roughly three million barrels of oil a day, in the relatively near future. And that flow of resources, obviously, belongs to the Iraqi people, needs to be put to use by the Iraqi people for the Iraqi people and that will be one of our major objectives.

But the point is this is not a nation without resources, and when it comes time to rebuild and to make the kinds of investments that are going to be required to give them a shot at achieving a truly representative government, a successful government, a government that can defend itself

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and protect territorial integrity and look to the interests of its people, Iraq starts on significant advantages. It's got a well-trained middle class, a highly literate work force, a high degree of technical sophistication. This is a country that I think, but for the rule of Saddam Hussein and his brutality and his diversion of the nation's resources and his pursuit of weapons of mass destruction, can be one of the leading, perhaps the leading state in that part of the world in terms of developing a modern state and the kind of lifestyle that its people are entitled to.

**Mr. RUSSELL:** And you are convinced the Kurds, the Sunnis, the Shites will come together in a democracy?

**VICE PRES. CHENEY:** They have so far. One of the things that many people forget is that the Kurds in the north have been operating now for over 10 years under a sort of U.S.-provided umbrella with respect to the no-fly zone, and they have established a very strong, viable society with elements of democracy an important part of it. They've had significant successes in that regard and they're eager to work with the rest of Iraq, that portion of it that still governs Saddam Hussein. And if you look at the opposition, they've come together, I think, very effectively, with representatives from Shia, Sunni and Kurdish elements in the population. They understand the importance of preserving and building on an Iraqi national identity. They don't like to have the U.S., for example, come in and insist on dealing with people sort of on a hyphenated basis—the Iraqi-Shia, Iraqi-Sunni—but rather to focus on Iraq as a nation and all that it can accomplish as a nation, and we try to be sensible to those concerns. I think the prospects of being able to achieve this kind of success, if you will, from a political standpoint, are probably better than they would be for virtually any other country in under similar circumstances in that part of the world.

**Mr. RUSSELL:** Ten days ago, the president had a news conference and said this, and let me show you:

*(Videotape, March 6, 2003):*

**PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH:** No matter what the whip count is, we're calling for the vote. We want to see people stand up and say what their opinion is about Saddam Hussein and the utility of the United Nations Security Council, and so you bet. It's time for people to show their cards, let the world know where they stand when it comes to Saddam.

*(End videotape)*

**Mr. RUSSELL:** Are we going to demand a second vote in the United Nations to show their cards?

**VICE PRES. CHENEY:** Well, it has a certain appeal, Tim. The president will address that issue today when he meets in the Azores with Prime Minister Aznar from Spain and Prime Minister Blair from Great Britain. The decision has to be made about whether or not we call for a vote and that's something they'll address. Within a few hours, you'll be able to ask the president that directly. He'll hold a press conference, I'm sure, when he finishes meeting with his colleagues.

**Mr. RUSSELL:** Brent Scowcroft, a man you know well, the national security adviser to former President Bush, when you were secretary of defense, talked to the National Journal and said this, and let me lay it out: "I'm puzzled as to where President Bush stands on the issue of our traditional alliances such as NATO, because during the campaign he made some strong statements about putting more stock in them. Clearly, that hasn't happened. Part of the Bush administration clearly believes that as a superpower, we must take advantage of this opportunity to change the world for the better, and we don't need to go out of our way to accommodate alliances, partnerships or friends in the process, because that would too constraining."

"[This doctrine of continually letting each mission to define the coalition and relying almost solely on ad hoc] coalitions of the willing is fundamentally fatally flawed. As we've seen in the debate about Iraq, it's already given us an image of arrogance and unilateralism, and we're paying a very high price for that image. If we get to the point where everyone secretly hopes the United States gets a black eye because we're so obnoxious, then we'll be totally hamstringing in the war on terror. We'll be like Gulliver with the Lilliputians."

Brent Scowcroft, "arrogance," "black eye." Eighty-five percent of Spain, 86 percent of Germans, 91 percent of Russians, all against this war. What happened? How did we lose a PR battle against Saddam Hussein in the world, and why would Brent Scowcroft say those kinds of things?

**VICE PRES. CHENEY:** Well, I have great affection for Brent. We've been friends for a long time. He is occasionally wrong, and this is one of those occasions.

I think it's important—I don't want to underestimate the extent of which there are differences here between the United States and our allies on these issues, but it helps to understand that, Tim, I think if we back off and try to put this in historical perspective, I do think that 9/11 is maybe a historic watershed, that the world is fundamentally different on the front side of that than it was on the backside, on the 21st century side, if you will, than it was on the 20th century side, that the United States and the president have been forced to come to grips with issues that are allies to date have not yet had to come to grips with, that the problem, once you look at 9/11—and, again, think back to the past—we had certain strategies and policies and institutions that were built to deal with the conflicts of the 20th century. They may not be the right strategies and policies and institutions to deal with the kind of threat we face now from a nuclear armed al-Qaeda organization, for example, should that development, and we have to find new ways to deal with those threats.

We've been forced, partly because we were hit on 9/11, to come to grips with that very real possibility that the next attack could involve far deadlier weapons than anything the world has ever seen. And then it won't come from a major state such as would have been true during the Cold War, if the Soviet Union had ever launched at the United States. It will come from a handful of terrorists on jihad, committed to die, and in the effort to kill millions of Americans. The rest of the world hasn't really had to come to grips with that yet. They're still, I think, thinking very much in terms of the last century, if you will, in terms of policies and strategies and institutions, and part of the difficulty we're faced with here is we do have, I think, a different perception of the world today, and what's going to be required to secure the United States, than they do. And that, in part, accounts for the current debate and difference of perception, if you will, between Americans and Europeans.

There are other things at work here, too. Clearly, the demise of the Soviet Union. That means that a consensus that existed with respect to what the major threats are disappeared with the end of the Cold War. I think the Europeans tend to look at what they've accomplished within Europe, which is truly remarkable—the integration of Europe, the increasing reduction in the significance of national boundaries, political and economic coming together of those systems, finding ways peacefully to

deal with their differences so they didn't repeat what happened in the first half of the 20th century when two world wars started in Europe, and they tend to think that the world operates the way Europe does. We look at that, and I think we have to give them enormous credit for what they've accomplished, but it's also true that they accomplished it in part because we provided the security umbrella for the last 50 years. It was U.S. military capability that held the Soviet Union in check, that formed the backbone for NATO.

And, now, as we go forward and look at the threat of rogue states and terrorists equipped with deadly weapons in the future, the only nation that really has the capability to deal effectively with those threats is the United States. The Brits have got some capability, and they're great allies, and we badly want them on board in any venture we undertake, but the fact of the matter is for most of the others who are engaged in this debate, they don't have the capability to do anything about it anyway.

The suggestion that somehow the war on terror has suffered as a result of the differences over Iraq I don't think is valid. I think what we found is that the cooperation and the intelligence area and the law enforcement area, financial area has been enormously successful, continues to be effective and we've seen it in the arrest in recent weeks of very significant figures in the al-Qaeda organization, including Khalid Shaikh Mohammed just a short time ago.

**MR. RUSSERT:** There is a perception, however, if you read any of the papers in Europe and around the world, the constant description of the president as a cowboy, that he wants to go it alone, that the president and you and the administration that was perceived as extremely competent on foreign policy has been stumbling and hasn't reached out and nurtured alliances, that if you mention the president's name—a friend of mine wrote me a letter and said, "It's like a blast furnace. They just respond, saying, 'He just wants to lead the world into war.'" Every other German says that in the poll. Forty-five percent of Brits say that President Bush is a higher risk to world peace than Saddam Hussein. How did we get to this point? And is the competence of the foreign policy of the Bush administration being seriously questioned?

