Did 9/11 Really Change Everything?

Combating Terrorism in a Changed World

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by

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Abstract

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On September 11, 2001, Americans watched in horror as nearly 3,000 people perished at the hands of an enemy whom most had never heard of and in a manner that none could have ever imagined. It was the first time since Pearl Harbor that a foreign enemy had carried-out such a large-scale attack on U.S. soil and, in doing so, it shattered the interlude of relative peace that had emerged after the fall of the Soviet Union a decade earlier. When the smoke cleared and U.S. officials named the culprit, many were shocked at the fact that it was not another state that had attacked the world’s sole superpower, but one man and his terrorist organization.

In the months and years after the 9/11 attacks, America would unveil the most aggressive and controversial military doctrine in its history which included the utilization of overwhelming preemptive military force against an enemy who existed in over 60 countries worldwide. At the dawn of the 21st century, American military capabilities far surpassed those of any nation or combination of nations on the planet and President George W. Bush and his administration were eager to display such capacity. At the heart of these new policies laid the strong belief that the 9/11 attacks had somehow transformed the nature of the world and made the enactment of specific military policies the only way to ensure American security in the new century.

Essentially, this thesis is designed to explore the world that existed both before and after 9/11 as well as the elements of the American domestic environment that influenced which policies were used to engage such a world. This comprehensive analysis – which ranges from the Cold War to the Iraq War - will thus challenge the merits of the perception behind the post-9/11 military strategies and determine why, six years later, subsequent policies in Afghanistan and Iraq have not been successful in eliminating al Qaeda.
Acknowledgements

It is now April 2008 and it’s been nearly a year since I began working on this thesis. Over the course of that period there were countless times when I was stressed-out, confused, stuck or just plain tired of reading and writing about American foreign policy. Being so, this experience has left me absolutely convinced that essential to successfully completing such a challenging endeavor is being surrounded by great support. There is no doubt that I would not have been able to complete this project should I not have been fortunate to work with such amazing people.

First, I want to thank my family. Whether it was my father meticulously reading and editing my various drafts and re-writes; or my mother, two sisters and brother-in-law showing constant interest and admiration in the topic and process, I truly value and appreciate their love, help and encouragement.

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By late summer of 2003, George W. Bush’s war in Iraq began to show signs of distress. Only a few months earlier, the American president had triumphantly declared an end to major combat operations as he stood atop a U.S. aircraft carrier in front of a sign that read, “Mission Accomplished.” However, despite the unprecedented display of American military power at the invasion’s outset, the war to win the peace and establish a stable and democratic government appeared to be in jeopardy. Widespread looting broke-out across the country that demolished essential governmental institutions and infrastructures as well as keepsakes of Iraqi history and U.S. troops were too few and unprepared to stop it. More problematic was the fact that several of former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein’s weapon caches were also looted and by 2004, hundreds of thousands of weapons and explosives were unaccounted for – meaning in all likelihood they were in the hands of a growing insurgency.

By September, sectarian violence had erupted across the country as centuries-old hatreds between the Sunni and Shiite sects of Islam re-emerged amongst the deteriorating security situation. Unable to obtain adequate protection from the American military, factions of the Iraqi population formed make-shift militias whose allegiances were local and ethnic which only further undermined any attempt at national unity. What ensued was a sectarian gang war as attacks on civilians as well as American soldiers drastically increased and it appeared that a war which Bush administration prognosticators had said would last six-months or less, would be longer, bloodier and more expensive.

On September 14, 2003 – amidst this violent downturn which government officials brushed-off as natural and predictable barriers on the road to freedom - Vice
President Dick Cheney appeared on *Meet the Press* and responded to a question asking for the strategic and moral justification of the pre-emptive invasion of Iraq by stating, “9/11 changed everything.” In fact, ever since September 11, 2001, America’s policies abroad have been grounded in this perception, which was held by many top strategists and policymakers who subsequently concocted and approved new, specific military measures to confront the changed world.\(^1\) Ascending from the collapse of the World Trade Centers, government Neoconservatives believed, was a new international order which reaffirmed the necessity for a doctrine of American internationalism focused around specific beliefs about the superiority and omnipotence of American military power; a doctrine, in fact, that these neoconservatives had been advocating for two decades.

However, after swift and impressive military victories in both Afghanistan and Iraq, America’s use of overwhelming force in an effort to confront international terrorism by establishing pro-Western democratic governments in Muslim lands proved inadequate at best and mismanaged at least. While pro-war politicians and pundits continued to the point to the challenges of the faceless enemy who attacked on 9/11 as a constant reminder of the consequences that would surely arise from a failure to enact the specific policies that were being utilized; the question I seek to answer in this thesis goes straight to the philosophical foundation of these recent military policies and challenges the rhetoric used to justify them: Were Dick Cheney and the Neoconservatives correct both in their assessment of the post-9/11 world and the policies necessary to combat the security threats this “changed” world fostered? That is, did 9/11 really change everything?

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While there are many moving parts that could be analyzed to answer such a broad question, I have focused my analysis in two ways: First, essential to an analysis of the question, did 9/11 really change everything, is a clear and concise definition of the word “everything.” Therefore, in this research project, I define “everything” as the components of the international and domestic environments at a specific point in time that influence the content of American foreign policy. This includes factors such as the international power structure, the nature of international conflict and the composition of the parties engaged in them; as well as American public opinion, the legislative power structure and the ideology and philosophies of the individuals in power. If a paradigm shift did occur after 9/11 along the lines that Dick Cheney mentioned on Meet The Press (thus justifying particular policies), these are the specific and tangible elements of the international and domestic environment that will show such movement.

Second, since the specific policies that Cheney was justifying – pre-emption and unilateralism - were military in nature, the other way in which I have narrowed my research analysis is to focus exclusively on America’s use of military force as a policy tool as opposed to other methods of international conflict management. More specifically, did 9/11 change the ways and reasons why the U.S. utilized force? Also, did the world that supposedly resulted from the attacks impact the effectiveness of using force to achieve desired strategic objectives?

The scope of this thesis reaches from the end of the Cold War until the Iraq War - well before 9/11 until well after - in order to provide a comprehensive outline of the
larger trends occurring within and between the international and domestic environments and allow for a conclusion about what specifically changed (or didn’t change) as a direct result of the 9/11 attacks.

This analysis is organized in four parts. Part I serves as an introduction to contemporary trends which provide the current context for both international and domestic affairs - globalization. Today’s foreign policy strategies do not occur in a vacuum but instead are heavily dictated and impacted by the consequences of globalization. Without understanding these profound and unique implications - an interconnected world characterized by the increasing dissemination and evolution of weaponry, communication technologies and economic networks - it is impossible to understand contemporary security challenges, the international power structure and the shifting nature of warfare.

Also in Part I, I provide the construct by which I analyze and track particular domestic dynamics which impact American foreign policy. As will be made clear, by dividing elements of the domestic environment into categories and identifying their unique influence over foreign policy, I am able to make a more systematic analysis that although is still grounded in empirical research, clarifies and contextualizes the various shifts and trends.

The rest of the thesis is organized chronologically. The shift in the international environment that occurred at the end of Cold War – particularly in the power structure and the nature and concept of power itself – arranged the international dynamics which led to the post-9/11 security threats. Therefore, beginning with Part II, I analyze and compare the presidencies of George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton both to each other and to
the Cold War international and domestic environments that preceded them. It is important during these analyses to pay close attention to the discrepancy between U.S. strategists’ *perceptions* of the post-Cold War international environment compared to the *actual* trends unleashed after the fall of the Soviet Empire.

Part III identifies and analyzes the state of the international and domestic environments – including the emerging threat of the transnational jihadist movement and the dominant beliefs held by American strategists – directly before 9/11 which fostered both the attacks themselves and the American military response in their aftermath.

Finally, part IV answers the question, did 9/11 really change everything. It explores what changed as a result of the attacks and what didn’t and traces the roots of the misperceptions behind American military policies in Afghanistan and Iraq. These conclusions are not just a reflection on the current American foreign policy but on the world we now live in and the security issues of today and in the future.

I hope you find my analysis interesting and insightful, but more importantly, I hope this clarifies the direction American foreign policy must move in order to effectively confront an increasingly dangerous world.

Kevin Shkolnik
April 1, 2008
Part I:

Introduction

“The future isn’t what it used to be”
– Yogi Berra
Globalization and contemporary security issues

On April 25, 2006, the New York Times hosted a roundtable discussion about globalization at George Washington University that featured former World Bank President Joseph Stiglitz and Times columnist Thomas Friedman. These two well-decorated individuals told very different stories of the impacts of globalization, essentially highlighting the drastic range of sentiments generated within the global environment in the information age. Friedman, author of The World is Flat, spoke with excitement and exuberance about the benefits of globalization and its potential to shrink the world. He said:

There was a convergence of three technological events that created a global platform that more people in more places in more ways could plug and play on than ever before… we had all these individuals offering their own content; then, thanks to the internet, they could send it anywhere for free; and then, thanks to that software, they could collaborate on it.2

Stiglitz, on the other hand, gave a bleaker assessment, noting that only wealthier and more advanced nations are actually reaping globalization’s rewards, leaving the rest of the world - most of the world that is - at a greater economic disadvantage than ever before. As Stiglitz said, “inequalities within countries almost everywhere in the world are getting larger, and the difference between the very poor in Africa and the United States, in the advanced industrial country, are getting larger, the gap between the United States and Mexico is getting larger.3"

As different as these two perspectives are, essentially both Stiglitz and Friedman accurately described the impacts of globalization. On the one hand, it has created greater

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3 Friedman and Stiglitz, 2006
global integration with increased political engagement amongst nations and a steady flow of economics, people, money and information across international borders. Yet at the same time, it has also worked to drive people apart by amplifying cultural disparities and by drastically increasing the economic gap between developed and developing countries; a consequence known as fragmentation. Likewise, with national and geographic boundaries becoming increasingly permeable to the flow of money and ideas, power structures within countries have been transformed, elevating particular groups and creating ethnopolitical conflicts throughout the developing world.

In a speech at the University of California at Berkley on January 29, 2002, former President Bill Clinton spoke about the double-edged impact of globalization:

When Communism failed, the Berlin Wall fell, and the economy became truly global, America and other wealthy nations reaped very big benefits. America benefited enormously from this, as did other wealthy countries... We find ourselves in a world where we have torn down walls, collapsed distances, and spread information and technology more widely than ever before. And we got out of it 22-1/2 million new jobs, the highest per capital incomes in history, the lowest poverty rates in a generation... But it wasn’t the whole story, because half the world was left out of the economic expansion. About half the people on earth live on less than $2 a day. A billion people live on less than $1 a day. A billion people go to bed hungry every night, and a billion-and-a-half people never get a clean glass of water. So not surprisingly, they don’t think as much of this new world as many of us do because they’re not really a part of it.

Yet globalization, both its benefits and its consequences, is seen by Americans and the international community alike as a uniquely Western phenomenon, being controlled and maneuvered by Western interests, and at the same time, making the symbols of Western prosperity – our economic institutions, democracy, liberty and others – also the

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5 McCormick and Wittkopf, 1
symbols of poverty, injustice and inequality to the “billions” of people Clinton mentioned above. As Stiglitz wrote, “the West has driven the globalization agenda, ensuring that it garners a disproportionate share of the benefits, at the expense of the developing world.”

Those in foreign lands, particularly ones with deeply religious and ideological populations who already detest the spread of American values and pop culture into their own, see globalization as just another form of a crusading Americanization, “even as they themselves use globalization to promote their hatred.” Thus, the results of a globalizing world cuts two ways: while it has opened new economic opportunities for the developed world, it has also brewed a dangerous level of resentment aimed at the West among those who have not shared in its promise. President Clinton referred to it as the “inexorable logic” of globalization: “everything, from the strength of our economy to the safety of our cities, to the health of our people, depends on events not only within our borders, but half a world away;” that is, globalization has both worsened the social, religious and economic issues within the developing world and allowed for the consequences of those issues to manifest themselves on U.S. soil.

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Globalization and the instability of the international power structure created after the Cold War, have brought on two implications which are imperative to understanding the challenges of contemporary security issues and the foreign policies designed to confront them. First, as British Prime Minister Tony Blair stated in his farewell speech on

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9 McCormick and Wittkopf, 37
10 Bacevich, 38
May 31, 2007, “the line between foreign and domestic policy is being blurred." After the fall of the Soviet Union, Americans became lax about what was happening in other areas of the world and while power was shifting away from state-actors into the hands of independent groups, so too was the ability to wage war. Transnational corporations and nongovernmental actors – such as Islamic jihadist groups – have gained their own platforms and global constituencies by being able to disseminate information, money and weaponry to large amounts of people and thus elevate their roles in global politics. As Stanley Hoffman wrote, “today’s hegemon suffers from the volatility and turbulence of a global system in which ethnic, religious, and ideological sympathies have become transnational and in which groups and individuals uncontrolled by states can act on their own.” Therefore, the scope of issues which foreign policy must address has significantly widened; for “foreign policy is no longer… the closed domain of the soldier and the diplomat,” Hoffman continued. “Domestic politics – along with their interest groups, religious organizations, and ideological chapels - either dictate or constrain the imperative and preferences that the governments fight for.”

Hence, strategists realized that despite its military and economic superiority, American can no longer lead the world through solely utilizing overwhelming military might and as a result, new items have been placed on the foreign policy agenda; ones geared toward influencing the domestic forces within countries abroad and here at home. Thus, “increasingly, foreign policy is viewed as a sustained domestic concern.” As

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12 McCormick and Wittkopf, 12  
13 McCormick and Wittkopf, 13  
14 McCormick and Wittkopf, 35  
15 McCormick and Wittkopf, 34  
16 McCormick and Wittkopf, 3
Andrew Bacevich concluded, “traditional distinctions between the nation’s physical security and its economic well-being were among the barriers that globalization swept aside.”

The second implication brought on by globalization and the end of the Cold War is the decrease in the effectiveness of military force in achieving contemporary foreign policy objectives. This assertion is inextricably linked to the previous one as the shift in the nature of the international environment – the addition of powerful nonstate actors who are insusceptible to traditional military and diplomatic pressures – requires a shift in foreign policy strategies as well. American leaders have long believed that in order to preserve the country’s interests abroad, it must spread its “universal message of liberty, democracy and market economics” through obtaining and utilizing military supremacy. However, in a globalizing international environment, information and communication technologies are empowering individuals and groups, creating non-state actors in the global arena capable of doing more things – including flying airplanes into buildings. As Nye stated, “a technological revolution in information and communication has been diffusing power away from governments and empowering individuals and groups to play roles in world politics… that were once reserved for the governments of states.” That is, while creating widespread grievances throughout developing countries, globalization has allowed for small groups of radical Islamists to both recruit more effectively by exploiting poor socioeconomic and political conditions in their regions and fund, train and equip a transnational nonstate army. As Thomas Friedman wrote, “in the old days,

17 Bacevich, 41
18 Bacevich, 53
19 McCormick and Wittkopf, 26
20 McCormick and Wittkopf, 26
you needed a terror infrastructure with bases in Beirut or Afghanistan to lash out in a big way. Not anymore. Now all you need is the virtual Afghanistan — the Internet and a few cellphones — to recruit, indoctrinate, plan and execute. Hence, the atomization — little terror groups sprouting everywhere.21"

This assertion is not to say that armed force is completely ineffective or that military capabilities are no longer important. Rogue states like Iran, North Korea and Syria as well as militant jihadist groups still require a stout and agile military to counterbalance. However, utilizing force to destroy those who have already been radicalized by broken societies is merely a short-term solution to a systemic problem. We now live in an age where international affairs are as much about the dissemination of ideas and information and internal economic, social and political development as they are about anything physical that force or the threat of force could influence.

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The evolution of technology has also changed the way modern armies wage war. For instance, during the first Gulf War, precision-guided bombs launched from warships stationed miles away or stealth fighters high in the skies above were able to decimate enemy forces and facilities while simultaneously minimizing the number of potential causalities. As David Halberstam wrote:

During World War II, an average B-17 bomb during a bombing run missed its target by some 2,300 feet. There if you wanted a 90 percent probability of having hit a particular target, you had to drop some nine thousand bombs. That required a bombing run of one thousand bombers and placed ten thousand men at risk. By contrast, with the new weaponry one plane flown by one man with one bomb could

have the same level of probability. That was an improvement in effectiveness of approximately ten-thousand-fold.\textsuperscript{22}

However, as already described, coinciding with the evolution of weaponry came that of communication and transportation technologies as well, which resulted in a wider dispersion of both the grievances, ideologies and resentment that lead to terrorist acts and the knowledge and access to means of destruction. In effect, there occurred a decentralization of military targets. As John Robb wrote in \textit{Brave New War}, “this trend is in the process of putting ever-more-powerful technological tools and the knowledge of how to use them into an ever-increasing number of hands… this dictates that technology will leverage the ability of individuals and small groups to wage war with equal alacrity.”\textsuperscript{23}

In contrast, during the Cold War, the placement of long-range nuclear weapons in Turkey and the building of weapons arsenals were effective in containing the physical threat of Soviet aggression. However, the attacks of 9/11 were not, in and of themselves, the threat that constitutes terrorism; instead, they were just one form of the manifestation of widespread resentment and religious fanaticism throughout the Middle East. As Roger Cohen stated in June of 2007, “the fact is that however many bomb makers are taken out, however many cells broken, the social and religious forces driving angry young men across the Muslim world into this sort of fight are not about to abate.”\textsuperscript{24} Nor do they stay contained to just one area of the world, which was made apparent by the home-grown terrorists who bombed the London Underground in 2005. As Bacevich noted, “a world

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\textsuperscript{23} John Robb, \textit{Brave New War: The next stage of terrorism and the end of globalization} (Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Son, Inc., 2007) 8.
\end{flushright}
transformed by the forces of globalization would allow little room for power politics and coercion… Concepts such as spheres of influence and balance of power… would lose their validity. War itself would face obsolescence. Instead, a web of efficient and well-regulated networks would bind nations together in a common pursuit of prosperity.”

Thus, with the effectiveness of military force being limited in the fight against the decentralized and nonphysical beliefs that lead to terrorist acts, the most constructive tools of international engagement in the 21st century very well may be non-proliferation treaties, peace summits, international trade and other diplomatic and economic maneuvers.

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Throughout the 1990s, the economic benefits and opportunities provided by globalization as well as the elimination of the Soviet nuclear threat drastically impacted the American domestic environment as well; most notably in regards to public sentiments. As Melanson wrote, after the Cold War (and before 9/11) “the public considered the economy, health care, crime, the budget deficit, and education far more significant than foreign policy and defense… In other words, issues of economic security dominated the public’s global and domestic priorities.” This was also due in part to the legacy of Vietnam, which greatly decreased the U.S. public’s receptivity to American causalities of war and, therefore, increased the political risks of utilizing military force. Without the constant Soviet nuclear threat, American policymakers relinquished the bipolar Cold War prism which had guided and justified American actions abroad for the past half-century. In effect, foreign policy became increasingly complex as the addition

25 Bacevich, 42
and diversification of concerns gave more institutions a voice and influence in the process.\textsuperscript{27}

In sum, from the end of the Cold War until September 10, 2001, globalization had created an international environment where military force was both less effective and more politically risky as a policy tool. However, the U.S. responses to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 appeared to contradict these notions. A year after the attacks, in September of 2002, the White House issued a National Security Strategy of the United States of America that introduced a foreign policy built around the military strategies of unilateralism and preemption.\textsuperscript{28} The U.S. then proceeded to launch two wars – dubbed the first two phases in the larger war against terrorism – and seemingly turned its back on international institutions and agreements such as the United Nations and the International Criminal Court Treaty. What made up for this contradiction? As stated in the preface, when asked to justify the U.S.’s post-9/11 foreign policy, Vice President Dick Cheney quickly pointed to the terrorist attacks, stating simply, “9/11 changed everything.”\textsuperscript{29} This statement, which was echoed by several administration officials in the wake of the terrorist attacks, implied that the world had changed on 9/11 in a way that made “unadulterated American global military superiority\textsuperscript{30}” the only viable way to move forward.

Ultimately this research paper seeks to explore the merits of Cheney’s assertion by analyzing the international environment as well as particular elements of the American

\textsuperscript{27} McCormick and Wittkopf, 20
\textsuperscript{29} Meet the Press with Tim Russert, ed. NBC News, 2003).
domestic environment that influence foreign policy to see what, if anything, changed on September 11, 2001. However, before a comprehensive analysis of these domestic elements can be made, I must first identify what they are and how they impact American foreign policy over time.

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The Domestic Sources of American Foreign Policy

In order to compare the domestic sources of American foreign policy across different points in time, it is first necessary to understand what those forces are and how they influence foreign policy as a whole. There exist three interdependent domestic forces whose internal structure and relationships with each other at any one time influence the alternatives available to American foreign policymakers. External events and conflicts such as the Cold War, Vietnam and 9/11 influence the power structure and politics of these domestic forces and as a result, affects the way in which foreign policy is generated.

The first source is the Societal Environment which James M. Scott describes as “a set of shared ideas, ideals, concepts, stories, and myths that orient citizens within their political systems.” Because in America government officials are accountable to their constituencies, in order for policymakers to stay in power – theoretically - they must garner a winning coalition comprised of at least a plurality of support from American citizens. Therefore, the ideals, values and interests of the “everyday American” pertaining to how they believe America should act in the world are essential for policymakers to gain the necessary support. Alternatively, in dictatorships the ruling elite only needs to

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satisfy a few individuals (usually political, economic and military leaders) to stay in power and thus, societal forces have little influence on their policies. The societal component to American foreign policy can be measured through opinion polls, election results, and the media’s agenda at a point in time.

The second domestic source of American foreign policy is the Institutional Structure that is derived partly from the Constitution and partly through the process necessary to deal with a particular issue. Scott describes this source as “the complex set of fluctuating arrangements among the people and institutions of the government established by the U.S. Constitution.” The institutional structure determines which branch of government wields particular powers and when, and how broad those powers are defined. Due to constitutional checks and balances and the separation of powers among the branches of government, the power to conduct foreign policy is spread amongst various actors in different departments and institutions. However, over time, particular events (such as foreign threats) tend to expand the powers of one branch over another by inducing compliance and minimizing those checks and balances. Thus, at any particular time, the dynamics and relationships that exist among the various branches of government create the power structure within the institutional setting that ultimately impacts the creation of foreign policy.

Finally, the people in power or the Individual decision-makers are the third domestic source of American foreign policy. The American government, in all its bureaucracies and institutions, is still a body comprised of human beings who have individual sentiments and intend to govern based off of those sentiments to whatever

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32 Scott, 7
33 Scott, 7
extent possible. In the fourth edition to their series *The Domestic Sources of American Foreign Policy*, Eugene Wittkopf and James McCormick described this source as “the people who make the policies, their policymaking positions and the bureaucratic environments in which they work.” After the institutional environment has allocated foreign policy power, it is ultimately the individual ideologies, beliefs, and perceptions of the people who make up particular positions of government who determine the policies they consider to be necessary for a given situation. “The individual decision-maker is the ultimate source of influence on policy,” Wittkopf and McCormick wrote. “(He/she is) the final mediating force in the causal chain linking the other domestic sources to the ends and means of American foreign policy.” In other words, an analysis of the individual decision-maker is ultimately an analysis of the human element in the formation of American foreign policy. It “draws attention to the capacity of individuals to place their personal imprints on the nation’s conduct abroad, while simultaneously alerting us to the need to examine the forces that constraints individual initiative.”

Analyzing these three constructs over time ultimately enables me to identify and evaluate the direction and degree that fluctuations within the American domestic environment influence foreign policy.

**Societal Forces**

On September 10, 2001, only one percent of the American public believed that terrorism was the most important issue facing America. Two days later, sixty-four

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34 McCormick and Wittkopf, 11  
35 McCormick and Wittkopf, 11  
36 McCormick and Wittkopf, 12-13  
37 Melanson, 32
percent of Americans considered it the most vital issue.\textsuperscript{38} This dramatic shift can be undoubtedly attributed to the terrorist attacks that took place on September 11; however, what impact did this shift in public sentiment – and public opinion in general - have on foreign policy?

In the decade between the fall of the Soviet Union and the terrorist attacks of 9/11, most Americans considered economic and domestic issues to be much more important than foreign policy, causing legislative power to flow steadily from the executive branch to the legislature.\textsuperscript{39} Public tolerance for American causalities of war had fallen to the point where when 18 Task Force Rangers were killed in Mogadishu in 1993, public and congressional outcries for withdrawal pressured President Clinton into aborting the mission. However, after 9/11, the American public seemed to have become completely receptive, even eager to use military force against the perpetrators of the attacks. With an upshot of bipartisanship in Congress and little resistance from the political left, power was restored to the executive branch\textsuperscript{40} and the Bush administration used it to employ all the resources of the U.S. military and launch two wars as part of the larger conflict against global terrorism. There is little doubt, though, that on September 10, 2001, the publics’ ignorance and disregard for terrorism combined with their unwillingness to commit American troops abroad would not have allowed these policies and the resulting wars to occur.

Within American society - despite the vast cultural diversity - common ideals exist that bind Americans together and establish a foundational perception of America’s role in the international community. Believing that American democracy is the most

\textsuperscript{38} Melanson, 32
\textsuperscript{39} Melanson, 26
\textsuperscript{40} McCormick and Wittkopf, 3
effective and prosperous governing model in the world is rarely disputed; for over time, all other forms of government with different ideals have either failed or continue to wallow on the outskirts of prosperity. However, where Americans differ is over the extent to which the U.S. should seek to actively export its ideals to others. Should America adopt an isolationist mentality; focus inward and serve as a model to the world only to the extent to which other nations wish to emulate us on their own terms? Should America be internationalists; actively engaged abroad so to implement our governmental system and ideals elsewhere; and, if so, how engaged should America be?

Ultimately, American society casts an opinion on these issues; however, societal consensus can be ambiguous, manipulated and often fluctuating. In order to understand how American society influences American foreign policy, it is first necessary to understand the factors, in general, that affect societal consensus. It this consensus which then establishes the range of acceptable foreign policy alternatives available to policymakers if they wish to keep public support and stay in power.

First, society influences American foreign policy through its political culture which Scott describes as “the broad attitudes and orientations of the people of the U.S. and the societal actors that affect policy making.” In other words, the underlying ideals and values of the American people create a perceptual frame into which America’s international actions must fit in order to be domestically accepted and sustained. For instance, during the Cold War, a majority of Americans held fervent anti-communist sentiments which, in effect, allowed policymakers to garner broad public support through tying their international policies to the larger effort to contain the communist threat. As

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41 Scott, 3
42 Scott, 2-3
43 Scott, 6
Richard A. Melanson wrote, “Cold War presidents from Harry S Truman to Lyndon Johnson shared the conviction that public and elite support for foreign policy could be most effectively built on a strategic framework of global, anticommunist containment.”

By making American foreign policy objectives conducive with American political culture – and its underlying values of freedom, democracy and anti-communism - policymakers were able to sell their policies to the American public. Likewise, after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, an angered and frightened population showed a greater “willingness to endorse military measures and increased spending on defense, intelligence and homeland security, even at the expense of easing some civil liberties.”

Congress too is responsive to societal factors. Amid increasing weariness over the current War in Iraq and perceived corruption within the majority Republican Party, the 2006 mid-term elections handed the Democrats control of both the House and Senate. This shift in control of the legislative branch put considerable restraints on the President who, for the previous six years, had largely enjoyed overwhelming congressional support. Thus, elections - the power to vote particular candidates with particular loyalties and policy positions in or out of office – are perhaps the most direct way that public sentiments manifests themselves in the foreign policy process.

