Analysing United States foreign policy towards the Middle East 1993-2003 : origins and grand strategies

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ABSTRACT

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Steven Martin Wright

The position of this study is that the foreign policy response of George W. Bush's administration in the wake of the trauma of the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on New York and Washington D.C. signified a complete redefinition of US grand strategy. In essence the new grand strategic era of the War on Terror had emerged and had replaced the post-Cold War order. The purpose of this thesis is to demonstrate this radical change through a foreign policy analysis methodology.

This thesis analyses the foreign policy of the United States under Bill Clinton and George W. Bush. It demonstrates the origins, nature and trajectory of US foreign policy during the time period 1993-2003. This is achieved through an original comparative foreign policy analysis of the two presidencies in the time frame 1993-2003, and also through an analysis of US foreign policy towards the Middle East as a case study. Three key interrelated areas of US foreign relations towards the Middle East were selected as case studies: Persian Gulf security; the Arab-Israeli peace process; and political Islam.

The study shows how US foreign policy towards these case studies altered after the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks and became guided by the new grand strategy of the War on Terror. It makes an original contribution to the current scholarship on US foreign policy towards Iraq during the post-Cold War era through showing that the United States sought regime change in Iraq since 1991 as its strategic objective. Finally, prior to the onset of the War on Terror, political Islam is shown to have been a secondary foreign policy concern and subservient to US interests in the Persian Gulf. This study shows how US foreign policy in this new context resulted in political Islam becoming an issue of primary importance in US strategic calculations towards the Middle East.

Analysing United States Foreign Policy Towards the Middle East 1993-2003: Origins and Grand Strategies.

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Dedicated to my parents Brian and Maria for their ongoing support without which this would not have been possible.

Contents

Chapter I

Introduction

"The Middle East is an area in which the United States has a vital interest. The maintenance of peace in that area, which has so frequently seen disturbances in the past, is of significance to the world as a whole."

Franklin D. Roosevelt

March 1944

The foreign policy response of George W. Bush's administration in the wake of the trauma of the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on New York and Washington D.C. signified a complete redefinition of US grand strategy.[1] Whilst the collapse of the Soviet Union marked the end of the Cold War, resulting in the post-Cold War era, the 9/11 attacks marked the onset of the era of the War on Terror. This gave rise to the most fundamental redefinition of US grand strategy since the presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt.[2] Yet the nature of Bush's post-9/11 foreign policy agenda has emerged as the most ambitious since Woodrow Wilson articulated his vision for a new international order following the end of the First World War.[3] Understanding the origins, strategic direction and application of this change is thus of great importance for the field of international relations and policymakers in general.

The foreign policy of the United States towards the Middle East presents an ideal case study in which to show how US grand strategic policy has changed in the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. The Middle East is one of the most complex and emotionally laden political arenas for United States foreign policy. Complex schisms based on ideology, religion and history allow for a diverse range of interpretations and evaluations. It also makes the need for a sophisticated diplomacy ever more important. The United States has devoted a great deal of energy towards its diplomacy with the Middle Eastern, none more so than with the Arab-Israeli conflict.

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[1] Grand strategy is defined as the overarching strategic purpose or direction which takes precedence over regional geostrategic foreign policy calculations and bilateral geopolitical foreign policies. It typically involves the application of all areas of national power to achieve a long term national objective. For example, during the Cold War era the grand strategic purpose is commonly defined as the containment and deterrence against the ideological spread of Communism.

[2] John L. Gaddis, "Grand Strategy in the Second Term," Foreign Affairs 84.1 (2005): 2.

[3] Henry Kissinger, Diplomacy (New York: Touchstone, 1995) 218-45.

But on a wider level, profound national interests are at stake in the Persian Gulf for the United States.[4] Moreover, in the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the importance of this strategically vital arena for US foreign policy has been compounded further. Therefore, US foreign policy towards the Middle East is suitable for conducting a foreign policy analysis and examining this fundamental change in US foreign policy.

1.0 THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The examination of foreign policy can offer not only a contribution to academic scholarship, but also to policy formation itself. By providing a detailed analysis of foreign policy development, purpose and implementation, it is possible to identify issues that have importance for diplomacy and policy formation. This is especially important in circumstances where a state's foreign policy has a wide-ranging impact on geopolitics, as seen in the case of US foreign policy towards the Middle East. With the majority of scholarship on US foreign policy being evaluative based, this study will concern itself with an analytical and descriptive examination of US foreign policy.

The objectives of this case study are essentially threefold. Firstly, it will provide an interpretation of US foreign policy within the wider contextual framework of US grand strategy. Grand strategy is interpreted in its traditional guise as the application of all areas of national power to achieve a long term national objective.[5] Indeed, George Kennan outlined US grand strategy in 1947, through the famous "Mr. X" articles, as a strategy of containment which was applied until the end of the Cold War in 1989. But the key issue here is the manner in which US foreign policy changed in the wake of the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks and its character during the Clintonian era. The premise of this study is that a fundamental change occurred and resulted in a redefinition of US grand strategy that has reordered US foreign policy. Therefore, this study will demonstrate how US foreign policy

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[4] United States, Department of Defence, United States Security Strategy for the Middle East, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 3 May 1995) 48pp. 15/06/03 <http://www.defenselink.mil/policy/isa/nesa/mideast.html >.

[5] For further information see [George Kennan] Anonymous, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," Foreign Affairs 25.4 (1947).: 852-68.

changed by showing its nature and origins during the Clintonian era and the initial years of the first Bush administration.

The manner in which this objective will be achieved is through drawing comparative observations from a foreign policy analysis of the two presidencies. This also serves a second objective of providing a comparative study of the Clinton and George W. Bush presidencies. This will underscore the historical context and scale of the change that occurred post-9/11. In essence, this will aim to show that a clear departure in US grand strategy occurred from the post-Cold War era to the War on Terror.

The final objective will be to provide a detailed analysis and account of US foreign policy towards the Middle East within the context of a foreign policy analysis methodological framework. The purpose will be to provide a qualitative foreign policy analysis of US foreign policy towards the Middle East as a case study to test the conclusions derived from the first objective. Therefore, a clear understanding and analysis of US foreign policy *formation* and *trajectory*[6] toward the Middle East is required. In addition to serving the primary objective of this thesis, it will also offer a contribution to the field of scholarship in this area by way of providing a clear analytical and descriptive account of the nature of US foreign policy towards the Middle East in the time period 1993-2003.

Overall, by fulfilling these three interlinked objectives, the findings from this case study will contribute to the wider field of scholarship on this subject. The following section will provide detail on the methodology employed, taking into consideration the objectives outlined.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

Given the objectives of this case study, the key issue is identifying the most appropriate form of analysis. Clearly a more qualitative understanding of the origins of foreign policy formation is required; however, a wider contextual understanding is

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[6] Foreign policy trajectory is defined as the direction or trend a foreign policy is taking in order to actually fulfil a strategic objective.

also a necessity. A balanced methodological approach is therefore needed that can incorporate the advantages of differing levels of analysis. This thesis will be premised on G. John Ikenberry's methodological foreign policy analysis framework which specifically aims to analyse US foreign policy within the context of grand strategy. Grand strategy will be used as the overarching theoretical framework from which the foreign policy analysis will be analysed against. This is based on the premise that a change in grand strategy occurred away from the post-Cold War order in the wake of the trauma of the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on Washington D.C. and New York.

Before moving onto a clear exposition of Ikenberry's methodology, the following section will show where it sits in an intellectual context. This will underline the differential levels of analysis available and also why Ikenberry's methodological proposition is the most suitable vehicle for this study. Ikenberry's methodology will be shown to be firmly lodged within the contemporary scholarship on foreign policy analysis and is a model which incorporates the epistemological approaches towards foreign policy analysis that will be outlined.

2.1 Intellectual Context

The methodological approach advocated by Kenneth Waltz is a useful model for deducing the character of the international system. Although he highlights different levels of causation, he argues that the systematic nature of the international level is the most appropriate means for explaining the restrictions and imperatives by which states operate.[7] Whilst such an analytical framework can offer useful explanations, especially in the form of predictive generalisations, it suffers from a lack of detail and can be overly general.[8] Given the objective of this study, an international level systematic analysis would be useful for identifying grand strategic

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[7] Kenneth N. Waltz, "Anarchic Orders and Balances of Power," American Foreign Policy: Theoretical Essays, ed. G. John Ikenberry, 5th ed. (New York: Georgetown University, 2005) 60-82; and Kenneth N. Waltz, Man, the State, and War: A Theoretical Analysis (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001) 159-238.

[8] For a greater discussion see Ole R. Holsti, "Models of International Relations and Foreign Policy," American Foreign Policy: Theoretical Essays, ed. G. John Ikenberry, 5th ed. (New York: Georgetown University, 2005) 14-22.

conceptualisations, but would not allow for a sufficient understanding of the origins and sub national context in which foreign policy was formulated. Moreover, the extent to which it could account for nonstate actors such as al-Qa'ida is also questionable.

Although this approach suggests that the most useful guide is the systematic level, J. David Singer's classic study on the problem of differing levels of analysis suggests that a more balanced approach that incorporates national levels of analysis will provide a better understanding of state action.[9] Thus, only through appreciating policy formation on a national level can its origins and context be truly appreciated. In some respects, this is commensurate with Stephen David's model of omnibalancing which seeks to incorporate both systematic and domestic political levels for explaining the foreign policy behaviour of Third World countries.[10] Although David's model is not applicable to examining US foreign policy due to its rubric, it underscores the methodological need for incorporating differential levels of analysis.

Robert Jervis, also suggests that analysis should be conducted on a qualitative sub national level. This brings us to the traditional scope of the sub-field of foreign policy analysis. He argues that the analytical levels of the bureaucracy and the decision maker should be incorporated in order to provide a richer understanding of policy formation.[11] Indeed, the key weakness of the structural/systematic approach to international relations is the adequacy of the explanation it can offer.[12] But, according to Jervis's analytical model, the decision making level offers a much more detailed understanding of the origins of foreign policy. It is an approach that can be

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[9] J. David Singer, "The Level of Analysis Problem in International Relations," International Politics and Foreign Policy, ed. James N. Rosenau, 2nd ed. (New York: Free Press, 1969) 20-29.

[10] Stephen R. David, "Explaining Third World Alignment," World Politics 43.2 (1991): 233-56.

[11] Robert Jervis, Perception and Misperception in International Politics (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1976) 13-31; see also Margot Light, "Foreign Policy Analysis," Contemporary International Relations: A Guide to Theory, eds. A. J. R. Groom and Margot Light (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994) 93-108 .

[12] For a survey of the differential critiques see Holsti, "Models of International Relations and Foreign Policy," 14-20.

subdivided into the broad categories of bureaucratic; societal; domestic political; and idiosyncratic frameworks.

Graham Allison offered a seminal example of a bureaucratic approach through his examination of the differential conceptions of the Cuban Missile Crisis.[13] He demonstrated a three tiered approach to explaining US foreign policy by examining it through the complementary lenses of: the rational actor; the organisational process; and the bureaucratic/governmental politics.[14]

Whilst Allison's study and the bureaucratic approach are in general highly informative, they have also been subject to criticism.[15] The bureaucratic approach, however, has been viewed as only applicable in certain cases: the need for detailed information on the decision making process is a clear methodological limitation through the actual availability of the data.[16] When applying this to the United States, the usefulness of this approach is clearly constrained by whether primary data on the bureaucratic decision making process has been declassified and stored in the national archives.

In contrast, the societal approach draws from a political sociological backdrop to demonstrate the ethnic, media, and public opinion factors that have a bearing on foreign policy formation. Such factors can, to differing degrees, play a key role in

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[13] Graham T. Allison, "Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis," American Foreign Policy: Theoretical Essays, ed. G. John Ikenberry, 5th ed. (New York: Georgetown University, 2005) 402-41; Graham T. Allison and Morton H. Halperin, "Bureaucratic Politics: A Paradigm and Some Policy Implications," World Politics 24.2 (1972): 40-79; and see also Leslie H. Gelb and Richard K. Betts, The Irony of Vietnam: The System Worked (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1979) 347-70.

[14] For a critique of Allison's model see Steve Smith, "Perspectives on the Foreign Policy System: Bureaucratic Politics Approaches," Understanding Foreign Policy: The Foreign Policy Systems Approach, eds. Michael Clarke and Brian White (Aldershot: Elgar, 1989) 109-34; and Jonathan Bendor and Thomas H. Hammond, "Rethinking Allison's Models," The American Political Science Review 86.2 (1992): 301-22.

[15] Stephen D. Krasner, "Are Bureaucracies Important? (or Allison Wonderland)," American Foreign Policy: Theoretical Essays, ed. G. John Ikenberry, 5th ed. (New York: Georgetown University, 2005) 447-59.

[16] Deborah J. Gerner, "The Evolution of the Study of Foreign Policy," Foreign Policy Analysis: Continuity and Change in Its Second Generation, eds. Laura Neack, Jeanne A. K. Hey and Patrick Jude Haney (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1995) 23-24; Deborah J. Gerner, "Foreign Policy Analysis: Exhilarating Eclecticism, Intriguing Enigmas," International Studies Notes 16.3 (1991): 4-19.

influencing the foreign policy agenda.[17] For example, the role of public opinion on foreign policy has differing impacts depending on the typology of the state.[18] But an equally important factor is the historical political culture within a given state. In the case of the United States, Gabriel Almond's classic study on domestic culture underscored the importance to which isolationism has a degree of currency embedded within US foreign relations.[19]

A further level is that of the domestic political environment. It is one of the more useful levels in foreign policy analysis. It focuses on the role of special interest groups, legislation and the domestic structure on foreign policy formation.[20] Henry Kissinger's excellent study into the complex interaction of domestic structures and foreign policy formation, underlines the rich explanation that can be derived from analysis on this level.[21] But more importantly, his study shows that the degree to which the domestic sphere impinges on foreign policy can vary according to the stability of the period concerned. In other words, the international level context may have a bearing on the degree to which the domestic structure dictates the foreign policy prerogative of the executive.

The final level of foreign policy analysis concerns that of idiosyncratic factors. Drawing from a psychological field, this level aims to identify the background; personality; worldview outlook; and leadership style of key individuals in the foreign

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[17] Herbert C. Kelman, "Patterns of Personal Involvement in the National System: A Social-Psychological Analysis of Political Legitimacy," International Politics and Foreign Policy, ed. James N. Rosenau (New York: The Free Press, 1969) 276-90.

[18] Bruce E. Moon, "The State in Foreign and Domestic Policy," Foreign Policy Analysis: Continuity and Change in Its Second Generation, eds. Laura Neack, Jeanne A. K. Hey and Patrick Jude Haney (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1995) 187-200; and Christopher Farrands, "Environment and Structure," Understanding Foreign Policy: The Foreign Policy Systems Approach, eds. Michael Clarke and Brian White (Aldershot: Elgar, 1989) 84-108.

[19] Gabriel A. Almond, The American People and Foreign Policy (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1977) 53-76; see also Samuel Huntington, "American Ideals Versus American Institutions," American Foreign Policy: Theoretical Essays, ed. G. John Ikenberry, 5th ed. (New York: Georgetown University, 2005) 214-45.

[20] Joe D. Hagan, "Domestic Political Explanations in the Analysis of Foreign Policy," Foreign Policy Analysis: Continuity and Change in Its Second Generation, eds. Laura Neack, Jeanne A. K. Hey and Patrick Jude Haney (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1995) 117-38.

[21] Henry Kissinger, "Domestic Structure and Foreign Policy," International Politics and Foreign Policy, ed. James N. Rosenau (New York: The Free Press, 1969) 261-75.

policy decision making process, and from this derive explanations for policy formation. This is a very useful means of explaining why decision makers may favour certain policy directions and is particularly useful in explaining a long term strategic vision. Such factors are also seen as a useful means of explaining why rationality by itself cannot preclude an irrational foreign policy trajectory.[22] But although it is useful, Yaacov Vertzberger's seminal study on this area highlights that while it may provide correlations, such idiosyncratic factors do not necessarily determine a particular foreign policy.[23]

With these theoretical controversies in mind, there is clear need to demarcate a suitable methodological approach for this case study. In the context of the foreign policy analysis tradition, Deborah Gerner reminds us that this is dependent in the first instance on whether the objective of the study is descriptive, evaluative or analytical.[24] As already outlined, this case study does not fall within an evaluative rubric. It does, however, require the application of both descriptive and analytical epistemologies.

An analytical approach has the purpose of drawing on the contending levels of explanation in various ways to fashion a plausible understanding of foreign policy.[25] The analytical approach towards foreign policy analysis does, however, pose key methodological problems. The most important is that its findings suffer from eclecticism.[26] The *n*th+1 theory problem brings into question the validity of the interpretation it offers, and blurs the distinction with descriptive based analysis.[27] It

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[22] Robert Jervis, "Hypotheses on Misperception," International Politics and Foreign Policy, ed. James N. Rosenau (New York: The Free Press, 1969) 239-54; see also Barbara W. Tuchman, The Guns of August (New York: Ballantine Books, 1994) 21-158; and Robert S. McNamara, et al., Argument without End: In Search of Answers to the Vietnam Tragedy (New York: Public Affairs, 1999) 373-98.

[23] Yaacov Vertzberger, The World in Their Minds: Information Processing, Cognition and Perception in Foreign Policy Decisionmaking (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990) 342-64.

[24] Gerner, "The Evolution of the Study of Foreign Policy," 17-18; and G. John Ikenberry, "Introduction," American Foreign Policy: Theoretical Essays, ed. G. John Ikenberry, 5th ed. (New York: Georgetown University, 2005) 8-11.

[25] Ikenberry, "Introduction," 9.

[26] Gerner, "Foreign Policy Analysis: Exhilarating Eclecticism, Intriguing Enigmas," 4-19.

[27] Ikenberry, "Introduction," 9.

thus also suffers from failing to differentiate between factors which have differential importance at any given stage on foreign policy formation. Moreover, a further problem is the extent to which this qualitative analysis can be conceptualised and understood.

On a descriptive level, the purpose is to "establish the facts regarding foreign policy decisions, policies declared publicly, actions taken, and the official and de facto relationships among state and nonstate international actor."[28] But in terms of understanding and describing the character of US foreign policy, Walter Russell Mead offers an original conception of schools which can be used to characterise it and US grand strategy. This is useful on a descriptive level as it allows for US grand strategy to be conceptualised on a more general level. Mead highlighted four competing historical components in US foreign policy:

1. Jeffersonian: this school holds liberal democracy in high esteem. The emphasis here is on the defence of American society and its political system through the least costly and dangerous way.[29]

2. Hamiltonian: the emphasis of this school is for the promotion of US economic interests. This is done as far as possible through expanding free trade, but sees a need to protect and maintain regimes that control key markets and resources. Thus maintenance of stability is a key factor.[30]

3. Jacksonian: here the focus is on the ability of the United States to act independently of other nations through the maintenance of a qualitative superiority in military terms.[31]

4. Wilsonian: this traditional school sees a moral obligation for the advancement of democracy, the rule of law and human rights, throughout the world. The

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[28] Gerner, "The Evolution of the Study of Foreign Policy," 18.

[29] Walter Russell Mead, Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World (New York: Knopf, 2001) 174-217.

[30] Ibid. 99-131.

[31] Ibid. 218-63.

promotion of these "universal ideals" is viewed to be in the national interest of the United States.[32]

Although Mead's framework is not a methodology for foreign policy analysis, it is useful for giving general descriptive conceptualisations of US grand strategy and US foreign policy. Therefore, Mead's terminology will be incorporated into the proposed methodology to offer descriptive and contextual observations.

Whilst there are clear problems with traditional analytical foreign policy analysis, the more contemporary scholarship on this subfield allows for a sophisticated approach that counters its methodological shortfalls.[33] A *metatheoretical* approach towards analytical foreign policy analysis proposes the development of a wider conceptual framework from which state action is interpreted, and the varying levels of analytical analysis are incorporated. This counters the problem of eclecticism as differential findings from competing levels of analysis are used against larger scale framework.[34] A benefit of using this approach is that differential levels of analysis can be identified as more important in particular circumstances whilst serving the overall purpose of providing grounding to the overarching interpretation of the study. Moreover, this does not confine the analysis to a sub-national level as the methodology can incorporate relevant activity on both national and international levels.[35]

Taken as a whole, this case study will apply, from a phenomenological ontology, a metatheoretical foreign policy analysis framework as its methodology, which will necessarily include a descriptive and analytical epistemology. This is commensurate with Ikenberry's prescription for conducting a foreign policy analysis of the United

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[32] Walter Russell Mead, Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World 132-73.

[33] Ikenberry, "Introduction," 9-12.

[34] G. John Ikenberry, et al., "Introduction: Approaches to Explaining American Foreign Economic Policy," 42.1 (1988): 1-14; and G. John Ikenberry, "Conclusion: An Institutional Approach to American Foreign Economic Policy," 42.1 (1988): 219-42; and Ikenberry, "Introduction," 9-11.

[35] Ikenberry, "Introduction," 9-12; Ikenberry, et al., "Introduction: Approaches to Explaining American Foreign Economic Policy," 1-14; and Jervis, Perception and Misperception in International Politics 13-31.

States. The nature of the overarching metatheoretical framework is that of US grand strategy. The very concept of US grand strategy will be shown to rely to a great extent on the idiosyncrasies of the President and by the ideological influences on the elite decision makers within the administration. This will be explored in greater detail in chapter three of this study where a comparative foreign policy analysis of Bill Clinton and George W. Bush will be conducted with the purpose being to elucidate a conceptualisation of US grand strategy during the time frame of this study.

This will also serve as a useful hypothesis from which the case study of US foreign policy towards the Middle East can be examined. Chapter 2 will provide a literature review to further demarcate the location of this study's grand strategic framework within the existing scholarship. The following sections will, however, provide further details on the parameters of research and the sources of data of this study's methodology.

2.2 The Parameters of the Study

As has already been highlighted, this study is not an evaluative study of US foreign policy and will be confined to an analytical and descriptive approach commensurate with the methodology and objectives that have been laid out. The means of achieving these objectives will be through a case study of US foreign policy towards the Middle East.

The specific time frame of this study is 1993-2003. The justification is that this allows for an examination of US foreign policy during Clinton's two terms of office, and the first two years of George W. Bush's first term of office. This accounts for his policy before and immediately after the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, until the end of 2003. The full period of Bush's first term of office is that the study's emphasis is on showing how US grand strategic policy changed in the wake of the trauma of the 9/11 terrorist attacks by using US policy towards the Middle East as a case study, and a premise of this study is that an adequate examination can be

concluded within this time frame. Therefore, it is outside the scope of this study to examine US policy after the end of 2003.

In terms of the parameters of the case study, the complexity of US foreign policy towards the Middle East requires a broad examination in order to provide for an adequate contextualisation and understanding of US foreign policy. The scope of this research will, therefore, provide an examination of US foreign policy towards the three key interconnected areas of: Persian Gulf security; the Arab-Israeli dispute; and political Islam. The justification is that these three interconnected spheres are the main contextual areas that best encompass the issues that have had a bearing on US foreign policy during the time frame of this study, and therefore the scope will be limited to their rubric.

The definition of Persian Gulf security is taken as being the geopolitical security of the states surrounding the Persian Gulf.[36] The scope of this examination is defined as US foreign policy towards Iran and Iraq. The justification is that this was the primary focus of US foreign policy by which the United States sought to provide for Persian Gulf security. It is, therefore, outside the scope of this thesis to provide an examination of US bilateral foreign policy towards the individual Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states.

In terms of the Arab-Israeli dispute, the focus will mainly be on US foreign policy towards the Israeli and Palestinian negotiations, but it will also provide an examination of US foreign policy involvement in Israeli negotiations with Jordan and Syria respectively. Israeli negotiations with Lebanon will also be encompassed, but this thesis will view it as linked with the Syrian negotiations on account of its particular circumstances.

In approaching US foreign policy towards political Islam, the scope of research will encompass issues relating to US foreign policy towards moderate and extremist political Islam. This will be in addition to an examination of US foreign policy towards international Islamic terrorism as this is an important contextual issue that

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[36] The definition of a geopolitical unit is essentially that of an individual state. Here the emphasis is on the security of the GCC states. Conversely, geostrategy is defined as a regional based strategic policy.

has key relevance to the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001, and nature of US grand strategy post-9/11. This will serve the purpose in chapter four of allowing for a cogent explanation of the key contextual factors that resulted in, and the character of, the emergence of the new grand strategic era of the War on Terror.

In terms of the epistemology, this thesis will not encompass the bureaucratic debates on foreign policy decisions as such an examination in the time frame and scope of this study is too expansive to be included. And more importantly, this aspect of foreign policy analysis suffered from the practical limitation of such information not being available at the time of writing due to internal policy papers being classified.

The areas which will be examined are those that form the traditional sphere for foreign policy analysis as has already been outlined. But given the metatheoretical methodology, this thesis will also encompass issues on national and international levels that are deemed relevant to analysing US policy formation towards the scope of this case study.

2.3 The Sources of Data

Given that this study will use a metatheoretical approach to foreign policy analysis, the sources that it will draw from are wide ranging. Fortunately, US foreign policy is an exceptionally well documented and researched area, so there is a wide body of primary and secondary material to draw from. Nevertheless, it is also highly controversial area and subject to competing interpretations and misconceptions. As the study is non evaluative, the issue of hermeneutics will predominantly concern scholarship whose empirical data is relied upon in the absence of primary material to cross check its accuracy.

The focus is necessarily on primary materials as far as possible and draws on: speeches; Congressional testimony; governmental and non-governmental reports; foreign policy dispatches; and press briefings. Interviews were conducted in circumstances where there was a clear degree of ambiguity over US foreign policy. Nevertheless, a key limitation is that this thesis was not able to draw from classified governmental material which could provide for a more valid interpretation of foreign

policy formation. Whilst this leaves scope for future research on this area, the following section will outline the contribution this study makes to the existing scholarship.

3.0 THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

This study applies a metatheoretical foreign policy analysis methodology towards US foreign policy to the Middle East in the time frame 1993-2003. It is the first study of to conduct this form of analysis on US foreign policy towards the Middle East within the time frame and scope that has been outlined. It is also original in that it provides an initial comparative analysis of the idiosyncrasies of elite decision makers and foreign policies differences between Bill Clinton and George W. Bush.

A further key area where this study provides an original contribution is through its interpretation of US policy towards Iraq. Through the foreign policy analysis conducted, this thesis has uncovered new evidence that allows for a revision of interpretations on US policy towards Iraq during the Clinton administration. This is highly significant since it allows previous interpretations on the strategic underpinnings and character of US policy towards Iraq during the Clintonian era to be revisited.

The overall significance of this study, however, is that is contributes to the wider body of scholarship on US foreign policy formation, strategic and tactical direction and contextualisation towards the Middle East, whilst also providing a case study interpretation of US geostrategy and grand strategy which has wider currency in international relations scholarship.

4.0 THE ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

The structure of this thesis is divided into four substantive sections, and ultimately consists of eight chapters. This, the first chapter, provides the introduction; the methodology; the scope; and the parameters of research. The second chapter

provides an examination of the existing literature in order to highlight the current scholarship in this field and to identify the justification and problem in which this study is directed. The third chapter provides comparative observations on the idiosyncrasies of the elite bureaucratic decision makers and foreign policies of Bill Clinton and George W. Bush. This provides the methodological framework where this case study will be lodged. The fourth chapter is substantive in that it provides an analysis of the position of the United States towards political Islam and how countering the root causes of extremism (terrorism) underpins the very essence of the new grand strategic era of the War on Terror. The fifth chapter will provide an examination of US foreign policy towards Iran and Iraq in the time period 1993-2001. This will aim to demonstrate the nature of Clinton's foreign policy and grand strategy in the post-Cold War era. The sixth chapter will also provide an analysis of US foreign policy towards Iran and Iraq but will be carried out in the time period 2001-2003. This chapter will show that the impact of the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks had a defining impact on grand strategy which allows that this change allows for a proper explanation of US foreign policy in this time period. Moreover, it underscores that a change in grand strategy had occurred away from that of the post-Cod War era. The seventh chapter provides an analysis of US foreign policy towards the Arab-Israeli peace process. The final chapter will provide concluding comments and the scope for future study.

5.0 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has outlined the objectives, methodology and structure of this study. The methodological approach is a metatheoretical foreign policy analysis which will draw upon a variety of epistemological factors in order to analyse and show the trajectory of US foreign policy towards the Middle East 1993-2003. The objectives of the study are essentially threefold: firstly, an interpretation will be provided of US foreign policy within a grand strategic framework. This will underline the conjecture that the Bush administrations response in the wake of the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 resulted in the emergence of the grand strategic era of the War on Terror. This will be shown to be a radical departure in US foreign policy from the

post-Cold War era and is the most radical redesign of US grand strategy since Franklin D. Roosevelt.

The second objective will be to offer a comparative foreign policy analysis of the presidencies of Bill Clinton and George W. Bush. This will not only provide an original contribution to the existing body of scholarship but will also be used to underline the radical departure following the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

The final related objective is to conduct an analysis of US foreign policy towards the Middle East during the time period 1993-2003 as a case study to test the prescriptions made through examining the application of US strategic policy. This will be achieved through examining the three interconnected areas of Persian Gulf security; the Arab-Israeli peace process; and political Islam. By analysing the origins, trajectory and nature of US foreign policy towards these three interrelated case study areas, this thesis will also aim to offer an original conceptualisation of US policy towards these key areas and thus contribute to the wider field of scholarship of Middle Eastern international relations.

The methodological approach will be firmly lodged with the contemporary scholarship in the subfield of foreign policy analysis. The model that will be used for the case study is metatheoretical foreign policy analysis and will attack the subject area through a descriptive and analytical epistemology. The scope of the foreign policy analysis will not encompass the qualitative aspect of bureaucratic bargaining over policy decisions for the reason that such documentary information was not available to this study and such an approach would be to expansive given the time frame and scope of this study.

The following chapter will provide a literature review of the current scholarship in order to underscore the contribution this study makes and its location within the existing literature. It will then move to the substantive chapters of this thesis where the comparative foreign policy analysis and the case studies towards the Middle East will be approached.

Chapter II

Literature Review

"The greater our knowledge increases the more our ignorance unfolds."

John F. Kennedy

September 1962

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The following will provide a literature review of the competing interpretations of the United States' foreign policy towards the Middle East, with specific regard to the three areas under scrutiny in this thesis, namely Persian Gulf security; the Arab-Israeli peace process; and, finally, political Islam. The literature review will aim to locate gaps in the previous scholarship in the field of study that are commensurate with what this thesis proposes.

The foreign policy of the United States towards the Middle East is an area which has received a great deal of attention; however, the majority of scholarship is evaluative based. In comparison, a relatively small number of studies, using a descriptive and analytical epistemology, have been conducted through a foreign policy analysis framework on the origins and context of US foreign policy towards the Middle East. As this study is not an evaluative foreign policy analysis, the following review of academic literature will not encompass this area of scholarship and will necessarily focus on the character, trajectory and context of US foreign policy.

Whilst this thesis aims to provide an analytical understanding of US foreign policy towards these three key interrelated areas, it also offers an interpretation that can be satisfactorily located within wider strategic concepts. This literature review necessarily includes the competing interpretations of the geostrategy underpinning US foreign policy at global and regional levels. This allows for a wider contextual interpretation of US foreign policy towards the Middle East.

2.0 CONCEPTUALISATIONS OF GLOBAL GEOSTRATEGIC FRAMEWORKS IN US FOREIGN POLICY 1993-2003

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the fall of the Berlin Wall there have been competing prescriptions and interpretations on the trajectory US foreign policy took in what is commonly described as the post-Cold War era. Charles Krauthammer described a 'unipolar world' in which US hegemony in the international system had emerged.[1] Indeed, the implosion of the Soviet Union is generally accepted as a landmark in US foreign policy which saw the emergence of a true hegemonic superpower. Others, such as Samuel Huntington, cautiously questioned how long this could endure.[2] Indeed, Francis Fukuyama famously declared the culmination of an ideological evolution that had reached its climax with the triumph of liberal democracy over what he saw as the last remaining competing ideology.[3]

The concept that liberal democracy had triumphed over competing ideologies, and thus had lost the overarching strategic guide, can be seen to have given rise to a revisionist version of global geostrategic conceptions of American foreign policy. G. John Ikenberry contended in 1996 that the overarching American grand strategy since the end of the Second World War had been to *promote* liberal democracy, and thus the Cold War needed to be seen under this rubric.[4] Ikenberry went on to show that this liberal foreign policy guide did not alter following the end of the Cold War, and ultimately served as a grand strategic guide for American foreign policy during the Clintonian era. This conceptualisation is significant: it challenges the more traditional realist prescriptions of Cold War grand strategy as it virtually subordinates Cold War era politics to a *geopolitical* rather than a *global geostrategic* level. The significance of this is that US foreign policy during this study's time frame would

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[1] Charles Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment," Foreign Affairs 70.1 (1990): 23-33.

[2] Samuel Huntington, "The Lonely Superpower," American Foreign Policy: Theoretical Essays, ed. G. John Ikenberry, 5th ed. (New York: Georgetown University, 2005) 540-63.

[3] Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History?" America and the World: Debating the New Shape of International Politics, ed. Gideon Rose (New York: W.W. Norton, 1989) 1-28.

[4] G. John Ikenberry, "America's Liberal Grand Strategy: Democracy and National Security in the Post-War Era," American Foreign Policy: Theoretical Essays, ed. G. John Ikenberry, 5th ed. (New York: Georgetown University, 2005) 268-86.

thus be interpreted as having been guided by a consistent global grand strategy dating back to the emergent post-Second World War era. But to what extent can this conceptualisation be applied to US foreign policy towards the Middle East? Indeed, if Ikenberry's thesis is taken to its logical conclusion and applied to the Middle East, the United States would have promoted liberal democracy as a strategic priority; however, there are good reasons to question whether this is the case as Clinton's Persian Gulf foreign policy was widely equated with the maintenance of the status quo.

Although there are clear questions arising from Ikenberry's thesis, Walter Russell Mead lends support to the argument that liberal democracy has been a long term theme in US foreign policy. In Mead's influential historical study on US foreign policy, he highlights that the pursuit of liberal democracy has been a historical force in US foreign policy calculations with a vintage that can be traced back to the War of Independence.[5] Nevertheless, it is pertinent to question the extent to which such Wilsonian ideals actually had a bearing on US foreign policy since the end of the Cold War.

In fairness to Ikenberry's thesis, his view has credibility when one examines the position of the Clinton administration: Anthony Lake outlined in 1993 the conception of a grand strategy based on the "enlargement of the world's free community of market democracies."[6] Warren Christopher reiterated this in 1995 by underlining that "support for democracy is not some starry-eyed crusade; it is a determination to help freedom take hold where it can."[7] In other words, Clinton's overarching grand strategy was premised on the dual objective of promoting democracy and bolstering economic development. This was clearly articulated as the Clinton administration's priority, and strategic point of reference, for US foreign policy in the post-Cold War

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[5] Walter Russell Mead, Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World (New York: Knopf, 2001) 132-217.

[6] Anthony Lake, "From Containment to Enlargement," Remarks at Johns Hopkins University, School of Advanced International Studies, Washington, D.C.: Johns Hopkins University, 21 Sep. 1994. 11pp. 17/06/02 <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/lakedoc.html>.

[7] Warren Christopher, "America's Leadership, America's Opportunity," Foreign Policy 98 (1995): 7.

era. Moreover, this was very much a consistent theme in both Clinton administrations' foreign policy statements.[8]

However, in terms of a specific interpretation of the Clintonian era, Douglas Brinkley echoes this theme by arguing that Clinton adopted an overarching foreign policy doctrine, which can be likened to a grand strategy that was premised on the pursuit of liberal democracy on a global scale.[9] Charles Maynes echoed a similar line, and characterised the administration's strategy as showing a level of consistency from the Cold War era. In 1993 Maynes commented:

> The new approach turns out to be much like the old one. Under the Clinton doctrine of enlargement, America's alliance commitments remain the same as they were under the Cold War doctrine of containment. American troops stay where they are... Under the new doctrine of enlargement, the United States will try to spread democracy and free markets. But that was the US objective during the Cold War.[10]

Although there is clear evidence that the Clinton Presidency did indeed premise itself on the grand strategy of pursuing democracy and promoting global capitalism, and arguably continued certain aspects of Cold War grand strategy, real questions remain as to whether this had a substantive impact on US foreign policy. Indeed, Thomas Carothers maintains that Clinton's record on democratic promotion had "not lived up to the expansive rhetoric."[11] More to the point: was the Clinton administration's foreign policy towards the Middle East guided by the grand strategy of pursuing democracy and promoting global capitalism?

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[8] United States, President of the United States, A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, Feb. 1995) 41pp. 12/06/02 <http://www.whitehouse.gov/>; United States, President of the United States, A National Security Strategy for a New Century, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, Oct. 1998) 35pp. 15/06/03 <http://www.whitehouse.gov/>.

[9] Douglas Brinkley, "Democratic Enlargement: The Clinton Doctrine," Foreign Policy 106 (1997): 111-27; and Thomas Carothers, "The Clinton Record on Democracy Promotion," Critical Mission: Essays on Democracy Promotion, ed. Thomas Carothers (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2000) 39-52.

[10] Charles W. Maynes, "A Workable Clinton Doctrine," Foreign Policy 93 (1993): 3.

[11] Carothers, "The Clinton Record on Democracy Promotion," 39.

Other scholars, however, reject the notion that the Clinton administration had any grand strategy at all. Linda Miller succinctly showed in 1994 that the Clinton administration tried to "revise the conventional Cold War wisdom"[12] and thus had failed to provide a coherent successor framework to Cold War grand strategy. Similarly, Richard Hass provided a distinction in 1997 that can be drawn between the Clinton administration's rhetoric and practice on this strategic framework. He highlights that despite the administration positioning itself on the premise of expanding democracy and free markets; its stated Wilsonian agenda has had "a negligible impact on day-to-day affairs."[13] The importance behind this is that, despite such a grand strategic framework being articulated, the administration arguably did not conduct its foreign policy in accordance with such a rubric. But even then, the extent to which Clintonian grand strategy can be disregarded as rhetorical is questionable: it seems reasonable to assume that it was an important factor in foreign policy calculations given that it was promoted as an overarching foreign policy framework.

Nevertheless, this scepticism is echoed by Henry Kissinger who interpreted US foreign policy during the Clintonian era as having recoiled from the Cold War pursuit of the national interest, favouring instead the use of geoeconomics as a strategic rubric. Kissinger writes that:

> Victory in the Cold War tempts smugness; satisfaction with the status quo causes policy to be viewed as a projection of the familiar into the future; astonishing economic performance lures policymakers to confuse strategy with economics and makes them less sensitive to the political, cultural and spiritual impact of the vast transformations brought about by American technology.[14]

From this perspective, the Clintonian foreign policy rubric would have been devoid of politically based strategic concepts, and thus would have reduced US foreign

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[12] Linda B. Miller, "The Clinton Years: Reinventing US Foreign Policy," International Affairs 70.4 (1994): 646.

[13] Richard N. Hass, "Fatal Distraction: Bill Clinton's Foreign Policy," Foreign Policy 108 (1997): 112.

[14] Henry Kissinger, Does America Need a Foreign Policy? Toward a Diplomacy for the 21st Century, Rev. ed. (London: Free Press, 2002) 19.

policy to a series of ad hoc decisions cemented by proposals for expanding the global economy. The significance for this thesis is that in the absence of a coherent global *political* grand strategy, geoeconomic frameworks would have given way to regional geostrategic frameworks.

In sum, the indications are that the Clinton administration premised itself on a grand strategic framework which sought the global promotion of democracy and global capitalism as a means for guiding its foreign policy. Indeed, some scholars have suggested that this was consistent with a long standing grand strategy which predated the Cold War era. Nevertheless, there seems reason to doubt whether this grand strategy was adopted in practice, thus allowing the charge that it is more rhetorical than substantive. Therefore, the significance for this thesis is whether US foreign policy towards the Middle East can be satisfactorily equated as falling under the rubric of the Clinton administration's global strategic framework; or rather was merely premised on a regional geostrategy in the time frame 1993-2001. The significance here is that by determining whether US foreign policy towards the Middle East under the Clinton era originated under the articulated grand strategy tests these competing interpretations.

2.1 The Context of the Global War on Terror

Although a clearer interpretation of the Clintonian era is important, a further issue arises when examining the time frame following the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon on 11 September 2001. Indeed, there have been competing interpretations made on the Bush administration's foreign policy after these events. Some scholars have argued that there has been consistency in US grand strategy, whilst others have argued that the attacks resulted in a fundamentally new era underpinning US foreign policy that is akin to Cold War grand strategy.

Some of the more conservative responses have equated the Bush administration's policy response post-9/11 as simply an affirmation of a liberal grand strategy that can be traced back to the Second Would War. Robert Kagan views the Bush administration's new strategy as essentially a restatement of long-standing American

policies. In many respects this echoes Ikenberry's thesis of a liberal grand strategy dating back to the post-Second World War order. Kagan comments that:

> [T]he striking thing about [Bush's strategy] is that aside from a few references to the idea of pre-emption, which itself was hardly a novel concept, the Bush administration's 'new' strategy was little more than a restatement of American policies, many going back half a century.[15]

In a similar vein, Walter Russell Mead sees Bush's strategy as not necessarily a radical transformation, but rather a restatement of traditional forces within US foreign policy. However, Mead offers an original conception by suggesting that the security environment was a product of the new economic disparity the global economy had created.[16] Nevertheless, Mead sees a reaffirmation of longstanding Wilsonianism as having become more pronounced given the newfound willingness for the application of power which he describes as a Jacksonian current in US foreign policy.[17] The significance of this approach is that the Bush administration's response cannot necessarily be equated as a new grand strategic approach; but then the clear question arises of how US foreign policy towards the Middle East post-9/11 can be interpreted. Indeed, this conception indicates that any changes in US foreign policy towards the Middle East falls squarely under the rubric of regional geostrategy. However, given the March 2003 invasion of Iraq as an example, it seems doubtful that it can realistically be explained without reference to the wider contextual issues arising from the War on Terror; especially when the invasion was articulated as falling under such a rubric by the Bush administration.

Others have argued that a new global grand strategy within US foreign policy has emerged which is akin to that of the Cold War era. For example, Hass notably equates the post-9/11 international system as the "post-post-Cold War era" which he sees as a new grand strategic era which would be characterised by US engagement

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[15] Robert Kagan, Of Paradise and Power: America and Europe in the New World Order (New York: Knopf, 2004) 93.

[16] Walter Russell Mead, Power, Terror, Peace, and War: America's Grand Strategy in a World at Risk (New York: Knopf, 2004) 109-25.

[17] Ibid. 59-82.

under a coherent framework reminiscent of the Cold War.[18] Also, he highlights that it is distinguishable from the post-Cold War era. But, on a more specific level, John Lewis Gaddis indicated in 2002, that the Bush administration adopted a new grand strategy that is in complete contrast to that articulated by the Clinton administration. Gaddis describes the Bush administration's strategy as "the most sweeping redesign of US grand strategy since the presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt."[19] In terms its nature, Gaddis says that "[i]t rejects the Clinton administration's assumption that since the movement toward democracy and market economics had become irreversible in the post-Cold War era, all the United States had to do was 'engage' with the rest of the world to 'enlarge' those processes."[20] Most importantly, Gaddis shows that there are two central features to the Bush administration's grand strategy. Firstly, it identifies a linkage between 'rogue states' that seek the production of unconventional weapons, and the ultimate risk that such weapons could be used asymmetrically by terrorist groups: he argues this has necessitated the adoption of the *preventative* use of force doctrine. Secondly, Gaddis identifies that the long term objective of this grand strategy is directed towards combating the perceived root causes of terrorism through promoting democracy on a global basis.[21] In essence, the long term aspect to the Bush administration's strategy can be equated with counterterrorism. The key question for post-9/11 US foreign policy towards the Middle East is the extent to which US geostrategy and foreign policy can be viewed as falling under such a rubric as Gaddis describes.

In contrast to Gaddis, G. John Ikenberry suggests that the Bush administration's response can be equated to a *neo-imperial grand strategy.* Ikenberry builds on his thesis that a *liberal grand strategy* is identifiable from the end of the Second World War which remained consistent throughout the commonly referred to post-Cold War

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[18] Richard N. Hass, "The Clinton Administration's Approach to the Middle East," Remarks to the Foreign Policy Association, New York: GPO, 22 Apr. 2002. 7pp. 30/10/03 <http://www.state.gov/s/p/rem/9632.htm>.

[19] John L. Gaddis, "Bush's Security Strategy," Foreign Policy 133 (2002): 53.; and John L. Gaddis, "Grand Strategy in the Second Term," Foreign Affairs 84.1 (2005): 2.

[20] Gaddis, "Bush's Security Strategy," 53.

[21] John L. Gaddis, Surprise, Security, and the American Experience (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004) 80-113.

era. He ultimately contends that the foreign policy response to the 9/11 attacks has resulted in this longstanding current being supplemented with imperial designs.[22] He did not, however, believe that a new grand strategy in US foreign policy had occurred.[23] Ikenberry argues that the Bush administration's strategic concepts equate to a vision which derogates the notion of sovereignty as it has placed itself in a position where it alone dictates acceptable behaviour on a national and sub-national level, whilst also seeking the promotion of liberal democracy on a global level in order to safeguard US interests. He views this departure away from multilateralism as a radical reorientation in US foreign policy whilst remaining premised on the pursuit of a liberal democratic order.[24] Nevertheless, Ikenberry suggests that this departure from multilateralism is a temporary phase which was caused by the manner in which neoconservatives dominated the Bush administration's calculations shortly after the 9/11 attacks.[25]

On a more qualitative level, Ikenberry also highlights that the means of achieving these objectives have resulted in the adoption of the preventative use of force; virtual rejection of international law; and the belief that US hegemony is required for liberal democracy to be secured.[26] Overall, Ikenberry's thesis is important as it argues that the Bush administration's grand strategy is imperial and based on ensuring US hegemony, in contrast to Gaddis's equation that it is more about combating the actual causes and threats of terrorism. Nevertheless, Ikenberry's prescription that this encapsulates a *new grand strategy* post-9/11 seems questionable: many of the factors which he highlights have a historical vintage. Indeed, Niall Ferguson's excellent study on the historical development of US supremacy highlights that such forces are far from new.[27]

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[22] Ikenberry, "America's Liberal Grand Strategy: Democracy and National Security in the Post-War Era," 564-72.

[23] G. John Ikenberry, "American Grand Strategy in the Age of Terror," Survival 43.4 (2001): 19-31.

[24] G. John Ikenberry, "The End of the Neoconservative Moment," Survival 46.1 (2004): 7-10.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ikenberry, "America's Liberal Grand Strategy: Democracy and National Security in the Post-War Era," 564-72.

[27] Niall Ferguson, Colossus: The Rise and Fall of the American Empire (London: Allen Lane, 2004). 33-168.

Ikenberry's conception of a resurgent unilateralism is also interesting, but to what extent can it be seen as something new when the United States has engaged in foreign policy endeavours, such as the Kosovo campaign under Clinton, without reference to international law that arguably subjugated the Westphalian notion of sovereignty? Indeed, this allows us to question whether Ikenberry's prescription of its emergence post-9/11 is really as valid as he makes it out to be.

The willingness of the Bush administration to pursue unilateralism is contended by David Skidmore as being less different to the Clintonian years than Ikenberry would have us believe. Skidmore's comparative foreign policy analysis in 2005 of Clinton and George W. Bush's propensity for a unilateral foreign policy suggests that "[u]nder both presidents, US behaviour was strongly unilateralist."[28] He goes on to say:

> Under Clinton, US unilateralism was less a preference in itself than the outcome of a policy process driven by domestic constraints. Without the authority bestowed upon the presidency by Cold War imperatives, Clinton was unable, and perhaps unwilling, to overcome domestic resistance to multilateralism.[29]

In terms of how the foreign policy of George W. Bush compares, Skidmore writes:

> Under Bush, unilateralism was the product of a combination of unchecked power abroad, the sway of particularistic interests at home, and the ideological inclination of Bush and his top advisers. Even the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, proved insufficient to deflect the Bush administration's unilateralist tendencies.[30]

The importance of Skidmore's comparative foreign policy analysis is that it questions Ikenberry's contention that a radical shift towards unilateralism occurred

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[28] David Skidmore, "Understanding the Unilateralist Turn in US Foreign Policy," Foreign Policy Analysis 2 (2005): 223.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Ibid.

under George W. Bush. Indeed, Skidmore suggests that "[t]he appropriate contrast is not between a multilateralist Clinton and a unilateralist Bush, but between two unilateralisms that differ not in kind but more in tone, emphasis and degree."[31]

Overall, there are significant disparities in the competing interpretations of how US foreign policy can be interpreted through a global geostrategic lens during the time frame of this study. Although there is a general acceptance that the 9/11 terrorist attacks had a significant impact on US foreign policy, it does not seem clear as to how the overall time frame of this study can be interpreted. The significance for this thesis is thus that it does not allow for a clear indication of how US foreign policy towards the Middle East can be interpreted or conceptualised within US global geostrategy. Therefore, justification arises for conducting a foreign policy metatheoretical analysis of US foreign policy, in order to clearly provide an interpretation which contextualises these issues by using US foreign policy towards the Middle East 1993-2003 as a case study. The significance will be that it will test, and ideally clarify, the trajectory and conceptualisation of the global geostrategic framework of US foreign policy during what is debated as a transitional period. Therefore, a clear account of US grand strategy will be provided in chapter 3. But, in order to properly account for the competing interpretations of US foreign policy towards the Middle East: the following section will provide a conceptualisation of US geostrategy on a regional level towards Persian Gulf security; the Arab-Israeli peace process; and political Islam.

3.0 CONCEPTUALISATIONS OF US GEOSTRATEGY TOWARDS THE MIDDLE EAST 1993-2003

Interpretations of US geostrategy towards the Middle East are equally contentious. In terms of the US regional strategy towards the Middle East, it was with the announcement of the "dual containment strategy" by Martin Indyk in May 1993, Special Assistant to the President for Near East and South Asian Affairs at the National Security Council, that US foreign policy became officially lodged on the

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[31] Skidmore, "Understanding the Unilateralist Turn in US Foreign Policy," 224.

premise of containing and deterring both Iran and Iraq from challenging the security of the key oil producing Gulf States, in addition to undermining the peace process and threatening Israel.[32] Indyk portrayed the Clinton administration's approach to the Middle East as a non-compartmentalised strategy which was premised on dual containment. The definitive outline of dual containment was made, however, by national security adviser Anthony Lake in a 1994 article in the journal Foreign Affairs.[33] Lake clarified the conception of the strategy as entailing a multilateral containment of Iraq as a means of forcing compliance with UN resolutions; and a unilateral containment with Iran until it altered its internal and external policies. The fact that these policies provided for Persian Gulf security was merely seen as a *by-product* as they were premised on other criteria.[34] Indeed, Lake's argument afforded Iraq under Saddam Hussein the prospect of having sanctions lifted over a period of time, once compliance had been recognised by the UN Security Council and confidence had been restored within the international community.[35] Iran received a similar prescription in that the United States sought a moderation of Iran's policies in order for a rapprochement to occur, but would maintain sanctions as a means of controlling Iran until it moderated its policies deemed provocative by the United States. There was thus a degree of analytical conflict between these objectives and the conception of it as a *containment strategy* which one can equate with maintenance of the status quo.[36]

Although Lake presented the dual containment strategy as a prudent policy undertaking, debate exists on its origins and nature which contrasts with the official position. In 1994, F. Gregory Gause III interpreted it as a strategy geared towards achieving the wider regional strategic objective of Persian Gulf security.[37] Gause

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[32] Martin Indyk, "The Clinton Administration's Approach to the Middle East," Address to the Soref Symposium, Washington, D.C.: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 18 May 1993. 4pp. 12/07/03 <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/pubs/soref/indyk.htm >.

[33] Anthony Lake, "Confronting Backlash States," Foreign Affairs 73.2 (1994).

[34] Indyk, "The Clinton Administration's Approach to the Middle East."

[35] Lake, "Confronting Backlash States," 45-50.

[36] F. Gregory Gause III, US Policy toward Iraq, Emirates Lecture Series, vol. 39 (Abu Dhabi: The Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research, 2002) 12.

[37] F. Gregory Gause III, "The Illogic of Dual Containment," Foreign Affairs 73.2 (1994): 56-58.

recognised that Iran and, to a lesser extent, Iraq were seen to pose a threat towards Israel and the peace process, but interpreted the overall dual containment strategy as being ultimately geared towards securing US geostrategic interests in the Persian Gulf. Whilst Gause maintained that the Clinton administration's dual containment policy was premised on geostrategic concerns towards the Persian Gulf, he argued that this was subservient to the long term objective of making neighbouring states a "sufficient counterweight to both Iran and Iraq."[38] Therefore, Gause effectively argues that containment was designed to weaken both countries to a sufficient degree in order to usher in a balance of power: through the application of containment, the status quo would be enforced and would thus cater for Persian Gulf security.

Anthony Cordesman also argued in 1994 that the adoption of dual containment was a necessity given the inability of the Gulf countries to offer a credible defence against their aggressive neighbours. Cordesman comments that "[it] is not solely a function of what Iran can do or Iraq can do, it is a function of what the nations in the region can do, and it is basically a function of American ability to contain Iranian and Iraqi military power."[39] He recognised that such an approach was required in order to safeguard vital US political and economic interests. Nevertheless, he conceded that, in the case of Iraq, containment would ultimately not be able to prevent an Iraqi production of unconventional weapons as it merely slows their development.[40] Gause, however, went even further by arguing in 1999 that sanctions neither weakened Saddam's hold on power, nor stopped his development of unconventional weapons.[41] Nevertheless, both shared the premise that dual containment was premised on geostrategic interests in the Persian Gulf. Kissinger lends weight to this prescription by echoing Gause's argument that dual containment was a thoroughly geostrategic response to the threat both countries posed to US interests in the Persian Gulf.[42]

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[38] Gause III, US Policy toward Iraq 12.