**VICE PRES. CHENEY:** Well, I start with the terms of responding to that, Tim, with the explanation that I just gave. I think, you know, we're on one side of the divide, if you will, and they're on the other, at this

point. I think eventually there will be a coming together in terms of an understanding, if you will and the development...

**Mr. RUSSELL:** No long-term damage to the United Nations?

**VICE PRES. CHENEY:** Well, I can't say that. I don't think we damaged the United Nations. I think the United Nations up until now has proven incapable of dealing with the threat that Saddam Hussein represents, incapable of enforcing its own resolutions, incapable of meeting the challenge we face in the 21st century of rogue states armed with deadly weapons, possibly sharing them with terrorists.

With respect to the charge about the president, I just think it's dead wrong. I've gotten to know this man very well. I work side-by-side with him every day, seven days a week, you know, 24/7, as they say. He has a great capability that I think is absolutely essential in an effective leader, and that's the ability to cut to the heart of the issue. If I'm looking for analogies, I think Ronald Reagan, and I think of it as Reaganesque in the sense that President Reagan understood, for example, some very basic fundamental facts. He went out at one point and referred to the Soviet Union as empire of evil. Created consternation on both sides of the Atlantic. A lot of hammering, "How could you possibly say the Soviet Union was the empire of evil?" Well, that was, in fact, true. It guided his policy judgments. He, in turn, ultimately led the alliance in the right direction and we ultimately prevailed on the Cold War.

I look at President Bush and I see, for example, his setting a whole new standard about how we're going to deal with terrorist-sponsoring states. In the past, many of our friends in Europe and elsewhere around the world, when they see a state that's sponsored terror, frankly was willing to look the other way, not to hold them accountable for the fact that they were providing sanctuary for people who were out there in the world doing evil things.

After we got hit on 9/11 the president said no more and enunciated the Bush doctrine that we will hold states that sponsor terror, that provide sanctuary for terrorists to account, that they will be treated as guilty as the terrorists themselves of whatever acts are committed from bases on that soil. That's a brand-new departure. We've never done that before. It makes some people very uncomfortable, but it's absolutely essential as part of our strategy for taking down the al-Qaeda organization and for ending the terrorist threat that the United States has been forced to deal

with over the years. So the notion that the president is a Communist, you know, is a Westerner, I think that's not necessarily a bad idea. The fact of the matter is he cuts to the chase. He is very direct and I find it very refreshing.

Often times, you can get so tangled up in the nuance and the fine points of diplomacy of dealing with these kind of issues, engage in a large debate but the people who make things happen, the leaders who set the world, if you will, on a new course, deal effectively with these kinds of threats that we've never been faced with before, will be somebody exactly like President Bush. I think he's exactly what the circumstances require.

**Mr. RUSSELL:** Do you believe Saddam Hussein will use chemical weapons against U.S. troops?

**VICE PRES. CHENEY:** I don't know. I assume he may try. Of course as soon as he does it will be clear to the world that we were absolutely right, that he does, in fact, have chemical weapons.

**Mr. RUSSELL:** How will you respond?

**VICE PRES. CHENEY:** We've got, I think, a military force that is the best equipped in history to deal with this kind of threat. Our troops are well trained. They've got a lot of equipment that's designed specifically to permit them to operate in that kind of an environment. The other thing we have is just overwhelming capabilities in terms of going after an opposing force, the ability to move very fast, combined arms of air, for example, helicopters, artillery, and armor formations. It's going to take a very brave individual to get close enough to our forces to strike at them with a chemical weapon.

**Mr. RUSSELL:** If he did a widespread chemical attack, would we consider responding with nuclear?

**VICE PRES. CHENEY:** I can't say how we would respond under the circumstances, Tim. We've always adopted the policy that if someone were to use a weapon of mass destruction—chemical, biological or nuclear—against the United States or U.S. forces, we reserve the right to use any means at our disposal to respond. And I'm sure that'll continue to be our policy here. We would not want to telegraph what we might or might not do under those circumstances.

**Mr. RUSSERT:** We have to take a quick break. We'll be right back with more of our conversation with the vice president of the United States, Dick Cheney, right after this.

(Announcements)

**Mr. RUSSERT:** More with Vice President Dick Cheney after this brief station break.

(Announcements)

**Mr. RUSSERT:** And we are back with the vice president. Front page of *The New York Times*: "Anger On Iraq Seen As New Al-Qaeda Recruiting Tool." The Arab street will rise up, recruit more people. The president has embraced a new road map of the Middle East. Some say that was a political calculation to help with the war in Iraq. What will happen in the Arab street? And will more young Arabs, Muslims sign up to attack the United States?

**VICE PRES. CHENEY:** I can't predict that, Tim. It's possible. There's another point of view, though, that I think is very valid here, important not to lose sight of, and to some extent the United States has established over the last several years, going back at least to the '80's, an unfortunate practice that we've often failed to respond effectively to attacks on the United States. And I think the impression has grown in that part of the world—I think Osama bin Laden believes this and I think Saddam Hussein did, at least up until 9/11—that they could strike the U.S. with impunity, and we had situations in '83 when the Marine barracks was blown up in Beirut. There was no effective U.S. response. In '93 the World Trade Center in New York hit; no effective response. In '96, Khobar Towers, in '98 the east Africa embassy bombings, in 2000, the USS Cole was hit, and each time there was almost no credible response from the United States to those attacks.

Everything changed on 9/11 when we got hit here at home and we had a different president in place, who was bound and determined to go forward. And I firmly believe, along with, you know, men like Bernard Lewis, who's one of the great, I think, students of that part of the world, that strong, firm U.S. response to terror and to threats to the United States would go a long way, frankly, towards calming things in that part of the world. People who are moderate, people who want to believe in the United States, and want to support us will be willing to stand up because

the United States is going to stand with them and not pull and disappear when the going gets tough.

One of the keys, for example, with respect to Iraq is our friends in the region have been willing to step up now and be supportive of what we need to do from a military standpoint because they believe this president will do exactly what he says he will do. They don't want to stand up and stick their necks out if the U.S. is then going to fade as we have so often in the past, so...

**Mr. RUSSERT:** But a lot of countries, Mr. Vice President, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, the neighbors of Saddam, other than Kuwait, are not supportive.

**VICE PRES. CHENEY:** Well, I think we will find, Tim, that if in fact we have to do this with military force that there will be signs of relief in many quarters in the Middle East that the United States finally followed through and deal effectively with what they all perceive to be a major threat, but they're all reluctant to stand up if Saddam's still in power and if there's a possibility he will survive once again to threaten them and to threaten their region. So for the United States to follow through here, be determined, be decisive, do exactly what we said we were going to do, I think we'll find we've got far more friends out there than many people think.

**Mr. RUSSERT:** And Jordan and Pakistan and countries like that will be stable?

**VICE PRES. CHENEY:** I think so. I think weakness, vacillation, and unwillingness of the United States to stand with our friends, that is provocative. It's encouraged people like Osama bin Laden, as I say, to launch repeated strikes against the United States, and our people overseas and here at home, with the view that he could, in fact, do so with impunity and now he knows different.

**Mr. RUSSERT:** North Korea an imminent threat; they have a nuclear bomb, perhaps on line to build six more by June. Why not have a pre-emptive military strike against North Korea or at least sit down with them, one-on-one, and try to resolve that crisis?