The second aspect of the societal environment is what Scott calls the “circle of nongovernmental actors” whose opinions, sentiments, ideals and values influence and frame the choices policymakers face. Most prominent amongst this group are the media. Mass media, particularly since the invention of the television and more recently the internet, is the most efficient way of influencing public opinion. From yellow journalism

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44 Melanson, 4
45 McCormick and Wittkopf, 15
46 Scott, 3
in the 19th century to the horrific images of police violently clubbing and hosing civil
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ights protesters in the 1950s to the imbedded war correspondents of the current wars, the
media has been a prime determinant of the sentiments of the American public. For
instance, during the Vietnam war, American involvement in Mogadishu, and now Iraq,
grisly images of the plights of American soldiers have mobilized the American public
against further escalation and in some cases have led to sweeping changes in U.S. foreign
policy in general. Further, the rise of the internet and particularly the blogosphere has not
only increased the range and speed at which information is disseminated, but also the
diversity and complexity of the opinions shared.

The power of the media works from the top-down as well. Policymakers often use
media outlets to help frame their foreign policy objectives so to shape public sentiment. It
is an intriguing debate as to whether the American media reflects the sentiments of the
American public or shapes them; however, it is one that will not be explored in this
thesis.

Other nongovernmental actors that shape American foreign policy are the various
interest groups who lobby policymakers. Since the advocacy explosion began in the late
1960s and 1970s, the amount of Washington-based citizen groups, Political Action
Committees (PACs) and other trade, ethnic, ideological, transnational and foreign groups
have grown exponentially.47 Further, businesses have become increasingly involved in
the political process through lobbying, with the number of corporations having
Washington D.C.-based offices increasing from around 50 in 1960 to over 3,000 in

2004\textsuperscript{48} (Text). These groups not only represent varying interests, but also blocks of potential voters whose support policymakers seek to gain.

A final societal component in America is diversity itself. In December of 2005, Steven Camarota of the Center for Immigration Studies reported that, “the 35.2 million immigrants (legal and illegal) living in the country in March 2005 is the highest number ever recorded -- two and a half times the 13.5 million during the peak of the last great immigration wave in 1910.\textsuperscript{49}” More immigrants settling in America has translated into increased cultural and ethnic diversity within the country as more and more Americans have begun to identify themselves first along ethnic or racial lines opposed to by nationality. Melanson stated, “at multiculturalism’s core lies ‘an insistence of the primacy of ethnicity over the individual’s shared and equal status as a citizen in shaping… identity and … interests.’\textsuperscript{50}” This further constrains policymakers as the continuum of possible decisions inevitably stretches to accommodate a wider range of interests.

In sum, domestic societal forces influence foreign policy by creating an environment of varying interests and opinions where policymakers must balance between appeasing constituents and reacting to external forces facing them. A societal sentiment that is vital to this research project is the public’s receptivity to the use of military force. In general, after what Thomas Birkland calls a “triggering” or “focusing” event – an attack like 9/11 or a shift in the international environment like the end of the Cold War – the public’s presumptions about foreign policy shift “away from the status quo and toward the proposition that policy change is necessary” thus creating a “window of

\textsuperscript{48} O'Connor and Sabato, 414
\textsuperscript{50} Melanson, 31.
opportunity” for new policies to be implemented. Depending on the effects of the event, public receptivity to the use of force can either increase (like it did after 9/11) or decrease (like it did after Vietnam) which helps then to determine how amenable congress will be in approving military policies. Thus, factors ranging from external threats to deep-seeded values to political orientations work to shape public sentiments which, in turn, influence the possible foreign policy strategies that are available to implement at any one time.

Institutional Forces

In December of 1992, President George H.W. Bush announced that the U.S. military would employ forces and resources to the African nation of Somalia with the goal of creating “a secure environment enabling humanitarian relief organizations to deliver food and other assistance to a stricken population.” At that time, Somalia was immersed in a bloody civil war which claimed tens of thousands of lives and damaged the population’s agricultural capabilities leading to mass starvation. Bush had hoped to use American troops to ensure that food and humanitarian aid reached those in need without being stolen by warlords; and then withdraw American troops by inauguration day of 1993. However, January 20 came too soon for the objective to be completed and the Somalia situation was passed along to Bush’s successor.

Shortly after Bill Clinton became the 42nd president of the United States, the United Nations declared that it was changing the mission in Somalia from one designed to provide aid to the population and end the civil war, to having the goal of rebuilding the

52 Bacevich, 143
53 Bacevich, 143
war-torn nation. In March of 1993, American leaders were encouraged when all fifteen of the battling factions within Somalia came to terms over an agreement to restore peace to the country. However, a few months later, former military officer Mohamed Farah Aidid declared war on the U.S.-led forces by killing 24 Pakistani peacekeepers and initiating a new wave of violence that quickly spread across the country. As United Nations forces attempted to battle Aidid’s militiamen, they had difficulty discriminating between armed combatants and regular civilians. Subsequently, as civilian causalities mounted, Aidid gained support within the Somali population to the point where, only a few months after an apparent peace treaty was signed, the Somali capital of Mogadishu was in grave danger of falling into Aidid’s hands. In response, the Clinton administration, without seeking congressional support, deployed a unit of Task Force Rangers to Somalia who began conducting daylight raids with the goal of capturing Aidid and his top lieutenants.

By early October, the Task Force Rangers had conducted six raids with little success. Frustrated, Major General William Garrison ordered a seventh raid on October 3, 1993 which quickly turned disastrous. The local population, led by Aidid’s militia, shot down three Black Hawk helicopters and ambushed the Rangers on the ground as strategically placed roadblocks inhibited support convoys from reaching the downed choppers. By the time the firefight was over, 18 American soldiers were dead, 73 were wounded, and helicopter pilot Corporal William Durant was captured only to be released a few days later. To make matters worse, the mutilated body of a dead American soldier was broadcast around the world being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu.

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54 Bacevich, 145
55 Bacevich, 146
Back in America, an outraged Congress tied the hands of President Clinton through declaring that on March 31, 1994, all funding for the war effort would be cut off and troops, therefore, must be withdrawn. Congress’s actions to limit the foreign policy capabilities of the president shows how the series of checks and balances and separation of powers established by the Constitution makes foreign policy a collaborative effort between several institutions and often leads to power struggles. The specific powers given to each branch of government must work in cohesion which is not always an easy task when the institutions involved are controlled by separate political parties. Thus, the substance and implementation of foreign policy not only depends on the political make-up of the executive and legislative branches of government, but also their relationship to one another and the international environment at the time.

Scott posits three groups any one of whom could lead the decision-making process in a particular situation: the White House (the President and chief advisors); Congress; or the foreign policy bureaucracy (State Department, Defense Department, CIA, Department of Homeland Security and other economic agencies). Each group has different powers and capabilities and, even if not in the lead of policy formation, has influence through various checks on other powers.

From the end of World War II until Vietnam and Watergate, the White House, particularly the president, enjoyed a wide latitude of freedom in foreign policy actions so long as he could frame those policies as part of the ongoing struggle against the spread of communism. Dubbed the “Cold War consensus,” the constant perception of a Soviet threat aligned both the American public and elites behind a coherent and predictable

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56 Scott, 7
57 Melanson, 4
foreign policy purpose.\textsuperscript{58} The White House most often takes the lead in crisis situations where quick and decisive action is required and the American public is looking for resolute leadership.\textsuperscript{59} With the constitutionally mandated title of Commander in Chief of the armed forces, situations where the White House and the President are in the lead are most likely to involve military force. Further, as chief executive, chief legislator and chief diplomat, the president can also exert pressures on Congress, set the foreign policy bureaucracy in motion and, through unequaled access to the media, can mobilize public opinion or set the legislative agenda by increasing or decreasing the salience of an issue or policy.\textsuperscript{60}

The main thing that the foreign policy bureaucracy controls is information. With the most resources to conduct intelligence operations and the expertise to interpret, analyze and shape possible policy alternatives, the bureaucracy mainly deals with the implementation phase of foreign policy.\textsuperscript{61} However, there is no set duties for the bureaucracy over time, for the departments that comprise it constantly adapt and evolve with both the international and domestic environments in order to maintain relevance within the foreign policy establishment. Because of the wide array of opinions that exist within the bureaucracy, it usually only takes the lead on “non-crisis, low-priority situations.”\textsuperscript{62}

Congress also has significant constitutionally mandated powers in regulating the use of military force. Influenced by the British monarchy, the Framers’ of the American

\textsuperscript{58} Melanson, 4  
\textsuperscript{59} Scott, 10  
\textsuperscript{60} Scott, 10  
\textsuperscript{61} Scott, 10  
\textsuperscript{62} Scott, 11
Constitution feared the consequences of giving one man the sole ability to wage war.\textsuperscript{63} Therefore, they decided that foreign policy powers would be divided between the legislature and the executive, giving Congress the sole ability to initiate and allocate funds for war and effectively “separate(ing) the purse and the sword.”\textsuperscript{64} Per the Constitution, the only time the executive can utilize military force unilaterally would be to repel a sudden attack because, in such a situation, it is believed that the legislative process would be too slow-moving. However, since the ratification of the United Nations Charter following World War II, Presidents from Truman to Bush to Clinton, have absolved themselves of the necessity to seek congressional authority; believing, instead, that authorization from the multinational UN Security Council to be sufficient enough.\textsuperscript{65} As will be explored in part II of this research project, the constitutional mandate which requires Congress, and Congress alone, to authorize any U.S. military engagement has been largely side-stepped since the 1950s.

Congress also has the power to shape foreign policy through legislation, appropriations, confirmation and ratifications, or oversight and institutional control activities.\textsuperscript{66} A House or Senate controlled by the opposite political party as the executive can significantly restrain an administration’s legislative initiatives. In such situations, both branches seek to rally public support behind their particular stances in order to exert pressure on political adversaries. Since the fallout from the Vietnam War, Congressional participation in foreign policy has dramatically increased, at times causing a rivalry or

\textsuperscript{64} McCormick and Wittkopf, 143
\textsuperscript{65} McCormick and Wittkopf, 145
\textsuperscript{66} Scott, 110-111
power struggle between the President and one or both houses of Congress. President George H.W. Bush often tried sway public opinion to his side by telling the American public that it is the President’s job to conduct foreign policy, not a Congress who is responsible only to a narrow constituency and that he took pride in the fact that he had “vetoed six bills that would have weakened presidential powers.” Moreover, Congress usually only takes the lead on foreign policy initiatives, when bipartisanship support for an issue exists, which is necessary for any decisions to be made.

**Individual Decision-Makers**

In 1934, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt issued a Joint Resolution of Congress that stated “it shall be unlawful to sell… any arms or munitions of war in any place in the United States to the countries now engaged in… armed conflict, or to any person, company, or association acting in the interest of either country, until otherwise ordered by the President or by Congress.” Two years later, the aircraft manufacturer Curtiss-Wright Corporation challenged the resolution after it had conspired to send fifteen machine guns to Bolivia while the South American country was engaged in a war in Chaco. The company believed that the resolution exceeded the legislative powers given to the Executive by the Constitution and took its challenge all the way to the Supreme Court. In the case, *The United States v. Curtiss-Wright Corporation*, the Court struck down the appellants challenged, stating,

> In this vast external realm, with its important, complicated, delicate and manifold problems, the President alone has the power to speak or listen as a representative of the nation. He makes treaties with the advice and consent of the Senate; but he alone

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67 Melanson, 230
68 Scott, 12
negotiates. Into the field of negotiation the Senate cannot intrude; and Congress itself is powerless to invade it\textsuperscript{70}.

The Court then cited a speech given by John Marshall in the House of Representatives on March 7, 1800 when he stated, “the President is the sole organ of the nation in its external relations, and its sole representative with foreign nations\textsuperscript{71}.”

Ultimately, through the vast bureaucracy that is the U.S. government staffed with hundreds of agencies and institutions, major foreign policy decisions such as when and how to utilize military force often come down to the small group of individuals who inhabit the White House. Subsequently the unique characteristics, leadership styles, and ideals of those individuals - particularly the president - greatly influences the decisions being made. In Time Magazine from September 22, 2003, former Clinton Secretary of State, Madeline Albright, stated that should Al Gore have won the 2000 presidential election, the U.S. would not likely have been currently engaged in a war in Iraq\textsuperscript{72}. In other words, had 537 votes gone the other way in Florida in 2000; American foreign policy would look drastically different than it does today.

Other actors who influence foreign policy are the advisors who the president decides to surround himself with. For instance, some presidents choose advisors who hold a wide variety of backgrounds and stances, encouraging open debate and conflict within the White House. Other Presidents maintain a staff of like-minded individuals who are “loyal, interested in their goals, and willing to help them implement these goals. Such presidents would like to clone advisors who share their raison d’etre so that their

\textsuperscript{70} U.S. Supreme Court,
\textsuperscript{71} U.S. Supreme Court,
worldview permeates the executive branch of government.\textsuperscript{73} The beliefs and convictions of these advisors ultimately decide the range of policy alternatives discussed.

Congress, too, is made up of individuals who are each responsive to different constituencies, interest groups and part of various congressional committees and caucuses. Aside from the societal and institutional forces which guide a congresspersons’ decisions, individual factors such as ideology, partisanship and the anticipated reactions of the executive or the American public also play a major role in determining how one will vote and ultimately in what way individuals will try and shape foreign policy.\textsuperscript{74} As Ralph G. Carter noted, it is a “common practice… for legislators to watch opinion polls carefully for shifts in the mix of public preferences\textsuperscript{75} and then take a stance accordingly.

A final characteristic of the individual decision-maker that influences foreign policy is the ability of that actor to gain consensus with the American public and political elite. As discussed above, in regards to foreign policy, this task was made more difficult after the fall of the Soviet Union when, lacking an articulate, clear purpose for wielding U.S. power abroad, George H.W. Bush was voted out of office even after waging a successful war in Kuwait. As Bacevich said, “Bush possessed neither the historical imagination nor the moral sensibility to comprehend all that the fall of the Berlin Wall signified. Speaking from the ‘bully pulpit,’ he failed to convey any real sense of conviction… Neither defending the Saudi monarchy nor restoring the emir of Kuwait to his throne – both regimes unsympathetic to Western notions of democracy and human rights – qualified as likely to advance the cause of freedom.”\textsuperscript{76} Hence, Bush was unable

\textsuperscript{73} McCormick and Wittkopf, 363  
\textsuperscript{74} Scott, 127  
\textsuperscript{75} Scott, 129  
\textsuperscript{76} Bacevich, 63
to connect his foreign policy actions with the ideals of the American people and he paid a heavy price. Clinton, on the other hand, was able to fashion coherent descriptions of “the post-Cold War order and America’s place in that order. Indeed, the most basic ideas that Bush’s successor would employ to recalibrate U.S. strategy were already in wide circulation during Bush’s own presidency. All that was needed – and this was the one thing that Bush and his advisors were singularly ill equipped to provide – was packaging. Ultimately, the individual beliefs and perceptions of those who make foreign policy decisions combined with those decision-makers’ ability to sell those beliefs to the American people and political elite create the continuum of possible policy alternatives from which the final strategies are determined.

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Described above are the elements of the domestic environment that influence both the process by which foreign policy is generated and the content of the final policies adopted. In order to determine whether or not the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 “changed everything,” an analysis must be made exploring the impact the attacks had on these elements – along with the international environment - that allowed for the enactment of particular U.S. military policies in Afghanistan and Iraq.

77 Bacevich, 71
Part II:

The Death of Containment, the Shattering of Consensus


“From the privacy of retirement, I watch a fundamental transformation of a worldview I knew so well for the thirty-five years of my career. That world was defined by a historic struggle between the Soviet Union and the West with rules that structured our political, economic, and military relations. It was a dangerous period, but relatively stable, and one in which we understood the role we had to play. With the end of the Soviet Union and the death of communism as an ideology, we face a world so far without a new structure or a new set of rules. Our strategy of containment died with the Soviet Union.”

- Colin Powell, 1995
A changing global power structure

In May of 1989, shortly after addressing a ballroom filled with three- and four-star army generals, Colin Powell - then commanding general of the U.S. Forces Army Command (FORSCOM) - received a letter from Heritage Features columnist Henry Mohr. In it, Mohr expressed his disagreement with Powell’s speech, where the future Joint Chiefs Chairman and Secretary of State had predicted that the Soviet Union was well on its way toward disintegration and that the armed forces institutions should prepare for smaller defense funds in the post-Cold War period. Mohr, a retired Army major general himself, rejected the notion of the imminent demise of the USSR and he wrote Powell to express what he believed to be the prevailing sentiments of many foreign policy experts at the time. “The net assessment,” Mohr wrote, “was that the Soviet Union will emerge in the early 1990s from its ongoing ‘reorganization and modernization’ much stronger militarily than it is today.”

Mohr’s statement reflected the mindset of many top government and military officials at the time who had spent their entire careers preparing to combat the Soviet threat. For the previous 45 years, the Soviet Union had been the other superpower in an ideologically bipolar international environment and the only remaining state-entity capable of challenging U.S. power. Further, the constant threat of nuclear war had forged a domestic consensus between the American public and the government which both generated “substantial societal support for an internationalist foreign policy orientation”

and produced “a much greater tendency toward executive branch leadership in the making of U.S. foreign policy.” As Scott wrote:

This consensus… included basic agreement on the nature of the world (bipolar), the nature of the conflict in the world (zero-sum between the United States and the Soviet Union), the U.S. role in the world (leadership), and broad U.S. foreign policy (containment of the Soviet Union and communism and promotion of an open, multilateral economy).

Likewise, all international events were viewed through a prism that categorized and prioritized occurrences and then dictated responses based on the desire to oppose the Soviet Union and contain communism – thus, creating a Cold War paradigm. Being in effect for nearly half a century, this paradigm had become a permanent construct within the American foreign policy elite and was followed even when it allied the U.S. with suspect bedfellows. For instance, the corrupt but anti-communist Panamanian leader Manuel Noreiga received money from both the CIA and the Defense Intelligence Agency as part of U.S. efforts to arm the Nicaraguan Contras despite the fact that Noriega held onto his power through eliminating political rivals and got rich off of illegal drug deals.

That this paradigm was on the verge of collapse served as a culture shock to the foreign policy establishment. As Colin Powell noted after speaking with several generals in 1990, “I was astonished by the death grip of old ideas on some military minds. The Navy kept arguing for more aircraft carriers. Why? Because it knew that the Soviet

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79 Scott, 13-14
80 Scott, 13
81 Powell and Persico, 415
Union was building more carriers. How did it know? Because satellite photographs taken years before showed a keel plate laid down in a Soviet shipyard.\textsuperscript{82}

\textbf{The international environment after the Cold War}

The Berlin Wall fell on November 10, 1989 and, with it, great flux took hold of the international environment. Within the Soviet Bloc, Premier Mikhail Gorbachev was in the process of opening and restructuring the political and economic systems while at the same time many of its former states had declared independence. U.S. policymakers were unsure how successful Gorbachev’s \textit{glasnost} and \textit{perestroika} policies would be and whether Gorbachev himself could remain in power despite the growing resentment of hard-liners within his own government. Several top U.S. officials, including Defense Secretary Dick Cheney and National Security Council deputy Robert Gates, believed “that the hard-line communists might well knock off Gorbachev and restore the bad old days.”\textsuperscript{83} Hence, while the official policy of the U.S. government was to support a peaceful disbandment of the Soviet Union, fears remained about the uncertain consequences of any shift in a status quo that had existed for over four decades.

Foreign policy during the Cold War had been a dangerous business, no doubt, yet it was based on a relatively consistent set of assumptions which provided policymakers with clear protocols on how to operate actions abroad. These assumptions included a basic awareness of the structure of the international power system, where potential threats lay and how America should engage the world. The fall of the Soviet Union not only muddled this clarity but also drastically changed the “distribution and composition of

\textsuperscript{82} Powell and Persico, 452
\textsuperscript{83} Powell and Persico, 439
power through the global environment, including its forms, uses and relevance. Thus, as George H.W. Bush entered the oval office in January of 1988 the global power dynamic which had been in place since the allied victory in World War II - and the consensus and clarity which that dynamic created - were rapidly becoming things of the past.

In their wake, Bush faced two issues: first, what would post-Cold War American foreign policy look like; what would be its priorities and how would its vast defense and diplomatic resources be allocated around the globe? And second, in the absence of an over-arching threat, how would Bush sell the new policies to the American public?

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A new form of war

The Cold War consisted of chronic worries of a large-scale conventional or nuclear war between the U.S. and the Soviets. Therefore, both nations prepared accordingly by building up weapons arsenals, strategically placing nuclear missiles in allied countries and making sure that their domestic populations were able and ready to mobilize for large-scale war. However, the development of the nuclear bomb combined with an increased international economic interdependence actually decreased the willingness of states – including the U.S. and Soviet Union - to fight each other in conventional warfare. Instead, as was the case with the Vietminh in Vietnam and Mujahadeen in Afghanistan, the two states increasingly relied on surrogate forces to do the fighting for them. In this case, wars took place between a state or coalition of states and a non-state actor taking the form of an insurgency, ethnic faction or terrorist group.

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84 Scott, 15
fighting amongst the general population,\textsuperscript{85} As Robb wrote, “most conflicts in the latter half of the twentieth century were fought through guerilla proxy. States have continued to fight, but through nonstate guerillas that served as surrogates for their own military.\textsuperscript{86}” In effect, this different form of war necessitated different political and strategic elements than were traditional to industrial war and put armies trained to conduct conventional tactical maneuvers into situations for which they were not fit – a reality clearly shown in the outcomes of both the Vietnam and Soviet-Afghan wars.\textsuperscript{87}

In his book, \textit{The Utility of Force}, Sir Rupert Smith wrote that in earlier inter-state wars, “political objective was attained by achieving a strategic military objective of such significance that the opponent conformed to our will – the intention being to decide the matter by military force.\textsuperscript{88}” That is, the objective sought by the government utilizing force was achieved solely through the use of that force. For instance, during World War II the objective in Europe was to rid the continent of the Nazi regime; therefore, once the axis armies were destroyed, the objective was achieved. It was this type of confrontation that U.S. defense analysts envisioned would take place should Cold War tensions lead to a hot war between the two superpowers and as a result, Western armies were trained and prepared in accordance. However, the paradigm of large-scale industrial wars taking place on distant battlefields between two powerful state-actors had become things of the past.\textsuperscript{89} As Robb wrote, “to really understand this future, you need to discard the idea of state-versus-state conflict. That age is over… Wars between states are now, for all intents

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\textsuperscript{85} Robb, 26 \\
\textsuperscript{86} Robb, 26 \\
\textsuperscript{87} Rupert Smith, \textit{The utility of force : the art of war in the modern world}, 1st U.S. ed. (New York: Knopf, 2007) 272. \\
\textsuperscript{88} Smith, 272 \\
\textsuperscript{89} Smith, 273
\end{flushleft}
and purposes obsolete.\textsuperscript{90} The exception was Saddam Hussein in the Gulf War in 1991. After U.S. and allied forces massed at the Saudi-Kuwaiti border attempting to intimidate Hussein back into his country without a fight, the Iraqi dictator instead decided to take his chances in a conventional war. In a mere 100 hours of ground conflict, the Iraqi army was decimated by technologically advanced and better trained allied forces and subsequently limped back into its own country. In that case, force was sufficient enough to achieve the objective of liberating Kuwait, however, should an internal political change have been desired in Iraq – as would be the case in 2003 – both the nature of the war and the type of power needed to topple Hussein \textit{and} establish a new, stable government would have been considerably different.

After the fall of the Soviet Union, the asymmetrical form of warfare instigated by the nuclear bomb never changed; what did, though, were the types of conflicts that emerged (or continued) and the parties involved. As the iron curtain receded from Eastern Europe and the Cold War lens was removed from Africa, a wave of civil wars and ethnic conflicts were unveiled that were fought by several battling factions with no underlying political establishments. Whereas, the international environment was supposed to become simpler with the removal of Soviet Russia, it instead became even more complex as nonstate groups no longer acted on behalf of a larger state in a larger conflict but for their own reasons. As David Halberstam wrote in \textit{War in a Time of Peace}:

\begin{quote}
Crises would stem from the implosion of the poor, embryonic African countries stocked to the gills with B- and C-level modern weaponry, countries that were barely countries at all, and in which most civic institutions of government, save the army and the secret police, had effectively atrophied. The rise of nationalism, indeed tribalism, in several parts of the world and ethnic anger over arbitrary boundaries would cause
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{90} Robb, 7
the outbreak of bitter, unusually cruel fratricidal violence and, in time, masses of refugees flowing across international borders.\textsuperscript{91}

Without the Cold War prism minimizing the relevance of these conflicts, the media and ethnic lobbyist groups thrust humanitarian and peacekeeping concerns into the foreign policy agenda debate. Therefore, the objective of U.S. military interventions after the Cold War – such as in Somalia and the Balkans - wasn’t to defeat or destroy one side or the other but to create an environment secure enough for political ends to be achieved by other means - whether through “diplomacy, economic incentives (or) political pressure.”\textsuperscript{92} Hence, military force alone was neither sufficient nor effective in actually resolving these guerilla conflicts because it lacked the means to achieve the necessary political ends.\textsuperscript{93}

In short, the second half of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century saw the evolution of warfare from conventional state-versus-state conflicts prior to World War II; to guerilla forces fighting as proxy armies for larger states during the Cold War; to insurgencies, terrorist groups or other nonstate actors fighting on their own accord throughout the 1990s; and created a disorderly international environment and a type of armed conflict that could not be solved through the annihilation of one of the parties. Therefore, the superior troops and weapons possessed by the U.S. armed forces became less coercive to international foes and less relevant to its ability to dictate world affairs. Instead, the strength of an actor in the international environment increasingly became defined by its diplomatic and economic resources and its ability to win the “hearts and minds” of the populace involved. As Colin Powell concluded:

\textsuperscript{91} Halberstam, 74
\textsuperscript{92} Smith, 272
\textsuperscript{93} Smith, 272
In this new world, economic strength will be more important than military strength. The new order will be defined by trade relations, by the flow of information, capital, technology, and goods, rather than by armies glaring at each other across borders. Nations seeking power through military strength, the development of nuclear weapons, terrorism, or tyrannical governments are mining ‘fool’s gold’. 

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The Domestic Environment

Within America, the eradication of the Soviet threat accelerated the post-Vietnam societal and institutional shifts that worked to make “foreign policy more like domestic policy – subject to conflict, bargaining, and persuasion among competing groups within the outside government.” Without security concerns dominating the national agenda and concentrating the power initiative within the executive branch, foreign policy absent the Soviet Union was more susceptible to varying domestic pressures and therefore, substantially more complex. That is, the debate itself over what issues should be placed on the foreign policy agenda – economic, security, environmental, humanitarian - and what role America should play in the world expanded, giving more influence to a wider array of sources. This decentralization of influence and power both produced a more assertive and partisan Congress and enhanced the role of nongovernmental actors in the foreign policy process.

Part II of Did 9/11 Really Change Everything? is an exploration of the fluctuations in the sources and elements of American foreign policy that occurred as consequences of the end of the Cold War as well as the specific impact these fluctuations had on America’s use of military force throughout the 1990s. As will be identified, the foreign policies of George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton were relatively consistent despite

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94 Powell and Persico, 604
95 Scott, 19
varying rhetoric, campaign promises and attempts to distinguish one political party from another. With a domestic environment that reflected the publics’ general disinterest in coercive internationalism and an international power structure which harvested the intra-state conflicts discussed earlier, both Commanders in Chief during this period used force not as a means to conduct a sweeping policy enforcement; but as an extension of a domestic agenda; monitoring, policing and punishing independent acts of insubordination that threatened U.S. interests. The purpose of this section is to describe and discuss the use and effectiveness of military force in American foreign policy and the domestic forces which led to it before September 11, 2001 so that it can serve as a contrast to the changed environments and resulting policies that emerged after the attacks.