[39] Martin Indyk, et al., "Symposium on Dual Containment: US Policy toward Iran and Iraq," Middle East Policy 3.1 (1994): 13.

[40] Ibid.

[41] F. Gregory Gause III, "Getting It Back on Iraq," Foreign Affairs 78.3 (1999): 62.

[42] Kissinger, Does America Need a Foreign Policy? 191.

In contrast, Gary Sick contended in 1996, that the adoption of a containment policy towards Iran was primarily based on serving the strategic priority of the Arab-Israeli peace process.[43] He highlighted how it was a policy undertaking which virtually mirrored a policy paper authored by Martin Indyk in 1993, prior to him taking office in the National Security Council, which called for a containment of the threats Iran and Iraq posed to Israel and the peace process itself. Therefore, US bilateral foreign policy towards Iran was arguably subordinate to US interests towards the peace process. Sick conversely saw US policy towards Iraq under the dual containment rubric as being premised on a compliance with UN resolutions: increased Persian Gulf security was thus seen by him as a by-product rather than an objective.[44] Indeed, Sick suggests that this resulted in the United States emerging as a *regional player* rather than an external actor, and was thus able to ensure these objectives were achieved.[45]

In what several scholars recognise as a seminal article on this subject, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Brent Scowcroft and Richard Murphy refined these interpretations in 1997. They suggested that the Clinton administration's bilateral policies towards Iran and Iraq were part of the *mutually reinforcing strategic objectives* of supporting the peace process, and providing for Persian Gulf security.[46] Thus a mutually compatible dual track US geostrategic policy towards the Middle East was applied, and the "dual containment strategy" was a mere slogan with little conceptual worth.

However, in terms of how US policy towards political Islam gels with this equation, Fawaz Gerges's important study has demonstrated that Clinton's goal of combating the structural causes of radical Islamism has been subservient to wider geostrategic concerns premised on maintaining the status quo. Gerges writes: "[t]he United States has not only supported its traditional friends – in their fight against Islamists – but

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[43] Gary Sick, "The United States and Iran: Truth and Consequences," Contention 5.2 (1996): 59-78.

[44] Gary Sick, "Rethinking Dual Containment," Survival 40.1 (1998): 5-32.

[45] Gary Sick, "US Policy in the Gulf: Objectives and Purpose," Managing New Developments in the Gulf, ed. Rosemary Hollis (London: Royal Institute for International Affairs, 2000) 14.

[46] Zbigniew Brzezinski, et al., "Differentiated Containment," Foreign Affairs 76.3 (1997): 20-30.

has done little to persuade them to open up the political field to existing, legitimate opposition forces."[47] The significance here is that unwillingness to promote democracy in the face of regional geostrategic interests demonstrates that the grand strategic premise of the Clintonian era was not applied in practice. Indeed, this theme was also articulated by Maria do Céu Pinto in 1999:

> In the case of America's friends in the Middle East, the US government's overriding interest is to maintain the existing regimes in power; their stabilising role, their position regarding the peace process and their pro-Western orientation make them important regional allies. In order to safeguard the integrity of these regimes, the Clinton administration has toned down its promotion of the 'democratisation agenda' for fear that the opening up of their political systems would give the Islamists an opportunity to gain power.[48]

Even with the onset of the administration of George W. Bush, there is little dispute that foreign policy towards the Middle East actually retained consistency from the Clinton administration up until the watershed of the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks. Indeed, Robert Kagan and William Kristol critically remarked that prior to the 9/11 attacks, Bush's policy seemed "content to continue walking down dangerous paths in foreign and defence policy laid out over the past eight years by Bill Clinton."[49] The views of other scholars, such as Kenneth Pollack, were more moderate but still identified US foreign policy towards Iran and Iraq as showing continuity from the preceding Clinton administration.[50]

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[47] Fawaz A. Gerges, America and Political Islam: Clash of Cultures or Clash of Interests? (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) 231.

[48] Maria do Céu Pinto, Political Islam and the United States: A Study of U.S. Policy Towards Islamist Movements in the Middle East (New York: Ithaca Press, 1999) 281-82.

[49] Robert Kagan and William Kristol, "Clinton's Foreign Policy Cont.," Weekly Standard 12 Mar. 2001: 11.

[50] Kenneth Pollack, "Next Stop Baghdad?" Foreign Affairs Editors' Choice: The Middle East Crisis, ed. Gideon Rose (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 2002) 116-32.

Moreover, following the attacks of 11 September 2001, whilst there is general agreement that significant changes occurred in US foreign policy towards the Middle East, there is debate as to how these can be conceptualised and interpreted on a regional geostrategic level. The key problem of assessing such issues so close to the time in which they have occurred allows for little historical reflection, and thus they are uncertain at best.

From a non-academic perspective, George Friedman argued in 2004 that US regional geostrategy towards the Persian Gulf had altered in that it now saw the threat emanating from al-Qa'ida as the primary threat to regional and US national security.[51] Freedman says that this shifted the focus towards Saudi Arabia's counterterrorism efforts as this was believed by the administration to be the key to defeating al-Qa'ida. He maintains that this resulted in the United States seeing an invasion of Iraq as resulting in a US military presence surrounding Saudi Arabia which would have allowed for pressure to be used against the Saudis for them to undertake comprehensive counterterrorism initiatives through repression rather than political reform based initiative.[52] Although Friedman's interpretation is original, there is reason to question whether this satisfactorily explains the origins of US foreign policy towards Iraq given that it virtually disregards any concept of a political reform based on counterterrorism that scholars widely believe is at the heart of combating extremism.

In contrast, Ivo Daadler and James Lindsay suggest that the 9/11 attacks did not result in a change in Bush's outlook on foreign affairs, it merely confirmed them. More specifically, they suggest that the March 2003 invasion of Iraq was carried out in order to remove the threat Iraq was seen to pose on a geostrategic level to Persian Gulf security, in addition to countering the potential threat of Iraqi unconventional weapons being transferred to terrorists for use on a wider level.[53] Therefore, they

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[51] George Friedman, America's Secret War: Inside the Hidden Worldwide Struggle between America and Its Enemies (London: Little Brown, 2004) 253-80.

[52] Ibid.

[53] Ivo H. Daalder and James M. Lindsay, "Bush's Foreign Policy Revolution," The George W. Bush Presidency: An Early Assessment, ed. Fred I. Greenstein (Maryland: John Hopkins Press, 2003) 125-36.

equate a level of consistency on a geostrategic level in terms of the threat Iraq was seen to pose, but nevertheless identify it as having been supplemented by an overarching strategy designed to counter the proliferation of unconventional weapons by hostile states for fear they could be provided to terrorists.

Rosemary Hollis offered a more sweeping assessment in 2003, by suggesting that US foreign policy towards the Middle East in the post-9/11 international system was viewed by the Bush administration as having failed on a geostrategic level, and thus security threats, rogue states and stagnant reform had to be tackled directly. [54] She argues that the new approach is to rework the regional order. But importantly, Hollis agues that they have been compartmentalised by the Bush administration so they are dealt with as individual issues which in essence equates to derogation away from geostrategy towards geopolitics.[55] Therefore, the key issue arising from this framework is the extent to which geopolitics, if at all, became guided by the post-9/11 global geostrategic outlook which other scholars have identified.

In terms of whether the US foreign policy has a geostrategic objective towards the Middle East, Marina Ottaway, Thomas Carothers, Amy Hawthorne, and Daniel Brumberg suggested in 2002 that the Bush administration has adopted a new geostrategic agenda that called for the adoption of democracy as part of a Greater Middle East Initiative. They suggest that the Bush administration had *redefined* its geostrategy towards the Middle East as resting on the premise of democratisation; this was seen as a means of providing regional security and combating the root causes of terrorism.[56] Indeed, they maintain that the Bush administration adopted the belief that terrorism and political extremism is a product of the undemocratic

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[54] Rosemary Hollis, "Getting out of the Iraq Trap," International Affairs 79.1 (2003): 32-35.

[55] Ibid. 32-33.

[56] Marina Ottway, et al., "Democratic Mirage in the Middle East," Critical Mission: Essays on Democracy Promotion, ed. Thomas Carothers (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2002) 229-34; Thomas Carothers, "Is Gradualism Possible? Choosing a Strategy for Promoting Democracy in the Middle East," Critical Mission: Essays on Democracy Promotion, ed. Thomas Carothers (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2003) 237-42; and Daniel Brumberg, "Bush Policy or Bush Philosophy," Washington Post 16 Nov. 2003, B03.

political structure of Middle Eastern countries.[57] The remedy to this was seen as an overall rejection of the Clintonian geostrategy which called for the maintenance of the status quo. From this basis, the invasion of Iraq in 2003 was undertaken to "unleash a democratic tsunami across the Islamic world."[58]

The interpretation of US geostrategy towards the Middle East being premised on the adoption of democracy is highly significant. Indeed, it is commensurate with John Lewis Gaddis's notion of US grand strategy being geared towards counterterrorism and takes account of Ikenberry's thesis that the promotion of liberal democracy is a long standing guide for US foreign policy. But in terms of how this gels with the role of the Arab-Israeli peace process is unclear and underscores the room for analysis. It is possible to infer, however, that Ottaway and Carothers interpret the Bush administration as believing the democratisation of the Middle East will make Israel more secure and aid the peace process. Nevertheless, questions remain as to how US foreign policy calculations towards the peace process fit in with this geostrategy.

According to Michael Scott Doran in 2003, the US invasion of Iraq can be viewed as a key factor in a wider strategy towards achieving a resolution in the Arab-Israeli peace process, by way of combating the root causes of terrorism.[59] Indeed, Bill Quandt notably echoed and expanded on this line of argument in 2005, by taking the position that the Bush administration had come to view its geostrategic priority as resting on combating the root causes of terrorism through achieving a resolution in the Arab-Israeli dispute.[60] He argues that the adoption of the preventative use of force doctrine against rogue states, that were manufacturing or possessing

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[57] Thomas Carothers, "Promoting Democracy and Fighting Terror," Critical Mission: Essays on Democracy Promotion, ed. Thomas Carothers (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2003) 63-73; Thomas Carothers, "Democracy: Terrorism's Uncertain Antidote," Critical Mission: Essays on Democracy Promotion, ed. Thomas Carothers (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2003) 251-58; see also Tamara C. Wittes and Sarah Yerkes, E., "The Middle East Partnership Initiative: Progress, Problems, and Prospects," Saban Center Middle East Memo, (Issue 5), Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 29 Nov. 2004, 6pp., 12/12/04 <www.brook.edu/views/op-ed/fellows/wittes20041129.htm>.

[58] Ottway, et al. "Democratic Mirage in the Middle East," 229-36.

[59] Michael Scott Doran, "Palestine, Iraq, and American Strategy," Foreign Affairs 82.1 (2003): 19-33.

[60] William B. Quandt, Peace Process: American Diplomacy and the Arab-Israeli Conflict since 1967, 3rd ed. (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2005) 401-02.

unconventional weapons, was used as the justification for invading Iraq.[61] However, he views this as part of a wider strategic objective of countering the root causes of terrorism and ultimately achieving a resolution to the peace process.[62] Specifically, Quandt draws a parallel with US engagement following the liberation of Kuwait in 1991: by removing Iraq as a strategic threat to Israel, a resolution in the peace process was more likely to occur. Therefore, on a geostrategic level, the peace process had become more important in US foreign policy calculations than before as it was now was viewed in terms of combating one of the key root causes of extremism. The importance of Quandt's geostrategic interpretation is that it places the peace process as the key contextual factor which unpinned US strategy for combating the root cause of terrorism. Nevertheless, it is questionable whether the invasion of Iraq can be equated as having been undertaken to enable a resolution to the peace process through removing Israel's geopolitical threats. Indeed, it is possible that the peace process was actually subservient to US grand strategy which sought the promotion of democracy and freedom as a means for combating the wider root causes of terrorism in addition to seeing a Palestinian Authority's adoption of such principles as a means to actually achieving a resolution through meaningful diplomacy.

In sum, there is a level of ambiguity as to how US regional strategy towards the Middle East in the time frame of this study can be conceptualised. The problem this raises is that it does not allow for a clear determination of how US foreign policy can be interpreted with specific reference to the wider global geostrategic interpretations that have already been discussed. This provides justification for a closer inspection of the interpretations of the trajectory taken by US foreign policy towards the three key areas of this case study. The purpose behind this is that a clear understanding of US foreign policy trajectory, which should allow for a distinction between tactics and strategy, will allow for a clear conceptualisation within a geostrategic framework. The following will, therefore, review the competing interpretations of the trajectory US foreign policy took towards the Persian Gulf; the Arab-Israeli peace process; and Political Islam during 1993-2003.

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[61] Quandt, Peace Process 3rd ed. 396-402.

[62] Ibid. 398-402.

4.0 INTERPRETATIONS OF US GEOPOLITICAL FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS THE MIDDLE EAST 1993-2003

As already highlighted, there are competing conceptions on US geostrategy but, predictably, there is also disagreement on the trajectory US foreign policy took in order to achieve such objectives. The focus of this section will, therefore, be based on the *trajectory* of US foreign policy.

In terms of Persian Gulf security it is necessary at this stage to demarcate US foreign policy on a bilateral basis towards Iran and Iraq. US foreign policy towards the individual Gulf States will not be included as the scope of this thesis is limited to a discussion of Iran and Iraq under the rubric of Persian Gulf security.

In terms of the trajectory of US foreign policy towards Iraq, Gause maintains that although Clinton continued George H. W. Bush's tactical policy of indefinitely containing Iraq through UN sanctions as a means of achieving US strategic objectives towards Persian Gulf security, this tactical policy altered towards a *regime change policy* in 1998.[63] Indeed, Gause quite rightly highlights that on account of Congressional legislation, US policy officially changed towards that of regime change in October 1998. Gause cites domestic political factors within the United States as being the cause. Although Gause recognises that Clinton also provided limited support for opposition groups in varying degrees since 1993, he suggests that this was merely part of a means of keeping pressure on Iraq to comply with UN resolutions.

In contrast to this, however, Gary Sick contends that US tactical policy towards Iraq altered towards a regime based approach in 1997. Importantly, Sick highlights that this was an executive led change, and thus brings into question what caused a change in US tactical policy. But, of equal significance, this challenges the view that tactical policy only changed following the Congressional legislation in October 1998.

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[63] Gause III, US Policy toward Iraq 11-14.

David Wurmser took a similar position in 1999, but argued that the change in US tactical policy towards regime change occurred in 1995.[64] He suggests that a distinction needs to be made between *overt* and *covert* policy: overtly, US foreign policy was officially premised on containment based on the need for a compliance with UN resolutions; covertly, Clinton had changed tactics in 1995 towards regime change on account of the international context where US policy was unravelling. The significance is that US policy during the Clinton administration arguably went through three stages to achieve its wider strategic objectives: containment through sanctions; covert regime change policy; and official regime change policy.

Although Wurmser's account is convincing, there appears to be justification for questioning why the Clinton administration only adopted a tactical policy of regime change in 1995, when interpretations of the administration of George H.W. Bush clearly suggest this tactical policy of seeking regime change was applied during his administration from 1991-1993.[65] In other words, why does the academic scholarship suggest a gap in US *tactical policy* towards regime change in the time period 1993-1995? Officially the Clinton administration held a different policy from its predecessor up until 1998, but the adoption of a *covert* policy towards regime change as early as 1995 suggests a possibility that a policy continuation towards achieving regime change may have occurred since 1991, thus justifying further in-depth examination.

However, with the onset of the Bush administration in January 2001, it was officially premised on regime change as a result of Congressional legislation that was signed into law in October 1998. Nevertheless, there is general agreement that it continued the Clinton administration's approach of containing Iraq through sanctions as a means of controlling the geostrategic threat it posed until an *internal* regime change had been achieved.[66] Nevertheless, the key divide is generally accepted as being the

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[64] David Wurmser, Tyranny's Ally: America's Failure to Defeat Saddam Hussein (Washington, D.C.: AEI Press, 1999) 7-29.

[65] Madeleine Albright and William Woodward, Madam Secretary: A Memoir (London: Macmillan, 2003) 272-87.

[66] Kenneth Katzman, et al., "The End of Dual Containment: Iraq, Iran and Smart Sanctions," Middle East Policy 8.3 (2001): 71-88.

attacks of 11 September 2001. With the invasion of Iraq in March 2003, US policy had clearly changed tactics. The issue is, therefore, what were the origins of this change in foreign policy and was it carried out for the objective of regime change in that had been official policy since 1998, or was it carried out for alternative reasons? Indeed, as the above discussion on geostrategy indicates, there is reason to believe that the strategic objectives had changed which brought about a change in tactical foreign policy.

Given these trajectories in US bilateral policy towards Iraq, there is a clear ambiguity on what the nature of US tactical foreign policy was in order to achieve its wider objectives. Therefore, a qualitative foreign policy analysis is justified in order to clarify the trajectory of US foreign policy towards Iraq through a descriptive and analytical epistemology.

In terms of US policy toward Iran there are fewer disputes about its trajectory. It is generally accepted wisdom that US containment policy towards Iran steadily hardened since the adoption of the dual containment strategy. Indeed, it is commonly accepted by scholars that the impetus for this trajectory was the domestic political environment within the United States.[67] Congressional legislation is seen as having subjugated the foreign policy prerogative of the executive, and forced a tightening and expansion of unilateral sanctions in order to achieve the objectives of dual containment. However, Hossein Alikhani reminds us through a bureaucratic foreign policy analysis that although US policy was primarily motivated by domestic Congressional considerations, Iran's behaviour towards terrorism; its opposition towards the peace process; and the issue of weapons of mass destruction, were ultimately provocative policies which perpetuated such a trajectory.[68]

But the election of President Mohammed Khatami is understood as the key contextual factor which promoted a change in tact. Stephen Fairbanks comments that "Iran's 1997 election process was a stage in an evolution toward greater

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[67] For an excellent discussion see Kenneth M. Pollack, The Persian Puzzle: The Conflict between Iran and America (New York: Random House, 2004) 265-349.

[68] Hossein Alikhani, Sanctioning Iran: Anatomy of a Failed Policy (London: I.B. Tauris, 2000) 402-13.

pluralism and democracy."[69] He stresses that the opportunities presented by this election needed to be immediately realised. He maintains that although Khatami's reformist agenda faced real problems, its success was ultimately dependent on reciprocity from the United States. Ruhi Ramazani highlights that Khatami's reforms were moving towards a "faqih-guided democratic peace."[70] Ramazani concludes that Khatami's reforms are directed towards greater democratisation. He stresses that such reformist moves were a product of complex internal reforms, and most importantly, are in the interests of the United States.[71] He also argues that although Washington initially failed to recognise Khatami's reformist movement, it ultimately ushered in a policy shift to support Khatami's position base.[72]

Although Ramazani is correct to highlight that Khatami's election was a watershed in Clintonian foreign policy towards Iran as Washington did indeed move towards fostering closer relations with Khatami, Kenneth Katzman cautions that Washington's policy remained consistent. He explains that it maintained its containment strategy, and only made subtle moves towards engagement.[73] Moreover, Katzman goes onto conclude that following the re-election of Khatami in 2000, the Clinton administration reaffirmed this subtle dual track policy of engagement and containment.

But with onset of the Bush administration, it is generally accepted that a policy change did not occur until after the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks as the Bush administration was involved in a policy review which was not concluded in the preceding time frame.[74] But in the wake of the 9/11 attacks, Kenneth Pollack argues that up until January 2002, there were signs of cooperation and engagement based on

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[69] Stephen C. Fairbanks, "A New Era for Iran," Middle East Policy 5.3 (1997): 55.

[70] Ruhi K. Ramazani, "The Emerging Arab-Iranian Rapprochement: Towards an Integrated US Policy in the Middle East," Middle East Policy 6.1 (1998): 47.

[71] Ruhi K. Ramazani, "The Shifting Premise of Iran's Foreign Policy: Towards a Democratic Peace?" Middle East Journal 52.2 (1998): 177-88.

[72] Ibid.

[73] Kenneth Katzman, "Iran: Current Developments and US Policy," CRS Report for Congress, (IB93033), Washington, D.C.: CRS, Congress, 9 May. 2002, 10-17.

[74] Pollack, The Persian Puzzle 324.

mutual interests.[75] However, he argues that following Iran's implication in the smuggling of illicit arms to groups aligned with the Palestinian authority, Iran was viewed as a sponsor of terrorism and was thus included as part of an 'axis of evil'. This set the tone for US relations with Iran for the remainder of the time frame of this study.[76] Nevertheless, it is worth questioning whether the substantive engagement and cooperation in the immediate wake of the 9/11 attacks was tactical or strategic. Indeed, if we accept some of the wider geostrategic conceptualisations that indicate the Bush administration had premised itself on the objective of pursuing democratisation for the purpose of counterterrorism, the actual overriding objective could be defined as seeking a change in regime in Iran and thus a rapprochement would be seen by some as running counter to this. The importance of determining whether US policy towards Iran post-9/11 was tactical or strategic would allow for a conceptualisation of whether the promotion of democracy had indeed became a geostrategic priority.

In terms of the interpretations of the trajectory of US involvement in the peace process, the Clinton administration's first term of office has been described by Avi Shlaim as being one in which "Clinton refused to put pressure on Israel and adopted a hands-off attitude to the peace process."[77] In order to demonstrate this approach, Shlaim argues that Washington refrained from applying pressure on Syria, and simply confined US diplomatic efforts to "carrying messages back and forth".[78] Bill Quandt supports this view by highlighting Washington's policy towards the peace process which can be categorised as "letting Israel set the pace for negotiations."[79] Moreover, he argues that Washington preferred to have a laissez-faire attitude to the peace process by not applying pressure. Nevertheless, Quandt argues that the first Clinton administration did maintain a policy of *facilitating* the negotiating between

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[75] Pollack, The Persian Puzzle 349-58.

[76] Ibid.

[77] Avi Shlaim, The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World (London: Penguin, 2000) 511.

[78] Ibid. 531.

[79] William B. Quandt, Peace Process: American Diplomacy and the Arab-Israeli Conflict since 1967, 2nd ed. (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2001) 339.

the parties when required, but saw the onus being on the parties themselves.[80] Interestingly, Quandt seems to hint that the reason the Clinton administration took such an approach was simply because of a pro-Israeli stance. Therefore, by Washington allowing Israel to control the pace of negotiations and by refraining from the application of US pressure on the parties in the dispute, Clinton was ultimately acting in a pro-Israeli manner towards the peace process.

Whilst Quandt equates Clinton's involvement in the peace process as that of a *facilitator* by virtue of his sensitivity to his political position in Congress, he does highlight that a change occurred following the election of Ehud Barak. Quandt argues that Clinton saw an opportunity for the achievement of a historic agreement and was ultimately driven by personal ambition.[81] Nevertheless, following the election of George W. Bush, Quandt contends that US foreign policy initially reverted to disengagement as a result of the context of a high profile diplomatic failure by Clinton. But following the attacks on 11 September, Quandt interprets US policy as having moved to a policy of engagement as a resolution was viewed as being commensurate with the overarching objective of combating the root cause of terrorism.[82]

A similar view was advocated by Robert Freedman. He saw the initial months of the Bush Presidency as premised on disengagement resulting from the failure of Clinton's high profile effort at Camp David. Nevertheless, he suggests that "Palestinian terrorism" was also a key factor which thwarted Bush's efforts prior to 11 September 2001.[83] But following 9/11, Freedman maintains that this had a defining impact on the manner in which Arafat was viewed by Washington. He characterises Bush's approach post-9/11 as remaining reasonably consistent with the main exception that Arafat had become *persona non grata* as a result of his alleged

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[80] Quandt, Peace Process 2nd ed. 321-40.

[81] Ibid. 355-76.

[82] Quandt, Peace Process 3rd ed. 385-412.

[83] Robert O. Freedman, "The Bush Administration and the Arab-Israeli Conflict: The Record of Its First Four Years," The Middle East Review of International Affairs 9.1 (2005), 27/03/05 <www.meria.ida.ac.il/journal/2005/issue1/jv9no1a4.html>.

links with terrorism. Therefore, the emphasis had shifted towards promoting democratic leadership within Palestinian Authority.

In sum, the available literature indicates that there are clear disagreements within the academic scholarship on the trajectory of US foreign policy towards Middle East. In particular, US policy towards Iraq shows a clear degree of ambiguity as to when Clinton's strategic policy became centred on regime change. But overall, given these ambiguities there is justification for conducting an empirical examination, using an analytical and descriptive epistemology, in order to clarify the character and contextual origins of US foreign policy towards these three interlinked areas. Whilst this has merit in its own right, its importance for this thesis is that it will serve as a case study to assess the grand strategic conceptualisation of US foreign policy 1993-2003 that will be established in the subsequent chapter.

5.0 CHAPTER CONCLUSION

From the above survey of the literature on US foreign policy, it is clear that there is a degree of ambiguity as to its strategic rubric, nature and implementation. Specifically, the existing scholarship offers competing interpretations on US grand strategy during the Clintonian era and in the post-9/11 international system. Some scholars have contended that the Bush administration's response to the attacks marked a reaffirmation of a long standing foreign policy strategy, whilst others view a fundamental redesign of US grand strategy having taken place. As has already been outlined, the premise of this thesis is that a fundamental departure from post-Cold War US grand strategy occurred in the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. But in order to provide a more valid interpretation, a grounded qualitative examination of US foreign policy is justified.

By using US foreign policy towards the Middle East as a case study, it will be possible to identify the dynamics of US grand strategy 1993-2003. However, the above review has also underscored that US geostrategy towards the Middle East is also subject to competing prescriptions. This is also the case with US foreign policy towards the three key areas of: Persian Gulf security; the Arab Israeli peace process;

and political Islam. Therefore, by using a foreign policy analysis towards these areas, this thesis provides a contribution to the current body of scholarship on the three levels of: US grand strategy; US geostrategy towards the Middle East; and US foreign policy towards the Middle East. By the nature of the methodology proposed, it will provide for a clear interpretation of these interlinked areas.

Given this, the subsequent chapter will provide comparative observations on Bill Clinton and George W. Bush. This will be attacked through a traditional foreign policy analysis. This will establish the idiosyncratic and bureaucratic differences that have contributed towards their differential foreign policies. But most importantly, it will also establish the grand strategy of the post-Cold War era and the nature of departure from this in the wake of the trauma of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. This will then be used as the methodological framework for the case study analysis.

Chapter III

Comparative Observations on William J. Clinton and George W. Bush

"No foreign policy – no matter how ingenious – has any chance of success if it is born in the minds of a few and carried in the hearts of none."

Henry Kissinger

August 1973

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The most distinguishing feature of US foreign policy is the level to which varying degrees of continuity and change stem from each successive administration. Each President brings a new outlook, interpretation and agenda for US policy. The President's choice of staff disseminates change on a bureaucratic level which in turn has an impact on policy. The importance of recognising such factors is necessary in order for a comprehensive foreign policy analysis and interpretation to be achieved.

Within the context of this case study, there is a need to provide for comparative observations on Bill Clinton's and George W. Bush's administrations as such analysis allows for a clearer understanding of the factors which contributed towards foreign policy formation and trajectory. This will be achieved through a comparative foreign policy analysis.[1] But significantly, it will outline a clear hypothesis which suggests that a radical change in US grand strategy occurred in the wake of the trauma of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Specifically, the nature of the Bush Doctrine and the manner in which the international environment was interpreted allows for an interpretation that the response to the attacks marked a departure from the post-Cold War towards the War on Terror era. This will serve as an overarching framework from which a metatheoretical foreign policy analysis case study towards the Middle East can be conducted in order to test and offer an understanding of the origins of US foreign policy during the time period 1993-2003.

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[1] Deborah J. Gerner, "Foreign Policy Analysis: Exhilarating Eclecticism, Intriguing Enigmas," International Studies Notes 16.3 (1991): 4-19.; Deborah J. Gerner, "The Evolution of the Study of Foreign Policy," Foreign Policy Analysis: Continuity and Change in Its Second Generation, eds. Laura Neack, Jeanne A. K. Hey and Patrick Jude Haney (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1995) 17-32.; and Yaacov Vertzberger, The World in Their Minds: Information Processing, Cognition and Perception in Foreign Policy Decisionmaking (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990) 342-64.

The following analysis will provide an examination of the idiosyncratic differences between Clinton and Bush in order to highlight how their background, outlook, and character would have had an impact on foreign policy. A second area which will be examined is that of the bureaucratic level. This will highlight the idiosyncratic differences of key staff members from both presidencies whose background and beliefs are important factors that allow for a deeper understanding of the origins of foreign policy trajectories. The final section will examine how this foreign policy manifested and contrasted under each presidency.

2.0 IDIOSYNCRATIC ATTRIBUTES

One of the key elements in foreign policy formation is that of the individual level which can lend itself to more psychological prescriptions.[2] How political decision makers construct a view of the world in their minds is an essential component in understanding foreign policy.[3] Such ontological factors would have an impact on how foreign policy issues are perceived, interpreted and acted upon.[4]

The idiosyncratic differences between Bill Clinton and George W. Bush are significant in that their style of leadership, political ethos, and vision differ markedly. In terms of their background, the differences are stark. Whilst Bush followed in the path of John Quincy Adams who also succeeded his father as President in 1825, Clinton grew up in a modest household at the hands of a drunken and physically abusive stepfather.

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[2] Philip E. Tetlock and Charles B. McGuire, "Cognitive Perspectives on Foreign Policy," American Foreign Policy: Theoretical Essays, ed. G. John Ikenberry, 5th ed. (New York: Georgetown University, 2005) 484-500.

[3] Vertzberger, The World in Their Minds: Information Processing, Cognition and Perception in Foreign Policy Decisionmaking 111-91.

[4] Robert Snyder, et al., "Decision Making Approach to the Study of Foreign Policy," International Politics and Foreign Policy, ed. James N. Rosenau (New York: The Free Press, 1969) 199-206.; Robert Jervis, "Hypotheses on Misperception," International Politics and Foreign Policy, ed. James N. Rosenau (New York: The Free Press, 1969) 239-54.; John Vogler, "Perspectives on the Foreign Policy System: Psychological Approaches," Understanding Foreign Policy: The Foreign Policy Systems Approach, eds. Michael Clarke and Brian White (Aldershot: Elgar, 1989) 135-58.; and Graham T. Allison, Essence of Decision; Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis (Boston: Little, 1971) 128-42.

Clinton enrolled for his bachelor's degree in Foreign Service from Georgetown University. He subsequently attended Oxford University as a Rhodes Scholar for two years. Bush went to Yale where he graduated with a bachelor's degree in History. Whilst Clinton subsequently went to Yale Law School, Bush opted for Harvard Business School. This academic and professional background had an impact on decision making style: whilst Clinton approached issues in a lawyerly systematic manner, Bush's style was more characteristic of demonstrating leadership through decisive action. Although Bush's academic performance at Yale and Harvard could not compete with the excellent academic credentials of Carter or Clinton, his SAT scores were, nonetheless, very impressive.

The most important difference about their activities at university level, however, was that they took different positions during the anti-Vietnam war movement. Clinton was active and vocally supportive of the movement during his undergraduate studies at Georgetown, and his subsequent move as a Rhodes Scholar to University College, Oxford, was something that his political opponents would later seize on as evidence of his avoidance of the draft. Comparatively, Bush's reputation at university was more apolitical and hedonistic. In contrast to Clinton, Bush enrolled with the Texas Air National Guard. But the importance of their differing political outlooks at the time of the anti-Vietnam War movement is significant: the Clintonian administration was, according to Henry Kissinger, "the first staffed by many individuals who came out of the Vietnam protest."[5] Bush's senior staff by comparison, was comprised of more politically seasoned individuals: many had served in previous Republican administrations dating back to Richard Nixon.[6] Indeed, Kissinger is correct to highlight that generational forces are significant factors in how policy issues are perceived and acted upon.

Their route to the White House was also different. Clinton's first attempt at a political career began in the wake of Nixon's resignation in 1974, when he ran unsuccessfully for a Congressional seat in Arkansas. Clinton subsequently ran for the

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[5] Henry Kissinger, Does America Need a Foreign Policy? Toward a Diplomacy for the 21st Century, Rev. ed. (London: Free Press, 2002) 29.

[6] James Mann, Rise of the Vulcans: The History of Bush's War Cabinet (New York: Viking, 2004) 14-19.

State Attorney General which he then used as a platform for the Governorship in 1978. Elected as the youngest Governor in the United States, he held the position until 1982, but was then re-elected again in 1984 and ultimately used this as a platform for the presidency. Bush also unsuccessfully contested a Congressional seat, but his political career really began in 1994 when he won the Texas governorship by capitalising on the political dissatisfaction with Clinton's "political ineptitude by pressing for and failing to achieve major health care reform."[7] Bush also capitalised on the breaking Lewinski scandal in 1998 to discredit his Democrat opponent and achieve re-election.

Whilst Clinton clearly had more political experience in office before winning the presidency, Bush still had a wealth of experience from an inside exposure to his father's and the Reagan presidency. But even more importantly, their differential political backgrounds had an impact on their political ethos in general: Clinton's political ability was fostered through domestic politics, whilst Bush had a more rounded exposure but clearly still lacked the level of experience in office Clinton had accumulated. Either way, neither could be described as foreign policy orientated before taking office in the same manner of George H. W. Bush.

In terms of their religious outlook, Clinton was a Baptist whilst Bush was a born-again evangelical Christian.[8] Whilst there is no question that Clinton was a devout Baptist, there is little indication that this had a bearing on his policy during office. Indeed, Clinton frequently spoke of the need to maintain a clear separation between the church and state.[9] But for George W. Bush religion is much more significant in that he regards it as having shaped his worldview outlook and purpose in life.[10] The origins of Bush's religious outlook is significant in that, although several Presidents have been noted Christians – Ronald Reagan, Jimmy Carter and Richard Nixon – the

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[7] Stephen Graubard, The Presidents: The Transformation of the American Presidency from Theodore Roosevelt to George W. Bush (London: Penguin, 2005) 669.

[8] David Aikman and George W. Bush, A Man of Faith: The Spiritual Journey of George W. Bush (Nashville: W Publishing, 2004) 111-34.

[9] William J. Clinton, "Remarks on Signing the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993," (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1993), vol., 1pp. vols.

[10] Kevin P. Phillips, American Dynasty: Aristocracy, Fortune, and the Politics of Deceit in the House of Bush (New York: Viking Penguin, 2004) 49-51.

Bush presidency appeared to be the *most* 'faith-based' to hold the White House.[11] But crucially, Bush appeared more than any of his predecessors to draw a policy guide from his spiritualism,[12] and it seems reasonable to conclude that his beliefs have complemented the outlook of key members of his administration on the basis of their similarity.

The differences were significant even with their election to the presidency. Clinton's November 1992 election victory saw him inaugurated on 20 January 1993, as the forty-second President of the United States and also as the first Democrat President since Jimmy Carter. Clinton won by a comfortable majority over the incumbent George H. W. Bush by wisely recognising that the key issue for the electorate was the economy. An often quoted phase, "it's the economy stupid," typified Clinton's highly successful 1992 Presidential electoral campaign. He also entered office with the 103rd Congress (1992-1994) being Democrat controlled. Although the US economy was experiencing recession and required immediate attention, Clinton undoubtedly took office in a secure domestic political position. Nevertheless, the Democrat's control of Congress was short-lived as control was lost in 1994, and was not regained during his two terms of office.[13]

In comparison, Bush became the first President since Benjamin Harrison in 1888, and only the fourth since independence, to win the Electoral College vote but lose the popular vote. The controversy surrounding the vote count in Florida, where the Supreme Court had to rule on the outcome, tainted Bush's first term on the grounds of legitimacy. Nevertheless, Bush entered office with a firm Republican majority in Congress and a strong economic environment which was only beginning to show signs of slowdown.

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[11] Howard Fineman, "Bush and God," Newsweek Mar. 10 2003: 3-5.

[12] Fred Barnes, "God and Man in the Oval Office," Weekly Standard (2003), vol. 008, 3pp. vols., 2.; Stephen Mansfield, The Faith of George W. Bush (Lake Mary, Fla.: Charisma House, 2003) 149-76.; and Paul Kengor, God and George W. Bush: A Spiritual Life (New York: Regan Books, 2004) 89-290.

[13] David Brady and D. Sunshine Hillygus, "Assessing the Clinton Presidency: The Political Constraints of Legislative Policy," The Clinton Riddle: Perspectives on the Forty-Second President, eds. Todd G. Shields, Jeannie M. Whayne and Donald R. Kelley (Arkansas: University of Arkansas Press, 2004) 47-78.

Although both had differential electoral victories, the most important factor was in their contrasting styles of leadership. It is generally accepted that Clinton treated issues in a highly systematic and unstructured manner in order to explore them to their full potential.[14] The propensity for lengthy meetings may have been a good means of fully exploring policy issues, but it also highlights Clinton's lack of focus and decisiveness as a leader. The importance being that Clinton's approach favoured decision making on an ad hoc level, whilst trying to accommodate as many different positions as possible. In other words, Clinton sought wide ranging consent and approval rather than being driven by an objective or ideology. Whilst such a style has merits of allowing for informed decisions which are more utilitarian, it is also an inherently weak style in that clarity of purpose and direction would be lacking. Either way, it appears reasonable to conclude from the available evidence that Clinton had an aversion to foreign policy risk taking. Stephen Graubard appropriately asks:

> Why, then, was [Clinton] unable to address the problems that surfaced abroad, that recommended a major reconsideration of policies pursued by his two Republican predecessors? The short answer is that Clinton, like Bush and Reagan, feared any engagement that carried substantial risk, defined as the return of American body bags.[15]

By comparison, Bush saw his position as the Commander in Chief who did not get immersed in finer details in the way that Clinton had so typically done.[16] The focus was, therefore, on taking decisions once recommendations had been formulated, whilst giving general direction for policy.[17] The limitation of such an approach was that the President became more dependent on the advice of senior staff, but it does have its own merit in that there is clarity of purpose through decisiveness. Indeed,

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[14] Betty Glad, "Bill Clinton: The Character Issue Revisited," The Clinton Riddle: Perspectives on the Forty-Second President, eds. Todd G. Shields, Jeannie M. Whayne and Donald R. Kelley (Arkansas: University of Arkansas Press, 2004) 1-22.

[15] Graubard, The Presidents: The Transformation of the American Presidency from Theodore Roosevelt to George W. Bush 648.

[16] Fred I. Greenstein, "The Leadership Style of George W. Bush," The George W. Bush Presidency: An Early Assessment, ed. Fred I. Greenstein (Maryland: John Hopkins Press, 2003) 1-16.

[17] David Frum, The Right Man: An inside Account of the Surprise Presidency of George W. Bush (New York: Random House, 2003) 12-74.

this allows for a style of leadership epitomised by Ronald Reagan. But in comparison to Reagan and Clinton, George W. Bush appears to have been more comfortable in using American power in general. This was especially the case following the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001.

In terms of a worldview, both candidates did premise themselves on a platform that the United States should play an active role in world affairs: this is hardly surprising as this is a common trait that every major Presidential candidate has positioned themselves on since the end of the Second World War.[18] For Bush, the promotion of American values was clearly *commensurate with US interests*. Indeed, he notably held in high esteem Natan Sharansky's arguments that democracy and freedom were the *universal remedies to tyranny and extremism*.[19] But as early as 1999, Bush commented that:

> [T]he basic principles of human freedom and dignity *are* universal... Some have tried to pose a choice between American ideals and American interests — between who we are and how we act. But the choice is false. America, by decision and destiny, promotes political freedom — and gains the most when democracy advances. America believes in free markets and free trade – and benefits most when markets are opened. America is a peaceful power – and gains the greatest dividend from democratic stability.[20]

Bush saw his position as being in direct comparison to Clinton, whose foreign policy he alluded to as being "action without vision, activity without priority, and missions without end."[21] But in terms of Bush's vision, Robert Kagan characterised it as having "no hint of a pseudo-realist notion that American principles have to be set

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[18] Ivo H. Daalder and James M. Lindsay, America Unbound: The Bush Revolution in Foreign Policy (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 2003) 36.

[19] Anonymous, "The Odd Couple," Economist Online (2005), vol., 3pp. vols.; and Natan Sharansky and Ron Dermer, The Case for Democracy: The Power of Freedom to Overcome Tyranny and Terror (New York: Public Affairs, 2004) 18-38.

[20] George W. Bush, "A Distinctly American Internationalism," Remarks at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library (Simi Valley, California: FAS, 1999), vol., 8pp. vols.

[21] Bush, "A Distinctly American Internationalism."

aside in favor of exclusive concentration on America's vital national interests."[22] Interestingly this is a worldview which is notably similar to Ronald Reagan's outlook.[23] Nevertheless, Bush's perception of American values being universal and their promotion being in US national interests, underscores the point that he had a *neo-Reaganite* vision of international affairs.[24]

When compared with Clinton, there are surprising similarities in that he also saw the promotion of democracy and freedom as being in US national interests. According to Clinton, "[t]he defense of freedom and the promotion of democracy around the world aren't merely a reflection of our deepest values; they are vital to our national interests. Global democracy means nations at peace with one another, open to one another's ideas and one another's commerce."[25] This vision articulated by Clinton prior to taking office was maintained throughout his two terms of office; however, he also saw geoeconomics as a key addition component. Clinton remarked, "[o]ur economic strength must become a central defining element of our national security policy."[26] Indeed, this was commensurate with his domestic platform of defining the economy as his primary policy concern. Clinton's vision was, therefore, premised on dual strategic objectives. The importance of this for foreign policy analysis is, however, that in certain circumstances such objectives could be contradictory: the promotion of democratic reform could unbalance the status quo and thus be to the detriment of geoeconomics. Therefore, the key issue is the extent to which such strategies were applied in practice and served as a strategic guide for foreign policy.

Overall, there are noticeable differences in the background, outlook, and leadership style of Bush and Clinton. But more importantly, such factors highlight a differential approach to how America's role in the world was perceived, and leadership styles

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[22] Robert Kagan, "Distinctly American Internationalism," Weekly Standard 29 Nov. 1999: 6-9.

[23] Graubard, The Presidents: The Transformation of the American Presidency from Theodore Roosevelt to George W. Bush 547-87.

[24] Hugh Heclo, "The Political Ethos of George W. Bush," The George W. Bush Presidency: An Early Assessment, ed. Fred I. Greenstein (Maryland: John Hopkins Press, 2003) 37-39.

[25] William J. Clinton, "A New Covenant for American Security," Speech at Georgetown University (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1991), vol., 3pp. vols.

[26] William J. Clinton, "A New Covenant for American Security."

that would have had a bearing on policy formation. Nonetheless, it is also important to recognise the general bureaucratic differences which played a key role. Whilst it is outside the scope of this thesis to explore how individual decisions were bartered on a bureaucratic level, the following section will draw attention to the idiosyncratic differences of senior staff.

3.0 IDEOLOGICAL INFLUENCES ON ELITE DECISION MAKERS

Whilst Clinton and Bush do have clear idiosyncratic differences, it is also of significance that this extended to the very character of their administrations. Clinton's choice of staff is telling as they closely mirrored his own style and outlook. The importance of Clinton's choice of staff for foreign policy was that they shared his general lack of vision and caution in American foreign policy. This contributed to the administration's lack of strategic clarity and purpose in foreign policy matters.

In the first Clinton administration, the appointment of Warren Christopher as Secretary of State, a distinguished lawyer who had been the Deputy Secretary of State in the Carter administration, was viewed by many as a safe bet. However, although Christopher was widely regarded as an efficient and capable bureaucrat, he was also seen as "lacking originality and beliefs of his own."[27] Given Clinton's lawyerly and at times indecisive character, the weakness of Christopher in pressing for his own beliefs would have resulted in a relatively low key input from the State department in foreign policy formation. Moreover, this contributed towards a reactive based foreign policy rather than one that was striving for clearly defined objectives.

A similar appointment was made in the form of Anthony Lake as National Security Advisor. Unlike Christopher, Lake was far from not having his own opinions: he was notably critical of the Vietnam policy whilst he was on the Kissinger's national security staff during the Nixon administration and resigned over the covert bombing

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[27] David Halberstam, War in a Time of Peace: Bush, Clinton, and the Generals (New York: Scribner, 2001) 174.

of Cambodia. But in Lake, Clinton had an individual who shared his sentiments over Vietnam and took an equally cautious approach to the application of US military power. "Lake was a Wilsonian figure in an era that was less and less Wilsonian"[28] David Halberstam writes. In many respects, Kissinger is correct that key members of Clinton's staff were opposed to Vietnam and thus had a particular generational outlook on the international environment.[29] But although Lake was influential in devising strategy, his relationship with Clinton has been described as formal, and thus it is unlikely that he was able to exert a level of influence that some of his more notable predecessors had done.[30]

However across the board, it is striking that the first Clinton administration was devoid of individuals who had an inclination towards making use of US power projection capability. This was underscored by Les Aspin at Defence, and James Woolsey at the CIA, who found that they did not enjoy open access to Clinton.[31] With Aspin, Clinton's choice was poor as he was ill qualified to run a bureaucracy as large and complex as the Pentagon, even though he had an excellent command of defence issues.[32] When compared to Robert McNamara, Aspin was a relatively weak Secretary of Defence. Given Clinton's unstructured style of leadership and focus on domestic and, in particular, economic affairs, foreign policy was given less attention when compared to previous administrations and this was compounded by the idiosyncrasies of the key people he appointed.[33]

Few changes occurred, however, with the onset of the second Clinton administration in 1996. The appointment of Madeline Albright as Secretary of State was a notably change which gave the State Department a higher profile. Albright was a highly

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[28]Ibid. 286.

[29] Kissinger, Does America Need a Foreign Policy? 29.

[30] John F. Harris, "New Security Adviser Berger Is Known as Consensus Builder," Washington Post 6 Dec. 1996: A27.

[31] Halberstam, War in a Time of Peace: Bush, Clinton, and the Generals 244.

[32] Graubard, The Presidents: The Transformation of the American Presidency from Theodore Roosevelt to George W. Bush 635.

[33] Ibid. 629-30.

talented and articulate diplomat, who was more charismatic than Christopher, but she was not noted for having a particular ideology: "no one associated her with any particular view or wing of the party."[34] Therefore, as with Clinton's previous senior level appointments, Albright was a highly capable individual but did not articulate a sense of purpose in foreign policy which would have filled the void left by Clinton's lack of decisiveness, and weak vision in US foreign relations.

At the National Security Council, Sandy Berger replaced Tony Lake. Berger was a long-time friend of Clinton and had been Lake's deputy since 1993. Berger immediately confined himself to pursuing what had become the defining strategy of the Clintonian presidency: geoeconomics. According to Berger, he saw his purpose as promoting "a new international economic architecture for expanding trade and creating American jobs in the global economy."[35] Whilst this underscored the strategic outlook of the administration, it also was more indicative of lack of clarity in which foreign policy was treated as geoeconomics is not a substitute for geostrategy.[36]

Overall, on a bureaucratic level the Clintonian presidency was marked by a cautious approach towards international affairs that generally seems to have resonated throughout both administrations. Indeed, Clinton's choice of candidates appears to have mirrored his own idiosyncrasies.

In direct comparison, George W. Bush's administration was notably comprised of strong-willed characters that had a clear worldview before taking office. Bush's foreign policy team was "mostly drawn from people who had served in the third and fourth tiers of his father's administration."[37] Most importantly, several held a common outlook on international affairs that can be likened to the neoconservativism

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[34] Halberstam, War in a Time of Peace: Bush, Clinton, and the Generals 386.

[35] Harris, "New Security Adviser Berger Is Known as Consensus Builder," A27.

[36] Kissinger, Does America Need a Foreign Policy? 19.

[37] Daalder and Lindsay, America Unbound: The Bush Revolution in Foreign Policy 22.

originally spawned by Leo Strauss.[38] Indeed, Condoleezza Rice famously coined the term "Vulcans" to describe Bush's foreign policy team.[39] It is, therefore, pertinent to provide a discussion of neoconservatism in the following section with specific regard to how this characterised the Bush administration.

3.1 The Neoconservative School

As a school of thought neoconservatism grew from the left wing radicalisation of the 1960s which was primarily a product of the anti-Vietnam War movement. A number of left wing liberal intellectuals became disillusioned with the anti-Americanism of the period and began to reassert against this counterculture. Norman Podhoretz writes:

> Neoconservatism came into the world to combat the dangerous lies that were being spread by the radicalism of the 1960s and that were being accepted as truth by the established liberal institutions of the day. More passionately and more effectively than any other group, the neoconservatives exposed those lies for what they were: an expression of hatred, rooted in utopian greed, for the life lived in this country, and the major weapon in a campaign to deprive it of the will to defend itself against its enemies in the world outside.[40]

Although neoconservative intellectuals were of left wing origin themselves, their critique of the 'radicalised' left of the 1960s proved to be the key divide which saw a new intellectual school emerge. This became more pronounced as a neoconservative perspective of the Welfare state developed into a critique of the expansionist policy epitomised by the New Deal. Through this reaction to left wing ideology, neoconservatism gradually became more identifiable with traditional right wing conservatism.

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[38] Anne Norton, Leo Strauss and the Politics of American Empire (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004) 141-43.

[39] Mann, Rise of the Vulcans 1-9.

[40] Norman Podhoretz, Neoconservatism: A Eulogy, 1996, AEI Press, Available: http://www.aei.org/publications/pubID.18103/pub_detail.asp, 10/08/05 2005.

A further key pillar of neoconservatism is anticommunism. This can be broadened out into the desire for the promotion of Wilsonian ideals. Although traditional conservatives were also noted for their anticommunist zeal, their focus was primarily on the risks from internal subversion. Senator Joe McCarthy's zealous anticommunism within American society epitomised this approach. Neoconservative elites approached the issue on a much wider perspective, focusing primarily on the external risk of communist aggression against liberal democracies. President Reagan's ardent anticommunism meshed well with the views being articulated by neoconservative intellectuals and his view that a clear pursuit of freedom, liberty, justice and equality as universal ideals was wholly commensurate with this agenda. Indeed, such values are also seen as fostering peaceful relations as this is viewed as the norm amongst like-minded democratic countries. With this overriding belief in the moral supremacy in liberal democratic values, neoconservatives see other competing ideological or religious beliefs as a direct threat. Therefore foreign policy is seen as a means of both safeguarding and promoting their morally based values for the national interest. This is an interesting combination of Wilsonianism/Idealism premised on realist calculations.

Although it is clear why neoconservatives desire the spread of liberal democratic values, there is not, however, a uniform acceptance of the feasibility and role the United States should play in achieving the goal of democratisation within neoconservatism itself. In the seminal article "Dictatorships and Double Standards" (1979), Jeane Kirkpatrick, a leading neoconservative, argued that while the United States should uniformly promote the spread of democracy on moral grounds, it should recognise that country specific factors may preclude the transformation to democracy occurring in a stable manner.[41] She argued that although the United States should promote democracy, it must recognise premature reforms may result in a backlash which could allow communists to gain power: the support of non-communist dictatorships was therefore justified. Indeed, Kirkpatrick recognised that in many instances in the third world, a successful and stable democratisation process would likely be a *long term* process, and went as far as advising against policies which would lead to a premature democratisation. The essence, therefore, of what

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[41] Jeane Kirkpatrick, "Dictatorships and Double Standards," Commentary 68.Nov. (1979): 34-45.

has been widely described as the Kirkpatrick Doctrine, is the use of selective measurers to promote democracy in order to combat the spread of communism. Kirkpatrick's argument, however, posed the key challenge to neoconservatives in terms of defining the strategic objective: democratisation versus challenging the Soviet Union in terms of refraining from policies which could destabilise friendly regimes on a geopolitical level.[42]

Importantly it was with this mainstream promotion of neoconservative values by President Reagan that its ideological division with traditional conservatism began to break down. But with the fall of the Soviet Union, and the 'defeat' of communism as an ideology, the neoconservative school of thought had lost its *raison d'étre*. Intellectually its scholars generally became engrained in with mainstream conservatism and some of its more high profile advocates, such as Irving Kristol, indicated that the fall of the Soviet Union marked the culminating success of neoconservatism's key objective over tyranny.[43]

But with the fall of the Soviet Union, George H. W. Bush reverted, in line with his own beliefs, to a more realist foreign policy strategy reminiscent of the Nixon-Kissinger era.[44] Consequently, the most notable neoconservatives such as Paul Wolfowitz, Richard Perle, William Kristol, Robert Kagan, and Max Boot, were critical of Bush's realist policy which they generally equated with appeasement. Therefore, the end of the Reagan administration and the implosion of the Soviet Union may have signalled the neoconservatives' loss of direct influence over the foreign policy reigns of power, but it was period which reinforced their optimism that democratic values have universal applicability.[45] Nevertheless, this also marked the evolution of the neoconservatives' 'Cold War ideology' into *new post-Cold War strategy*. It is this revision which later had a direct bearing on the presidency of George W. Bush.

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[42] Mann, Rise of the Vulcans 97-98.

[43] Irving Kristol, Neoconservatism: The Autobiography of an Idea (New York: Free Press, 1995).

[44] Mann, Rise of the Vulcans 164-78.

[45] Joshua Muravchik, "The Bush Manifesto," Commentary 114.Dec. (2002): 28-29.

A key event which galvanised neoconservative intellectuals in this new post-Cold War environment was the failure of George H. W. Bush's administration to take decisive action and topple Saddam Hussain after the liberation of Kuwait. Following on from the mantra of the fall of the Soviet Union, neoconservatives saw every reason for the overthrow of Hussain and also saw the United States' new undisputed hegemonic primacy as every reason to believe it could be carried out. With Hussain's longevity and failure of the Clinton administration to formulate an effective and coherent policy towards Iraq, neoconservative political groups such as the Project for the New American Century (PNAC) were founded. The PNAC was founded by William Kristol and its membership included many high profile members of the Reagan administration. Its core principle is listed as:

> As the 20th century draws to a close, the United States stands as the world's pre-eminent power. Having led the West to victory in the Cold War, America faces an opportunity and a challenge: Does the United States have the vision to build upon the achievements of past decades? Does the United States have the resolve to shape a new century favorable to American principles and interests?[46]

A further area of interest for neoconservatives was the issue of a rising China that could threaten the pre-eminence of the United States. It was, however, with the election of George W. Bush as President that many considered to be neoconservative intellectuals were able to return to positions of power after an 'exile' during the Clinton era. This included Donald Rumsfeld as Secretary of Defence, Paul Wolfowitz as his deputy and also Dick Cheney as the Vice President. Given this, it therefore seems appropriate to examine the specific role of neoconservatism in the Bush administration and how this post-Cold War ideology evolved into a new one which characterised the outlook of the War on Terror.