**VICE PRES. CHENEY:** The situation in North Korea is very serious. We recognize that. We are thoroughly engaged diplomatically in an

effort to deal with it. Each set of circumstances we're faced with around the world is different. It doesn't automatically mean an approach that makes sense in Iraq is necessarily an approach that would make sense in North Korea. North Korea, we think the key is a multilateral approach. Everybody always wants us to be multilateral and we think it's appropriate here. The matter has been referred to the U.N. Security Council now from the International Atomic Energy Agency when North Korea violated their existing safeguards agreements. That's been now referred to the U.N. The U.N.'s going to have to come to grips with it.

But it also is important that our friends in the region deal effectively with it. Though, they're far more directly affected than we are—Japan, South Korea and especially China—the idea of a nuclear-armed North Korea with ballistic missiles to deliver those will, I think, probably set off an arms race in that part of the world, and others, perhaps Japan, for example, may be forced to consider whether or not they want to readdress the nuclear question. That's not in China's interest, and we've been working with China, with Japan and Korea—I'm going to be out there next month; Colin Powell was recently there to try to put together effective international approach to North Korea to make it clear to them that it is not in their interest to proceed with building more nuclear weapons.

**Mr. RUSSELL:** What's after Iraq? Will we consider military action to pre-empt the nuclear program of North Korea, of Iran?

**VICE PRES. CHENEY:** Tim, I didn't come this morning to announce any new military ventures or, frankly, to take any off the table. We haven't thought in those terms. The fact of the matter is we hope we can deal with those issues by peaceful means wherever that kind of problem arises. It's one of the reasons the president tried so hard to have the U.N. Security Council be effective with respect to the Iraq question is because there are these other issues out there. They are best addressed if possible through the U.N. Security Council. But it'll only work if the council is going to be a meaningful organization that is prepared to enforce its own resolutions. Up till now they haven't been willing to do that. We hope they will do it. And I'm sure we'll continue to take an international approach to address this proliferation question.

But it is a major issue and you've touched on it this morning, that I think back on the discussions we've had in years past, we've worried about the possibility of proliferation. But it is now here. It's a real threat, and it's

growing. There are increasing number of nations out there that are looking to acquire these capabilities and the world would be radically different if some of these rogue regimes do, in fact, acquire that capability.

**Mr. RUSSELL:** A front page all across the world, this mystery illness, this flu-type illness from Asia that antibiotics do not seem to be able to treat. Do you know anything about that?

**VICE PRES. CHENEY:** No more than what I've seen in the press. The information that's available to us is public. The World Health Organization has put out a worldwide alert, which is unique. It doesn't happen very often. Our folks down at the CDC, the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta, are actively engaged in it. We don't know what it is. We don't know the cause of it at this point. It is very worrisome because it appears to spread from whoever has got it to the health-care workers caring for them. It appears to be moving fairly rapidly starting in Asia. We're, obviously, working very hard to try to identify it as soon as possible and figure out how to deal with it.

**Mr. RUSSELL:** Any suggestion it's terrorism?

**VICE PRES. CHENEY:** There's none to date.

**Mr. RUSSELL:** How's your health?

**VICE PRES. CHENEY:** Good. No complaints.

**Mr. RUSSELL:** How's your diet?

**VICE PRES. CHENEY:** My diet is good. I'm watched over very carefully by my wife and by doctors and I've got...

**Mr. RUSSELL:** Do you prefer french fries or freedom fries?

**VICE PRES. CHENEY:** I don't eat them whatever they're called. I used to love them, but, no, I stay away from french fries. They're not on my diet.

**Mr. RUSSELL:** In order to pay for this war, would the president consider suspending his proposed tax cut?

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**VICE PRES. CHENEY:** We don't believe that's the right course of action, Tim. This is one of those times when as important as the war on terror is and as important as the problem of Iraq is, we've also got a lot of other balls in the air. And an American president these days doesn't have the choice of focusing on only one thing. We've also got to deal with the Middle East peace process, with Israelis and Palestinians which we did this week. We've got to deal with the domestic economy. It's very important to get the economy growing again. And one of the reasons we've had a fall-off in revenue, obviously, is a slow economy and we need to get growth started again. We can't wait until after we've dealt with our military problems to get the economy growing again. So we believe the tax cut is good, long-term growth policy for our economy. And that's the best way for us to be able to afford the kind of things we're going to have to do internationally.

**Mr. RUSSERT:** I hope some day we can come back and have a full discussion on the economy.

**VICE PRES. CHENEY:** Well, I hope so, too, Tim.

**Mr. RUSSERT:** Mr. Vice President, thank you very much for sharing your views.

**VICE PRES. CHENEY:** Thank you.

**Mr. RUSSERT:** And we'll be right back.

*(Announcements)*

**Mr. RUSSERT:** If it's Sunday, it's MEET THE PRESS. Happy birthday, Daniel Patrick. Hang in there.



## Part Eleven

### Suggested Future Research

File Type	Knowledge-Constituted Statements
Overall WMD	<b>Rice (8 September 2002):</b> “We <i>know</i> that he is acquiring weapons of mass destruction” ( <a href="http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0209/08/le.00.html">http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0209/08/le.00.html</a> ).
	<b>Bush (12 September 2002):</b> “We <i>know</i> that Saddam Hussein pursued weapons of mass murder even when inspectors were in his country. Are we to assume that he stopped when they left?” ( <a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020912-1.html#">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020912-1.html#</a> ).
	<b>Rumsfeld (18 September 2002):</b> “We have not, will not, and cannot <i>know</i> everything that is going on in the world. Over the years, even our best efforts, intelligence has repeatedly underestimated the weapons capabilities of a variety of countries of major concern to us. We have had numerous gaps of two, four, six or eight years between the time a country of concern first developed a WMD capability and the time we finally learned about it” ( <a href="http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=283">http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=283</a> ).
	<b>Rumsfeld (18 September 2002):</b> “we do <i>not know</i> where all of Iraq’s WMD facilities are. We do <i>know</i> where a <i>fraction</i> of them are” ( <a href="http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=283">http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=283</a> ).
	<b>Rumsfeld (18 September 2002):</b> “knowing what we know about Iraq’s <i>history</i> , no conclusion is possible except that they have and are accelerating their WMD <i>programs</i> ” ( <a href="http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=283">http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=283</a> ).
	<b>Rumsfeld (19 September 2002):</b> “we simply do <i>not know</i> where all or even a large portion of Iraq’s WMD facilities are. We do <i>know</i> where a <i>fraction</i> of them are” ( <a href="http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=287">http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=287</a> ).