Societal Fluctuations and Institutional Shifts

In the spring of 1992, with the presidential election rapidly approaching, George H.W. Bush’s approval ratings began to steadily decline\textsuperscript{96} despite a handful of foreign policy successes on his presidential resume. He had skillfully negotiated a peaceful end to the Cold War which culminated with the disintegration of the Soviet Union on Christmas day, 1991; he had forced Saddam Hussein from Kuwait with an unprecedented display of military power and fewer casualties than even the most optimistic prognosticators predicted; he had overseen the reunification of Germany “almost entirely on Western terms;\textsuperscript{97}” and he had pushed for and achieved the expansion of NATO to include many of the former Soviet states. So, why then did it appear that Bush was in real danger of losing the presidency to Democratic challenger, Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton? The answer

\textsuperscript{96} Halberstam, 16
\textsuperscript{97} Brzezinski, 57
laid first within the shifting dynamics of the societal environment, where the end of the Cold War had accelerated particular shifts in both public opinion and American culture that destroyed the consensus over how America should act in the world. These societal shifts then combined with an evolving and increasingly influential media and special interest constituencies to decrease the salience of foreign policy issues in general and Bush’s foreign policy successes in particular. As Halberstam wrote:

> There are new, vexing political problems for Bush and any potential successor. As the Soviet threat to the United States receded, so, too, did the political support for any kind of foreign policy issue that was not immediate in its import. A generation was coming of age in the Congress who cared less about foreign affairs, elected by a generation of voters who cared less, and reported on by a media that paid less attention… The country, to be blunt, was more powerful and more influential than ever before, but it was looking inward.

To examine these fluctuations and the impact they had on American foreign policy more closely, below is an analysis of the different components that make up the societal and institutional elements and their particular states during the post-Cold War period.

**Public Opinion and American Culture**

Perhaps the most significant shift in the domestic environment that helped to erode the Cold War consensus was the change in public opinion that occurred in response to the events of the late 1960s and early 1970s. The aftermath of the Vietnam War and the effect of Watergate on the grandeur of the American presidency led to three major public opinion trends that were accelerated in the years after the Cold War: first, as already stated, there was an increased focus and emphasis on domestic issues opposed to international affairs; second, lingering memories of Vietnam had eroded both the publics’ and policymakers’ will to support the use of force, particularly the deployment of U.S.

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98 Halberstam, 75
troops abroad; and finally public opinion, in general, divided more along ideological and partisan lines. Together, these trends – along with institutional changes that will be described later – increased the political risks associated with the use of military force and thus limited the instances where it was considered a policy alternative to occasions where policymakers believed they could sustain public support.

The first trend was the increased public attention to domestic issues at the expense of international affairs. In a 1994 edition of *Foreign Affairs*, Editor James F. Hoge Jr. wrote, “there is the much-discussed ‘inward turning’ of the American people. Released from the ‘nuclear terror’ factor, Americans feel free to concentrate on home and neighborhood. Their attention to external problems is hard to get and once obtained is hard to rally behind assertions of leadership.” With a growing deficit inherited from President Reagan’s defense build-up, President Bush came under constant attack from both Democrats and the general public for his perceived neglect of domestic issues. In 1990, Democratic House Majority Leader, Representative Dick Gephardt, said, “I think the real failings are on the domestic front… I think we’re falling behind economically in almost every aspect.” Further, heading into an election year, economic recession had plagued many parts of the country and, in turn, made the economy the most important issue in the minds of the American public ahead of foreign policy. As Halberstam wrote:

(The American public) reflected a certain lack of gratitude on the part of all kinds of ordinary people for the successes of the last three years, and a growing anger – indeed perhaps rage – about the state of the American economy. There was also a concurrent belief that George Bush was certainly capable of being an effective world leader, but domestic problems and issues, in this case, principally the economy, did not matter as much to him as foreign affairs.

101 Halberstam, 14
However, it is important to note that this trend did not reflect a desire on the part of
Americans to return to a classic isolationist mentality; for nearly three out of four people
still believed the country should play an active role in world affairs\(^\text{102}\) (Holsti, Scott, p.
142). The difference was that the particular internationalist policies most supported were
ones designed to “promote and defend the country’s economic interests.”\(^\text{103}\)

The second trend seen in public sentiments during this period was the lingering
“shadow of Vietnam” that affected both the American public and foreign policy elite.
Two decades after more than 58,000 young Americans had perished there; the American
public still had little tolerance for military engagements that weren’t perceived to be
directly relevant to “vital” U.S. interests and even less tolerance for American casualties.
As Ivo Daalder and James Lindsay wrote in *America Unbound*, “every debate about the
use of force in the previous three decades… reflected the deep division that the Vietnam
War left on the American psyche. The men who had done the fighting (and who had seen
many of their friends die) were deeply leery about military intervention of any kind –
especially when the political objective was not just to defeat a military enemy, but to
change an entire regime.”\(^\text{104}\) While the public supported the notion of an active,
internationalist America, anytime a policy was formulated that involved committing
troops abroad, the dominant psychological and strategic influences were to make sure
that there was never another experience like Vietnam.

\(^{102}\) Scott, 142

\(^{103}\) Scott, 144

The final trend, beginning in the 1980s, was that public opinion started to pole along partisan and ideological lines, further inhibiting policy consensus. As Ole Holsti wrote, “substantial majorities among both Republicans and Democrats may oppose an undiscriminating retreat into post-Cold War isolationism, but there is considerable disagreement on what kind of international role is most appropriate, as well as on the strategies and means of pursuing U.S. interests abroad.” While most people believed that America should be a leader in the world, liberals tended to favor cooperative relationships with other nations and the use of international institutions opposed to conservatives, who were more apt to believe in unilateralist approaches and more willing to support the use of military force. Thus, more ideologically-driven and partisan sentiments made directing American action abroad an increasingly complex and incoherent process.

Multiculturalism also increased in the years after the Cold War. During the previous half-century, the national identity was defined in large part through contrasting American ideals with those of the ideologically opposite USSR. The Soviet Union served as both a consistent and immediate threat to U.S. interests and security, and it also worked to unite the American populace through common resentment; thus helping to forge a national identity. As Samuel Huntington wrote:

From the start, Americas have constructed their creedal identity in contrast to an undesirable ‘other.’ At the time of Independence…Britain embodied tyranny, aristocracy, oppression; America, democracy, equality, republicanism. Until the end of the nineteenth century, the United Stated defined itself in opposition to Europe. Europe was the past: backward, un-free, unequal…The United States, in contrast, was the future: progressive, free, equal, republican. In the twentieth century, the United States emerged on the world scene… as the leader of European-American civilization against upstart challengers to that civilization, imperial and then Nazi Germany. After World War II the United States defined itself as the leader of the democratic free

105 Scott, 157
world against the Soviet Union and world communism… The Cold War fostered a common identity between American people and government.\textsuperscript{106}

After the Cold War eliminated of the “undesirable other,” people began identifying themselves first based on ethnic, racial and religious identities opposed to a national one, thereby increasing the influence of “subnational commercial interests and transnational and nonational ethnic interests.”\textsuperscript{107} In effect, more diverse voices entered the foreign policy debate, making it harder for the executive to rally the American public behind a common cause for which to exert national resources. As Hoge Jr. wrote in 1997, “immigration and birthrate patterns are creating a more pluralistic population. As groups enlarge and prosper, they exert more political pressure on U.S. foreign policy leaders to pay attention to their places of origin. Each issue-based constituency develops well-endowed interest groups to compete for government and media attention.”\textsuperscript{108} Thus, due to a drop-off in nationalist sentiments and more Americans pushing for sub-national interests, domestic political pressures to appease particular constituencies further hindered the development of a foreign policy consensus.

In short, while the backlash to Vietnam began the public opinion trends discussed above, the fall of the Berlin Wall and subsequent Soviet collapse accelerated the erosion of the policy consensus that had existed from 1945 until 1968 (the Tet Offensive). As a result, the foreign policy agenda opened up to new issues and more influences, and made the use of military force more politically risky except when it could be exercised within the parameters acceptable to the American public. However, doing so became increasingly difficult as well due to the nature of post-Cold War warfare discussed in the

\textsuperscript{106} McCormick and Wittkopf, 56-57
\textsuperscript{107} McCormick and Wittkopf, 56
\textsuperscript{108} Hoge, James f. Jr, 136-143
previous section. Ultimately, the publics’ sentiments and a more diverse American culture presented policymakers with a wider constituent base to appease yet a narrower continuum of possible alternatives to conduct actions abroad.

**Legislative – Executive dynamics after the Cold War**

Before discussing the role that the media played in post-Cold War foreign policy, it is necessary to explore the institutional shift that enhanced the influence of these nongovernmental actors in the societal context. During the Cold War, foreign policy decisions were considered crisis-situations and usually made in the White House behind closed doors. This limited the peripheral influences on the resulting policy to the executive and his top advisors. Once the Soviet Union disintegrated, new issues were placed on the foreign policy agenda – ones not necessarily focused on security concerns – and an increasingly partisan and assertive Congress joined the policy-making process. This shift from the executive branch to the legislature also empowered a range of nongovernmental actors, as Congress is more accountable and accessible to outside sources. Hence, post-Cold War foreign policy was heavily impacted by nongovernmental actors (Scott, p. 20). As James Lindsay wrote, “with the end of the Cold War, the norms and beliefs that once limited congressional activism are crumbling. The result is the development of what Jeremy Rosner, a former senior director on the staff of the National Security Council under President Clinton, aptly calls ‘the new tug of war’ for the control of foreign policy.”

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109 McCormick and Wittkopf, 178
110 Scott, 20
111 McCormick and Wittkopf, 178
Further, after the 1994 Republican takeover as the majority party, new congressional alliances were formed along partisan and ideological lines, making policy agreement between President Clinton and Congress more difficult to come by. Congressional compliance with executive policy dropped off by 10 percent in the period between 1992 and 1995 and flat-out resistance to the president’s policy initiatives grew by 8 percent.\textsuperscript{112} While this trend may seem common-place given the fact that opposing parties controlled the two legislative bodies of government, polls also showed that President Bush faced less resistance to his policies from the Democratically controlled Congress than his successor;\textsuperscript{113} a fact that frustrated Clinton to the point where he once stated, “gosh, I miss the Cold War.”\textsuperscript{114}

In short, the end of the Cold War changed the urgency by which foreign policy decisions were made and placed new issues on the agenda. With a foreign policy not just focused on security but economic, humanitarian, environmental and socio-ethnic issues as well, Congress became more assertive and influential in the process. This allowed external actors who have access to Congress – such as interest groups and the media – to also expand their role and influence in the foreign policy process.

\textit{A resurgent media}

In December of 1992, \textit{Time} Magazine depicted the scene when 28,000 American troops hit the beaches of the African country of Somalia. Led by Navy seals in full combat gear and war paint, the soldiers exited their “hovercrafts and helicopters” onto the shores of Mogadishu and were immediately met by a barrage of bright lights; that is, not

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{112} Scott, 111 \\
\textsuperscript{113} Scott, 128 \\
\textsuperscript{114} Scott, 1
\end{flushleft}
the flash of gunfire, but those of television cameras, lots of them.\textsuperscript{115} Hours before Operation Restore Hope even began, the world’s media poured into the tiny Somali capital and anxiously awaited the arrival of the main attraction: the U.S. military. In June of 1944, the American public had to wait for the next morning’s newspapers before they heard of the allied landings at Normandy; yet 48 years later, such a delay was unnecessary. The landings were being recorded live and broadcast into living rooms around the world. In the age of satellites, computers and the 24-hour news cycle, the media has forged themselves a crucial role in the foreign policy process both through their ability to efficiently and instantaneously disseminate messages and through their relationship with policymakers and the military.

During the Cold War, as discussed above, foreign policy decisions were usually made behind closed White House doors, out of sight and influence of the media. Further, once a policy was released, all interpretations were made through the Cold War prism, leaving little variation of opinion. As W. Lance Bennett wrote, “the press was often a sideline player and occasional cheerleader in the policy process simply because the process, itself, was anything but open to the public.”\textsuperscript{116} However, after the Cold War, two shifts allowed for the media to become more influential in the foreign policy process. First, as previously discussed, many foreign policy decisions were being debated in Congress, giving the media an open look and interpretation of both the process and the merits of policy alternatives. Therefore, engaging the media and framing current and possible future developments in positive constructs became a necessary task for policymakers in order to sustain public support. As Smith wrote, the media brings “the

\textsuperscript{116} Scott, 171
conflict into the homes of millions of people: people who vote and whose opinions influence their politicians – those who make the decision on using force. ¹¹⁷"

Second, without the Cold War paradigm categorizing and interpreting world events in an East-West context - and with no new foreign policy construct yet devised – the media gained more latitude in both the range of issues it reported and the way it portrayed those issues. Therefore, it could affect the public debate – and public sentiments as well - by reporting certain issues more than others or in particular ways which fostered either positive or negative responses.

For instance, in the mid 1980s and 1990s, the populations of developing countries across Africa were struck with catastrophic famine due to the efforts of warlords using hunger as a way to gain and sustain power. In the past, the American public was often ignorant of such situations not relevant to the containment and deterrence policies and gave politicians little incentive to exert energy and resources to the causes. However, without a new dominant paradigm to focus attentions abroad, the media was able to go searching for attention-arousing issues that could be broadcast to Americans. “The movement away from the Cold War in American society… enables the media to try and add new issues to the foreign policy agenda” McCormick wrote. “Consider, for example, the powerful effect of the media in portraying the death and starvation in… Somalia in the early 1990s… Media pictures and accounts of the death and suffering resulted in part in American military aircraft being used to transport food and, eventually, American ground forces being deployed.”¹¹⁸ Further, hostilities in the former Yugoslavia began in 1991 when the Serbian army began slaughtering the defenseless Bosnian Muslims after

¹¹⁷ Smith, 280
¹¹⁸ Scott, 179
they declared independence. However, it wasn’t until 1995, after the mainstream media began broadcasting brutal images of ethnic cleansing, when America and NATO finally became militarily involved. As Hoge Jr. wrote:

In April a hitherto impotent NATO swiftly imposed a limited ultimatum in the Bosnian conflict after a mortar shelling of a Sarajevo marketplace caused horrifying civilian casualties. Observers on the scene questioned why this particular loss of life – no greater than other occurring in Bosnia – led to action against the Serbian siege. In good part, the answer was television. A CNN crew happened to be out and about the city that Saturday morning.119

On the other hand, the opening of the foreign policy process fostered a mutually-beneficial relationship between Congress and the media. McCormick wrote, “as the media become an increasingly standard feature of congressional process, members increasingly seek to use such outlets to shape their message to their colleagues and to the public at large.”120 Policy makers designed strategies to draw the attention of as many media outlets as possible in order to disseminate views and frame issues more widely. This led to the emergence of the sound byte as a staple of political discourse. As flashy television images and instant electronic updates shortened the time-period by which the American public expected to receive information, seconds-long political catch-phrases describing and identifying policy (often in partisan terms) became an evaluative measure of both policy itself and the competence of the politician articulating it.

So is also the case with national leaders and military commanders. In the age where public sentiments are instrumental in policy formation, the way in which the media reports a conflict can create perceptions that push the population one way or another; or when reporting on the sentiments of the population, the media can actually influence the decisions of leaders. As Smith, a former general in the British Army, wrote:

119 Hoge, James f. Jr, 136-143
120 Scott, 175
Television and the Internet in particular have brought conflict into the homes of the world – the homes of both leaders and electorates. Leaders are influenced by what they see and by their understanding of the mood of the audience, their electorate. And they react on these perceptions, often for reasons to do with their own political purpose rather than the one at issue in the fight itself. Indeed, confrontations may end up crossing into conflicts, or escalating in levels of fighting, or indeed crossing the other way and deescalating owing to perceptions formed from the media.121

Yet, there is much debate over the true influence the media has on American foreign policy. While there is little doubt that emotional images can arouse public debate on an issue, many analysts still claim that the media only has peripheral impact on the actual decisions being made, even in the post-Cold War environment. As McCormick concluded, “The so-called ‘CNN’ effect may not be quite as potent as some imply even in the Somalia case… As one careful analysis of this episode reveals, the media ‘did not independently drive Somalia to the surface.’ Rather they reflected the policy goals of those in the Bush administration, the Congress, and the international community who want to enlarge American actions in that country.”122 What is clear, though, is that the media, more than any other nongovernmental actor, has become the most efficient and effective way to disseminate a message to the general public which, in effect, has enhanced their role in the foreign policy debate.

The Executive Strikes Back

Within the partisan and complex institutional environment, the President found alternative ways to direct American policy abroad without gaining the overt approval of Congress. The “loop-hole” was first established by President Truman in 1950, when he sent U.S. troops to Korea in accordance with the UN Security Council’s ultimatum that

121 Smith, 286
122 Scott, 179
North Korea withdraw its forces back above the 38th parallel. Instead of seeking the authority of his own Congress for such action, Truman deferred to that of a multinational institution.

40 years later, President George Bush followed Truman’s example when he sent 500,000 American troops to expel Saddam Hussein from Kuwait. As Louis Fisher wrote, “instead of seeking authority from Congress, Bush created a multinational alliance and encouraged the UN Security Council to authorize the use of military force.” After the Security Council did so, the Bush administration considered that declaration sufficient to give them the authority to go to war. (Even though, theoretically, the UN resolution was contingent on whether or not it was accepted in each member country through the proper political processes). By the time Bush did go to Congress, he was only “asking for ‘support,’ not authority.”

On two other occasions, Bush’s successor also avoided seeking the authority from a politically hostile Congress. First, in October of 1993, President Clinton sent a small contingent of U.S. troops to Haiti for “humanitarian reasons” after Haiti’s first democratically elected president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, had been overthrown in a military coup. Consequences of the resulting leadership sent thousands of refugees to neighboring nations, including the United States. American forces never made it ashore, however, as a group of armed Haitian civilians threatened to start a confrontation should the troops attempt to enter the country. Nine months later, in July of 1994, the UN Security Council issued a resolution authorizing the use of force to remove Haiti’s

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123 McCormick and Wittkopf, 146
124 McCormick and Wittkopf, 147
125 McCormick and Wittkopf, 148
126 McCormick and Wittkopf, 149
illegitimate military leadership and in response, the U.S. Senate passed its own resolution declaring that Clinton was not granted the sole power to wage war from the UN Security Council. Clinton, aware of the history on the issue, fired back, “like my predecessors of both parties, I have not agreed that I was constitutionally mandated to obtain the support of Congress.” Nonetheless, Clinton went ahead and prepared to invade the island. Eventually, though, the whole political altercation proved moot as the Haitian military leaders accepted U.S. demands peacefully.

The second occurrence took place with Clinton’s decision to send troops to Bosnia as part of a NATO coalition. Again, Clinton bypassed the authorization of Congress on the principle that he had both the ability and the duty to go to war on behalf of a multilateral institution. As Fisher wrote, “Curiously, by operating through NATO, Clinton would seek the agreement of England, France, Italy, and other NATO allies, but not congress.” Hence, as both Clinton and Bush understood, with increasing partisan divisions in Congress, gaining consensus for the use of military force abroad would be a daunting task. Therefore, by placing authority in the United Nations, both commanders in chief were able to maintain a level of control over foreign policy.

A Transition to Base Force

The changing international power structure combined with the societal and institutional shifts at home called for a re-assessment of U.S. military necessities and capabilities. In the early 1990s, the military-political establishment was faced with the task of re-fitting and transitioning the U.S. armed forces around a post-Cold War conflict

127 McCormick and Wittkopf, 150
128 McCormick and Wittkopf, 152
orientation. In determining the size of the military defense budget, the Pentagon works to
determine a worst-case scenario for the American military (usually one where it would be
forced to engage multiple foes on multiple fronts) and then submits a budget request to
congress asking for ample resources to confront such a situation. During the Cold War,
these war scenarios always included the need to confront a mobilized Red Army and then
two or more other enemies simultaneously in another region of the world. As Patrick
Tyler wrote in a February 18, 1992 New York Times article:

> In the Kennedy administration, Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara developed
> the two-and-one half war scenario, which held that the United States should be
> prepared to fight the Soviet Union in Europe while also fighting a regional war in
> Asia or the Middle East and a smaller war in Latin America. The Nixon
> Administration, however, based its defense planning on a one-and-a-half war
> scenario, assuming the United States might have to fight the Soviet Union in Europe
> while also taking on a foe like North Korea.\(^{129}\)

However, with the Soviets gone, Dick Cheney and Colin Powell were faced with the task
of formulating a new scenario to allocate the military budget that reflected the post-Cold
War global realities. As Powell said, “with the Soviet military shrinking, we faced a
likely stampede by members of congress arguing that there was no threat, hence no need
for a large military. ‘Peace Dividend’ had become a fashionable phrase. Since we did not
need as many guns, we could start shifting money to schools or housing or crime
prevention.\(^{130}\)”

Powell and Cheney ultimately came up with a proposal to maintain a military
capable of performing certain fundamental duties such as mobilizing the vast military
infrastructure and sending it to an unknown destination to confront a potential foe. While

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\(^{130}\) Powell and Persico, 451
the plan, called Base Force, had no specific adversary in mind, it allocated resources based on geographical regions and then determined the military capabilities that would be necessary to confront a hypothetical foe in such a location. As Powell wrote, “I proposed forces capable of performing four basic missions: one to fight across the Atlantic; a second to fight across the Pacific; a contingency force at home to be deployed rapidly to hot spots… and a reduced but still vital nuclear force to deter nuclear adversaries.”

This hypothetical military capable of executing four large-scale missions simultaneously, significantly cut the forces that were in existence at the time. When Cheney presented the proposal to Congress, it included reducing military personnel from 2.1 million down to 1.6 million, a decrease of nearly 25 percent, and a sweeping modernizing of current weapons systems.

These cuts ultimately reflected the military leaders’ beliefs at the time that a smaller, more mobile force would be better suited for the post-Cold War environment. With societal and institutional shifts creating a low threshold for the number of American casualties the public would accept and the Gulf War providing for an expectation of short, decisive future military action, political and military leaders turned to high-tech, long-range weapons systems as the engine for the new era. As Bill Clinton concluded in 1992, “our forces must be more mobile, more precise and more flexible, and they must have the technologically advanced weapons they need to prevail and to prevail quickly.”

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131 Powell and Persico, 451-452
132 Powell and Persico, 452

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A Blueprint Ahead of its Time

In February of 1992, undersecretary of defense, Paul Wolfowitz, drafted his own version of the Defense Planning Guidance (DPG) review; the annual document that serves as the basis for the Pentagon’s administrative planning and budgeting. DPGs in general have little actual impact on the military services; however, the language, tone and emphasis are supposedly a reflection of the “prevailing ideas about the future of American foreign policy and its subsequent military strategies.”135 Whereas usually these documents merely formalize what are the already-dominant sentiments and strategy-proposals of the pentagon at a particular point in time, Wolfowitz used the first DGP after the official collapse of the Soviet Union to prod “not just the military but the entire national security establishment into reassessing American strategy.”136 Wolfowitz’s draft declared an unsympathetic acknowledgement of American hegemony in the post-Cold War international environment and asserted the goal of “preventing the emergence of any potential global competitor.”137 That is, the document overtly stated that the United States would utilize its military to make sure no other nations challenge American leadership in the new world order. After being leaked to the press in March of 1992, Wolfowitz’s draft drew harsh criticism. As Bacevich wrote:

Wolfowitz’s DPG abandoned any pretense of reluctance about being a superpower. Worse, it implied a radical departure from the conception of international politics embedded in Woodrow Wilson’s Fourteen Points, Franklin Roosevelt’s Four Freedoms, or John F. Kennedy’s unconditional promise “to assure the survival and success of liberty.” That was the language of American statecraft. The draft DPG’s candor – with the interaction of power and interests eclipsing universal ideals as the grammar of statecraft – had a decidedly alien ring. That such an approach might have

134 Bacevich, 44
136 Bacevich, 44
137 Tyler, 05/24/1992
found favor in nineteenth-century Paris or Berlin was perhaps to be expected, but it would not in twentieth-century Washington, D.C.138

The Bush administration responded by condemning the draft and distancing itself from its assertions. A revised version of the DPG came-out in May which dropped most of the harsh language and instead presented a more empathetic and diplomatic future strategy.

While fading into oblivion, Wolfowitz’s draft – and the ideas behind it - didn’t completely die-out. A few months later, George H.W. Bush was out of office and the DGP was all but forgotten; however, its aggressive language pushing the U.S. to use its unprecedented hegemony to pursue and maintain American self-interest throughout the world would rise again in the near future. As Brzezinski wrote, “the document planted the intellectual seeds for the policy of unilateralist preemption and prevention that emerged a decade later.139,”

An Ideological Split

Wolfowitz’s DPG and the Bush administration’s reaction to it showed the different sides of the rift that existed within the Republican Party at the end of the Cold War. Absent the established policy of containment, the split occurred over differing opinions on how the U.S. should utilize its military superiority. As Brzezinski wrote, “there was a great need for coherent perspectives to replace the now obsolete premises that had guided American conduct on the world scene during the decades of the Cold War.”140 George Bush, along with his National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft, Secretary of State James Baker, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Colin Powell, were

138 Bacevich, 45
139 Brzezinski, 81
140 Brzezinski, 29
bread by the internationalist, anti-communist sentiments of the Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford Administrations, who viewed the Cold War as a political conflict between two nuclear superpowers and molded their cautious worldview and memories of Vietnam into the policy of détente. This camp identified with the more centrist wing the Republican Party who dealt with issues as they came with the main goal of containing communism.

However, Bush’s Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney, along with Paul Wolfowitz and others within the bureaucracy and media, held a more ideological view of foreign policy, one that was typical of the other faction within the GOP, the neoconservatives. They rejected the assertion that globalization had shifted power from states to individual groups and believed that all non-state actors would whither without state support. Further, these hawks – which included several former democrats – viewed domestic power-trends in the 1990s that had signified “the post-Vietnam retreat from the ‘imperial presidency,’ the reluctance to use force or engage in daring covert action, (and) the subservience of American policy to domestic politics,” as having “reflected everything that had gone wrong with American foreign policy.” They believed the Cold War ended because of the strength, clarity and moral certitudes shown by the re-militarization policies of the Reagan administration and that military capability was the key indicator of global power. Hence, military superiority was necessary for America to forge a peaceful international environment conducive to U.S. interests. As David Halberstam wrote, “before the end of the Cold War, the pragmatic Bush people had generally been detenters, seeking small slices of mutual accord with the Soviets and a reduction in nuclear

141 Halberstam, 58
142 Daalder and Lindsay, 42
143 Daalder and Lindsay, 131
144 Daalder and Lindsay, 42
tensions. By contrast, many of the Reagan people had cared not just about national
security but rather which side was right and which side was wrong. Likewise, they
distrusted international institutions such as the United Nations, believing America had the
moral authority and, in fact, the duty to act unilaterally when necessary and without the
consent of the global community. During George H.W. Bush’s administration the latter
group of foreign policy hard-liners mostly stayed in the background and their sentiments
were never accepted by the administration.

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The New Constraints on Military Force

Derived from his observations and analyses of French military tactics under
Napoleon, Carl Von Clausewitz wrote a series of eight books that were published
posthumously in 1832 with the title On War. Two key tenants from his observations
during the 1806 Franco-Prussian War remain relevant today and help to explain the
growing complexity of warfare and the limits of military force after the Cold War. First,
is what Clausewitz called the “remarkable trinity” comprised of the state, the military and
the people; all of which are equally relevant and must be possessed if military force is to
be successful.

The other key tenant is his definition of war as two overlapping struggles; one
political and one military. As he described, war is the “product of both a ‘trial of strength’

145 Halberstam, 58-59
146 Smith, 59
147 Smith, 59
and a “clash of wills.” When analyzing these tenants together, it becomes clear as to why in guerilla settings many powerful armies fail despite military superiority.