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[46] Elliott Abrams, et al., Statement of Principles, 3 Jun. 1997, Project for a New American Century, Available: http://newamericancentury.org/statementofprinciples.htm.

3.2 Neoconservatism and the Bush Administration

It would be a mistake, however, to assume that the character of George W. Bush's senior staff was inherently ideologically conservative: Condoleezza Rice's outlook on international affairs was more of a traditional realist and thus shared the outlook of Brent Scowcroft and Kissinger.[47] Indeed, it would also be a mistake to assume the ideological conservatives in the Bush administration held the same view as the founding fathers of neoconservative school of thought.[48]

Nevertheless, Rice did hold some neoconservative views on the need for the promotion of freedom and democracy which became more apparent after 11 September 2001.[49] In terms of her background, she gained her doctorate on a comparison of the Soviet and Czechoslovakian militaries, under the tutelage of Josef Korbel who was Madeline Albright's father. She was thus more of a European specialist. But her relationship with George W. Bush was particularly strong as they both shared a love of sports, exercise and, as a devout Presbyterian, they shared a similar outlook on life. Although Bush did not appoint her to Cabinet level as Clinton had done with Lake and Berger, it is generally accepted that she enjoyed excellent access to Bush and was instrumental in foreign policy formation.

Other senior level staff, however, held more ideological beliefs. Unlike Rice, Wolfowitz upheld many of the ideals espoused by Leo Strauss. James Mann describes Wolfowitz's outlook as being premised on "stopping tyranny and condemning evil; the notion that dictatorships operate in fundamentally different ways from democracies; the belief that liberal democracies and their intelligence agencies can be fooled by a dictator's elaborate deceptions."[50] Wolfowitz undertook his doctorate on the risks of proliferation from nuclear desalination plants at the

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[47] Mann, Rise of the Vulcans 148.

[48] Stefan A. Halper and Jonathan Clarke, America Alone: The Neo-Conservatives and the Global Order (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) 40-200.; and Norton, Leo Strauss and the Politics of American Empire 141-80.

[49] Mann, Rise of the Vulcans 316.

[50] Mann, Rise of the Vulcans 29.

University of Chicago under Albert Wohlstetter who was a noted opponent of proliferation. Wolfowitz initially gained experience in the Nixon administration in the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and later under the Carter administration as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defence for the Middle East and Persian Gulf. It was in this capacity that Wolfowitz's views on the strategic importance of the Persian Gulf were developed.

In the final year of the George H. W. Bush administration, Wolfowitz, as Under Secretary of Defence, was charged with the task of formulating the Pentagon's first post-Cold War Defence Planning Guidance for 1992.[51] The purpose of the document was to develop an overall military strategy, and develop future defence budgets from it. The person who actually wrote this classified document was Zalmay Khalilzad, the Assistant Deputy Undersecretary of Defence for Policy Planning. Khalilzad built on Wolfowitz's ideas to develop a coherent post-Cold War neoconservative military strategy. However, Khalilzad's 1992 draft was leaked to the press, and was subject to a wave of criticism, both domestically and overseas. Although the draft was rewritten in a more diplomatic tone to alleviate the concerns of allies overseas,[52] its overarching themes remained reasonably consistent in the revision. The primary themes within the reports were:

1. The United States should work actively to retain its pre-eminence in the world by preventing a rival power from emerging.
2. Future military coalitions would be ad hoc, and specific to the cause.
3. The United States would act unilaterally if it defines such action as being in its national interests.
4. The United States should aim to actively promote its values and interests on a global basis.[53]

Unlike neoconservative vision during the Cold War, this revision had to alter according to, as Leo Strauss argues, the definition of threat facing liberal

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[51] Patrick E. Tyler, "Us Strategy Plan Calls for Insuring No Rivals Develop," New York Times 8 Mar. 1992: A12.; and Patrick E. Tyler, "Lone Superpower Plan: Ammunition for Critics," New York Times 10 Mar. 1992: A10.

[52] Tyler, "Lone Superpower Plan: Ammunition for Critics," A10.

[53] Tyler, "Us Strategy Plan Calls for Insuring No Rivals Develop," A12.

democracies.[54] Although during the Cold War the threat was clearly seen as Communism, the post-Cold War revision saw the new threat being: *potential challengers to American hegemony*. Nevertheless, it was with the onset of the Clinton administration that the neoconservatives were essentially confined to an opposition role as they lost their positions in government. According to James Mann, however, despite using a different rhetorical vision, the Clinton administration did not substantively depart from this post-Cold War neoconservative strategy:

> Overall, the Democrats failed to come up with any clear alternative vision of American strategy that would forswear the 1992 vision of the United States as a sole superpower. When the Clinton administration sought to articulate its own view of America's role in the world, it stressed the importance of globalisation, open markets and democracy. Those themes did not contradict the 1992 strategy, but rather described the economic and political basis of the new international system the United States intended to dominate.[55]

Although the Clinton administration was indirectly pursuing this aspect of the post-Cold War neoconservative vision, those neoconservatives who had lost their positions of power when Clinton took office developed their opposition to the Democrats through organisations such as the PNAC and also through influential publications such as the Weekly Standard, National Interest and the Daily Star. Indeed, during the Clinton years, Wolfowitz was particularly critical of the administration's policy towards Iraq; he, and many others, saw this as an incoherent and unworkable policy. The issue of Iraq was, along with China and Taiwan, the main moral and security issues they saw the United States facing. Accordingly, these issues, in particular Iraq, served as the key mobilising agents for the neoconservatives when they were not in office throughout the Clinton era.

By 1997 Wolfowitz and other neoconservatives had openly began to call for regime change against Saddam Hussain, and were actively lobbying Congress, through the Project for a New American Century, for an official change in Clinton's policy

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[54] Norton, Leo Strauss and the Politics of American Empire 181-94.

[55] Mann, Rise of the Vulcans 248-93.

towards Iraq.[56] Moreover, this effective opposition against Clinton's policy toward Iraq played a key role in prompting Congress to legislate, and subsequently Clinton signing into law, the Iraq liberation Act of 1998. This ultimately saw the neoconservative policy towards Iraq being *overtly* adopted as a foreign policy objective.

It was only following the 2000 Presidential election that the neoconservatives were able to return to a variety of positions of power within government.[57] From an opposition movement in exile during the Clinton years, the election of George W. Bush marked their return to power. Although Bush's foreign policy team retained its hawkish views towards Iraq and its neoconservative outlook on international affairs in the months prior to 11 September 2001, its Straussian external threat remained premised on countries which could challenge the pre-eminent position of the United States. The 9/11 terrorist attacks, however, changed this perception of external threat. With the attacks, terrorism had become a readily identifiable threat by the American public which was capable of striking against them within the United States.

Others such as Secretary of Defence Rumsfeld, Vice-President Cheney, and his Chief of Staff "Scooter" Libby, were more concerned with maintenance of the qualitative edge the United States had over any strategic competitors rather than the more idealistic doctrine advocated by Wolfowitz. As has been highlighted earlier, the Pentagon's Defence Policy Guidance 1992, which was officially authored by Cheney, was later rewritten by Libby in diplomatic language without changing the underlying theme of maintenance of US hegemony. Rumsfeld's political views also echoed this position as he established himself as a leading hawk opposed to a reduction of the military capability of the United States whilst he was Defence Secretary during the Ford administration.[58] The findings of the 1997 Congressional commission to assess the ballistic missile threat to the United States, which he

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[56] Elliott Abrams, et al., Letter to President Clinton, 26 Jan. 1998, Project for a New American Century, Available: http://www.newamericancentury.org/iraqclintonletter.htm.; and Elliot Abrams, et al., Letter to Trent Lott and Newt Gingrich, 29 May 1998, Available: http://www.newamericancentury.org/iraqletter1998.htm.

[57] Mann, Rise of the Vulcans 29.

[58] United States, "Quadrennial Defense Review Report," ed. Department of Defence (GPO, 2001), vol. Washington, D.C., 79pp vols.

chaired, further cemented this reputation.[59] In essence, some members of the Bush administration held strong views prior to taking office for the need to maintain hegemony by preventing the rise of a strategic competitor to American military superiority.

In a similar fashion, Colin Powell and Richard Armitage both had strong views on the need for maintenance of the qualitative military edge of the United States. They slightly differed from Rumsfeld, Cheney, and Libby by generally being more pragmatic and more willing to see value in multilateralism. In many respects, they were ideally suited for top two positions in the Department of State. Nevertheless, they were not as political as the other members of Bush's senior staff and both had a disdain for idealism or ideology in foreign policy, which placed them in conflict with Wolfowitz and Condoleezza Rice.

Nevertheless, the Bush administration did have a more religious character in comparison to the Clinton administration which cannot be ignored: it has been widely reported that religious practices such as bible readings and group prayers before official meetings have been held in the Bush White House. But these were not just symbolic gestures as such beliefs were translated into policy. Indeed, one of Bush's first domestic policies was the Faith-Based Initiative which sought to "unite conservative evangelicals, urban Catholics, minority pastors, and traditional noblesse oblige Republicans in a grand religious inspired approach to social problems."[60] But in terms of US foreign policy, the attacks of 11 September 2001 played a more telling role. The attacks served to reinforce Bush's existing convictions of the universality of the values that have grounding in his own Christian faith: freedom, liberty and democracy. Indeed, as with many other fellow Americans, Bush categorised those who perpetuated the terrorist attacks as the embodiment of evil and, consequently, a direct challenge towards the good values seen to be epitomising the United States. Indeed, some commentators such as Martin E. Marty have gone as

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[59] United States, "Rumsfeld Commission Report," Executive Summary of the Commission to Assess the Ballistic Missile Threat to the United States, ed. Congress (Brookings, 1998), vol. Washington, D.C., 24pp vols.

[60] Frum, The Right Man: An inside Account of the Surprise Presidency of George W. Bush 100-01.

far as describing Bush as feeling that he has been called upon by God in the form of a religiously justified cause against evil.[61]

In his 2003 State of the Union Address, Bush illustrated his belief that such values are universal and enshrined in the Christian faith by saying that: "the liberty we prize is not America's gift to the world, it is God's gift to humanity."[62] The importance of this is clear: Bush's own religious values and beliefs, which are shared by many within his administration, were a factor that shaped his outlook and, specifically the desire to spread freedom, liberty and democracy as part of his foreign policy.

All things considered, it seems possible to recognise several important characteristics on a bureaucratic level during the first Bush administration. There were two key complimentary idiosyncrasies that resonated in the administration: a desire for maintenance of US hegemony, and a firm belief in the desirability of spreading Wilsonian ideals. Indeed, prior to the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the general foreign policy focus of the administration was more geared towards the issue of China which was seen as a possible strategic competitor. In the post-9/11 environment, however, these idiosyncrasies were reflected in US foreign policy which saw a need to both maintain US hegemony in addition to combating the root causes of terrorism through the promotion of Wilsonian ideals. When compared with the Clinton presidency, it is noticeable that there are clear differences on a bureaucratic level which had a bearing on the perception, interpretation and decisions in US foreign policy during the time frame of this study. Therefore, on an idiosyncratic level the differences form a near dichotomy.

4.0 FOREIGN POLICY

From the preceding observations, it is possible to draw some initial comparisons on the foreign policies of Bill Clinton and George W. Bush. The following examination is, however, only an initial survey as its validity is understandably dependent on the

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[61] Martin E. Marty, "Bush and God," Newsweek Mar. 10 2003: 5-7.

[62] George W. Bush, "President Delivers State of the Union Address," The President's State of the Union Address (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 2002), vol., 20pp. vols.

data available at the time of writing; nevertheless, there is good reason to conclude that a fundamental change in US grand strategy occurred in the wake of the trauma of the 9/11 terrorist attacks which ultimately permeated throughout the US foreign policy agenda.

With the onset of the Clinton administration, the overarching strategy unpinning US foreign relations was articulated as being premised on the dual objectives of a global promotion of democracy and a furtherance of global economic capitalism. The Clinton administration saw these two strategic objectives as mutually reinforcing. Whilst the promotion of liberal democracy and market capitalism has a strong vintage in US foreign policy history, the key issue for scholars has been whether the end of the Cold War truly marked the demise of a grand strategic era in US foreign policy. Whilst some scholars such as John Ikenberry equate US grand strategy since the end of the Second World War as premised on the Jeffersonian pursuit of democracy, one cannot deny that the fall of the Berlin Wall and the implosion of the Soviet Union marked the end of an era where a clearly identifiable external threat was perceived by Washington which served as a strategic guide for US foreign policy during the Cold War era. Therefore, despite the Clinton administration maintaining what can be described as the quintessential American goal of promoting liberty, freedom and democracy; there is justification for taking the position that the Clinton presidency occurred within a different grand strategic era to that of the Cold War.

Despite the Clinton presidency articulating a grand strategy based on the promotion of democracy and global capitalism; there is good reason to conclude that geoeconomics alone served as the strategic point of reference for Clintonian foreign policy. The problem with this approach, according to Kissinger, is that geoeconomics "is not a substitute for global order, though it can be an important part of it."[63]

In the case of US foreign policy towards Persian Gulf security and political Islam, the promotion of democracy was subjugated at the expense of regional geostrategic

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[63] Kissinger, Does America Need a Foreign Policy? 30.

interests. Indeed, the very nature of Clinton's geostrategy was premised on maintenance of the status quo through containment and deterrence. Despite the administration's position towards political Islam being premised on widening democracy and civil liberties throughout the Middle East, this conflicted with Clinton's policy on a regional level. Therefore, at least in the case of the Middle East, it seems justified to conclude that Clinton's objective of pursuing democracy was more rhetorical than substantive.

But on a more general level, the Clinton administration failed to provide a coherent strategic guide for foreign policy: this was reinforced by the idiosyncrasies of Clinton and the senior personnel that he appointed. In terms of the Middle East, and the Arab-Israeli conflict in particular, it is fair to characterise Clinton's foreign policy as reactive and applied on an ad hoc level.

Nevertheless, Clinton's use of geoeconomics as a strategic guide for foreign policy and his ad hoc response to political developments was conducive to garnering multilateral support. Although Iraq proved to be a key point of contention with US allies in Europe in particular, Clinton's foreign policy did allow for a greater degree of multilateralism within the international system. Through his emphasis on geoeconomics, Clinton was better able to conduct his foreign policy and the cooperation it delivered would have fostered the spectacular global economic performance of the late 1990s. From this, one can interpret Clintonian foreign policy as being Jeffersonian on a rhetorical level, but overall distinctly Hamiltonian in character.

Although Clinton's foreign policy was inherently weak through its general reactive nature stemming from its geoeconomic basis, George W. Bush's foreign policy marked a clear departure from this trajectory. As has already been discussed, the idiosyncratic outlook, perception, and vision of the Bush administration was wholly based on differential criteria. On a bureaucratic level, the primary concern for many of Bush's senior foreign policy staff was for the maintenance of a qualitative superiority of the United States relative to potential strategic competitors. A second underlying tenant was the neoconservatism which sought the promotion of

democracy and freedom on a moral basis, in addition to seeing it providing for the national security of the United States.

When the Bush administration's policy prior to the 9/11 attacks is examined towards the Middle East, there appears to have been a general level of continuity from the Clinton administration. The discernible difference towards the Arab-Israeli dispute appears to have been a product of the geopolitical environment and, importantly, this case study will indicate that a change in regional geostrategy did not occur at that time. Therefore, despite the administration having differential idiosyncratic attributes to the Clinton presidency, foreign policy trajectory remained fairly constant. But it should not be forgotten that a policy review was still being conducted during this period of time and thus it is not possible to say whether these differential attributes would, by themselves, have translated into a radical departure from Clinton's geostrategy. On the other hand, the Bush administration's initial policy towards China in particular, indicates a change commensurate with the idiosyncrasies discussed.[64]

The attacks of 11 September 2001, however, do appear to have resulted in the onset of a new grand strategic era that one can equate in certain respects with the Cold War.[65] Given the importance of the Bush administration's foreign policy strategy post-9/11, the following section will analyse the nature of the Bush Doctrine in order to underscore that a new grand strategic approach was adopted in the wake of the trauma of the 9/11 attacks.

4.1 The Bush Doctrine

The Bush administration's response to the attacks was wholly commensurate with the idiosyncratic characteristics that have been defined above, and has been likened

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[64] John Chipman, Strategic Survey 2001/2002 (Oxford: OUP, 2002) 264-68.

[65] John L. Gaddis, We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History (Oxford: OUP, 1998) 281-95.; and Henry Kissinger, Diplomacy (New York: Touchstone, 1995) 423-45.

by Bob Woodward to a fundamentally new foreign policy doctrine.[66] The Bush Doctrine has three identifiable pillars which were originally outlined in the National Security Strategy of 2002.[67] These three pillars can be summarised as:

1. Prevent hostile states from acquiring unconventional weapons
2. Promote democracy and freedom on a global basis
3. Maintain the pre-eminence of the United States in the international system.

The nature of the Bush Doctrine is ambitious, optimistic and longsighted. Clear comparisons can be drawn with Woodrow Wilson's vision in the aftermath of the First World War but, for the Bush administration, it is seen not only in moral terms, but also through a clear definition of what the national security threats to the United States are.[68] The nature of its pillars reflect this as it includes both immediate security concerns from states intent on producing unconventional weapons, to the more long term goal of combating the root causes of extremist political Islam and politically motivated extremism with global reach in general. Given this, the following section will provide an analysis of the more immediate concerns of the doctrine, whilst the subsequent section will look at its more long term aspects.

4.1.1 The Preventative Use of Force

The first pillar of the Bush Doctrine emerged as a direct response to the realisation that if terrorists armed with box cutters could use aeroplanes as a weapon to cause mass casualties, what would the scenario be if an unconventional weapon was used?

The response to this possible scenario saw the Bush Doctrine draw a linkage between terrorism and hostile states with the intent to produce unconventional weapons. It also rejected in no uncertain terms Kenneth Waltz's argument that proliferation can

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[66] Bob Woodward, Bush at War (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002) 30.

[67] United States, "The National Security Strategy of the United States of America," ed. President of the United States (GPO, 2002), vol. Washington, D.C., 35pp vols.

[68] For an excellent study on Wilsonianism and foreign policy see: Robert S. McNamara and James G. Blight, Wilson's Ghost: Reducing the Risk of Conflict, Killing, and Catastrophe in the 21st Century (New York: Public Affairs, 2003) 17-58, 217-26.

be equated with international stability.[69] This aspect of the Bush Doctrine was controversial as it called on such threats to be dealt with preventatively. This linkage went beyond the separate issues of states harbouring and supporting terrorist groups which the Afghanistan campaign underscored.[70]

Vice President Cheney argued that the casualties posed by terrorist groups actually using unconventional weapons would have, if used to their greatest potential, dwarfed those of 11 September 2001.[71] Given the difficulties in manufacturing and deploying such weapons, Cheney is correct that the most logical means for terrorists acquiring such weapons would ultimately stem from 'rogue state' producers.[72] Indeed, this point was underlined by Bush:

> The gravest danger our Nation faces lies at the crossroads of radicalism and technology. Our enemies have openly declared that they are seeking weapons of mass destruction, and evidence indicates that they are doing so with determination. The United States will not allow these efforts to succeed. ...[H]istory will judge harshly those who saw this coming danger but failed to act. In the new world we have entered, the only path to peace and security is the path of action.[73]

The significance of this pillar in the overall strategy is that it vastly broadened the target list from "terrorist organizations of global reach" to include "any terrorist or state sponsor of terrorism which attempts to gain or use weapons of mass destruction

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[69] Kenneth N. Waltz, The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: More May Be Better, Adelphi Papers, No. 171 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1981) 1-32.; United States, "National Security Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction," ed. President of the United States (GPO, 2002), vol. Washington, D.C., 9pp vols.; and also see United States, "National Strategy for Combating Terrorism," ed. President of the United States (GPO, 2003), vol. Washington, D.C., 32pp vols.

[70] Woodward, Bush at War 43.

[71] Ibid. 137.

[72] Paul R. Pillar, Terrorism and Us Foreign Policy (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2001) 164.; David A. Kay, "Wmd Terrorism: Hype or Reality," The Terrorism Treat and Us Governmental Response: Operational and Organisational Factors, eds. James M. Smith and William C. Thomas (Colorado: USAF Institute for National Security Studies, 2001) 69-78.

[73] Bush, "President Delivers State of the Union Address," vol.

(WMD) or their precursors."[74] The scope was thus widened to include countries *defined by* the United States as hostile which were viewed as procuring, or *attempting* to procure, unconventional weapons. This was in spite of whether they were legally entitled to produce such weapons under international law. The reason why this potential form of terrorism was placed onto the national security agenda is not only attributable to the logical projection in the nature of terrorist attacks, but also to the anthrax attacks which took place in the immediate aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Although it is unclear what impact the anthrax attacks had on the national security agenda, it seems justifiable to infer that they were a factor which installed a level of fear within the domestic electorate of a mass casualty terrorist attack using such weapons.

The specifics of this strategy mean that in cases where hostile states are viewed as *intention* or *actually* producing unconventional weapons, the United States would *prevent* their acquisition by resorting to anticipatory self defence if a diplomatic/peaceful resolution in accordance with US zero sum demands had proved elusive. In other words, the United States would ultimately resort to the use of force if a state does not comply with US non-negotiable demands. This is based on the belief that such weapons could be used directly or asymmetrically against the United States, and the scale of the threat justifies the subjugation of state sovereignty. Bush unveiled this change in military strategy at the West Point Military Academy in June 2002 where he stated that "our security will require all Americans to be forward-looking and resolute, to be ready for preemptive action when necessary to defend our liberty and to defend our lives."[75]

In terms of the historical use of pre-emptive action, the National Security Strategy maintained that:

> The United States has long maintained the option of preemptive actions to counter a sufficient threat to our national security. The greater the threat, the greater is the risk of inaction — and the more

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[74] United States, "The National Security Strategy of the United States of America," vol.6.

[75] George W. Bush, "West Point Commencement Speech," America and the World: Debating the New Shape of International Politics, ed. Gideon Rose (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 2002) 367.

> compelling the case for taking anticipatory action to defend ourselves, even if uncertainty remains as to the time and place of the enemy's attack. To forestall or prevent such hostile acts by our adversaries, the United States will, if necessary, act preemptively.[76]

Bush's proposal, however, went beyond the traditional definition of *pre-emptive* war and encompassed the doctrine of *preventative* war.[77] It is important to recognise that p*re-emptive* warfare is a response in the face of an *imminent* attack whilst a *preventative* war is carried out long before a potential threat materialises.[78]

The use of pre-emptive force was not a new concept by any means in the history of US foreign policy. Indeed, the Kennedy administration had acted pre-emptively in its establishment of a naval quarantine around Cuba during the missile crisis. However, Robert Kennedy reminds us that the naval quarantine of Cuba was premised on the call to action from the Organisation of American States, and the administration purposely refrained from referring to it as pre-emptive self defence.[79] Nevertheless, a policy of pre-emptive action had never been a *formally declared policy* of the United States, *despite* its actual usage. The adoption of the *preventative* war doctrine was, however, very much a new concept in US foreign policy.

The Bush administration maintained that there was a clearly established legal basis for the pre-emptive use of force:

> For centuries, international law recognized that nations need not suffer an attack before they can lawfully take action to defend themselves against forces that present an imminent danger of attack. Legal scholars and international jurists often conditioned the legitimacy of preemption on the existence of an imminent threat—

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[76] United States, "The National Security Strategy of the United States of America," vol. 15.

[77] Walter B. Slocombe, "Force, Pre-Emption and Legitimacy," Survival 45.1 (2003): 123-28.

[78] Jack Levy, "Declining Power and the Preventive Motivation for War," World Politics 40.Oct. (1987): 82-105.

[79] Robert F. Kennedy, Thirteen Days: A Memoir of the Cuban Missile Crisis (Norwalk, Connecticut: Easton Press, 1991) 61-103.; and John L. Gaddis, Surprise, Security, and the American Experience (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004) 38-56.

> most often a visible mobilization of armies, navies, and air forces preparing to attack. We must adapt the concept of imminent threat to the capabilities and objectives of today's adversaries. [80]

This legal justification for the pre-emptive use of force, which should more accurately be referred to as *anticipatory self-defence,* stems from a narrow interpretation of Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. Article 2(4) provides for a clear prohibition towards the use of force in the international system. The exception to this, carried in Article 51, allows for the "inherent right of individual or collective self-defence *if an armed attack occurs*... until the Security Council has taken measurers to maintain international peace and security."[81] Apart from the Cuban missile crisis, there have been only two other relevant cases since the adoption of the UN Charter to *potentially* support its basis under customary international law: Israel's attack on the Egyptian army in 1967, and Israel's air strike on Iraq's nuclear reactor in Osirak in 1981. Even so, the legality of the preventative use of force rubric in the Bush Doctrine remains unproved at best under customary international law, but may well prove to be an evolving principle of customary international law.[82]

In response to criticism, the Bush administration's position was clarified by William H. Taft IV, Legal Adviser to the State Department:

> The President's National Security Strategy relies upon the same legal framework applied to the British in Caroline and to Israel in 1981. The United States reserves the right to use force preemptively in self-defense when faced with an imminent threat. While the definition of imminent must recognize the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction and the intentions of those who possess them, the decision to undertake any action must meet the test of necessity. After the exhaustion of peaceful remedies and a careful, deliberate consideration of the consequences, in the face of overwhelming

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[80] United States, "The National Security Strategy of the United States of America," vol. 15.

[81] Malcolm D. Evans, Blackstone's International Law Documents, Blackstone's Statutes, 4th ed. (London: Blackstone, 1999) 16. Emphasis Added.

[82] Al-Hussain Al-Thani, "The Legality of Use of Force against Iraq in March 2003," (University of Durham, 2004), vol., 32-36.

> evidence of an imminent threat, a nation may take preemptive action to defend its nationals from unimaginable harm.[83]

Whilst Taft's definition goes some way to address the concerns of the definitions *arbitrary use*, the legality of invoking Article 51 as a justification for the use of force, *prior to an actual attack having occurred*, is not generally accepted by legal scholars.[84]

The case of the invasion of Iraq in March 2003 underscored this doctrine of the preventative use of force: Iraq was viewed as having such weapons in its possession, and also intent on further production whilst being unwilling to comply with the demands of the international community in a peaceful manner. The key issue to understand about this pillar is, however, that the preventative use of force is not seen as applicable is every circumstance. The Bush Doctrine only saw this as applicable in cases where hostile states remain committed to acquiring unconventional weapons once diplomacy to reverse this situation had been tried and failed. But the significance of this pillar is that it reduces US diplomacy to a *zero-sum game* where compromise is not possible on this issue. Therefore, under its rubric, the preventative use of force would occur once diplomacy, leading to a *full* compliance with US demands, is seen as tried and failed, which indicates that the notion of diplomacy in such circumstances is reduced to an anachronism.

Nonetheless, the Bush administration's adoption of the concept of the preventative use of force, premised on *unilateralism if necessary*, sets a precedent for states defining their security interests and applying unilateral measures to achieve them. But the willingness of the Bush administration to resort to unilateralism has some vintage in US foreign policy, particularly in Republican circles.[85] Nevertheless, it is a course of action that holds the risk of setting a precedent in the international system. Henry Kissinger succinctly comments that:

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[83] William H. Taft, "The Legal Basis for Preemption," Roundtable on Old Rules, New Threats (Washington, D.C.: Council on Foreign Relations, 2002), vol., 3pp. vols.

[84] Miriam Sapiro, "Iraq: Shifting Sands of Preemptive Self-Defense," The American Journal of International Law 97.3 (2003): 602.

[85] Jesse Helms, "American Sovereignty and the Un," National Interest 62.Winter (2000): 31-34.

As the most powerful nation in the world, the United States has a special unilateral capacity to implement its convictions. But it also has a special obligation to justify its actions by principals that transcend the assertions of preponderant power. It cannot be in either the American national interest or the world's interest to develop principals that grant every nation an unfettered right of preemption against its own definitions of threats to its security.[86]

Although the administration did caution other nations from using pre-emption as a pretext for aggressive military action, the ambiguity of what exactly warranted such state practice, if it is taken as a precedent for international action, underscores that the Westphalian order is truly in systemic crisis.[87]

The nature of the threat that became so apparent after the 9/11 attacks also ushered in other pillars which allow for it to be defined as a grand strategy. Indeed, it is the manner in which the threat was defined that has prompted a departure from the Clintonian era. The nature of this difference lies firstly in the manner in which the Bush administration defines terrorism as being countered in the long term, and secondly in the recognition that the ultimate threat posed by terrorism is through the use of unconventional weapons, as has already been discussed. Therefore, this pillar saw the need to counter the threat posed by unconventional weapons and terrorists before they could possibly emerge as the risks were deemed too great.

4.1.2 Democratic Promotion

The second key pillar is the adoption of the neoconservative position on the promotion of democracy and freedom. Gaddis remarks that this is at the centre of the Bush Doctrine.[88] The desire to defend and spread such values draws from a historical

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[86] Henry Kissinger, "Consult and Control: Bywords for Battling the New Enemy," Washington Post Sept. 16 2002: A19.

[87] Kissinger, Does America Need a Foreign Policy? 234-82.

[88] John L. Gaddis, "Bush's Security Strategy," Foreign Policy 133 (2002): 50-57.

vintage in US foreign policy which was most clearly articulated by Woodrow Wilson and Thomas Jefferson.[89] In contrast to previous administrations which saw its promotion as desirable, the Bush Doctrine saw the promotion of liberal democracy as a national security *requirement.*

The key reason why the Bush Doctrine equates democratic promotion with national security is on account of the interpretation that the absence of democracy and freedom actually spawns extremism under the guise of terrorism. Therefore, in the post-9/11 context, the root cause of the terrorist attacks was viewed as the lack of legitimate representative institutions within the Middle East and elsewhere as this resulted in the only outlet for dissent being religious fanaticism.[90] The Bush administration thus embraced the intellectual position on radical political Islam that it is the very lack of democracy and freedom in given countries that results in the rise of political extremism and terrorist action.[91]

In addition to democratisation actually combating the root causes of terrorism with global reach, the Bush administration also saw it as desirable on the grounds that representative democracies are more likely to engage in peaceful relations and thus democratisation would provide stability and security for the international system. Indeed, this is a thoroughly Wilsonian ideal that believed like-minded democracies would opt to resolve difference through legal means and diplomacy. Therefore, when this is translated to the Middle East, a complete reordering of the political environment was desired in order to provide for regional stability in the long term. This is despite the transformation requiring a geopolitical overhaul which would create insecurity through socio-political changes. Indeed, this is in direct contrast to the Clinton administration's approach.

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[89] Robert Jervis, "Understanding the Bush Doctrine," American Foreign Policy: Theoretical Essays, ed. G. John Ikenberry, 5th ed. (New York: Georgetown University, 2005) 584-85.

[90] Fouad Ajami, The Dream Palace of the Arabs: A Generation's Odyssey, 1st ed. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1998) 133-58.; and Bernard Lewis, What Went Wrong? (London: Phoenix, 2002) 168-78.; see also United Nations Development Programme, The Arab Human Development Report 2004: Towards Freedom in the Arab World (New York: United Nations Development Programme, Regional Bureau for Arab States, 2004).

[91] Phillip H. Gordon, "Bush's Middle East Vision," Survival 45.1 (2003): 155-63.

The nature of this pillar allows the charge that it is exceptionally optimistic and ambitious. Indeed, it goes well beyond the revolutionary vision Wilson articulated in the aftermath of the First World War. But for Bush, the 9/11 attacks marked an opportunity to restructure the world order. Bush remarked that "history has called us into action, and we are not going to miss that opportunity to make the world more peaceful and more free."[92]

With regard to the invasion of Iraq in March 2003, it was viewed by Bush as serving dual purposes commensurate with this pillar: firstly, it allowed the removal of Saddam Hussain's dictatorship and the installation of democratic polity; and secondly, a democratising Iraq was viewed as fostering pressures for democratic reform within neighbouring authoritarian states within the region.[93] In some respects this is akin to the Cold War Domino Theory. Bush remarked in the aftermath of the Iraq invasion that "I believe that a free Iraq can be an example of reform and progress to all the Middle East."[94] Indeed, with Iraq serving as a beacon for democracy, the Bush administration believed that it would foster pressure within the civil society of neighbouring states for democratic reforms to be implemented.[95] This highlights that this pillar fostered a wider geostrategic agenda for the Middle East which is in direct contrast to the Clinton era.

Therefore, the belief was that only through a complete reordering of the international system in the long term can the root causes of terrorism be countered. In addition to this, the Bush administration also saw democratic promotion as serving the goal of

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[92] George W. Bush, "President, Vice President Discuss the Middle East," Remarks by the President and the Vice President Upon Conclusion of Breakfast (Washington D.C.: GPO, 2002), vol., 3pp. vols.

[93] Gordon, "Bush's Middle East Vision," 155-63.

[94] George W. Bush, "President Discusses the Economy with Small Business Owners," Remarks by the President in the Rose Garden (Washington D.C.: GPO, 2003), vol., 4pp. vols.; See also Colin Powell, "The Us-Middle East Partnership Initiative: Building Hope for the Years Ahead," Remarks at the Heritage Foundation

(Washington, D.C.: GPO, 2002), vol., 6pp. vols.

[95] Stephen Cook, "The Right Way to Promote Arab Reform," Foreign Affairs 84.2 (2005): 92-96.; and Marina Ottaway, et al., "Democratic Mirage in the Middle East," Critical Mission: Essays on Democracy Promotion, ed. Thomas Carothers (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2002) 229-36.

providing for international stability in the long term as it upholds the principle that democratic nations will resolve their differences through Wilsonian means.

4.1.3 American Hegemony

The final level of the Bush Doctrine called for the maintenance of US hegemony. It is noticeable that this was in fitting with the spirit of the Pentagon's Defence Policy Guidance of 1992.[96] As already highlighted, this called for maintenance of US primacy through ensuring a qualitative superiority in military capability.[97] This can be translated as having an imperial connotation but will depend on the definition of hegemony and empire.[98] Either way, it was premised on the belief that the United States actually upholds universal values and thus maintenance of US primacy was required in order to promote and defend them in addition to the United States itself.[99] Indeed, Edward Rhodes highlights that the maintenance of the US hegemonic position "provides the aegis under which peace and freedom can be built."[100]

In an address to the West Point Military Academy in 2002, Bush remarked that "America has, and intends to keep, military strength beyond challenge – thereby making the destabilizing arms races of other eras pointless, and limiting rivalries to trade and other pursuits of peace."[101] But in the National Security Strategy of 2002, Bush announced that "[i]t is time to reaffirm the essential role of American military

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[96] Tyler, "Lone Superpower Plan: Ammunition for Critics," A12.

[97] Jervis, "Understanding the Bush Doctrine," 584-85.

[98] G. John Ikenberry, "America's Imperial Ambition," American Foreign Policy: Theoretical Essays, ed. G. John Ikenberry, 5th ed. (New York: Georgetown University, 2005) 564-75.; Zbigniew Brzezinski, The Choice: Global Domination or Global Leadership (New York: Basic Books, 2005) 131-49.; Robert Jervis, American Foreign Policy in a New Era (New York: Routledge, 2005) 89-90.; and Niall Ferguson, Colossus: The Rise and Fall of the American Empire (London: Allen Lane, 2004) 169-99.

[99] Ikenberry, "America's Imperial Ambition," 564-75.; Andrew J. Bacevich, American Empire: The Realities and Consequences of Us Diplomacy (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002) 225-44.; and Bush, "West Point Commencement Speech," 369.

[100] Edward Rhodes, "The Imperial Logic of Bush's Liberal Agenda," Survival 45.1 (2003): 134.

[101] Bush, "West Point Commencement Speech," 369.

strength. We must build and maintain our defenses beyond challenge. Our military's highest priority is to defend the United States."[102] The strategy goes on to say that:

> The United States must and will maintain the capability to defeat any attempt by an enemy—whether a state or non-state actor—to impose its will on the United States, our allies, or our friends. We will maintain the forces sufficient to support our obligations, and to defend freedom. Our forces will be strong enough to dissuade potential adversaries from pursuing a military build-up in hopes of surpassing, or equaling, the power of the United States.[103]

This has been interpreted by Robert Jervis as seeking the dual objectives of ensuring that no nation could even contemplate matching US military supremacy through heightened levels of funding, in addition to actually preventing a rival from emerging.[104] Although Jervis believes that the United States would act militarily to ensure it maintains its primacy, it is difficult to envisage that military force would be used in the hypothetical situation of a liberal democratic rival emerging. Nevertheless, this aspect of the Bush Doctrine is aimed primarily at preventing a non-democratic state from gaining primacy over the United States.

All things considered, the Bush Doctrine, which can be equated with a grand strategic approach, has three key aspects. Importantly, these global strategic goals resulted in a fundamental reassessment of US geostrategy towards the Middle East. This indicates that the Bush Doctrine is a truly a global geostrategy which can be likened to the approach of the United States during the Cold War era. Therefore, the Bush administration's foreign policy response has resulted in the new grand strategic era of the War on Terror, which has succeeded the era of the Post-Cold War in which Clinton's foreign policy operated.

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[102] United States, "The National Security Strategy of the United States of America," vol.29.

[103] Ibid., vol., 29.30.

[104] Jervis, American Foreign Policy in a New Era 89-90.

5.0 CHAPTER CONCLUSION

The conclusions that can be drawn from these comparative observations are that the character, worldview and vision for US foreign policy are markedly different in the Clinton and Bush administrations. The idiosyncratic differences of Bush and Clinton appear to correlate with the character of key senior individuals in their given bureaucracies, and are ultimately commensurate with the nature their foreign policies have taken. On a bureaucratic level, Clinton's administration was staffed by individuals who shared his geoeconomic vision for foreign policy, but were not noted for holding particular views which would place them in conflict with this. In any case, the Clinton presidency can be characterised as risk averse in foreign policy concerns. Whilst its geoeconomic orientation and reluctance to take risk in the use of military power made it a more compatible policy for multilateral cooperation, its ad hoc approach to international affairs was weak and did result in contradictory positions being adopted. Bush's idiosyncrasies, however, lend themselves towards a clear and decisive foreign policy that is geared towards long range and ambitious projections. It has also resulted in a propensity for unilateralism which is in direct contrast to the Clinton presidency.

In direct comparison, the Bush presidency has been shown to have departed from Clinton's geoeconomic strategy in a radical fashion. After the 9/11 attacks, the Bush administration adopted a new strategic approach towards international affairs that resulted in a complete overhaul of US geostrategy towards the Middle East. As has already been highlighted, depending on the interpretation of grand strategy, it is possible to argue that a new grand strategic era occurred following the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

Taken as a whole, it is clear that a radical departure in US foreign policy has taken place. Whilst Bush's policy is more sophisticated than Clinton's geoeconomic foreign policy strategy, the key issue is whether the radical transformation it requires for the international system will actually provide the United States with the objectives it has set out to achieve. Given the long term nature of Bush's policy, an adequate evaluation at this stage is not viable, but the key observation that can be made is that it is inherently optimistic. This will lead to new challenges for the

United States in terms of whether it can successfully accomplish its objectives in the face of instability and insecurity that will likely follow as transitions to democracy occur.

Given these observations, and the conjecture that a new grand strategic era for US foreign policy has emerged in the wake of the trauma of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the rest of the thesis will analyse US foreign policy towards the Middle East as a case study to illustrate this conceptual framework and the radical change that has occurred. The next chapter will, therefore, provide an analysis of US foreign policy towards Persian Gulf security as a means of illustrating both the origins of US foreign policy in the time period 1993-2003, in addition to conceptualising it with the grand strategic frameworks identified.

Chapter IV

Radical Political Islam and Grand Strategy

"Which is more important in world history: The Taliban or the fall of the Soviet Empire? A few over-exited Islamists or the liberation of Central Europe and the end of the Cold War?"

Zbigniew Brzezinski

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The epigraph by Zbigniew Brzezinski is telling: prior to the attacks of 11 September 2001 it was difficult to equate the rise of radical political Islam with the ideological and military threat posed by the Soviet Union. But the scale and severity of the 9/11 attacks resulted in a foreign policy response which can be viewed as a new grand strategic era for US foreign policy. Whilst Brzezinski's assessment was correct prior to the 9/11 attacks, it is important to recognise that the overall product of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was the beginning of the development of a radical version of international political Islam that ultimately spawned al-Qa'ida. As the response of the United States to the 9/11 attacks marked the onset of a new grand strategic era, the product of these events are equally important for world history.

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse the position of the United States towards political Islam during the time period 1993-2003. Specifically it will demonstrate how the linkage between neoconservatism and the advent of US grand strategy in the era of the War on Terror was premised in the main on countering the root causes of religious political extremism through promoting the key neoconservative ideals of political representation; freedom; human rights and equality on a global level. Indeed, their absence is ultimately viewed as having created the conditions which bred international terrorism. So whilst promoting these values fulfils the moral edge of neoconservatism it also serves a more realist function of safeguarding US national security.

In examining US foreign policy towards radical political Islam, it will be shown that the position of the United States towards political movements which are guided by

Islam, does not equate to a policy towards the Islamic religion. But in terms of these movements, a demarcation can generally be made between those that are moderate, which legitimately participate in the given political system, and extremists' movements which have a propensity towards violence in order to fulfil their political objectives. The United States will be shown to view extremist movements as illegitimate, which fall under its counterterrorism policy rubric. The focus of US policy towards political Islam is therefore on moderate Islamic groups.

The issues facing US policy towards moderate Islamist groups revolve around whether both their participation in a democratic process, in addition to whether the establishment of a government based on the Islamic *Shari'a* they commonly seek as legitimate. This chapter will show that the steadily evolving policy towards political Islam in the time period 1993-2003, was typically inconsistent in that it commonly saw such groups' participation as legitimate, but a majority electoral victory as illegitimate.

Of more importance, however, is the manner in which the United States aimed to combat the root causes of extremism and terrorism in general. Although the academic literature quite rightly indicates a diverse and rich account of the causes of extremism, the position of the United States in this time period can be characterised as viewing a democratic and freedom deficit in Islamic countries as being at the root of Islamic inspired extremism. Nevertheless, this thesis will argue that the stated US policy towards reform as a means of countering the root causes of Islamic extremism was actually a secondary foreign policy concern to US policy strategy towards the Persian Gulf arena. However, this thesis will contend that the adoption of a grand strategic rubric of the War on Terror resulted in a fundamental departure in this long-standing policy.

2.0 OVERVIEW OF THE ORIGINS OF POLITICAL ISLAM

In order to provide an appropriate analysis of US foreign policy towards political Islam, it is necessary to firstly provide an adequate contextualisation by providing a general overview of the intellectual framework. The significance of the intellectual

context is that it underlines that a foreign policy response towards political Islam would probably depend on the intellectual context that is adopted.

Academic interpretations towards political Islam appear to demonstrate a clear dichotomy. These differential interpretations concern the origins, characteristics and perceived threats posed by political Islam. But most importantly, this dichotomy reflects whether political Islam is viewed as *compatible with democracy*. The significance of these competing classifications is that they advocate diverse and incompatible policy responses towards political Islam. In many respects, the debate over political Islam is one of the few remaining intellectual debates within US foreign policy: the legacy of the Iranian Revolution shows that differential interpretations as to why the United States 'lost Iran' has a direct bearing on policy prescriptions towards Islamism.[1]

In terms of the classification and origin of Islamist movements, it has been argued that political Islam can be characterised as a complex socio-cultural response, which has evolved historically, rather than a simple product of the political structure.[2] Bernard Lewis approaches the issue in terms of asking why the once vibrant and successful Islamic civilization has declined and fallen in relation to the West. Lewis's lucid historical explanation argues that various inherent internal constrictions have resulted in the relative decline of the Islamic civilization. But more importantly, he sees political Islamic movements using politicised interpretations of history which explain this decline as a means of garnering their support bases. Other scholars, such as François Burgat, echo Lewis's thesis by arguing that Islamism is a response to Westernisation and therefore should simply be considered a cultural response.[3] Bugat argues that "the process of re-Islamisation is a mere process of re-traditionalisation, developing in relative autonomy and exclusion

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[1] Robert Satloff, US Policy Towards Islamism: A Theoretical and Operational Overview (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 2000) 3-5.

[2] Dale F. Eickelman and James P. Piscatori, Muslim Politics (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004) 22-166.

[3] Francois Burgat, "Ballot Boxes, Militaries and Islamic Movements," The Islamism Debate, ed. Martin Kramer (The Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies, Tel Aviv University, 1997) 41.

to the dynamic of political liberalisation and social modernisation."[4] Bassam Tibi maintains this theme by highlighting that a Muslim identity has emerged as a cultural response from Muslim encounters with Western modernity.[5] These sociologically grounded cultural responses draw from globalisation and regionalisation approaches which identify the reaffirming of a localised culture, or normative values, as being a product of an increased level of international interaction and interconnectedness.

Whilst increased interaction and awareness of foreign cultures, economies, political frameworks and religions results in a reaffirming of a cultural identity,[6] Hrair Dekmejian takes the position that this has occurred within the context of a failure of modernisation and development in the region.[7] The significance behind this is that it is the failure of competing ideologies in terms of delivering modernisation and development that has led to the adoption of Islamism as a new ideological paradigm. Again, this affirms Lewis's argument that an affirmation of Islamic values in political life is viewed as the most apt reason of restoring the Islamic world's position in relation to the West. Nazih Ayubi supports this approach but stresses that the lack of economic development in the Middle East can be attributed to it being 'artificial' development which was mainly geared towards catering for Western actors.[8] Moreover, this 'artificial' form of development is categorised as not only unsustainable, but also one which undermines socio-economic and political relations. In other words, Ayubi argues that modernisation in Muslim societies arose from the pressures of colonialism and its overall development has been inhibited.

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[4] Francois Burgat, "Ballot Boxes, Militaries and Islamic Movements," 41.

[5] Bassam Tibi, The Challenge of Fundamentalism: Political Islam and the New World Order (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002) 64-113.

[6] John O. Voll, Islam: Continuity and Change in the Modern World, 2nd ed. (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1994) 289-392.

[7] R. Hrair Dekmejian, Islam in Revolution: Fundamentalism in the Arab World, 2nd ed. (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1995) 3-72; R. Hrair Dekmejian, "Islamic Revival: Catalysts, Categories, and Consequences," The Politics of Islamic Revivalism: Diversity and Unity, ed. Shireen Hunter (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988) 103-15.

[8] Nazih N. M. Ayubi, Political Islam: Religion and Politics in the Arab World (London: Routledge, 1991) 120-77.

Although the cultural response argument provides a credible reason for the existence of Islamist movements, Daniel Pipes considers Islamism ultimately stemming from Western radicalism.[9] He highlights that many Islamists are those who have been exposed to the West and are highly educated. They seek the modernisation of their own countries but blame the West for inhibiting their countries' indigenous development. Hence, not only does Pipes recognise that Islamism is fostered by a radical cultural response to modernity, but he also sees it as a product of the frustration at the lack of economic development within the Middle East. Therefore, in contrast to Dekmejian, Pipes highlights that Islamists view the lack of modernisation and development in the Middle East as a result of Western capitalism.

Whilst both cultural and economic factors have been advanced as contributors towards the growth of Islamic movements, it should not be forgotten that Islamic political movements are first and foremost a political response. It has been widely argued that it is a natural successor to the ideological void left in the wake of Arab nationalism. John Esposito sees the emergence of political Islam as a result of the failure of alternative paradigms such as "Arab nationalism/socialism, Iranian (Pahlevi) nationalism, and Muslim nationalism in Pakistan."[10] With the apparent failures of these ideologies, political Islam became revitalised as a viable alternative. Esposito and Voll both approach this so-called Islamic revivalism from a historical perspective that identifies political Islam as the only credible alternative to authoritarianism. They convincingly argue that:

> As the recent histories of Algeria, Tunisia and Egypt demonstrate, Islamist groups are more likely to emerge as the major opposition party when they are 'the only game in town' that is, when they function in political environments in which they become the sole credible voice of opposition and thus attract the votes of those who

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[9] Daniel Pipes, "The Western Mind of Radical Islam," The Islamism Debate, ed. Martin Kramer (The Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies, Tel Aviv University, 1997) 51-67.

[10] John L. Esposito, "The Persian Gulf War, Islamic Movements and the New World Order," The Iranian Journal of International Affairs Spring (1991): 346.

> simply wish to vote against the government or system, as well as the votes of their supporters.[11]

In many respects, Esposito and Voll's analysis correctly identifies that the key underlying cause of political Islam's success is the absence of any other credible political mobilising force. The key question is, therefore, why is there an absence of competing political mobilising agents? Esposito's analysis would have us believe that it is simply a product of the failure of competing political ideologies; but surely this overlooks why even limited democratic pluralism has failed to develop within Middle Eastern countries in general. Nevertheless, Maria do Céu Pinto reminds us that:

> [Political Islam is] mainly a protest movement against the current Arab regimes which suffer intrinsic weaknesses relative to the emerging Islamist challenge. The Muslim activists gain popular appeal by endeavouring to implement the very programme nationalist regimes devised but were unable to carry out.[12]

In other words, the growth in support for Islamism rather than other political movements is a result of the failure of indigenous Arab regimes to implement successful development programmes. Thus, Pinto implies that Islamism is a political response to the socio-economic context.

Whilst there are several origins of political Islam, for policy prescriptions the most important consideration is the political structure itself within countries where political Islam finds currency. Bernard Lewis rightly highlights that:

> Religious movements enjoy... practical advantage[s] in societies like those of the Middle East and north Africa that are under more or less autocratic rule: dictatorships can forbid parties, they can forbid meetings – they cannot forbid public worship, and, they can to only a limited extent control sermons. As a result the religious opposition

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[11] John L. Esposito and John O. Voll, Islam and Democracy (Oxford: OUP, 1996) 196.
[12] Maria do Céu Pinto, Political Islam and the United States: A Study of U.S. Policy Towards Islamist Movements in the Middle East (New York: Ithaca Press, 1999).

> groups are the only ones that have regular meetings places where they can assemble and have at their disposal a network outside the control of the state or at least not fully subject to it. The more oppressive the regime the more it helps the fundamentalists by giving them a virtual monopoly of opposition.[13]

Whilst this explains why political Islam has grown within the context of authoritarianism, it does not by itself explain why political Islam potentially leads to Islamic terrorism. The most likely explanation is that on account of the failure to achieve reform within authoritarian countries, the use of violence is seen by some as a legitimate means of achieving their political objectives. Therefore, the very essence of the absence of freedom in authoritarian systems serves to foster the radicalisation of some Islamists into using terrorism as a political tool.

This line of argument is incorporated to a certain extent in Martin Indyk's analysis into why Islamist movements have seen a resurgence coupled with the use of violence as a tool of achieving political objectives.[14] Indyk argues that on account of the frustration of the Islamists in dealing with their own government, opposition towards the United States and other Western powers has been fuelled, as they are seen as the reason why authoritarian regimes have been unwilling to reform. When viewed within the context of US policy towards Persian Gulf security, which specially sought the maintenance of the status quo, there is credibility in the argument which sees the US national interest as having been the barrier to political reform in the first instance. Islamic terrorism against the United States is thus a direct by-product of US policy efforts to promote its national interest in the Middle East.

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[13] Bernard Lewis, The Crisis of Islam (London: Phoenix, 2003) 114.

[14] Martin Indyk, "Back to the Bazaar," Foreign Affairs 82.1 (2002).

2.1 Accommodation and Confrontation

Islamic political movements use highly diverse methods in their attempt to gain political power. Islamists are generally classified in terms of their political behaviour being either moderate or radical, based mainly on whether they use violence as a political tool. However, there are some commonalities which transcend political Islamic movements that should not be overlooked. Esposito highlights the following commonalities:

1. Islam is viewed as being a total way of life;
2. Westernisation is equated with secularism and other values contrary to Islam;
3. Islam is the divine route to success and therefore is superior to capitalism and socialism;
4. The introduction of the *Shari'a* will produce a more moral and just society;
5. It is the duty of all Muslims to embrace the concept of Jihad – to make effort against the odds.[15]

Despite these communalities, Esposito and Voll quite rightly emphasise the distinction between Islamic movements that pursue power in moderate or radical fashions:

> Radical groups which go beyond these principles such as Hezbollah, al-Jihad, Takfir wal Hijra and the Army of God believe in an overthrow of Muslim governments who they see as un-Islamic; that a historical battle exists against the West; Muslims and non-Muslims who do not accept this are infidels.[16]

They highlight that although such radical groups exist, they operate on the fringe of society and are not representative of the majority norms and values of mainstream

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[15] Esposito, "The Persian Gulf War, Islamic Movements and the New World Order," 342-43.

[16] Ibid. 344.

Muslim societies.[17] The mainstream Islamic groups are highlighted as being non-violent:

> [They are] vibrant, multi-faceted movements that will embody the major impact of Islamic revivalism for the foreseeable future... its goal is the transformation of society through the formation of individuals at the grass roots level. Islamic societies work in education (schools, child care centres, youth camps), in religious publishing and broadcasting, in economic projects (Islamic banks, investment houses, insurance companies, local agrarian development) and in social services (hospitals, clinics, legal aid societies).[18]

Following the view that moderate Islamists exist, Esposito affirms the *accommodationist* view that Islam is *compatible* with democracy and should therefore be accommodated into the political spectrum as part of a wider drive towards political pluralism.[19] In any case, Esposito and James Piscatori quite rightly remind us that Islam does indeed have an intrinsic representative element through the consultative mechanism of the *Shura*.[20] Moreover, the involvement in democratic polity is believed to be a moderating mechanism as participation within it forces the moderation of policy for simple political expediency. This is seen as further marginalising radical Islamists.[21]

Graham Fuller takes a comparable position by highlighting that Islamists involvements in democratic political processes would have to be suitably moderated for them to effectively co-operate with other movements and to enable them to fulfil

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[17] John L. Esposito and John O. Voll, "Islam's Democratic Essence," Middle East Quarterly 1.4 (1994): 5-10; John L. Esposito and John O. Voll, "Islam and Democracy: Rejoinder," Middle East Quarterly 1.4 (1994): 74.

