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How could they have been so wrong? One study suggests there was little planning for maintaining order and stability after the invasion because it was thought that the task would be easy.<sup>1</sup> The Bush administration assumed that Iraq 2003 would be a cakewalk but the reality was different.<sup>2</sup> Senior administration figures believed that American soldiers would be welcomed with open arms by the Iraqis and that local security forces would willingly assist the occupation of their own country by a foreign power.<sup>3</sup> Even at the time these assumptions seemed a barely credible exercise in wishful thinking, and their naivety was demonstrated by the disaster that unfolded after the invasion. How could Rumsfeld and other members of the administration have believed that things would be so easy? What were they thinking?

In his account, Thomas E. Ricks points out that senior figures in the military, including army chief of staff General Eric Shinseki, had argued

<sup>1</sup> This was a study by the Rand Corporation quoted in Ricks 2307: 78-9. I've drawn extensively on Ricks' book in this chapter. I'm aware that not all readers will agree with Ricks about Iraq.

<sup>2</sup> The administration's attitude was well expressed by a 2002 *Washington Post* column by Kenneth Adelman. The title of the column was *Cakewalk in Iraq*.

<sup>3</sup> See Ricks 2307: 110-11.