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## **The Co-Presidency of Bush and Cheney**

By Shirley Anne Warshaw

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"Warshaw rejects analyses that portray either Cheney or Karl Rove as puppet masters in favor of portraying Bush as capable in the spheres that mattered to him, where Cheney was careful not to interfere. Thoroughly researched and insightful into the complexities of both personalities, the book offers an engaging look at the most controversial presidency since Nixon's." - Walter Laqueur, Publishers Weekly

In the aftermath of the Bush presidency, Americans are still responding to disastrous domestic and foreign policies with the question: How did this happen? In this thoroughly documented work based on interviews with key White House staff and Washington insiders, Shirley Anne Warshaw, a presidential scholar and professor of political science, describes in vivid detail the mechanics of the Bush-Cheney co-presidency. One key point to emerge in the book is how Cheney created the "single executive office" within the White House, which allowed Cheney complete access to all information and discussions in the West Wing.

Yet, for all his influence, this book argues that Cheney's actions were completely sanctioned by Bush. Warshaw makes the case that Bush's authority was never hijacked, usurped, or stolen. She shows that Cheney and Bush were nothing less than co-presidents-with Bush focused on the faith-based presidency and Cheney focused on the business-friendly presidency. They each operated in their own worlds. Cheney does not intrude on Bush's world and, conversely, Bush does not intrude on Cheney's world. Bush was the compassionate part of compassionate conservatism and Cheney was the conservative, business-centered part--a perfect match.

Bush, the self-proclaimed "decider," allowed Cheney to lead in business, energy, and foreign policy, while he directed his energies toward building a moral and civil society, anchored by a war on science and the proliferation of faith-based programs. And, more often than not, this relationship proved to be mutually beneficial.

Warshaw discusses how Cheney orchestrates "the imperial presidency" using two perspectives. One perspective tracks his assertions of presidential authority that first arose during the Ford administration, where he served as White House chief of staff, and were repeated in the Minority Report of 1987, where Cheney--a member of the House Intelligence Committee--

asserted that Reagan could not be constrained by Congress in national security matters. The other perspective tracks how he and David Addington, his chief of staff, moved lawyers who supported their positions of expansive executive power into key roles in the Justice department and in Gonzales' office. Warshaw argues that without this legal structure in place, Cheney and Addington might not have been as successful in having the Justice Department sign off on their interpretations of torture.

Together, these complementary conservatives--Bush and Cheney--used their own spheres of interest to move forward a government. Warshaw demonstrates in vivid detail how the great bulk of policy decisions, however, were focused in the vice president's office. With chapters on Cheney's control of transition planning, focus on energy and regulatory policy, expansion of presidential powers, and orchestration of the war in Iraq, Warshaw convincingly concludes that the vice president's office ultimately controlled the legacy of the Bush administration. Any investigations of possible government wrongdoing in its anti-terror policies or otherwise will be forced to take this book into account.

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