[18] Esposito, "The Persian Gulf War, Islamic Movements and the New World Order," 344.

[19] Esposito and Voll, "Islam and Democracy: Rejoinder," 73-75.

[20] John L. Esposito and James P. Piscatori, "Democratization and Islam," Middle East Journal 45.3 (1991): 427-40.

[21] Ibid.

their objective of gaining political support for election to power.[22] Ahmad and Zartman comment that:

> Even if we consider the profession of democracy by the present leadership of Islamist countries as tactical or opportunistic, there is reason to believe that the very process of working within a democratic framework will transform this opportunistic commitment to a more substantive and effective commitment among the next generation of leaders and supporters.[23]

Piscatori goes even further by arguing that it is far from certain that even if political Islamic parties gained power, we would see it "degenerate into the obscurantist beliefs, priestly tyrannies, and sacred violence that secular ideologues anticipate."[24] Therefore, this highlights the prospect that political Islam is indeed compatible with democratic polity.

Overall, the *Accommodationist School* not only stresses the distinction between radical and moderate Islamists, but also highlights the advantages of incorporating moderates into the democratic political process in order to moderate political behaviour. Whilst political Islam is viewed as compatible with democracy and the inclusion of Islamists in a free and pluralistic system as desirable, the *Confrontationlist School* sees an inherent tension existing between democracy and Islam. Bernard Lewis argues that Islamist participation in the democratic process is tactical as elections would effectively result in "one man, one vote, once."[25] He argues it is basically illegitimate for a democracy to effectively vote itself away and, with the democratic election of an Islamic theocracy, that is precisely what would happen. But the reason why Islam is seen as unable to function within a democratic

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[22] Graham Fuller, "Islamism(S) in the Next Century," The Islamism Debate, ed. Martin Kramer (The Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies, Tel Aviv University, 1997) 141-60.

[23] Mumtaz Ahmed and I. William Zartman, "Political Islam: Can It Become a Loyal Opposition," Middle East Policy 5.1 (1997): 72.

[24] James P. Piscatori, "The Turmoil Within: The Struggle for the Future of the Islamic World," Foreign Affairs Editors' Choice: The Middle East Crisis, ed. Gideon Rose (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 2002) 178.

[25] Bernard Lewis, "Islam and Liberal Democracy," Atlantic Monthly 271.2 (1993): 91.

system is taken up by Samuel Huntington as being a direct result of its incompatible culture.[26] Huntington argues that an Islamic theocracy is incompatible with the very notion of fundamental freedoms that underpin liberal democracy.[27] He suggests that this inherent tension may well result in some form of civilization confrontation rather than the traditional state based conflict.

Lewis picks up on the theme of the desirability of an Islamic theocracy by arguing that Islamic governance not only results in the abrogation of fundamental human rights, it also serves to stifle economic and social development.[28] Lewis writes, "[i]n the course of the twentieth century it became abundantly clear in the Middle East and indeed all over the lands of Islam that things had indeed gone badly wrong. Compared with its millennial rival, Christendom, the world of Islam had become poor, weak, and ignorant."[29] But Lewis does not limit his analysis to nation specific Islamist groups, he see international ones, epitomized by al-Qa'ida, as equally undesirable: "For Usama bin Laden, his declaration of war against the United States marks the resumption of the struggle for religious dominance of the world that began in the seventh century."[30] Lewis goes on to conclude that "[i]f the fundamentalists are correct in their calculations and succeed in their war, then a dark future awaits the world, especially the part of it that embraces Islam."[31] Overall, Lewis suggests that the equation of Islam with peaceful rule is a fallacy, and thus political Islam cannot be allowed to reach its logical conclusion of the establishment of an Islamic theocracy governed by the S*hari'a*.

Given this incompatibility and potential threat, Daniel Pipes argues that despite the degree of diversity of all Islamic political movements, they are inherently hostile

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[26] Samuel Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" Foreign Affairs 72.3 (1993): 22-32.

[27] Samuel Huntington, "Religion and the Third Wave," National Interest 24.Summer (1991): 40-41.

[28] Bernard Lewis, What Went Wrong? (London: Phoenix, 2002) 168-78.

[29] Ibid. 168.

[30] Lewis, The Crisis of Islam 139.

[31] Ibid. 140.

and pose a threat to Western civilisation.[32] He identifies Islamism as analogous to other ideological movements such as communism and fascism which are widely considered inimical to Western norms and values.[33] Amos Perlmutter echoes his theme by arguing that Islamism is an "aggressive revolutionary movement as militant and violent as the Bolshevik, Fascist, and Nazi movements of the past." [34] This view is grounded in the argument that underlying commonalties exist amongst all political Islamic movements and that incompatibility can be equated with other competing ideologies.

Martin Kramer continues by drawing our attention to inherent common characteristics which allows us to question if any real distinction exists between radical and moderate Islamic movements.[35] He goes as far to argue that this commonality indicates a unified political ideology, equitable with communism, which threatens the West.[36] He specifically highlights Iran as being at the centre of this monolithic Islamist civilization.

The accommodationist approach, which sees the *Shari'a* as compatible with democratic polity and Islamists involvement in the democratic process resulting in a moderation of behaviour, is firmly rejected by Daniel Brumberg. He echoes Lewis's premise that moderate Islamists are essentially only engaging in the democratic political process for tactical reasons in that they believe it to be the most legitimate and likely way they will achieve power. Such behaviour is seen as tactical as democracy could be subverted once power is gained as the adoption of the *Shari'a*

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[32] Robert H. Pelletreau, et al., "Symposium: Resurgent Islam in the Middle East," Middle East Policy 2.2 (1994).

[33] Daniel Pipes, "There Are No Moderates: Dealing with Fundamentalist Islam," National Interest 41.Fall (1995): 48.

[34] Amos Perlmutter, "Wishful Thinking About Islamic Fundamentalism," Washington Post 19 Jan. 1992, A5.

[35] Martin Kramer, "The Mismeasure of Political Islam," The Islamism Debate, ed. Martin Kramer (The Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies, Tel Aviv University, 1997) 167-72.

[36] Martin Kramer, "Islam Vs. Democracy," Commentary 95.Jan. (1993): 38-39.

will usher in an authoritarian theocracy.[37] Kramer continues with this theme by highlighting that although democracy was promised by Islamists in Iran, candidates are vetted by the Guardian Council in order to see if they meet the requirements set out in the Iranian constitution: "the regime in Tehran thus fails the key test of democracy, for it cannot be voted out of power."[38] He argues that by their very essence Islamic theocracies are expansionist, aggressive and inherently anti-Western. The reason for this stems from the belief that Western culture is perceived as the anti-thesis to Islamic values.[39] Indeed, Kramer argues that by fundamentalist regimes positioning themselves as the bastion against Western culture, they indirectly serve to self-legitimise their presence.

Oliver Roy approaches this issue from a unique perspective by arguing that Islamic polity cannot be an effective and lasting form of governance. He comments that:

> Even if Islamist regimes are authoritarian and coercive, why is there no Islamic totalitarianism? My answer is that there is a contradiction in Islamist ideology. If it does respect the basic idea of the Shari'a, it cannot control the family and has to admit the existence of a private sphere beyond the reach of the state. If it does not respect the Shari'a, then this ideology might be opposed in the very name of Islam... true Shari'a would mean devolution of law from the state to a religious court.[40]

Therefore, Roy argues the position that governance under *Shari'a* law not only has inherent contradictions which make it unworkable along its own ideals, but also that it is incompatible with Western models of liberal democratic polity.

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[37] Daniel Brumberg, "Rhetoric and Strategy: Islamic Movements and Democracy in the Middle East," The Islamism Debate, ed. Martin Kramer (The Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies, Tel Aviv University, 1997) 11-18.

[38] Kramer, "The Mismeasure of Political Islam," 49.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Oliver Roy, "Islamists in Power," The Islamism Debate, ed. Martin Kramer (The Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies, Tel Aviv University, 1997) 82.

Overall, the characteristics of political Islam are a clear matter of contention. It is accepted by scholars and commentators that Islamic political movements do share common characteristics in terms of their goals and values, as well as having diversity in the methods to which they attempt to gain political power. Notable academics such as Esposito, Piscatori and Voll take the position that radical and violent movements are unrepresentative; the majority of Islamic movements are moderate and engage in peaceful participation in the political process. They highlight that such moderate movements should be accommodated in the democratic process as they would necessarily moderate their objectives further for expediency, and would consequently not pose a threat to the democratic framework. Although this view has a great deal of credibility, other commentators such as Kramer and Pipes affirm that no real distinction can be drawn between moderate and radical Islamist movements. They highlight that the difference between moderate/peaceful and violent/radical Islamists is inconsequential as both seek the establishment of a regime based on the principles of the *Shari'a*. They highlight that the *Shari'a* is incompatible with liberal democratic rule, human rights and Western culture. Although an Islamic theocracy would not necessarily equate with extremism, the belief that it would not allow itself to be voted out of power on account of it conflicting with its religious principals makes it inherently incompatible with democratic rule. The net effect of such incompatibility is an overriding tension with the West.

2.2 The Historical Context

The position of the US government towards political Islam began to germinate during the Carter presidency. The Carter administration saw the Islamic *Mujaheddin* in Afghanistan as a geostrategic means of drawing the Soviet Union into a 'Vietnam style' conflict in order to counter the Soviet threat to the Persian Gulf. Indeed, Brzezinski regarded the actual cause of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan as being a direct result of a successful covert US operation to draw them into an invasion. Brzezinski stated:

> According to the official version of history, CIA aid to the Mujaheddin began during 1980, that is to say, after the Soviet

army invaded Afghanistan, 24 Dec 1979. But the reality, secretly guarded until now, is completely otherwise. Indeed, it was July 3, 1979 that President Carter signed the first directive for secret aid to the opponents of the pro-Soviet regime in Kabul. And that very day, I wrote a note to the president in which I explained to him that in my opinion this aid was going to induce a Soviet military intervention.[41]

Brzezinski's analysis of the situation was correct. The US induced invasion marked the onset of a strategic relationship which involved the supply of armaments to Islamists. The significance of this covert US policy was that Afghanistan became the locus of an Islamic guerrilla style insurgency against the Soviet Union, which attracted numerous recruits from across the world. In many respects, it can be described as the beginning of an international *jihad* which is in contrast to the nation specific Islamists who merely oppose their own government. But significantly, the use of the Afghan *Mujaheddin* was a tactical means by which the United States secured wider interests in accordance with the Cold War strategic environment. Although this episode marked the beginnings of US involvement with political Islamic movements, it was a covert strategy and thus not representative of an overarching US policy framework.

The Iranian Revolution of 1979 was, however, the key issue which brought political Islam into the spotlight. Unlike the *Mujaheddin* in Afghanistan which was seen as a tactical asset, the Iranian Revolution was seen as a clear strategic threat to US interests. The revolution was highly significant in that it not only marked a fundamental change in US policy towards Persian Gulf security, it also marked the emergence of political Islam as a credible political force. On a wider level, the Shi'a uprisings in the eastern province of Saudi Arabia in 1979, in addition to the seizure of the Grand Mosque in Mecca by Islamists; underscored that the ramifications of Iran's Islamic Revolution had a wider significance.

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[41] Bill Blum, "The CIA's Intervention in Afghanistan: Interview with Zbigniew Brzezinski," Le Nouvel Observateur 15-21 Jan. 1998, 12/06/03 <http://www.globalresearch.ca/articles/BRZ110A.html>.

Although the United States did have several other encounters with radical Islamists during the 1980s, a comprehensive policy framework does not appear to have been established. It would be more accurate to describe a *perception* of political Islam as having developed at this time: political Islam was almost consistently seen as posing varying degrees of risk.[42] The terrorist bombing of the US marine barracks in Lebanon in 1983 underscored the recognition that radical Islamists posed a threat, but the focus of the Reagan administration generally remained centred on the Cold War strategic environment. Political Islam remained a secondary concern.

It was not until the Algerian Revolution in 1991 that political Islam was seen as holding a potential threat through democratic polity. Unlike the manner in which Khomeini came to power in Iran, Algeria showed that Islamists could gain power through democratic means and thus underscored Bernard Lewis's point that democracy could be used illegitimately: many saw an Islamic theocracy as resulting in the abolition of future elections. The victory by the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) in Algeria's parliamentary elections resulted in a bloody civil when the military intervened to nullify the elections. In many respects, a parallel can be drawn with the 1964 democratic election of the socialist Salvador Allende in Chile: both were legitimate electoral victories but were deemed by the United States as a usurpation of democracy. Nevertheless, the Islamist's democratic victory demonstrated that an Islamic theocracy could occur through democratic means.

But the realisation of the threat posed by political Islam through the ballot box coincided neatly with the end of the Cold War era. To many writers, Islamism became the ideological successor to communism. But in terms of US foreign policy, the Algerian scenario represented a clear threat to US interests within the Middle East. Bush's Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, Edward Djerejian, stated that "a coherent policy framework towards Islam has become a compelling need as foreign policy challenges erupt involving an 'arc of crisis' extending from

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[42] Paul R. Pillar, Terrorism and US Foreign Policy (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2001) 41-72; Richard A. Clarke, Against All Enemies: Inside America's War on Terror (New York: Free Press, 2004) 35-72.

the Balkans, the Caucasus, North Africa, the Middle East, and Central and South Africa."[43] Given the end of the Cold War and the realisation from the causes of Algerian civil war that US interests on a wider level were potentially at risk from political Islam, a coherent policy position was thus seen as warranted.

The formation of a policy framework was unveiled by Djerejian in June 1992. In his 'Meridian House Declaration,' Djerejian made clear that despite the end of the Cold War, Islam was not seen as a monolithic threat to the United States. Djerejian remarked that "the US Government does not view Islam as the next 'ism' confronting the West or threatening world peace. That is an overly simplistic response to a complex reality."[44] But whilst the diversity amongst political Islamic movements was recognised and accepted as part of the political process, Djerejian outlined that certain Islamist groups were not supported by the United States: "we are suspect of those who would use the democratic process to come to power, only to destroy that very process in order to retain power and political dominance. While we believe in the principle of 'one person, one vote,' we do not support 'one person, one vote, one time.'"[45]

Therefore, the policy formulation saw a clear distinction between moderate and radical Islamist groups. Radical Islamist groups were demarcated as having the following characteristics:

1. Practice terrorism, oppress minorities, preach intolerance, or violate internationally accepted standards of conduct regarding human rights;
2. Insensitive to the need for political pluralism;
3. Cloak their message in another brand of authoritarianism;
4. Substitute religious and political confrontation for constructive engagement with the rest of the world;

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[43] Qtd. In: Pinto, Political Islam and the United States 206.

[44] Edward Djerejian, "The US and the Middle East in a Changing World," Address at Meridian House International, Washington, D.C.: GPO, 2 Jun. 1992. 8pp. 04/05/02 <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/dispatch/1992/html/Dispatchv3no23.html>.

[45] Ibid.

5. Do not share our commitment to peaceful resolution of conflict, especially the Arab-Israeli conflict; and
6. With those who would pursue their goals through repression or violence.[46]

In contrast, moderate Islamist groups were seen as seeking a gradual reform and affirmation of Islamic ideals on their given country. Importantly, these Islamic ideals were viewed as *compatible with democratic rule*. Djerejian commented that:

> In countries throughout the Middle East and North Africa, we thus see [moderate] groups or movements seeking to reform their societies in keeping with Islamic ideals. There is considerable diversity in how these ideals are expressed. We detect no monolithic or coordinated international effort behind these movements. What we do see are believers living in different countries placing renewed emphasis on Islamic principles and governments accommodating Islamist political activity to varying degrees and in different ways.[47]

The key point about this policy formulation was that it demonstrates a synthesis of both the accommodationist and confrontationlist schools of thought: both were applied respectively to whether the Islamist group was defined by the United States as moderate or radical. Nevertheless, this definition was fluid and applied on a case-by-case approach. Therefore, whilst it was clear that the United States opposed extremism which manifested itself through violence, ambiguity remained as to whether the United States "was genuinely committed to the principle of free elections in a case in which political Islamists could win power."[48] Although the Meridian House address had its limitations, it was also politically helpful. Maria do Céu Pinto comments that:

> On the one hand [Djerejian's formulation] enabled Washington to oppose any Islamic group that espoused violence and challenged

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[46] Edward Djerejian, "The US and the Middle East in a Changing World,"

[47] Ibid.

[48] Fawaz A. Gerges, America and Political Islam: Clash of Cultures or Clash of Interests? (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) 83.

> moderate pro-Western regimes such as Egypt and Saudi Arabia. On the other it made it possible to resist groups opposed to the peace process and anti-American Islamic regimes in power – such as Sudan and Iran – which met his criteria of being violent, intolerant and coercive. [49]

In essence, Djerejian's formulation rested on three distinct tiers: moderate Islamists which were compatible with US foreign policy interests and were a non-issue; and extremist Islamists, which could both be *compatible* and *incompatible* with US foreign policy interests. That is to say, analytically speaking, US policy towards extremists Islamists was dependent not on whether violence was used, but who it was being used against. On the other hand, a rejection of violence as a political means was clearly present, thus ruling out a condoning of extremism. From this, it appears that there was a degree of ambiguity and lack of coherence in US policy statements which encompassed political Islamic movements.

Overall, Fawaz Gerges is correct to argue that the real importance of the Meridian House Declaration was that it left a contextual framework for the Clinton administration.[50] It interpreted political Islam very broadly and thus was far from a comprehensive policy framework. But it did stress two important themes: firstly, that a clear dichotomy exists, separating both moderate from extremist Islamism; and secondly, extremist Islamism can be identified not only by its willingness to use violence as a political tool, but also from its wider political agenda which is seen as incompatible with democracy. Thus the point of contention for this framework was whether moderate Islamists can be viewed as compatible with democratic rule despite the differentiation from extremist groups.

Although it was an important framework, Gerges argues that the George H.W. Bush administration did not translate this position into policy as it conflicted with Persian Gulf security: the strategic objective of maintaining security through supporting the status quo did not correspond with the competing objective of political reform and

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[49] Pinto, Political Islam and the United States 207.

[50] Gerges, America and Political Islam 85.

accommodation. Therefore, when US policy towards political Islam under the Bush administration is put into context, it amounted to very little operationally. Indeed, its flexibility and lack of clarity underscored it as a *secondary foreign policy issue* to wider US policy interests in the Middle East.

3.0 UNITED STATES POLICY POSITION TOWARDS POLITICAL ISLAM 1993-2001

With the onset of the Clinton administration in 1993, a key issue which appeared to be facing US foreign policy towards political Islam was how to maintain the fine balance between accommodation and confrontation, whilst not allowing US policy to be charged with being anti-Islam per se. The Bush administration had been vocal in the Meridian House Declaration that it neither saw Islam as a threat nor extremist Islamists as representative of the Islamic faith. By maintaining the Bush administration's position of stressing that the United States did not equate extremist political Islam with the Islamic faith, it underscored the dichotomy and legitimised a confrontationist approach against extremism. In other words, by stressing that radical Islamism was nothing to do with the Islamic religion, the United States could reject accusations that it was adopting a confrontationist strategy towards political Islam. While moderate political Islam was essentially a non issue, extremist Islamism was seen to demand a policy response as it was equated with terrorism.

Throughout Clinton's two terms of office, it is striking that it was consistent in the manner in which extremist Islamism was portrayed: policy pronouncements carefully and consistently dispelled any linkage between the Islamic faith and terrorism, in addition to rejecting the notion that political Islam was a successor to communism. Clinton personally affirmed these points during his visit to Indonesia in November 1994. He commented, "[I] say to the American people and the West generally that even though we have had problems with terrorism coming out of the Middle East, it is not inherently related to Islam – not to the religion, not to the culture."[51] On a similar note, Clinton remarked in an address to the Jordanian parliament in October

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[51] Thomas W. Lippman, "To Islam, an Olive Branch," Washington Post 28 Dec. 1994, A3.

1994, "[that] America refuses to accept that our civilizations must collide... [w]e respect Islam."[52]

Robert Pelletreau succeeded Djerejian as Assistant Secretary of State, and maintained what appeared *analytically* to be the three-tier approach towards political Islam:

> In the foreign affairs community, we often use the term "political Islam" to refer to the movements and groups within the broader fundamentalist revival with a specific political agenda. "Islamists" are Muslims with political goals. We view these terms as analytical, not normative. They do not refer to phenomena that are necessarily sinister: there are many legitimate, socially responsible Muslim groups with political goals. However, there are also Islamists who operate outside the law. Groups or individuals who operate outside the law—who espouse violence to achieve their aims—are properly called extremists.[53]

Martin Kramer sees this as a three-tiered approach as it demonstrates a clear analytical inconsistency in US foreign policy: it arguably allowed the United States to condone extremism, which can manifest itself in the form of terrorism, as legitimate, providing the United States agrees with its objectives.[54] Nevertheless, this is an academic point of contention and is in direct contrast to the longstanding official position of the US government that it does not condone or support terrorism. In September 1995, Pelletreau underscored this point by stating that "I have trouble defining exactly where one category starts and another stops... [we] ought not color every party or group or government the same way, nor should we simplistically

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[52] William J. Clinton, "Speech by President to the Jordianian Parliament," Remarks by the President to the Jordianian Parliament, Amman: GPO, 26 Aug. 1993. 2pp. 11/10/04 <http://www.clintonfoundation.org/legacy/102694-speech-by-president-to-jordanian-parliament.htm>.

[53] Robert H. Pelletreau, "Symposium: Resurgent Islam in the Middle East," Middle East Policy Fall (1994): 2.

[54] Martin Kramer, "Coming to Terms: Fundamentalists or Islamists?" Middle East Quarterly 10.2 (2003): 7.

condemn them all as anti-Western."[55] He also stated that "[w]e must deal with fundamentalist Islam in a variety of contexts – how it impacts on issues of importance to the United States, such as the peace process, or combating terrorism, or encouraging open markets or political pluralism or respect for human rights. The starting point is our own objectives, not political Islam as such."[56] As a result of a lack of clarity and coherence in distinguishing moderate from extremist groups, even amongst those that use violence, US policy pronouncements regarding political Islam can be interpreted as being both contradictory and ambiguous.

Therefore, the Unites States' position on extremist political Islam was clearly confrontational providing it was commensurate with US policy objectives. Indeed, although we know the Clinton administration's *position* towards both moderate and extremist political Islam, it is not part of a specific stated policy towards Islam, or indeed politicised Islam. Therefore, political Islam mainly became an issue for the United States when it used terrorism as a means of achieving its political objectives, and thus falls under the rubric of US counterterrorism policy. Strictly speaking, it is inaccurate to view the Clinton administration as having had a policy towards Islam. This point was underlined by the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Robert Neumann: "[l]et me be clear and emphatic: the United States of America does not and should not have a political policy towards Islam."[57]

This point underscores the argument that if the United States did not have a specific policy towards political Islam, and extremist Islamism was not seen as representative of the Islamic faith, the central issues are: firstly, the position of the United States towards moderate political Islam vis-à-vis democracy; and secondly, the nature of US counterterrorism policy towards extremist political Islam. The importance of the compatibility of moderate political Islam with democracy is that it demonstrates whether the United States supports moderate political Islamic movements in a democratic polity. With regard to counterterrorism, this highlights the more operational sphere of US policy towards extremist political Islamic movements.

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[55] Daniel Pipes and Patrick Clawson, "Robert H. Pelletreau Jr.: Not Every Fundamentalist Is a Terrorist," Middle East Quarterly 2.3 (1995): 7.

[56] Pipes and Clawson, "Robert H. Pelletreau Jr.: Not Every Fundamentalist Is a Terrorist," 7.

[57] Qtd. in: Satloff, US Policy Towards Islamism: A Theoretical and Operational Overview 8.

3.1 Islam and Democracy

The position of the United States towards political Islam's compatibility with democracy was chequered by the events in Algeria. As has already been stated, the George H. W. Bush administration did not view the election of the Algerian Salvation Front (FIS) as legitimate as it believed democracy could not vote itself out of existence. This was a view which was upheld throughout the Clinton presidency.

Pelletreau's ambiguous distinction of moderate from extremist Islamists is not helpful. The case-by-case approach which recognises overlapping criterion of the two definitions does not allow for a clear analytical interpretation of whether US foreign policy saw Islam as inherently compatible with democratic rule. Clinton's national security advisor, Anthony Lake, saw Islamic extremism as separate from the Islamic faith, but also as posing a threat to freedom itself. Lake commented in May 1994 that "[w]hat distinguishes Islamic extremism from other forms of extremism is not terrorism, but the naked pursuit of political power."[58] Lake's statement is important in that it expanded on the Meridian House Declaration by showing that extremism had a dual dimension of its propensity for the use of violence, in addition to its underlying political objectives. Previous declarations had basically confined extremism to the sole definition of whether it resorted to violence.

Lake's formulation raises more questions than it answers. It is questionable to what extent moderate or extremist Islamists can be separated if they both desire the establishment of an Islamic theocracy as their strategic objective. In terms of whether there are differential forms of an Islamic theocracy, which would more or less acceptable to the United States, would simply not a viable means of analytically assessing US policy towards political Islam.

In contrast, Pelletreau confined the definition of extremist Islamists as being centred on acts rather than objectives.[59] Pelletreau stated in May 1994 that Islamists "who

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[58] Anthony Lake, "Conceptualizing US Strategy in the Middle East," Address to the Soref Symposium, Washington, D.C.: Wasington Institute for Near East Policy, 17 May 1994. 4pp. 19/04/02 <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/pubs/soref/lake.htm>.

[59] Satloff, US Policy Towards Islamism 10.

operate outside the law"[60] could be classified as extremists. This legalistic formulation, made within days of Lake's objective based definition, indicates a lack of clarity in US policy towards defining extremism. Of course, the US designation of Hezbollah in 1997 as an extremist group demonstrated that this was a flawed approach.[61] Nonetheless, it does underscore the point that analytically, there was inconsistency in whether the United States interpreted political Islam as a threat based on its *actions* or its *strategic objectives*.

By 1996, Pelletreau's definition of Islamism had incorporated the issue of extremist's objectives in addition to their actions. Pelletreau commented that:

> Extremists around the world use whatever resources they have to achieve their goals. In the Middle East, religious rhetoric can be made into one of those resources. A fatwa or incitement to violence can be just as dangerous as bombs and bullets. The impulse that motivates the Izz al-Din al-Qassam brigades of Hamas, the Algerian Armed Islamic Group (or GIA) and the Iranian Revolutionary Guards is not Islamic piety, but a mixture of revenge, fanaticism and pursuit of political power.[62]

The classification of extremists as using whatever means available to them in order to achieve their objectives, suggests that the goal of an Islamic theocracy is viewed as synonymous with extremism and contrary to US interests. Indeed, this indicates the distinction between moderate and extremist Islamists was not as clear as Pelletreau's previous comments would have us believe. From this, one could argue that, at the very least, the United States viewed even moderate political Islam with a degree of scepticism because of its potential to usurp democracy in the event of the establishment of an Islamic theocracy. However, when viewed within the context of previous policy statements, there was a clear lack of clarity as to whether the United States viewed moderate Islamists objectives as being in favour of US interests.

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[60] Satloff, US Policy Towards Islamism 10.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Robert H. Pelletreau, "Dealing with the Muslim Politics of the Middle East," Address to the Council on Foreign Relations, New York: GPO, 8 May 1996. 7pp. 15/09/02 <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/bureaus/nea/960508PelletreauMuslim.html>.

Compounding this uncertainty, in June 1998 Robert Neumann seemingly reverted to the distinction of actions signifying the classification of an Islamist group. But Neumann went further than previous administration statements as he rejected the school of thought which advocated the United States should have a policy towards Islamist groups that use democracy as a tactical means of achieving their incompatible strategic objective of an Islamic theocracy. He rejected the confrontation of moderate Islamists groups as it was seen as incompatible with the underlying Jeffersonian tenants of US foreign policy.[63] Therefore, he indicated that their strategic objective was flawed but the United States would did not view their activities as illegitimate.

When US policy statements towards the objectives of Islamists and its compatibility with democratic rule is examined since the onset of the Clinton presidency, there appears to be a lack of consistency or clarity, and it has at times been contradictory. There have, however, been some consistencies that can be highlighted during the time period 1993-2001. The most noteworthy consistency has been US opposition to the use of violence as a political tool. Although the flexible nature of US policy has allowed for an analytical criticism of whether this is true, at an operational level, there is good reason to believe that this has been applied in practice. The key issue is, however, whether the United States views an Islamic theocracy as commensurate with democracy, and therefore raises the issue of the extent to which moderate and extremist Islamists can be equated given that they seemingly seek the shared goal of an Islamic theocracy. At a base level, US policy was inherently contradictory as it saw moderate Islamists' participation in the democratic process as legitimate, but their end game objective as illegitimate. The indication is that Islamists' political participation is fine, providing they only remain on the fringes of democratic polity and thus do not usurp democracy in favour of an Islamic theocracy.

As the general indication is that the United States favoured a widening of the political system in Middle Eastern authoritarian countries and the inclusion of moderate Islamists, the key issue is how this equated within the wider context of US

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[63] Walter Russell Mead, Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World (New York: Knopf, 2001) 100-73.

policy. On a regional level within the Persian Gulf, the security of the region to safeguard US interests rested on the containment of Iran and Iraq as a means of ensuring the status quo. The key interest was thus to ensure that the security of the oil producing GCC countries was ensured in order to safeguard US economic interests. Political reform and the inclusion of Islamists in the political process posed risks for the stability and security of these countries. Therefore, US interests within the Persian Gulf was widely viewed as being potentially jeopardised by the US position towards moderate Islamist groups.

On an international level, the key pillar of the Clinton administration was for the expansion of free markets and democracy. Although this was in fitting with US policy towards political Islam, it contrasted with US policy towards the Persian Gulf. Whilst there was a clear policy quagmire, the Clinton administration cannot be regarded as having pressed Middle Eastern countries to implement substantive reform. Although there were clear rhetorical statements calling for this, it amounted to very little. This indicates that Clinton's policy was contradictory in that it called for a widening of political participation, but US interests towards Persian Gulf security were its primary concern. Political Islam and furthering its inclusion in democratic polity can thus be interpreted as a secondary concern.

3.2 International Terrorism

With the onset of the Clinton administration in 1993, terrorism was, according to Richard Clarke, "far down on the new team's priority list."[64] The Clinton administration had come to power with its global foreign policy objectives premised on the expansion of democracy and free markets: counterterrorism was undoubtedly a key issue but, as with the previous Bush White House, it was not viewed as an immanent threat. The significance of terrorism with regard to political Islam is simply that extremist Islamism can manifest itself in what the United States defines as terrorism: "premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by sub-national groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to

[64] Clarke, Against All Enemies 73.

influence an audience."[65] International Islamic terrorism is therefore an important contextual issue in allowing for an understanding of US foreign policy towards extremist political Islamic movements and is of direct relevance to the grand strategic era of the War on Terror.

The January 1993 bombing of the World Trade Centre in New York was the first high profile Islamic terrorist attack within the United States. The arrest of Omar Abdel Rahman, a blind Egyptian cleric, uncovered what was to turn out to be an al-Qa'ida terrorist cell with direct links to Khalid Sheikh Mohamad and Ramzi Yousef. Investigations in the cleric's apartment in New York uncovered references to the Afghan Services Bureau (*Mahktab al Kiddimah*). The Afghan Services Bureau, better known as al-Qa'ida, was a form of international political Islam that had developed in the wake of the Soviet defeat in Afghanistan, and was headed by Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri.

Unlike indigenous extremist political Islamic movements operating within Middle Eastern countries, al-Qa'ida's *modus operandi* stems directly from the circumstances surrounding the Cold War guerrilla style insurgency within Afghanistan. The decision by the United States to instigate a Soviet invasion coupled with its support for the Afghan *Mujaheddin*, served both the strategic purpose of embroiling the Soviet Union in a Vietnam style conflict, and as a locus point attracting numerous recruits from across the Muslim world. The CIA purchased armaments from China and Egypt using Saudi and US funds in order to back the insurgency.[66] It was in essence the Vietnam conflict but with role reversal.

Unlike other indigenous nation specific political Islamic groups, the Afghan *Mujaheddin* was directed against a foreign power. Significantly, the total number of *Mujaheddin* fighters has been estimated to range from 175,000 to 250,000 from over 40 countries.[67] But with the withdrawal of the Soviet Union, it was seen as a

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[65] United States, CIA, The War on Terrorism: Frequently Asked Questions, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 2005) 2pp. 20/11/02 <http://www.cia.gov/terrorism/faqs.html>.

[66] Steve Coll, "CIA in Afghanistan: In CIA's Covert War, Where to Draw the Line Was Key," Washington Post 20 Jul. 1992, A3.

[67] Mark Urban, War in Afghanistan (London: Macmillan, 1988) 244-45.

religious victory by the *Mujaheddin.* That is to say, the withdrawal of the Soviet Union reinforced the conviction that their insurgency had defeated a superpower: but crucially, it created a strategic vacuum. Peter Bergen quite rightly comments that:

> The victory against communism in Afghanistan was an intoxicating moral victory: a superpower had been defeated in the name of Allah. It was an important lesson for the Afghan Arabs and for bin Laden himself, who applied it to the next holy war – against the United States.[68]

The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 prompted the deployment of US forces onto the Arabian Peninsula to defend Saudi Arabia from potential Iraqi invasion, and ultimately as a launch-pad for a counter-invasion of Kuwait to liberate it from Iraq under a UN mandate. This was the key event which seemingly resulted in the United States being viewed by bin Laden and his affiliates as the immediate successor to the Soviet Union. Within the context of their extremist Wahabbi interpretation of Islam, the presence of a non-Islamic force on the Arabian Peninsula was a key trigger given the location of the two holy shrines in Mecca and Medina. Bernard Lewis reminds us, however, that bin Laden's reasoning was highly complex: "[t]he catalog of American offences they cite is long and detailed, beginning with the conquest, colonization, and settlement – emotive words – of the New World and continuing to the present day."[69] Indeed, bin Laden saw the "New World Order", first outlined by George H. W. Bush to a joint session of Congress on 11 September 1990, as symbolic of the onset of a new phase in the United States' relations with the world, and the Islamic world in particular.[70] Indeed, the specific date of the 9/11 attacks some eleven years later was probably symbolic of this. In an interview with Peter Arnett in 1997, Bin Laden stated:

> After the collapse of the Soviet Union in which the US has no mentionable role, but rather the credit goes to God, Praise and Glory

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[68] Peter Bergen, Holy War Inc.: Inside the Secret World of Osama Bin Laden (London: Phoenix, 2002) 78.

[69] Lewis, The Crisis of Islam 134.

[70] George H. W. Bush, "Toward a New World Order," Address before a joint session of Congress, Washington, D.C.: GPO, 11 Sept. 1990. 27pp. 15/06/04 <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/erc/briefing/dispatch/1990/html/Dispatchv1no03.html>.

> be to Him, and the Mujahidin in Afghanistan, this collapse made the US more haughty and arrogant and it has started to look at itself as a Master of this world and established what it calls the *new world order*.[71]

With bin Laden locating himself in Sudan and later in Afghanistan, the establishment of a loose network of former Mujaheddin fighters known as al-Qa'ida had emerged. Al-Qa'ida is by no means a monolithic organisation: it is a loosely organised *international* political Islamic organisation which is represented across the world. The informal nature of al-Qa'ida is what provided it with its operational effectiveness, as infiltration by governmental intelligence agencies was highly difficult. For US foreign policy, at the onset of the Clinton administration the sphere of political Islam was very much seen under the guise of indigenous Islamist groups, but al-Qa'ida was a different threat altogether as its objectives encompassed *both* localised nation specific issues, in addition to wider goals which saw a need for the United States to be directly attacked.

Although al-Qa'ida was implicated in the 1993 World Trade Centre bombing and the subsequent debacle in Somalia, it was not initially clear to the Clinton administration what they were facing.[72] The focus of the Clinton administration towards international terrorism was arguably *state centric*. Iran, Sudan and Syria were the focus of the initial efforts by the Clinton administration towards international terrorism.[73] Indeed, Iranian backed Saudi Hezbollah was reported by the US government as being behind the attack at al-Khobar in Saudi Arabia, which killed nineteen US military personal in 1996. During the first Clinton administration, the threat from international terrorism was seen as squarely coming from state sponsored terrorism. Non-state international terrorist groups were still recognised as a real threat, but were viewed as less operationally effective in contrast to state sponsored terrorist groups. Although the trial of the World Trade Centre bomber, Omar Abdel

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[71] Peter Arnett, "March 1997 Interview with Osama Bin Laden," CNN Online March 2001, 12/07/04 <http://news.findlaw.com/hdocs/docs/binladen/binladenintvw-cnn.pdf>. Emphasis added.

[72] Clarke, Against All Enemies 79.

[73] Ibid. 101-32.

Rahman, was showing the first signs that the United States faced a threat from international non-state political Islam, and that bin Laden was *potentially* involved in financing transnational terrorist operations,[74] the focus of US counterterrorism strategy was generally focused on state actors. Indeed, it appears that much of the intelligence the United States was receiving about al-Qa'ida was unsubstantiated at this point.

The recognition by the CIA that the United States was facing a loosely organised international terrorist network, headed by bin Laden, occurred in the summer of 1995.[75] The steady flow of intelligence underlined that the United States was facing a threat from a previously unheard of organisation known as al-Qa'ida which was headed by bin Laden. But by 1998, al-Qa'ida became a more comprehensive organisation as it reportedly 'merged' with Egyptian Islamic Jihad, headed by Ayman Zawahiri. Whilst bin Laden remained the public figurehead of al-Qa'ida, it has been widely speculated that Zawahiri acted in an equal capacity to bin Laden. Around the same time, bin Laden issued a *fatwa* which called upon Muslims to target the United States. Although al-Qa'ida had attacked the United States before, this was the rhetorical declaration of war. The true scale of the threat facing the United States from al-Qa'ida surfaced shortly afterwards. In August 1998, the US embassies in Tanzania and Kenya were simultaneously attacked causing over two hundred and fifty fatalities and injuries to over five thousand. The Clinton administration responded with targeted air strikes in Afghanistan after receiving *actionable intelligence* about an al-Qa'ida leadership meeting. This, however, amounted to very little and did not succeed in its objective of killing al-Qa'ida's leadership.

The bombings of the US embassies galvanised the administration's view that al-Qa'ida posed a clear and present danger to the United States. Al-Qaida had steadily evolved and the embassy bombing underscored its operational ability. Crucially, this was the juncture at which the Clinton administration actually sanctioned the use of lethal force against bin Laden and thus is the point when bin Laden was viewed as an immanent threat rather than a fugitive from the law requiring trial and imprisonment.

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[74] Clarke, Against All Enemies 147.

[75] Ibid., 148.

But politically speaking, an unequivocal response by the Clinton White House was a necessity given the scale of the attack. The response of the Clinton administration was to implement several new counterterrorist policies and increase funding towards homeland security programmes; these issues ultimately fall outside the scope of this thesis. Nevertheless, the key point is that, despite the Clinton administration having taken the al-Qa'ida threat very seriously and implemented several counterterrorist measurers, its policy response was *reactive* and thus not geared towards combating the perceived *root causes* of al-Qa'ida's support base. As has already been discussed, the root causes of the support base of political Islamic movements are several but, most importantly, it is the structural barriers to political reform in authoritarian countries which make political Islam an attractive and viable means of expressing discontent and striving for political objectives. The priority of the Clinton presidency towards the Persian Gulf remained throughout geared towards ensuring the security of the region through upholding the status quo. Therefore, although the Clinton administration implemented a variety of counterterrorism measurers, these were *reactive* based policies to al-Qa'ida's operational network and little attention was focused on combating the *causes* of its support base.[76]

This allows us to conclude that Clinton's policy towards international Islamic inspired terrorism was, although an issue of great importance, a secondary issue to Persian Gulf security. Of course, there is the argument that the Clinton administration may not have seen the structural barriers as the most effective means of combating the base support level of al-Qa'ida; but when US policy pronouncements toward political Islam are taken into account, it is seems that the administration did indeed see the political structure of authoritarian countries as being the main cause of political Islam's support base. Therefore, Clinton's policy towards international Islamic extremism was geared towards an operational response and, as with its policy towards indigenous nation-specific political Islam, pressing for substantive political reforms in authoritarian countries was not viewed as compatible with the key interest of preserving Persian Gulf security.

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[76] For further details on US counterterrorism policy see: David Tucker, "Combating International Terrorism," The Terrorism Treat and US Governmental Response: Operational and Organisational Factors, eds. James M. Smith and William C. Thomas (Colorado: USAF Institute for National Security Studies, 2001) 129-54.

With the onset of the George W. Bush administration, it appears that this policy trajectory was continued. In the initial months of the new administration, a comprehensive policy review was conducted. As a result, there was no substantive change in operational US foreign policy relating to political Islam. According to Clarke, this policy review was slow and continued up until the attacks of 11 September 2001. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that the findings of the Deputies' level policy review showed that a *more comprehensive non-state centric solution* was agreed for the National Security Presidential Directive on Terrorism. Indeed, it seems that this stemmed not only from the realisation that the Clinton administration had been overly state-centric and the nature of al-Qa'ida warranted a change of tactics, but also President Bush wanted to eliminate al-Qa'ida rather than merely "swatting flies."[77] Although the indication is that prior to the 9/11 attacks the Bush administration was planning a more vigorous counterterrorism policy, the available evidence does not indicate that this was anything more than an escalation of Clinton's reactive based policy. There is no indication that the Bush administration was going to alter its policy towards Persian Gulf security in order to usher in a reformist agenda in order to combat the *root causes* of extremist political Islam and international terrorism.

There were some bureaucratic changes however, which are worthy of note. Most importantly, according to Richard Clarke, the former National Coordinator for Security and Counterterrorism, the newly incumbent Bush administration did not grasp the complexity of the terrorist threat.[78] Clarke argues that Condoleezza Rice saw the National Security Council as a "foreign policy coordination mechanism and not some place where issues such as terrorism in the US"[79] should be addressed, and thus was arguably viewing terrorism as a secondary national security concern. Moreover, Clarke implies that Rice's decision to downgrade his position of National Coordinator for Security and Counterterrorism from Cabinet level as further evidence of the priority to which the Bush administration afforded the threat from

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[77] Clarke, Against All Enemies 235.

[78] Ibid. 229-32.

[79] Ibid. 230.

terrorism. Nevertheless, although Clarke is right to highlight this bureaucratic restructuring, it does not analytically demonstrate that the Bush administration had adopted, or was indeed planning, a different foreign policy *strategy* towards terrorism, or saw terrorism in general as any less of a threat.

3.3 Summary Assessment

From the above assessment of US policy towards political Islam, although the United States did not have a policy towards the Islamic faith, it has held a position on political movements which were grounded in Islam. Whilst the United States has a long-held position that it opposes violent extremism as a means of achieving political objectives, the policy pronouncements of the Clinton administration has analytically brought this into question. Indeed, there were indications that the United States condoned the use of violence if it saw the objectives behind the attack as legitimate. Nevertheless, it seems reasonable to conclude that although there is an analytical inconsistency in US policy during the time period 1993-2001, the United States was at an *operational level* opposed to the use of violence for achieving political objectives.

The key issue with regard to political Islam was, however, whether the moderate Islamist parties should be viewed as compatible with democratic rule. The academic backdrop to this question has been shown to be highly contentious. Nevertheless, in terms of US foreign policy, the policy pronouncements on this subject during the Clinton era does seem to suggest inconsistency and a lack of clarity. Regardless of such, the key issue was that although the participation of Islamists in democratic polity was, more often than not, seen as legitimate; the notion of an Islamist party achieving its strategic objective of an Islamic theocracy was not. In many respects, US foreign policy in the time period 1993-2001 appears to have held the position, most notably advocated by Bernard Lewis, that the establishment of an Islamic theocracy would run contrary to the very basis of democratic rule. In effect, the risk of democracy voting itself out of existence was not only seen as an illegitimate response but also a potential outcome from an Islamist electoral victory.

Whilst this was an ongoing inconsistency, and a key long-standing debate in US foreign policy, the spectre of political Islam manifesting itself through international terrorism was not treated as seriously until Clinton's second term of office. With US policy towards political Islam being mainly state-centric, it appears that the shift away from this categorisation in dealing with al-Qa'ida only began to occur following the onset of the Bush administration and the comprehensive policy review which was conducted. Nonetheless, the key point was that in terms of US counterterrorism strategy towards al-Qa'ida, US policy was firmly *reactive based.* Therefore, the root causes of extremist political Islam, which were identified by the Clinton administration, were not countered. Specifically speaking, US policy towards Persian Gulf Security was the administration's primary concern and thus the need to forcefully press for substantive reform in order to counter the root causes of extremism were not implemented.

4.0 UNITED STATES POLICY POSITION TOWARDS POLITICAL ISLAM POST-9/11

Following the devastating attacks of 9/11 on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon, the foreign policy priorities of the Bush administration underwent a comprehensive revision. The shock and horror of the attacks on US society was overwhelming, and was akin to the reaction of the surprise Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour. But 9/11 was arguably more telling: it was an attack against the symbols of American military and economic power and resulted in a significant loss of civilian life, rather than military personnel as occurred in Pearl Harbour. A foreign policy response of one form or another was inevitable given the domestic political outcry.

The unfolding of the Bush administration's neoconservative foreign policy response was that a new grand strategic era in US foreign policy occurred. As with the Cold War era, the White House defined an overarching external threat to the national security of the United States and its allies. Unlike the communist threat which was seen in purely state centric terms, international Islamic terrorism was seen as a by-product of the socio-political conditions present within particular countries, most notably the Islamic countries of the Middle East, which can be described as

undemocratic in character. As with the Clinton administration, Bush's interpretation accepted the formulation, advocated by Bernard Lewis, that the root cause of political Islam and radical international Islamic terrorism was the structural conditions present within authoritarian countries. As has already been discussed, it is the perpetuation of authoritarian rule in Middle Eastern countries that ultimately results a furthering of the support base of radical Islamists: both nation-specific and international.

US policy towards combating the radical manifestation of political Islam in the time period 1993-2001 was subservient to US strategy towards the Persian Gulf arena. Specifically, although the Clinton administration recognised that democratisation and the spread of freedom were necessary remedies against radical political Islam, the US strategy of promoting a balance of power through maintaining the status quo was its primary foreign policy concern. The significance of the Bush administration's policy response to the attacks of 9/11 was that these priorities became reversed: combating the *root causes* of radical Islamism became a priority over *immediate* US interests in the Persian Gulf arena. Indeed, through combating the root causes of radical political Islam, US national security was seen to be enhanced. Nonetheless, as has already been discussed, the Bush administration saw the widespread adoption of democracy and freedom throughout the Middle East as actually catering for Persian Gulf security concerns, but it was recognised that this transition would result in a period of potential insecurity.

The Bush administration's invasion of Afghanistan in October 2001 reflected this grand strategic vision in addition to immediate operational concerns: the ousting of the Taliban was serving the purpose of denying sanctuary and a formal base of operations for al-Qa'ida. But within Bush's strategic framework, the implementation of democracy and freedom to Afghanistan served the overarching goal of safeguarding US national security through combating what it defined as the root causes of radical Islamism. The invasion of Iraq in March 2003 again served the same strategic objective. But with Iraq, it was a much more important policy as it was seen as the means by which democracy and freedom could be promoted throughout Middle East and the Persian Gulf countries in particular. Indeed, the Iraq invasion underscores the point that US policy towards political Islam had risen to

become a foreign policy priority, and the altered definition of Persian Gulf security was in fitting with this. Therefore, unlike the Clinton administration where there was a clear inconsistency in the two policy agendas, Bush's post-9/11 policies were strategically compatible.

With the overall grand strategy dictating the supremacy of both Jeffersonian and Wilsonian guides to foreign policy, the key analytical question about Bush's policy was whether moderate political Islam was viewed as compatible with democracy. Anoush Ehteshami is correct to ask whether the Bush administration "would fathom the emergence of Islamist-leaning governments across the Arab world?"[80] According to Bush, however, Islam and democracy are indeed compatible:

> It should be clear to all that Islam – the faith of one-fifth of humanity – is consistent with democratic rule. Democratic progress is found in many predominantly Muslim countries – in Turkey and Indonesia, and Senegal and Albania, Niger and Sierra Leone. Muslim men and women are good citizens of India and South Africa, of the nations of Western Europe, and of the United States of America. More than half of all the Muslims in the world live in freedom under democratically constituted governments. They succeed in democratic societies, not in spite of their faith, but because of it. A religion that demands individual moral accountability, and encourages the encounter of the individual with God, is fully compatible with the rights and responsibilities of self-government.[81]

Bush's comments were echoed by Condoleezza Rice who stated that "the Islamic faith and striving for democracy and human rights are not only fully compatible, they

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[80] Anoushiravan Ehteshami, "The Delicate State of Muslim Democracy," Global Agenda 2004: 216.

[81] George W. Bush, "President Bush Discusses Freedom in Iraq and Middle East," Remarks by the President at the 20th Anniversary of the National Endowment for Democracy, Washington, D.C.: GPO, 6 Nov. 2003. 6pp. 15/09/04 <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/11/20031106-2.html>.

are mutually reinforcing."[82] Richard Armitage reinforced this view by stating that "I think a democratic election held in the Muslim world will be a further sign that there's nothing antithetical about democracy and the great religion of Islam."[83]

Although from the above statements one can conclude that the Bush administration shared the Clintonian position that moderate Islamic parties' participation in a democratic process was legitimate, it is not altogether clear if an *Islamic theocracy* would be viewed within the same light. Indeed, given the possibility that such a government could, as Bernard Lewis highlights, result in the subjugation of democratic rule, it is reasonable to take the position that although Bush held Jeffersonian democratic values as universal, an Islamic theocracy would have been seen as an illegitimate outcome. More to the point, this indicates a policy continuation from the Clinton era: legitimate participation but with the recognition of it *potentially* leading to an illegitimate outcome.

The key issue, therefore, is under what guise would the outcome actually have been seen as legitimate for the Bush administration? Michael Hirsh writes that the combination of democracy and Islam does pose a potential contradiction, but there is also the possibility of a true compatibility. According to Bernard Lewis, who acted as one of a select group of academic consultants to the Bush White House, the solution is viewed as coming from the adoption of the Kemalist democratic model symptomatic of Turkey.[84] Michael Hirsh comments that:

> The administration's vision of post-war Iraq was also fundamentally Lewisian, which is to say Kemalist. Paul Wolfowitz repeatedly invoked secular, democratic Turkey as a "useful model for others in the Muslim world," as the deputy secretary of defense termed it in

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[82] Condoleezza Rice, Rice Says Values of Islam, Democracy, Human Rights Mutually Reinforcing, (Washington D.C.: GPO, 4 Dec. 2002) 3pp. 15/09/04 <http://tokyo.usembassy.gov/e/p/tp-soc20021206a2.html>.

[83] Richard Armitage, "Armitage: Afghan Vote to Show Democracy, Islam Compatible," Deputy secretary of state interviewed by Italian newspaper, Washington, D.C.: GPO, 6 Oct. 2004, 4pp. 17/12/04 <http://tokyo.usembassy.gov/e/p/tp-20041012-26.html>.

[84] Michael Hirsh, "Bernard Lewis Revisited: What If Islam Isn't an Obstacle to Democracy in the Middle East but the Secret to Achieving It?" Washington Monthly 45.Nov. (2004) 6pp. 13/12/04 <http://www.collectiveinterest.net/homepage/bernard_lewis%20revisited.pdf>.

December 2002 on the eve of a trip to lay the groundwork for what he thought would be a friendly Turkey's role as a staging ground for the Iraq war. Another key Pentagon neocon and old friend of Lewis's, Harold Rhode, told associates a year ago that 'we need an accelerated Turkish model' for Iraq.[85]

In support of Hirsh's argument, Bush remarked in July 2004 on a visit to Turkey that, "I appreciate so very much the example [Turkey] has set on how to be a Muslim country and at the same time a country which embraces democracy and rule of law and freedom."[86] Here the significance is that the *ideal* end product of what Bush viewed as a desirable and legitimate outcome from democratic polity within an Islamic society was a separation of religion from government. From this conception, moderate political Islamic parties can legitimately participate in a pluralistic democratic polity, but the adoption of an Islamic theocracy resulting in the potential scenario of one person, one vote, one time, would continue to be viewed by the United States as an illegitimate outcome.

In many respects, the Bush administration's position towards political Islam clarified and expanded on what was an ambiguous and at times contradictory position of US foreign policy prior to the attacks of 9/11. Although the Bush presidency saw the compatibility of democratic rule in an Islamic society more clearly achievable and, most importantly, desirable, than any preceding administration, it still appears to have held the same position that an Islamic theocracy would have been an illegitimate political outcome.

5.0 CHAPTER CONCLUSION

What can be deduced from US foreign policy with respect to political Islam and terrorism in the time period 1993-2003, is that there was consistency in some

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[85] Michael Hirsh, "Bernard Lewis Revisited: What If Islam Isn't an Obstacle to Democracy in the Middle East but the Secret to Achieving It?"

[86] George W. Bush, "Remarks Prior to Discussions with Prime Minister," Remarks prior to discussions with Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey, Ankara: GPO, 27 Jun. 2004. 1pp. 17/02/05 <http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m2889/is_27_40/ai_n6148652>.

respects and a reversal of policy in others. In terms of continuity, the United States maintained a consistent opposition towards violent political expression during this time period. Nonetheless, the lack of clarity and consistency in the Clinton era brought this supposition into question as one could analytically conclude from the Clinton administration's position that it condoned political extremism, providing its objective was commensurate with US policy interests. But, as has already been discussed, at an operational level, it is reasonable to conclude that the United States remained firmly opposed towards extremism as a means of achieving political objectives.

