

Woodward, "The War Within," pg.72)

- On August 17, 2006, "the president gathered his war council in the windowless Roosevelt Room." (pg. 88)
 - Sec. Rumsfeld and Gen. Pace attended, and "General Abizaid had joined the meeting through the secure video link, as had General Casey." (pg. 90)
 - The President asked his generals about the number of troops: "'Do we have enough manpower to do Baghdad and keep taking on al Qaeda and the Baathists?'" (pg. 93)
 - The President later characterized the meeting as "intentionally sending a message to Sec. Rumsfeld and Gen. Casey: 'If it's not working, let's do something different.'" (pg. 99)
- Before the President initiated a formal interagency Iraq strategy reevaluation process on November 10, 2006, several independent strategy reviews were taking place within the executive branch.
 - **State Department:** As early as June 2006, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice "had key staff members . . . examining the Iraq strategy and writing classified memos about their findings." (pg. 57)
 - **Department of Defense:** The "Council of Colonels": In late September, Gen. Pace "assembled the brightest military minds to study what had become of Iraq and to examine the United States' broader global challenges. . . . The group would report directly to Pace and the service chiefs every Friday afternoon." (pg. 158-59)
 - **National Security Council:** On October 1, 2006, Hadley charged a member of his staff with putting together an "operational concept" for "a new direction in Iraq." (pg. 161)
- By October 2006, Hadley had informed the military that the NSC was recommending a surge.
 - Hadley shared an NSC report with Gen. Pace: "'You're the military planners. You're running your own process. . . . All I'd ask is to consider this in your process.'" (pg. 171)

Woodward's reporting – contrary to his personal opinion – further demonstrates that during the critical stage of the decision making process – from early November 2006, when the interagency review began, until the President finally decided upon the surge – the military leadership was involved in the review process and had multiple opportunities to present views to the President through Chairman Pace and in a key meeting with the President at the Pentagon.

- The President directed the review team – which included representatives from the Department of Defense and the Joint Chiefs – to "devote themselves full-time to the assignment." The team was to meet "daily, including weekends" over a 16-day period. (pg. 207)