The first two components of Clausewitz’s triangle – the military and the state – are certainly strengths of contemporary America. Being the world’s only superpower, technological advances in weaponry and communications made the U.S. military the most elite fighting force in world history to go along with its unrivaled economic and political power. In a democracy, however, the politicians who lead the state are accountable to the American people and therefore, the two components are linked. For, if the American people are unhappy with a particular military engagement, members of Congress may choose to appease their constituents’ sentiments in fear of losing their position.

Likewise, in his definition of war, Clausewitz identifies two essential components for sustaining a successful military engagement. The first component is military in nature - the “trial of strength” – and is a reference to traditional notions of military power; that is, the ability of one force to defeat another in battle. The second component, which Clausewitz considers equally as important, is the “clash of wills” which is the resolve of both the state and the people to sustain their military involvement. For instance, in 1968 the North Vietnamese incurred tremendous casualties after it launched the Tet Offensive throughout South Vietnam. However, despite the severe military blow to the Vietminh, within the U.S. the attack worked to accelerate the erosion of the American publics’ will to sustain the war. Ultimately, with a population growing increasingly weary of the war and congressional officials being accountable to a civilian constituency, losing the will of the American people correlated to many politicians abandoning the war effort as well. In

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148 Smith, 60
result, many analysts believe that the attack effectively marked the beginning of the end of the American involvement in Vietnam (an end that would take seven more years and further public and political erosion to complete).

Therefore, according to Clauswitz, sustaining the will of the population is vital to the success of any military operation. However, doing so became substantially more difficult after the Cold War as domestic sentiments created implicit criteria that any military engagement must meet in order to sustain public support. Key among these was the expectation that committing troops abroad was done only for missions that involved vital U.S. interests; or, if not – such as in humanitarian missions – there would be little or no American casualties. Therefore, during this time-period, policymakers often evaluated to what degree military interventions would fulfill these criteria before committing U.S. troops abroad.

However, the complex ethnic, political and social conflicts that arose during the 1990s rarely presented the American president with the opportunity for short-term, risk-free engagements. Despite the rapid evolution and vast superiority of American weaponry, the asymmetrical elements of these conflicts made the quick and clean victories that were necessary to sustain domestic support, virtually impossible. Here’s why: as stated earlier, the strategic objectives in conflicts caused by political or social issues are political and social in nature and not military. Therefore, other than killing enemy combatants, conventional armies are tasked with winning over “the hearts and minds” of the local populations which is a prize that both (or all) warring parties actively seek. This is because, in asymmetrical warfare, local communities are essential to success. For instance, a state-actor – say, the U.S. in the 2003 Iraq war - needs the help of
the local population because no lasting political solution can be formulated without the
support of the populace. Otherwise discontent and confrontation would not cease and
fighting would continue. Further, the state-actor needs the local population so as to keep
them from aiding the other side, which is exactly why the paramilitary forces or non-state
actor – say, elements of the Sunni insurgency or al Qaeda in Iraq fighting against the U.S.
in the Iraq war - also needs them. As Smith wrote, “the guerrilla fighter needs the people
for concealment… He needs the people in their collective form to sustain himself. Like a
parasite he depends on his host for transport, heat, light, revenue, information and
communications.”

In result, this duel over the will of the people narrows the technological gap between
the weapons systems of the two (or more) parties in two ways: First, knowing they are at
a disadvantage technologically, guerrilla fighters, insurgencies, etc. only engage the
enemy “when the time is right for him.”

Second, should the superior force want to deliver a decisive blow to the opposition –
one that would supposedly end the conflict quickly – that actor would have to use
excessively destructive tactics. However, too much force can alienate the local population
and actually be counter-productive to the over-arching goals of the military engagement.
Therefore, the asymmetrical conflicts that arose after the Cold War required a small-
scale, drawn-out tactics which posed high risk to both U.S. troops in the field and the
politicians who sent them there.

149 Smith, 281
150 Smith, 292
As increasingly complex international conflicts combined with a domestic aversion to entangling military engagements, Bill Clinton chose a different way to justify the use of force during his presidency in effort to garner and sustain public support. First concocted by Madeline Albright, Clinton fashioned a convenient distinction between waging war and utilizing force as a policy tool. With technological advances in weaponry that allowed America to launch long-ranged missiles at enemy targets from distances out-of-range from any retaliatory strike, Clinton used destructive force to engage the enemy without risking causalities or entangling America in a wider war. Such was the case when he bombed Iraq in 1998 after Saddam Hussein expelled weapons inspectors from his country and in Afghanistan and Sudan after simultaneous Al Qaeda attacks on U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania.\(^{151}\) As Bacevich described:

War typically involves suffering, bloodshed, loss on a large scale. Waging war implies national sacrifice. War gives birth to unintended and unforeseen consequences. The horrific record of the preceding century suggested that war by its very nature was uncontrollable... Force, as conceived by Albright’s Rule, obviated such concerns. Henceforth, military power was not to be unleashed; it was doled out in precisely measured increments. The use of force against carefully selected targets – preferably inanimate objects – precluded the prospect of slaughter. By capitalizing on advanced technology to deliver ordnance from afar, targeting opponents presumed to have little or no capacity to retaliate, the United States minimized the risk to its own forces.\(^{152}\)

While providing Clinton with a way to use force without risking political backlash at home, the bombings from “afar” still did not and could not solve the political conflict at the heart of the issues. While the air-strikes were effective at destroying particular targets, they did nothing to alter the internal politics of any of the enemy states and thus, only put off further confrontations to another date. In effect, Albright’s distinction gave Clinton...
the rhetorical justification he needed to use force more frequently than any other President in American history, despite never declaring war. However, in the occasions he did use force, particularly in the Middle East, the political or social problems which were responsible for the conflicts were left unaddressed.

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As described in Part I, the final – and sometimes most substantial – domestic source of American foreign policy is the individual decision-maker or makers who occupy particular positions within the U.S. government and military establishment. Below is a discussion of the qualities and worldviews of the leaders during this time-period which help to explain the philosophy and rationale behind the particular foreign policies that were implemented.

*George H.W. Bush*

George H.W. Bush was a product of the Cold War. He had spent his political career serving presidents Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford as the ambassador to the United Nations, U.S. representative in Beijing, and the director of the CIA before spending eight years as Ronald Reagan’s vice president. While relieved to rid the world of the constant nuclear threat, the fall of the Soviet Union was somewhat unwelcome to him and his top advisors, who had been well-seasoned within the foreign policy construct of containment. As Richard Melanson wrote:

George Bush, whose outlook, skills, and political constituency were products of the Cold War, had inherited a grand design that was four decades old, grounded in the precepts of the Truman Doctrine and expressed in the strategy of containment. The president created an inner circle of largely like-minded “professional buddies”… (and) none of them initially shared Ronald Reagan’s enthusiasm for Mikhail

153 Melanson, 195
Gorbachev or Reagan’s belief that the Cold War had ended. They entered office fully prepared to contain the Soviet Union.\textsuperscript{154}

While it wasn’t until Christmas of 1991 when the Soviet Union officially collapsed, the fall of Berlin Wall in November, 1989 made it unambiguously clear that this administration filled with Cold Warriors would have to deal with a whole new international environment altogether. Bush faced a transitioning world that seemed to have endless threats and he was forced to balance between asserting America’s role as the sole superpower and ceasing from becoming what he called a “global policeman.”

In an attempt to attach American foreign policy to a larger construct and sell it to the American public, Bush coined the term, the “New World Order.” At the heart of this construct was Bush’s belief that while America must be a leader in the world, international action in the post-Cold War era would have to be multilateral. In a 1993 speech at West Point, Bush said, “What was ‘entangling’ alliances in Washington’s day is now essential… I spoke of the folly of isolationism and of the importance, morally, economically, and strategically, of the United States remaining involved in world affairs. We must engage ourselves in a new world order, one more compatible with our values and congenial to our interest… but even more we must lead.\textsuperscript{155}”

Bush’s belief in multilateralism was perhaps best displayed during the lead-up to the First Gulf War. Beginning shortly after Hussein’s invasion of Kuwait, Bush and Secretary of State James Baker put together an international coalition that included 13 NATO countries, “nearly all Arab nations,” and some countries that had “just slipped out

\textsuperscript{154} Melanson, 200
Further, Bush decided not to chase Hussein into Iraq largely because he didn’t want to violate the UN resolution which only authorized an invasion into Kuwait.

Bush was also a pragmatist when it came to the decision on whether or not to use military force abroad. While he was calculated, reactive and cautious in general, he was a hawk when he believed force was necessary. It was such characteristics that allowed him to be strategically successful in his international endeavors. Bush and his advisors were “by and large the most careful of men, internationalists, anticommunists, but not ideologues or moralists.” George Bush knew the consequences of using military force and he also knew the consequences of not doing so. In 1942, on his 18th birthday, he had enlisted in the U.S. Navy to become a pilot; a period where his internationalist sentiments were shaped after Nazi Germany and Imperialist Japan overran their neighboring countries virtually unopposed and performed horrific atrocities on the helpless populations. As Halberstam wrote, “to many in the generation coming home after World War II, a generation that knew firsthand the tragedy of the war itself and the death of so many close friends, old-fashioned isolationism was no longer acceptable.” Yet, at the same time, Bush was no cowboy. He was cautious about the use of force and believed it should only be utilized when all other options had been exhausted. He performed a meticulous calculation of the costs and benefits of a military operation and always understood the gravity of asking an American soldier to die for his/her country. In 1993, when speaking to cadets at West Point, he described his beliefs on when military force should be used:

\[156\] Powell and Persico, 490
\[157\] Halberstam, 58
\[158\] Halberstam, 69
I know that many people would like to find some formula, some easy formula to apply, to tell us with precision when and where to intervene with force. Anyone looking for scientific certitude is in for a disappointment. In the complex new world we are entering, there can be no single or simple set of fixed rules for using force. Inevitably, the question of military intervention requires judgment. Each and every case is unique… Using military force makes sense as a policy where the stakes warrant, where and when force can be effective, where no other policies are likely to prove effective, where its application can be limited in scope and time, and where the potential benefits justify the potential costs and sacrifice… But in every case involving the use of force, it will be essential to have a clear and achievable mission, a realistic plan for accomplishing the mission, and criteria no less realistic for withdrawing U.S. forces once the mission is complete.159

Yet, despite his successes abroad, the American public never came to understand how democracy in Panama, dispelling Saddam from Kuwait or feeding the hungry in Somalia contributed in any coherent way to a “new world order.” With the American public more interested in domestic affairs, Bush still lacked the ability to connect his policies abroad with the domestic conditions at home.

In the end, it was not any type of failure in the international arena that prompted his electoral defeat in 1992, but the perception itself that Bush cared more for issues facing the world than those of his own people As James Schlesinger wrote, “now that the direct threat to the United States has eased, one must assume that the public’s willingness to be extensively engaged has also been correspondingly reduced. Indeed President Bush suffered in the polls, not because our forces were lengthily engaged overseas, but simply because the public felt that he was devoting too much attention to foreign affairs relative to domestic matters.” Ultimately, Bush contributed a pragmatic outlook to foreign policy in a very complex time, leveraging an impressive web of strategic relationships to make sure the Soviet empire collapsed without a thud. Yet he also offered nothing new or creative to the post-Cold War paradigm, a context that was ripe with opportunity. Instead,

159 Wines, 1993
160 James Schlesinger, "Quest for a Post-Cold War Foreign Policy," Foreign Affairs 72.1 (1992/93) .
he seemed to manage international affairs as if Cold War tensions still existed. As Brzezinski wrote, “by 1992 a remarkably successful diplomat and determined warrior had turned his promising call for a new world order into a reassertion of the more familiar old imperial order.”

*Bill Clinton*

The election of Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton in 1992 not only represented a shift in party but in generation as well. While Bush grew up as part of the “greatest generation,” Clinton was a baby-boomer. He had avoided going to Vietnam and instead joined the anti-war movement along with his future-wife, Hillary Rodham. As Melanson wrote, “Bill Clinton’s personal history made it more difficult for him to offer a declaratory history of American foreign relations. His record of antiwar protest and possible draft evasion seriously tainted his ability to narrate an inspiring, patriotic account of America’s historical role in the world.” He was also somewhat disliked by military commanders, not only because of his actions during the sixties, but also because, as a candidate, he pledged to lift the ban on gays in the military. Yet, unlike Bush, Clinton was a talented orator who could display empathy and compassion with the flick of switch. As Bacevich wrote, “Bill Clinton was a naturally gifted politician – glib, energetic, infinitely flexible in his principles, a man of outsized appetites for attention and power. Unencumbered by Cold War baggage and possessing a far surer grasp of how culture and technology were changing the United States, the nominally inexperienced

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161 Brzezinski, 82
162 Melanson, 280
Clinton arrived in the White House far better equipped than his predecessor to articulate a persuasive rationale for U.S. strategy.\textsuperscript{163}"

Bill Clinton was also the first president to both start and finish his tenure outside the realm of the Cold War. Perhaps nothing reflected this shift more pointedly than the fact that, unlike his predecessors stretching back over a half-century, Clinton focused his presidency on domestic issues. When his initiatives did cross into the international realm, they did so in the form of trade relations and open-market economics. As Brzezinski wrote, “Clinton (in contrast to Bush) viewed foreign affairs as a continuation of domestic politics by other means. This view also influenced the way foreign policy decisions were made under Clinton and how his principal foreign policy appointees were selected.\textsuperscript{164}"

The principles behind Clinton’s foreign policy were three-fold: democracy promotion, human rights and open markets. Together, these principles were articulated as the concept of enlargement where America would seek to “enlarge” the amount of nations who adhered to them. The main challenge for Clinton though - like with Bush - was selling his vision to the American public and military elite. As Melanson wrote:

Clinton often encountered difficulty when he tried to legitimate the use of military force in places like Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo. Part of the problem was the Pentagon’s reluctance to commit forces for what it viewed was essentially humanitarian missions. In order to win public support the president often inflated the stakes involved in these situations and, ironically, fell back on ‘national credibility’ arguments made by Cold War presidents. Furthermore, Clinton, the former war protestor, evidently shared the Defense Department’s skepticism about the employment of ground troops in these gray situations.\textsuperscript{165}

When conflicts arose that were perceived to have the potential to escalate into more serious affairs - such as when North Korea turned away from the Nonproliferation Treaty

\textsuperscript{163} Bacevich, 89
\textsuperscript{164} Brzezinski, 85
\textsuperscript{165} Melanson, 279
- the Clinton administration turned to diplomatic methods without any type of subsequent threat of force; policies that that never made the “cost of (North Korea’s) determination to acquire nuclear weapons… outweigh the benefit of acquiring them.”

Likewise, during a brutal civil war in Sudan, President Clinton presented an executive order stating that the Sudanese government constituted “an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States.”

Yet he followed that order with economic sanctions alone.

Clinton’s willingness to commit U.S. troops abroad was also heavily impacted by the Somalia incident. After the publics’ backlash to the deaths of 18 American troops in Mogadishu, what was considered the “Vietnam syndrome” to every U.S. president since Gerald Ford transformed into the “Somalia syndrome” to Clinton. Subsequently, it had a lasting impact on his decision to use force which was made clear after the U.S. balked at sending troops to intervene in a similar situation in Rwanda. As Melanson wrote, “although candidate Clinton had offered support for a standing UN force to fight terrorism and ethnic violence, Somalia forced the administration to reassess its thinking.” Ultimately, the fiasco in Mogadishu taught Clinton a valuable lesson about the limits of American military might and the complexity of the intra-state conflicts that arose throughout the developing world and he tried to avoid another such situation for the rest of his presidency.

In short, Clinton utilized military force as an extension of his domestic initiatives which included opening financial markets abroad and creating a global community conducive to American economic interests. His policies, though, like Bush’s before, had

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166 Brzezinski, 98
167 Bacevich, 110
168 Melanson, 244
no standard guideposts nor predictability but, instead, were largely concocted as reactions to world affairs. As Brzezinski stated, “(Clinton) never made a concerted effort to develop, articulate, and pursue a comprehensive strategy for a responsible American role in the volatile world that confronted him.” While high approval ratings reflected the booming status of American financial markets, hostility toward America and its growing role in international affairs increased throughout the Middle East, Africa and Central Asia. Likewise, diplomatic efforts to halt nuclear weapon proliferation had proven to be inadequate as North Korea and (supposedly) Iraq inched toward developing nuclear warheads and the Israeli-Palestinian peace process had broken down. Thus, although packaged and framed distinctively, Clinton’s foreign policy was little different than Bush’s. In an increasingly complex international environment, America had become the major player in global affairs yet still lacked a coherent paradigm to guide and justify its actions abroad. As Melanson concluded, “despite his justifiable claim to be the first wholly post-Cold War president, Bill Clinton’s attempts to legitimate publicly his grand design, strategic objectives, and foreign policy tactics broke little new ground. He relied on most of the same devices used by his predecessors.”

Conclusions

Documented in Part II were the parallel trends that impacted the use of armed force during the 1990s. First was the changed nature of international conflicts after World War II and how they decreased the effectiveness of military force as it was equipped and utilized by state actors. As was the case prior to World War I, conflicts within states

169 Brzezinski, 131
170 Melanson, 279
between religious, ethnic and cultural factions erupted throughout the developing world, causing massive bloodshed and instability. Subsequently, these intra-state, assymetrical wars represented a dramatic shift in both the nature of warfare as a whole and the tactics necessary to be successful in international conflicts. As a result, Bacevich wrote, “the military establishment inherited from the Cold War was not especially well suited for the new era.”

The other trend unleashed during this period were the fluctuations within the societal and institutional elements of American domestic politics that increased the amount of varying influences in the foreign policy decision-making process and decreased the range of policy alternatives that the American public and policymakers would tolerate.

In effect, throughout the 1990s, force was utilized only when policymakers believed it could be employed within the parameters established by the American domestic environment; namely, quickly and with few American casualties. When an operation became too politically costly, as was the case after the fiasco in Mogadishu, the use of force was no longer a desired political tool. While these limits on military engagements worked to maintain a level of public support, they inhibited Bush and Clinton from establishing a new foreign policy consensus or a sweeping paradigm for America’s role in the new international environment. Subsequently, American foreign policy became a reactive, case-by-case process that was particularly sensitive to fluctuating domestic influences. While Bush declared the “new world order” and Clinton spoke of the potential for global prosperity through enlargement; their actual policies were more alike than they were different. Without a sweeping foreign policy strategy

171 Bacevich, 120
anchored by an “evil” nemesis, American actions abroad took on a policing role, tying up the loose ends that emerged after the collapse of the old international structure instead of asserting a bold vision for the new century. This was the case up until September 11, 2001; a day that many experts claimed had changed the very basis of American foreign policy and its role in the world. Discussed in the third and fourth parts of this research article are the merits of such exertions and a conclusion to the question: Did 9/11 really change everything?
Part III:
January 20, 2001 – September 10, 2001

We’ve never had a good name for it, and now it’s over. The post-cold war era – let us call it that for want of any better term – began with the collapse of one structure, the Berlin Wall on November 9, 1989, and ended with the collapse of another, the World Trade Center’s twin towers on September 11, 2001. No one, apart from the few people who plotted and carried out these events, could have anticipated that they were going to happen. But from the moment they did happen, everyone acknowledged that everything had changed\textsuperscript{172}

- Strobe Talbot and Nayan Chanda

\textsuperscript{172} Strobe Talbott and Nayan Chanda, eds., \textit{The Age of Terror} (New York: Basic Books, 2001)
The psyche of the victors

As the clock hit midnight on January 1, 2000 the feared Y2K computer viruses never materialized and Americans celebrated the dawn of the new millennium in relative peace. While the 20th Century had seen two world wars, the creation of the atomic bomb and multiple genocides, America and the West felt that in the end, they had emerged triumphant. More specifically, as Dr. Andrew Bacevich explained in a January, 2007 speech at Miami University, four big ideas permeated the psyche of American strategists following the collapse of the Soviet Union that would come to dominate foreign policy at the beginning of the new millennium.

The first idea was what Francis Fukayama called “The end of history.” According to this notion, with the end of the Cold War, the West had achieved a final victory in the great ideological battles that arose throughout the 20th century, with liberal democracy being the sole survivor. Over the course of the previous 100 years, the governing model of free elections, limited government and civil rights had defeated imperialism, fascism and most recently, bolshevism, and it had proven to be the only plausible model of organizing a successful society.173 As the director of the Middle East Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Marina Ottaway wrote, “Since the end of the Cold War… it has become axiomatic that democracy is the only acceptable political system, good for all countries under all circumstances.”174

Second was globalization. As described in detail in Part I, with the fall of the Soviet Empire, there was nothing left to stop the powerful forces of economic integration

173 Bacevich, Miami University, 01/12/2007
174 Crocker, Hampson, and Aall, 603
as they forged outward into previously untapped markets.\textsuperscript{175} To much of the world, for better or worse, globalization was synonymous with Americanization and U.S. leaders claimed the responsibility of directing its expansion.

Third was the notion that America was an “indispensable nation,” a term coined by President Clinton’s Secretary of State Madeline Albright. American leaders recognized that after the Cold War, the U.S. had ascended to a position of “unique global leadership.”\textsuperscript{176} Consistent with this notion was also the belief that Americanism was universal; it was accepted and welcomed by all and that there would be no state competitor in the near future to challenge America’s global status.\textsuperscript{177}

Finally was a level of military capability that the Pentagon hoped to achieve by the year 2020, “Full Spectrum Dominance.”\textsuperscript{178} FSD was centered on the belief that the evolution of communication technologies had changed the very nature of warfare by making the battlefield transparent; thus removing the fog and friction of war.\textsuperscript{179} As Bacevich wrote in \textit{American Empire}, “At root, the expectation that the United States could sustain broad-gauged military preeminence rested on a specific understanding of the role that technology – in particular information technology – has come to play in modern warfare.”\textsuperscript{180} Through FSD, the U.S. could reach complete military supremacy by obtaining the key factor in any conflict; information. New technologies would pinpoint the exact location of enemy combatants and eliminate collateral damage. By doing so, American military officials believed that war itself would almost become obsolete.

\textsuperscript{175} Bacevich, 2007
\textsuperscript{176} Bacevich, 2007
\textsuperscript{177} Bacevich, 2007
\textsuperscript{178} Bacevich, 2007
\textsuperscript{179} Bacevich, 2007
\textsuperscript{180} Bacevich, 131
because of the overwhelming dominance of the U.S. armed forces allowing for little cost to be incurred in future conflicts. In an address at the Citadel in 2000, then Candidate George W. Bush announced his priority to “take advantage of a revolution in the technology of war to transform America’s military… This would involve skipping a generation of technology to build ‘agile, lethal, readily deployable’ forces requiring minimum logistical support.”

Implicit in the very concept of FSD was also the belief that hard power could act as the driving force behind the spread of globalization, democracy and American leadership. With FSD, American leaders could utilize force swiftly and accurately and there was no limit to its reaches. Afghanistan and Iraq would be the first two case-studies testing the effectiveness of this notion where superior communication and weaponry could drastically reduce the personnel on the ground and still achieve the stated goals. As Bacevich concluded, “having assessed the security implications of globalization – a process ostensibly making the world more complicated and more dangerous than ever before – the United States after the Cold War committed itself to establishing a level of military mastery without historical precedent.”

At the heart of all these ideas was the belief that the end of the Cold War had made America irrevocably stronger. As Fred Kaplan wrote in Daydream Believers, “George W. Bush and his top aides in the White House and the Pentagon came to office believing that the United States had emerged from its Cold War victory as the world’s ‘sole superpower’ and that they could therefore do pretty much as they pleased…” American power seemed not merely undiminished but nearly absolute. It was a new era,

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181 Melanson, 300
182 Bacevich, 2007
183 Bacevich, 133
time to devise new ways of seeing and dealing with the world – new strategies that would take full advantage of what they saw their unbridled supremacy.\textsuperscript{184} While the assertion that the international power structure drastically changed after the disintegration of the Soviet Union is indisputable; the shift that took place led not to a simpler world capped by U.S. omnipotence – as many believed -, but one that was vastly more complex and dangerous. Part III of \textit{Did 9/11 Really Change Everything?} describes the actors who evolved as a result of this shift and how, when empowered by the forces of globalization, they were able to attack America on September 11, 2001. Part IV, then describes what did and did not change as a result of the attacks and how the ideas listed above led to the failures of American policies in the attacks’ aftermath.

\textit{Military force in the age of global terrorism}

Former Under Secretary-General of the United Nations Brian Urquhart wrote that “the last decade of the twentieth century may well go down in history as the time when conventional battlefield warfare, like the great battleships of the early part of the century, became an anachronism. This development has not only changed the nature of warfare; it has also changed the way in which military institutions might be used to maintain peace.\textsuperscript{185}"

The guerilla wars waged by ethnic minorities or nationalist groups throughout poor and unstable regions after the fall of the Soviet Union dampened but didn’t eradicate the extreme optimism held by American officials about the possibilities of a post-Cold War international environment. Although these conflicts were bloody – at times

\textsuperscript{184} Kaplan, 1,3
\textsuperscript{185} Crocker, Hampson, and Aall, 265
involving ethnic cleansing – they remained regional and apart from any transnational threat; thus only involving America when and to the extent that America wanted to get involved in them. As the world’s only superpower, America had the luxury of dictating its own actions abroad without worrying about disturbing the balance of power or a provoking a rival threat.

During this time, however, the international power structure was drastically evolving as the scope of conflicting interests expanded exponentially. Further, increases in the dissemination of money, weaponry and knowledge enabled under-trained and under-armed local and regional paramilitary groups to successfully compete with state-armies. This did more than just level the playing-field, it empowered nonstate groups to the extent where they no longer needed a mother-state to aid, train, and supply them. Hence, they went from being the surrogates of larger states fighting for the objectives dictated by larger powers to being autonomous with the capability to wage war in pursuit of their own objectives. As John Robb wrote in *Brave New War*, “Because of the arrival of this new technological and structural leverage, these guerilla and terrorist movements, which were once the proxy puppets of nation-states, became autonomous…In this new environment, small groups could travel, communicate, finance, and trade globally without state support. Translated into military terms, this allowed small groups to finance, plan, supply, and coordinate attacks globally with little regard for borders, laws, and governments.”

Thus, while the disintegration of the Soviet Union left America as the only remaining superpower in the world; globalization was in the process of decentralizing conventional notions of power and subsequtnely allowing for nonstate entities – which

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186 Robb, 30
originally formed for ethnic or nationalist concerns – to become autonomous economic, political and military players in the global arena. As these groups expanded the scope of their organizations, they began to evolve into elaborate networks of money and manpower and their presence in the international landscape dramatically altered both the concept and allocation of power worldwide.

A 21st century enemy

Understanding the perils of the international environment that existed at the start of the 21st century requires an understanding of the specific actors who inhabited it as well as their capabilities and motivations for attacking the West. In the wake of the 9/11 attacks, the two main questions on Americans’ minds were who did it and why? Six years later, while American officials have given the public a face and name at whom to direct their anger– Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda -, there still exist many misperceptions about who this enemy really is and how to combat it in the future. In order to effectively identify the enemy who attacked America on 9/11 it is necessary to start at the very beginning of the Muslim religion and trace the complex factions, evolutions and mutations – spurred by unique combinations of social, religious, economic and technological factors - that led a small contingent of religious radicals to declare war against the West.