With regard to the scope of US policy towards political Islam, it is important to recognise that there is no evidence to support the conjecture that the United States had a policy toward Islam per se. Indeed, it is noticeable that the United States has gone to great pains to underscore the point that it does not have a policy towards one of the world's great religions. But it would be accurate to describe a steadily evolving understanding of Islamic political movements and how this fits in with US policy. The key issues for US policy towards political Islam in this time period was essentially twofold: firstly, whether the establishment of an Islamic state premised on the *Shari'a* would be compatible with democratic principals; and secondly, how should Islamic inspired terrorism be countered.

United States foreign policy during the Clinton era towards whether an Islamic state premised on the *Shari'a* was compatible with democracy was slow in developing. The gradual flow of statements on the issue by administration officials was often unclear and inconsistent. The Clinton administration saw the participation of Islamic political parties which desired the adoption of the *Shari'a* as legitimate in a democratic process. However, it saw a potential majority election as an illegitimate outcome due the belief that the adoption of the *Shari'a* would ultimately result in a subjugation of democracy. In many respects, a historical parallel can be drawn with US Cold War policy towards communist political parties' involvement in democratic politics.

The onset of the War on Terror strategic environment for US foreign policy greatly clarified and expanded upon the importance of political Islam in policy calculations.

With the external threat being defined as terrorism with global reach, the issue of how to combat its *root causes* became a defining feature of US grand strategy for the Bush administration. Whilst there was recognition in the Clinton era that the authoritarian nature of Islamic states were the prime cause of terrorism, Clinton's policy remained firmly *reactive based* and, crucially, *a secondary foreign policy concern* to US interests in the Persian Gulf strategic arena. Indeed, it is widely accepted that the Clinton administration accepted the balance of power in the Persian Gulf by failing to substantively press for reform. Although Clinton articulated that the spread of democracy and global capitalism was a priority, Clintonian foreign policy appears to have been overly cautious and lacking in a clear strategic vision. Nevertheless, the combating of the root causes of political Islam as part of a comprehensive counterterrorism strategy had been a secondary foreign policy concern to Persian Gulf security since the Cold War era.

The advent of the War on Terror changed these priorities: The need to combat the root causes of terrorism with global reach became a primary foreign policy concern and thus supplanted the post-Cold War policy towards Persian Gulf security. Although the definition of Persian Gulf security will be shown in this thesis to also have changed, counterterrorism, directed at combating its root causes, had taken on a status of grand strategy. The key point here is that whilst Clinton's policy towards terrorism with global reach was *reactive based*, and Islamic terrorism was a secondary foreign policy concern to Persian Gulf security, Bush's policy priority was *offensive based* and had resulted in a new definition of Persian Gulf security.

The central issue, with regard to the Bush administration's newfound priority of countering the root causes of terrorism was, however, whether Islamic governance based on the *Shari'a* was compatible with the democracy and freedom agenda. The Bush administration's statements greatly expanded upon those of the previous presidency as any notion that democracy could not work in an Islamic society were comprehensively dispelled by them. However, the newfound commitment towards democracy and freedom did not clarify whether all democratic outcomes would be viewed as acceptable. Indeed, there is good reason to conclude that the Bush administration saw democracy as compatible within an *Islamic society*, providing the *Shari'a* was not adopted.

Chapter V

United States Foreign Policy Towards Persian Gulf Security: Iran and Iraq 1993-2001

"We recognise this area as vital to US interests and we will behave, with others, multilaterally when we can and unilaterally when we must."

Madeleine Albright

October 1994

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The contemporary national interests of the United States in the Persian Gulf region have their historical origins rooted in the circumstances of the First World War. Although the United States had commercial interests in the Maghreb region dating back to 1784,[1] it was the inherent requirement of the modern era of mechanised warfare in addition to the dynamics of Western industrialisation at the time, that oil firmly became a key economic and strategic interest of the United States.[2] It is important to recognise from the outset that the paramount national security interest of the United States in the region has historically been for "[an] unhindered flow of oil from the Persian Gulf to the world market at a stable price."[3] The stability of the Persian Gulf is, therefore, very much a national security interest of the United States.

During the Cold War, the containment of communism was the overarching, global strategic consideration that characterised US foreign policy and this was consequently reflected in its policy towards the Persian Gulf. The reasons why the Persian Gulf was a key strategic interest for the United States during the Cold War era, is usefully summarised by Michael Hudson:

> [T]he entrenchment of Soviet power in that strategic region would [have been] a decisive shift in the world balance, outflanking NATO;

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[1] Thomas A. Bryson, American Diplomatic Relations with the Middle East, 1784-1975: A Survey (Metuchen: Scarecrow Press, 1977) 1-57.

[2] John A. DeNovo, American Interests and Policies in the Middle East, 1900-1939 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1963) 167-69.

[3] United States, Department of Defence, United States Security Strategy for the Middle East, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 3 May 1995) 48pp. 15/06/03 <http://www.defenselink.mil/policy/isa/nesa/mideast.html >.

> Soviet control of Middle Eastern oil could disrupt the economy of the free world; and triumph throughout Asia, Africa, and Europe.[4]

With Britain having decided to withdraw its presence east of Suez in the 1960s, Richard Nixon was prompted into developing a 'twin-pillar' security strategy of promoting Iran, and to a lesser extent Saudi Arabia, as guardians of regional security and as bulwarks against Soviet expansionism.[5] This twin-pillar strategy became defunct when Iran, the key pillar of the US policy, experienced an Islamic revolution in 1979 that resulted in Muhammad Shah Reza Pahlevi being overthrown.

The dramatic overthrow of the Shah ushered in a new era for regional politics and US strategic policy towards the region. The subsequent seizure of the US embassy in Tehran in November 1979 and the ensuing hostage crisis was crucial in affirming the perception of the Islamic Republic as inimically hostile to US interests. It was as a result of the anti-American position of the successor Islamic regime in Tehran that the revolution necessarily ushered in a reassessment of Iran's role in US policy towards Persian Gulf security. A further key factor was that Iran became equated with an asymmetric threat to Israel – a key long term US interest – through its support for Hezbollah and its destabilising influence on the internal affairs of Lebanon.

With the onset of the Reagan administration in 1981, US policy towards the Persian Gulf was essentially formulated within the context of the Iran-Iraq War and also through perceived Iranian links to international terrorist attacks against both the United States and Israel. Although the US professed neutrality towards the conflict, Reagan's policy was essentially characterised by a strategic balancing in which it provided intelligence assistance towards Iraq.[6]

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[4] Michael C. Hudson, "To Play the Hegemon: Fifty Years of US Policy Towards the Middle East," Middle East Journal 50.3 (1996): 334.

[5] Henry Kissinger, The White House Years (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1979) 1262-65.

[6] Anthony H. Cordesman, The Iran-Iraq War and Western Security 1984-87: Strategic Implications and Policy Options (London: Jane's Publishing, 1987) 157-63.

With the end of the Iran-Iraq War and the emergence of a post-Cold War international environment, the dynamics of US foreign policy had entered into a new phase. The onset of the Clinton era saw geoeconomics[7] become its strategic point of reference for US foreign policy. Although the Wilsonian and Jeffersonian pursuit for liberal democracy was articulated as a pillar of Clinton's grand strategy, this was a rhetorical prescription: US geostrategy in the Persian Gulf, which called for the maintenance of the balance of power, was in clear conflict.

The following analysis will firstly separate US foreign policy towards Iran and Iraq for reasons of clarity. The next section will outline the post-1991 Gulf War strategic environment before examining the regional geostrategy adopted throughout the Clinton years.

2.0 POST-1991 GULF WAR STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

Following the liberation of Kuwait in 1991, President George H. W. Bush used the unprecedented agreement within the international community towards Iraq to formulate a post-war sanctions and inspections mandate through the United Nations. Washington's post-liberation agenda was positioned on a multilateral effort towards ensuring Iraq did not possess unconventional weapons. But the key by-product of this was that it provided for Persian Gulf security. When the Bush administration adopted this policy, it was formulated in the context of uprisings within Iraq that followed the liberation of Kuwait.[8] Indeed, it is widely known that there was high confidence in the administration and in many policy circles that Hussain would be overthrown by a national revolutionary civil uprising or through an internal military coup d'état. Therefore, a direct military invasion of Iraq was not seen as necessary given the widely held belief that Hussain's regime was likely to be overthrown by

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[7] Geoeconomics is defined as the pursuit of economic engagement as a political objective. Therefore international trade and foreign investment are key drivers of this strategic policy. Geoeconomics as a foreign policy strategy was fully commensurate with the domestic electoral platform of Bill Clinton.

[8] The uprisings in Iraq followed a speech given by President Bush in which he called on the people of Iraq overthrow Saddam Hussain. Although Bush's speech gave no indication that the US would provide direct support for any uprising, it was widely interpreted within Iraq that a subsequent invasion or provision of direct support was imminent.

internal forces. Resorting to the United Nations allowed Iraq to be multilaterally contained *until* regime change actually occurred. Therefore, whilst the strategic objective was to nullify the threat posed by Iraq, the tactics employed were geared towards regime change.[9]

The adoption of UNSCR 687, which was ultimately enforceable under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, placed obligations on Iraq to *verifiably* dismantle its chemical, biological and nuclear programmes, in addition to any ballistic missiles and related components with a range greater than 150 kilometres. Also, in accordance with the US regional security agenda, UNSCR 687 established an embargo on military procurement and laid the basis for sanctions on imports and exports in order to pay for damages incurred following the invasion and occupation of Kuwait. With the Iraqi threat to Persian Gulf security being curtailed through a multilateral containment strategy by the Bush administration, the key issue was how to prevent Iranian hegemony within this context.

Within Congress, however, following the liberation of Kuwait in 1991, dissatisfaction had been mounting at the inconsistency of Washington's policy towards the Islamic Republic: it categorised Iran as a 'rogue state' whilst burgeoning bilateral trade was allowed to go unchecked. Indeed, the level of trade was significant as "US exports to Iran in 1987 amounted to US$54 million, growing to US$60 million by 1989. In 1990, exports shot up to US$168 million, reaching US$750 million by 1992, making the United States Iran's sixth-largest trading partner."[10]

The response in Congress to these pressures, coupled with both the newly emerging post-Cold War strategic arena and the geopolitical context in the Persian Gulf, resulted in the Iran-Iraq Arms Non-Proliferation Act of 1992. It was justified by its sponsor, Senator John McCain, and its co-sponsor, Senator Alfonse D'Amato, that "tighter curbs on shipments to Iran were necessary if a repetition of US export

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[9] Don Oberdorfer, "US Had Covert Plan to Oust Iraq's Saddam, Bush Adviser Asserts; Effort to Remove Leader Came 'Pretty Close'," Washington Post 20 Jan. 1993, A1.

[10] Hossein Alikhani, Sanctioning Iran: Anatomy of a Failed Policy (London: I.B. Tauris, 2000) 163.

control errors with Iraq prior to the Gulf War was to be avoided."[11] That is to say, on account of Congressional pressure, prompted by domestic political considerations and the regional context in the Persian Gulf in the aftermath of the liberation of Kuwait in 1991, the Bush administration was forced by Congress to implement a restrictive unilateral sanctions policy towards Iran. The Clinton administration inherited this policy position in 1993. Therefore, the overarching nature of the Bush administration's policy towards Persian Gulf security, which Clinton inherited, had the dual characteristic of a multilateral containment of Iraq through the United Nations, and a unilateral sanction based policy towards Iran.

3.0 GEOSTRATEGY: DUAL CONTAINMENT

In the immediate post-war scenario 1991-93, Iraq obstructed the UNSCOM inspections by restricting access to various sites, and prevented the seizure of official Iraqi documents by the inspectors. The UN responded to Iraqi non-compliance by adopting UNSCR 707 and 715, which effectively reaffirmed the legitimacy of inspections and the necessity for a full and complete Iraqi compliance. It was, however, in the immediate period prior to Bill Clinton being inaugurated into office that Iraq prohibited the use of UNSCOM flights,[12] and also made incursions into the demilitarised zone with Kuwait.[13] This violation by Iraq resulted in it being found in material breech of prior resolutions on 8 January 1993.[14] In this instance, it seems likely that Iraq was testing the willingness of Washington to enforce compliance in the run-up to the US administration handover. These factors resulted in the coalition responding with a series of air strikes against Iraq.[15] Therefore, with the onset of the Clinton Presidency, the new administration inherited the policy position of being

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[11] Hossein Alikhani, Sanctioning Iran: Anatomy of a Failed Policy 164.

[12] Iraq informed the UN that it would no longer permit UNSCOM fixed wing aircraft to operate within Iraq on 7 Jan. 1993.

[13] Iraq began positioning anti-aircraft missiles in the demilitarised zone on 27 Dec. 1992.

[14] Yoshio Hatano, "Situation between Iraq and Kuwait," Statement by UN Security Council President Hatano, New York: 8 Jan. 1993. 12/08/02 <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/dispatch/1993/html/Dispatchv4no03.html >.

[15] Coalition air strikes commenced on 13 Jan. 1993.

committed to upholding UN resolutions designed to contain the threat Iraq posed to US interests in the Persian Gulf region.

Although President-elect Clinton supported this policy position, he made it clear that when he entered office he was "ready for a fresh start with Saddam Hussain."[16] After receiving political criticism for a seemingly 'softer' approach towards Iraq, Clinton refined his position on Iraq as being the maintenance of the Bush administration's policy but with a *new policy initiative*.[17] Crucially, Clinton made it clear that he could not conceive "[the] United States ever having any kind of normal relationship with Iraq as long as Saddam Hussain [was] there."[18] It was, therefore, clear that George H. W. Bush's position on Iraq was widely favoured within Congress and any radical departure by Clinton would have been politically costly to the new Democrat administration. Indeed, given this accepted political wisdom in Washington, it would have been a difficult departure for the newly incoming Clinton Presidency.

Martin Indyk, the Special Assistant to the President for Near East and South Asian affairs, outlined the Clinton administration's "new" initiative towards regional security, in an address to the pro-Israeli Washington Institute for Near East Policy in May 1993. The strategy outlined by Indyk was that of dual containment towards both Iran and Iraq.[19] Dual containment rested on the premise that both states had a history of aggressive action in a variety of spheres, and posed a threat to the Persian Gulf states and Israel. The emphasis was thus on a moderation of their policies.

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[16] Thomas Friedman, "Clinton's Warning to Saddam: I'm Going to Judge You by Your Behaviour," International Herald Tribune 15 Jan. 1993, 2.

[17] George Stephanopoulos, All Too Human: A Political Education (London: Hutchinson, 1999) 157-59.; also see Leslie Gelb, "A Reformed Iraq to Offset Iran? Forget It," International Herald Tribune 18 Jan. 1993, 2.

[18] William J. Clinton, Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States 1993: William J. Clinton (Bk. 1), Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1993. 05/11/04 <http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=1993_public_papers_vol1_misc&docid=f:pap_pre.htm#1993v1contents>.

[19] Martin Indyk, "The Clinton Administration's Approach to the Middle East," Address to the Soref Symposium, Washington, D.C.: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 18 May 1993. 4pp. 12/07/03 <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/pubs/soref/indyk.htm >.

Clinton's Persian Gulf strategy rested on the recognition that a singular containment of Iraq was insufficient to guarantee regional security on account of the geopolitical situation:

1. The threat posed by potential Iranian hegemony in the context of Iraqi containment;
2. The threat posed by Iranian attempts to procure unconventional weapons;
3. The inability of the GCC countries to mobilise a credible defence cooperation arrangement.[20]

The clearest exposé of the dual containment strategy occurred, however, in an academic article in 1994, by Anthony Lake, the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs:

> The Clinton administration's policy of 'dual containment' of Iraq and Iran derives in the first instance from an assessment that the current Iraqi and Iranian regimes are both hostile to American interests in the region. Accordingly, we do not accept the argument that we should continue the old balance of power game, building up one to balance the other. We reject that approach not only because its bankruptcy was demonstrated in Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. We reject it because of a clear-headed assessment of the antagonism that both regimes harbor towards the United States and its allies in the region. And we reject it because we don't need to rely on one to balance the other.[21]

Lake outlined Clinton's dual containment policy as not entailing a duplication of policy towards both Iran and Iraq, as the administration saw both states posing differential threats and thus warranting unique responses. Whilst the policy towards Iraq was multilateral in scope and based on UN resolutions, the US containment policy towards Iran was clearly a unilateral policy undertaking. The Iranian policies that warranted these responses were highlighted by Lake as:

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[20] David W. Lesch, The Middle East and the United States: A Historical and Political Reassessment (Oxford: Westview, 1996) 356-58.

[21] Anthony Lake, "Confronting Backlash States," Foreign Affairs 73.2 (1994): 48.

1. Clandestine efforts to procure unconventional weapons with long-range missile technology;
2. Provision of direct and asymmetric support for radical political Islamic movements who use violent terrorist style methods of political expression;
3. Efforts to undermine the Arab-Israeli peace process;
4. Efforts to destabilise Gulf countries such as Bahrain, and also Islamic countries in Africa;
5. High levels of conventional weapons production and procurement, which posed a potential threat to the security of GCC states.[22]

For the Clinton administration, these factors ultimately posed a significant threat to US interests in the Persian Gulf, and were seen to warrant the *continuation* of a unilateral containment policy.[23] The objective of the Clinton administration towards Iran was thus: the United States would unilaterally attempt to economically, politically and militarily contain the threat posed by Iran to the region and would seek a change in Tehran's behaviour through *meaningful dialogue,* leading ultimately to reconciliation rather than a regime change strategy. This was very much a continuation of the unilateral policy of the previous Bush administration towards Iran.

Lake was careful to distinguish the administration's policy towards Iraq as being separate from Iran, whilst still encompassed under the same strategic policy of dual containment:

> In post-Khomeini Iran, a revolutionary regime remains engaged in outlaw behaviour. Nevertheless, the Clinton administration does not oppose Islamic government, nor does it seek the regime's overthrow. Indeed we remain ready for an authoritative dialogue in which we will raise aspects of Iranian behaviour that cause us so much concern.[24]

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[22] Lake, "Confronting Backlash States," Foreign Affairs 48.

[23] Ellen Laipson, et al., "Symposium: US Policy Towards Iran: From Containment to Relentless Persuit," Middle East Policy 4.Sep (1995): 2.

[24] Lake, "Confronting Backlash States," 50.

Clinton's dual containment strategy towards regional security was therefore, in essence, a policy continuation towards both Iran and Iraq from the previous Bush administration. However, it was original on the grounds that no previous *declared* US policy rested on the premise of simultaneously containing both Iran and Iraq as a means of ensuring Persian Gulf and wider regional security.

However, the accepted historical diplomatic wisdom of the application of containment theory is a conceivable explanation as to why the Clinton administration was willing to pursue this strategy towards Iran and Iraq. Throughout the Cold War, the United States pursued a strategy of containment towards the Soviet Union as its primary means of strategically combating the ideological and military threat it posed. It is also a strategy that the United States has employed against other states such as Cuba and North Korea. The origins of strategic containment are found in George Kennan's long telegram in 1946 on how to combat the Soviet threat. Expanded upon and clarified in Kennan's famous article in Foreign Affairs, containment emerged as the cornerstone of US grand strategic policy throughout the Cold War period.[25]

The credibility of containment, as a strategy for dealing with nations that pursue policies contrary to US interests, was greatly enhanced with the fall of the Soviet Union. Containment has credibility in US political discourse as it is seen to control the short and medium threats posed by 'rogue states' and arguably forces change to occur at a socio-political level. It is important, however, to recognise that the containment strategy also emerged as a result of its perceived suitability for the geopolitical environment and the recognition within Congress that the United States should apply its power given its hegemonic position.

Henry Kissinger eloquently captures the essence of the US application containment theory:

> Containment was an extraordinary theory... [t]horoughly American in its utopianism, it assumed that the collapse of a totalitarian adversary could be achieved in an essentially benign way. Although this

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[25] Anonymous [George Kennan] Anonymous, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," Foreign Affairs 25.4 (1947). 852-68.

doctrine was formulated at the height of America's absolute power, it preached America's relative weakness. Postulating a grand diplomatic encounter at the moment of its culmination, containment allowed no role for diplomacy until the climatic final scene in which the men in white hats accepted the conversion of the men in black hats.[26]

Even during containment, Kissinger has argued that the prospect of a meaningful dialogue taking place between the United States and a perceived rogue country will very much hinge on whether Washington views the regime as having *diplomatic credibility*.[27] Kissinger highlights that US 'exceptionalism'[28] in its foreign policy requires the negotiating partner to act in a legalistic, honest and moral manner in its diplomacy. The prospect of meaningful dialogue thus ceases when Washington views the given regime as lacking in this.

4.0 UNITED STATES FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS IRAQ 1993-2001

For the US, the imposition of sanctions brought about the by-product of a contained and controlled Iraq. A multilaterally contained Iraq thus catered for the US objective of ensuring the security and a balance of power within the vital area of the Persian Gulf. Nevertheless, it is important to recognise that the reason why sanctions were supported by the international community was to compel Iraq to comply with its obligations: this is in contrast with the underlying US objective of ensuring Persian Gulf security through a contained and controlled Iraq.

The official policy of the Clinton administration towards Iraq was, up until 1998, for a continuation of sanctions until a complete compliance with UN resolutions had been achieved. Following Iraq's full compliance with UN resolutions, a normalisation of relations was possible. Comparatively, in the previous Bush

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[26] Henry Kissinger, Diplomacy, (New York: Touchstone, 1995) 471.

[27] Ibid. 471-75.

[28] Exceptionalism in US foreign policy refers to the widely held belief that the values, which underpin American society, are *universal* values. This interpretation has a direct bearing on US diplomacy in that in the pursuit of US national interests, other nations will benefit from such values being imparted upon them.

administration, the US position towards Iraq differed slightly in that the emphasis was on the continuation of sanctions until Saddam was replaced from power, rather than a simple compliance with UN resolutions.[29] For the Clinton administration, Lake commented that "we will want to be satisfied that any successor [Iraqi] government complies fully with all UN resolutions".[30] This placed the official objective clearly on Iraqi compliance with UN resolutions, rather than regime change per se. However, from the outset of his term of office in 1993, Clinton made it clear that he could not "conceive of the United States ever having any kind of normal relationship with Iraq as long as Saddam Hussain is there."[31] This makes the strategic priority in his foreign policy very much open to question: was Clinton's overall strategic objective regime change or reconciliation following Iraq's full compliance with UN resolutions? The two strategic objectives are not compatible. With this in mind, the following section will provide analysis on US foreign policy towards Iraq and aims to separate the tactical from the strategic in order to provide a comprehensive understanding of US foreign policy towards Iraq. It will begin with a discussion of the tactical multilateral containment before moving on to the strategic element of regime change. The tactical policy will necessarily focus on the international context and the UN inspections mandate which US policy rested upon.

4.1 Tactical Policy: Multilateral Containment

Following the liberation of Kuwait by coalition forces,[32] Iraq was subject to stringent post-war obligations under UNSCR 687.[33] Specifically speaking, UNSCR 687 called on Iraq to *verifiably* render harmless all of it's, "chemical and biological weapons

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[29] Madeleine Albright and William Woodward, Madam Secretary: A Memoir (London: Macmillan, 2003) 275.

[30] Lake, "Confronting Backlash States," 48.

[31] Dan Rather, "President Interviewed by Dan Rather," CBS 24 Mar. 1993, 12/07/04 <http://www.clintonfoundation.org/legacy/032493-president-interviewed-by-dan-rather.htm>.

[32] The coalition's military action to liberate Kuwait from Iraqi forces was authorised by UNSCR 678 of 29 Nov. 1990 under Chapter VII of the UN Charter.

[33] Iraq was obligated under UNSCR 687, Sect. C, to fulfil its obligations to the *Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare*, which was signed by Iraq on 17 Jun. 1925 in Geneva.

and all stocks of agents and all related subsystems and components and all research, development, support and manufacturing facilities."[34] Iraq was viewed as having a well established offensive surface-to-surface missile programme: the test flight of the upgraded 'Scud B' missile, with a range of more than 600km, posed a clear threat to the security of the states in the Persian Gulf.[35] UNSCR 687 stated that its "ballistic missiles with a range greater than one hundred and fifty kilometres and related major parts, and repair and production facilities" were to be rendered harmless.[36]

UNSCR 687 laid the basis for on-site inspections within Iraq by a United Nations Special Commission to verify compliance on these issues. Also, UNSCR 687 placed obligations on Iraq to comply with its commitments under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and laid the basis for Iraq to verifiably render harmless its nuclear weapons programme under the supervision of the IAEA in conjunction with UNSCOM.[37]

Following the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, President Bush declared a national emergency with respect to Iraq, through Executive Order No. 12722 on 2 August 1990: this blocked all Iraqi assets within the United States and placed restrictions on the importation and exportation of good and services between the two countries. Subsequent Executive Order Nos. 12724 and 12817 were implemented by the Bush administration to align US policy with UN Security Council Resolutions 661 and 778 respectively. With the Bush administration having based its policies on the prediction that Hussain would be internally ousted from power following the *intifadah* in 1991, Washington was left with little choice but to adopt a containment policy through supporting UN resolutions until it had been achieved.[38] As already highlighted, this was adopted on the premise that it would ensure both Persian Gulf security, and

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[34] UNSCR 687 of 3 Apr. 1991, Sect. C, Par. 8 (a).

[35] W. Seth Carus and Joseph Bermudez, "Iraq's Al-Husayn Missile Programme: Part 1," Jane's Intelligence Review 2.5 (1990): 204-09; and W. Seth Carus and Joseph Bermudez, "Iraq's Al-Husayn Missile Programme: Part 2," Jane's Intelligence Review 2.6 (1990): 242-48.

[36] UNSCR 687 of 3 Apr. 1991, Sect. C, Par. 8 (b).

[37] UNSCR 687 of 3 Apr. 1991, Sect. C, Par. 11.

[38] Kenneth M. Pollack, The Threatening Storm: The Case for Invading Iraq, (New York: Random House, 2002) 53.

weaken Saddam Hussain's regime, with the ultimate objective of bringing about the conditions for an internal regime change.[39] In essence, the Bush administration saw its support of sanctions as a tactical means of ensuring Persian Gulf security until its strategic objective had been achieved.

UNSCR 699 and 715 provided the confirmation for UNSCOM and the IAEA to conduct continual on-site inspections within Iraq in order to search and render harmless any prohibited materials.[40] Despite it being mandated by the United Nations, Iraq demonstrated little intention of allowing its unconventional weapons to be destroyed by the IAEA and the UN Special Commission. Hussain created a covert Concealment Operations Committee, which was headed by his son Qusayy, in order to hide his WMD programmes and stockpiles from the inspectors. Despite Iraqi attempts to inhibit the inspections process and conceal its prohibited nuclear programmes, in 1991 the IAEA inspection team successfully uncovered three uranium enrichment programmes: one using electromagnetic isotope separation technology; a second programme using centrifuge technology; and a third programme using chemical methods.[41] In addition to this, Iraq was found to be experimenting with a laboratory-scale plutonium separation technique. Following these discoveries, in July 1991 the sixth IAEA inspection uncovered further proof of a nuclear programme that included several kilograms of highly enriched uranium and approximately 400 tons of natural uranium.[42]

The findings of the IAEA inspectors alarmed the international community as Iraq's nuclear programme was more advanced than commonly thought. The discoveries made by the inspectors on Iraq's biological and chemical weapons programmes

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[39] Pollack, The Threatening Storm 53.

[40] UNSCR 699 of 17 Jun. 1991 and UNSCR 715 of 11 Oct. 1991.

[41] United Nations, International Atomic Agency, First Semi-Annual Report on the Implementation of UNSCR 687, (S/23295), (Vienna: IAEA, 5 Dec. 1991) 6pp. 18/07/02 <http://www.iraqwatch.org/un/IAEA/s-23295.htm>.

[42] United Nations, UNSCOM, First Report by the Executive Chairman of the Special Commission Pursuant to the Implementation Security Council Resolution 687 (1991), (S/23165), (New York: United Nations, 25 Oct. 1991) 29pp. 18/07/02 <http://www.iraqwatch.org/un/UNSCOM/687/s23165.htm>.

compounded this concern.[43] Following UNSCOM and the IAEA uncovering details of Iraq's nuclear and biological weapons programme in 1992, Iraq began to co-operate and disclosed to the inspectors details on their chemical and nuclear stockpiles, as well as admitting that they had a *defensive* biological programme. Although Iraq did make these declarations on its weapons stockpiles, their co-operation was consistently brought into question on numerous levels, especially given that the inspectors would make discoveries that were not listed in Iraq's declaration to the Security Council.

With the onset of the Clinton administration and the confirmation of the containment policy in May 1993, US policy towards Iraq continued to rest clearly on the effectiveness of the implementation of UN Security Council resolutions. The weapons inspections process continued to be highly problematic with specific regard to Iraq's obligation to give a full, final and complete declaration on its weapons programmes, as prohibited by UNSCR 687 and required by UNSCR 707.[44] Iraq's declarations were consistently found to be insufficiently detailed and incomplete by UNSCOM.[45] In addition to failing to provide a full, final and complete declaration of its prohibited weapons, UNSCOM and the IAEA found Iraq to be carrying out "a continuing pattern of obstruction and intimidation" towards its mandate.[46] According to UN reports, up until 1995, there were numerous instances of Iraqi obstruction towards inspectors and it has been suggested that the obstruction was "directed at the

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[43] United Nations, UNSCOM, Fourth Report by the Executive Chairman of the Special Commission Pursuant to the Implementation Security Council Resolution 687 (1991), (S/24984), (New York: United Nations, 17 Dec. 1992) 22pp. 18/07/04 <http://www.iraqwatch.org/un/UNSCOM/687/s-24984.htm>.

[44] United Nations, Secretariat, Third Report under UNSCR 715 by the Secretary-General on the Activities of the Special Commission, (S/25620), (New York: United Nations, 19 Apr. 1993) 8pp. 12/05/03 <http://www.iraqwatch.org/un/UNSCOM/715/s25620.pdf>.

[45] United Nations, UNSCOM, Ninth Report by the Executive Chairman of the Special Commission Pursuant to the Implementation Security Council Resolution 687 (1991), (S/1995/494), (New York: United Nations, 20 Jun. 1995) 10pp. 18/07/03 <http://www.iraqwatch.org/un/UNSCOM/687/s-1995-0494.htm>.

[46] United Nations, Fourth Report by the Executive Chairman of the Special Commission Pursuant to the Implementation Security Council Resolution 687 (1991).

highest levels of the Iraqi government and by the Office of the Presidential Palace (OPP) and personnel in Saddam's private Diwan (office)."[47]

Hussain's defiance also extended to provoking a potential military engagement with the United States in October 1994 after his deployment of ground forces near the Kuwaiti border. Saddam apparently wanted to provoke a crisis with the United States to have the UN sanctions lifted. Clinton's response, however, was to deploy 170 aircraft and 6,500 personnel to Riyadh under the rubric of Operation Vigilant Warrior. It is of significance that Clinton retained 120 aircraft and 5,000 personnel as a permanent military deployment in order to deter future transgressions by Iraq, thus placing a greater degree of pressure on Baghdad to comply.

However, despite Iraq's persistent obstruction and provocations, by 1995 the UN inspection process had yielded positive results. UNSCOM and the IAEA had severely degraded Iraq's WMD programmes, which involved the destruction of "over 480,000 litres of chemical warfare agents, over 28,000 chemical munitions and nearly 1,800,000 litres, over 1,040,000 kilograms and 648 barrels, of some 45 different precursor chemicals for the production of chemical warfare agents."[48]

The official view of the United States was that the IAEA had "effectively disbanded the Iraqi nuclear weapons programme at least for the near term."[49] However, questions remained as Iraq was unable to account for its stockpiles of *precursor* ingredients for the production of chemical weapons. Most notably, Iraq was unable to account for precursor chemicals required for the production of 200-250 tons of the advanced nerve agent VX.[50] Therefore, although Iraq was failing to fully comply with the inspectors, the UN and the IAEA had achieved a great deal by destroying

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[47] Anthony H. Cordesman, Iraq and the War of Sanctions: Conventional Threats and Weapons of Mass Destruction (Westport: Praeger, 1999) 127-28.

[48] United Nations, Ninth Report by the Executive Chairman of the Special Commission Pursuant to the Implementation Security Council Resolution 687 (1991).

[49] William J. Clinton, Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States 1994: William J. Clinton (Bk. 1), Wasington D.C.: GPO, 1995. 07/01/04 <http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getpage.cgi?dbname=1994_public_papers_vol1_misc&page=1046&position=all >.

[50] United Nations, Ninth Report by the Executive Chairman of the Special Commission Pursuant to the Implementation Security Council Resolution 687 (1991).

sizeable amounts of Iraq's chemical arsenal, dismantling its nuclear programme and destroying its declared defensive biological weapons programme.

4.1.1 Post-1995 Inspection Process

Although by 1995 UNSCOM and the IAEA were reasonably satisfied that they had rendered harmless the majority of Iraq's prohibited weapons and were ready to implement the long term monitoring phase,[51] it was with the defection to Jordan of Lt. General Hussain Kamal Hassan al-Majeed and Lt. Colonel Saddam Kamal Hassan al-Majeed that a new phase in the weapons inspections process was ushered in.[52] Hussain Kamal al-Majeed was the former Minister of Industry and Military Industrialisation in Iraq and was one of Saddam Hussain's inner circle. The defection was prompted by Saddam's son Udayy issuing threats against Hussain Kamal and his family.[53] As Hussain Kamal was intimately involved in a deception of UNSCOM and the IAEA by way of a covert illicit weapons programme, it was clear to the Iraqi regime that information on this would be provided to UNSCOM and the IAEA. The Iraqi government thus opted to pre-empt any possible information Hussain Kamal would give the Special Commission by providing documentation pertaining to its covert illicit weapons programme to the IAEA. Baghdad provided "documentary material, which included technical records, drawings, suppliers catalogues and extracts from scientific and technical publications [that] amounted to some 680,000 pages, of which some 80% related to Iraq's past nuclear programme."[54]

These new declarations showed that Baghdad's prohibited weapons programmes were more advanced than previously thought, especially with regard to the

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[51] United Nations, Secretariat, Seventh Report under UNSCR 715 by the Secretary-General on the Activities of the Special Commission, (S/1995/284), (New York: United Nations, 10 Apr. 1995) 36pp. 12/08/03 <http://www.iraqwatch.org/un/UNSCOM/715/s-1995-284.htm>.

[52] They defected to Jordan along with several members of their family and their wives who were Saddam Hussain's daughters.

[53] Amatzia Baram, Building toward Crisis: Saddam Husayn's Secret Strategy for Survival (Washington, DC: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 1998) 8-17.

[54] United Nations, First Semi-Annual Report on the Implementation of UNSCR 687.

development of the advanced VX nerve agent.[55] Also, by October 1995, the Special Commission had concluded that Iraq had significantly misled UNSCOM and the IAEA over the issue of prohibited missile technology:

> Iraq has been misleading the Commission by withholding information that, before the Gulf war, it had secretly produced Scud-type missile engines and carried out research and development on a variety of projects on missiles of prohibited ranges. Furthermore, Iraq's efforts to conceal its biological weapons programme, its chemical missile warhead flight tests and work on the development of a missile for the delivery of a nuclear device led it to provide incorrect information concerning certain of its missile activities. [56]

In terms of Iraq's weapons programme, the most alarming aspect of the new revelations was that Iraq had a secret, *offensive* biological warfare programme and a covert chemical weapons programme that included the production of the advanced VX nerve agent on an industrial scale.[57] According to UNSCOM, Iraq declared it had produced sizeable quantities of the chemical precursors exclusive to the development of VX and that it possessed sufficient amounts to produce 90 tons of VX.[58] It was noted at the United Nations that:

> In the chemical weapons area, the Special Commission's investigations have led to disclosure of activities [aimed] at the acquisition of a considerable capability for the production of the advanced nerve agent VX. Whether Iraq still keeps precursors in storage for immediate VX use has not been fully clarified.[59]

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[55] United Nations, Ninth Report by the Executive Chairman of the Special Commission Pursuant to the Implementation Security Council Resolution 687 (1991).

[56] United Nations, Seventh Report under UNSCR 715 by the Secretary-General on the Activities of the Special Commission.

[57] Ibid.

[58] Ibid.

[59] United Nations, Seventh Report under UNSCR 715 by the Secretary-General on the Activities of the Special Commission.

These damming revelations about Iraq's undisclosed illicit weapon programmes in addition to a continuation of the policy of non-cooperation with the UN inspectors demonstrated that Iraq was failing to comply with its obligations which gave it little diplomatic credibility in the face of its previous false declarations.

The response at the UN was predictable and Iraq's failure to comply with its obligations was greeted with condemnation. This mood in the UN was further exacerbated by the seizure of advanced missile components destined for Iraq via Jordan in 1995.[60] This showed that the provisions of UNSCR 687 paragraph 20, which placed control on Iraqi imports, was insufficient in the face of a defiant Iraq. The response at the United Nations was the unanimous adoption of UNSCR 1051,[61] which strengthened the import and export controls on Iraq by requiring all imports to Iraq to be declared and ultimately accounted for by Iraq. Despite the efforts at the United Nations to further strengthen the sanctions mandate, Iraq was found by UNSCOM to be continuing in a persistent and deliberate obstruction of the inspections process.[62] This pattern of obstructing the mandate of UNSCOM and the IAEA continued throughout 1996-98 and ultimately saw Iraq being found in breech of its obligations by a series of UN Security Council resolutions.[63]

4.1.1.1 The Dilemma of Verifiability

The defection of Lt. General Hussain Kamal Hassan al-Majeed was a turning point in Iraq's situation vis-à-vis the UN, which also demonstrated to the United States that Iraq had little intention in complying with UN resolutions. UNSCOM recognised in a

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[60] United Nations, Ninth Report by the Executive Chairman of the Special Commission Pursuant to the Implementation Security Council Resolution 687 (1991),

[61] Approved on 27 Mar. 1996, the Resolution was adopted unanimously and was sponsored by France, Germany, Italy, United Kingdom and the United States.

[62] United Nations, UNSCOM, Forth Report by the Executive Chairman of the Special Commission Pursuant to the Implementation Security Council Resolution 1051 (1996), (S/1997/774), (New York: United Nations, 6 Oct. 1997) 41pp. 25/09/03 <http://www.iraqwatch.org/un/UNSCOM/1051/sres97-774.htm>.

[63] Iraq's failure to cooperate with UNSCOM and the IAEA 1996–98, saw the international community condemn Iraq through UNSCR 1060 of 12 Jun. 1996, UNSCR 1115 of 21 Jun. 1997, UNSCR 1134 23 Oct. 1997, UNSCR 1137 of 12 Nov. 1997 and UNSCR 1205 of 5 Nov. 1998.

report to the Security Council in January 1999 that: "the overall period of the Commission's disarmament work must be divided into two parts, separated by the events following the departure from Iraq, in August 1995, of Lt. General Hussain Kamal."[64]

In Hussain Kamal's testimony to the IAEA, he was categorical that Iraq did indeed have nuclear, chemical and biological weapon programmes that dated back to the Iran-Iraq war. Moreover, he stated that previous declarations given by Iraq were flawed as its biological and chemical weapons programmes, particularly with regard to the VX nerve agent, were more advanced than previously known by the UN. His statement, however, is enlightening in that by August 1995 he said he personally ordered the unilateral destruction of all of the prohibited weapons, pre-cursor chemicals and missile components, in order to have the sanctions on Iraq lifted. In his testimony to the IAEA, Hussain Kamal states, "I ordered the destruction of all weapons. All weapons – biological, chemical, missile, nuclear were destroyed."[65] He comments that: "I made the decision to disclose everything so that Iraq could return to normal."[66] He goes on to confirm that the destruction of the prohibited weapons took place, "after visits of inspection teams," who were "very effective in Iraq."[67]

The significance of Hussain Kamal's testimony cannot be underestimated as any assessment of its truthfulness determines the justification underpinning US containment policy through multilateral sanctions: without the possession of unconventional weapons, the official justification for multilateral sanctions would have been nullified. Given the scope of the new information he provided the IAEA, the detrimental impact it had on Iraq's diplomatic credibility, and the fact Hussain Kamal was executed upon his return to Iraq after falsely being promised a pardon by

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[64] United Nations, Secretariat, Memorandum of Understanding between the Secretariat of the United Nations and the Government of Iraq on the Implementation of Security Council Resolution 986 (1995), (S/1996/356), (New York: United Nations, 20 May 1996) 10pp. 04/11/04 <http://www.meij.or.jp/text/Gulf%20War/mouunirq1996.htm>.

[65] United Nations, UNSCOM and IAEA, Interview Transcript with Hussain Kamel in Amman, Sensitive classification note for file, (New York: United Nations, 22 Aug. 1995) 15pp. 12/07/03 <http://www.casi.org.uk/info/unscom950822.pdf>.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Ibid.

Saddam, it seems reasonable to conclude that there is an element of truth in his testimony. However, if Iraq had indeed destroyed all of its weapons and any trace of them, why was it continuing to persist in an obstruction of the UN Special Commission if it had nothing to hide? The significance, however, in accepting Hussain Kamal's testimony that Iraq had unilaterally destroyed all its prohibited weapons, presented the key problem of *verifiability* for a complete compliance with UN resolutions. The paradox was thus how could Iraq prove to the UN Special Commission and the international community that it had destroyed its stockpiles, listed in official Iraqi documents, when it had concealed the destruction process and any evidence of it having taken place?

Consequently, there is a possibility that Iraq possessed fewer, or indeed none, of the prohibited weapons and technologies post-1995 than it had failed to account for. In addition to this issue, there is the matter of whether Iraq's unaccounted for weapons actually still posed a threat. The majority of chemical and biological weapons were a relic of the Iran-Iraq war: many of those that had been weaponised would have been defunct anyway as the chemical weapons Iraq was known to possess, such as the nerve agents sarin and tabun, have a limited shelf life of five years if stored in *ideal conditions*. The advanced nerve agent VX has only a slightly longer shelf life. Biological weapons also suffer from the same problem, even if stored in ideal conditions: Botulinum and Liquid Anthrax have a shelf life of 3-4 years.

A further factor, which warrants consideration, is that during the 1991 conflict a number of the weapons would have conceivably been destroyed in the bombing campaign. Indeed, Iraq's chemical weapon site at al-Muthanna was completely destroyed, along with weapons stored there. It is also likely that other weapon stores were destroyed in the intensive bombing campaign across Iraq in 1991.

Overall, it seems reasonable to conclude that even if the prohibited weapons had not been unilaterally destroyed as indicated by Hussain Kamal, it is unrealistic to take the position that Iraq would have been able to verify the destruction of *all* its weapons and related components following the 1991 bombing campaign. Moreover, by 1995, virtually all-remaining weapons would likely have been past their shelf life thus rendering them defunct anyway. The threat Iraq potentially posed was therefore

more to do with its capacity to produce new weapons from *unaccounted-for precursor ingredients*. But even when considering potential production from precursor ingredients, it is open to question how effectively an estimate could take into account wastage during production. Therefore, it is reasonable to take the position that the majority of Iraq's illicit weapons had indeed been destroyed or destroyed by 1995, and that Iraq was not in the position of being able to *fully* verify their destruction to the United Nations.

4.2 Air Exclusion Zones

Following the liberation of Kuwait in 1991, President Bush called upon the Iraqi people to "take matters into their own hands," and oust Saddam's regime from power.[68] Various civilian areas in Iraq, and in particular the Kurdish areas, openly rebelled against the Iraqi regime. It was following the Iraqi military repression of these rebellions that the international community condemned these actions and adopted UNSCR 688 of 5 April 1991. UNSCR 688 condemned the oppression of the Iraqi civilians and demanded that Iraq immediately halt the repression. Of significance however, was the appeal by the Security Council that "all Member States and all humanitarian organizations... contribute to these humanitarian relief efforts."[69] Following the adoption of UNSCR 688, the United States, United Kingdom and France, adopted a northern air exclusion zone in April 1991. This had the express objective of creating a safe haven for the Kurdish civilians by making the area north of the 36th parallel in Iraq a fixed-wing and rotary-wing aircraft free zone.[70] This northern no-fly zone was justified by the United States as being consistent with UNSCR 688 in terms of it providing the adequate security needed for the humanitarian relief effort. The United States, United Kingdom and France

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[68] George H. W. Bush, "Statement from Baghdad: A Cruel Hoax," Comments to the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Washington, D.C.: GPO, 15 Feb. 1991. 20pp. 13/07/03 <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/erc/briefing/dispatch/1991/html/Dispatchv2no07.html >.

[69] UNSCR 688 of 5 Apr. 1991. Par. 6.

[70] George H. W. Bush, "US Expands Kurdish Relief Efforts," Opening statement at White House news conference, Washington, D.C.: GPO, 16 Apr. 1991. 38pp. 15/07/03 <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/erc/briefing/dispatch/1991/html/Dispatchv2no16.html>.

established a second air exclusion zone in southern Iraq in the area below the 32nd parallel on 26 August 1991 in order to provide protection for the Shi'ite population. This southern air exclusion zone was subsequently expanded to the 33rd parallel in September 1996.

At issue, however, was whether UNSCR 688 actually provided the legal justification for the US, UK and French enforcement of the no-fly zones. UNSCR 688 was *not* enacted under Chapter VII, and thus did not provide any *explicit provisions* for the use of force.[71] Although Congress called upon Bush to press the Security Council to agree on the enforcement of UNSCR 688 in accordance with Chapter VII, no such measures were introduced to the Security Council.[72] It is thus on account of the absence of the specific authorisation for the use of force in UNSCR 688 that the legal foundation of the air exclusion zones was questionable under the guise of international law.

The legality of the air exclusion zones enforcement was also questionable on the grounds of whether it was concurrent with the authorisation for the use of force under UNSCR 678.[73] But even when the legality of action under the legal position of humanitarian intervention is considered, it seems clear this basis for intervention, "would have limited the operation to air drops and other non-forcible assistance of a humanitarian character."[74] In addition to these issues, any potential justification of self-defence as a means of legitimising enforcement in the air exclusion zones was also questionable "since the argument depends on coalition aircraft having the right to fly over Iraq in the first place."[75] Therefore, under international law the legal foundation for the US position on air exclusion zones was absent and simply

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[71] Christine Gray, "From Unity to Polarization: International Law and the Use of Force against Iraq," European Journal of International Law 13.1 (2002): 9.

[72] Simon Chesterman, Just War or Just Peace? Humanitarian Intervention and International Law (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2001) 200.

[73] Ibid. 203.

[74] Ibid. 205.

[75] Chesterman, Just War or Just Peace? 200.

highlights the willingness of the United States to nullify the provisions in the Treaty of Westphalia on the ground of humanitarian concerns.

The Clinton administration's support for the air exclusion zones, which were clearly inherited from the previous Bush administration, proved to be a contentious issue and a dividing factor within the Security Council. The decision by Clinton in September 1996 to extend the southern air exclusion zone to the 33rd parallel was in response to Hussain's attack on Irbil on 31 August 1996.[76] France did not support this change in policy and did not commit its forces to patrolling the extended area of the no-fly zone.[77] But on 27 December 1996, France withdrew its involvement from Operation Northern Watch, as it no longer found there to be a humanitarian requirement to justify its continued participation. The US took a contrary position and continued to enforce the air exclusion zone, which undoubtedly served to further aggravate the emerging divisions on the Security Council up until late 1997. France's participation in Operation Southern Watch was suspended on 16 December 1998, due to the commencement of Operation Desert Fox by the United States and the United Kingdom.

It is therefore clear that the Clinton administration's participation in the Iraqi air exclusion zones was a factor that ultimately served to further tensions within the multilateral coalition. The Clinton administration's commitment of its forces towards enforcing the southern and northern air exclusion zones within Iraq was a policy which, although grounded on humanitarian considerations, failed to possess legal legitimacy in the eyes of the international community and under international law. The significance of US support and enforcement of the Iraqi air exclusion zones is that whilst they demonstrated a US commitment towards the humanitarian predicament of the oppressed Kurdish and Shi'ite population areas, it was a policy that served to undermine the integrity of multilateral international coalition. With

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[76] Robert H. Pelletreau, "Developments in the Middle East," US Department of State Dispatch, 5.41, Washington, D.C.: GPO, 30 Sept. 1996. 33pp. 13/06/03 <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/erc/briefing/dispatch/1996/html/Dispatchv7no40.html>.

[77] William J. Perry, Downing Assessment Task Force, 18 Sept. 1996) <http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Sep1996/b091996_bt544-96.html >, William J. Perry, "Downing Assessment Task Force," Report of the Assessment of the Khobar Towers Bombing, Washington, D.C.: GPO, 30 Aug. 1996. 2pp. 13/06/03 <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/khobar/downing/downltr.htm>.

heightened divisions in the Security Council, most notably from 1996-98, the French withdrawal from the northern air exclusion zone and disagreement over the US decision to extend the southern air exclusion zone would have undoubtedly served to further challenge the integrity of the multilateral coalition.

4.3 Strategic Policy: Regime Change

The safe-haven in northern Iraq not only served the function of providing humanitarian relief, but it also was intended to stem the flow of Kurdish refugees into Iran and Turkey,[78] in addition to providing a secure base of operation for opposition movements as a part of the overall insurgency strategy.[79] It was following the establishment of the northern safe-haven in 1991 that the opposition movements were able to unite under the umbrella organization of the Iraqi National Congress (INC). The CIA then began supporting the INC covertly as part of the regime change strategy.[80] The CIA sent small quantities of armaments, money and supplies to the constituent parts of the INC, as part of US covert efforts to promote an insurgency which would have weakened Saddam's regime and thus made it more susceptible to an internal coup d'état.[81]

Although the official position of the Clinton administration was geared towards the upholding of UN resolutions through multilateral sanctions, the overall strategic has been suggested by David Wurmser as having covertly altered towards the objective of regime change from 1995.[82] The truth of the matter is actually quite different as there is evidence to suggest that a policy continuation from the preceding Bush administration actually occurred, which means that US policy was officially geared

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[78] Bush, "US Expands Kurdish Relief Efforts,"

[79] David Wurmser, Tyranny's Ally: America's Failure to Defeat Saddam Hussain (Washington, D.C.: AEI Press, 1999) 13.

[80] Ibid. 14.

[81] Daniel Byman, et al., "Coercing Saddam Hussain: Lesson from the Past," Survival 40.3 (1998): 136.

[82] David Wurmser, Tyranny's Ally: America's Failure to Defeat Saddam Hussain (Washington, D.C.: AEI Press, 1999) 10-18.

towards the objective of regime change since 1991. In an interview by the author with Anthony Lake, he clarified the situation as being:

> The problem was that we could not, at that time, state explicitly that the purpose of our policy was the overthrow of the regime... because if that became explicitly stated at that time it would blow apart the coalition, as such a goal did not fall explicitly within the terms of the UN resolutions. Although when we argued that there needed to be full compliance with all the resolutions passed in the wake of the first Gulf War, in effect, that was calling for [Saddam Hussain's] overthrow because, if he observed the provisions calling for an end to repression, then his regime would fall.[83]

Therefore, Lake's remarks underline that containment was viewed by the administration as a tactical means of achieving its overarching strategic objective of regime change. But in terms of how this strategic policy of regime change was implemented, it is necessary to provide an examination of CIA operations, and those involving opposition groups, undertaken by the Clinton administration towards Iraq.

In terms of opposition groups, the Clinton administration continued to support the INC as a means of bringing about a "democratic and pluralist government in Iraq that can live in peace with its neighbors and its own people."[84] Washington saw the INC as useful tool in fostering a degree of domestic opposition to the Iraqi regime, but not as a direct threat.[85] Indeed, Lake commented in an interview with the author that "the institution that could actually overthrow Saddam was the Iraqi military."[86] Thus, the administration did not believe groups such as the INC were going to actually unseat Saddam Hussain.

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[83] Anthony Lake, Telephone Interview with Author, 27 Sep. 2004.

[84] Robert H. Pelletreau, Developments in the Middle East, 4 Oct. 1994) <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/dispatch/1994/html/Dispatchv5no41.html >.

[85] Ibid.

[86] Lake, Telephone Interview with Author.

In March 1995 however, the INC launched a military offensive against Iraqi military forces and admittedly made advances against them. With a sizeable number of defections having occurred to the INC, it seemed that a real threat was being posed to the regime of Saddam Hussain.[87] For Washington, however, the advances posed the problem that a victory by the INC forces would have potentially threatened the territorial integrity of Iraq due to the major role of Kurdish separatist movements in mounting the insurgency. But given that it would have likely had a bearing on the stability of neighbouring states, its success would have been contrary to the US strategic interests of an unhindered flow of hydrocarbon resources from the region.[88]

In light of the threat posed to the territorial integrity of Iraq by a potential INC victory during March 1995, the US withdrew its support for the insurrection.[89] The decision to withdraw all support for the insurrection is reported as having come directly from the White House.[90] The unwillingness to support the INC in this effort was a departure of official policy by the Clinton administration as US policy towards the INC was stipulated as:

> We are also providing stronger backing for the Iraqi National Congress (INC) as a democratic alternative to the Saddam Hussain regime. The INC has succeeded in broadening its base to encompass representatives of all three major communities in Iraq: Sunni, Shi'ite and Kurd. It is committed, as are we, to maintaining the territorial integrity of Iraq and to adhering to Iraq's international responsibilities. We are now urging others in the region to accord the INC the recognition and support it deserves.[91]

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[87] Wurmser, Tyranny's Ally 14-15.

[88] Pelletreau, Developments in the Middle East.

[89] Wurmser, Tyranny's Ally 14-15.

[90] Jim Hoagland, "How CIA's Secret War on Saddam Collapsed," Washington Post 26 June 1997, A21.

[91] Martin Indyk, The Clinton Administration's Approach to the Middle East, 18 May 1993 .