	<p><b>Rumsfeld (26 September 2002):</b> “We <i>know</i> they [the Iraqis] <i>have</i> weapons of mass destruction. We <i>know</i> they have <i>active</i> programs. There isn't any debate about it”</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.defense.gov/Transcripts/Transcript.aspx?TranscriptID=3669">http://www.defense.gov/Transcripts/Transcript.aspx?TranscriptID=3669</a>).</p>
	<p><b>Bush (26 September 2002):</b> “We <i>know</i> he's [Saddam Hussein] actively seeking the destructive technologies to match is hatred” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/text/20020926-7.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/text/20020926-7.html</a>).</p>
	<p><b>Bush (7 October 2002):</b> “If we <i>know</i> Saddam Hussein has <i>dangerous weapons</i> today – and <i>we do</i> – does it make any sense for the world to wait to confront him as he grows even stronger and develops even more dangerous weapons?”</p> <p>(<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021007-8.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021007-8.html</a>).</p>
	<p><b>Rumsfeld (3 December 2002):</b> “The United States <i>knows</i> that Iraq <i>has</i> weapons of mass destruction. The U.K. <i>knows</i> that they have weapons of mass destruction. Any country on the face of the earth with an active intelligence program knows that Iraq has weapons of mass destruction”</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=2803">http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=2803</a>).</p>

**Powell (5 February 2003):**

- “I cannot tell you everything that we *know*. ... What you will see is *an accumulation of facts*. ... My colleagues, every statement I make today is backed up by sources, *solid sources*. These are not assertions. What we're giving you are *facts* and conclusions based on *solid intelligence*”.
- “My second purpose today is to provide you with additional information, to share with you what the United States *knows* about Iraq's weapons of mass destruction as well as Iraq's involvement in terrorism”.
- “We *know* that Saddam's son, Qusay, ordered the removal of all prohibited weapons from Saddam's numerous palace complexes. We *know* that Iraqi government officials, members of the ruling Baath Party and scientists have hidden prohibited items in their homes. Other key files from military and scientific establishments have been placed in cars that are being driven around the countryside by Iraqi intelligence agents to avoid detection”.
- “As it did throughout the 1990s, we know that Iraq today is actively using its considerable intelligence capabilities to hide its illicit activities”.
- “We *know* that Saddam Hussein is determined to keep his weapons of mass destruction; he's determined to make more. Given Saddam Hussein's history of aggression, given what we *know* of his grandiose plans, given what we *know* of his terrorist associations and given his determination to exact revenge on those who oppose him, should we take the risk that he will not some day use these weapons at a time and the place and in the manner of his choosing at a time when the world is in a much weaker position to respond?”.
- “Saddam Hussein and his regime are not just trying to conceal weapons, they're also trying to hide people. You know the basic facts. Iraq has not complied with its obligation to allow immediate, unimpeded, unrestricted and private access to all officials and other persons as required by Resolution 1441”

([\[whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030205-1.html\]\(http://whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030205-1.html\)\).](http://georgewbush-</a></p></div><div data-bbox=)

Chemical Weapons	<p><b>Hans Blix (9 February 2003):</b> “Our starting point is that the Security Council to which we report would want to be reassured that no WMD or long-range missiles are in Iraq. Much was destroyed up to '98, but the Security Council noted in 99 that there are unresolved disarmament issues and asked Iraq and us UNMOVIC and the IAEA to resolve them. <i>These unresolved issues do not necessarily mean that there are weapons; it means we don't know</i>, we'd like to know that they don't now exist”</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.iaea.org/NewsCenter/Focus/IaeaIraq/pressconf_09022003.pdf">http://www.iaea.org/NewsCenter/Focus/IaeaIraq/pressconf_09022003.pdf</a>).</p>
	<p><b>Bush (20 February 2003):</b> “the world <i>knows</i> that Saddam Hussein has weapons of mass destruction”</p> <p>(<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/text/20030220-2.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/text/20030220-2.html</a>).</p>
	<p><b>Bush (6 March 2003):</b> “the American people know that Saddam Hussein has weapons of mass destruction”</p> <p>(<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/03/20030306-8.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/03/20030306-8.html</a>).</p>
	<p><b>Cheney (29 November 2001):</b> “We <i>know</i> he [Saddam Hussein] has developed ... chemical <i>agents</i>”</p> <p>(<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/vicepresident/news-speeches/speeches/vp20011129.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/vicepresident/news-speeches/speeches/vp20011129.html</a>).</p>
	<p><b>Cheney (17 March 2002):</b> “We <i>know</i> they [the Iraqis] have ... chemical weapons”</p> <p>(<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/vicepresident/news-speeches/speeches/vp20020317.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/vicepresident/news-speeches/speeches/vp20020317.html</a>).</p>
	<p><b>Cheney (19 March 2002):</b> “We <i>know</i> that they [the Iraqis] have chemical weapons. Of course they've <i>used them in the past</i> against the Iranians and the Kurds”</p> <p>(<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/vicepresident/news-speeches/speeches/vp20020319.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/vicepresident/news-speeches/speeches/vp20020319.html</a>).</p>

**Senator Richard Durbin (3 September 2002):** “We *know* he has *chemical* and biological weapons. Maybe he has more”  
([http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/congress/july-dec02/congress\\_9-3.html](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/congress/july-dec02/congress_9-3.html)).

**Fleischer (3 September 2002):** “We do *know* that Saddam Hussein possesses chemical weapons”  
(<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020903-1.html>).

**General Richard Myers (8 September 2002):** “We’ve *known* for, for quite some time that he’s got chemical and biological weapons and a, and an *interest* in nuclear weapons, and this is very consistent with what we’ve known all along, and I think represents the facts as they are”, in Hershey (2008).

**Rumsfeld (18 September 2002):** “We do *know* that the Iraqi regime *currently has* chemical and *biological* weapons of mass destruction”  
(<http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=284>).

**Rumsfeld (18 September 2002):**

- “We do *know* that the Iraqi regime *has chemical* and biological weapons of mass destruction”.
- “we *know* Iraq possesses ... chemical weapons, and is expanding and improving their capabilities to produce them. That should be of every bit as much concern as Iraq’s *potential nuclear capability*”  
(<http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=283>).

**Rumsfeld (19 September 2002):** “We do *know* that the Iraqi regime *has chemical* and biological weapons of mass destruction”  
(<http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=287>).

	<p><b>General Richard Myers (19 September 2002):</b> “we <i>know</i> he's <i>continuing</i> to produce the chemical and biological weapons”  (<a href="http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=287">http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=287</a>).</p>
	<p><b>Bush (7 October 2002):</b> “We <i>know</i> that the regime has produced thousands of tons of chemical agents, including mustard gas, sarin nerve gas, VX nerve gas”  (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021007-8.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021007-8.html</a>).</p>
	<p><b>Rumsfeld (14 November 2002):</b> “we <i>know</i> that Saddam Hussein <i>has chemical</i> and biological weapons”  (<a href="http://www.defense.gov/Transcripts/Transcript.aspx?TranscriptID=3283">http://www.defense.gov/Transcripts/Transcript.aspx?TranscriptID=3283</a>).</p>

**Powell (5 February 2003):**

- “To support its deadly biological and chemical weapons programs, Iraq procures needed items from around the world using an extensive clandestine network. What we *know* comes largely from intercepted communications and human sources who are in a position to *know* the *facts*”.
- “We also have satellite photos that indicate that banned materials have recently been moved from a number of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction facilities. ... Let's look at one. This one is about a weapons munition facility, a facility that holds ammunition at a place called Taji (ph). This is one of about 65 such facilities in Iraq. We *know* that this one has housed chemical munitions. ... Here, you see 15 munitions bunkers in yellow and red outlines. The four that are in red squares represent *active chemical munitions bunkers*. How do I *know* that? How can I say that? Let me give you a closer look. Look at the image on the left. On the left is a close-up of one of the four chemical bunkers. The two arrows indicate the presence of sure signs that the bunkers *are storing* chemical munitions”.
- “We *know* that Iraq has embedded key portions of its illicit chemical weapons infrastructure within its legitimate civilian industry”.
- “In May 2002, our satellites photographed the unusual activity in this picture. Here we see cargo vehicles are again at this transshipment point, and we can see that they are accompanied by a decontamination vehicle associated with biological or chemical weapons activity. What makes this picture significant is that we have a human source who has corroborated that movement of chemical weapons occurred at this site at that time. So it's not just the photo, and it's not an individual seeing the photo. It's the photo and then the *knowledge of an individual* being brought together to make the case”.
- “we *know* that they [the Iraqi government] do [have nerve agents]”  
(<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030205-1.html>).