An Ancient Jihad

There is a fundamental flaw in the way Western leaders strategize against militant Muslim extremist groups which is rooted in how these leaders perceive the so-called
“terrorists.” All too often President Bush and his chief strategists talk about Muslim extremists as if they represent a homogenous bloc with common objectives, tactics and capabilities. However, unlike the Soviet Union during the Cold War, the enemies facing America and the West today are considerably more complex. As Fawad Gerges wrote in *The Far Enemy*, “Since September 11 a tendency existed among Western commentators to lump all jihadis together in one category and to overlook important subtleties, nuances, and differences among them. Al Qaeda represents just one violent current in a diverse and complex movement."\(^{187}\)

While al Qaeda is the product of many factors and variables over time, its beginning coincided with that of the nation of Islam. In the seventh century, the followers of the prophet Mohammed formed the first Islamic state around the Muslim religion; effectively merging political and religious boundaries.\(^{188}\) Sitting in the middle of ancient Arabia, the nascent Islamic nation faced many enemies and like any nation-state, needed a military or at least a capacity to fight so to protect itself from invaders. However, because the Islamic state was formed with the authority and guidance of Allah (via the Prophet Muhammad), the act of defending its physical boundaries – and the duty to protect one’s land and people - was tantamount to defending all of the nation of Islam as well (called the umma or global community of believers). Hence, this “call to duty” directed to defend Islam – the state and the religion – during its earliest years became the very first jihad. As Walid Phares wrote in *Future Jihad*, “(jihad) is a call to mobilize the resources, energies, and capabilities of individuals in the service of the higher cause…Jihad became the


engine to shield as well as expand the community of believers… all battles became holy; all encounters with the enemy were inscribed as part of religious duty189.” Hence, in the traditional setting, jihad was a collective duty in defense of Muslim lands and laws and could only be initiated by the highest authority of the Islamic state (the successor of the Prophet - the Caliph). Only this successor would be able to lead because only he would inherit the divine guidance of Allah.190

The time period between 622 CE and 657 CE became known as the golden age of Islam after Mohammed and his successors led Muslim armies across the Arabian Peninsula in order to unify and expand the umma. However, “since then, according to the worldview of (radical Islamists), humanity has been caught between the positive, dynamic expansion of Islam around the globe and a negative movement toward corruption, under the influence of materialistic politicians.191

In the 12th century, the armies of the Turkish Ottoman Empire marched into Christian Europe and didn’t stop until they reached the boundaries of Vienna. As they turned to the Middle East, they swiftly conquered Mesopotamia and then solidified themselves as the supreme leaders of the Muslim world by declaring their sultan the Caliph and moving the capital to Istanbul.192 Soon, as Phares wrote, “the Ottomans imposed themselves as custodians of the faith and of the umma… For centuries to come, the Ottomans were accepted as the new rulers, despite the fact that they were not Arabs… The logic of jihad

189 Phares, 24
190 Phares, 25
192 Phares, 42
superseded the logic of ethnic difference between Arabs and Turks. Thus, the institution of the Caliphate existed in the form of a state-like entity, the Ottoman Empire.

*The privatization of jihad*

In 1923, Kemal Mustafa disassembled the Ottoman Empire and founded the Republic of Turkey in its place. However, in doing so, Mustafa dissolved the institution of the Caliphate as well which effectively ended 13 centuries of state-sponsored jihad. When the umma and a political state were one and the same, jihad - while religious in justification - could only be initiated by the ruler of the Islamic state and thus ultimately represented the actions of a nation within the larger international community. However, with the fall of the Ottoman Empire after World War I, the juxtaposition of state-ruler and Caliphate ended and there was no longer a single, centralized authority. In effect, this initiated a process of privatization of jihad, where individuals and groups claimed the Caliphates’ religious authority to wage war and with it, conducted personal jihads.

*Jihadists and the 9/11 attackers*

In order to understand who actually attacked the U.S. on 9/11 and how to combat them in the future, there are critical distinctions that must be made within the religion of Islam so that instead of fighting the generic “terrorists” who occupy the role of the enemy in President Bush’s rhetoric, we can identify the specific worldview, objectives and tactics of our enemies as well as the social, economic and religious factors that lead to their successes and failures. As Talbott and Nayan wrote, “This new enemy was different.

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193 Phares, 43
194 Phares, 71
Osama bin Laden’s organization, al Qaeda, flew no flag – it was the ultimate NGO – and his warriors seemed inspired rather than deterred by the prospect of their fiery deaths.\(^{195}\)

Like in any religion, there exists a minority within Islam who abide by an ultra-conservative interpretation of the Koran and believe that all levels of society should be governed by Shariah law; these extremist Muslims are referred to as Islamists. However, within this larger extremist minority category – Islamists - there exist two more sub-categories: first, are the vast majority of Islamists who can be considered mainstream. They, over time, have accepted contemporary political norms and seek to “Islamize state and society through peaceful means.”\(^{196}\)

The other sub-category within the Islamist movement is jihadism. It is this group (actually several groups) that considers the continuation of the ancient jihad the individual duty of every Muslim\(^{197}\) (Gerges, p. 3). However, in contrast to the classical meaning of the word jihad, which called for the collective defense of Muslim lands, modern jihadists “claim that the old rules and regulations do not apply because Muslim lands are ‘occupied,’ by either local ‘apostates’ or their American masters.”\(^{198}\) As Gerges wrote, “historically, the classical view held that jihad was a collective duty that could be activated only if outside enemies threatened or invaded Muslim lands.”\(^{199}\) However, contemporary jihadists assert that “present-day Muslim rulers… forsake their religion by not applying the Shariah and by taking unbelievers as their allies…Therefore, waging jihad against these apostates is a personal duty of every Muslim who is capable of

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\(^{195}\) Talbott and Chanda, xi
\(^{196}\) Gerges, 2
\(^{197}\) Gerges, 3
\(^{198}\) Gerges, 3
\(^{199}\) Gerges, 10
fighting until the former repent or get killed.\textsuperscript{200} Hence, by re-defining the concept and justification for jihad, the leaders of modern jihadist movements take what was considered a tool for the defense of Islam and use it in offensive ways.

The contemporary jihadist worldview – and the new meaning of jihad - largely stem from the writings of Sayyid Qutb, an Egyptian radical who was executed in 1966 for attempting to overthrow the government.\textsuperscript{201} Qutb spent several years studying in the United States in the 1940s where he developed an intense loathing for what he considered to be a sinfully materialistic and secular culture. He later described the world as made up of two bipolar dimensions: Islam and what he called 
\textit{Jahiliyya}, an existence “beset with barbarism, licentiousness, and unbelief.”\textsuperscript{202} There was no middle ground between the two and thus, every human either followed Islam as particularly defined by Qutb or was worthy of destruction.\textsuperscript{203} The problem though, according to Qutb, was that most humans were attracted more toward the material impulses offered by 
\textit{Jahiliyya} than Islam and thus, Islam would eventually succumb to those impulses. Therefore, it was the duty of every Muslim to take up arms against the forces and followers of 
\textit{Jahiliyya} because one or the other must prevail. As Gergez wrote, Qutb initiated the doctrine followed by contemporary jihadists through “popularizing and legitimizing the idea of making jihad a personal and permanent endeavor to confront ‘jahili leadership’ and ‘jahili society’ alike.”\textsuperscript{204}

\textsuperscript{200} Gerges, 10
\textsuperscript{203} National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, Kean, and Hamilton, 51
\textsuperscript{204} Gerges, 6
Hence, after the dissolution of the institution of the Caliphate as a state entity (the Ottoman Empire), there occurred the process of privatization of the Muslim authority to wage war – jihad. Modern jihadis, in the form of nonstate groups, view themselves as the legitimate heirs to ancient Caliphs and take it upon themselves to execute their orders and continue the jihad that began in the seventh century. As Phares wrote, “the jihadists have developed an interpretation of Islam the religion and applied it to the realm of world politics. In simpler terms, the jihadists are twentieth-century terrorists who want to resume the wars unleashed by Islamic empires nearly fourteen centuries ago. But in the absence of an actual unified Islamic ‘empire’… today’s jihadis have to act on its behalf, committing violence in the name of a whole community and an entire religion.” The main objective of modern jihadis is to re-unify the umma and reestablish the Caliphate by dissolving contemporary political borders and creating “one great Muslim world stretching from Spain through North Africa, the Middle East, and all the way down to Indonesia and into parts of Asia.”

The meaning of this objective in operational terms and how to translate it into strategic tactics in contemporary warfare has been the subject of much debate within the jihadist movement. Beginning in the 1970s and continuing until the 1990s, leading jihadis would come to classify the strategic aspect of their struggle in two dimensions: fighting the near enemy – that is, local Muslim rulers who jihadis consider to be apostates because they have violated Shariah law; and fighting the far enemy – the true infidels, the U.S. and Israel. Jihadists viewed the American-Israeli alliance as the main culprit in “keeping

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205 Phares, 48
206 Robb, 18
the umma ‘divided’ and for aborting any ‘corrective movement to unify its ranks.\textsuperscript{207}’

Hence, to them, the local, pro-Western Muslim regimes were just the means (or agents) through which this infidel alliance operated.

In the 1970s, though, the jihadist movement represented only a tiny contingent of Muslims and didn’t have the resources to wage a global battle against infidels nor did they want to incur the wrath of the sole remaining superpower. Therefore, the movement set their sights on the near enemy with the objective to “Islamize” the Muslim lands by replacing Muslim rulers for a state governed by strict Shariah law. As Gerges wrote, “until the mid-1990s the dominant thinking among jihadis was that Muslim rulers’ subservience to and collusion with Western powers enabled the latter to dominate the world of Islam. Therefore, jihadis argued that the most effective means to terminate Western hegemony over their societies was by replacing the secular local order with an Islamic one. They also correctly reckoned… that they did not have the resources to militarily confront Western states.\textsuperscript{208}”

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, militant jihadist groups like Hamas in Palestine, Hezbollah in Lebanon, and other “religious nationalist” groups in Kashmir, Chechnya, Egypt and Algeria “believed that seizing power at home by armed struggle was the swiftest and most effective way to Islamize state and society.\textsuperscript{209}” Therefore, they “launched an all-out frontal assault to dismantle the secular social and political order and replace it with a theocratic one.\textsuperscript{210}”

\textsuperscript{207} Gerges, 144
\textsuperscript{208} Gerges, 47
\textsuperscript{209} Gerges, 11
\textsuperscript{210} Gerges, 25
What is critical to note here is the purposeful and rational decision on behalf of the many factions who made-up the jihadist movement to focus on pro-Western Muslim regimes – especially in Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Algeria - and not the West itself. That is, as Gerges wrote, from the 1970s until the mid-1990s, the jihadist movement’s “overriding goal revolved around confronting the secular, pro-Western Arab rulers as a first strategic step before engaging Israel and the United States. Fighting the near enemy took priority over fighting the far enemy… because young militants wanted to establish an Islamic base or a safe haven at home. In fact, there existed very little operational thinking, let alone conceptualizing about the primacy of engaging the far enemy.”

Hence, the 2001 attacks on America must have been the result of some sort of strategic shift within the jihadist movement. This shift – or as Gerges described, mutation – is essential to understanding the specific faction of the jihadist movement who orchestrated the 9/11 attacks as well as how they should be confronted in the future.

Since 1923, there have been three separate waves of jihadism that have claimed the authority as the post-Ottoman Caliphate and found footing within the Muslim world. The first emerged in the 1920s and was based off of a doctrine – called the Salaf - established by Sunni cleric, Mohammed Abdel Wahab and came to be known as Wahabism. This doctrine reverted to literal translations of the teaching and declarations of the founding fathers of Islam and separated the world into two factions: believers and infidels. Out of this ideological strand came the leaders of the Saudi kingdom who launched an internal campaign to spread their beliefs throughout the Muslim world.

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211 Gerges, 29
212 Phares, 61
Using their vast wealth acquired through oil exports, the Wahabi followers implemented Salafi teachings into mosques, schools, libraries, hospitals and other centers for communication and information throughout the region laying the groundwork of anti-West, pro-jihadist ideology that would eventually produce an offshoot named Osama bin Laden.\(^{213}\)

The second wave of contemporary jihadism arose out of Egypt, called the Muslim Brotherhood. Like Wahabism, the Brotherhood revolved around Salafi teachings but was more militant than its Saudi counterpart. Out of this movement came jihadist organizations such as Hamas and future al Qaeda leaders Ayman al-Zawahiri and Abdullah Azzam. As Phares wrote, the Muslim Brotherhood “waged local jihads in multiple battlefield around the globe, at times joined ‘national’ struggles against foreign ‘infidel’ forces, such as the Soviets in Afghanistan or the Israelis in the West Bank and Gaza, and took part in civil wars against (infidel) enclaves in southern Sudan and Lebanon.”\(^{214}\) In 1979, products of Wahabi teaching and members of the Muslim Brotherhood would meet in the mountains of Afghanistan in an effort to thwart the Soviet advance and form a strategic and ideological alliance which effectively linked two strands of radical Islam that would eventually form al Qaeda.

The third wave differs from the previous two in that it was formed by the Shiite community.\(^{215}\) After overthrowing the shah in Iran, Imam Ruhollah Khumeini declared the Persian country an Islamic state and “opened a space for Shia radical politics to rise”\(^{216}\) after being marginalized for centuries. While both the Salafis and the Muslim

\(^{213}\) Phares, 61
\(^{214}\) Phares, 65
\(^{215}\) Phares, 66
\(^{216}\) Phares, 66
Brotherhood rejected the legitimacy of the Shiite Islamic republic, the Khumeini revolution produced radical offshoots of its own, including the terrorist organization, Hezbollah.

A war, a snub and a defeat: the seeds of mutation

As will become evident, the creation of the philosophical and strategic doctrine that would guide al Qaeda was a product of the personalities and ambitions of opportunistic leaders combined with the effects of a unique amalgamation of events.

The first event had little to do with the U.S. and occurred in the rugged eastern hills of Afghanistan in 1980. As imperial-minded Soviet forces raided the poor tribal country, a make-shift militia of jihadis from all over the Muslim world launched a guerilla campaign to expel the communists from Muslim soil. There was a consensus within both the religious and political establishments in Arab lands that the fight against the Soviets was a defensive war and therefore was the collective duty of the umma to repel the onslaught against Islam (hence, the consensus was that the Afghan war was a legitimate jihad). As Gerges wrote, “never before in modern times had so many Muslims from so many lands who spoke different tongues separately journeyed to a Muslim country to fight together against a common enemy.” As more and more “Arab Afghans” entered Afghanistan (those who were not local Afghan mujahadeen), the nature of the battle shifted from purely a nationalist war against foreign invaders to a religious war between Islam and the godless Soviet communists. While many tall tales exist about the heroic impact of the foreign fighters; in truth, they had little to no actual impact on the outcome.

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217 Gerges, 81
218 Gerges, 82
of the war. Instead, most of the fighting was done by Afghan mujahadeen who vastly outnumbered the Afghan Arabs and ultimately were the reason for the Soviet defeat.\(^\text{219}\)

However, the Afghan war was significant for different reasons. First, it showed the jihadist movement’s leaders their capabilities when they worked together and mobilized Muslim society behind a cause. It also created the perception that the great secular powers were no match for the spiritually-guided and divinely motivated jihadis.

Second, fighting together in the Afghan hills for nearly a decade forged alliances between the various groups of jihadis – or more importantly, certain individual members of those groups - whose resulting organizations came to form the subsequent generation of the jihadist movement. Most significant amongst these alliances was the “fusion of puritanical Salafism-Wahhabism with a militant internationalist strand of Muslim Brotherhood”, which would eventually morph into bin Ladenism.\(^\text{220}\)

Finally, the Afghan war created the first transnational Islamic movement and set in place the philosophical, strategic, and religious forces that led to 9/11.\(^\text{221}\) As a proxy-force during the Cold War, the mujahadeen received money and weapons from many capitalist countries (including the U.S.) and by 1984, Bin Laden began to use his family’s wealth to establish a worldwide network of Islamic fighters. These men received first-hand training in the war with the Soviets and became addicted to the jihadist cause.\(^\text{222}\) After the war, bin Laden’s army constituted a unique fighting unit and its members were sent all throughout the Muslim world to aid their fellow holy warriors in jihads against local regimes. As Phares wrote, “(jihadists) used the Afghan conflict to recruit and train

\(^{219}\) Gerges, 82  
\(^{220}\) Gerges, 86  
\(^{222}\) Gerges, 84
men for the worldwide jihad. They basically transformed a national resistance movement, the true Afghan mujahidin, into a hub for radical Islamists – those who would become the Taliban and later al Qaeda.223"

Still wrapped-up in Cold War politics, American officials never viewed the Afghani Jihad as anything but “an extension of their war-in-proxy against the Soviet Union.”224 While united against a common enemy at the time, the jihadist movement had vastly different objectives than those of the United States and used the Afghan war as a stepping-stone en-route to their larger goals. As Gerges wrote, American officials “gave little thought to the aftermath of the Afghan struggle: what to do with tens of thousands of hardened fighters baptized into a culture of martyrdom and emboldened by victory over a rival superpower.”225"

The second major event that sowed the philosophical, ideological and strategic seeds that led to 9/11 was the first Gulf War. The 1991 war with Iraq, or more specifically the U.S. involvement in it, took the radical views of bin Laden and targeted them exclusively on the West. In August, 1990, Saddam Hussein and his Iraqi army invaded its tiny neighbor Kuwait and in doing so took control of a large faction of the world’s oil supply. In response, bin Laden offered to mobilize 100,000 holy warriors in defense of the Saudi kingdom. While viewing King Faud and his family as apostates,226 bin Laden remained in contact and relative peace with them throughout the 1980s. However, the royal family turned down bin Laden’s proposal and instead turned to

223 Phares, 110
224 Gerges, 73
225 Gerges, 73
226 Gerges, 144
George Bush and the Americans. This snub infuriated bin Laden as a Muslim regime willingly allowed non-Muslim soldiers to walk within the same borders as Mecca and Medina. On his deathbed, the Prophet Muhammad had said, “let there be no two religions in Arabia.” While there are many interpretations as to the meaning of this clause, to bin Laden and other Islamists, it clearly meant that “all non-Muslims should be expelled from the entire peninsula.”

The U.S. presence in Saudi Arabia was, for bin Laden, “the point of no return because the sanctity of Islam’s holiest shrines was desecrated by the impious crusaders.” As Gerges described, different from religious nationalists who fought the near enemy in order to establish local Islamist societies, bin Laden “viewed local regimes, including the house of Saud, as insignificant tools and agents in the hands of the Americans. He considered Saudi Arabia an occupied country and its regime incapable of forcing the Americans out. Therefore, he declared war on the United States, not on Saudi Arabia, because… once the United States is expelled from the area, its local clients would fall like ripened fruits.”

Subsequently, bin Laden and his cohorts began to ponder how to make their desire to wage war on the far enemy operational. In a 1992 conference in Khartoum, Islamic fundamentalists from all over the Muslim world – Sunni and Shiite – came together to, as Phares wrote, lay “the groundwork for the surge in an international jihadist network, centered on the core jihadists who had fought the Afghan war… The jihadists laid out a new international strategy to defeat the forces of kuffar (infidels) and especially

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227 Wright, 158
228 Wright, 158
229 Gerges, 148
230 Gerges, 149
their head, the much-hated United States.\textsuperscript{231} This meeting became the first formal wedge in the divide that would eventually separate the jihadist movement based on strategic objectives: religious nationalists who aimed to overthrow the near enemy; and transnationalists whose sights were set on a much larger objective: attacking the West.

*The birth of transnational jihad*

The third and final event – which is actually a series of events - that paved the way toward al Qaeda occurred within Muslim societies. By the mid-1990s the jihadist movement’s two largest and most powerful factions were on the verge of annihilation. Tens of thousands of militant jihadists in Egypt and Algeria had been killed or arrested by Hosni Mubarak’s or the Algerian military junta’s security forces and those who had managed to continue the fight found themselves unable to inspire and mobilize mainstream Muslim society.\textsuperscript{232} Most citizens within the Muslim world, while empathizing with the jihadists’ cause, found their violent tactics repulsive and “held them responsible for the country’s bloodletting.”\textsuperscript{233} In essence, after nearly 20 years of armed conflict with local Muslim regimes the jihadis were no closer to unifying the umma or establishing Shariah law throughout the region. Further, they were now broke and had lost the “hearts and minds” of the local populations.

With defeat on the horizon, jihadist leaders began to fight amongst themselves and the movement eventually fractured. With dwindling options, large groups – most notably the Egyptian Islamic Group – declared a unilateral ceasefire in 1997. As Gerges wrote, the jihadis “viewed the battle as strategically lost, and they felt that the costs of

\textsuperscript{231} Phares, 127
\textsuperscript{232} Gerges, 25
\textsuperscript{233} Gerges, 153
continuing the fight could not match any likely benefits. Their rank and file at home were exhausted and needed breathing space to heal their wounds... tens of thousands of jihadis, including the top leadership, were languished in prisons in Egypt, Algeria, and elsewhere.234"

The ceasefire, though, was not embraced by all, including the leader of the jihadist group, Ismaic Jihad, and future deputy of al Qaeda, Aymin al-Zawahiri. Zawahiri - by this time located in the Afghanistan with Osama bin Laden - wrote a series of letters to jihadist leaders all over the region trying to get the ceasefire revoked.235 When his efforts failed, he began to look inward, questioning the strategies that had guided jihadis over the past two decades which had failed to mobilize the umma, particularly the overall strategy of fighting the near enemy (apostate Muslim rulers). Along with his newfound ally, bin Laden, Zawahiri decided that it was time to switch strategies and go after the far enemy: America (that is, he agreed with the strategy that bin Laden had advocated for since the early 1990s). As Gerges wrote, Zawahiri rationalized that “taking jihad global would put an end to the internal war that roiled the jihadist movement after it was defeated by local Muslim regimes. ‘The solution’ was to drag the United States into a total confrontation with the umma and wake Muslims from their political slumber.”236" Hence, by the latter years of the 20th century, a small faction of jihadis, lead by Zawahiri and bin Laden, looked to internationalize jihad with the hope of provoking a confrontation between civilizations – the Muslim world versus the West – that would mobilize the umma behind the jihadist cause.237

234 Gerges, 160-162
235 Gerges, 159
236 Gerges, 160
237 Gerges, 157
In sum, the consequences of three major events led to the paradigmatic shift within the jihadist movement from localism to globalism: the first event was the defeat of Russian troops in Afghanistan and the collapse of the Soviet Union shortly thereafter; second was the Saudi snub of bin Laden in the wake of Saddam Hussein’s invasion of Kuwait and the permanent presence of American troops in Saudi Arabia; and last were the crushing defeats suffered by religious nationalist groups throughout the 1990s at the hands of local Arab regimes. Each event played an important role in the philosophical and strategic evolution of the jihadist doctrine and subsequently led Zawahiri and bin Laden to form the very first transnational jihadist organization: al Qaeda.

The sociology of radicalization

The rise of al Qaeda was catalyzed by the alliance between the charismatic bin Laden and the ideologue Zawahiri combined with the defeat of religious nationalist at the hands of the near enemy. Throughout the 1990s, bin Laden’s international ambitions kept him from becoming a central player in the mainstream jihadist movement other than as chief financier. While emerging from the Afghan war as a hero (due to his own accounts of a disputed battle with the Soviets), many jihadist leaders considered his desire to attack the West as foolish and dangerous. However, as Gerges wrote, the jihadist movement in general was not led by “ideas or organizations,” but by “highly charismatic, aggressive, and daring personalities who captivated and inspired followers to unquestionably do their bidding.” Hence the key to understanding the motivations and tactics of al Qaeda, as

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238 Gerges, 30-31
239 Gerges, 34
well as its appeal throughout the Muslim world, lies in exploring the worldview of its leaders bin Laden and Zawahiri and their alliance in transnational jihad.

While bin Laden is the face, financier and lead motivator of al Qaeda,
the Egyptian-born physician with roots in the Muslim Brotherhood - is its ideologue, "conceptualizer and theoretician." Until the mid-1990s, Zawahiri was one of the lead advocates for the belief in the necessity to attack the near enemy opposed to trying to face-off against the West. In fact, when he first went to Afghanistan to fight the Soviets in 1986 – where he met bin Laden – he did so not out of a desire to internationalize jihad but instead, to "develop strategic plans to overthrow the pro-Western government in Egypt." However, within a few years, Zawahiri’s ambitions evolved and he abandon the local doctrine for a global one and subsequently allied himself with bin Laden. While there is some debate over why this shift took place, the most plausible reason is a combination of deteriorating funds – thus making an alliance with and subjugation to the wealthy bin Laden a necessity – and the realization that jihad against the near enemy had failed and it was a time to try something new.

Bin Laden, on the other hand, formed his desire to directly confront the West much earlier, after he perceived the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan and the subsequent collapse of its empire to be a direct result of the involvement of the Arab Afghans. That perception – although untrue - led bin Laden to the conclusion that a "ragged army of dedicated Muslims could overcome a superpower." As Wright wrote, “(bin Laden) had

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241 Gerges, 18
242 Gerges, 120
243 Gerges, 121
244 National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, Kean, and Hamilton, 48
developed a fixed idea about America, which he explained to each new class of al-Qaeda recruits. America appeared so mighty, he told them, but it was actually weak and cowardly. Look at Vietnam, look at Lebanon. Whenever soldiers start coming home in body bags, Americans panic and retreat… For all its wealth and resources, America lacks conviction. It cannot stand against warriors of faith who do not fear death.245"

Unlike other jihadist leaders, bin Laden realized that the lifeline of Western superpowers was not their militaries but their economies. Therefore, he believed that defeating the U.S. was only a matter of drawing it into a prolonged conflict in a Muslim land that could continually drain its economic and human resources246 (National Geographic: Inside al Qaeda). Subsequently, like when the Soviets invaded in 1979, the umma would unify and mobilize in jihad against the common non-Muslim enemy.

Bin Laden and Zawahiri both subscribe to Qutb’s description of the world and use it to gain recruits through manufacturing a holy war out of propaganda against America. As the 9/11 Report stated, according to bin Laden:

America is responsible for all conflicts involving Muslims. Thus Americans are blamed when Israelis fight with Palestinians, when Russians fight with Chechens, when Indians fight with Kashmiri Muslims and when the Philippine government fights ethnic Muslims in its southern islands… These charges found a ready audience among millions of Arabs and Muslims angry at the United States because of issues ranging from Iraq to Palestine to America’s support for their countries’ repressive rulers.247

245 Wright, 187
247 National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, Kean, and Hamilton, 51
Bin Laden believes that the Koran foretold the current “war on terror” and that fighting back is a test of loyalty for all Muslims.\textsuperscript{248} As is evident from Qutb’s depiction of the world as bipolar between Islam and \textit{Jahiliyya}, American is an enemy not solely because of its policies or perceived catalyst of Muslim grievances but because of its existence at all. In order to appease bin Laden, all Americans would have to convert to his particular interpretation of Islam and rid itself of the materialism that sides it with \textit{Jahiliyya}. Bin Laden wants a universalist Islamic state with a theocratic government that revives the classical Islamic notion of the Caliphate.\textsuperscript{249} In a September 8, 2007 video tape, bin Laden announced to the American people, "I invite you to embrace Islam, for the greatest mistake one can make in this world and one which is uncorrectable is to die while not surrendering to Allah, the Most High, in all aspects of one's life - ie., to die outside of Islam. And Islam means gain for you in this first life and the next, final life. The true religion is a mercy for people in their lives, filling their hearts with serenity and calm."

What makes bin Laden particularly effective in recruiting followers is his ability to exploit the social, economic and political grievances felt by many mainstream Muslims throughout the region. It is here where the relationship between socio-economic conditions and the spread of jihadi doctrine is most evident (although, not just with bin Laden but with the leaders of all jihadist factions). As \textit{The 9/11 Report} stated, “seizing on symbols of Islam’s past greatness, (bin Laden) promises to restore pride to people who consider themselves the victims of successive foreign masters… He appeals to people disoriented by cyclonic change as they confront modernity and globalization. His rhetoric

\textsuperscript{248} Keane, 2005
\textsuperscript{249} Talbott and Chanda, 39
selectively draws from multiple sources – Islam, history, and the region’s political and economic malaise.\textsuperscript{250}

The Middle East was the sight of at least ten of the world’s largest conflicts between World War II and the beginning of the 21\textsuperscript{st} century,\textsuperscript{251} with each one bringing considerable hardship to the people of the region. While only a few of these wars involved Western powers, its dependence on oil, support for Israel and imperial past, made America the main culprit in the eyes of many across the region.\textsuperscript{252}

However, there are millions –maybe billions - of poor people in the world who don’t turn to terrorism in response. Why, particularly in the Middle East and Central Asia, does there appear to be a direct relationship between poor socioeconomic factors and the ability of radical Islamists to recruit and gain favor throughout the Muslim world?

