

**[the] management [of the war]" and "handed off a war he was losing to his national security advisor" are not supported by Woodward's own evidence.**

**In fact, President Bush was engaged with his war cabinet in the process leading up to the decision to surge troops in Iraq.**

Throughout the book, Woodward provides numerous examples demonstrating that the Iraq war was at the forefront of the President's daily activity:

- "Hadley spoke with the president every day about Iraq, and both felt increasingly uneasy." (pg. 72)
- Five days a week, the President received the Iraq Note from NSC staff, covering "casualties, bombings, military operations, and intelligence." (pg. 60)
- During meetings regarding Iraq, the President took a leading and active role, regularly asking pertinent, probing questions. (For examples, see pg. 40-41, 78, 90-99, 267-69, 270-74, 274-76, 283-84, and 286-89.)

It is evident from Woodward's own reporting that the President made the decision to surge, and he played an active role in the process leading up to that decision:

- In the spring and early summer 2006, the President asked Hadley, Sec. Rice, and others to tell him if the plan was "not working," explaining that, "I cannot in good faith send more people who might die in Iraq unless it is working." (pg. 9-10)
- In late July 2006, the President authorized Hadley to ask "Rumsfeld, Casey and Khalilzad a series of tough, detailed questions" that could "plant the seed for a full strategy review." "Go to it," the President told Hadley. In order for the session to occur, "it needed the blessing of the president." (pg. 72)
- In early December, "Hadley realized the president was going to go with the surge. It was the only option that seemed to offer a bold change. Talk of an exit seemed absurd to Bush." (pg. 264)
- During the December 9 NSC meeting, the President explained that, "I will be making the decisions, and the goal is radical action to achieve victory." (pg. 272)
- At a December 12 NSC meeting, the President explained, "'We have to do something different. . . . We have to demonstrate that we're doing something fundamentally different.' And he reminded his general, 'We've got to win.' He posed the question: 'Okay, what can you do that's fundamentally different?'" (pg. 283)
- At the December 12 NSC meeting, the President also explained that, "'U.S. presence helps to keep a lid on. . . . It buys time for the Maliki government and the Iraqi security forces. It gets the situation to a more manageable level in Baghdad. . . . A heavier presence will buy time for his government.'" (pg. 284)
- On January 6, 2007, "Bush wanted to give the new commander what he wanted and finally decided on the maximum available of five brigades." (pg. 313)

**Woodward's conclusion that the President, as sectarian violence spiked in Iraq in 2006, "rarely**