Although Washington clearly supported the insurgency activities of the INC as a means of promoting domestic opposition within Iraq, the Clinton administration reneged on its policy position by not supporting the INC as a replacement to Saddam's regime. It has been speculated that the Clinton administration's reversal in policy is on account of their unwillingness to get embroiled in an INC orchestrated military engagement,[92] which could have placed unwanted pressure on the territorial integrity of Iraq that was contrary to US interests.

The withdrawal of US support for the March 1995 insurgency resulted in the fragmentation of the Kurdish coalition and also in the failure of the INC offensive,[93] and the INC's ability to mount any effective opposition to Baghdad cease.[94] More importantly though, it marked the failure of CIA covert operations in northern Iraq, and damaged US credibility with the Kurdish factions and those remaining in the INC.[95]

Washington subsequently opted to focus its insurgency efforts on the newly emerging Iraqi National Accord (INA), as this was seen as the most viable means from which a coup d'état could occur from within the regime.[96] The INA, headed by Iyad Allawi, who was a former Iraqi intelligence official, was comprised mainly of military officers from the Sunni core of the Iraqi regime. Unlike the INC, which offered regime change through military confrontation, the INA had the potential to bring about an internal coup d'état. Importantly, an internal coup d'état was seen as unlikely to pose the same threats to the territorial integrity of Iraq as a military insurgency by the INC. Washington saw an internal coup as the most feasible and also the most politically expedient way of achieving regime change. Assistant Secretary of State Robert Pelletreau aptly commented, "the only way you were going

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[92] Hoagland, "How CIA's Secret War on Saddam Collapsed," A21.

[93] Ibid. A21.

[94] John Burgess and David Ottway, "Iraqi Opposition Unable to Mount Viable Challenge," Washington Post 12 Feb. 1998, A2.

[95] Ewan Thomas, et al., "How the CIA's Secret War in Iraq Turned into Utter Fiasco," Newsweek 23 Mar. 1998.: 5

[96] Wurmser, Tyranny's Ally 20-25.

to succeed in unseating the existing regime was through an internal military coup against it."[97] The defection of Hussain Kamal al-Majid and General Nizar al-Khazraji,[98] undoubtedly demonstrated to Washington that Saddam's inner circle was disloyal, fragmenting and thus conducive to undertaking an internal coup.

The key problem with the INA as an opposition movement, however, was that it had been "heavily penetrated by Iraqi security."[99] With the vast majority of the defections to the INA having come from the Iraqi military and Saddam's own inner circle, it is likely that many bogus defections would have occurred to provide disinformation and carry out counter-intelligence operations. This would have served to not only hamper the operations of the INA, but also to undermine and prevent any coup attempts from occurring against Saddam.

The infiltration of the INA by Iraqi intelligence proved to be the root cause of the failure of the INA as an insurgency movement. In 1996 an INA coup operation was thwarted by Iraqi intelligence and resulted in the execution of several hundred CIA backed conspirators within Iraq.[100] The lack of success in the INA's operation understandably placed Saddam in a more secure position and underlined the inability of the INA to initiate a coup. Although Washington continued to support the INA after 1996, it is only reasonable to conclude that the significant infiltration of the INA by Iraqi intelligence made its effectiveness and future likelihood of successfully carrying out a coup *very unlikely*.

The Clinton administration's strategic insurgency and covert regime change policy had, therefore, ultimately failed in fulfilling its objectives, and by 1996, was a policy option rendered ineffectual. Although the United States overtly premised its policy on an Iraqi full and complete compliance with UN resolutions, it covertly continued the Bush administration's official strategy of supporting insurgency movements within Iraq towards the ultimate objective of initiating regime change. Indeed, the

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[97] Wurmser, Tyranny's Ally 21.

[98] Nizar al-Khazraji was a former Iraqi Chief of Staff who defected to the INA in 1996.

[99] Cordesman, Iraq and the War of Sanctions 27.

[100] Wurmser, Tyranny's Ally 21.

pursuit of this strategy demonstrates the duplicitous nature of Clinton's policy as it was officially premised on a destruction of Iraq's prohibited weapons leading to reconciliation, whilst the true objective was regime change.

The support for the INC by Clinton was initially effective in serving the purpose of uniting the Kurdish factions and in fostering general opposition towards Saddam's regime. However, by 1995, the administration's unwillingness to militarily support the INC had resulted in the failure of the offensive and the collapse of the CIA sponsored insurgency in northern Iraq. The regime change strategy of the administration can therefore be split into two parts: firstly, using the INC as a means of weakening Saddam's regime and thus making it more susceptible to a coup; and secondly, it switched its focus in 1995 towards the INA as a means of instigating a coup. In sum, this demonstrates the pursuit of regime change as a strategic objective since 1991 through internal means.

4.4 The Failure of Tactical Containment

In the aftermath of the liberation of Kuwait in 1991, the Iraqi domestic economic infrastructure virtually collapsed. As a consequence, the Iraqi people faced a detrimental humanitarian predicament and the government was not in a position to alleviate it. UNSCR 687 incorporated provisions that exempted food and medicine from the embargo, as well as easing the restrictions on Iraqi assets for use in purchasing such supplies. Security Council Resolution 706, passed on 15 August, was a direct response to meet these needs. It gave Iraq the ability to sell up to US$1.6 billion in oil over a six month period using an escrow account, which could be used to purchase food and medicine, and to compensate Kuwait.[101] For Saddam, this UN initiative posed a threat to his rule as the control of revenue and provision of supplies would fall to the UN which would consequently be seen as an alternative authority within Iraq.[102] As compliance with the humanitarian relief provisions of UNSCR 687 and 706 challenged the rule of Saddam, Baghdad's response was to adopt a self-

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[101] UNSCR 706 of 15 Aug. 1991, Para. 1.

[102] Pollack, The Threatening Storm 60.

sufficiency programme rather than co-operating and utilising the provisions the UN had provided it.[103]

During the first Clinton administration, the humanitarian situation within Iraq weakened support amongst the international community, most notably among Arab states, for the multilateral sanctions mandate. In response to these concerns, the United States proposed UNSCR 968 on 14 April 1995, dubbed the 'oil-for-food' programme, which greatly expanded the oil sales Iraq could use for purchasing humanitarian provisions.[104]

Despite the introduction of this programme, 'sanctions fatigue' amongst UN member states was clearly growing and being fostered by Iraq.[105] Iraq realised that the most effective method of having the sanctions lifted was to divide the will of the Security Council on the sanctions and inspections processes. Apart from highlighting the humanitarian impact of the sanctions, Baghdad proactively engaged in discussions with Russia and France on lucrative oil and trade agreements. Although the State Department attempted to refute Iraq's claims on the effect of sanctions, it had little impact.[106] In addition to this, it is reasonable to believe that both France and Russia had a vested interest in seeing the sanctions lifted, as Iraq owed them US$4 billion and US$8 billion respectively.[107] Indeed, Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov commented that "[w]ithout sanctions, the Iraqis would sell oil and pay us; with sanctions, they sell oil and use the sanctions as an excuse not to pay us."[108] This was used by Iraq to make these countries support the lifting of sanctions, due to their

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[103] Dilip Hiro, Neighbors, Not Friends: Iraq and Iran after the Gulf Wars (London; New York: Routledge, 2001) 25-67.

[104] United Nations, Memorandum of Understanding between the Secretariat of the United Nations and the Government of Iraq on the Implementation of Security Council Resolution 986 (1995).

[105] Mary. E. O'Connell, "Debating the Law of Sanctions," European Journal of International Law 13.1 (2002): 69-71.

[106] See United States, Department of State, Saddam Hussain's Iraq, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1999) 1-29.

[107] Kenneth Katzman, "Iraq: International Support for US Policy," CRS Issue Brief for Congress, (98-114F), Washington D.C.: Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress: GPO, 19 Feb. 1998, 10pp, 12/08/03 <http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/report/crs/98-114.htm>.

[108] Albright and Woodward, Madam Secretary 275.

own national economic interests. Therefore Washington's emphasis, and reliance on a concerted multilateral response to Iraq, was unravelling due to the humanitarian effects of the sanctions policy and the resolute efforts by Iraq to further divisions within the international community.

The oil-for-food programme was subsequently further expanded[109] in order to reduce the opposition to sanctions, which was occurring mainly through humanitarian concerns. For Washington however, the policy of maintaining multilateral international support for sanctions, by providing backing for increased Iraqi oil sales for humanitarian supplies, was in essence a double-edged sword. In order to maintain multilateral support for the sanctions policy, the US supported the oil-for-food programme, but this strategy resulted in weakening the strict nature of sanctions on Iraq. Mary O'Connell comments:

> The agreement contained in UN Security Council Resolution 1153 more than doubled the cash Iraq would receive every six months. In fact, it potentially allowed Iraq to sell US$10.5 billion a year of oil, which compares to average Iraqi annual oil exports of US$11.5 billion (in 1998 dollars) during 1981-1989... This compares with US$1.32 billion every six months under the prior agreement, or US$2.64 billion a year.[110]

Therefore, the Clinton administration's multilateral policy of containment through sanctions on Iraq was showing signs of deficiency and potential failure, in the light of a weakening of international support for the indefinite continuation of sanctions. Whilst Washington's support for easing the humanitarian crisis served the diplomatic purpose of revitalising its multilateral support base, thus strengthening the integrity of the multilateral coalition, at the same time it undermined the strict nature of the sanctions and provided a diplomatic success for Iraq through the increased revenue it had at its disposal.

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[109] Its provisions were expanded by UNSCR 1143 of 4 Dec. 1997 and UNSCR 1158 of 28 Mar. 1998.

[110] O'Connell, "Debating the Law of Sanctions," 270.

Despite Iraq being found in breech of its obligations by the UN, Washington found that the international community's willingness to support UN sanctions indefinitely was increasingly wavering. Many saw the sanctions as having created a significant humanitarian predicament for the Iraqi people.[111] It appears, however, that the main cause of the humanitarian crisis was the deliberate withholding of humanitarian supplies by the Iraqi regime.[112] Saddam's regime withheld supplies in order to *create a humanitarian crisis* amongst the Iraqi population, which served the purpose of fostering divisions within the international community towards enforcing sanctions.[113] Indeed, the Iraqi regime purposely failed to utilise the available resources provided for it under the oil-for-food programme in a deliberate effort to perpetuate the humanitarian suffering of the Iraqi people for its own purely political objectives.[114]

Iraq's strategy was undoubtedly effective in creating divisions in the Security Council. The increased debate as to the actual legality of UN sanctions towards Iraq further undermined the US position due to the issue over whether they were in line with both the legal principal of proportionality and with customary international humanitarian law standards.[115]

The regional political ramifications of the sanctions were viewed in terms of the humanitarian predicament of the Iraqi people. The humanitarian situation inflamed regional public opinion towards the US, and Secretary of State Albright found that the rulers of Qatar, Bahrain and Kuwait were deeply concerned with the plight of the Iraqi people. This impacted on their support for the US position towards Iraq.[116] Further compounding the loss of regional support was the slow pace of negotiations

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[111] Geoff Simons, Imposing Economic Sanctions: Legal Remedy or Genocidal Tool? (London: Pluto, 1999) 173-80; Geoff Simons, Targeting Iraq: Sanctions and Bombing in US Policy (London: Saqi Books, 2002) 63-85; and Eric Rouleau, "America's Unyielding Policy Towards Iraq," Foreign Affairs 74.1 (1995): 59-74.

[112] Pollack, The Threatening Storm 125-44.

[113] Cordesman, Iraq and the War of Sanctions 269-71.

[114] Pollack, The Threatening Storm 125-44.

[115] O'Connell, "Debating the Law of Sanctions," 269-74.

[116] Albright and Woodward, Madam Secretary 278.

in the Arab–Israeli peace process following the election of Binyamin Netanyahu. These factors made the US policy of containment towards Iraq loose vital support from Arab states and the wider international community, which further served to encourage Saddam to defy the UN sanctions policy.

In light of the split in the international community, Iraq focused its energies on attempting to divide the Security Council, whilst continuing active non-cooperation during 1997–98. With Russia and France both showing an unwillingness to resort to force in order to compel Iraq,[117] it was clear to Baghdad that it was succeeding in dividing the will of the international community and that the determination to enforce UN resolutions was lacking. The concerted Iraqi effort to defy UN resolutions saw Iraq have four further UN Security Council Resolutions passed against it, as it was found to be in breech of its obligations.[118]

4.4.1 Domestic Political Factors

The continued Iraqi defiance of UN resolutions and the emerging divisions within the international coalition towards the sanctions were clear evidence of a failing US position. Members of the US Congress were openly critical of the situation vis-à-vis Iraq and the general mood felt in Congress was usefully summed up by the Chairman of the Congressional Committee on Energy and Natural Resources:

> [A]ctions by the administration and the UN particularly have rendered the effectiveness of the sanctions less than meaningful, and without effective sanctions the UN inspectors in my opinion will never be able to force Saddam to destroy his weapons of mass destruction.[119]

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[117] O'Connell, "Debating the Law of Sanctions," 227.

[118] UNSCR 1115 of 21 Jun. 1997, UNSCR 1134 of 23 Oct. 1997, UNSCR 1137 of 12 Nov. 1997 and UNSCR 1205 of 5 Nov. 1998.

[119] Qtd. in Katzman, "Iraq: International Support for US Policy," 4.

The immediate response given by Congress to Iraq's defiance was a ruling that Iraq was in material breach of its international obligations.[120] The Congressional dissatisfaction with the administration, and realisation that US policy towards Iraq had virtually failed, was heightened by the testimony of the former Chief of UNSCOM's Concealment and Investigation Unit, Scott Ritter. Ritter accused the Clinton administration of deliberately interfering in the operations of UNSCOM, with the express intention of *preventing* a confrontation from occurring.[121] The implication from Ritter's testimony was that the Clinton administration actively and deliberately impeded the weapons inspection processes in order prevent a confrontation from occurring, which would have further divided the international coalition. Ritter specifically suggested that Secretary of State Madeline Albright intervened in the independent inspection process by delaying the no-notice inspections on 6-9 August 1998. From Ritter's testimony, it was widely reported this was a deliberate action by Albright to prevent a confrontation.[122] Ritter also alleged that the CIA was using UNSCOM as a means of gathering intelligence. Former UNSCOM Chairman Richard Butler, however, convincingly rebutted Ritter's allegations that the US had interfered with the operations of UNSCOM.[123] Although Butler also denied that the CIA gathered intelligence through UNSCOM,[124] it subsequently transpired that this aspect of Ritter's allegation was accurate.[125] Indeed, not only did the CIA covertly participate in the inspection process and receive full briefings from UN weapon inspectors, they also were highly involved in providing intelligence to further the inspection mandate.[126]

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[120] Barton Gellman, "Gingrich Opens File on White House Iraq Policy," Washington Post 29 Aug. 1998, A2.

[121] In Burgess and Ottway, "Iraqi Opposition Unable to Mount Viable Challenge," A2.

[122] Cordesman, Iraq and the War of Sanctions 271.

[123] Richard Butler, Saddam Defiant: The Threat of Weapons of Mass Destruction and the Crisis of Global Security (London: Phoenix, 2001) 193-98.

[124] Ibid. 197-98.

[125] Barton Gellman, "US Spied on Iraqi Military Via UN," Washington Post 2 Mar. 1999, A2.

[126] Bob Woodward, Plan of Attack (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004) 245.

Ritter's testimony had a damning effect in Congress on perceptions towards the Clinton administration. Speaker of the House, Newt Gingrich, was scathing in his criticism by suggesting that the effect of the administration was to appease Iraq, and that its "tough rhetoric on Iraq has been a deception masking a real policy of weakness and concession."[127] In addition to this, Ritter gained international notoriety as vocal critic of the Clinton administration's policy strategy[128] and, given his credentials as a former Chief Weapons Inspector, it was likely he had some influence on public opinions towards Clinton's foreign policy.

The stagnation of the US position towards Iraq during 1997-98 led to a growing number of calls within Congress for increased efforts to overthrow Saddam Hussain's regime. Congress recognised that it was the regime of Saddam that posed the continuing threat to international peace and security and, through legislation in January 1998, urged the President "to work with Congress in furthering a long term policy aimed at definitively ending the threat to international peace and security posed by the government of Iraq and its weapons of mass destruction programme".[129] The growing calls for direct action against the Iraqi regime ultimately resulted in Congress adopting the Iraq Liberation Act on 31 October 1998.[130] Proposed by Majority Leader Trent Lott and House International Relations Committee Chairman Benjamin Gillman, the Iraq Liberation Act specified that "[i]t should be the policy of the United States to support efforts to remove the regime headed by Saddam Hussain from power in Iraq and to promote the emergence of a democratic government to replace that regime."[131] The bill, which received bipartisan support and passed by a margin of 360-38, gave President Clinton the authority to allocate US$97 million in defence equipment to Iraqi opposition groups, and a further US$2 million for

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[127] Gellman, "Gingrich Opens File on White House Iraq Policy."

[128] Scott Ritter, "An Ineffective Policy toward Baghdad," International Herald Tribune 17 Aug. 1999, 5.

[129] United States, Senate, Condemning Iraq's Threat to International Peace and Security, Cong. 105, 2nd Sess., Res 711988, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 21 Jan. 1998) 2pp. 17/12/03 <http://weblog.theviewfromthecore.com/2004_02/ind_003148.html>.

[130] United States, House, Iraq Liberation Act of 1998, H.R. 466, P.L. 105-338, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 31 Oct. 1998) 8pp. 17/12/03 <http://www.iraqwatch.org/government/US/Legislation/ILA.htm>.

[131] Ibid. Sect. 3.

opposition groups' radio and television broadcasts. The adoption of this legislation clearly originated from the failure of the multilateral approach towards Iraq, and marked a decisive shift in Congressional pressure on US policy from containment towards overtly perusing regime change. Moreover, it is important to recognise that although this legislation came clearly from Congress, the administration viewed the new policy with some degree of scepticism[132] as it was seen to be hampering efforts to maintain the multilateral coalition towards the maintenance of sanctions. Nevertheless, the covert policy towards regime change since 1991 had now become an official policy.

4.4.2 Continuing Iraqi Defiance

Only two months after Richard Butler had taken over from Rolf Ekeus as the Chairman of the UNSCOM inspection team, Iraq provoked a major crisis in an effort to shake off the inspections and sanctions. On 13 September 1997, the Iraqi regime refused the UN inspectors direct access to the military barracks in Tikrik. In this instance, UNSCOM was informed that the site they were planning on visiting was classed as a "sensitive" site. Under an agreement in 1996 between Rolf Ekeus and the Iraqi government, only four UNSCOM personnel would conduct the inspection of such sites. The inspection team was initially denied access to the site, and despite an agreement that no vehicles may be used within the site or leave it, several did so. Moreover, the UNSCOM Chief Arial Inspector was prevented by Iraqi officials from photographing the site, which was in clear breech of Iraq's legal obligations. When the inspectors finally gained access to the site after three hours, they found evidence that documentation had been removed from the site.[133]

Two days after the incident at Tikrit military base a similar incident occurred at the Sarabadi Republican Guard base.[134] Later that month, however, there was a standoff

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[132] Kenneth Katzman, "Iraq: US Efforts to Change the Regime," CRS Report for Congress, (RL31339), Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, 22 Mar. 2002, 16pp, 23/10/03 <http://www.casi.org.uk/info/usdocs/crs/020322rl31339.pdf>.

[133] Butler, Saddam Defiant 96-97.

[134] Ibid. 97.

over the inspection of the Iraqi Special Security Organisation (SSO) headquarters, and a major crisis unfolded. The inspectors were stopped in the vicinity of the SSO headquarters at gunpoint. Despite direct negotiations between Tariq Aziz and Butler, the UNSCOM inspectors were prevented from gaining access on the justification that the SSO headquarters were part of a presidential site. With the inspectors being held at gunpoint, they were withdrawn on account of fears for their safety.

UNSCOM Chairman Richard Butler formed the opinion that the arbitrary prevention of inspectors from accessing certain sites, and the lack of substantive co-operation, made it clear that the priority of Iraq was to maintain WMD stockpiles rather than to get a clean bill of health from the UN. Butler commented that:

> The claim that Saddam Hussain's regime wanted, above all, to rid Iraq of economic sanctions was false. Iraq's priority... had always been to retain weapons of mass destruction – and, perhaps in particular, a biological weapons capability. Because disarmament and relief of sanctions are tied together under international law, this means that Saddam's ability to hold on to such weapons is far more important to him than the welfare of 22 million ordinary Iraqis.[135]

Indeed, at face value, it is logical to conclude that given Iraq's failure to substantively comply with its obligations, its priority was *to maintain* an unconventional weapons programme. However, it also seems clear that Iraq had a real desire to rid itself of UN sanctions: therefore it seemed apparent that Iraq's priority was to covertly maintain some form of WMD capabilities whilst also attempting to rid itself of the UN sanctions and the inspections mandate.

The response at the UN Security Council to Iraq's defiance was UNSCR 1134 of 23 October 1997. Whilst the resolution did not find Iraq in 'material breech' of its obligations, it did note with 'grave concern' Iraq's recent obstruction of the UN mandate. Unlike previous Security Council Resolutions, UNSCR 1134 was not adopted unanimously. Three permanent members of the Security Council – China,

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[135] Butler, Saddam Defiant 100.

France and Russia abstained in the vote. It would have therefore been clear to Iraq that sanctions fatigue was taking effect at the Security Council.

With the tide of international opinion moving in its favour, Baghdad decided to up the stakes by barring US nationals from partaking in UNSCOM inspections.[136] In addition to this, Tariq Aziz also specified that American provided U-2 flights must cease. Whilst the UN condemned Iraq's position, a stalemate developed.[137] The UNSCOM inspection teams that comprised US nationals were prevented from partaking in the inspections, and from this, the inspections process ground to a halt. Although the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, attempted to reach a political solution by sending UN Special Envoys to Baghdad, a solution was not forthcoming.[138]

A breakthrough in the stalemate came via Russian diplomatic offices on 20 November 1997. Tariq Aziz held talks with Russian Foreign Minister Primakov and reached an agreement that Iraq would allow a resumption of the UNSCOM inspections with the provision that the inspection process would be conducted effectively in order to usher in a speedy lifting of the sanctions.[139] Following this announcement, the representatives of the five permanent members of the Security Council met in Geneva to conclude a joint statement on the Iraq-Russia Agreement.

The Geneva Agreement saw the representatives of the permanent members of the Security Council endorse the unconditional return of the inspectors, however, it was

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[136] Judy Aita, "UNSCOM Suspends Operations in Iraq," United States Information Agency 29 Oct. 1997, 12/03/03 <http://www.fas.org/news/iraq/1997/10/97102902_npo.html>.

[137] United Nations, Security Council, United Nations Security Council Statement on Iraq, (New York: United Nations, 29 Oct. 1997) 2pp. 25/10/03 <http://www.fas.org/news/iraq/1997/10/97102904_npo.html >.

[138] Judy Aita, "Iraq Rejects United Nations Overtures to Resume Co-Operation with UNSCOM," United States Information Agency 7 Nov. 1997, 12/06/02 <http://www.fas.org/news/iraq/1997/11/97110701_npo.html>.

[139] Government of Iraq, Joint Communique from the Iraqi and Russian Governments, 20 Nov. 1997, http://www.fas.org/news/iraq/1997/11/iraq_un_97_11_20.htm.

conceded that there would be an effort to make UNSCOM more 'effective' in its operations as a means of seeing the sanctions speedily lifted.[140]

Despite the positive outlook the Geneva Agreement provided, within a few months Iraq resorted to its former policy of disrupting the inspections process, which again indicated that it was trying to conceal a covert WMD programme. In the backdrop of this defiance, the United States and the United Kingdom continued to build up their military forces in the Persian Gulf, which had begun before the Geneva Agreement.

Given the continued military deployment and Iraq's failure to comply with its obligations, by February 1998, there was notable concern within the United Nations that the crisis was spiralling out of control. Kofi Annan took it upon himself to reach a political solution to the crisis and travelled to Baghdad to meet with Saddam Hussain.[141] The UN-brokered agreement provided Iraq a further opportunity to comply with its obligations with the provision that UN diplomats when travelling to Iraqi presidential sites would accompany the inspection teams. Whilst the United States held some scepticism that the UN-brokered agreement would actually work, they nonetheless welcomed it as it provided a resumption of the inspections.[142] The United States responded by sponsoring Security Council Resolution 1154, which provided, under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, the "severest consequences" for Iraq in the event of it violating its obligations under UNSCR 687.[143]

4.4.2.1 Operation Desert Fox and Stalemate

With Congressional, in particular the Republican members of Congress, applying pressure on the administration to adopt a more aggressive strategy towards Baghdad,

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[140] Wendy Lubetkin, "Secretary of State: Perm Five Unity Brings Apparent Reversal in Iraq," United States Information Agency 20 Nov. 1997, 26/09/03 <http://www.fas.org/news/iraq/1997/11/97112006_tpo.html >; Albright and Woodward, Madam Secretary 280-81; and Butler, Saddam Defiant 120.

[141] Butler, Saddam Defiant: The Threat of Weapons of Mass Destruction and the Crisis of Global Security 140-68.

[142] Albright and Woodward, Madam Secretary 283-84.

[143] UNSCR 1154 of 2 Mar. 1998, Par. 3.

Washington was forced to take a more proactive approach towards the enforcement of UN resolutions. Despite the UN-brokered agreement that had been concluded in February 1998, by August Iraq's Revolutionary Command Council and the Ba'ath Party Command halted their cooperation with UNSCOM and the IAEA on the basis that the oil embargo needed to be lifted and the composition of the UNSCOM and IAEA inspection teams should be reorganised. Iraq did, however, allow the monitoring as required by UNSCR 715 to continue. As a result of Iraq's defiance of its obligations under international law and its failure to honour the UN-brokered agreement of February 1998, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1194 which ultimately condemned Iraq for its non-compliance.

However, when Clinton signed into law the Iraq Liberation Act on 31 October 1998, Iraq responded on the same day by terminating its co-operation with the inspectors. Clinton had been under pressure from the Republican controlled Congress to take more forceful steps, and Iraq understandably viewed this policy adoption as highly provocative and illegal action. Iraq's cessation of co-operation with the inspectors resulted in the adoption of UNSCR 1205 of 5 November 1998. This resolution condemned Iraq for having halted its cooperation indefinitely with UNSCOM and the IAEA.[144]

In the face of a divided international community, Iraqi's cessation of the weapons inspection process proved to be the most significant test to the determination of the United States to enforce UN resolutions. On 14 November 1998 Clinton, along with British Prime Minister Blair, ordered air strikes on Iraq, but ultimately postponed them for 24 hours due to Iraqi concessions. With Iraq declaring it would fully and unconditionally comply with UN resolutions on 15 November, the air strikes were called off. It was made clear by Tony Blair that the United States and the United Kingdom would act militarily if Iraq withdrew its cooperation again.[145]

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[144] Iraq's Revolutionary Command Council and the Ba'ath Party Command halted their cooperation with UNSCOM and the IAEA on 5 Aug. 1998, and the government of Iraq terminated its cooperation on 31 Oct. 1998.

[145] Cordesman, Iraq and the War of Sanctions 366-67.

Despite the threat of force hanging over Iraq, Richard Butler informed the Security Council on 8 December that Iraq was continuing to hamper the inspections process. In his sobering report to the Secretary-General of the United Nations on 15 December 1998 Butler stated: "Iraq did not provide the full cooperation it promised on 14 November 1998".[146] With the very real likelihood of military action as a result of Butler's report, the UN removed its staff from the UNSCOM mission in Baghdad on 15 December. On the following day, whilst the UN Security Council was in session and debating Butler's report, the United States and the United Kingdom carried out Operation Desert Fox, which involved concentrated air strikes on a variety of targets within Iraq.[147] The military strikes lasted for 72 hours, after which Clinton announced that the military objectives had been achieved.[148] Although the military air strikes were successful in degrading the military apparatus of Saddam's regime,[149] they did not prove successful in re-establishing Iraq's co-operation and compliance with UN resolutions and further reinforced divisions in the Security Council.[150]

The United States and the United Kingdom justified the legality of the air strikes under the provisions of UNSCR 1154 and 1205 under Chapter VII. The former stressed that Iraq must "accord immediate, unconditional and unrestricted access to the Special Commission and the IAEA in conformity with the relevant resolutions," and, "that any violation would have [the] severest consequences for Iraq."[151] Resolution 1205 provided condemnation for an Iraqi violation through its suspension of cooperation with UNSCOM and the IAEA. Although the resolutions did not explicitly authorise the use of force, it was argued that they provided *implied*

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[146] United Nations, UNSCOM, UNSCOM Chairman's Letter to the Security Council, United Nations, 15 Dec. 1998) 9pp. 12/08/03 <http://www.iraqwatch.org/un/UNSCOM/s-1998-1127.htm >.

[147] Alfred B. Prados and Kenneth Katzman, "Iraq: Former and Recent Military Confrontations with the United States," CRS Issue Brief for Congress, (IB94049), Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, 16 Oct. 2002, 18pp, 04/11/04 <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/14836.pdf>.

[148] Prados and Katzman, "Iraq: Former and Recent Military Confrontations with the United States."

[149] William Arkin, "The Difference Was in the Details," Washington Post 17 Jan. 1999, B1.

[150] Colum Lynch, "UN Arms Inspectors Will Not Return to Iraq," Washington Post 24 Sept. 1999, A22.

[151] UNSCR 1154 of 2 Mar. 1998, Par. 3.

authorisation.[152] In addition to the reliance on implied authorisation, the US and UK argued that UNSCR 678 provided the authorisation[153] for the use of force, due to its provision that "Iraq comply fully with Resolution 660 and all subsequent relevant resolutions."[154] However, this argument is open to question under international law.[155] Therefore, the position taken by the United States and the United Kingdom in justifying Operation Desert Fox clearly demonstrates their departure from the multilateral doctrine as they carried out military action without the express authorisation from a Security Council Resolution.

Therefore, the shift in *official* US policy towards regime change occurred in 1998 as a result of the Republican Congressional pressure on the basis that the multilateral effort had failed due to the unwillingness of the international community to enforce resolutions in the face of clear Iraqi defiance. Indeed, Clinton commented in 1998 that Saddam posed a threat to the whole world and that "[the] best way to end that threat once and for all is with a new Iraqi government."[156] Martin Indyk notably commented that:

> We have come to the conclusion, after more than seven years of effort at seeking Saddam's compliance with UN Security Council resolutions, that his regime will never be able to be rehabilitated or reintegrated into the community of nations. This conclusion is based on what Saddam's record makes manifest – that he will never relinquish what remains of his WMD arsenal, and that he will never cease being a threat to the region, US interests, and his own people. It is based on Saddam's policies, not on any predetermined policy of our own. Thus, in November of last year, President Clinton announced a

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[152] Gray, "From Unity to Polarization: International Law and the Use of Force against Iraq," 12.

[153] Ibid.

[154] UNSCR 687 of 3 Apr. 1991, Par. 1.

[155] Gray, "From Unity to Polarization: International Law and the Use of Force against Iraq," 12-13.

[156] Albright and Woodward, Madam Secretary 287.

> new policy with regard to Iraq: henceforth, we would contain Saddam Hussain until a new regime can govern in Baghdad.[157]

Clearly by 1998, Clinton's official policy strategy towards Iraq had completely changed. Importantly, he had ultimately come to officially accept the very same strategic understanding that his predecessor, President George H. W. Bush, had adopted towards Iraq: a normalisation of relations and the security of the Persian Gulf could not be ensured while Saddam was in power.

4.4.3 US Policy Post-Operation Desert Fox

In the aftermath of Operation Desert Fox, which lasted for only 72 hours, it seems that the war objectives were geared towards not only debilitating Iraq's capability for threatening neighbouring states and its production of weapons of mass destruction, but also to destabilise Saddam's regime. US Defence Secretary Cohen and General Henry H. Shelton, the Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, indicated that "American forces attacked not just the headquarters of Iraqi military intelligence, Special Republican Guard and Special Security Organization, but also barracks housing Republican Guard troops, while regular Army units were left alone."[158] It was reported that "[t]his aspect of the war plan served what military officials acknowledged was the larger, if undeclared, purpose of the air strikes: to weaken Saddam Hussain's hold on power by damaging his personal support structure and sowing unrest within the Iraqi military."[159] This was in addition to the stated objective of degrading Iraq's WMD capability, despite 'dual use' facilities not targeted in order to avoid civilian casualties. Indeed, Sandy Berger recognised that in the aftermath of the bombing campaign, the only choices left for US policy was for:

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[157] Martin Indyk, "Indyk Says US Is Committed to a Better Future for the Middle East," Indyk remarks at New York Council on Foreign Relations, New York: GPO, 23 Apr. 1999. 12pp. 13/05/03 <http://www.usembassy-amman.org.jo/4Ind.html>.

[158] Bradley Graham, "The Big Military Question: What's Next?" Washington Post 24 Dec. 1998, A5.

[159] Ibid.

"total Iraqi compliance with UN Security Council demands, which is unlikely, or the downfall of Saddam Hussain, which is inevitable."[160]

Whilst the *official* position of the United States changed towards the promotion of regime change as a result of Congressional legislation, the multilateral containment approach came under strong criticism from France, Russia and China in the wake of the air strikes. Russian President Boris Yeltsin, who was under pressure from the Russian Duma and was potentially facing impeachment, used the air strikes as a means to deflect attention away from his domestic problems and ultimately withdrew the Russian Ambassadors temporarily from both Britain and the United States as a political gesture. Spurred by his domestic political concerns, Yeltsin highlighted the US and British air strikes as an illegal action and pressed for the lifting of UN sanctions towards Iraq.[161] Clearly, the US position of multilaterally containing Iraq through the United Nations had become virtually untenable in the aftermath of Operation Desert Fox.

With the unravelling of the sanctions policy in the United Nations, Saddam Hussain raised the stakes by declaring that he no longer recognised the northern and southern no-fly zones on the basis on their illegality under international law. Hussain's calculation resulted in a sustained war of attrition, which ultimately further degraded his air defence capability.[162]

The French Ambassador to the United Nations, Alain Dejammet, recommended altering the current system of requiring Iraq to account for its stockpiles towards one which prevented Iraq from acquiring new stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction.[163] The problem for the United States in accepting this position, according to State Department spokesman James P. Rubin, was that "Iraq should not

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[160] Thomas W. Lippman, "Two Options for US Policy," Washington Post 20 Dec. 1998, A2.

[161] David Buchan, "Europeans Rally to Allies Cause," Financial Times 19 Dec. 1998, 59.

[162] Steven Komarow, "Saddam's Ouster Is Goal Now, US Officials Say," USA Today 21 Dec. 1998, 01A; and Barbara Slavin, "UNSCOM Unlikely to Return to Iraq," USA Today 21 Dec. 1998, 18A.

[163] The Associated Press, "France Offers Plan to Lift Iraqi Embargo," USA Today Online 13 Jan. 1999, 12/02/03 <http://www.usatoday.com/news/index/iraq/iraq549.htm>.

be liberated from the sanctions until it rids itself of all weapons of mass destruction."[164] With the United States proving unwilling to lift sanctions until Iraq had verified the destruction of its weapons, the French proposal was not adopted. Similarly, Russia issued its own proposal on 15 January, which stated that "the embargo could be lifted once the council receives a report from an assessment team on the status of Iraqi cooperation on disarmament and decides to start the monitoring system."[165] Clinton's counter-proposal, which proved equally unsatisfactory, was to "allow Baghdad to borrow against a UN escrow fund to buy food and medicine, encourage humanitarian contributions to Iraq, and strengthen UNICEF and other UN programs already on the ground."[166] The US proposal was in essence an extension of the oil-for-food programme. Iraq however rejected this proposal as Iraq's Trade Minister, Medhi Saleh, stated that "Iraq will not accept anything short of a comprehensive lifting of the unfair embargo."[167]

Given the conjecture already discussed regarding the unlikelihood that Iraq could actually account for its prohibited weapons, it seems that the French and Russian proposals were a more realistic means of containing Iraq's potential long term threat whilst maintaining the international consensus towards Iraq. Therefore, whilst Clinton's decision to insist on Iraq fully accounting for its stockpiles before the sanctions could be lifted was, strictly speaking, a legitimate course of action in the light of Iraq's legal obligations, it was not a realistic policy position. However, given that the United States was committed to regime change, the permission of Iraq to have sanctions lifted would have increased the regimes economic position, thus making it more secure. Therefore, in keeping with the US strategy of regime change towards Iraq, Washington demonstrated an unwillingness to lift sanctions regardless of whether Iraq could actually account for its prohibited weapons.

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[164] The Associated Press, "French Proposal Leads to Talks on Iraq," USA Today Online 14 Jan. 1999, 12/02/03 <http://www.usatoday.com/news/index/iraq/iraq550.htm>.

[165] The Associated Press, "US Rejects Russian Solution on Iraq," USA Today Online 15 Jan. 1999, 12/02/03 <http://www.usatoday.com/news/index/iraq/iraq553.htm>.

[166] Ibid.

[167] Ibid.

With the impasse in the Security Council, coupled with Baghdad's unwillingness to co-operate, UN inspections within Iraq remained suspended for the remainder of Clinton's second term of office. The strategic priority, however, rested clearly on the promotion of regime change. Under the terms of the Iraq Liberation Act, US$97 million was allocated to insurgent groups operating within Iraq, with the objective being to effect regime change. This policy was notably criticised by General Anthony Zinni, Commander of US Forces in the Persian Gulf, as not being a realistic policy option.[168] Zinni commented "I will be honest. I don't see an opposition group that has the viability to overthrow Saddam at this point."[169] Given the high number of competing opposition groups, it seems likely that Zinni's assessment was indeed correct. Martin Indyk's comments that "[i]t will take time and hard work," and that "a lot more will be done behind the scenes than will be noticeable publicly, at least at first," thus seem an accurate assessment of the situation. [170]

The Clinton administration refrained from providing the opposition groups with military help as, according to James Rubin, the United States was "not prepared to take action that is premature or that puts people's lives needlessly at risk... [t]here are a number of steps that have to be taken before we're in a position to provide lethal assistance."[171] By the end of the second Clinton administration, just under US$2 million of the allocated amount had been spent by the Pentagon. It was only in the final week of the Clinton administration that a plan for distributing a US$25 million Congressional aid package to further the efforts of opposition movements was formulated. This was an aid package in addition to the US$97 million provided for under the Iraq Liberation Act, of which only US$5 million had been allocated. But the Clinton administration was obligated into formulating a distribution plan for the

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[168] The Associated Press, "Top General Criticizes US Policy on Iraq," USA Today Online 28 Jan. 1999, 12/02/03 <http://www.usatoday.com/news/index/iraq/iraq567.htm>.

[169] Ibid.

[170] David Ensor, "US to Intensify Work with Iraqi Opposition Groups," CNN Online 16 Nov. 1998, 12/02/03 <http://edition.cnn.com/US/9811/16/saddam.overthrow/>.

[171] Harry Dunphy, "US Will Aid Iraqi Opposition," Associated Press 25 May 1999, 15/04/03 <http://www.iraqcmm.org/cmm/clari-990525.html>.

US$25 million aid package as Congress had incorporated it into the federal aid budget:[172]

> As a reflection of continued congressional support for the overthrow effort, a provision of the FY2001 foreign aid appropriation (H.R. 4811, P.L. 106-429, signed November 6, 2000) earmarked US$25 million in ESF for "programs benefiting the Iraqi people," of which at least: US$12 million was for the INC to distribute humanitarian aid inside Iraq; US$6 million was for INC broadcasting; and US$2 million was for war crimes issues. According to the appropriation the remaining US$5 million could be used to aid the seven groups eligible to receive assistance under the ILA.[173]

The Republican Congress was thus clearly pressing for Iraqi opposition groups to be assisted in order to effect regime change within Baghdad. Therefore, on a domestic political level, the Bush administration came to power with strong political support within Congress for the terms of the Iraq Liberation Act to be fulfilled.

Overall, given the impasse at the United Nations, Clinton's tactical policy of intrusive inspections and sanctions, whilst pursuing a regime change strategy, lay in tatters. Multilateral support for the sanctions had virtually disappeared in the aftermath of Operation Desert Fox. The continued application of sanctions, which were a highly watered down version of their original inception, only remained active through the safeguard of a potential US veto. Although Clinton's policy had *officially* reverted towards regime change, given the fractured state of the opposition movements (which was to a certain extent a product of Clinton's unsuccessful covert efforts at inducing regime change), the prospect of a credible armed insurgency was remote indeed.

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[172] United States, House, Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, H.R. 4811, P.L. 106-429, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 19 Dec. 2000) 45pp. 17/09/03 <http://clinton4.nara.gov/OMB/legislative/7day/12-19-00.pdf>.

[173] Katzman, "Iraq: US Efforts to Change the Regime."

4.5 Summary Assessment

Clinton's official policy towards Iraq up until 1998 was for the application of sanctions until a full compliance with UN resolutions was achieved: this allowed for potential reconciliation once the sanctions had been lifted. This policy, however, served the US national interest as it allowed for a multilateral containment of Iraq which catered for Persian Gulf security. Comparatively, the strategy of George H. W. Bush's administration towards Iraq differed by way of it being centred on containment as a means of controlling potential threats *until regime change had occurred*, ruling out any prospect of reconciliation. Whilst the pursuit of regime change was a policy option, *it is strategically incompatible with the reconciliation through containment approach.*

It was not until October 1998, with the signing into law of the Iraq Liberation Act, that US policy *officially* reverted to the strategy of the previous Bush administration: *containment until regime change occurred.* Given the covert pursuit of regime change prior to this and its incompatibility with the containment leading to reconciliation path, the question of what exactly was Clinton's strategy towards Iraq prior to October 1998 is clearly justified.

Clinton's policy towards Iraq has almost uniformly been described as pursuing inconsistent and incompatible objectives. Indeed, Henry Kissinger accuses Clinton's policy towards Iraq of having lacked strategic clarity. This study has shown this perspective to be wanting as Clinton's duplicitous strategy of striving for incompatible objectives was more politically and strategically sophisticated than the current body of scholarship would have us believe. As already discussed, Clinton did not conceive a normalization of relations with Iraq as being possible while Saddam Hussain was in power but, nevertheless, had to balance the logic of pursuing an official regime change strategy against the long term need for the maintenance of international support for the multilateral sanctions based policy. The problem facing Clinton was that the adoption of an official regime change policy would have most likely fractured the support base of the multilateral sanctions based policy, rendering it wholly ineffective. Indeed, Robert Kagan comments that the "rehabilitation and reintegration of Saddam Hussain's Iraq" was precisely what most of Washington's

allies in Europe sought.[174] Clinton's strategy was, therefore, sophisticated in that it catered for this disparity by being officially committed to reconciliation,[175] after a full Iraqi compliance with UN resolutions had occurred, whilst covertly pursuing regime change. Clinton's duplicitous strategy thus received the benefit of international legitimacy through multilateralism whilst covertly a classic *realpolitik* strategy, reflecting the US national interest, was pursued. Indeed, it has been shown that Clinton refrained from supporting an armed military insurgency to unseat Saddam Hussain, preferring an internal coup d'état, as a result of the potential risks it may have had on the territorial integrity of Iraq and the geopolitical stability of the Persian Gulf. Therefore, Clinton's strategy was for regime change, but not at the expense of an armed insurgency or military invasion, which could have impacted upon US strategic interests in the wider Persian Gulf.

The uprisings in 1991 and the continual stream of defections that followed made an internal coup seem likely. Clinton continued the application of multilateral containment in order to control the threat Iraq posed to regional security. With Iraq facing the key issue of verifying the destruction of its prohibited weapons, the prospect of a long term necessity for sanctions was realistic. However, the sanctions also served the tactical role of weakening the regime of Saddam Hussain, both economically and militarily, making it more susceptible to a coup d'état.

The strategic objective of the Clinton administration towards Iraq was therefore premised on regime change from the offset, and its duplicitous commitment towards Iraq's compliance with UN resolutions was very much a tactical policy geared towards the continual multilateral containment of Iraq. The significance of this is that the US *strategy* towards Iraq during the Clinton administrations did not alter from its original inception in the previous Bush administration in 1991. Kissinger and others are therefore mistaken to assume that Clinton's strategy towards Iraq lacked clarity: it was in fact a policy which maintained a consistent strategic objective and was

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[174] Robert Kagan, Of Paradise and Power: America and Europe in the New World Order (New York: Knopf, 2004) 44.

[175] Clinton's commitment to a multilateral containment of Iraq provided a legal commitment, and thus official position, of being premised on a continuation of sanctions *until* Iraq had complied with its international obligations.

sophisticated in that it used tactical measures as a means of achieving a greater degree of international legitimacy. Moreover, it used containment as a means of controlling the threat posed by Saddam until a coup d'état, which was favourable to Washington, had occurred.[176]

Therefore, it was with the adoption of the Iraq Liberation Act and the collapse of the multilateral containment after Operation Desert Fox, that Clinton's tactical and covert strategic policies had ultimately failed by December 1998, resulting in the forced reversion by Congress to the Bush administrations official policy of regime change. By January 2001, Clinton's policy towards Iraq throughout his two terms of office had thus been consistent in its overall strategic objective of pursuing regime change through the only politically viable method of achieving this result: a coup d'état. What can be interpreted from Clinton's policy is that his tactical policy of multilateral containment had ultimately failed. For Gulf security, there was also the strategic failure of achieving regime change, not as a result of a policy mistake by Clinton, rather a product of the effectiveness of Iraq's security forces and the inability of the western intelligence agencies to effectively operate within Iraq.

5.0 UNITED STATES FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS IRAN 1993-2001

By 1993, bilateral relations with Iran remained chequered by both historical and contemporary differences. For the United States, one of the main issues hampering a rapprochement concerned Iran's continual opposition towards the Arab-Israeli peace process both rhetorically and substantively. In addition, its conventional military capability and alleged efforts to acquire a nuclear arsenal served as active barriers towards the goal of reconciliation. On a geostrategic level, Iran was seen by the United States as posing a potential threat to US allies in the Persian Gulf and also towards the freedom of the seas through its potential ability to disrupt shipping access through the Strait of Hormuz.

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[176] Not withstanding an armed invasion of Iraq to enact regime change, containment was seen as a requirement by Washington as a means of controlling the threats Iraq potentially posed the region until either regime change or its full compliance with UN resolutions was achieved.

The mutual hostility between Iran and the United States does not, however, correspond with their overlapping interests.[177] On a geostrategic level, politically and strategically important areas flag Iran's borders. Its large oil reserves coupled with its large deposits of natural gas clearly indicates Iran has great importance for the global economy. Moreover, its role as the most populous Shi'a country gives it a special role in Islamic jurisprudence. For Iran, trade relations with the United States have the potential for rapid economic development and regional ascendancy. Although co-operative relations potentially possessed the prospect of fulfilling such mutual interests and benefits, relations since 1979 were very much void of being built on such grounds.

The foreign relations of the United States and Iran in the time period 1993-01 is remarkable in that their respective foreign policies appeared to have mutually reinforced the others and thus lessened the prospects of substantive diplomacy. Whilst it is outside the context of this thesis to examine what factors actually determined Iran's foreign policy, this thesis does show that the impact of Iran's foreign policies on its bilateral relationship with the United States has served to prevent a rapprochement from occurring. Indeed, from the United States point of view, Iran's unwillingness to moderate its sponsorship of terrorist organizations, in addition to its vocal opposition to the peace process, has fuelled Congressional legislation against Iran. This is important because it created a domestic political environment within the United States which makes any 'softening' of US policy a politically charged option for the executive.

Overall, this analysis will show that the Clinton administration sought a moderation in Iran's policies in order to achieve a degree of reconciliation. Without this, Iran was seen as posing a direct threat to Persian Gulf security. For reasons outside the scope of this thesis, Iran did not moderate its policies to a level which could have made reciprocal measures by the executive a credible political option. Indeed, Iran's policies served as a means by which interest groups were able to mobilize support for a punitive containment of Iran through unilateral sanctions. This will be shown to

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[177] Zbigniew Brzezinski, et al., Iran: Time for a New Approach (Washington D.C.: Council on Foreign Relations, 2004), 9.

have restricted the options available to the executive and, in essence, usurped the foreign policy prerogative of the President. Nevertheless, the thesis will contend that Iran's failure or inability to moderate its provocative foreign policies resulted in a deepening of the bilateral hostility. It is conceded, however, that it is reasonable to assume that some aspects of Iranian foreign policy were, to a certain extent, a reaction to the unilateral measures enacted by Congress.

5.1 Domestic Political Context

Whilst it is outside the scope of this study to give a detailed analytical account of Iranian domestic and structural factors that have affected its own foreign policy towards the United States, the general end product will be highlighted as it is germane to understanding the constraints US foreign policy towards Iran faced in the time period of this study.

The CIA's involvement in overthrowing Prime Minister Mossadegh in 1953, coupled with the support of Shah Mohamed Reza Pahlavi, were very significant historical grievances for Iran. However, the Revolution itself did not immediately mark the onset of bilateral hostility, but rather it was the decision to allow the Shah into the United States for medical treatment which triggered a domestic backlash against America. The resulting seizure of the United States Embassy and the popular support it received, allowed for what Said Amir Arjomand has classified as a "clerical coup d'état."[178] This saw the radical clerics ultimately extend their power over the moderates and any remaining areas of the Iranian government and military. The resulting effect was that the Islamic Revolution became self-legitimising through it being defined as diametrically opposed to the United States and the West. Even with the accession of Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani to the Presidency following the death of Ayatollah Khomeini, these constraints arguably thwarted his efforts at détente. Therefore, there were significant domestic and institutional contextual factors within

[178] Qtd in Robert Snyder, The United States and Iran: Analysing the Structural Impediments to a Rapprochement (Abu Dhabi: Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research, 2001) 11.

Iran which made a rapprochement with the United States an arduous policy quagmire.[179]

Similarly, in the United States, historical relations have had an institutional bearing on its foreign policy towards Iran. As has already been discussed, the embassy hostage crisis and Iran's implication in terrorist attacks against the United States and Israel have been highly significant issues that have had a bearing on US foreign policy.

Domestically, Iran was generally portrayed in the Western media as a pariah nation inherently linked with terrorism. With images of Iranians chanting 'Death to America!' after a religious sermon and occasional burnings of the US and Israeli flags, generally speaking, little distinction was usually made in the media between the ruling theocracy's supporters as compared with the wider diversity in Iranian civil society and even within the government itself. Nevertheless, the Mullahs' attempts to gain legitimacy amongst their supporters both rhetorically and substantively through their opposition towards the United States, clear pressures were forced onto the US foreign policy agenda. Nevertheless, although American domestic perception of Iranian policies are important in evaluating domestic support for US foreign policy, in the case of the construction of US foreign policy towards Iran, the actions of Congress has shown itself to be particularly instrumental in determining this.

A central issue to understanding the driving force of Congressional impingement on US relations with Iran has been the role of special interest groups. With Iran's hostile position towards Israel, Jewish groups have played a key role in lobbying for the adoption of a pro-Israeli policy. Given Iran's hostile rhetoric and its alleged support for terrorist attacks against Israel, meant that pro-Israeli interest groups generally categorised Iran as a clear and present danger.

The umbrella organisation for the Jewish lobbies is the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC). Although US legislation prevents Israel from directly

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[179] Snyder, The United States and Iran 10-25.

providing funding or acting as a client of AIPAC, "Israel is the *de facto* client of several Jewish lobbies: it is with its interests alone that they are concerned."[180] Although there are several diverse pro-Jewish lobbies, they act in a fairly coordinated manner:

> Many AIPAC groups (among them the American Jewish Congress and the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith) have their own representatives in Washington. AIPAC has close working relations with other Jewish organisations, some of which are represented on its board. It also advises numerous Jewish PAC's across the United States.[181]

The Jewish lobby is, along with the National Rifle Association, one of the most influential and successful special interest groups in the United States. They yield a great deal of influence within Congress and their ability to have some bearing on Congressional voting is an important consideration in any evaluation of US policy that either directly or indirectly concerns Israel.

In addition to lobbyist groups, domestic voting blocks are also an important consideration. The so called 'Jewish vote' is significant in some areas such as New York and some North Eastern areas of the United States, but with there being in the region of 6 million Jewish individuals in the United States, they are a clear voting minority.[182] However, it is worthwhile distinguishing the 'Jewish vote' from the 'pro-Jewish vote,' which stems mainly from diverse conservative Christian communities. Indeed, Clinton's election campaign pronouncements on the Middle East were noted for being very supportive of the Israeli state. Whilst this can likely be accounted for by his genuine affinity towards the Israeli state and the Jewish people,[183] it also indirectly served the political purpose of catering for the significant American Christian and Jewish voting blocks.

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[180] Nigel Bowles, The Government and Politics of the United States, Comparative Government and Politics. (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1993) 227.

[181] Ibid.

[182] Nigel Bowles, The Government and Politics of the United States, 227.

[183] William J. Clinton, My Life (New York: Knopf, 2004) 294.

Although these factors are significant in varying degrees, it is important to recognise that the contextual issues external to the United States are germane to understanding their own objectives towards US relations with Iran in the time period of this study. Raymond Tanter has argued that Israeli national politics are linked with direction of AIPAC's lobbying on the US Congress following the liberation of Kuwait in 1991. Tanter maintains that AIPAC shifted its focus towards Iran following the defeat of the Likud party in Israeli national elections in 1992.[184] He suggests that as a result of AIPAC being in effect linked with the Likud, its defeat at the Israeli elections lessened AIPAC's influence within the Congressional halls of power. He goes on to say that by AIPAC immediately shifting its focus onto Iran, it was able to use this as a means of maintaining its influence within Washington following the defeat of the Likud.[185]

Additionally, many critics saw the Clinton administration as having an inherent pro-Israeli character of its own on account of the sizeable number of Jewish individuals that were present within it. Hossein Alikhani argues that within Clinton's National Security Council; seven out of eleven of its most senior Directors were Jewish, along with a large number of senior individuals within the White House and State Department. This indicates that there was an inherent pro-Israeli bias from the offset in Clinton's administration. Whilst Alikhani's argument has some merit, it should be viewed with caution as it is not methodologically feasible to measure its effect on US policy. However, it is reasonable to conclude that it was a factor that potentially fostered a degree of bias within the administration towards Israel.