The answer is not what creates the grievances but where people turn in response. As Gilles Kepel wrote in The War for Muslim Minds, “the region suffered from a disastrous combination of overpopulation, low employment and low pay, and deficient access to education and modern communications. This situation created fertile conditions for conflict, particularly over control of the dominant ideological system that maintained the region’s political and social balance: Islam.\textsuperscript{253}” Hence, into the ideological vacuum created by poor conditions step bin Laden and other jihadist leaders who are masterful at sculpting their worldview and methods of response into the answer to common grievances.

\textsuperscript{250} National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, Kean, and Hamilton, 48
\textsuperscript{251} Talbott and Chanda, 29
\textsuperscript{252} Talbott and Chanda, 29
\textsuperscript{253} Kepel, 4
The poor and uneducated, though, aren’t the main targets for radicalization. As Fareed Zakaria explained in the video, *Islam and the West*, to them, the West signifies “food and meds.” Instead it is those few who have found the ability to escape the political and economic black hole of the region and therefore better understand its existence in the first place. These young men are able to understand and conceptualize the disparity between the quality of life in their villages compared to that of the West; a disparity that is only further exaggerated by the fact that most of these men experience the West through television programs, movies and consumer goods.

When some Wahabi cleric then gives a very simple answer as to who these men should blame for the discrepancy between their lives in the Muslim world compared to their experiences and perceptions of the West, it contextualized their dissonance. As Wright described, “most of the prospective Al Qaeda recruits were from the middle or upper class, nearly all of them from intact families. They were largely college-educated, with a strong bias toward the natural sciences and engineering. Few of them were products of religious schools; indeed, many had trained in Europe or the United States and spoke as many as five or six languages. They did not show signs of mental disorders. Many were not even very religious when they joined the jihad.”

Often, the jihadist movement and Islamic fundamentalism in general, is the only organized political alternative to the current forces in the Arab world which have led to poverty and humiliation. Whereas a society’s middle class is usually the catalyst for development and modernization, oppressive and tyrannical regimes throughout the Muslim world have squandered their civil liberties and economic freedoms. As a result,

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254 Tatge
255 Wright, 301
256 Tatge
their silenced voices and futile efforts leave them frustrated and isolated.⁵²⁵ Often then, they turn to radical Islam in response, which is the easiest and most effective way to exercise self-determination throughout the region. As The 9/11 Report stated, “frustrated in their search for a decent living, unable to benefit from an education often obtained at the cost of great family sacrifice, and blocked from starting families of their own, some of these young men were easy targets for radicalization.”¹⁵²⁸

Hence, the radicalization of Muslim youths is a result of several over-lapping factors that don’t come from any one place. It is a perfect storm of the psychological grievances experienced due to socioeconomic conditions in the region; rage and humiliation from decades of Western imperialism and corrupt Muslim governments; and the lack of any viable moderate political figures or institutions that provide the means of self-determination. Jihadist groups are often the ones that provide the basic human necessities for the young men in the region who, in turn, not only adopt the jihadist worldview but submit themselves entirely to its cause. As John Lewis Gaddis wrote, “the terrorists… combined what may seem to us to be a primitive belief in the rewards of martyrdom with the most modern methods of planning, coordination, and execution. We confront, therefore, not only a new category of easily available weaponry, but a new combination of skill and will in using it.”⁵²⁹

The al Qaeda threat

Al Qaeda differs from traditional Islamist and nonstate groups in ways that have made it an unprecedented international security threat to the West. First, as describe

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⁵²⁵ Talbott and Chanda, 32  
⁵²⁸ National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, Kean, and Hamilton, 54  
⁵²⁹ Talbott and Chanda, 9
earlier, al Qaeda represents a mutation within the traditional jihadist movement that has redefined its strategic enemy as the U.S. opposed to local Muslim leaders. As Professor of Global Issues and Democratic Thought at Wesleyan University Martha Crenshaw noted, al Qaeda holds both regional and universal goals, which combined with the tools of globalization, put no boundary around where it can or will strike. She wrote, “the international ambitions of al Qaeda are stronger than those of past groups, which would probably be expected in a world where it is easier to develop and communicate a shared ideology and in which the United States is the sole superpower.”

The second reason al Qaeda differs from traditional Islamist and nonstate groups is the methods it uses in pursuing those goals, especially the willingness to cause large amounts of civilian deaths even when those civilians are other Muslims. This method combined with the fact that al Qaeda holds no desire to be legitimately recognized within the political international environment – thus fearing no reciprocity for its actions - gives Western leaders legitimate worries about the possibility of it acquiring and using weapons of mass destruction.

Finally, al Qaeda is organized in loose decentralized networks allowing it to operate on a global scale while avoiding annihilation by military force. Even after its base in Afghanistan was decimated by U.S. bombs in 2001, al Qaeda lost little ability to coordinate and execute attacks through autonomous local groups – or cells – located in a multitude of countries. As Crenshaw wrote, “since 2001… attacks in Indonesia, Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Turkey, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Kenya, Spain and Great Britain have shown

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260 Crocker, Hampson, and Aall, 76
261 Crocker, Hampson, and Aall, 75
that al Qaeda in the broadest sense, including all aspects of jihadi terrorism, retains both the will and capacity to conduct operations around the world.262"

Bin Laden and the CIA

By 1994, al Qaeda – still an informal organization – had become international with operatives in Afghanistan, Yemen, Egypt, Russia, Somalia and Bosnia.263 Young jihadis would sustain rigorous basic training at al Qaeda camps and then return to their native countries to join local jihads and spread the anti-Western ideology. Through a systemic process, bin Laden was creating a transnational army of Islamic warriors.264 To fund his organization, bin Laden set-up a highly sophisticated economic network where “donations flowed through charities or other nongovernmental organizations (NGOs)” and ended up in an al Qaeda bank account. With these funds, al Qaeda operatives could travel world-wide to purchase weapons and other supplies for future jihad.265

In the mid-1990s, bin Laden’s growing reputation as a financier of worldwide terrorist attacks from his base in Sudan finally caught the attention of the CIA. The 1995 National Intelligence Estimate contained a warning to American security officials detailing a “new type of terrorism” espoused by a highly complex and sophisticated network of autonomous groups who had the resources to strike beyond their regional boundaries. However, as The 9/11 Report stated, “many officials continued to think of

262 Crocker, Hampson, and Aall, 68
263 Ford, Cascio, and Beaudry, 2005
264 Ford, Cascio, and Beaudry, 2005
265 National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, Kean, and Hamilton, 55
terrorists as agents of states (Saudi Hezbollah acting for Iran against the Khobar Towers) or as domestic criminals (Timothy McVeigh in Oklahoma City).  

In 1996, after the U.S. and UN pressured the Sudanese government to expel bin Laden, the terrorist mastermind wrote his first declaration of war against the West. In it, he called for all Muslims to join together in jihad to eject American soldiers from Saudi Arabia. He alluded to and celebrated past suicide attacks against American interests – namely the 1983 Beirut bombing that killed 241 American soldiers, a 1992 bombing in Aden, Yemen and the 1993 battle in Mogadishu - and stated that the U.S. population had little tolerance for casualties. In effect, this declaration marked the informal birth date of al Qaeda as a unified terrorist organization.

Within a few months the Taliban took control of Afghanistan and allowed bin Laden and al Qaeda to return to its point of origin. At the same time, the CIA stepped-up efforts to track bin Laden, as they “set up a special unit of a dozen officers to analyze intelligence on and plan operations against” him. In 1997, this unit – now dubbed the bin Laden unit – began to recognize that “bin Laden was more than just a financier. They learned that al Qaeda had a military committee that was planning operations against U.S. interests worldwide and was actively trying to obtain nuclear material.

In February, 1998, bin Laden and Zawahiri published a fatwa in a London-based Arabic newspaper, entitled “Declaration of War on America and Americans” and formally announced the establishment of the World Islamic Front against Jews and Crusaders – the official name of al Qaeda - to wage it. It stated:

266 National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, Kean, and Hamilton, 108
267 National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, Kean, and Hamilton, 48
268 National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, Kean, and Hamilton, 109
269 National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, Kean, and Hamilton, 109
Kill the Americans and their allies - civilians and military - is an individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it, in order to liberate the al-Aqsa Mosque and the holy mosque [Mecca] from their grip, and in order for their armies to move out of all the lands of Islam, defeated and unable to threaten any Muslim... We do not have to differentiate between military and civilian. As far as we are concerned they are all targets.

Prior to this second declaration of war, the CIA’s Counterterrorist Center considered bin Laden merely an “extremist financier” and little more. However, after another public exclamation to “kill Americans and their allies,” the CIA realized the potential threat that bin Laden posed and stepped-up its efforts to capture or kill him. After receiving credible information about bin Laden’s whereabouts in May 1998, an operation was planned for his capture. However, shortly before it was to commence, high-ranking U.S. officials cancelled it due to the risk of collateral damages – that is, the killing of civilians and children, incurring many casualties of its own and/or unsettling the fragile political structure in Pakistan. As The 9/11 Report stated, “no capture plan before 9/11 ever again attained the same level of detail and preparation.”

Three months later, on August 7, 1998, al Qaeda executed simultaneous bombings that killed over 200 people at U.S. embassies in Nairobi, Kenya and Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania. In response, President Clinton initiated Operation Infinite Reach which was a bombing campaign targeted at suspected terrorist training camps and operations sites in Afghanistan and Sudan. The attacks were ineffective. As Wright wrote, “the main legacy of Operation Infinite Reach… was that it established bin Laden as a symbolic figure of resistance, not just in the Muslim world but wherever America, with the clamor of its narcissistic culture and the majestic presence of its military forces, had made itself

270 Gerges, 167
271 Ford, Cascio, and Beaudry, 2005
272 National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, Kean, and Hamilton, 114
unwelcome. Subsequently, Clinton officially authorized the use lethal force on bin Laden. In December, the American president warned that al Qaeda was planning to hijack commercial airliner to force the release of incarcerated jihadis from American jails. Officials were initially put on high alert; however, when no attack came, the alert was lifted.

In February of 1999 (in the midst of the Lewsinky scandal) the CIA cancelled another military strike against bin Laden; this time because he was accompanied by a prince from the United Arab Emirates - a friendly Muslim nation with good ties to the U.S.

On the morning of October 12, 2000 the U.S. Navy guided missile destroyer, USS Cole, docked at the Yemeni Port of Aden for a routine fuel stop. Nearly 50 minutes into the refueling, at approximately 11:18 a.m. local time, a small, unidentified vessel carrying two Arab men approached the destroyer near its galley. Seconds later, an explosion pierced the Cole’s exterior, creating a 40- by 40-foot hole, killing 17 American sailors and injuring 40 more. In the waning days of his presidency, Clinton expressed determination in discovering the culprit of the attack but never ordered retaliatory action toward al Qaeda. Shortly thereafter George W. Bush was sworn in as the 43rd President of the United States and he too declined to strike against the USS Cole bombers.

While the USS Cole bombing gained considerable press within the United States, the attack still occurred thousands of miles away. It was one thing to target U.S. citizens and interests abroad but the American people were still largely unconcerned about terrorism so long as they remained on U.S. soil. That would soon change, though, as also

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273 Wright, 285
274 Ford, Cascio, and Beaudry, 2005
275 Ford, Cascio, and Beaudry, 2005
in America in late 2000 were the four al Qaeda members who would pilot the hijacked planes and carry-out the attacks on 9/11.

The past section outlined two trends that emerged at the end of the 20th century which drastically changed the international environment and the threats American foreign policy had to face: the first was the mutation within the Muslim jihadist movement that fractured it into two general camps: religious nationalists, who had been planning and executing attacks for three decades against local Muslim regimes in order to ensure that the Islamic revolution succeeded at home;276 and transnationalists “who were emboldened by the defeat of the Russians in Afghanistan and wanted to fully internationalize jihad and export the Islamist revolution worldwide.”277 The latter group, headed by Osama bin Laden and Aymin al Zawahiri, is who attacked America on 9/11 and continues to promote the jihadist ideology worldwide today.

The second trend was the evolution of communication technologies which allowed for greater dissemination of weaponry, money and information across international borders and subsequently allowed for autonomous nonstate actors to wage asymmetrical warfare on a global level. This trend is what enabled the transnational jihadists to act on their objective of attacking the far enemy. As Strobe Talbott and Nayan Chanda wrote in *The Age of Terror*, “the revolution over the last thirty years in communication and transportation has empowered individuals, making it possible for them to move money, products, information and ideas across borders in ways that

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276 Gerges, 25
277 Gerges, 25
previously had been the monopolies of governments and giant corporations. The terrorists took full advantage of that freedom and harnessed it to their cause.278"

These trends fostered (or perhaps, reflected) a rapidly evolving international environment, which made for a highly complex and fluid power structure. However, while tangible threats to American security began materializing all across the world in the form of autonomous nonstate actors, the American people, as well as government officials and policy strategists, mistakenly focused their attention elsewhere. Central to this mistake were misperceptions about the very nature of the world that emerged after the Cold War as well as the centrality of power and America’s ability to dictate international affairs through wielding it. As will be described in the next section, September 11 introduced the collective American conscious to 21st century threats but still failed to alter the misperceptions at the philosophical heart of U.S. foreign policies as American troops again entered the Arabian Peninsula.

* * *

The Domestic Environment

In discussing the domestic forces in America that influenced American foreign policy after 9/11 it is important to begin with the individual decision-maker (for reasons that will be discussed shortly). However, in order to determine what changed as a result of the terrorist attacks on American soil, I must first explore the worldview, beliefs and subsequent policies of the decision-makers prior to 9/11 and then compare them with those afterward.

278 Talbott and Chanda, xiii
The Decider

George W. Bush came to power in perhaps the most bizarre and controversial election in American history. After losing the popular vote to incumbent Vice President Al Gore, it took six weeks of re-counts and a final decision by the Supreme Court to grant Bush the presidency which was ultimately decided by 537 votes in Florida out of the more than 100 million cast nation-wide. Nonetheless, on January 20, 2001, the former governor of Texas and son to America’s 41st executive was sworn in as President of the United States.

Bush’s Worldview

Observers of George W. Bush often note particular traits within his personality that seem to permeate his rhetoric and policy proposals. Among them is a strong sense of moral clarity, Texas stubbornness, unhesitant decisiveness and, at times, even hubris. Two main influences contributed to Bush’s worldview and help explain his decision-making process – particularly in foreign policy decisions after 9/11 – throughout his presidency.

Faith

As George W. Bush took center stage in American political life, his faith and spirituality permeated his rhetoric and campaign speeches. Bush evoked the name of God and associated spiritual goodness with American values more than any other U.S. President since Woodrow Wilson. A March 10, 2003 Newsweek article stated that, “this president- this presidency – is the most resolutely ‘faith-based’ in modern times, an enterprise founded, supported and guided by trust in the temporal and spiritual power of
God… The Bush administration is dedicated to the idea that there is an answer to societal problems here and to terrorism abroad: give everyone, everywhere, the freedom to find God.\textsuperscript{279}

Faith wasn’t always a part of Bush’s life though. In fact, he didn’t find his faith until after his 40\textsuperscript{th} birthday when he went in search for a way to end his alcoholism and mend his relationship with his wife and daughters.\textsuperscript{280} This coincided with a convenient political shift, as evangelical activism began to combine with conservative politics and the south became increasingly aligned with the GOP. But, as Bush entered the Oval Office years later, faith not only guided his resolve but helped shape his worldview as well. He saw the world and the conflicts that arose throughout the international environment as battles between good and evil and it was his duty as both an American and a Christian to assert the resources at his disposal in the name of goodness. As Bush said in a commencement speech at West Point in June, 2002, “We are in a conflict between good and evil, and America will call evil by its name.”\textsuperscript{281}

After September 11, Bush began to refer to terrorists as “evildoers,” state-sponsors of terrorism as part of an “axis of evil” and the tyrants that ruled those countries as just, plain “evil.” Not only did he frame the conflict America faced into one of morality but lumped all America’s adversaries – regardless of nature, objectives, worldviews, tactics or capabilities – as one and the same: democracy, freedom and liberty were good; those who opposed those ideals were evil. “The liberty we prize is not

\textsuperscript{280} Fineman, et al, 22-31
\textsuperscript{281} Karen Yourish, "Delivering the 'Good News'.” Newsweek 03/10/2003 2003: 28,
America’s gift to the world,” Bush said in his 2003 State of the Union address, “it is God’s gift to humanity.”

Aside from the usual problems that arise within a democracy when faith and politics mix at the highest level, Bush’s constant evocation of Christian doctrine on behalf of America only works to further the perception within the Muslim world that Western intervention in Iraq and Afghanistan are part of a Judeo-Christian crusade aimed at suppressing or even destroying Islam. As Martin E. Marty wrote in a 2003 *Newsweek* article entitled, “The Sin of Pride,” “Christian theologians are wary when Bush uses the words of Jesus to draw neat lines and challenge the whole rest of the world: if you are not us, or with us, you are against us. Without question, belief in America democracy as one of God’s blessings is part of the move against Iraq. But, as theologians in a number of faiths remind us, the demonization of the enemy – an ‘us and them’ mentality – can inhibit self-examination and repentant action, critical components of any faith.”

Nonetheless, even in late 2006 when the war in Iraq seemed to be spiraling out of control, Bush’s faith kept him certain of the proper actions to take.

*The Vulcans*

Bush’s desire to be president emerged after spending only one term as Texas Governor where, despite his domestic record, he displayed little knowledge or exposure to foreign policy affairs. During the 2000 campaign, the press picked up on this fact and portrayed W. as being grossly ignorant of the world outside America – some would say,  

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282 Yourish, 28
outside of Crawford, Texas even. In a notable 1999 interview, Bush was left clueless when Reporter Andy Hiller asked him the name of the president of Chechnya.\footnote{Daalder and Lindsay, 17}

In response to growing skepticism about his ability to lead America in its age of global preeminence, W. assembled a group of eight experts, all republicans, in order to fill him in on world affairs. As Daalder and Lindsay wrote, “the group was drawn mostly from people who had served in the third and fourth tiers of his father’s administration... (and) ran the foreign policy aspects of the campaign on a day-by-day basis. For that reason Bush’s choice of eight advisers were significant – it provided the first clue to his own foreign policy beliefs.\footnote{Daalder and Lindsay, 21,30}"

Nicknamed the Vulcans, this group of foreign policy hard-liners was headed by Stanford Provost and Eastern European expert Condoleezza Rice but also included Paul Wolfowitz, Richard Armitage, Robert Blackwill, Stephen Hadley, Richard Perle, Dov Zakheim and Robert Zoellick. With little exception (that exception would be Armitage), the Vulcans were ultra-conservative hawks who believed in the essential need for American military superiority so to create a world filled with democracy (or as some commentators would say, a world designed in the image of America). Key amongst their beliefs was a distrust of multilateral institutions and alliances in general, as they believed America’s interests and action should never be dependent on collective decisions.

From the Vulcans, W. developed his own worldview and a key component of it was the belief that the American military should only be used in situations where direct U.S. interests were at stake. For instance, Bush often criticized President Clinton for entangling the U.S. military in “humanitarian” operations. As Daalder and Lindsay wrote,
“Bush clearly had Clinton in mind when he declared that presidents should not let the
nation ‘move from crisis to crisis like a cork in a current…’ Clinton’s mistake in Bush’s
view, was not that he had actively exercised American military might; it was that he had
expended it on matters of secondary importance, leaving U.S. troops dispirited,
frustrated, and overstretched.286” Further, Bush rejected globalization as an inevitable
shift in the nature of power and instead believed that nonstate actors were always
connected to states and that “they would whither without state support.”287” Therefore, the
world according to Bush and his advisors could be categorized much like it was in the
past; by friendly states and rogue states.

A Cabinet of Two Ideologies

After becoming president, Bush filled his cabinet and high-level foreign policy
positions with a star-studded cast of cold warriors, Neocons and Bush 41 veterans so to
compensate for his lack of foreign policy experience. In doing so, however, separate
factions took shape within his administration, stemming from deep ideological
differences over America’s role in the world and how to utilize its unprecedented
military, economic and political power.

The first group was headed by Bush’s Secretary of State Colin Powell and it
advocated for international diplomacy and the utilization of multilateral instruments and
institutions to foster a coherent and cooperative international environment.288 The other
faction contained Assistant Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, Vice President Richard

286 Daalder and Lindsay, 37-38
287 Daalder and Lindsay, 42
288 Kepel, 47-48
As Kepel described, this faction “favored taking advantage of the nation’s unprecedented status as sole superpower to radically transform the world order. This neoconservative group… called for dissemination of the American model of democracy around the globe, by whatever means appropriate – means that did not necessarily include multinational organizations such as the United Nations (which Wolfowitz and his colleagues considered outdated) and which did not preclude military force.”

While not composed of solely neocons in the truest definition of the label, the latter group believed that new weaponry and intelligence technology could make the U.S. military so superior to the rest of the world that no potential enemy would dare stir-up trouble for fear of being annihilated (of course, they viewed any and all potential enemies as being states or state-sponsored groups). While they recognized the rising threat within radical Islam, they believed that the best way to confront it was to expand the American form of democratic government into the Middle East and Central Asia. Hence came the justification for the Iraq war, as administration hawks and neocons thought that democracy in Iraq would serve as a seed for the entire region, eventually sprouting similar government models one country at a time. As will be explored shortly, after 9/11, the composition and beliefs of these two factions never changed; however, what did was which group had the ear of the president.


Bush’s first eight months in office provided little for the history books and even less for those who hoped that after two terms of a democrat-controlled White House, a

289 Kepel, 48
290 Kepel, 62
shift in party-control would signal a similar shift in foreign policy. The assertive internationalism that had been the staple of the foreign policy of candidate Bush was nowhere to be found in the White House of President Bush. In fact, in almost every case he continued and sometimes furthered the policies of his predecessor despite being overtly critical of Clinton’s use of military force for humanitarian missions. As professor of war studies at King’s College in London, Lawrence Freedman wrote, “the general view as the Bush administration came to power was that the armed forces were to prepare for proper wars against serious threats (with China clearly in mind but also possibly North Korea or Iraq) and not dissipate their energies on activities that seemed closer to social work.”

Perhaps most significant was the administration’s position toward Iraq. After Candidate Bush called for regime change, President Bush instead, “moved to replace the existing Iraqi sanctions with so-called smart sanctions that expedited trade in civilian goods but tightened controls on military goods.” Thus, while differing in semantics, the younger Bush’s foreign policy at the beginning of his presidency lacked the same critical component that the two previous commanders in chiefs’ did: a grand strategy that categorized international priorities and justified the allocation of U.S. resources abroad to the American public.

Where Bush did break from his predecessors was in his view on multilateralism. Where George H.W. and Clinton put international institutions and alliances at the forefront of their foreign policies, George W. backed away from international treaties, as he withdrew or refused American participation in the Kyoto Protocol, the Biological

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291 Crocker, Hampson, and Aall, 253
292 Daalder and Lindsay, 64
Weapons Convention and the International Criminal Court. Further, Bush rolled back American engagements abroad, including U.S. roles in negotiations with North Korea, China, Russia and in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Critics of the administration pointed to the North Korea situation as the main departure (and in their minds, failure) of Bush’s first eight months in office. After years of back-and-forth rhetoric, broken promises and hollow accusations, it appeared that when Bill Clinton left office, the diplomatic road was wide open for Bush to hammer out a nonproliferation agreement. However, instead of continuing negotiations Bush felt that “to negotiate with an evil regime was to recognize that regime, legitimize it, and – if the negotiation led to a treaty or trade – prolong it.” This mindset reflected that of many of the Vulcans (and other neocons) during the Cold War, where they despised Nixon’s policy of détente toward the Soviet Union for similar reasons.

If nothing else, Bush’s actions toward North Korea give a glimpse into his mind and how morality manifests itself in his foreign policy decisions. Whereas his predecessor had been a keen pragmatist in regards to so-called “evil” regimes, Bush had a sense of moral clarity that not only colored how he viewed the world (good vs. evil), but also dictated many of the decisions he made, especially after 9/11.

In sum, as Daalder and Lindsay concluded, “during his first eight months in office… Bush had failed to deliver the foreign policy he had promised during the campaign. The list of disappointments was long… Nonetheless, Bush… had focused on
few key priorities and worked them hard. Those priorities just happened to involve
domestic policy – notably tax cuts – not foreign policy.  

One area of foreign policy that remained low on Bush’s list of priorities was dealing
with the threat of Islamic terrorism. Outgoing Clinton administration officials realized -
to a large extent because their own policies aimed at terrorist organizations had been
ineffective – that the biggest issue to face America in the near future would not be China,
North Korea, or Iraq, but al Qaeda. These sentiments were repeated by CIA director
George Tenet, and the top administration expert on terrorism Richard Clarke who spoke
of the threat as being imminent and immediate. A Presidential Daily Brief on August 6,
2001 contained an article entitled, “bin Laden Determined to Strike in U.S.,” where it
noted that there had been “patterns of suspicious activity in this country consistent with
preparations for hijackings or other types of attacks, including recent surveillance of
federal buildings in New York.” Yet, despite these warnings and many others, the
Bush administration still saw the world in terms of states and were unprepared and
largely unconcerned about a stateless menace and its potential for any true destruction
against a power like the U.S. The first senior-level meeting between administration
officials to even discuss strategies to combat al Qaeda didn’t take place until September
4, 2001 at which time any policies implemented – had there been any – would have come
too late. As Melanson concluded, “before September 11 the new administration pursued a
foreign policy that appeared rather Kissingerian with its emphasis on traditional

297 Daalder and Lindsay, 69
298 Daalder and Lindsay, 74
299 National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, Kean, and Hamilton, 262
300 Daalder and Lindsay, 75
geopolitical issues and relations with big powers… Moreover, Richard Clarke… argued… that the Bush team decided to move away from what it considered to be Clinton’s preoccupation with al Qaeda.³⁰¹" On a Tuesday morning in early September, though, all that changed.

³⁰¹ Melanson, 303
Part IV

September 11, 2001 - ?

“See, 9/11 changed everything”

“9/11 changed everything”
- Dick Cheney, 9/14/2003
What was 9/11? Was it a declaration of war? Was it an event that transformed the international environment? Was it an attack, like Pearl Harbor, that marked the beginning of a new war? Did it mark the beginning of the end for an international environment that is organized around nation-state? The truth is 9/11 meant different things on different levels to different parties.

For bin Laden and Zawahiri, the attacks were the accumulation of years of planning and training in order to extend their jihad to the American mainland. As Kepel wrote, “those who commissioned and executed the suicide hijackings saw them as neither the beginning nor end but as simply the successful implementation of a predefined and long-range strategy.” At first, jihadis outside of al Qaeda were deeply skeptical about America’s allegation that it was bin Laden who orchestrated the attacks. Like most American officials, “ordinary Arabs and Muslims did not believe that al Qaeda could be responsible.” However, once video-tape circulated where bin Laden himself admitted to the attacks, mainstream jihadis largely condemned al Qaeda for targeting civilians and focusing the wrath of the U.S. military on the jihadist movement as a whole. In fact, the attacks failed to accomplish bin Laden’s main objective of re-unifying the fractured jihadist movement and mobilizing the umma against the far enemy; instead, he created a backlash from both secular and religious authorities within the Muslim World. As Gerges wrote, “leading religious scholars and clerics (condemned) al Qaeda and declared their opposition to all those who permit and engage in the killing of noncombatants. They stressed the defensive, not offensive, function of jihad in Islam and that it is a collective,

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302 Kepel, 71
303 Gerges, 186
304 Gerges, 187
not an individual, duty that could only be activated by the community, not by amateurs.\textsuperscript{305} Whereas bin Laden and Zawahiri “had expected a Muslim response similar to that to the Russian invasion and occupation of Afghanistan,\textsuperscript{306} they instead got a U.S. retaliation that included a broad coalition of supporters, of whom, many were Muslims.