Chemical Weapons	<p><b>Rumsfeld (11 March 2003):</b> “we <i>know</i> he <i>continues</i> to <i>hide</i> biological and chemical weapons, moving them to different locations as often as every 12 to 24 hours, and placing them in residential neighborhoods” (<a href="http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=2027">http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=2027</a>).</p>
	<p><b>Cheney (16 March 2003):</b> “we <i>know</i> he [Saddam Hussein] has, in fact, developed these kinds of <i>capabilities</i>, <i>chemical</i> and biological weapons. ... . We <i>know</i> he’s reconstituted these programs since the Gulf War” (<a href="http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/bush/cheneymeetthepress.htm">http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/bush/cheneymeetthepress.htm</a>).</p>
Biological Weapons	<p><b>Cheney (29 November 2001):</b> “We <i>know</i> he [Saddam Hussein] has developed biological ... <i>agents</i>” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/vicepresident/news-speeches/speeches/vp20011129.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/vicepresident/news-speeches/speeches/vp20011129.html</a>).</p>
	<p><b>Cheney (17 March 2002):</b> “We <i>know</i> they [the Iraqis] have biological ... weapons” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/vicepresident/news-speeches/speeches/vp20020317.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/vicepresident/news-speeches/speeches/vp20020317.html</a>).</p>
	<p><b>Cheney (19 March 2002):</b> “We <i>know</i> they [the Iraqis] have biological weapons” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/vicepresident/news-speeches/speeches/vp20020319.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/vicepresident/news-speeches/speeches/vp20020319.html</a>).</p>
	<p><b>Senator Richard Durbin (3 September 2002):</b> “We <i>know</i> he has <i>chemical</i> and biological weapons. Maybe he has more” (<a href="http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/congress/july-dec02/congress_9-3.html">http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/congress/july-dec02/congress_9-3.html</a>).</p>
	<p><b>General Richard Myers (8 September 2002):</b> “We’ve <i>known</i> for, for quite some time that he’s got chemical and biological weapons and a, and an <i>interest</i> in nuclear weapons, and this is very consistent with what we’ve known all along, and I think represents the facts as they are”, in Hershey (2008).</p>



<p><b>Rice (8 September 2002):</b> “we <i>know</i> that he has stored the biological weapons” (<a href="http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0209/08/le.00.html">http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0209/08/le.00.html</a>).</p>
<p><b>Congressman John Spratt<sup>1</sup> (18 September 2002):</b> “And in particular – this concerns me – we don't <i>know for sure</i> what they have in the way of biological agents, and <i>we aren't sure</i> how robust their VX, that dusty (ph) VX, persistent VX might be” (<a href="http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=284">http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=284</a>).</p>
<p><b>Rumsfeld (18 September 2002):</b> “We do <i>know</i> that the Iraqi regime <i>currently has</i> chemical and <i>biological</i> weapons of mass destruction” (<a href="http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=284">http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=284</a>).</p>
<p><b>Rumsfeld (18 September 2002):</b> “We do <i>know</i> that the Iraqi regime <i>has</i> chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction” (<a href="http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=283">http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=283</a>).</p>
<p><b>Rumsfeld (19 September 2002):</b> “We do <i>know</i> that the Iraqi regime <i>has</i> chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction” (<a href="http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=287">http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=287</a>).</p>
<p><b>General Richard Myers (19 September 2002):</b> “we <i>know</i> he's <i>continuing</i> to produce the chemical and biological weapons” (<a href="http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=287">http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=287</a>).</p>
<p><b>Rumsfeld (14 November 2002):</b> “we <i>know</i> that Saddam Hussein <i>has</i> chemical and biological weapons” (<a href="http://www.defense.gov/Transcripts/Transcript.aspx?TranscriptID=3283">http://www.defense.gov/Transcripts/Transcript.aspx?TranscriptID=3283</a>).</p>

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<sup>1</sup> John Spratt is a US Congressman representing South Carolina's fifth district.

	<p><b>Powell (5 February 2003):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “To support its deadly biological and chemical weapons programs, Iraq procures needed items from around the world using an extensive clandestine network. What we <i>know</i> comes largely from intercepted communications and human sources who are in a position to <i>know</i> the <i>facts</i>”.</li> <li>• “While we were here in this council chamber debating Resolution 1441 last fall, we know, we <i>know</i> from sources that a missile brigade outside Baghdad was disbursing rocket launchers and warheads containing biological warfare agents to various locations, distributing them to various locations in western Iraq. Most of the launchers and warheads have been hidden in large groves of palm trees and were to be moved every one to four weeks to escape detection”.</li> <li>• “Saddam Hussein has not verifiably <i>accounted for</i> even one teaspoon-full of this deadly material [anthrax]. ... The Iraqis have never <i>accounted for</i> all of the biological weapons they admitted they had and we know they had. They have never <i>accounted for</i> all the organic material used to make them [biological weapons]. ... they have not <i>accounted for</i> many of the weapons filled with these agents [biological] such as there are 400 bombs. This is evidence, not conjecture. This is true. This is all well-documented” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030205-1.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030205-1.html</a>).</li> </ul>
Biological Weapons	<p><b>Rumsfeld (11 March 2003):</b> “we <i>know</i> he <i>continues</i> to <i>hide</i> biological and chemical weapons, moving them to different locations as often as every 12 to 24 hours, and placing them in residential neighborhoods” (<a href="http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=2027">http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=2027</a>).</p>

Mobile Facilities	<p><b>Bush (28 January 2003):</b> “From three Iraqi <i>defectors</i> we <i>know</i> that Iraq, in the late 1990s, <i>had</i> several mobile biological weapons labs. These are designed to produce germ warfare agents, and can be moved from place to a place to evade inspectors. Saddam Hussein has not disclosed these facilities. <i>He's given no evidence that he has destroyed them</i>”</p> <p>(<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030128-19.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030128-19.html</a>).</p>
	<p><b>Cheney (30 January 2003):</b> “We <i>know</i> he had ... several mobile biological weapons laboratories designed to produce germ warfare agents on the move”</p> <p>(<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030130-16.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030130-16.html</a>).</p>
	<p><b>Cheney (31 January 2003):</b> “We <i>know</i> that he <i>had</i> ... several mobile biological weapons laboratories designed to produce germ warfare agents on the move”</p> <p>(<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030131-13.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030131-13.html</a>).</p>
	<p><b>Wolfowitz (23 January 2003):</b> “We <i>know</i> about that capability [Iraq’s mobile biological weapons production facilities] from defectors and other sources”</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=171">http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=171</a>).</p>