5.1.1 Iran-Iraq Arms Non-Proliferation Act of 1992

During the course of the Iran-Iraq War, the military presence of the United States had progressively increased in the region as a means of securing its allies and to ensure the unrestricted supply of oil. Given the state of relations since the Islamic

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[184] Raymond Tanter, Rogue Regimes: Terrorism and Proliferation (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999) 55-57.

[185] Tanter, Rogue Regimes 56.

Revolution, the increased US military presence in the Persian Gulf was understandably seen by Tehran as a real threat to its national security. Coupled with this were its aggressive neighbour Iraq and its historical suspicion of Russia through its borders stretching from Afghanistan to the states on the Caspian basin. Given the threats Iran perceived, coupled with its conventional military forces being significantly degraded following its war with Iraq, it understandably saw a strategic need to rebuild its armed forces.

As Iran was not self-sufficient in domestic weaponry production, it undertook a concerted effort to rebuild its armed forces from overseas sources. Iran's decision to increase the size of its armed forces in the aftermath of the Iran-Iraq War was strategically provocative to Washington on account of the risk this potentially posed to US interests in the Persian Gulf and towards Israel. However, the availability of armaments had been curtailed as a result of the actions of successive US administrations since 1979. The view held by the majority in Congress and in US policy circles in general, was that post-revolutionary Iran posed a threat to US interests in the Middle East, and thus its armaments and military procurement should be restricted. As a result of the conditions on the supply of conventional weapons, there was little choice from whom Tehran could actually enter into supply relationships with. The most notable military arms and technological suppliers in the aftermath of the Iran-Iraq War, proved to be Russia, China and North Korea.[186]

Iran's relations with Russia had historically been characterised by hostility and suspicion.[187] However, a thaw in relations occurred in February 1989 following a meeting between Ayatollah Khomeini and the Soviet Foreign Minister Edouard Shevardnadze. This ultimately developed into a military and nuclear technology trade agreement following the visit to Moscow by the Speaker of the Iranian Parliament, Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, in June 1989.

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[186] The Czech Republic and Poland were also countries that traded arms with Iran.

[187] Kenneth Katzman, "Iran: Arms and Technology Acquisitions," CRS Report for Congress, (97-474F), Washington, D.C.: CRS, Congress, 22 Jun. 1998, 6pp., 01/04/03 <http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/report/crs/97-474.htm>.

The US led liberation of Kuwait in 1991 had important ramifications on Russia's influence in the Persian Gulf. The United States forged close political and military relations with the GCC countries, which effectively closed off the market to Russian arms manufacturers. It seems clear that, despite their poor historical relations, Russia's need for capital and Iran's need for armaments thus allowed both countries to develop their bilateral relations based on mutual interests. Geo-politics also accounts for the Russian-Iranian arms co-operation following the break-up of the Soviet Union in 1991. It has also been speculated that the supply of armaments to Iran has allowed Russia to control the spread of revolutionary Islam on its borders.[188]

During the Clinton Presidency, Russia's arms trade with Iran did have ramification on Moscow's bilateral relations with the United States. Such was the degree to which the Clinton administration viewed Iran's procurement of Russian armaments and technology, Clinton raised it as a serious concern with President Yeltsin at their summit meetings.[189] Clinton made Russia's acceptance into the multilateral export trading control relationship, the Waasenaar Agreement,[190] dependent upon Russia not to concluding any new arms agreements with Tehran. Following the 1995 Clinton-Yeltsin summit meeting, Russia bowed to American pressure and agreed not to conclude any *new* arms agreements with Iran.[191]

China was also willing to provide armaments and technology to Iran in spite of US pressures to the contrary.[192] Following a visit to Bejing in 1985 by Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, Iran entered into an armament trading relationship with the People's Republic.[193] A range of advanced conventional weapons were purchased by

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[188] Katzman, "Iran: Arms and Technology Acquisitions."

[189] The Clinton-Yeltsin summits were held in: Vancouver, 1993; Washington D.C. 1994; and Moscow 1995.

[190] The Waasenaar Agreement is the successor to the Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls.

[191] Clinton, My Life 654-56.

[192] John Calabrese, "China and the Persian Gulf: Energy and Security," Middle East Journal 52.2 (1998): 265.

[193] For a further details on Iran's procurement of conventional weapons from China, see: Kenneth Katzman, "Iran: Military Relations with China," CRS Report for Congress, (96-572), Washington, D.C.: CRS, Congress, 26 Jun. 1996, 13pp.

Iran, including alleged assistance for Iran's *Shihab* missile programme. However, the main focus of Sino-Iranian conventional arms trade concentrated on advanced anti-ship missiles. Iran entered into an agreement to purchase the sophisticated Chinese manufactured Silkworm surface-to-surface anti-ship missiles. This represented a strategic escalation in Iran's military capability. This was ultimately realised in the final stages of the Iran-Iraq War when Iran used Silkworm missiles at US escorted oil tankers in the Persian Gulf and also at Kuwait oil installations.

The trade in armaments between China and Iran does seem to have been motivated by commercial interests on the part of China: specifically revenue from the arms trade and also the regular supply of oil from Iran. China's willingness to supply Iran with arms and technology did prove to be a point of contention in US-Sino bilateral relations. It has been suggested that this is a 'tit for tat' strategy by Beijing in response to US military support for Taiwan.[194]

Similarly, Iran has engaged in a range of military and technological procurement from North Korea.[195] The focus of the relationship is, however, concentrated on ballistic missile technology. North Korea has allegedly sold Iran Scud and North Korean manufactured *Nodong* and *Tapeo-Dong* surface-to-surface missiles, in addition to technology for Iran's own *Shihab* surface-to-surface missile project.[196] North Korea's sale of military technology did have an impact on its own bilateral relationship with the United States, but in terms of US-Iranian relations, its proliferating ballistic missile stockpile, together with the development of longer range *Shihab* rockets,[197] served to further aggravate bilateral relations. Indeed, Iran's

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[194] Katzman, "Iran: Arms and Technology Acquisitions."

[195] For a further details on Iran's procurement of conventional weapons from North Korea see Kenneth Katzman and Rinn-Sup Shinn, "North Korea: Military Relations with the Middle," CRS Report for Congress, (95-754F), Washington, D.C.: CRS, Congress, 23 Jun. 1994, 19pp.,

[196] For a detailed study on Iran's ballistic missile programme see Andrew Feickert, "Iran's Ballistic Missile Program," CRS Report for Congress, (RS21548), Washington, D.C.: CRS, Congress, 23 Aug. 2004, 6pp., 12/02/05 <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/39332.pdf>.

[197] John Chipman, The Military Balance, ed. Christopher Langton, vol. 2003-2004 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003) 102-03.

missile proliferation compounded fears within Israel for its own national security,[198] which in turn had an impact on the US foreign policy agenda.

In the aftermath of the liberation of Kuwait in 1991, the level of Congressional dissatisfaction towards Iran was being aggravated by Iran's procurement of such weaponry and also that the United States was one of Iran's major trading partners. By early 1992, with the dissatisfaction of the Department of Commerce's export licensing towards a proliferating Iran: Congress was prompted into adopting the Iran-Iraq Non-Proliferation Act of 1992.[199] Proposed by Senator John McCain and Senator Alfonse D'Amato, the Iran-Iraq Non-Proliferation Act of 1992 suspended the ability of the United States government to, engage in trade with Iran; issue trading licences; and provide economic and technical assistance. It specifically placed restrictions on entities trading in advanced conventional weapons of a type or size that would have a destabilising impact on the region. Moreover, it prohibited the trade in technology that could assist Iran's unconventional weapons programmes. This legislation was also extra territorial in that it extended these provisions to foreign states and companies. An important factor of this Act, which subsequently had a bearing on the Clinton administration, was that it did not quantify what constituted, "destabilizing numbers and types of advanced conventional weapons."[200] This later provided the Clinton administration with some degree of latitude in implementing the Act. However, the legislation had no bearing on Russian transfers of armaments to Iran as it was not enacted retrospectively over previously signed arms agreements.

It is important at this point to recognise that the Iran-Iraq Arms Non-Proliferation Act of 1992 was very much a Congressional response towards the problems posed by Iran and was the, "most restrictive legislation passed against Iran since 1980."[201] This legislation, sponsored by the Republican Senators McCain and D'Amato, was

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[198] Thomas W. Lippman, "Israel Presses U.S. To Sanction Russian Missile Firms Aiding Iran," Washington Post 25 Sept. 1997, A31.

[199] Alikhani, Sanctioning Iran 63.

[200] The Iran-Iraq Non Proliferation Act of 1992.

[201] Alikhani, Sanctioning Iran 164.

not welcomed by the Bush administration as it was seen as subjugating the Constitutional authority of the President to construct US foreign policy. President Bush notably commented that:

> I am particularly concerned about provisions that purport to derogate the President's authority under the Constitution to conduct US foreign policy, including negotiation with other countries... Consistent with my responsibilities under the Constitution for the conduct of diplomatic negotiations, and with established practice, I will construe these provisions to be precatory rather than mandatory.[202]

Nevertheless, the signing into law of this Act did have a direct bearing on US policy as Washington began to further their efforts to enlist the co-operation of allied nations to restrict their exports to Iran,[203] and marked the onset of a clear unilateral containment strategy towards Iran.

5.2 Clinton's Foreign Policy Objectives Towards Iran

With the onset of the Clinton Presidency, Robert Pelletreau, the Assistant Secretary of State for Near East Affairs, outlined the objective of the administration towards Iran as being geared towards altering Iran's behaviour with respect to five key areas:

1. Its quest for nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, and the means for their delivery.
2. The continued involvement of the Iranian government in terrorism and assassination worldwide.
3. Its support for violent opposition to the Arab-Israeli peace process.
4. Iran's threats and subversive activities against its neighbours.
5. Its dismal human rights record at home.[204]

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[202] Alikhani, Sanctioning Iran 164.

[203] Ibid 165.

[204] United States, House. Foreign Affairs Committee. Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East, Developments in the Middle East, 105th Cong., Sess. 2nd, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 01 Mar. 1994).

Importantly however, Pelletreau made it clear that a resumption of relations was an objective, but would very much depend on such activities being curtailed. Pelletreau commented:

> Our policy is not aimed at changing the Iranian government, but at inducing Iran to change its behaviour in these areas. We are prepared to enter into dialogue with authorised representatives of the Iranian government to discuss the differences between us. We seek to persuade Iran that it cannot expect to enjoy normal state-to-state relations so long as it violates basic standards of international behaviour. This means working with other countries to deny Iran access to technology, new credits, and other means by which it can facilitate the pursuit of policies of destabilization, terrorism and acquiring weapons of mass destruction.[205]

5.3 Congressional Usurpation of Foreign Policy

Although the Clinton administration was fortunate to come to power with a Democrat controlled Congress, following the 1994-midterm elections the Republican Party gained control of both Houses of Congress. The loss of Democrat control over congress is highly significant for two distinct reasons:

1. The end of the Cold War signalled the end of the overarching global grand strategy geared towards the containment against the Soviet Union. With the loss of a clear strategy, Congress inevitably lost its general bipartisan approach towards foreign policy. When this is considered along with the administration's loss of partisan control over Congress, Clinton was facing a clear obstacle in the conduct of his foreign policy.

2. As a result of the end of a general bipartisan approach towards foreign policy and the context of a Democrat Presidency, the Republicans within Congress inevitably adopted the strategy of being reactive to domestic political concerns on foreign issues as a means of garnering wider political support.

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[205] United States, House. Foreign Affairs Committee. Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East, Developments in the Middle East, 105th Cong., Sess. 2nd.

This translated into interest groups receiving a much wider political voice within Congress.

The interplay of the political forces from interest groups and Congressional politics had been a constant source of pressure on the Clinton administration since the conception of the dual containment strategy. By March 1994, AIPAC released its highly influential policy document: Comprehensive US Sanctions against Iran: A Plan for Action.[206] The 76-page document outlined a strategy to combat Iran through a variety of means. AIPAC also lobbied "strenuously for a total trade embargo and for a secondary boycott of foreign companies trading with Iran."[207] But it was as a result of Senator D'Amato adopting this strategy that ultimately saw Congress force it onto the US foreign policy agenda.

D'Amato, a fiercely pro-Israeli Republican Senator from New York, had a large Jewish constituency and was seen by many as a champion of AIPAC. Indeed, Senator D'Amato and AIPAC had a longstanding relationship as the organisation allegedly deterred potential Democrat candidates from running against him in his 1986 re-election bid.[208] At the end of January 1995, D'Amato tabled in the Senate: The Comprehensive Iran Sanctions Act of 1995.[209] Indeed, D'Amato's proposed bill was inherently linked with AIPAC as, according to Keith Weissman, AIPAC's Chief Middle East Analyst, it was AIPAC who actually wrote the proposed legislation. Drawing from AIPAC's 1994 strategy paper on comprehensive sanctions against Iran,[210] D'Amato's proposed legislation called for a prohibition on:

1. Any transfer in the currency exchange of Iran.

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[206] American Israeli Public Affairs Committee, Comprehensive US Sanctions against Iran: A Plan for Action (Washington D.C.: AIPAC, 1994) 1-72.

[207] Alikhani, Sanctioning Iran 178

[208] Bowles, The Government and Politics of the United States 228.

[209] United States, Senate, Comprehensive Iran Sanctions Act, 104th Cong, 2nd Sess., (Washington D.C.: GPO, 25 Jan. 1995) 5pp. 12/04/04 <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?c104:S.277.IS:>.

[210] American Israeli Public Affairs Committee, Comprehensive US Sanctions against Iran 1-72.

2. The transfer of credit or payments between, by, through, or to any banking institution, to the extent that such transfers or payments involve interest of Iran or thereof.
3. The importing from, or exporting to, Iran of currencies or securities.
4. Any acquisition, holding, withholding, use, transfer, withdrawal, transportation, importation or exportation of, or dealing in, or exercising any right, power or privilege with respect to, or any transaction involving, any property in which Iran or any national thereof has any interest; by any person, or with respect to any property, subject to the jurisdiction of the United States.
5. The licensing for export to Iran, or for export to any other country for re-export to Iran, by any person subject to the jurisdiction of the United States of any item or technology controlled in the Export administration Act of 1954.
6. The importation into the United States of any good or service which is, in whole or in part, grown, produced, manufactured, extracted, or processed in Iran.[211]

Clearly, D'Amato's proposed legislation was comprehensive and a large escalation in US unilateral sanctions towards Iran. Although it was very much based on the framework of the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992, it added additional provisions that made it potentially the most restrictive legislation against a foreign country by the United States.

In the interim period before D'Amato's bill received a hearing in the Senate, pressure on the Clinton administration mounted as Republican Representative Peter King tabled a bill in the House that was identical to D'Amato's. With it being clear that sanctions would be implemented, the Iranian National Oil Company (INOC) concluded a US$1 billion contract with US oil giant Conoco, to develop the Sirri-A and Sirri-E oil fields. The conclusion of the agreement does indicate a political

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[211] United States, Comprehensive Iran Sanctions Act.

opening from Iran,[212] but as a result of the political situation within Congress, it is doubtful that it would have been politically feasible for the administration to pursue such an avenue at that time.

The conclusion of the INOC–Conoco oil agreement serves to highlight the inconsistency of the dual containment strategy: on the one hand, the US$1 billion agreement was lawful, but on the other, it ran contrary to the stated objectives and spirit of the containment strategy. Given this inconsistency, conflicting remarks emerged from the administration on the agreement.[213] Whilst the White House appeared to condone the agreement by stating that it was legal, Secretary of State Christopher unequivocally condemned the agreement as inconsistent with the interests and policies of the United States.[214]

The response of the Clinton administration to this politically damaging situation was in effect to implement many of the provisions of D'Amato's bill in order to regain lost political ground and to be seen as responsive to the INOC-Conoco Agreement. On 15 March 1995, Clinton issued Executive Order 12957, which basically precluded the Conoco deal:

1. [T]he entry into or performance by a United State person of the entry into or performance by an entity owned or controlled by a United States person, of (i) a contract that includes overall supervision and management responsibility for the development of petroleum resources located in Iran, or (ii) a guaranty of another person's performance under such a contract.
2. [T]he entry into or performance by a United States person of the entry into or performance by an entity owned or controlled by a United States person, of (i) a contract for financing of the

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[212] Elaine Sciolino, "Iranian Leader Says US Move on Oil Deal Wrecked Chances to Improve Ties," New York Times 16 May 1995, A5.

[213] Alikhani, Sanctioning Iran 182.

[214] United States, Department of State,"Daily Press Briefing," Conoco Oil Agreement, Washington, D.C.: GPO, 7 Mar. 1995. 12pp. 12/09/03 <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/daily_briefings/1995/9503/950307db.html>.

development of petroleum resources located in Iran, or (ii) a guaranty of another person's performance under such a contract.

3. [A]ny transaction by any United States person or within the United States that evades or avoids, or has the purpose of evading or avoiding, or attempts to violate, any of the prohibitions set forth in the Order.[215]

The Clinton administration, however, opposed the D'Amato bill, which was heard at the Senate on 16 March 1994, as it felt that milder sanctions were more appropriate, especially given the difficulties in applying unilateral sanctions.[216] Given this opposition, D'Amato introduced the Iran Foreign Sanctions Act of 1995, dubbed D'Amato II by AIPAC, it went even further than his previous bill. The bill was designed to be extra-territorial in jurisdiction, whereby any foreign firm that trades with Iran would be subject to sanctions. Compounding this, identical legislation was introduced in the House by Republican King, with the caveat that a sanctioned foreign entity that had traded with Iran would not be able to trade at all within the United States. In effect, the combined nature of the bills potentially called for a foreign entity to choose to trade either with the United States, or with Iran.

The bills were subject to a great deal of criticism as a result of the impact they would have had on US multilateral relations. Gary Sick highlights that the legislation, if enacted, would result in:

> [A] blizzard of Presidential waivers will be required... making a travesty of the legislative process and clogging the courts with frivolous litigation... corporate lawyers and entrepreneurs with a taste for complex legal dodges will have a field day, creating a swamp of evasive corruption and thriving business for eager prosecutors.[217]

Both bills received public backing from AIPAC, as well as from the influential Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs (JINSA). It should have been clear to

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[215] United States, United States Security Strategy for the Middle East.

[216] Alikhani, Sanctioning Iran 186.

[217] Gary Sick, "How Not to Make Iran Policy," MEES 38.31 (1995): D5.

Clinton that the wise words of Senator William Fulbright in 1973 on how the Israelis actually control the Senate were indeed the case.[218]

Clinton was therefore faced with a clear dilemma that if he opposed the bills it would have been very politically damaging to his administration and thus to the Democrats in Congress. Clinton was thus left with little political choice. The administration's response was to steal the initiative yet again and propose the policy as its own, before the Senate and House voted on the D'Amato-King bills. With Clinton aiming to regain his domestic position with the pro-Jewish electoral factions, he duly announced his new policy undertaking at none other than a World Jewish Congress dinner, whilst wearing a *yarmulke*. Clinton stated:

> I am formally announcing my intention to cut off all trade and investment with Iran and to suspend nearly all other economic activity between our nations. This is not a step I take lightly, but I am convinced that instituting a trade embargo with Iran is the most effective way our Nation can help to curb that nation's drive to acquire devastating weapons and its continued support for terrorism... In my discussions with President Yeltsin and with the G–7 leaders in Halifax in June, I will urge other countries to take similar or parallel actions. I do want you to know that I do oppose the suggestion some have made that we impose a secondary boycott and prohibit foreign firms doing business with Iran from doing business with the United States. I don't agree with that. I think that decision would cause unnecessary strain with our allies at a time when we need our friends' co-operations.[219]

Clinton therefore proposed implementing tighter sanctions on trade with Iran, but went short of the D'Amato-King bills that called for sanctioning foreign entities that traded with Iran. D'Amato described the policy as "a foreign corporation or person will have to choose between trade with the United States and trade with Iran."[220] His

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[218] Alikhani, Sanctioning Iran 189.

[219] Clinton, Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States 1994: William J. Clinton (Bk. 1), 1054.

[220] Thomas W. Lippman, "Hill Races White House to Get Tough with Iran," Washington Post 2 Apr 1995, A5.

proposals were, however, commensurate with the dual containment strategy doctrine, but Clinton made it clear that he did not support a secondary application of sanctions against foreign entities because of the detrimental impact this would have had on US multilateral relations. Given that Clinton's official policy towards Iraq relied on multilateral support, it was commensurate with US interests to refrain from provocative foreign policies.

Adding to Executive Order 12957 of 15 March 1995, Clinton issued Executive Order 12959 of 6 May 1995 which prohibited virtually all trade and investment with Iran. The Executive Order towards Iran:

1. Prohibits exportation from the United States to Iran or to the Government of Iran of goods, technology or services, including trade financing by U.S. banks;
2. Prohibits the re-exportation of certain U.S. goods and technology to Iran from third countries;
3. Prohibits transactions such as brokering and other dealing by United States persons in Iranian goods and services;
4. Prohibits new investments by United States persons in Iran or in property owned or controlled by the Government of Iran;
5. Prohibits U.S. companies from approving or facilitating their subsidiaries' performance of transactions that they themselves are prohibited from performing;
6. Continues the 1987 prohibition on the importation into the United States of goods and services of Iranian origin; and
7. Allows U.S. companies a 30-day period in which to perform trade transactions pursuant to contracts predating this order that are now prohibited.[221]

Therefore, with Clinton having issued Executive Order 12959 of 6 May 1995, he had in effect been forced to implement policy that was designed by pro-Israeli lobbyist groups and tabled by Republican Congressmen. Although this was policy that was commensurate with Clinton's dual containment strategy, the domestic political

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[221] Clinton, Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States 1994: William J. Clinton (Bk. 1), 654.

conditions limited his options and prevented him from having explored further the political opening made by Iran under the guise of the INOC-Conoco oil agreement. Indeed, this serves to highlights the trend of an intrusion by Congress onto the foreign policy agenda of the United States towards Iran. This usurpation could ultimately be traced back to the factors leading to the adoption of the Iran-Iraq Non-Proliferation Act of 1992.

5.3.1 The Iran-Libya Sanctions Act of 1996

Following Clinton's Executive Order 12959 of 6 May, an understanding was reached with Senator D'Amato whereby he and his counterparts in the House would postpone having their respective bills considered by Congress. For this postponement, Clinton ambitiously agreed to actively gain support from US allies to reduce, or even cease, their bilateral trading with Iran.

Clinton had made it clear, in his speech at the World Jewish Congress on 20 April 1995, that he would pursue this objective at the G-7 summit in Halifax, Nova Scotia, in June 1995.[222] Predictably, the G-7 countries were unwilling to adopt this policy proposal towards Iran. The failure of the Clinton administration to gain international backing for its policy towards Iran, prompted D'Amato to submit legislation to the Senate on 8 September 1995. D'Amato's introduction of the Iran Foreign Oil Sanctions Act of 1995, co-sponsored by Senators Inouye, Pressler, Faircloth and Kohl, drew from, but ultimately differed from the legislation he introduced on the 27 March 1995. D'Amato had amended his previous bill so that it would specifically target *foreign entities* trading in petroleum or natural gas products with Iran.[223] This, however, was still directly opposed to the stated position of the Clinton administration that it would not impose any secondary sanctions on foreign entities trading with Iran.[224]

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[222] Clinton, Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States 1994: William J. Clinton (Bk. 1) 654.

[223] United States, Senate, Iran Oil Sanctions Act Report, 104th Cong., 1st Sess., (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 15 Dec. 1995) 9pp. 12/03/03 <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/cpquery/T?&report=sr187&dbname=cp104&>.

[224] Ibid.

Although the Clinton administration opposed the legislation,[225] the Chairman of the House International Relations Committee, Benjamin Gilman, introduced a similar bill in the House of Representatives. Gilman's legislation, co-sponsored by Representatives Berman, Forbes, King and Shaw, was as comprehensive as D'Amato's Senate bill. Although the White House maintained its adamant opposition to the bills, within Congress, they received bipartisan support. Compounding this, Representatives Gejdenson and Burton introduced a bill which supported Gilman's position.[226] As a result of the high level of support the bills were receiving within both Houses of Congress, the Clinton administration changed its policy from direct opposition to a stated willingness to compromise.[227]

Senator D'Amato duly altered his legislation as a compromise measure towards the administration so that sanctions on entities trading on Iran's oil and gas fields would only qualify on investments of more than US$40 million. With the White House lending its support to this modified bill, it had clearly undertaken a policy reversal towards secondary sanctions on foreign entities engaged in trade in Iran's oil and gas sectors as a direct result of domestic political factors.

Whilst the Senate bill was being approved, Democrat Senator Edward Kennedy added an amendment requiring the same sanctions be applied to Libya. Kennedy was representing the families of the victims of the notorious bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie. With Libya providing sanctuary to Abdel Basset Ali Mohammed al-Megrahi and Lamen Khalifa Fhimah, the two suspects in the bombing, Kennedy argued that it would serve as a means to both deter future terrorist attacks by Libya and hopefully compel Gaddafi to hand over the suspects.

Although the legislation was a 'watered down' version of its original incarnation, it was subject to a barrage of heavy criticism by US allies, as well as oil and gas companies, for having no basis under international law on account of the extra-

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[225] United States, Senate, Iran Oil Sanctions Act Report.

[226] Alikhani, Sanctioning Iran 295.

[227] Ibid.

territorial application of the jurisdiction of the United States.[228] Although the Senate bill was technically illegal under international law, it had not come into force within the United States. The requirement was for it to be reconciled with Gilman's bill in the House. However, Gilman's bill sat diplomatically uncomfortable for the White House as it was more comprehensive than the modified D'Amato bill. Specifically speaking, Gilman's legislation called for sanctions on any entity that engaged in trade with Iran, which would have understandably have had diplomatic repercussions for the United States internationally.

The administration strongly opposed Gilman's bill in Congressional hearings, but ultimately reached a compromise that allowed the bill to proceed with the support of the White House. The main compromises entailed Libya being essentially treated different from Iran, as sanctions were to be *mandatory* for contraventions of UN resolutions and were only *optional* for investment in the oil and gas sectors.

With the passage to the Senate of the bill on 26 June 1996 for final approval, Senator Kennedy reintroduced an amendment that required the lifting of the distinction within the bill in applying differential sanctions on the two countries. Whilst this was opposed by AIPAC, it was as a result of the pressure of the Pan Am Flight 103 victims' families on the Senate that allowed the bill, now jointly proposed by D'Amato and Kennedy, to be passed on 16 July 1996.

With the Kennedy amendment, there was a new need to reconcile the two bills. This unexpectedly occurred as a direct consequence of the crash of TWA Flight 800 over Long Island on 17 July 1996. The initial view that it may have been a result of a terrorist attack resulted in a loss of opposition to the bill within the House.[229] The unanimous adoption of the House bill paved the way for it to be signed into law by Clinton.

Therefore, with a Republican controlled Congress, Congressional pressure and domestic political forces on the executive and the wider Democrat party forced

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[228] Anonymous, "A Review of US Unilateral Sanctions against Iran," Middle East Economic Survey 45.34 (2002).

[229] Alikhani, Sanctioning Iran 310.

Clinton to alter his policy position towards Iran. Although the application of prohibitive unilateral sanctions was entirely commensurate with the rubric of the dual containment strategy, the extraterritorial sanctioning of entities trading with Iran was not. Moreover, Congressional legislation, which strengthened sanctions against Iran, is arguably not commensurate under the rubric of the dual containment strategy. Specifically speaking, with Congress legislating foreign policy, Clinton's flexibility in conducting diplomacy with Iran to achieve the strategic objective of reconciliation was very much thwarted. Moreover, given the priority of the Clinton administration to maintain the multilateral sanctions based policy towards Iraq, the Congressional legislation was very much a usurpation of the foreign policy prerogative of the executive and ultimately served to hamper the implementation of the overall dual containment policy strategy.

5.4 Dual Track Diplomacy: Beyond Containment

US policy towards Iran during the first Clinton administration had been clearly dominated by Congressional legislation as previously discussed. This had restricted the scope of options available to the White House and had effectively set the foreign policy agenda. Moreover, structural impediments within Iran were further active barriers towards any efforts at a rapprochement.[230] However, in May 1997, the political context in Iran changed as Mohammad Khatami, a self-declared reformer whose record was not tainted with hostile rhetoric towards the United States, was elected President. Khatami's election came as a surprise to many international observers and was dubbed the Second Khordad Movement after the date of his election.

In an interview with CNN in January 1998 Khatami presented a more conciliatory note towards the United States. He drew parallels between the United States and Iran's revolutionary movement towards independence and, most notably, he called

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[230] Robert Snyder, The United States and Iran: Analysing the Structural Impediments to a Rapprochement, The Emirates Occasional Paper, vol. 32 (Abu Dhabi: Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research, 2001) 10-19.

for a 'dialogue of civilizations.'[231] He expressed his "respect for the great American people"[232] and his desire for relations being built on a cultural exchange involving scholars, tourists, journalists and artisans, etc. Although it was a notable change in rhetoric, the substance of Khatami's remarks received a cautious response as some of these exchanges had already been occurring:

> American tourists go to Iran, although the State Department warns them that it is unwise, and many Iranians visit the U.S. and even attend American universities. Academics from both sides fly back and forth to give lectures and take part in conferences. There is no sign such exchanges have warmed the icy political climate much.[233]

Nevertheless, Khatami highlighted that "[o]ne of the major flaws in the U.S. foreign policy... is that they continue to live with cold war mentality and try to create a perceived enemy." He saw the D'Amato legislation as epitomising this framework of thinking. Although Khatami's remarks were effectively a departure in official Iranian rhetoric towards the United States, in terms of US foreign policy Iran's continued opposition towards the Arab-Israeli peace process, along with other contextual issues, prevented any substantive alteration in US foreign policy.

According to former Secretary of State Madeline Albright, the opportunity for a shift in US foreign policy towards Iran did indeed occur in January 1998. However this was not as a result of Khatami's conciliatory remarks in the CNN interview but rather as a result of a substantive change in Iran's policy towards the Arab-Israeli peace process. Yasser Arafat had received a letter from Khatami which "backed Palestinian participation in the Middle East peace process, acknowledged Israel's legitimacy, and discussed the possibility of a region wide peace if the Palestinians were allowed to establish a state on the West Bank and Gaza."[234] Also, Khatami publicly denounced terrorism and the killing of Israeli citizens, which was a significant move towards accommodating the demands of the United States. The

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[231] Christiane Amanpour, "Transcript of Interview with Iranian President Mohammad Khatami," CNN Online 7 Jan. 1998, 12/07/04 <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/9801/07/iran/interview.html>.

[232] Ibid.

[233] Bruce W. Nelan, "New Day Coming?" Time Jan. 19 1998.: 4-5.

[234] Albright and Woodward, Madam Secretary 320.

overall situational context leading to a change in US foreign policy was not, however, just limited to Iran's conciliatory overtures towards the United States and policy change towards the peace process. Albright commented:

> Iran's record in the war against drugs has greatly improved – at least within its own borders – and it has received high marks from the UN for its treatment of more than two million Iraqi and Afghan refugees. Iran is also participating in diplomatic efforts to bring peace and stability to Afghanistan and is making a welcome effort to improve relations with Saudi Arabia and other neighbors in the Gulf.[235]

Albright concluded that given this alternation in policy, "Iran no longer belonged in the same category as Iraq,"[236] and consequently "[t]he time was ripe to move beyond dual containment."[237]

The US response to Iran's policy changes under Khatami were cautiously welcomed, but significant obstacles towards reconciliation remained. Albright commented that:

> We view these developments with interest, both with regard to the possibility of Iran assuming its rightful place in the world community, and the chance for better bilateral ties. However, these hopes must be balanced against the reality that Iran's support for terrorism has not yet ceased; serious violations of human rights persist; and its efforts to develop long range missiles and to acquire nuclear weapons continue. The United States opposes, and will continue to oppose, any country selling or transferring to Iran materials and technologies that could be used to develop long-range missiles or weapons of mass destruction. Similarly, we oppose Iranian efforts to sponsor terror. Accordingly, our economic

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[235] Madeleine Albright, "Albright Speech 6/17/98," Remarks at 1998 Asia Society Dinner Waldorf-Astoria Hotel New York, New York: GPO, 18 Jun. 1998. 4pp. 13/06/04 <http://www.aghayan.com/alb061798.htm>.

[236] Albright and Woodward, Madam Secretary 320-22.

[237] Ibid.

> policies, including with respect to the export pipelines for Caspian oil and gas, remain unchanged.[238]

Whilst a positive move towards resolving substantive differences had occurred, the contextual divide was, nevertheless, unlikely to lead to a period of détente in any real sense. Indeed, a shift in US policy could not have realistically occurred without Iran ending its policies – most notably its alleged support for terrorist groups – which brought pressure onto the foreign policy agenda from special interest groups and from within Congress. Although it is outside the scope of this study, it appears that there were structural obstacles within Iran which prevented a more substantive alternation in its own foreign policies,[239] in addition to the issue of a moderation of US policies which provided legitimacy for Iran's provocative policies. Indeed, in late 1998, Khatami's reformist Second Khordad Movement suffered a clampdown which further weakened their influence against the conservative clerics.[240]

The options available to US diplomacy were few: given the challenges Khatami was facing from his conservative opponents, any public backing for him from Washington would have probably caused the reformist movement more harm then good. Although a significant relaxation of US sanctions policy would potentially have bolstered Khatami's position, wider contextual issues relating to Iran's foreign policies made this an unrealistic foreign policy choice for the United States in spite of the Clinton administration being in its final years of its second term of office. These issues included:

1. The unresolved issue of whether Iran was covertly pursuing a nuclear weapons program in contravention of its international obligations;
2. Iran's implicated in an attack on US forces stationed in Khobar Towers, Saudi Arabia, in June 1996;
3. Iran had arrested thirteen Jewish individuals and several Muslims on the charge of espionage. Despite EU and UN pressure on Tehran, twelve were

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[238] Albright, "Albright Speech 6/17/98."

[239] Richard A. Roth, et al., "U.S. Policy Towards Iran: Time for a Change?" Middle East Policy 3.1 (2001): 4-8.

[240] Albright and Woodward, Madam Secretary 323.

imprisoned. This resulted in domestic political pressures within Congress which rejected the engagement approach;

4. Without a substantive change in Iran's policies that were provocative to the United States and Israel, a significant relaxation in US sanctions policies would have been politically unworkable for both the White House given the likely response within Congress.

Despite these contextual obstacles on the options available to the Clinton administration, it was following the Iranian February 2000 elections, in which Khatami's supporters gained control of the parliament, that the Clinton administration made a second attempt at improving relations. Again, it was the political situation in Iran which prompted the administration to make political overtures at providing concessions towards the Islamic Republic to indirectly bolster the reformist movement. The United States lifted its import restrictions on "Iran's principal non-oil exports – carpets, pistachios, dried fruit, and caviar. Whilst these are considered luxury items in the United States, their production and marketing in Iran are associated with the middle class, much of which had voted for Khatami."[241]

According to Albright, the Iranian reaction to the relaxation of US sanctions was mixed despite it gaining a positive response from the EU and domestically within the United States.[242] However, the US concessions did not go far enough to overcome the structural impediments facing the reformers within Iran. The context which created the policy quagmire is usefully summarised by Albright:

> The Clinton administration policy towards Iran was calibrated appropriately. We could have achieved a breakthrough only by abandoning our principals and interests in non-proliferation, terrorism, and the Middle East, far too high a price. We could have avoided the charge that we were too soft on Iran by ignoring the reform movement entirely, but that would have left us isolated

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[241] Albright and Woodward, Madam Secretary 324.

[242] Ibid.

internationally and provided no incentive for Iran to change further.[243]

Therefore, at the end of the Clinton administration, the prospects for achieving a normalisation of relations with Iran were remote. Conversely, the opposite was true for Iran. US policies in the Middle East such as its support for Israel, military presence and restrictive sanctions policy, presented clear political obstacles for any change in Iranian foreign policy towards meeting the benchmark required for meaningful dialogue to take place.

But with the onset of the Bush administration in January 2001, one may have been tempted to assume that its connections with the oil industry would have resulted in a softening of policy towards Iran.[244] This was not to be the case. Condoleezza Rice argued in an article in Foreign Affairs during the 2000 election campaign that "[a]ll in all, changes in US policy toward Iran would require changes in Iranian behaviour."[245] In essence she articulated a policy continuation as there was little scope for an alternative to the policy of containment. As had been found by the Clinton administration, the key obstacle to a change in relations rested with the Iranians. The structural impediments to Tehran taking advantage of overtures from the United States in addition to the unwillingness to moderate Iranian foreign policy made the prospect of a rapprochement a distant goal.

During the initial months of the Bush Presidency up until the 9/11 attacks, US policy can be characterised as a continuation from the Clinton era while a policy review was undertaken.[246] But on a wider contextual level, little had altered to justify a substantive shift in foreign policy.

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[243] Albright and Woodward, Madam Secretary 324.

[244] Kenneth M. Pollack, The Persian Puzzle: The Conflict between Iran and America (New York: Random House, 2004) 343.

[245] Condoleezza Rice, "Campaign 2000: Promoting the National Interest," Foreign Affairs 79.1 (2000): 6.

[246] Pollack, The Persian Puzzle 343-45.

By August 2001, the ILSA was up for renewal and the Bush administration renewed it with the caveat recommendation that it should be reviewed on a more periodical basis. Specifically, Colin Powell was reported as seeking a two year extension rather than the normal five year period. This was ultimately rejected by Congress and was renewed for a full five years on a 96-2 vote in the Senate.[247]

Although the White House was clearly attempting to garner some flexibility in its diplomacy towards Iran through its recommendation, the sponsor of the bill, Senator Charles Schumer of New York, argued that even though President Khatami had been elected, a moderation in Iran's sponsorship for terrorist movements had not occurred.[248] It can be argued that the reason why Congress voted against this stems from the manner in which AIPAC effectively mobilised support within Congress against any potential policy review. Indeed, by March 2001, AIPAC had gathered upwards of 180 co-sponsors in the House for the renewal of ILSA before the White House had publicly issued its policy position. It was only by June 2001 that the White House took the official position of seeking only a two year extension and this position was subjected to a great deal of criticism: "[I]f ILSA was a good policy, then why extend it for only two years, and if it was a bad policy, why extend it at all?"[249]

On a wider level, however, in June 2001 a United States federal court issued indictments for fourteen men, alleged to be members of Hezbollah, for the 1996 bombing at Khobar Towers. Crucially, the indictment implicated the Iranian government as being behind the bombing.[250] Although this did not have a clear effect on the executive branch, it is likely that this was served to underline the case being made by AIPAC within Congress for a renewal of ILSA.

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[247] Alison Mitchell, "Senate Extends Sanctions on Libya and Iran," New York Times 26 Jul. 2001, A6.

[248] Alison Mitchell, "Senate Extends Sanctions on Libya and Iran," A6.

[249] Iranians for International Cooperation, "ILSA Mistakes in Retrospect," Payvand's Iran News Aug. 2001, 12/11/02 <http://www.payvand.com/news/01/aug/1177.html>.

[250] Anonymous, "Khobar Towers Indictments Returned," CNN Online 22 Jun. 2001, 28/08/02 <http://archives.cnn.com/2001/LAW/06/21/khobar.indictments/>.

5.5 Summary Assessment

What can be discerned from the above analysis is that US policy towards Iran during the time period 1993-01 can be divided into two distinct phases, that is, the substance of the factors which determined the actual foreign policy. These two distinct phases are separated by the election of President Mohammad Khatami in 1997.

The nature of the Clinton administration's *containment policy* towards Iran can be satisfactorily explained using Walter Russell Mead's theoretical framework. Mead's theoretical approach allows us to identify a combination of Hamiltonian, Wilsonian and Jefferson driving forces as explaining Clinton's foreign policy strategy towards Iran.

Within the conceptual framework, a containment of Iran would have served the key Hamiltonian strategic interests of promoting free trade and safeguarding the international economy by protecting the countries which have control over key resources. The containment of Iran ensured it would not pose a threat to the US economic interest in an unhindered flow of oil from the Persian Gulf. This would have included the interest in deterring Iran's alleged involvement in sponsoring terrorist attacks as regional instability would potentially have detrimental consequences on free trade. Similarly, the Clinton administrations' opposition to Iran's record on human rights and alleged involvement in terrorism is explainable by the Wilsonian school of thought. Mead interprets Wilsonianism as pressing for the application of universal human rights, the rule of law, democracy and other 'universal ideals.' Terrorism is interpreted as threatening free societies and international order as a whole, and thus warrants a Wilsonian response. However, with the potential threat state sponsors of terrorism pose to the national security of the United States, Jeffersonians also regard terrorism as warranting a foreign policy initiative.

Although Mead's conceptual framework can cater for the strategic interests in Clinton's *containment policy* towards Iran, it does not satisfactorily account for the actual development of US policy towards Iran during the Clinton Presidency. The above analysis indicates that US foreign policy towards Iran 1993-1997 was

primarily the product of domestic structures outside the traditional government bureaucracy. Although the executive and the government bureaucracy had a clear foreign policy agenda, the international context, as determined on a domestic level by Iran's foreign policy – most notably its provocative polices towards Israel[251] – resulted in a sustained effort on behalf of special interest groups on Congress to direct the foreign policy agenda. Interestingly, traditional foreign policy analysis concentrates on the role of the government bureaucracy, or executive, as the principal determining force in foreign policy. Indeed, the construction of the foreign policy of the United States is constitutionally enshrined as being the prerogative of the executive. However, the special nature of the international context, coupled with the highly mobilised and privileged position the Jewish and pro-Israeli lobbies occupy, resulted in an exceptional application of influence onto the legislative branch in the American government.

The significance of this situation is twofold: firstly, the prerogative of the President to conduct foreign policy is subjugated; secondly, special interest groups, whose interests cannot be explained under the rubric of Mead's theory, actually determines the course of US foreign policy. Although a strict application of sanctions on Iran was commensurate with the containment policy, the extra-territorial application of sanctions was not. Therefore, Mead's theory cannot satisfactorily account for US policy towards Iran 1993-97, and thus warrants this study's inclusion of a layer of analysis which accounts for forces on the domestic political legislature.

The second phase of US policy towards Iran during the Clinton Presidency occurred after a change in the domestic political situation with Iran which, in turn, resulted in a change in Iran's foreign policy. Despite the election of Mohamed Khatami and the subsequent alteration in Iran's foreign policy, it did not alter to the level sufficient to for meaningful dialogue and a détente to occur. Whilst it is outside the scope of this study to discuss the reasons why Iran could not make more substantive changes to its own foreign policy in order to enable reconciliation, the evidence in this case study supports the view that the proponents of engagement overlook the structural impediments within the United States which prevent this policy undertaking *before* a

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[251] Roth, et al., "U.S. Policy Towards Iran: Time for a Change?" 11-13.

satisfactory change in Iran's foreign policy had occurred. Indeed, the above analysis of US policy towards Iran during the Clinton Presidency indicates that a complex range of structural factors and special interests prevented any scope for meaningful diplomacy in the absence of a substantive change in Iran's foreign policy.

6.0 CHAPTER CONCLUSION

The Clinton era was characterised by a policy continuation from the previous Bush administration, which sought to achieve security within the Persian Gulf area through the maintenance of a balance of power by containing the potential threat posed by Iran and Iraq. Indeed, the Clinton administration sought a modification in Iran's policies in order to allow for a reassessment to occur. Nevertheless, Iran's inability or failure to moderate its policies resulted in important domestic political factors; the ensuing highly assertive and constrictive policy towards Iran prevented the executive having flexibility in its diplomacy. Although it is outside the scope of this thesis, it is reasonable to conclude that this further contributed to Iran's failure to moderate its policies and thus was potentially a self-depreciating cycle. Indeed as outlined above, it seems clear that the domestic political forces were the primary driver of US foreign policy towards Iran and this simply reduced the traditional prerogative of the executive to effectively pursue its policy objectives.

Iraq was a different picture in that since 1991 the regime of Saddam Hussain was not viewed as redeemable. This was crucial in that unlike Iran where constructive dialogue was the objective, US policy towards Iraq sought the strategic objective of regime change. The Clinton administration's formula was for the application of sanctions until regime change occurred. A by-product of this was that Iraq was 'contained' multilaterally, and this ensured Persian Gulf security until the strategic objective of regime change had occurred. Indeed, the prospect of regime change held the potential for reconciliation and a reassessment of the nature of Persian Gulf security. The reason why this strategic objective was not officially acknowledged at the time was a result of the need to ensure the unity of the international coalition. This was because the coalition was held together on the premise of the application of sanctions until compliance had been achieved, which would allow for reconciliation

and reintegration of Iraq into the international community. Therefore, the official position of the Clinton administration was a tactical means of achieving its overarching strategic objective of regime change. Importantly, this finding is an original contribution to the current field of scholarship.

Through a complex interplay of domestic, regional and international factors, the unity of the international coalition began to unwind. With Congress legislating in 1998 that the *official* policy of the United States should be directed towards achieving regime change, Clinton's tactical policy of multilateralism had in effect failed and ushered in an era of stalemate following the withdrawal of the international inspectors in December 1998.

Therefore, throughout the Clinton era and up until the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, US foreign policy towards Persian Gulf security remained premised on a balance of power, with the containment of Iran and Iraq being the primary means of achieving this. This underscores the interpretation offered in chapter three of Clintonian grand strategy being premised on geoeconomics as the Wilsonian and Jeffersonian pursuit of liberal democracy was subjugated at the expenses of regional geostrategic interests. Indeed, this shows that the officially articulated dual nature of Clintonian grand strategy did not apply in the case of Persian Gulf security as this was contrary to the balance of power approach adopted: the promotion of liberal democracy was simply contrary to regional interests in ensuring the status quo in order to safeguard a steady flow of oil.

Chapter VI

United States Foreign Policy Towards Persian Gulf Security: Iran and Iraq 2001-2003

"The United States has adopted a new policy, a forward strategy of freedom in the Middle East. This strategy requires the same persistence and energy and idealism we have shown before. And it will yield the same results. As in Europe, as in Asia, as in every region of the world, the advance of freedom leads to peace."

George W. Bush

November 2003

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 were a defining moment that promoted a major reassessment of US strategic policy.[1] The scale of the impact the attacks had on mainstream US society had not been witnessed since the Japanese attack on Peal Harbour in December 1941. But the effect of the attacks was arguably more telling: it was an attack that targeted civilians and the symbols of American military and economic power. With the high number of civilian casualties, many Americans no longer felt the security they had enjoyed since the War of Independence.

The attacks also marked a shift in the traditional priority of the US electorate from the main focus on domestic economic concerns towards a wider spectrum which encompassed threats to US national security from international forces. The significance of this was twofold: firstly, American domestic society perceived a new external threat under the guise of international terrorism; and secondly, many within the government felt the need to address these homeland security concerns of the domestic electorate. This was ultimately realised in the 2004 Presidential election where George W. Bush was widely acknowledged as having campaigned heavily on the national security ticket.

This thesis contends that the response of the George W. Bush administration in the wake of the trauma of the 9/11 attacks resulted in the adoption of a new grand strategic era for US foreign policy which departed from the Clintonian years. In

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[1] United States, White House,"President Bush Meets with Prime Minister Blair," Washington, D.C.: GPO, 31 Jan. 2003. 4pp. 12/09/03 <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030131-23.html>.

order to demonstrate whether the hypothesis outlined in chapter 3 is robust, this chapter will demonstrate the origins, nature, trajectory and context in which US foreign policy towards achieving Persian Gulf security was applied. This will be achieved through analysing US foreign policy towards Iran and Iraq as a case study in the post-9/11 context. As discussed earlier, this is justified on the premise that US policy towards these two key countries was the primary means in which the United States sought to achieve this objective. Therefore, it is outside the scope of this chapter to discuss the bilateral policy of the United States to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states.

The Bush administrations' foreign policy response to the terrorist attacks was ultimately the official adoption of a grand strategy which departed from the traditional concepts of deterrence and containment. At its most basic level, it ultimately sought to maintain the pre-eminence of the United States in the international system in addition to safeguarding national security from external threats. As has been outlined in chapter 3, the significance of the September 11 attacks was that they altered the domestic socio-political context within the United States in terms of the perception of an external threat: *international Islamic terrorism*. Although terrorism is nothing new, the Bush Doctrine was ultimately the political response to the newly perceived external threat.

Since 1991, successive administrations had been consistent in their strategic assessment that the security of the Persian Gulf could not be secured with Saddam Hussain in power, and therefore sought regime change as the overall policy objective. As has already been discussed in the previous chapter, the Clinton administration saw Saddam's compliance with UN resolutions as a tactical policy likely to result in the overthrow of his regime. The newly incumbent Bush administration did not depart from this strategic assessment. The manner in which the 9/11 attacks impacted upon US foreign policy towards Iraq was through the tactics used to achieve this strategic objective: prior to 11 September 2001 US policy had been premised on an internal coup d'état and not from an armed invasion. However within the context of a foreign policy analysis framework, the key issue is concerns what the factors were that resulted in this policy change.

In terms of US foreign policy towards Iran, it will also be shown that the Bush Doctrine resulted in a clear departure from Clintonian foreign policy. Under its rubric Iran's nuclear programme was viewed as holding the potential for it to acquire nuclear weapons even though Iran was entitled to a domestic nuclear power capability under international law. Moreover, the Iranian regime was viewed by the administration as undemocratic and thus in conflict with the key Wilsonian pillar in the Bush Doctrine. Overall, it underscores that the strategic rubric of the War on Terror resulted in a departure away from the regional geostrategy of the Clintonian post-Cold War era.

As has already been outlined in chapter 3, the premise of this thesis is that a new grand strategy was adopted by the Bush administration in the wake of the trauma of the 9/11 attacks. This will be shown in the subsequent section to have resulted in a complete redefinition of US foreign policy towards the Persian Gulf.

2.0 UNITED STATES FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS IRAQ 2001-2003

At the very first meeting of the Principals of the National Security Council on 30 January 2001 Secretary to the Treasury, Paul O'Neill, reported that the focus of the administration was clearly on effecting regime change within Iraq.[2] Secretary of State Powell saw a clear need to revamp Clinton's failed sanctions regime to achieve regime change through a tactical policy of seeking Iraq's compliance with UN resolutions. Powell commented that the sanctions are "not endearing us to the Iraqi people, whose support we're hoping to elicit... to help overthrow this regime."[3] The summery of the State Department's strategy towards Iraq at the National Security Council meeting on 1 February 2001 stated:

> Our overall objective would be to prevent Iraq from threatening its neighbors or the national security more broadly on the basis of continued control of Iraqi revenue, [a] ban on military and WMD

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[2] Ron Suskind, The Price of Loyalty: George W. Bush, the White House, and the Education of Paul ONeill (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004) 29.

[3] Ibid. 74.

> related imports and weapons inspections. This approach has two tracks which are mutually reinforcing and which we would pursue concurrently; one track is to intensify sanctions enforcement and the other is to implement UN Security Council resolution 1284.[4]

As with the Clinton administration, the strategic objective of regime change continued, and the use of sanctions as a tactical policy of promoting the conditions required to effect regime change was applied. The use of military force – in terms of an invasion – was reportedly never specifically discussed at the NSC meeting, and was not seen as a prudent policy option at that time. However, the need to rekindle the military coalition of the 1991 Gulf War was seen as a suitable means of coercing Saddam to comply with Security Council Resolutions. The Bush administration's strategy was therefore premised on a policy continuation from the Clinton administration.

It was, however, in the period between 31 May and 26 June 2001 that the Deputy National Security Advisor, Stephen J. Hadley, held discussions at the Deputies' subcommittee level to formulate the Principals' strategic framework into an official policy strategy.[5] The official policy strategy towards Iraq was eventually presented to the Principals at the National Security Council on August 1, 2001. Entitled "A Liberation Strategy,"[6] the Top Secret document "proposed a phased strategy of pressuring Saddam and developing the tools and opportunities for enhancing that pressure, and how to take advantage of the opportunities. It relied heavily on the Iraqi opposition."[7] The strategy did not call for a military invasion but was a revitalised version of the policy that was undertaken during the Clinton era. Bob Woodward writes that:

> The paper had classified attachments that went into detail about what might be done diplomatically – economic sanctions and U.N. weapons inspectors; military with the no-fly zones and the

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[4] Suskind, The Price of Loyalty 84.

[5] Woodward, Plan of Attack 21.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid.

> contingencies if a pilot were shot down; and what the CIA or others might do to support, strengthen and empower the Iraqi opposition.[8]

Although this was a policy continuation, the willingness of the administration to use military force to achieve a foreign policy objective was seen as being in marked contrast to the general reluctance present within the Clinton Presidency. Indeed, Paul O'Neill found that "[t]hose present who had attended NSC meetings of the previous administration – and there were several – noticed a material shift [in the willingness to use military force]" and that the "prohibition [for using military force] was clearly gone... that opened options, options that hadn't been opened before."[9] Indeed, the most notable advocate for the use of military force against Iraq was Paul Wolfowitz, the Deputy Secretary of Defence. [10] His views were exceptionally hawkish – he had notably been calling for a military solution towards Iraq even before he had taken office in the Bush administration.

Although the willingness to use military force was present and being touted by Wolfowitz; contextually, little had changed since the Clinton administration. The general willingness to use military force can most realistically be explained by the different intellectual beliefs held by those in Bush's foreign policy circle, specifically, its neoconservative character and outlook on international affairs. Nevertheless, the actual policy towards Iraq in the Bush administration prior to 11 September 2001 should be characterised as a policy continuation from the Clinton era, but with the caveat that there was a substantive change in the administration's willingness to use of military force, even though a military invasion was *not* part of the administration's policy towards Iraq at that time.

In accordance with Bush's election pledges and the administrations policy framework, efforts were made at attempting to rebuild the multilateral coalition towards Iraq from the onset. Secretary of State Powell sought regional support from within the Middle East for 'smart sanctions' that would ease the flow of

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[8] Woodward, Plan of Attack 21.