When the U.S. launched its invasion of Afghanistan, al Qaeda found itself isolated along with the Taliban and unlike in 1980, no foreign countries or fighters were coming to their aid. Hence, in attacking America, bin Laden hoped to provoke a U.S. response that would unify both the jihadist movement and regular Muslims against the West. He got his war; however, instead of a clash of civilizations, Operation Enduring Freedom pitted al Qaeda and the Taliban against the rest of the world.

In the realm of warfare, John Robb gave perhaps the best explanation of what 9/11 represented. He said that the attacks were the first applications of 21\textsuperscript{st} century warfare – that is, global guerilla campaigns – “by an autonomous nonstate group not acting as proxy of a foreign power.\textsuperscript{307} In other words, 9/11 did not mark a new war against America nor a reshuffling of the international power structure. Instead it was a strike as part of the continuation of a centuries-old jihad using the technologies of the 21\textsuperscript{st} century – technologies that allow for small groups to wage war on a global scale. Highlighted by 9/11, though, was the fact that the international environment had changed; not on that Tuesday morning, but gradually over the last decades of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century due to the winding down and then end of the Cold War. The break-up of the bipolar international power structure combined with the forces of globalization to unleash new

\textsuperscript{305} Gerges, 239  
\textsuperscript{306} Gerges, 187-188  
\textsuperscript{307} Robb, 31
global realities that had dire implications on the concept of national security and the
tactics necessary to successfully utilize force in the 21st century.

Similarly, 9/11 rendered a final verdict on the effectiveness of past U.S. policies
meant to combat al Qaeda. For instance, U.S. retaliatory strikes following the Kenyan
and Tanzanian attacks in 1998 were designed to display the capabilities of the U.S.
military and make terrorist organizations think twice about attacking U.S. targets again.
However, the USS Cole bombing in 2000 and then the 9/11 attacks showed that bin Laden was not at all deterred by U.S. military superiority. As Robb wrote, “the most
disturbing aspect of 9/11 wasn’t the horrible destruction, but that the men who attacked
us on that day didn’t even factor the opposition of the U.S. military into their planning.
Despite tens of trillions of dollars spent on defense over the last decades, this military
force proved ineffectual as a deterrent at the point when we needed it most. 308 The
failure of military force to deter nonstate jihadist groups can be attributed as much to
their willingness to die for their cause as to the limits of force in general; however,
nonetheless, it signaled a drastic need for transformation in the thinking of the U.S.
security establishment.

Perhaps the biggest shift on 9/11 occurred within the U.S. domestic environment.
Just like at the end of World War II, the high-point of Vietnam, and the end of the Cold
War, the domestic forces that influence American foreign policy realigned so to put new
emphasis on certain priorities and give increased power to particular branches of
government as well as particular strands of ideology over others. As even Bush, himself,
admitted, before 9/11 terrorism in general and Osama bin Laden in particular were of

308 Robb, 7
peripheral importance to his national security policies whereas, afterwards it was the focal point.309

One such ideology that found prominence only after the attacks was neoconservativism, whose advocates already permeated Bush’s cabinet but had previously been marginalized by domestic attitudes and competing philosophies. In a 2002 column in the Wall Street Journal, Council on Foreign Relations senior fellow Max Boot wrote that, “During the 2000 campaign, President Bush sounded very much like a realist, with his suspicions of ‘nation building’ and his warnings about American hubris. Then along came 9/11. The National Security Strategy that he released in September – which calls for ‘encouraging free and open societies on every continent’ – sounds as if it could have come straight from the pages of Commentary magazine, the Neocon bible.310”

The neocons were foreign policy hardliners who emphasized universal American political and military superiority and, according to Fred Kaplan, called for regime change, preemption and a concept of victory that included “not only defeating an enemy in battle or ‘making the world safe for democracy’ but – in an ambitious twist on that age-old ideal – remaking the world into a democracy.311” However, in order to understand how and why neoconservatism was able to become the center influence on American foreign policy, it is necessary to explore in detail the actual shifts that took place within the domestic forces of American foreign policy and their resulting implications on the use of military force to combat global terrorism.

311 Kaplan, 4
What 9/11 really changed:

The domestic environment

The 9/11 attacks had a very specific impact on the foreign policy process, especially in regards to the use of military force. In the immediate aftermath, the domestic forces that influence American foreign policy realigned in such a way that dampened the various checks, balances and alternate perspectives and pushed them into the background providing ample political capital and justification for the specific use of preemption and unilateralism. While it seems like a far reach to go from a terrorist attack to two controversial military strategies, exploring the American domestic environment at the time gives a very clear picture of how the former event led to the latter policies.

The return of the cold war presidency

As was historically common after an attack or threat of attack on the homeland, a shift in attitudes induced one in the domestic power structure as well. No longer concerned about domestic issues, the power that Congress had enjoyed during the 1990s quickly flowed back to the president. As Daalder and Lindsay wrote, “congressional resistance to Bush’s national security policies gave way on September 11. In a replay of a well-known phenomenon in American politics, the attacks shifted the pendulum of power away from Capitol Hill and toward the White House.” More than anything else, this shift in congressional resistance was reflected three days after the attacks, when only one member of Congress voted against a resolution authorizing Bush to “use all necessary and appropriate force against those nations, organizations or persons he determined planned, authorized, committed or aided the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 or

312 Daalder and Lindsay, 90
harbored such organizations or persons.\textsuperscript{313} Essentially, this resolution was a pledge by Congress to stay out of the president’s way in his fight against terrorism.

By the end of October, Congress passed another sweeping resolution, this time giving the president the domestic powers to “track internet communications, detain suspected terrorists and obtain nationwide warrants for searches and eavesdropping.”\textsuperscript{314} As Murray and Spinosa concluded, “facing new threats, the political climate changed within Washington; partisan differences receded allowing the president a degree of latitude not seen in decades to conduct foreign affairs.”\textsuperscript{315}

At the heart of the institutional power shift was immense pressure put on Congress by the general public. As Barbara Sinclair stated in “Patriotism and Institutional Protection: the Congressional Response to 9/11,” “members (of Congress) genuinely believe it essential for the U.S. to show unity and resolve. They also were acutely aware that the public expected them to support the president and might well punish them at the ballot box if they did not do so. Democrats in particular feared opening themselves to charges of lack of patriotism from the administration and future opponents.”\textsuperscript{316}

In effect, as the public, Congress and the media rallied around their commander in chief, Bush’s approval ratings jumped from 50 percent\textsuperscript{317} to nearly 90 percent within hours of the attacks.\textsuperscript{318} A Pew Research study released on March 7, 2002 documented the shift in American attitudes from shortly before the attacks until six months afterwards. It showed that the public viewed the federal government nearly twice as favorably in

\textsuperscript{313} Barbara Sinclair, Patriotism, Partisanship and Institutional Protection: The Congressional Response to 9/11 (Gainesville, Florida 2003).
\textsuperscript{314} Sinclair, 2003
\textsuperscript{315} McCormick and Wittkopf, 111
\textsuperscript{316} Sinclair, 2003
\textsuperscript{317} Daalder and Lindsay, 77
\textsuperscript{318} McCormick and Wittkopf, 19
November of 2001 than it did in October of 2000 and trusted the government considerably more as well.\textsuperscript{319}

Public sentiments about America’s role in the world and how it should combat terrorism also shifted after 9/11. The same March 2002 Pew poll showed that the amount of Americans who became committed to active U.S. involvement in international affairs had doubled after the attacks, from 32 percent to 61 percent.\textsuperscript{320} This was reflected most substantially in public support for an increase in defense spending. Not since the 1974, in the midst of the Cold War, had so many Americans wanted to see more money spent on defense.\textsuperscript{321} As Freedman explained, the collective attitude of the U.S. “was an uncompromising mood, ready to take the military initiative, mobilizing massive forces to do so and accepting the sacrifices that the new campaigns might require.”\textsuperscript{322}

Further, 9/11 marked the first time since the end of the Cold War that the perception of a transcending threat existed in the minds of the American public. The fact that a group of faceless, nameless religious radicals had crossed the great Atlantic Ocean and killed Americans on their own soil – using American planes nonetheless - created a sense of vulnerability amongst the general public that only Soviet missiles in Cuba had ever matched. This perception altered Bush’s political agenda by placing issues of national security at the forefront. As Daalder and Lindsay wrote, “after September 11 foreign policy no longer played second fiddle to domestic policy. The war on terrorism became the priority for Bush.”\textsuperscript{323}

\textsuperscript{320} Pew Research Center for People & Press, 2002
\textsuperscript{321} Pew Research Center for People & Press, 2002
\textsuperscript{322} Crocker, Hampson, and Aall, 254
\textsuperscript{323} Daalder and Lindsay, 85
Ultimately, Bush was given a mandate to create a grand foreign policy strategy designed to combat terrorism which began with viewing the contemporary world through a 9/11 prism that prioritized international events into two categories: relevant to the fight against terrorism; or not. For the first time since the Cold War consensus, an overriding domestic accord existed which drastically increased the ability of the American government to utilize military force abroad. As Murray and Spinosa wrote, “a new bipartisan consensus among party leaders (that the United States faced immediate threats from terrorism to which it must respond), along with a supportive public, created a political climate in Washington reminiscent of the late 1960s.  

Thus, within days of the attacks the political climate in America transformed in a way that reflected the emotional angst of the American public. With Congress seemingly forfeiting its constitutional checks and the public holding more hawkish sentiments, the power relationship between the three main domestic forces of American foreign policy aligned in a way that placed overwhelming power in the hands of George W. Bush.

*Cheney and the consolidation of executive power*

President Bush’s accumulated power after 9/11 didn’t only come from societal and institutional forces, but from the efforts of his vice president as well. As a young conservative in Richard Nixon’s Office of Economic Opportunity, Cheney developed a firm belief that the executive was the lead branch of the American government and therefore, should have superior powers over the other branches.  

After the Watergate scandal, Cheney acted as White House chief of staff for Gerald Ford where he operated in

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324 McCormick and Wittkopf, 99
a time of bitter partisanship, continuous congressional investigations and ardent public ridicule directed at Ford himself. The results, Cheney believed, was a severe weakening of the institution of the presidency which put dangerous restrictions on his ability to direct the country in a time of crisis.\textsuperscript{326}

Cheney’s dismay furthered in the 1980s after he was elected to the House of Representatives and was surrounded by democrats who were bent on putting restrictions on Ronald Reagan’s executive powers. As a January 2003 article in \textit{U.S. News & World Report} stated, Cheney believed that “no matter what happened in the congressional investigation of the Iran-contra arms-for-hostages scandal in the Reagan administration, it was important for Congress not to harm the presidency. He opposed limiting the institution’s powers to make war, conduct foreign policy and keep secrets.\textsuperscript{327}” Cheney’s fanaticism with executive privilege soon fostered an attitude of resentment toward Congress.\textsuperscript{328} After serving as George H.W. Bush’s Secretary of Defense – where he told Bush not to seek congressional authority before committing troops to Saudi Arabia to fight the first Gulf War – Cheney accepted the office of the vice president to George W. Bush. Finally in a position of extreme stature, the attacks of 9/11 gave Cheney an excellent opportunity to restore strength to the institution of the presidency.

Immediately following the attacks, Cheney recommended that the White House ask Congress to approve new wartime powers for the president that would give Bush (and Cheney) unprecedented abilities to fight terrorism both at home and abroad.\textsuperscript{329} The sought powers were so broad, in fact, that Congress - in a time where it agreed to almost

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item[\textsuperscript{326}] Walsh, et al, 40-48
\item[\textsuperscript{327}] Walsh, et al, 40-48
\item[\textsuperscript{329}] Kirk, 2007
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
everything - said no. Nonetheless, Cheney remained determined. As the *U.S. News & World Report* article stated, “Cheney concluded that America’s policy from then on must be to ‘go out and defeat, smash, and kill the terrorists.’ Whether it’s spying on terrorism suspects without a warrant, invading Afghanistan, occupying Iraq, or allowing American operatives to detain suspected terrorists, Cheney has been willing to do whatever it takes to prevent another 9/11.330

Over the course of the six years following the 9/11 attacks, Cheney’s obsession with executive power prompted the passage or practice of some of the most controversial bills and policies in U.S. history. Not since the Sedition Act and Japanese internment camps, had the constitution been so drastically side-stepped. Among these policies was warrant-less wire-tapping on American citizens as well as the official re-definition of the word “torture” to mean interrogation techniques that were “specifically intended” to create organ failure.331 However, these sweeping powers ultimately led to the abuse of power, for after prisoner-abuse photos from Abu Ghraib became public, Congress reasserted its constitutional authorities by passing legislation on torture restrictions. Nonetheless, the period following the 9/11 attacks proved to be a time when the executive (and vice executive) operated virtually unchecked by other branches of government and set new standards for presidential power in wartime.

*The Bush Doctrine*

In *American Unbound*, Ivo Daalder and James Lindsay wrote, “what made Bush’s proposed foreign policy different – and potentially even radical – were not its goals but

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330 Walsh, et al, 40-48
331 Kirk, 2007
its logic about how America should act in the world. It rejected many of the assumptions that had guided Washington’s approach to foreign affairs for more than half a century.332 On the night of the attacks, the president announced to the nation what came to be known as the Bush Doctrine, “We will make no distinction between those who planned these acts and those who harbor them.”333 But what did this mean? As Tenet told Bush, al Qaeda was a transnational terrorist group who operated in over 60 countries worldwide. The U.S., in all its military superiority, lacked the resources to wage a global war against nonstate actors. Nonetheless, Bush decided to focus first on the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and then pick-off the others “one at a time.”334 As Bush described to Bob Woodward, “What was decided is, it doesn’t matter to me how long it takes, we’re going to rout out terror wherever it may exist… The doctrine is, if you harbor them, feed them, house them, your just as guilty, and you will be held to account… This war will be fought on many fronts, including the intelligence side. What was decided is… we’re going to hit them with all we’ve got.”335

Bush’s comments reflected a worldview where – as described earlier – he divided the international environment into two separated poles, good and evil; and evil had to be eliminated. In a speech at the National Cathedral on September 14, Bush remarked, “Our responsibility to history is already clear: To answer these attacks and rid the world of evil.”336 Further, Bush’s strategy also put overwhelming emphasis on states. Instead of focusing exclusively on the elaborate networks of money, weaponry and other resources that enabled terrorist organizations to thrive, Bush focused on “the link between terrorists

332 Daalder and Lindsay, 40
334 Woodward, 33
335 Woodward, 73
336 Woodward, 67
and state sponsors.\textsuperscript{337} Administration officials believed that without the backing from states, terrorist organizations would be unable to sustain themselves and execute large-scale attacks.\textsuperscript{338} Hence, the over-riding assumption was that by eliminating particular rogue regimes, the administration could eliminate terrorism.

Ultimately, this focus on states led American military strategists to overestimate how effective the use of force could be in achieving their goals. They believed that military might could effectively destroy the terrorists’ sanctuaries and coerce state-sponsors of terrorism to “change their ways;\textsuperscript{339}” that is, they believed force was still capable of performing the same functions as it did during the Cold War because – to them - the basic nature of the enemy was the same. However, as Kepel concluded, “the parallel drawn between the dangers of communism and those of Islam gave Washington’s strategic planners the illusion that they could dispense with analyzing the nature of the Islamist ‘menace’ and could simply transpose the conceptual tools designed to apprehend one threat to the very different realities of the other.\textsuperscript{340}.”

\textit{Military force in Afghanistan}

In his book \textit{Daydream Believers}, Fred Kaplan tells a story that epitomizes American military capabilities in the 21\textsuperscript{st} century. To paraphrase: on October 15, 2001, eight days after the initial bombing-phase of the Afghan war had begun, an undercover American special-ops officer stationed near the village of Mazar-i-Sharif spotted an entire regimen of Taliban fighters. He immediately typed the enemy’s coordinates into

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{Daalder and Lindsay, 84}
\footnote{Daalder and Lindsay, 84}
\footnote{Daalder and Lindsay, 98}
\footnote{Kepel, 62}
\end{footnotes}
his laptop and sent them to an unmanned Predator drone hovering thousands of feet overhead. The drone then relayed the coordinates to the Sultan Air Base in Saudi Arabia where an Air Force officer directed it to fly over the regimen and take real-time video images from its built-in camera. After confirming the position, the Air Force officer ordered a B-52 bomber pilot to put the target’s coordinates into a smart bomb and fire away. In Kaplan’s words: “En route, the pilot punched the target’s coordinates into the GPS receiver of one of the (smart bombs). He flew to the area and fired the (smart bomb), which darted toward the regiment, exploded, and killed the Taliban.” The significance of this attack was that from the time the special-ops officer spotted the Taliban forces to the time the bomb exploded, only 19 minutes elapsed. As Kaplan concluded, “just a decade earlier, in Desert Storm, the sequence would have taken three days. A few years before then, it could have not taken place at all; it could not have been imagined.”

As President Bush spoke sternly about hunting down the culprits responsible for the 9/11 attacks and bringing them to justice, the American public rallied around him and was prepared to support aggressive action so long as there was a decisive response. While bin Laden gave a face to the terrorist threat, he hardly gave an adequate target for the type of response that Bush had in mind and therefore, American efforts were focused on the radical regime that harbored al Qaeda in Afghanistan, the Taliban. According to

341 Kaplan, 36
342 Kaplan, 36
343 Kaplan, 36
Woodward, Bush commented that the invasion of Afghanistan would include the “full force of the U.S. military… bombers coming from every direction.”

A war in Afghanistan would also be a considerable test for America’s post-Cold War army. “With no secure or friendly nearby bases and no easy access routes for American ground troops,” the invasion would be headed from the air with planes and smart bombs. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld focused heavily on an assault strategy devised for the first Gulf War by Lieutenant Colonels Dave Deptula and John Warden dubbed the “five-rings strategy.” According to this strategy, the battlefield – or targets for aerial bombing – was allocated into rings like on a dart board with the prime target (first ring) being the “enemy’s leadership and communications network.” The idea was that the deployment of ground troops could be drastically limited after air attacks destroyed the “outer rings” because by the time they touched ground, the enemy would have already been demolished.

If anything, though, the first Gulf War showed the limitations of such a strategy. While the bombings successfully wreaked havoc on the Iraqi army, “Saddam’s network of command, control, and communication never collapsed.” Ultimately, it wasn’t until ground forces defeated the Republican Guard head-on that the Iraqi army was pushed back. A decade later, though, the evolution of weaponry and communication technology had given the U.S. army two new toys to play with: an unmanned aerial drone for enemy

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344 Woodward, 107
345 Kaplan, 32
346 Kaplan, 20
347 Kaplan, 20
348 Kaplan, 21
reconnaissance and a new and improved smart bomb (with a GPS system built-into it). With these devices, the five-ring strategy could be employed with near-exact precision.

What ensued was just what the American public wanted; through allying with the anti-Taliban resistance fighters, the Northern Alliance, the armed forces orchestrated a swift, resolute military victory that showcased the greatest display of technological warfare in the history of mankind. Within weeks, the Taliban were deposed and city after city was taken by the Northern Alliance. However, while the air barrage proved to be devastating to Taliban forces, it alone was not sufficient for victory. The enemy adapted by disguising itself more effectively and, again, ground troops were needed to deliver the decisive blows. As Kaplan concluded, “The new technology had proved very effective at killing people and destroying targets, but – even when it was combined with a small number of ground forces – it didn’t bring capitulation; it didn’t win the war. The world hadn’t quite changed that much.”

Ground troops or no, the initial military response in Afghanistan – combined with the infighting and fracturing of the jihadist movement – depleted and isolated al Qaeda’s current ranks. As Gerges wrote, “Four important countries – Afghanistan, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen – that had provide al Qaeda with secure bases of support and thousands of volunteers have become inhospitable and highly dangerous.” However, as will be described in detail later, the American invasion of Iraq “provided al Qaeda with a new lease on life, a second generation of recruits and fighters, and a powerful outlet to

349 Kaplan, 33
350 Kaplan, 38
351 Gerges, 251
expand its ideological outreach activities to Muslims worldwide. As manpower, resources and attention began to flow from Afghanistan to Iraq, American military strategists mistook the victory of the initial battle for the victory of the war; and the removal of a regime that harbored the terrorist organization for the terrorist ideology and organization itself. The Taliban, while decimated and forced underground, was beaten but not eliminated and would resurface years later to continue the fight.

While Operation Enduring Freedom sent a clear picture of American military superiority and its ability to level any other nation-state on the planet, the forceful tactics employed failed to adequately eliminate key components of the al Qaeda network, most importantly the ideology and communication networks at its the core. As Kepel explained, in its response to 9/11, “the United States required a worthy adversary for its war on terror – a nation with real estate to be occupied, military hardware to be destroyed, and a regime to be overthrown – not a terrorist NGO without status or headquarters… What they did not do was move rapidly to eliminate the international network controlled by bin Laden and Zawahiri, primarily because they did not understand its nature and functions adequately. In formulating a response to 9/11, the U.S. military’s strategic planners showed that while employing new military technologies and strategies, they had yet to shift from the mentality that superior force alone would lead to victory. Perhaps their concept of victory itself was inaccurate; for as described throughout this paper, the elimination of an enemy through defeating it in battle didn’t constitute victory; it didn’t create a stable and sustainable government in its place and it sure didn’t lay the groundwork for democracy. New technology may have transformed

352 Gerges, 251
353 Kepel, 111-112
warfare, but the end objectives, and the nonmilitary strategies needed to achieve them, remained as they always had.

Hence, as Kepel concluded, “despite the severe blows the Al Qaeda network had suffered – its data seized, many of its activists captured or killed – the elimination of its physical base in Afghanistan did not eradicate Al Qaeda’s effectiveness. Attacks started up once more… this organization did not consist of buildings and tanks and borders but of Internet websites, satellite television links, clandestine financial transfers, international air travel, and a proliferation of activists ranging from the suburbs of Jersey City to the rice patties of Indonesia.”

*Neocons and the 2002 National Security Strategy*

After 9/11, the “second layer” of the President Bush’s team – those with stronger neoconservative views – rose within the administration to become the “intellectual source of (Bush’s) inspiration and self definition.” Despite being a fundamental threat to America and the American way of life, the Neocons viewed 9/11 as an unprecedented opportunity to implement their ideology into America’s foreign policy. After the attacks, the realignment of domestic sentiments around more hawkish ambitions combined with an outpouring of international sympathy pulled the neocons’ views away from the political extremes and gave them a platform within the White House. For years they had advocated for aggressive military action to eliminate the rogue leaders who inhibited the spread of democracy worldwide and always at the top of their list was Saddam

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354 Kepel, 111
355 Brzezinski, 138
Hussein. The domestic consensus formed after 9/11 finally provided the justification needed to pursue aggressive regime change in Iraq as Hussein was an easy link to terrorism even if the evidence was unfounded. As Melanson wrote, “it appears that several members of the Bush administration, led by Cheney, Rumsfeld, and Wolfowitz, entered office in January 2001 already determined to depose Saddam Hussein. The attacks of September 11 provided them with a powerful pretext to do so. Furthermore, they… were committed to devising a new national security strategy that would carve out an American global role strikingly similar to one proposed in the Defense Planning Guidance (DPG) of 1992.”

If 9/11 informally allowed for the rise of the neoconservatives within the Bush administration then the 2002 National Security Strategy formalized their worldview into a grand foreign policy strategy. The 2002 NSS rested on four key premises: 1) liberal democracy is the only sustainable model for national success; 2) “American values are universally valid and cannot be compromised;” 3) “The preeminent military, economic, and political power of the United States is conducive to peace and welcomed by other states;” 4) Terrorists and rogue states represent a new type of enemy where deterrence will no longer work. Perhaps most strikingly was the NSS’s assertion that “as a matter of common sense and self-defense, America will act against… emerging threats before they are fully formed.” As Daalder and Lindsay wrote, “The key elements of the emerging strategy, which reflected the administration’s hegemonist worldview, were

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356 Woodward, 60
357 Melanson, 312
358 Melanson, 312
359 Melanson, 312
360 Melanson, 312
361 Melanson, 312
American power and leadership, a focus on rogue states, and the need to act preemptively.\textsuperscript{362}

\textit{Preemption (preventive war) and unilateralsim}

Arthur Schlesinger Jr., author of \textit{The Imperial Presidency}, noted that Bush’s new foreign policy strategy “repudiated the strategy that won the Cold War – the combination of containment and deterrence carried out through such multilateral agencies as the UN, NATO, and the Organization of American States… The essence of our new strategy is military: to strike a potential enemy, unilaterally if necessary, before he has a chance to strike us. War, traditionally a matter of last resort, becomes a matter of presidential choice.”\textsuperscript{363} In practice, unilateralism and preemption are not new to American foreign policy, yet in formal declaration they certainly are. The U.S. has never held itself to the standard that it would not act in its best interests militarily unless it had a broad coalition of support. In fact, unilateralism and the core belief of America’s superior morality was first espoused by George Washington when he announced in his Farewell Address that the U.S. should “steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world.”\textsuperscript{364}

However, over the long course of American history, the evolution of technology (mainly in warfare) and the shifting nature of the international environment has led to the creation of multilateral political, military and economic institutions such as the UN and NATO. These alliances reached their zenith during the Cold War. When the Soviet Empire collapsed, President Clinton made the enlargement of multilateral institutions the

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\textsuperscript{362} Daalder and Lindsay, 19
\textsuperscript{364} Schlesinger, 3
\end{flushleft}
focus-point of his foreign policy as he believed them to be the most efficient means to forcing cooperative international economic networks. However, the truth of the matter was that after the fall of the Soviet Union a faction of American strategists – mainly neoconservatives - saw little need for the UN as America became the world’s only superpower. This faction came to power along with the Bush administration and their ideology was front and center after the 9/11 attacks. Woodward wrote in Bush at War that Bush was weary about the letting other nations help dictate America’s actions in the War on Terror. As Bush, himself, said, “at some point, we may be the only ones left. That’s okay with me. We are America.” Hence, many within the government believed that America had long contained the military capabilities to operate alone in world; however, after 9/11, they felt they had to justification to do so as well.

Preemption, in its literal meaning, also is not new or unfounded to American foreign policy. It is the expectation of the American public that anytime the U.S. had specific, actionable information of a looming attack, it would act decisively to thwart it. However, in reference to Bush’s post-9/11 strategy, preemption is a bit of a misnomer. What was ultimately meant – and executed in Iraq – was preventive war. What’s the difference? As Schlesinger explained, “‘Preemptive’ war refers to a direct, immediate, specific threat that must be crushed at once… ‘Preventive’ war refers to potential, future, therefore speculative threats.” Hence, the key term is speculative. Theoretically, anywhere anti-Western forces exist, one could make the argument that is it conceivable that at some point in time they will (or could) attack the U.S. and thus, under the new doctrine, the U.S. has the authority to strike first.

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365 Woodward, 81
366 Schlesinger, 23
The very nature of the terrorist threat is what made preventive war acceptable (at the time) to the American public. People understood that terrorism was a global threat and it was logical that since nobody saw the 9/11 attacks coming, future attacks would be similar. Therefore, the only way to effectively combat global terrorism was to strike before the forces became operational – regardless of whether or not they had the capability, resources or desire to ever become so. This doctrine of preventive war got its first (and last) test with the war in Iraq. As Schlesinger wrote, “the preventive war against Iraq as a war of President Bush’s choice. It was not, like the Second World War, forced upon the United States. It was not, like the Korean War, the first Gulf War, and the war against the Taliban, a response to overt acts of aggression. Nor did the United States drag itself incrementally into full-scale war, as in Vietnam…. It took one man to decide for war, and to promote it, sending thousands of troops there while other nations doubted that a war was justified.”