	<p><b>Powell (5 February 2003):</b> “We have <i>firsthand descriptions</i> of biological weapons factories on wheels and on rails. ... <i>an Iraqi civil engineer</i> in a position to <i>know</i> the details of the program, confirmed the existence of transportable facilities moving on trailers. ... A third source, also in a position to know, reported in summer 2002 that Iraq <i>had manufactured</i> mobile production systems mounted on road trailer units and on rail cars. ... Finally, a fourth source, an Iraqi major, who defected, confirmed that Iraq <i>has</i> mobile biological research laboratories, in addition to the production facilities I mentioned earlier. ... We <i>know</i> that Iraq has at lest seven of these mobile biological agent factories” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030205-1.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030205-1.html</a>).</p>
Nuclear Weapons	<p><b>Cheney (19 March 2002):</b> “we <i>know</i> they [the Iraqis] are pursuing nuclear weapons” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/vicepresident/news-speeches/speeches/vp20020319.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/vicepresident/news-speeches/speeches/vp20020319.html</a>).</p>
	<p><b>Cheney (26 August 2002):</b> “we now <i>know</i> that Saddam has resumed his efforts to acquire nuclear weapons. Among other sources, we've gotten this from the firsthand testimony of defectors – including Saddam's own <i>son-in-law</i>, who was subsequently murdered at Saddam's direction. Many of us are convinced that Saddam will acquire nuclear weapons <i>fairly soon</i>” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/08/20020826.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/08/20020826.html</a>).</p>
	<p><b>General Richard Myers (8 September 2002):</b> “I think the, the evidence is we don't, we don't think so [that Iraq has an atomic weapon], but let me just say that <i>our intelligence is always imperfect</i>, and we usually find out that what we don't <i>know</i> is the <i>most troublesome</i>, and in this case, so we don't <i>know</i>. But our estimate is that at this point he does not have a nuclear weapon, but he wants one”, in Hershey (2008).</p>

**Cheney (8 September 2002):** “I can say that I *know for sure* that he [Saddam Hussein] is *trying* to acquire the capability [nuclear capability]”  
(<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/bush/meet.htm>).

**Rice (8 September 2002):** “We do *know* that he is *actively* pursuing a nuclear weapon”  
(<http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0209/08/le.00.html>).

**General Richard Myers (8 September 2002):** “We’ve *known* for, for quite some time that he’s got chemical and biological weapons and a, and an *interest* in nuclear weapons, and this is very consistent with what we’ve known all along, and I think represents the facts as they are”, in Hershey (2008).

**Rumsfeld (18 September 2002):** “Now, do we have perfect evidence that can tell us precisely the date Iraq will have a deliverable nuclear device, or when and where he might try to use it? That is not knowable”  
(<http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=283>).

**Rumsfeld (18 September 2002):**

- “We do *know* that the Iraqi regime ... is pursuing nuclear weapons”.
- “We do not *know* today precisely how close he is to having a deliverable nuclear weapon. What we do *know* is that he has *a sizable appetite* for them, that he has been actively and persistently pursuing them for more than 20 years, and that we allow him to get them at our peril. Moreover, let’s say he is 5-7 years from a deliverable nuclear weapon. That raises the question: 5-7 years from when? From today? From 1998, when he kicked out the inspectors? Or from earlier, when inspectors were still in country? There is no way of knowing except from the ground, *unless one believes what Saddam Hussein says*”  
(<http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=283>).

**Rumsfeld (18 September 2002):**

- “we do *know* they're currently pursuing nuclear weapons”.
- “Some have argued that the nuclear threat from Iraq is not imminent, that Saddam Hussein is at least five to seven years away from having nuclear weapons. I would not be so certain. Before Operation Desert Storm in 1991, the best intelligence estimates were that Iraq was about five to seven years away from having nuclear weapons. The experts were flat wrong. When the U.S. got on the ground, they found that the Iraqis were probably six months to a year to 18 months from having a nuclear weapon, not five to seven years. *We do know that he has been actively and persistently pursuing nuclear weapons for more than 20 years*”  
(<http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=284>).

**Rumsfeld (19 September 2002):** “We do *know* that ... they're [the Iraqis] pursuing nuclear weapons”  
(<http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=287>).

**Rumsfeld (14 November 2002):** “we *know* he has an *active* program for the development of nuclear weapons”  
(<http://www.defense.gov/Transcripts/Transcript.aspx?TranscriptID=3283>).

**ElBaradei (13 December 2002):** “We *know* that Iraq, at least when we left in 1998, has no [nuclear] capability whatsoever to produce either a weapon or weapon-usable material”  
(<http://edition.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0212/13/lt.01.html>).

**Bush (31 December 2002):** “I think it's important to remember that Saddam Hussein was close to having a nuclear weapon. We don't know whether or not he has a nuclear weapon”  
(<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/12/text/20021231-1.html>).

	<p><b>Rice (9 March 2003):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “What we've said is that we believe the weakness in Saddam Hussein's program [nuclear program] is the absence of fissile material, and we do not <i>know</i> whether he has acquired fissile material. This was a particular report that had to be investigated and run down, but we've always said that his strength is that he has the infrastructure in place, he has a procurement network that is out buying pieces of a nuclear infrastructure”.</li> <li>• “He has the scientists [nuclear scientists] in place, but what we don't think he has or know whether he has is the [nuclear] fissile material”.</li> <li>• “But I want to be very clear. We've always said that we do not <i>know</i> whether he's acquired [nuclear] fissile material”</li> </ul> <p>(<a href="http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2003/03/10/ftn/main543382.shtml?tag=contentMain;contentBody">http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2003/03/10/ftn/main543382.shtml?tag=contentMain;contentBody</a>).</p>
Nuclear Weapons	<p><b>Cheney (16 March 2003):</b> “We <i>know</i> he's out trying once again to produce nuclear weapons”</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/bush/cheneymeetthepress.htm">http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/bush/cheneymeetthepress.htm</a>).</p>
Uranium	<p><b>Cheney (8 September 2002):</b> “we have to <i>assume</i> there's more there than we <i>know</i>. What we <i>know</i> is just <i>bits</i> and <i>pieces</i> we gather through the intelligence system. But we-you never-nobody ever mails you the entire plan or that rarely happens. It certainly has not happened in this case. So we have to deal with these <i>bits</i> and <i>pieces</i>, and try to put them together in a <i>mosaic</i> to understand what's going on. But we do <i>know</i>, with <i>absolute certainty</i>, that he is using his procurement system to acquire the equipment he needs in order to enrich uranium to build a nuclear weapon”</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/bush/meet.htm">http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/bush/meet.htm</a>).</p>

	<p><b>NIE – Classified (1 October 2002):</b> “A foreign government service reported that as of early 2001, Niger <i>planned</i> to send several tons of “pure uranium” (probably yellowcake) to Iraq. As of early 2001, Niger and Iraq reportedly were still working out arrangements for this deal, which could be for up to 500 tons of yellowcake. <i>We do not know the status of this arrangement</i>”</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.fas.org/irp/cia/product/iraq-wmd-nie.pdf">http://www.fas.org/irp/cia/product/iraq-wmd-nie.pdf</a>).</p>
Aluminum Tubes	<p><b>Rice (8 September 2002):</b> “We <i>do know</i> that there have been <i>shipments</i> going into <i>Iran</i>, for instance – into <i>Iraq</i>, for instance, of <i>aluminum tubes</i> that really <i>are only suited to</i> – high-quality aluminum tools that are <i>only really suited</i> for nuclear weapons programs, centrifuge programs”</p> <p>(<a href="http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0209/08/le.00.html">http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0209/08/le.00.html</a>).</p>
Magnets	<p><b>NIE – Classified (1 October 2002):</b> INR's Alternative View: Iraq's Attempts to Acquire Aluminum Tubes: “Some of the specialized but dual-use items being sought are, <i>by all indications</i>, bound for <i>Iraq's missile program</i>. Other cases are <i>ambiguous</i>, such as that of a planned magnet-production line whose suitability for centrifuge operations remains <i>unknown</i>. Some efforts involve non-controlled industrial material and equipment – including a variety of machine tools – and are troubling because they would help establish the infrastructure for a renewed nuclear program. But such efforts (which began well before the inspectors departed) <i>are not clearly linked to a nuclear end-use</i>. Finally, the claims of Iraqi pursuit of natural uranium in Africa are, in INR's assessment, <i>highly dubious</i>”</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.fas.org/irp/cia/product/iraq-wmd-nie.pdf">http://www.fas.org/irp/cia/product/iraq-wmd-nie.pdf</a>).</p>
Missiles	<p><b>Rice (8 September 2002):</b> “We <i>know</i> that there are <i>unaccounted-for</i> Scud and other ballistic missiles in Iraq”</p> <p>(<a href="http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0209/08/le.00.html">http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0209/08/le.00.html</a>).</p>



