2003- OPERATION “IRAQI FREEDOM” Defense policy makers ignored the Powell Doctrine - Iraqi policy dominated by neocons in the Bush administration (Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld and Co.); Secretary of State Colin Powell and supporters were brushed aside.

1. Defense Secretary Rumsfeld’s decision to deploy a lean force in Iraq as opposed to overwhelming force

2. Weak domestic support - Initial US public support for the war quickly waned as US casualties mounted and Bush’s war objective became less clear

3. Consistent and overwhelming international disapproval of US invasion - only Britain lent significant military support, plus a few other countries whose support was symbolic

4. Bush’s war objectives were vague and constantly shifting - a) WMD; b) Democracy and human rights; c) Regime change - removal of Saddam; d) Demonstrate US resolve in the face of Saddam’s refusal to cooperate with UN inspectors; e) Liberate Iraqi people from tyranny; f) Regional security - protect moderate Arab states and oil supplies

5. No exit strategy for the US and coalition members

6. Emergence of sectarian violence following US occupation (Sunni, Shii’a, Kurds)

7. US Policy makers ignored the need to rebuild Iraqi police and military for the purpose of maintaining order following collapse of Saddam’s regime/post-conflict reconstruction

 8. Disruption of regional balance of power in Iran’s favor - US invasion raised the regional profile of an anti-American government in Teheran

 9. Staggering economic and human costs of the war - critics believe Iraqi war helped to trigger economic recession

10. Political backlash at home against Republicans and the Bush administration