Government misinformation and media complicity in the selling of Iraq

With America’s new military strategy outlined in the national security document released in September 2002, the Bush administration was left with the task of figuring a way to sell its policies to the American public. One of Bush’s top advisors, Karl Rove, understood very well the domestic constraints placed on foreign policy so he devised a media campaign designed to eradicate them. The goal was to leverage the current levels of public support, media complicity and congressional bipartisanship that emerged in reaction to the 9/11 attacks into a specific mandate for an invasion of Iraq. The way to do so was simple: link the two. As Freedman wrote, the Bush administration described an

367 Schlesinger, 37
invasion of Iraq “as a war of necessity and part of the war on terror. In building the
domestic case for war, the United States constantly asserted direct links between Saddam
Hussein’s regime and al Qaeda, and even with the 9/11 attacks, although the evidence
was flimsy. 368"

After months of an administration-led media blitz asserting everything from an
Iraqi role in the 9/11 attacks to Hussein having stockpiles of weapons of mass
destruction, the American public came to see an invasion of Iraq as necessary for the
immediate security of America. A Program on International Policy Attitudes (PIPA)/
Knowledge Networks Poll reflected these sentiments in 2002 and 2003, as it reported that
57 percent of Americans believed that Iraq was either directly or partially linked to al
Qaeda and 69 percent believed that Saddam Hussein was either very or somewhat likely
to have been personally involved in the 9/11 attacks; two claims that the 9/11
Commission clearly refuted. 369 These wide-ranging misperceptions created a domestic
environment that was tailor-made for an executive in war time. In February 2003, a
month before the U.S. invasion, Americans who believed the Iraq-al Qaeda link were
more than twice as likely to support unilateral U.S. action against Hussein (67% to
29%). 370 Thus, the Bush administration got their mandate.

Also contributing to the overall fear of a looming Iraqi threat was the American
media. Supposedly the government watchdog on issues of public importance, broadcast
and print outlets alike served as the administration’s microphone in the run-up to war. A
PIPA/Knowledge Institute poll showed that 80 percent of the people who got their news

368 Crocker, Hampson, and Aall, 255
369 Steven Kull, Misperceptions, The Media and the Iraq War, ed. Clay Ramsay, et al Program on
370 Kull, 2003
from Fox, 71 percent who got their news from CBS, 61 percent who got their news from ABC and 55 percent who got their news from either NBC or CNN held at least one misperception about an Iraq-al-Qaeda link, the discovery of WMD, or the world’s opinion about the U.S. invasion of Iraq.\textsuperscript{371} As Mariellen Diemand concluded in her 2003 war coverage analysis, “The role of the press in the war against Iraq has been to deter dissenting opinions and to be ‘cheerleaders’ for the ongoing battle. Any attempt at objectivity was abandoned once the bombs started dropping and was replaced with one-sided and overly patriotic-sentiments, which closely resemble the administration’s stance on the war.\textsuperscript{372}”

The final leg of domestic support that the administration needed for an invasion was congressional approval and they understood that as goes the voters; goes Congress. With the public and media already convinced of the catastrophic threat posed by Saddam Hussein, the few congressional opponents to the invasion who dared speak-out quickly found themselves in the minority. Not only were dissenters portrayed as weak and unfit for the demands of the post-9/11 world but opposition to war was soon linked with a lack of patriotism. As Melanson wrote, “Republicans, in effect, argued that those who opposed the (Iraq war) resolution were guilty of aiding and abetting the enemy – not only Iraq, but al-Qaeda as well. With elections only a few weeks away, 81 House and 29 Senate Democrats joined huge Republican majorities to easily pass a resolution authorizing Bush to employ whatever force he deemed necessary to ‘(1) defend the

\textsuperscript{371} Kull, 2003
United States against the continuing threat posed by Iraq, and (2) enforce all relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions regarding Iraq.373

The administration’s efforts to manipulate the domestic sources of foreign policy were successful. Not only did President Bush receive a mandate to invade Iraq from both the public and Congress, but on March 19, 2003 -the beginning of combat operations - domestic support for war stood at an overwhelming 71 percent while Bush’s approval ratings for his handling of the Iraq situation stood firmly at 64 percent.374

Taken in whole, by linking the terrorist threat with Iraq, the Bush administration – with aid from the complicit media - systematically manipulated the societal and institutional forces that influenced foreign policy in a way that afforded the president immense flexibility in exercising military force abroad. As a Center for Public Integrity study from January, 2008 found, “President Bush and seven of his administration’s top officials… had made at least 935 false statements in the two years following the September 11, 2001, about the national security threat posed by Saddam Hussein’s Iraq.” Yet, misinformation or not, over 150,000 America soon entered into a war on the Gulf Coast for the second time in a little over a decade.

Military force in Iraq

What was particularly striking about the run-up to the Iraq war was that initial attempts at coercive diplomacy against Hussein seemed to work. Under threat of an attack, the Iraqi dictator allowed UN inspectors back into to his country to search for

373 Melanson, 314
374 Melanson, 316-317
weapons of mass destruction. Initially, Hussein refused to cooperate fully with the inspectors’ demands and restricted access to certain buildings and people. In response, in October 2002, Congress authorized Bush to use force in Iraq – which Bush pledged he would do – and a month later, on November 8, 2002, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1441 which required “that Iraq provide the UN inspection team and the IAEA ‘immediate, unimpeded, unconditional, and unrestricted access’ to all buildings, records, and person whom (the inspectors) wanted to see or talk with.”376 Staring down an imminent U.S. invasion and receiving substantial pressure from Russia and France, Hussein changed his stance and began to cooperate with the weapons inspectors. In February 2003, the head UN inspector Hans Blix admitted that the situation had improved in terms of Iraqi compliance with their search for WMD.377 Even more, Blix announced that no evidence had been found of “biological, chemical, or nuclear weapons” - the main claim for the necessity to go to war in the first place. Hence, on a state actor whose leader above all desired to stay in power, coercive diplomacy was effective. Hussein had learned during the first Gulf War that his military stood little chance against the U.S. in a conventional battle and therefore, the mere threat of an invasion produced results. As Robert Art and Patrick Cronin wrote, “the threat of military action, combined with Saddam’s hope that sanctions would be lifted with full cooperation, produced compliance. The Bush administration, however, refused to take yes for an answer. It wanted regime change, something that Saddam would not willingly agree to.”379 Therefore, despite effective diplomatic tactics, the U.S. prepared for phase

376 Crocker, Hampson, and Aall, 309
377 Crocker, Hampson, and Aall, 310
378 Crocker, Hampson, and Aall, 310
379 Crocker, Hampson, and Aall, 310
two of Bush’s Global War on Terror; one that wouldn’t have been possible on September 10, 2001. As Woodward wrote, “the terrorist attacks of September 11 gave the U.S. a new window to go after Hussein.380"

Despite some hostility from particular members of the international community toward the U.S. invasion of Iraq, dissent faded into the background once the initial military campaign began. Consistent with Rumsfeld’s and other’s perception of the capabilities of technology in modern warfare, the conventional phase of the war was preceded by a large-scale bombing campaign that decimated the Iraqi army and infrastructure. Once ground troops entered the fight, there was little resistance and within weeks, U.S. tanks rolled into Bagdad. Like the Afghan invasion, the initial U.S. onslaught of Iraq was a perfect display of U.S. military superiority.

However, after the conventional battle was over, U.S. forces proved to be unsuited and unprepared for restoring peace and stability to the country. As Freedman explained, “the transition from an invading force to an occupying administration was poorly handled. In part, this was because preparations had been made to cope with the expected problems of hundreds of thousands of refugees, in flight from urban fighting, instead of the actual problem of a breakdown of law and order in the cities.381” Even before Bush’s infamous “Mission Accomplished” speech atop the USS Abraham Lincoln in May widespread looting had broken out all across Iraq and American forces – numbered based on estimates made by Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz - were too few to stop it. As Melanson wrote, “[the U.S. armed forces] had been stretched so thin because

380 Woodward, 83
381 Crocker, Hampson, and Aall, 256
Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz had rejected Army Chief of Staff Eric Shinseki’s strong recommendation that as many as 400,000 troops would be needed to pacify Iraq. Rumsfeld… had originally favored deploying as few as 75,000 troops, but eventually agreed on a figure of about 175,000. The result was a rapid military victory, followed by a prolonged period in which basic services such as electricity could not be restored and secure conditions could not be achieved.382

A tactic such as applying military force can only be evaluated based on its ability to achieve a desired objective. Therefore, in order to understand where military force failed in the battle in Iraq it is first necessary to identify the long-term objectives of the invasion. As Melanson wrote, “administration neoconservatives envisioned a post-Hussein democratic Iraq that would serve as a model for other Arab states. In time, they reasoned, autocratic governments like Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Egypt (and the Palestinian Authority) would be pressured by their populations to transform themselves into democracies. And when that happened, these states would cease to be the breeding ground for Islamic terrorists. Iraq would thus serve as a beacon of liberty in the Arab world and the host for U.S. military installations. American influence in the region would be further cemented.383” This thinking was born out of events from recent history; for just like many Eastern European states were able to transition to democracy after the fall of the Soviet Union, the elimination of dictatorial “power apparatus” in Iraq would allow for civil society to rebuild itself on a “democratic basis.384” The role of the U.S. armed forces

382 Melanson, 318
383 Melanson, 313
384 Kepel, 68
was to, first, depose of Saddam Hussein and his regime and second, facilitate the transition to a pro-Western democracy.

To the first part, the armed forces were unequivocally successful. Hussein’s ill-conceived strategy of initially fighting a conventional war (although, he did later set the blueprints for the insurgency) gave the superior technology of the U.S. easy targets to destroy. After barely a month of military conflict, the U.S. had taken control of most of the country.

The transition to a democracy, though, was dramatically more complex and contingent on the ability of the U.S. and moderate Muslim forces to restore basic government services and win the “hearts and minds” of the Iraqis. The key factor in this endeavor is two-way trust; the Iraqi civilians must trust that the U.S. forces - and not the sectarian or terrorist groups - have their best interests in mind, and the U.S. forces must trust that the Iraqi civilians won’t shoot at them. On the other side, those who want to disrupt the transition to democracy use tactics aimed specifically to disrupt the formation of this trust. As Freedman wrote, the “insurgents were able to blend in with civilians and so undermine any hopes of developing trust between the Americans and the local population, especially in Sunni areas.” "Unable to distinguish peaceful civilians from enemy combatants, the U.S. troops “remained in ‘force protection’ mode and killed too many ordinary Iraqis.” Hence, distain and distrust were mutual.

The insurgents and terrorist groups in Iraq have several inherent tactical advantages over conventional forces in an urban guerilla war. First, they live and operate amongst the population with no uniforms and no frontlines and therefore provide a very

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385 Crocker, Hampson, and Aall, 256
386 Crocker, Hampson, and Aall, 256
poor target for even the most sophisticated of smart bombs. As Robb described, “because the insurgents in Iraq lack a recognizable center or gravity – a leadership structure or an ideology – they are nearly immune to the application of conventional military force. 387‖ Further, as described in Part II, they often dictate when and where battles will take place and therefore engage the conventional troops only when it is advantageous to them and then vanish back into the larger population. Against the mass and bulk of the U.S. Army, a guerilla force stands little chance; however, through the use of cell phones or other electronic devices, guerilla fighters can inflict great harm without ever exposing themselves to possible reprisals. As Robb continued, “what is different today is that an evolutionary leap in the method of warfare has occurred in concert with a decentralization of economic power – the combination of which makes it possible for even extremely small nonstate groups to fight states and possibly win on a regular basis. 388‖

The second advantage is the perception of nonstate forces compared to state armies and how the perception alone gives insurgents and/or terrorists a leg-up on winning the “hearts and minds” of the local population. A population expects a government to provide food, healthcare, security, clean water, electricity and other basic services and if it fails to do so, that government will lose legitimacy with the population. Therefore, through disrupting the ability of the state to provide basic services for its people, nonstate forces can alienate the local population from its own government; and do so for a very cheap price. 389 Robb calls this strategy systems disruption; where “small attacks can generate a rate of return (measured in economic damage) a million-fold over

387 Robb, 4
388 Robb, 21
389 Robb, 5
their costs. By attacking oil pipelines, electricity centers, water supplies and other systems that provide mass public services, terrorist groups can cause massive damage with homemade bombs and other shoddy appliances. Once a government loses its legitimacy as the provider of basic services, the people will turn to other entities, in this case, often the nonstate forces themselves. Iraq is a prime example. The coalition Iraqi government/U.S. army has not been able to provide basic security for the people and therefore, the people have been turning to (or joining) nonstate militias for protection at the expense of the state.

The most important legacy of the Iraq war, however, was the affect it had on al Qaeda and the transnational jihadist movement. Sold as “phase two” in America’s “Global War on Terror,” the invasion of Iraq actually helped to revive a dying jihadist movement by giving al Qaeda a new pool of radicalized youths to recruit. As described earlier, until the U.S. invasion of Iraq, the jihadist war against the “far enemy” had not gone well for bin Laden. While the 9/11 attacks had caused severe damage in New York and Washington and prompted the coveted retaliation that bin Laden was hoping for, the umma largely condemned the hijackings and the targeting of noncombatants. While TV cameras caught a handful of Palestinians and Iraqis celebrating in the streets after hearing of the collapse of the World Trade Centers, jubilation was not the dominant reaction of mainstream Muslims (a candlelight vigil was actually held in Tehran the night after the attacks).

In order to effectively eliminate the al Qaeda network, American officials realized they must first isolate it from mainstream Muslims. With the 9/11 attacks; however, al

390 Robb, 15
Qaeda’s own tactics appeared to do just that. Combined with the subsequent U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, both al Qaeda’s physical base and ideological appeal were decimated and its operatives sent into hiding all across the Muslim world.

The invasion of Iraq, though, undid all this. With U.S. troops overthrowing a Muslim ruler who had nothing to do with 9/11, American foreign policy strategists gave bin Laden what he called a “golden and unique opportunity.”\(^{391}\) First, an American occupation of Iraq proved to be fertile ground for the guerilla warfare that al Qaeda had specialized in and allowed bin Laded to show the jihadist movement in whole that al Qaeda was alive and well despite its perceived defeat in Afghanistan. Second, aside from opening another theater where U.S. troops could be easily targeted, the Iraq war provided bin Laden the opportunity to expand al Qaeda’s appeal to those who strongly oppose America’s occupation of Muslim lands. As Gerges wrote, “bin Laden… positioned himself as a defender of occupied Arab lands, particularly in Iraq and Palestine, and he hopes to reverse Muslims’ hostile views toward global jihad… the expansion of the American ‘war on terror’ particularly the invasion and occupation of Iraq, has radicalized a large segment of Iraqi society and Arab public opinion.”\(^{392}\) Hence, on both a tactical and psychological level, the U.S. invasion of Iraq played right into the hands of bin Laden and al Qaeda.

The invasion of Iraq, like that of the Soviets in the 1980s, mobilized the umma and provided an opportunity for jihadis to gain technical fighting skills and become

\(^{391}\) Gerges, 258
\(^{392}\) Gerges, 259, 264
seasoned in warfare. The result is a second generation of transnational Islamic militants (Gerges, p. 264) “driven by local agendas and inspired by al Qaeda ideology.”

But the very context of the war itself – the West versus Islam and the occupiers versus the occupied – also allowed bin Laden’s ideology to reach beyond the already-radicalized to mainstream Islamic circles. Like all urban warfare, the casualties and suffering has not been limited to military personnel and insurgents but makes-up the everyday reality of the Iraqi people. Where once bin Laden’s tactics drew harsh criticism throughout the Muslim world, Iraq allowed him to effectively justify his global jihad and “make inroads, if not into mainstream Arabs hearts and minds, into a large pool of outraged Muslims from the Middle East and elsewhere and uprooted young European-born Muslims who want to resist what they perceive as the U.S.-British onslaught on their coreligionists.” As Gerges concluded, most “alarming is that throughout Arab lands the U.S. invasion of Iraq has turned into a recruiting device against perceived American imperial policies; it has radicalized both mainstream and militant Arab and Muslim public opinion… Far from being al Qaeda-type fanatics, these young men had not been politicized before the American-led invasion and had not joined any Islamist, let alone paramilitary, organization. They perceive the American war and military presence in Iraq as an alien encroachment on the ummah, which, in the eyes of their religious leaders, is not justified.” Hence, whereas after 9/11 America was the recipient of an unprecedented wave of international sympathy, merely three years later the Bush Doctrine had “converted that warm sympathy into cold hate.”

393 Gerges, 218
394 Gerges, 265
395 Gerges, 268
396 Schlesinger, 44
Al Qaeda today

Today, al Qaeda has a much different make-up than it did on September 12, 2001. As Gerges wrote, “after the United States attacked Afghanistan, bin Laden and his aides scattered operatives and lieutenants throughout the Middle East, North Africa, Asia and Europe… With the erosion of al Qaeda’s formal command and control structure, forward movement has devolved to regional affiliates and branches, which have increasingly taken matters into their own hands with little centralized operational planning by the parent organization.397” In the years following the American invasion of Iraq, these “regional affiliates and branches” have carried out attacks in Egypt, London, Spain, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Morocco.398 Further, while many of the “semiautonomous local cells”399† flew the banner of al Qaeda upon taking responsibility for various attacks, their actions were largely independent of direction from those close to bin Laden or Zawahiri. Ultimately, while al Qaeda’s organization represents a less tangible force, its decentralization and the dissemination of its ideology has made it more popular today than at anytime of its existence. As Daniel Bynam wrote in The Five Front War, “the organization has morphed from the terrorist group that struck America so brutally on 9/11. The core organization is weaker and less capable of a catastrophic attack on U.S. soil than it was six years ago. However, the cause it champions is far more popular, and the overall level of anti-U.S. and anti-Western anger is much higher.”400†

397 Gerges, 247
398 Gerges, 247
399 Gerges, 247
U.S. military tactics in Iraq and Afghanistan and their limited overall affects on al Qaeda shows the severe limitations of force and the future challenges of combating terrorism. As Kepel wrote, “the problem with September 11, from the standpoint of U.S. military strategy, was that the United States could not clearly define a stable territory against which its retaliatory missiles could be launched. Military modes of action and reaction, nuclear or conventional, were conceived to destroy territorial defenses, seize cities, control airspace, annihilate tanks, disrupt troop formations, shot down planes, and overthrow regimes that physically occupied palaces, offices, and barracks. Bin Laden and his allies had no homeland or territory… The very intangibility of the al Qaeda network precluded a traditional military conquest.”  

**Conclusion**

On March 19, 2004, President Bush stood in the East Room of the White House and called the fight against Islamic radicalism, the “inescapable calling of our generation.” Just like communism was to the generation before and fascism to the one before that, Bush implied that again the world was faced with an either-or scenario of good versus evil, us versus them, and freedom vs. tyranny. In essence, though, the ideology of “our generation” of enemy has been around since the seventh century; it’s just that today that ideology is held by nonstate groups who have global ambitions and the capabilities to act on those ambitions due to the tools of globalization.

American officials had believed that the disintegration of the Soviet Union solidified America’s strength and prominence in the international environment and gave

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401 Kepel, 114,119
it carte blanche authority to ensure the dissemination of its values world-wide. However, as Americans – government officials, policy strategists and regular citizens alike - sat shocked and horrified at the attack on U.S. soil on September 11, 2001, they all came to the same conclusion: the world changed today. This conclusion, or more accurately this perception of their own vulnerability, became the core reality around which subsequent policies were formulated. Further, it altered domestic forces in a particular way so to foster the rise of the neoconservatives and the adoption of their ideology and philosophy as the official strategy of American foreign policy in the post-9/11 world.

There was just one problem; the world didn’t change on September 11. Instead, 9/11 merely affirmed a fact that had been true since 1989: America wasn’t made stronger after the Cold War, it was made more vulnerable. The bipolar international environment of the Cold War didn’t give way to one where America was omnipotent but where the nature and dissemination of power, influence and interests made omnipotence impossible. The vast military superiority that America enjoyed was offset by a fluid international power structure and the rise of terrorists who were fostered by social, political and economic issues. As Kaplan wrote, “bombs could now hit targets with uncanny precision, and armies could maneuver across landscapes with impressive speed. But winning battles didn’t mean achieving the objectives of a war. Toppling a rouge regime was one thing… but propping up a new government to replace it was another thing entirely, and creating the conditions for democracy was something else still.”

Yet, where 9/11 led to a shift in the domestic environment, it still didn’t change the perceptions held by top policy strategists about America and its role in the world.

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403 Kaplan, 1
404 Kaplan, 4
Instead of reaching out to allies and creating coalitions capable of ensuring collective security, the Bush administration only further embraced their notion of American supremacy in a dangerous world by thwarting multilateral institutions and striving to create the world in America’s image. Instead of awakening the Bush administration to the vast dissemination of power and the rising capabilities of nonstate actors in the international environment, 9/11 pushed them to separate the world into the convenient and familiar bipolar construct of good versus evil. Further, the four main ideas that permeated American foreign policies throughout the 1990s were quickly debunked on 9/11, and if not then, a year-and-a-half later by the success of the insurgency in Iraq.

Hence, what 9/11 really changed was nothing in the international environment; “the way the world works - the nature of power, warfare, and politics among nations - remained essentially the same.” What changed was purely American: the perceptions of the American people, the power allotted to the president by Congress and subsequently, the way the U.S. employed military force in the international environment. Thus, as Kepel concluded, America’s military initiatives “might never have seen the light of day had it not been for an exceptional set of circumstances: the unprecedented terrorist attacks on New York and Washington on September 11, 2001, which opened a new chapter in American history.” Hence, when President Bush or Vice President Cheney spoke about 9/11 changing everything, they were partially correct although not in the way they intended; the world didn’t change on 9/11… America did.

What these conclusions mean for the future of American foreign policy

[405] Kaplan, 1
[406] Kepel, 69
As the war in Iraq continuously went downhill both public and congressional support began to waver. A debate began amongst commentators about the staying power of both the new policy consensus and the domestic power orientation that was created after 9/11. That debate was put to end on November 7, 2006 as voters from all across the country erased Republican majorities in both houses of Congress and the first officials out were those whom had most staunchly advocated and defended the invasion of Iraq. As the Democrats took control, President Bush’s power steadily eroded and neoconservatism grew a political stigma rivaled only by McCarthyism.

As I finish this research project in April 2008, President Bush’s approval ratings are hovering around 30 percent, ending the war in Iraq has become a popular rallying cry for the Democratic presidential candidates and a disastrous housing market and looming recession has made the state of the economy the main concern of voters heading into the November elections. Overall, it appears that the shifts in the American domestic environment that occurred in response to the September 11 attacks were short-term at best.

But the international environment – the rise of nonstate actors empowered with the tools of globalization – are as much a reality today as they were six years ago and it prompts a question that is central to this research project: what is the future role of conventional military force? The 21st century, like the 20 before it, will not be devoid of menaces. There remain plenty of state-actors that could pose more traditional threats to American or global security and need to be deterred; the most prominent of which is the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Hence, military force or the threat thereof, is still an essential card to hold in international conflict management. As Crocker,
Hampson and Aall wrote, “in the art of managing conflict… military power and the use of force continue to play a vital role in maintaining global power balances, dealing with regimes that refuse to abide by international norms and/or threaten their neighbors and in some cases providing a measure of response to terrorism. However, events during the past decade have showing that military force alone cannot effectively deal with the myriad of problems of failed and ailing states in the international system or with the malaise that grows out of continued conflict in parts of the globe. The better question, though, and really the one that this research paper attempted to answer is what role does conventional military force play in the fight against transnational jihadists; in that case, military force is still vital but severely limited.

The reality facing the next generation of American strategists that was highlighted – but not created – on 9/11 is that the deep social, religious, economic and political structures that marginalize, alienate and suppress the human spirit in lands and societies on the other side of the planet have the capability to wreak havoc on America’s shores as well. Thus, the policies designed to combat terrorism will continue to fail until they begin to affect the sources of these conflicts. While radicalization has been catalyzed by the ongoing situation in Palestine and the American invasion of Iraq, the heart of the issue is much deeper and more complex than reactions to Western foreign policies. In essence, there are fundamental flaws in the political and economic institutions that form the foundations of these societies and they manifest themselves in the very structure around which everyday life is organized. Power is monopolized by well-funded elites and thus, the ability to lawfully exercise self-determination is denied to everyone but outlaws.

What results is a ripe environment for a populist hero to emerge even if that hero is a

407 Crocker, Hampson, and Aall, 12
religious radical. As Gerges wrote, “at the heart of this structural crisis lie entrenched authoritarianism and a vacuum of legitimate political authority fueling the ambitions of secular and religious activists. Zawahiri and bin Laden belong to a long line of revolutionaries who have tried to fill the authority vacuum by promising the disfranchised and oppressed Muslim masses moral salvation and political deliverance. 408”

It is this basic fact that places the grave limits on military force to achieve the stated goal of eliminating terrorism. Terrorism – that is, transnational jihadists or jihadists in general – do represent a military threat in the international environment; however, their survival depends on their ability to spread their ideology and continue to gain recruits. There are two possible ways to stop this spread: first, eliminate completely all those who hold the jihadist ideology, like the Nazis were eliminated in World War II; or second, isolate them by tempering their appeal to the next generation of Muslim youths.

The former strategy, aside from being impractical on an economic level, is virtually impossible to achieve due to the decentralized structure of the jihadist network, their guerilla tactics and capabilities, and the fact that in order to eliminate them, Western forces would have to employ tactics that would only work to further spread the ideology; all consequences that have been discussed thoroughly throughout this paper.

The second strategy, though, is the one that must succeed. As has been stated often, while the top echelon of the jihadist movement consists of pure Islamists whose motivations are religious, the movement’s base and the foot soldiers that carry-out the attacks are radicalized due to social, economic and political grievances and a lack of viable alternatives. As Gerges wrote:

408 Gerges, 273
The war against transnationalist jihadis cannot be won on the battlefield in either Afghanistan or Iraq; this is not a conventional war in which two armies confront each other and emerge victorious or vanquished…. The most effective means to put Al Qaeda out of business is… by reaching out to the large ‘floating middle’ of young Muslim opinions and listening closely to their fears, hopes, and aspirations… There is an urgent need to address socioeconomic grievances and respond to the vacuum of legitimate authority in the region. Instead of expanding the ‘war on terror’ and embarking on new military ventures, American policy makers would be better served to exert systemic pressure on their Arab and Muslim ruling allies to structurally reform and integrate the rising social classes into the political space.409,

The first step, though, is the correct identification of the enemy. As part III of this research article attempted to do, Western strategists and officials must identify and define the enemy based on its objectives, ideology and worldview (i.e. transnational jihadis) and not by its tactics (terrorists). This distinction is key to isolating the few who attacked America on 9/11 from the large amount who, to this point, have been caught in the cross-fire and are often radicalized in the process. As Byman wrote, “the enemy is not a generic phenomenon called terrorism but rather a specific set of foes, in particular al-Qaeda and its allies.410,”

Thus, this separation outlines the necessity for parallel strategies in the fight against global terrorism. The continued push to open Muslim societies and increase the quality of life of their citizens on the one hand, and eliminating those specific groups who hold the jihadist mentality and are willing to die for the cause on the other. In essence, it’s the separation between those who have already been radicalized and those who could potentially be due to socio-economic and political forces. Only after this distinction is made – which is not easy – can military force be effectively utilized in 21st century warfare.

409 Gerges, 275-276
410 Bynam, 2
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