	<p><b>Powell (5 February 2003):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “We <i>know</i> from intelligence and Iraq's own admissions that Iraq's alleged permitted ballistic missiles, the al-Samud II (ph) and the al-Fatah (ph), violate the 150-kilometer limit established by this council in Resolution 687. These are prohibited systems”.</li> <li>• “What I want you to know today is that Iraq has programs that are <i>intended</i> to produce ballistic missiles that fly 1,000 kilometers. One program is pursuing a liquid fuel missile that would be able to fly more than 1,200 kilometers. And you can see from this map, as well as I can, who will be in danger of these missiles” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030205-1.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030205-1.html</a>).</li> </ul>
UAVs	<p><b>Rumsfeld (25 February 2003):</b> “We <i>know</i> that Iraq has a number of so-called UAVs, unmanned aerial vehicles, of different types; that they train with them and exercise them” (<a href="http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=346">http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=346</a>).</p>
Delivery Platforms	<p><b>Cheney (30 January 2003):</b> “We <i>know</i> he had about 30,000 munitions capable of delivering chemical weapons” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030130-16.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030130-16.html</a>).</p> <p><b>Cheney (31 January 2003):</b> “We <i>know</i> that he <i>had</i> some 30,000 munitions capable of delivering chemical agents” (<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030131-13.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030131-13.html</a>).</p>
Terrorism	<p><b>CIA (21 June 2002):</b> “Our <i>knowledge</i> of Iraqi links to al-Qa’ida still contains many <i>critical gaps</i> because of <i>limited reporting</i> and the <i>questionable reliability</i> of many of our sources” (<a href="http://www.fas.org/irp/congress/2005_cr/CIAreport.062102.pdf">http://www.fas.org/irp/congress/2005_cr/CIAreport.062102.pdf</a>).</p>

**Cheney (8 September 2002):** "There is – again, I want to separate out 9/11, from the other *relationships* between Iraq and the al-Qaeda organization. But there is a *pattern of relationships going back many years*. And in terms of exchanges and in terms of people, we've had recently since the operations in Afghanistan – we've seen al-Qaeda members *operating* physically in Iraq and off the territory of Iraq. We *know* that Saddam Hussein has, over the years, been one of the top state sponsors of terrorism for nearly 20 years. We've had this recent weird incident where the head of the Abu Nidal organization, one of the world's most noted terrorists, was killed in Baghdad. The announcement was made by the head of Iraqi intelligence. The initial announcement said he'd shot himself. When they dug into that, though, he'd shot himself four times in the head. And speculation has been, that, in fact, somehow, the Iraqi government or Saddam Hussein had him eliminated to avoid potential embarrassment by virtue of the fact that he was in Baghdad and operated in Baghdad. So it's a very complex picture to try to sort out"

(<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/bush/meet.htm>).

**Rice (8 September 2002):** "There is certainly evidence that al Qaeda people *have been* in Iraq. There is certainly evidence that Saddam Hussein cavorts with terrorists. I think that if you asked, do we know that he had a role in 9/11, no, we do not know that he had a role in 9/11. *But I think that this is the test that sets a bar that is far too high*. We *know* a great deal about his terrorist activity. We know that he, as I said before, tried to assassinate President George H. W. Bush. We know that he pays Hamas terrorists \$25,000 for suicide bombings that led to suicide bombings against American citizens with five American deaths at Hebrew University"

(<http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0209/08/le.00.html>).

**Bush (12 September 2002):** "al Qaeda terrorists escaped from Afghanistan ... are *known* to be in Iraq"

(<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020912-1.html#>).

**Rumsfeld (18 September 2002):**

- “We do *know* that the Iraqi regime has ... *proven support* for and *cooperation* with terrorist networks”.
- “We *know* that *al-Qaeda* is *operating in Iraq today*, and that little happens in Iraq without the knowledge of the Saddam Hussein regime. We also *know* that there have been a number of contacts between Iraq and al-Qaeda over the years. We know Saddam has ordered acts of terror himself, including the attempted assassination of a former U.S. President” (<http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=283>).

**Rumsfeld (18 September 2002):** “We do *know* that .... they've ... *proven support* for and *cooperation* with terrorist networks”

(<http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=284>).

**Rumsfeld (19 September 2002):** “We do *know* ... that they [the Iraqis] cooperate with terrorist networks”

(<http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=287>).

**Rice (25 September 2002):**

- “We clearly know that there were *in the past* and have been contacts between senior Iraqi officials and members of al-Qaida going back for actually quite a long time”.
- “yes there are contacts between Iraq and al-Qaida. We *know* that Saddam Hussein has a long history with terrorism in general. And there are some al-Qaida personnel who found refuge in Baghdad”.
- “We know too that several of the detainees, in particular some high ranking detainees, have said that Iraq provided some training to al-Qaida in chemical weapons development”

([http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/international/july-dec02/rice\\_9-25.html](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/international/july-dec02/rice_9-25.html)).

**Rumsfeld (26 September 2002):**

- “The *knowledge* that the intelligence community, the shared intelligence information among the coalition members, has of the al Qaeda *relationship* with Iraq is *evolving*. It's based on a lot of different types of *sources of varying degrees of reliability*. Some of it, admittedly, comes from *detainees*, which has been helpful, and particularly some high-ranking detainees”.
- “Since we began after September 11<sup>th</sup>, we do have *solid evidence* of the presence in Iraq of al Qaeda members, including some that have been in Baghdad. We have what we consider to be *very reliable reporting* of senior level contacts *going back a decade*, and of *possible* chemical and biological agent training. And when I say contacts, I mean between Iraq and al Qaeda. The reports of these contacts have been increasing since 1998”.
- “We have what we *believe* to be *credible information* that Iraq and al Qaeda have *discussed* safe haven opportunities in Iraq, reciprocal nonaggression *discussions*. We have what we consider to be *credible evidence* that al Qaeda leaders have sought contacts in Iraq who *could* help them acquire weapon of – weapons of mass destruction capabilities. We do have – I believe it's *one* report indicating that Iraq provided *unspecified* training relating to chemical and/or biological matters for al Qaeda members. There is, I'm told, also some other information of *varying degrees of reliability* that supports that conclusion of their cooperation”.
- Question: Do you know what the specific kind of training is without telling us?
- Rumsfeld: That I'm not – I don't have high confidence in, because –
- Question: Are there any indications that senior al Qaeda are in Baghdad or Iraq?

- Rumsfeld: “the problem with it is that when intelligence is gathered, it's gathered at a moment, and then that moment passes, and then there's the next moment and the moment after that. We certainly have evidence of senior al Qaeda who *have been* in Baghdad *in recent periods*. *Whether they're currently there or not one never knows*, because they're moving targets”.
- Rumsfeld: “although we *know* there are al Qaeda in the country, and we know they've *discussed* with Iraq safe haven. Now whether the ones that are in the country are there under some sort of grant of safe haven or not is – happens to be a piece of intelligence that either we don't have or we don't want to talk about”.
- Question: “you said, I think, that you have solid evidence of the presence of al Qaeda in Iraq, including some in Baghdad. And when you said that, I wasn't clear what time frame you were referring to, whether or not that is current. Do you currently believe they're in Baghdad, or are you only talking about al Qaeda in the North in Kurdish-controlled areas”?
- Rumsfeld: “Specifically not, with respect to the last part of your question. We're not only talking about al Qaeda in the northern part”.
- Question: So you currently believe there are al Qaeda in Saddam Hussein-controlled areas.
- Rumsfeld: “I thought I said it precisely the way I wanted to. *I can't know whether, as we sit here talking, the information that was accurate when we got it is still accurate today*”  
(<http://www.defense.gov/Transcripts/Transcript.aspx?TranscriptID=3669>).

**Rumsfeld (14 November 2002):** “our understanding of the relationship between Iraq and al Qaeda is still developing. That there is no question but that there *have been interactions* between the Iraqi government, Iraqi officials, and al Qaeda operatives. They have occurred *over a span of some eight or ten years* to our knowledge. *There are currently al Qaeda in Iraq*”

(<http://www.defense.gov/Transcripts/Transcript.aspx?TranscriptID=3283>).

**Bush (2 October 2002):** “We *know* Saddam Hussein has *longstanding* and *ongoing* ties to international terrorists”

(<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021002-7.html>).

**Joint Resolution to Authorize the Use of United States Armed Forces Against Iraq (2 October 2002):** “members of al Qaida, an organization bearing responsibility for attacks on the United States, its citizens, and interests, including the attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001, are *known* to be in Iraq”

(<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021002-2.html>).

**Bush (7 October 2002):**

- “we *know* that Iraq *is continuing* to *finance* terror and gives *assistance* to groups that use terrorism to undermine Middle East peace”.
- “We *know* that Iraq and the al Qaeda terrorist network share a common enemy – the United States of America”.
- “We *know* that Iraq and al Qaeda have had high-level contacts that go back a decade. Some al Qaeda leaders who fled Afghanistan went to Iraq. These include one very senior al Qaeda leader who received medical treatment in Baghdad this year, and who has been associated with planning for chemical and biological attacks”.
- “we know that after September the 11<sup>th</sup>, Saddam Hussein's regime gleefully celebrated the terrorist attacks on America” (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021007-8.html>).

**Bush (14 October 2002):** “This is a man [Saddam Hussein] that we *know* has *had* connections with al Qaeda. This is a man who, in my judgment, *would like* to use al Qaeda as a forward army. And this is a man that we must deal with for the sake of peace, for the sake of our children's peace” (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021014-3.html>).

**Wolfowitz (16 October 2002):** “We are still assembling the picture, which we *know* is *incomplete*, of the Iraqi *relationship* with al Qaeda. If that is true about the past, think how much more true it is about the future” (<http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=295>).

**CIA (29 January 2003):** "Iraq – acting on the request of al-Qa'ida militant Abu Abdullah, who was Muhammad Atif's emissary – agreed to provide *unspecified* chemical or biological weapons training for two al-Qa'ida associates beginning in December 2000. These two individuals departed for Iraq but *did not return*, so *al-Libi was not in a position to know if any training had taken place*" (<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/serialset/creports/pdf/s108-301/sec12.pdf>).

**Powell (5 February 2003):**

- "We know that Saddam Hussein is determined to keep his weapons of mass destruction; he's determined to make more. Given Saddam Hussein's history of aggression, given what we *know* of his grandiose plans, given what we *know* of his terrorist associations and given his determination to exact revenge on those who oppose him, should we take the risk that he will not some day use these weapons at a time and the place and in the manner of his choosing at a time when the world is in a much weaker position to respond?"
- "We *know* of Zarqawi's activities in Baghdad. ... The [Zarqawi] network remains in Baghdad".
- "We *know* members of both organizations [Al-Qaeda and Iraqi Intelligence Services] met repeatedly and have met at least eight times at very senior levels since the early 1990s. In 1996, a foreign security service tells us, that bin Laden met with a senior Iraqi intelligence official in Khartoum, and later met the director of the Iraqi intelligence service" (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030205-1.html>).



**Bush (6 February 2003):** "We also *know* that *Iraq is harboring a terrorist network*, headed by a senior al Qaeda terrorist planner. The network runs a poison and explosive training center in northeast Iraq, and many of its leaders are known to be in Baghdad. The head of this network traveled to Baghdad for medical treatment and stayed for months. Nearly two dozen associates joined him there and have been operating in Baghdad for more than eight months. The same terrorist network operating out of Iraq is responsible for the murder, the recent murder, of an American citizen, an American diplomat, Laurence Foley. The same network has plotted terrorism against France, Spain, Italy, Germany, the Republic of Georgia, and Russia, and was caught producing poisons in London. *The danger Saddam Hussein poses reaches across the world*" (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/text/20030206-17.html>).

**Bush (8 February 2003):** "We also *know* that *Iraq is harboring a terrorist network* headed by a senior al Qaeda terrorist planner. This network runs a poison and explosive training camp in northeast Iraq, and many of its leaders are known to be *in Baghdad*" (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030208.html>).

**Tenet (11 February 2003):** "I don't know that [whether the Zarqawi terrorist network is under the control or sponsorship of the Iraqi government], sir, but *I know that there's a safe haven that's been provided to this network in Baghdad*. ... what we've said is *Zarqawi and this large number of operatives are in Baghdad*" (<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2006/09/20060915-4.html>).

Terrorism	<p><b>Rice (9 March 2003):</b> “The strongest link of – of Saddam Hussein to al Qaeda ... there are a lot of tantalizing meetings that – with people who were involved in 9/11. But the strongest links to al Qaeda are really two. First of all, a poisons master named Al Zakawi who has his own network in Baghdad – or in – in Iraq, not in the north of Iraq where Saddam Hussein is arguably not in control but in central Iraq ... a man who is spreading poisons throughout Europe. And secondly, a very strong link to training al Qaeda in chemical and biological weapons techniques. We <i>know</i> from a <i>detainee</i> that – the head of training for al Qaeda, that they sought help in developing chemical and biological weapons because they weren't doing very well on their own. They sought it in Iraq. <i>They received the help</i>”</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2003/03/10/ftn/main543382.shtml?tag=contentMain;contentBody">http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2003/03/10/ftn/main543382.shtml?tag=contentMain;contentBody</a>).</p>
	<p><b>Bush (15 March 2003):</b> “We <i>know</i> the Iraqi regime <i>finances and sponsors terror</i>”</p> <p>(<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/03/20030315.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/03/20030315.html</a>).</p>
	<p><b>Cheney (16 March 2003):</b> “we <i>know</i> that he has a <i>long-standing relationship</i> with various terrorist groups, <i>including the al-Qaeda organization</i>”</p> <p>(<a href="http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/bush/cheneymeetthepress.htm">http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/bush/cheneymeetthepress.htm</a>).</p>
Iraqi Threat	<p><b>Bush (10 February 2003):</b> “I <i>believe</i> that Saddam Hussein is a threat to the American people. I also <i>know</i> he's a threat to our friends and allies”</p> <p>(<a href="http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/text/20030210-10.html">http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/text/20030210-10.html</a>).</p>

<p>Prospect of Iraq Using WMD</p>	<p>NIE – Classified (1 October 2002): “He <i>probably</i> would use CBW when he perceived he irretrievably had lost control of the military and security situation, but we are unlikely to <i>know</i> when Saddam reaches that point” (<a href="http://www.fas.org/irp/cia/product/iraq-wmd-nie.pdf">http://www.fas.org/irp/cia/product/iraq-wmd-nie.pdf</a>).</p>
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