[9] Suskind, The Price of Loyalty 75.

[10] Woodward, Plan of Attack 21.

humanitarian and civilian goods to Iraq, whilst tightening restrictions on Iraqi illicit imports and exports.[11] Katzman explains Powell's stance:

> The smart sanctions plan represented an effort, articulated primarily by Secretary of State Colin Powell at the beginning of the Bush administration, to rebuild a consensus to contain Iraq. The US plan centred on a trade-off in which restrictions on the flow of civilian goods to Iraq would be greatly eased and, in return, Iraq's illicit trade with its neighbors would be brought under the oil-for-food program and its monitoring and control mechanisms.[12]

At the United Nations, Washington was successful in having UN Security Council Resolution 1409 adopted. This resolution eased the restrictions on Iraqi civilian and humanitarian imports. But within the Middle East, the smart sanctions proposal did not receive the crucial backing from Middle Eastern countries. In spite of this, Powell claimed that the policy was a success as "[w]e have kept him contained, kept him in his box."[13] Thus whilst Washington's smart sanctions strategy did cater for the demands being levied by France, China and Russia for a broad easing of sanctions, it was generally unsuccessful in tightening the restrictions on Iraq's illicit imports and exports.

In terms of Bush's pledge to uphold the terms of the Iraq Liberation Act of 1998, the level of contact between Washington and Iraqi opposition groups was increased. However, the administration should not be seen as having made *substantive progress* towards the implementation of the Iraqi Liberation Act. Although the administration did carry out the distribution of economic support funds in accordance with the plan devised by Clinton in his final week of office, no funds were distributed as part of the Iraq Liberation Act itself. The reason for this was that the State Department suspended the distribution of funds by the Pentagon until a financial audit of the INC

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[11] Kenneth Katzman, "Iraq: Oil-for-Food Program, International Sanctions, and Illicit Trade," CRS Report for Congress, (RL30472), Washington, D.C.: CRS, Congress, 19 May 2003, 24pp., 17/06/04 <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/21122.pdf>.

[12] Ibid.

[13] United States, Department of State, Briefing En Route to Cairo, Egypt, 23 Feb. 2001) 3pp. 23/08/04 <www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2001/931.html>.

was carried out.[14] The suspension was based on the suspected financial mismanagement of funds by the INC. This suspension on the allocation of funds continued until shortly after Bush's January 2002 State of the Union speech.

Since 1991, successive administrations had categorised Iraq as a hostile state which posed a threat to the United States through unconventional weapons. Iraq was presumed to be in possession of such weapons through its inability or unwillingness to verify the destruction of all of its prohibited weapon stockpiles. But it is important to recognise, however, that even if Iraq was in a position to verify the destruction of its entire prohibited weapons stockpile, it would have continued to have been seen as a threat to the United States. Specifically, since 1991, an Iraq under the regime of Saddam Hussain was viewed as being intent on rekindling its unconventional weapon programmes if the sanctions and inspection mandates were ever lifted because of the presumed intent of Saddam Hussain to acquire such weaponry.

Given this contextual situation, the options available to the newly incumbent Bush administration can be summarised as:

1. A continual application of UN sanctions until Iraq had both verified the destruction of its prohibited weapon stockpiles and Saddam Hussain's regime had been internally deposed from power.[15]
2. A military invasion of Iraq to oust Saddam Hussain's regime from power.
3. An abandonment of the containment strategy, opting instead for engagement and reintegration.

Although the third option was a theoretical possibility, it would not have been a realistic policy option until the United Nations was able to rule that Iraq had *fully* complied with its obligations.[16] But, as has already been discussed in this thesis, Iraq

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[14] Elizabeth J. Lake, "State Department Audit to Delay Aid for INC," Washington Times 11 Jun. 2001, 11.

[15] It is reasonable to conclude that a succession to one of his sons upon his death would have been equally unacceptable to the United States as they would have likely been seen as having the same intent that Saddam had in terms of rekindling Iraq WMD programmes.

[16] Given that the Bush administration allowed a resumption of relations with Libya following its renunciation of its intent to procure weapons of mass destruction, coupled with an inspections regime which has been able to verify the destruction of its stockpiles, it is theoretically possible that if Iraq was able to verify the destruction of such weapons, it *may* have been a policy option.

cannot be regarded as having been *able* to verify the destruction of all of the prohibited weapons the UN inspectors had calculated were outstanding, and thus would have technically remained in contravention of UN resolutions. Therefore, at the most basic level, the policy decision facing the Bush administration was either for the application of UN sanctions until an internal regime change had occurred, or for a military invasion to achieve regime change. In either case the endgame strategic objective had remained consistent since 1991: regime change.

In the following analysis, the Bush administration will be shown to have been consistent in its application of US foreign policy towards Iraq that it inherited from the Clinton administration up until the 9/11 attacks. The analysis will demonstrate that the 9/11 attacks resulted in a fundamental break from the consistent US policy approach that had been applied since 1991. The manner in which the 9/11 attacks altered the contextual situation vis-à-vis Iraq was through the definition of threat facing the United States in the newly emerged grand strategic era of the War on Terror.

Specifically, the attacks prompted the definition of threat to not only include state sponsors of terrorism such as Afghanistan, but to also include countries hostile to the United States that were producing, or intent on producing, unconventional weapons.[17] In other words, Iraq was seen to pose a future threat as Saddam's regime was ultimately seen as intent on manufacturing unconventional weapons which could be used against the United States. By categorising Iraq in this manner, the *preventive* use of force was deemed as applicable.

On a wider level however, the new grand strategic era also had a direct bearing on the definition of Persian Gulf Security: the balance of power doctrine, coupled with the tactical use of containment and deterrence as means of safeguarding the security of the GCC, was wholly rejected. The strategy was seen by the Bush administration as preventing the widespread adoption of liberal democracy, but crucially, in the advent of the War on Terror era this was interpreted by Bush's neoconservative

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[17] Vice President Cheney was instrumental in the extension of the definition of the terrorist threat to encompass 'rogue states' that were proliferating in weapons of mass destruction. See: Woodward, Plan of Attack 29.

foreign policy team as being the root cause of politically inspired Islamic terrorism epitomised by al-Qa'ida. In addition, the spread of liberal democracy was seen by neoconservatives as providing stability to the region as peaceful relations are, admittedly, the norm amongst likeminded liberal democracies. With the acceptance of these neoconservative pillars, both the road map towards ensuring Persian Gulf Security and countering the root causes of international Islamic terrorism were seen as achievable through the successful spread of liberal democracy throughout the Middle East.

With Persian Gulf security resting on the need to reengineer the political landscape of the Middle East, a change in US policy towards Iraq occurred. The following analysis will show that the Bush administration saw the most effective means of achieving its objectives in the Middle East, and on a wider level towards its global counterterrorism campaign, was through implementing regime change in Iraq via a military invasion. Specifically speaking, an invasion of Iraq was seen as allowing for nation building, on a par with post-Second World War West Germany, which would ultimately serve as a beacon for democracy throughout the region thereby creating unassailable pressures on its neighbouring states to democratise. Through doing so, the logic was that overall dual strategic objectives of countering the root causes of international terrorism and safeguarding Persian Gulf security were attainable.

The following analysis will show that the Bush administration saw Iraq's failure to comply with its international obligations as providing a *casus belli* for war. It will be argued that this was used as a tactical means to provide public justification for the war, as the strategic goals of spreading democracy as a counter-terrorism initiative and preventing Iraq from *potentially* manufacturing unconventional weapons was not widely seen as a legitimate legal and political justification for invading Iraq. Therefore, the United States used Iraq's failure/inability to fulfil its international obligations as a *casus belli* for war, and as a tactical means of fulfilling its overarching political objectives.

The tactical policy road map to launching an invasion of Iraq is characterised as:

1. Arguing that Iraq possessed unconventional weapons, and was actively producing them in violation of international law;

2. Arguing that although Iraq had the capability to peacefully resolve the situation, it had no intention of doing so;
3. Showing that Saddam Hussain's regime had ties with al-Qa'ida linked terrorist groups, and could potentially supply them covertly with unconventional weapons.
4. To demonstrate that if the United States provided Iraq with an ultimatum to comply with its international obligations which it failed to heed, the United States would be justified to enforce UN resolutions to prevent the national security of the United States being potentially threatened by terrorists armed with the 'smoking gun' of an unconventional weapon.

These tactical justifications will be shown to insufficiently warrant the use of force against Iraq, and consequently it is possible to infer that the Bush administration knowingly overstated the risk as a means of garnering legitimacy for this policy. Nevertheless, this will serve to underline that the official policy towards Iraq was tactical, and masked the true strategic reasoning behind the invasion of Iraq in March 2003

The structure of the following analysis of US foreign policy will be twofold: firstly, an analysis of the official policy in the prelude of the invasion of Iraq in March 2003 will show that it does not adequately explain the foreign policy decision to depart from the post-Cold War containment policy towards Iraq. Secondly, a foreign policy analysis of alternative factors will be provided in order to demonstrate that following the 9/11 attacks, the official policy in the prelude to the invasion of Iraq was a tactical means of achieving a strategic objective that ultimately resulted from the context of the War on Terror.

2.1 Tactical Foreign Policy Towards Iraq

According to Bob Woodward, it was within days of the 9/11 attacks that Donald Rumsfeld and Paul Wolfowitz began advocating military action against Iraq.[18] This

[18] Bob Woodward, Bush at War (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002) 49, 83-85.

is corroborated by the former Treasury Secretary, Paul O'Neill, who recalled that Wolfowitz raised the prospect of military action against Iraq at the National Security Council meeting on 13 September 2001 as part of the administration's response to the 9/11 attacks.[19] Whilst this is evidence of the internal debate on the appropriate response to the terrorist attacks, the actual manifestation of this aspect of the Bush Doctrine that saw Iraq encompassed as part of the War on Terror was unveiled in the 2002 State of the Union Address.

Following the 2002 State of the Union Address, Bush administration officials continued making the case for the inclusion of rogue states as part of the War on Terror on account of the risk from unconventional weapons. Although such a threat is conceivable, it arguably overstates the risk in that the *modus operandi* of terrorist groups should more accurately be associated with conventional weapons.[20] But, within the context of the post 9/11, attacks terrorists armed with unconventional weapons was generally accepted as the sum of all fears. By highlighting this potential threat, a domestic political will to extend the War on Terror to encompass Iraq was being fostered.

To actually encompass Iraq into the rubric of the War on Terror, the White House began a twofold strategy which aimed to establish that Iraq was in possession of unconventional weapons and that it had links with al-Qa'ida. Members of Bush's foreign policy team made several references to the risk of Iraq's smoking gun being a "nuclear cloud" appearing over an American city that would effectively dwarf the scale of the 9/11 attacks. Indeed, such reports played on the already present perception of a linkage: according to a poll by Newsweek late July 2002, 72% of people in the United States believed that Iraq was involved with aiding al-Qa'ida acquire unconventional weapons.[21] This is significant in that, by fostering this link,

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[19] Suskind, The Price of Loyalty 188.

[20] John Gearson, "Terrorism in Historical Perspective," The Goodenough-Chevening Conference on Terrorism (London: Unpublished, 2003)

[21] Spenser Ackerman, "The Weakest Link: Why the Bush Administration Insists against All Evidence on an Iraq-Al Qaeda Connection," Washington Monthly Nov. 2003, 23/08/04 <http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1316/is_11_35/ai_111027164>.

the ultimate risk of terrorists using an unconventional weapon against the United States became ever more real.

By the Bush administration referring to Iraq's potential smoking gun as a "nuclear cloud" over an American city if UN resolutions were not enforced, the fears of the average American were being unjustly played upon as the IAEA inspectors had effectively rendered harmless Iraq's nuclear programme during the Clinton administration. Importantly, the Bush administration would have known this to have been the case. As Iraq simply did not have a nuclear capability or an active nuclear programme at the time, the use of such phraseology was effectively scaremongering.

In terms of establishing a connection between the two, the Bush administration highlighted the presence in Iraq of the al-Qa'ida linked group Ansar al-Islam.[22] The implication was that Ansar al-Islam's presence in Iraq was evidence of some form of substantive cooperative agreement with al-Qa'ida. But again, it was misleading of the Bush administration to have highlighted this. Ansar al-Islam was operating in the Kurdish area which was not under the control of Saddam Hussain. Although Saddam would have indirectly benefited from Ansar al-Islam's attacks on the Kurds,[23] it is important to recognise that it was also hostile to Saddam's regime. Indeed, the prospect of a cooperative agreement was rejected by the leader of Ansar al-Islam as he saw Saddam's regime as operating "outside the Islamist zone."[24] Therefore, the implication of the Bush administration that Saddam's regime was connected to al-Qa'ida through Ansar al-Islam is a misrepresentation of the facts. But more importantly, it is not conceivable that this would not have been known by the US intelligence community. In some respects however, this was reflected in the administration's comments as a linkage which was only *implied*, and not *categorically stated*. Therefore, there appears to be a degree of justification to

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[22] Johnathan Schanzer, Ansar Al-Islam: Iraq's Al-Qa'ida Connection, 2003, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2pp. 10 Aug. 2004 http://www.frontpagemag.com/Articles/Printable.asp?ID=5571.

[23] Schanzer, Ansar Al-Islam.

[24] Uncovered: The Whole Truth About the Iraq War, Dir. Robert Greenwald, DVD, The Disinformation Company Ltd., 2004.

conclude that it was done deliberately to allow for Iraq's inclusion into the rubric of the War on Terror.

In addition to this, it was reported that the lead hijacker of the 9/11 attacks, Mohamed Atta, met with Iraqi intelligence in Prague in June 2000 and April 2001.[25] Although these reports were subsequently rejected by the Czech police,[26] it is important to recognise that by the Bush administration citing such information, the public perception of a linkage between Iraq and al-Qa'ida would have been fostered. But in terms of whether there is substance to the overall view that Saddam's regime had links with al-Qa'ida, both the 9/11 Commission and the Duelfer reports have given little currency to these allegations.[27] Although the 9/11 Commission did find evidence that al-Qa'ida had repeatedly approached Iraq, they found no evidence to support the conjecture that any real cooperation had existed.[28] Therefore, there is a clear question of why did the administration infer from its intelligence data that Iraq had substantial linkages to al-Qa'ida when a post-invasion reassessment suggests the contrary?

In terms of translating this perception to Congress, the White House's alarming pronouncements saw Iraq steadily evolve as a key political issue as part of the War on Terror. Congress had clearly favoured regime change since 1998, but the issue of unconventional weapons falling into the hands of al-Qa'ida had altered the definition of threat that Iraq posed. The Senate Committee on Foreign Relations met at the end of July 2002 to discuss the threats posed by Iraq; it was clear from the testimony of

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[25] Fred Barnes, "Mohamed Atta Was Here and Met with Saddam Hussain's Man in Prague," Weekly Standard 8 Dec. 2002, 12/06/03 <http://www.weeklystandard.com/content/public/articles/000/000/001/539dozfr.asp>.

[26] Peter Green, "Iraq Link to Sept 11 Attack and Anthrax Is Ruled Out," Telegraph Online 18 Dec. 2001, 12/01/02 <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2001/12/18/wirq18.xml>.

[27] National Commission on the Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, The 9/11 Commission Report: The Full Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 2004) 567pp. 12/01/05 <http://www.9-11commission.gov/report/index.htm>; and Charles Duelfer, Comprehensive Report of the Special Advisor on Iraq's WMD: Chemical and Biological Weapons, (Washington, D.C.: CIA, 2004) 350pp. 02/03/05 <http://www.cia.gov/cia/reports/iraq_wmd_2004/>.

[28] National Commission on the Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, The 9/11 Commission Report: The Full Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States.

several of witnesses that the administration's fears were warranted.[29] With much of the substance of the Senate committee having confirmed the administration's position, this newly defined threat was given political credibility on a bipartisan level.

Of equal importance, however, was the nature of the intelligence released by the CIA to members of Congress. With the CIA confirming that Iraq possessed such weapons and had links with al-Qa'ida, there appeared to be a clear political case which justified the executive's position. Indeed, in advance of the Congressional debate on the authorisation for the use of force against Iraq, the CIA released excerpts of a closed Congressional hearing held on 2 October 2002. The excerpts left little doubt that Iraq had longstanding ties to al-Qa'ida and posed a threat through its undeclared stockpiles of unconventional weapons.[30] With the executive and the intelligence community confirming that Iraq posed a threat to the United States through such linkages, the political climate within Congress shifted towards an acceptance of the position of the executive. Crucially, this allowed the executive to implement a substantive foreign policy change towards Iraq.

With regard to Iraq's unconventional weapons programmes, the intelligence community was correct to highlight that Iraq had the theoretical *capability* to be in possession of weapons to the sum total that the UN special commission saw as outstanding. However, as has already been argued in this thesis, the intelligence community should have analytically known that this was *highly unlikely* and any suggestion to the contrary was misleading. According to the 2005 Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction, "[t]he intelligence community was dead wrong in almost all of its prewar judgments about Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. This

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[29] United States, Senate. Committee on Foreign Relations, Threats, Responses and Regional Considerations Surrounding Iraq, 107th Cong. 2nd Sess., (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 31 Jul. 2002) 279pp. 16/06/03 <http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=107_senate_hearings&docid=f:81697.pdf>.

[30] George J. Tenet, "CIA Letter to Senate on Baghdad's Intentions," New York Times Online 9 Oct. 2002, 10/10/02 <www.nytimes.com/2002/10/09/international/09TTEX.html>.

was a major intelligence failure."[31] Although there was a clear failure of intelligence, there is also the possibility that the intelligence data was 'politicised' by way of it being selectively used as a tactical means of providing the *casus belli* for war against Iraq.

The clear case was thus made that Iraq had failed to comply with its obligations and that it continued to possess a prohibited unconventional weapons stockpile. By adding the terrorist linkage, US foreign policy was able to provide a level of justification, on the grounds of safeguarding US national security, to issue an ultimatum to Iraq. But, as already discussed, the policy response to this *potential* threat was the adoption of the doctrine of anticipatory self-defence. So, if Iraq failed to adhere to its obligations, the Bush administration maintained that it reserved the right to use 'pre-emptive' action against Iraq as per its rules of engagement.

A key issue was whether the Bush administration should revert to the United Nations as part of its tactical strategy. Bush acknowledged that "[t]here were certain people in the administration that were hopeful we could solve this diplomatically. And there were some that basically said we can't solve it diplomatically."[32] Colin Powell has been portrayed as a notable advocate within the administration for resorting to the United Nations as a means of providing a wider diplomatic footing; but, then again, as Secretary of State it is only reasonable to expect that someone in such a position would advocate this. Although this was accepted by the administration, Cheney's views on the United Nations route leading to a "never-ending process of debate, compromise and delay"[33] seems to capture the essence of the view held by the White House. It was recognised, however, that the active participation of the United Kingdom was required in order for political legitimacy if it could not be provided through the United Nations. Whilst the administration would not have conceivably felt a domestic political need for the specific authorisation of the Security Council in

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[31] United States, Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction, Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction: Report to the President, GPO, 2005) 618pp. 04/04/05 <http://www.wmd.gov/report/>.

[32] Woodward, Plan of Attack 153.

[33] Ibid. 157.

the same manner as the United Kingdom, some form of international legitimacy was still required. Robert Kagan rightly highlights that although the Bush administration did not require the active participation of British forces to invade Iraq "[i]t was the patina of international legitimacy Blair's support provided – a legitimacy the American people wanted and needed, as the Bush officials well understood."[34] The conclusion was to place the emphasis on the need for the United Nations to enforce its own resolutions and, failing that, there would be a case for the United States to act without a specific UN sanction along with a "coalition of the willing." Moreover, through resorting to the United Nations in the first instance, the spectre of international legitimacy was afforded by the United Kingdom.

On 12 September 2002, Bush declared at a speech at the United Nations that it was the responsibility on the international community to enforce UN resolutions on Iraq. Bush sent the clear message to the United Nations that if it failed to enforce the relevant UN Security Council resolutions the United States will be forced into action. Bush stated:

> My nation will work with the UN Security Council to meet our common challenge. If Iraq's regime defies us again, the world must move deliberately, decisively to hold Iraq to account. We will work with the UN Security Council for the necessary resolutions. But the purposes of the United States should not be doubted. The Security Council resolutions will be enforced – the just demands of peace and security will be met – or action will be unavoidable.[35]

In accordance with the Bush doctrine, this immediate threat had to be dealt with multilaterally if possible, but pre-emptively and in a unilateral fashion if the UN route proved ineffective.[36] A few days later on 17 September 2002 the Bush administration released its National Security Strategy. As has already been discussed,

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[34] Kagan, Of Paradise and Power 150.

[35] George W. Bush, "President's Remarks to the United Nations General Assembly," Remarks by the President in Address to the United Nations General Assembly, New York: GPO, 12 Sept. 2002. 5pp. 17/02/02 <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020912-1.html>.

[36] United States, House, Authorization for the Use of Force against Iraq, H.R. 114, P.L. 102-1, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 10 Oct. 2002) 8pp. 17/12/03 <http://www.iraqwatch.org/government/US/Legislation/ILA.htm>.

it controversially adopted the preventative use of force doctrine as a key method to prevent rogue states developing unconventional weapons which could be provided to terrorist groups. In terms of Iraq, this basically set out the political 'rules of engagement' whereby launching an invasion of Iraq would occur if the United Nations failed to enforce its own resolutions.

On a domestic level, Congress provided authorisation for the use of force against Iraq in October 2002. This sent a clear statement to the world that the United States was prepared to act if Iraq failed to comply with UN resolutions. This, in addition to Bush's speech to the UN General Assembly, prompted revised diplomatic attempts at the United Nations to have the inspectors returned to Iraq.

It was following these developments that the Security Council unanimously passed UNSCR 1441 of 8 November 2002. The resolution recognised that Iraq had been in material breech of a series of previous UN resolutions, but nonetheless accorded Iraq *a final opportunity* to comply with the will of the international community. Iraq was required to provide a full and complete declaration of its unconventional weapons programmes and missile technology within thirty days. The resolution made clear that if Iraq failed to comply with the terms of the resolution, it would face "serious consequences."[37] But under international law, this does not amount to an authorisation for the use of force unless one interprets the case of Kosovo as providing the customary international legal justification required for the use of force, without specific authorisation from the Security Council.

It is worth recognising at this point that in the Security Council discussions on Resolution 1441, it was recognised that the resolution *did not contain the authorisation for the use of force, and that any authorisation to do so would require an additional resolution.* The United States Ambassador to the United Nations, John Negroponte said:

> As we have said on numerous occasions to Council members, this Resolution contains no "hidden triggers" and no "automaticity" with respect to the use of force. If there is a further Iraqi breach, reported to

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[37] UNSCR 1441 of 8 Nov. 2002, Para. 13.

> the Council by UNMOVIC, the IAEA, or a member state, the matter will return to the Council for discussions as required in paragraph 12.[38]

The recognition that Resolution 1441 did not contain the authorisation for the use of force against Iraq was also confirmed by the British permanent representative to the United Nations, Jeremy Greenstock:

> We heard loud and clear during the negotiations the concerns about "automaticity" and "hidden triggers" ... Let me be equally clear in response, as one of the co-sponsors of the text we have adopted. There is no "automaticity" in this Resolution. If there is a further Iraqi breach of its disarmament obligations, the matter will return to the Council for discussion as required in operational paragraph 12.[39]

Therefore, Resolution 1441 was adopted on the provision given by its sponsors, the United States and United Kingdom, that the resolution *did not* contain the authorisation for the use of force, even in the event of an Iraqi non-compliance.

Iraq resumed its cooperation with the IAEA and the UN special commission on 27 November and provided a 12,000 page declaration to the United Nations in early December. Iraq's declaration amounted to a statement that it was no longer in possession of unconventional weapons as it had unilaterally destroyed them.[40] Hans Blix described the declaration as consisting of "reprints of declarations that had been sent to UNSCOM in the years before the inspectors left at the end of 1998."[41] But, for the United States, the declaration amounted to a material breech as it did not include declarations on everything it believed to be outstanding. Nevertheless, the

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[38] United States, Mission to the United Nations, Explanation of Vote by Ambassador John D. Negroponte, (New York: United States, GPO, 8 Nov. 2002) 2pp. 12 Jul 2003 <http://www.un.int/usa/02print_187.htm >.

[39] United Kingdom, Mission to the United Nations, Explanation of Vote by Jeremy Greenstock, (New York: United Nations, 8 Nov. 2002) 1pp. 12/07/03 <http://www.un.org/webcast/unitedkingdom110802.htm>.

[40] Hans Blix, Disarming Iraq (London: Bloomsbury, 2004) 99-102.

[41] Ibid. 107.

United States did not aim to bring the crisis to a close and allowed the inspections process to continue.

With the inspection process continuing, both the United States and the United Kingdom released intelligence dossiers on Iraq's WMD capabilities in order to bolster domestic support against Iraq. The CIA's and British Joint Intelligence Committee's (JIC) dossiers asserted that Iraq was continuing its unconventional weapon programmes and was in possession of actual weapons. The British government's assessment stated that, based on UNSCOM reports, Iraq had failed to declare the following materials:

> Up to 360 tonnes of bulk chemical warfare agent, including 1.5 tonnes of VX nerve agent; up to 3,000 tonnes of precursor chemicals, including approximately 300 tonnes which, in the Iraqi chemical warfare programme, were unique to the production of VX; growth media procured for biological agent production (enough to produce over three times the 8,500 litres of anthrax spores Iraq admits to having manufactured); over 30,000 special munitions for delivery of chemical and biological agents.[42]

It is important to recognise here that the JIC's assessment highlighted not only the quantities of precursor materials Iraq had not accounted for, but also the quantities of actual biological and chemical weaponries Iraq was believed to be in possession of. But this estimate was misleading: it was the maximum potential of Iraq's capability, and did not account for the production wastage of precursors during manufacture; the actual shelf life of such weapons; or even potential stockpiles destroyed during bombing raids.

In the aftermath of the apparent suicide of the British government's weapons expert, Dr David Kelly, the Hutton Inquiry examined the intelligence data which was included in the JIC's dossier on Iraq. A key finding was that Downing Street wanted a compelling case to be made in the dossier and that this influenced the language

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[42] United Kingdom, 10 Downing Street, Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction: The Assessment of the British Government, (ID114567), (London: The Stationery Office, 24 Sep. 2002) 55pp. 20/10/03 <http://www.number-10.gov.uk/output/Page271.asp >.

used by the JIC. Lord Hutton's report stated that this "may have subconsciously influenced... members of the JIC to make the wording of the dossier somewhat stronger than it would have been if it had been contained in a normal JIC assessment."[43] Overall, it allowed for a degree of misrepresentation in Iraq's capability, and was therefore arguably construed towards serving the political purpose of bolstering legitimacy for launching an invasion. In essence, the Hutton Report underlined that the intelligence data had been potentially politicised to serve the tactical policy of invading Iraq to effect regime change.

The US and the United Kingdom interpreted Iraq's actions after the inspection process resumed as constituting a material breech.[44] Following the rhetoric and military deployments which indicated that an invasion was likely, numerous large-scale anti-war protests occurred across the world. By themselves, such protests had little bearing on altering US policy, but they did fuel the anti-war position of several countries, in particular France and Germany. The bearing this had on US foreign policy was via the United Nations in terms of the viability of having a second resolution passed which classified Iraq as being in material breech; this provided the specific authorisation for the use of force. As has already been discussed, whilst this would not necessarily have prevented the United States from invading Iraq, it was significant for US policy through the effect it had on the United Kingdom's ability to partake in an invasion. The problem was very much whether a credible case could be made at the United Nations to overcome the widespread domestic opposition to any potential war against Iraq.

President Bush promised compelling evidence in his January 2003 State of the Union Address to allay doubts over Iraq's possession of prohibited weapons. The administration provided this through a public presentation of intelligence data by Secretary Powell at the United Nations in early February 2003. This was the culmination of efforts by the United States to provide a clear cut case of the need to

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[43] United Kingdom, House of Commons, Report of the Inquiry into the Circumstances Surrounding the Death of Dr David Kelly C.M.G., (HC247), (London: The Stationery Office, 28 Jan. 2004) 473sect. 25/10/04 <http://www.the-hutton-inquiry.org.uk/content/report/>.

[44] United Nations, UNMOVIC, An Update on Inspection, (New York: United Nations, 27 Jan. 2003) 9pp. 19/06/04 <http://www.un.org/Depts/unmovic/Bx27.htm>.

bring Iraq into compliance with UN resolutions. The presentation was very reminiscent of Secretary Adlai Stevenson's performance during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Powell's photographic and audio data indicated that Iraq was actively concealing and deceiving UNMOVIC. Although it was widely hailed within the United States as a compelling case it was also subject to a great degree of scepticism.[45] Indeed, Hans Blix noted that the presentation contained inaccuracies and was by no means a clear cut case.[46] Russia, France and China shared this scepticism and were unwilling to accept the British and American position that it provided a *casus belli* against Iraq. They took the position that the inspectors should be accorded more time before a judgement was formulated, and thus a second resolution finding Iraq in material breech and authorising the use of force was seen as premature. However, *on face value*, Powell's presentation did seem convincing and it is reasonable to conclude that it had some effect on swaying public opinion in favour of the need to launch punitive action against Iraq.

However, with Hans Blix's report to the United Nations on 6 March 2003 which specified a catalogue of unresolved disarmament issues,[47] the United Kingdom and the United States saw clear justification for a second resolution finding Iraq in material breech and authorising the use of force. Despite the findings in Blix's report, Russia and France expressed their unwillingness to authorise the use of force, and their willingness to use their veto at the Security Council. Crucially, Jacques Chirac stated that "France will vote no to a new UN resolution on Iraq whatever the circumstances."[48] This was important in that it ended any possibility of a vote being taken at the Security Council and implied that this would be the case even if Iraq was in clear breech of its obligations. Chirac's position, however, in effect gave political justification for the use of force without the specific authorisation of the Security

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[45] Glen Rangwala, "Blix and Elbaradei Vs Powell," Middle East Reference 14 Feb. 2003, 10/11/04 <http://middleeastreference.org.uk/un030214.html>.

[46] Blix, Disarming Iraq 152-57.

[47] United Nations, UNMOVIC, Unresolved Disarmament Issues: Iraq's Proscribed Weapons Programmes, (New York: United Nations, 6 Mar. 2003) 175pp. 13/06/04 <http://www.un.org/Depts/unmovic/documents/6mar.pdf>.

[48] Anonymous, "France Will Use Iraq Veto," BBC News Online 10 Mar. 2003, 11/05/03 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/2838269.stm>.

Council. This proved to be a key issue which aided Tony Blair receiving the authorisation from the British Parliament as resolving the issue through the United Nations was no longer seen as a viable option. Therefore, France's position gave a degree of legitimacy to the use of force without specific authorisation for the use of force from the Security Council, and thus nullified any restraints the United Nations may have had over preventing an invasion from taking place.

With the United Nations route effectively closed off, US policy was able to function with a greater degree of latitude. This culminated in an ultimatum being issue to Iraq. Without the inability to refer to the United Nations, the United States and a 'coalition of the willing' subsequently launched an invasion on 20 March 2003. Allegations were widespread at the US subjugation of international law and political unilateralism. Although the invasion was not sanctioned by a specific resolution, it arguably relied on the customary principle of international law set by the case of Kosovo where both the EU and the United States acted without specific authorisation for the use of force; but admittedly this is by no means a resolved issue under international law. In terms of the allegation of unilateralism, the United States did act with several other countries including the United Kingdom, Poland, Italy and Spain, and it is therefore incorrect to refer to the invasion as a unilateral undertaking. Indeed, Robert Kagan is correct to highlight that France and Germany's accusation of unilateralism more aptly stems from their loss of influence over US policy.[49]

It is clear that the 9/11 attacks resulted in a tactical shift in US policy which resulted in a military invasion to achieve the US strategic objective of regime change that had been applied unchanged since 1991. However, it has been shown that the official justifications for launching the invasion were lacking. This underscores that the United States had applied the doctrine of anticipatory self-defence and had used Iraq's failure/inability to comply with UN resolutions as a *casus belli* for war. Nevertheless, it is important to recognise that, on a wider level, the grand strategic premise of the United States was to promote democracy and liberalism as a means of countering extremist political Islam and terrorism. As it will be shown in the next

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[49] Kagan, Of Paradise and Power 105-58.

section, this was a key strategic objective which was arguably of more importance than the perceived need to act preventatively against Iraq.

2.2 Strategic Foreign Policy Towards Iraq

Under the rubric of the Bush doctrine, the potential threat posed by an Iraq in possession of unconventional weapons should not be interpreted as mandating pre-emptive action in the form of regime change through a military invasion: theoretically, it would have only become a requirement once *all* diplomatic channels had been exhausted. However, although the United States made clear its belief that Iraq possessed such weapons, and was in a position to comply with its international obligations, the truth of the matter is more sobering: Iraq's unilateral destruction of its prohibited weapons prior to 1995 placed itself in a position whereby it was not capable of fully complying with its obligations, despite the Bush administration's position that Iraq was *capable* of doing so.[50]

Nevertheless, it is reasonable to conclude that given Iraq's failure to comply with its international obligations since 1991, the Bush administration would have taken the position that there was little or no realistic prospect of a *willing* Iraqi compliance, bar the exception of the threat of a subsequent invasion hanging over it like the sword of Damocles. But of more importance, given the nature of the intelligence data, it is difficult to see how the administration could have seen a full and complete compliance with UN resolutions as anything but a *marginal possibility*. When the factor of verifying weapons destroyed in the allied bombing campaigns are taken into account, or the possibility that Iraq had indeed unilaterally destroyed some of its weapons that were past their shelf-life, even a conservative interpretation of the data which was publicly released leads to the conclusion that a strict Iraqi compliance with UN resolutions was unlikely. In addition to this, the intelligence data, which was mainly provided by opposition groups, was circumstantial and laced with

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[50] There is no evidence to support the view that any US administration since 1991 actually believed Iraq was not in possession of unconventional weapons, and therefore incapable of diplomatically complying with its obligations. To suggest that the Bush administration knew its intelligence data was *incorrect*, rather than simply based on *inferences and circumstantial evidence*, would equate to the charge that it was guilty of the federal felony of misleading Congress.

qualifiers. Therefore, it is justifiable to conclude that the logical product of the administration's foreign shift after the 9/11 attacks was the realisation that the decision to give Iraq an ultimatum would almost certainly require a subsequent invasion.[51]

According to Richard Hass, after a discussion with Condoleezza Rice in early July 2002, he was left with little doubt that a decision to go to war had already been made. Hass commented that:

> Condi and I have regular meetings, once every month or so – she and I get together for thirty or forty-five minutes, just to review the bidding. And I raised this issue about were we really sure that we wanted to put Iraq front and center at this point, given the War on Terrorism and other issues. And she said, essentially, that that decision's been made, don't waste your breath. And that was early July [2002].[52]

From Hass's remarks, it is reasonable to conclude that the administration recognised that compliance by Iraq would not be forthcoming, or was not possible, and therefore it was in effect planning for an invasion against Iraq. This serves to underline the argument that the Bush administration had changed its tactical policy towards achieving the unchanged strategic objective of regime change.

In addition to this, a secret memo was leaked to the press in the run up to the British general election in May 2005 which confirmed Hass's remarks. The internal Downing Street memo listed the minutes from a meeting the Prime Minister held with senior cabinet members and intelligence personal on 23 July 2002. The minutes reported the following from the head of the British Secret Intelligence Service after holding talks with counterparts in Washington:

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[51] Admittedly, the United States had been consistent in its position that Saddam Hussain would have rekindled his unconventional weapons programme if the sanctions were lifted. Therefore, although it can be argued that it would have made little substantive difference if Iraq had indeed complied with UN resolutions, the prospect of the United States leading an invasion of Iraq if it had indeed fully complied with its international obligations, is unlikely to have been a politically expedient option.

[52] Nicholas Lemann, "How It Came to War," New Yorker 31 Mar. 2003, 13/09/04 <http://www.newyorker.com/printable/?fact/030331fa_fact>.

There was a perceptible shift in attitude. Military action was now seen as inevitable. Bush wanted to remove Saddam, through military action, justified by the conjunction of terrorism and WMD. But the intelligence and facts were being fixed around the policy. The [US National Security Council] had no patience with the UN route, and no enthusiasm for publishing material on the Iraqi regime's record. There was little discussion in Washington of the aftermath of military action.[53]

The significance of the leaked Downing Street memo is that it confirms that the Bush administration had decided to invade Iraq for strategic reasons and embarked on a tactical policy that would almost certainly result in an invasion. Indeed, this tactical policy hinged around misleading the general public through the selective use of intelligence data to justify the invasion.

With there being a clear use of tactical foreign policy to justify the invasion of Iraq the key issue is what was the strategic objective which underpinned the policy change? As already highlighted, the root cause of Islamic terrorism was seen by Bush's neoconservative foreign team as stemming from the absence of liberal democracy in Middle Eastern countries. Therefore the universal adoption of liberal democracy throughout the Middle East would form the basis of a long term counterterrorism strategy.[54] Iraq, however, was seen as the key to a wider geostrategic vision of democratising the wider Middle East area. Indeed, Bush commented in February 2003 that:

> A liberated Iraq can show the power of freedom to transform that vital region, by bringing hope and progress into the lives of millions. America's interests in security, and America's belief in

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[53] Matthew Rycroft, "The Secret Downing Street Memo," Times Online 1 May 2005, 02/05/05 <www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,2087-1593607,00.html >.

[54] The widespread adoption of liberal democracy is widely highlighted as fostering more peaceful relations between countries.

> liberty, both lead in the same direction: to a free and peaceful Iraq.[55]

This approach departs from the traditional notion of the maintenance of Persian Gulf security through ensuring the region's stability by way of supporting pro-Western autocratic regimes.

With the neoconservative interpretation of the post-9/11 context, the need to achieve a democratisation throughout the Middle East was a pressing concern. The manner in which this assessment ties in with US foreign policy towards Iraq is via the impact a democratised Iraq would arguably have on the greater Middle East area.[56] The logic of behind line of thought is that following an invasion of Iraq, the post-war reconstruction effort, which would necessarily include the establishment of democratic governmental institutions, would result in unassailable pressures on neighbouring authoritarian countries to indigenously democratise. The net effect is that the establishment of a liberal democratic regional system within the Middle East would safeguard US national security by countering the base level conditions that result in Islamic terrorist movements. In essence, the grand strategic era of the War on Terror dictated the *primacy of national security* and the widespread adoption of liberal democracy was seen as providing this in the long term.

Although it is a moot point and outside the scope of this thesis, it is debateable whether democracy *can* be imposed through military force in a secure and sustainable manner in addition to promoting moves towards democratisation on neighbouring authoritarian states.[57] However, it does seem clear that this was the key

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[55] George W. Bush, "President Bush Presents Vision of Middle East Peace," Remarks by the President at the American Enterprise Institute Annual Dinner, Washington, D.C.: GPO, 26 Feb. 2003. 6pp. 15/09/04 <http://tokyo.usembassy.gov/e/p/tp-20030228a1.html>.

[56] Marina Ottway, et al., "Democratic Mirage in the Middle East," Critical Mission: Essays on Democracy Promotion, ed. Thomas Carothers (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2002) 229-32.

[57] Ibid. 230-36.

strategic objective in the Bush administration's policy calculations towards Iraq.[58] The unveiling of the Middle East Partnership Initiative in December 2002 underlines the administration's commitment to the promotion of economic, political and educational reform across the Middle East through the provision of developmental assistance. Although the investment, training and support programmes that are encompassed in MEPI appear a benign political initiative, in the long term they would arguably provide the United States with more political influence as a result of its economic investments. Moreover, the educational and political reform initiatives would conceivably result in gradual socio-political changes occurring across the Middle East. Whilst it is outside the scope of this thesis to assess their prospects for success, it is suffice to say their adoption underlines the argument that the War on Terror has resulted in an abandonment of the concept of containment and balance of power approach in favour of a widespread overhaul of the Middle East on a socio-political level as a means of countering terrorism. It also underscores the Wilsonian aspect to post-9/11 US grand strategy that has been highlighted in chapter 3. Therefore, the invasion of Iraq through the use of its failure/inability to comply with its international obligations as a justification for war was a tactical foreign policy initiative geared towards achieving this wider strategic objective.

2.2.1 Post-Invasion of Iraq: Strategic Opportunity or Quagmire

The military campaign to unseat Saddam Hussain's regime is accurately described by Timothy Garden as having "no formal conclusion."[59] Bush declared on 1 May 2003 that "[m]ajor combat operations in Iraq have ended" and that "our coalition is engaged in securing and reconstructing that country."[60] Bush was correct that the Iraqi regime had been toppled and the Iraqi army had been defeated but, providing

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[58] Thomas Carothers, "Promoting Democracy and Fighting Terror," Critical Mission: Essays on Democracy Promotion, ed. Thomas Carothers (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2003) 63-74.

[59] Timothy Garden, "Iraq: The Military Campaign," International Affairs 79.4 (2003): 701.

[60] George W. Bush, "President Bush Announces Major Combat Operations in Iraq Have Ended," Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1 May 2003. 3pp. 05/05/03 <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/05/iraq/20030501-15.html>.

security for post-war reconstruction was to be a greater task than many in the administration had envisaged.

The Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), headed by L. Paul Bremer III, was charged with the political administration of Iraq until the formal transfer of authority on 28 June 2004. Resulting in the main from the Bush administration's miscalculation and unwillingness to commit the level of forces required for Iraqi security needs, a guerrilla style insurgency grew unabated.[61] In the initial period after the toppling of Saddam Hussain's regime the Iraqi economy virtually collapsed and, was plagued with widespread looting, lawlessness and insecurity. Given that US strategy was for Iraq to be reconstructed as a functional and pluralistic democracy in order to foster an overhaul of the region towards democratic polity, the insecurity within Iraq was a clear barrier.

The administration's initial strategy towards the post war reconstruction of Iraq was for it to remain under US control. The US was not prepared to cede control of Iraq to the UN but, nevertheless, saw it as a useful vehicle for soliciting financial aid.[62] However the growing insurgency had underlined that the US forces were insufficient for restoring security to Iraq. This was compounded by the active-duty troop strength of the US which indicated it required some form of third party participation by early 2004 or it would need to extend the tour of duty period. These factors prompted a change in tact from the Bush administration in early September as it began to seek a UN resolution that would provide for an internationalised military force which was comparable to that employed in Kosovo.[63]

Within the context of this policy change, two car bomb attacks struck the UN compound in Baghdad in late August and early September. The former resulted in the death of Sergio Vieira de Mello, the UN Special Representative for Iraq. This raised questions within the UN that it was targeted as a result of a perceived linkage

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[61] Larry Diamond, "What Went Wrong in Iraq," Foreign Affairs 83.5 (2004): 34-56.

[62] Steven R. Weisman and Felicity Barringer, "US Abandons Idea of Bigger UN Role in Iraq Occupation," New York Times 19 Aug. 2003, A1.

[63] David E. Sanger, "Bush Looks to UN to Share Burden on Troops in Iraq," New York Times 3 Sept. 2003, A1.

it had with the United States.[64] With the second bombing in September, the assessment was made by the UN that the security situation was too dangerous to warrant a significant commitment of personnel.[65] By October the UN began to significantly downsize its deployment in Iraq and this hampered the US efforts to garner support for an internationalised force.

The downsizing of the UN deployment in October 2003 made the prospect of the UN assuming a greater role an unrealistic option. Simon Chesterman and David Malone aptly comment:

> The idea that the United Nations can somehow quaff the poisoned chalice is delusional. The present US policy reversal and UN staff concerns place the secretary general in a difficult position. Until security improves, [Kofi Annan] cannot in good conscience send civilian staff into harm's way. But security will only improve when the United States looks less like an occupying power. Many analysts therefore think that Iraq is going to get worse before it gets better.[66]

In sum, the post-invasion strategic context saw the United States descend into a situation where it was acting multilaterally through a 'coalition of the willing', but was doing so without the legitimacy afforded by the United Nations. In some respects, a parallel can be drawn with the Vietnam War where the US faced a similar form of insurgency and was acting without a comfortable level of multilateral legitimacy. The guerrilla warfare that began to develop throughout 2003 in the aftermath of the invasion was still in its infancy when compared to the scale of attacks witnessed in subsequent years. Nevertheless, the key challenges the post-invasion scenario presented the United States was how long it would take for the security situation to be addressed and for a functional democratic government to take

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[64] Thalif Deen, "UN Bombed for Perceived US Link, Experts Say," Inter-Press Service 19 Aug. 2003, 03/04/04 <http://www.globalpolicy.org/security/issues/iraq/after/2003/0819unbombed.htm>.

[65] Edith M. Lederer, "Annan Won't Send UN Staff Back to Iraq," Associated Press 18 Oct. 2003, 12/03/04 <http://www.globalpolicy.org/security/issues/iraq/after/2003/1018annan.htm>.

[66] Simon Chesterman and David Malone, "The Iraq Tragedy: It's Too Late for the UN to Help Much," International Herald Tribune Online 8 Dec. 2003, 10/12/03 <http://www.iht.com/articles/120574.html>.

power. An assessment of the strategic impact of this aspect of US policy on Persian Gulf reform issues will necessarily require a medium to long term retrospective study. Given the time frame of this case study it is not viable to undertake this but is clearly an important area for future research.

2.3 Summary Assessment

The 9/11 attacks were highly significant in US policy towards the Persian Gulf in that the neoconservative vision on how the threat of terrorism should be countered had a direct bearing on US strategy towards achieving Persian Gulf Security. Since 1991 a policy of dual containment had been applied in order to maintain a balance of power and thus ensure the security through regional security. The Bush administration's response to the 9/11 attacks saw the promotion of liberal democracy as the overarching means of countering the root causes of international terrorism. This made the traditional balance of power approach in the Persian Gulf no longer viable. Indeed, it was seen as being a contributory factor to the development of Islamic terrorism. Therefore, there was a need for political, economic and educational reforms to be applied across the Persian Gulf as part of the long term goal of democratisation which would provide security and stability for the Persian Gulf.

The invasion of Iraq served this strategic objective in that the post-war reconstruction would allow nation building on-a-par with post-Second World War West Germany, making way for the adoption of democratic governance. More significance, a fully functioning democratic Iraq was believed to hold the potential for spreading democracy throughout the region as the position of authoritarian rulers would become untenable.

Whilst this was a key strategic objective in the rationalisation behind the invasion of Iraq, the Bush doctrine also saw a potential future threat arising from Iraq through the perceived commitment by Saddam Hussain's regime to produce unconventional weapons in the future. The prospect of such weapons being used directly or

asymmetrically against the United States was taken as justification in itself for the preventative use of force.

It has been suggested that the reason why these strategic objectives were not stated as the actual *casus belli* for mounting an invasion against Iraq as stemming from their perceived illegitimacy in the eyes of the international. Indeed, this would have posed practical difficulties in that it may well have jeopardised the formation of a coalition to launch the invasion. Even so, Iraq was a unique case in that it was unable to fully comply with UN resolutions. This gave the United States the opportunity to premise the invasion on the basis an enforcement of UN resolutions. US policy therefore used the case of an enforcement of UN resolutions as a tactical means of achieving its dual objectives that stemmed from the post-9/11 international context. It was therefore a clear *fait accompli*.

3.0 UNITED STATES FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS IRAN 2001-2003

The onset of the War on Terror was the unlikely conduit whereby bilateral relations were developed through shared geopolitical interests. Discussions on Afghanistan had taken place prior to the 9/11 attacks under the auspices of the United Nations' 'six-plus-two' talks. The Iranians were fervent opponents of the Taliban and al-Qa'ida, and during the Clinton era they had aimed to solicit the active help of the United States to directly target them. However, US policy at that time had other priorities and thus no substantive cooperative agreement was achieved. The 9/11 attacks fundamentally changed this contextual situation.

The presence of Osama bin Laden and the refuge being provided to his organisation by the Taliban, gave a renewed sense of importance to US policy towards Afghanistan under the rubric of the War on Terror. In order to facilitate discussion being held in the six-plus-two talks, a sub group was created which included Italy and Germany for political cover. The group held meetings in Geneva, and as American action in Afghanistan served Iran's geopolitical interests, agreement was reached for it to provide logistical, intelligence and operational support for Operation

Enduring Freedom.[67] For Tehran, it would have been clear that the United States was going to take military action regardless of whether it cooperated but, given its interests in deposing the Taliban, it is likely that Khamene'i saw this cooperation as a necessary evil.

With the end of war in Afghanistan, Iran became an active partner in the United Nations post-war conference held in Bonn, Germany. Khamene'i was pragmatic in his decision to cooperate with the post-reconstruction effort. Indeed, Iran had a vested interest in the United States succeeding in Afghanistan: Kenneth Pollack is correct to argue that a successful post-war reconstruction effort would have prevented a repeat of the instability caused by the Soviet withdrawal in 1989.[68] By providing assistance and being an active partner for the United States, Iran was in effect securing its own national interests.

With these shared geopolitical interests, it is only reasonable to speculate that the opportunity for confidence building measures towards a rapprochement would have been rife. However, it is important to recognise that the overarching contextual issue had become terrorism. With the State Department listing Iran as the a leading state sponsor of terrorism, it is questionable to what extent the Bush administration could have actually moved beyond containment without a substantive change in Iran's policies towards US designated terrorist groups. Moreover, given the central premise of the War on Terror being the spread of democracy and freedom, the Iranian regime was viewed within this context. Therefore a rapprochement without substantive reforms, which would have effectively resulted in a complete political transformation within Iran, would not have been viable and any cooperation the Bush administration was having with Iran was arguably *tactical*. Therefore, whilst cooperation based on geopolitical interests was important, it is doubtful it could have overcome the issue of Iranian links with terrorism.

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[67] Pollack, The Persian Puzzle 345-49.

[68] Ibid. 349.

3.1 Unravelling the New Strategic Dynamic

In spite of the relations with Iran being steadily built on through shared geopolitical interests, all of this was undone on 3 January 2002 when Israel intercepted a ship, the *Karine A*, carrying an arsenal of weaponry from Iran. The ship was captained by an officer in the Palestinian Authority's Navy and contained "[k]atyusha rockets, mortars, rifles, machine guns, sniper rifles, ammunition, antitank mines, rocket-propelled grenades, and 2.5 tons of explosives."[69] The weapons were manufactured in Iran and had been loaded onto the Ship within Iranian territorial waters.[70] Israel and the United States found it to be a compelling case that Iran was guilty of illicitly supplying the weapons. Powell commented that:

> I think he [Arafat] ought to acknowledge, as the first step toward moving forward, acknowledge that this has happened and they bear some responsibility for it happening, and give the international community, and especially the Israelis, some assurance that this kind of activity is going to stop. And do it in a way that will be persuasive and convincing and allow us to move forward.[71]

Whilst this did have a ramification on US diplomatic relations with the Palestinian Authority, it also had an impact on US foreign policy towards Iran. Within the newly emerged context of the War on Terror, Iran's provision of illicit armaments was seen by the White House and Congress as clear evidence of Iran's intention to derail the peace process through terrorism. Indeed, Pollack highlighted that the US intelligence community was convinced that Iran was "stepping up its support to HAMAS and PIJ to attack the right-wing Israeli government of Ariel Sharon."[72] But of more importance, reports came to light that Iran had allegedly allowed senior al-Qa'ida operatives to flee into Iran. This was in marked contrast to its initial clampdown and

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[69] Pollack, The Persian Puzzle 350-51.

[70] James Bennet, "Seized Arms Would Have Vastly Extended Arafat Arsenal," New York Times 12 Jan. 2002, A5.

[71] United States, Department of State, Powell Says Arafat Needs to Acknowledge Karine a Incident, (2002: United States Mission to the European Union, 13 Apr. 2002) 6pp. 12/05/03 <http://www.useu.be/Categories/GlobalAffairs/Jan2502PowellArafatKarine.html>.

[72] Pollack, The Persian Puzzle 351.

official position. With this coming to light only months after the 9/11 attacks, the political response in the United States to this was predictable and undid the 'good will' developed from the shared interests in the overthrow of the Taliban. Indeed, Condoleezza Rice stated that "Iran's direct support of regional and global terrorism, and its aggressive efforts to acquire weapons of mass destruction, belie any good intentions it displayed in the days after the world's worst terrorist attacks in history."[73]

Bush's 2002 State of the Union Address identified Iran as being part of an 'Axis of Evil' with Iraq and North Korea. According to Bob Woodward, both Rice and Stephen Hadley advised against Iran's inclusion in the speech as part of an 'Axis' as it had a fledgling democratic movement.[74] Nevertheless, Bush insisted that Iran be included as he saw Iran posing, along with North Korea and Iraq, the biggest threat to the world in terms of terrorism and the procurement of unconventional weapons.[75] As has already been discussed, the Bush doctrine saw the combination of these two factors as the greatest threat facing US national security; thus Iran's alleged involvement in both of these spheres resulted in it being categorised in this manner. For Iran, equating it with Iraq and North Korea was highly provocative and was greeted with condemnation by the hardliners as evidence of US provocation. Iran withdrew for a short period of time from the Geneva Group in protest, but later rejoined when it became clear that Iraq was to be targeted as the Group was useful as a conduit of information on US Gulf policy.

With the onset of the Operation Iraqi Freedom in March 2003, Iran refrained from hampering US policy, but was widely regarded as not having provided the same level of assistance that it had accorded the United States in its Afghanistan campaign. However, it is interesting to note that, according to Kenneth Pollack, Iran began moving intelligence personnel into Iraq from May 2003. He argues that an intelligence network was built up comprising "all of Iran's various intelligence and covert action organizations were represented in Iraq – the IRGC (including its Quds

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[73] Pollack, The Persian Puzzle 351.

[74] Woodward, Plan of Attack 87-88.

[75] Ibid. 88.

Forces), Hizballah, the MOIS, Lebanese Hizballah, and assorted others."[76] But crucially, according to Pollack, this intelligence apparatus was *not operational* and thus not involved in hampering US activities in post-war Iraq.[77] The reason why this network was not activated to hamper US activities is speculated by Pollack as being a result of Iran's interest in seeing a successful post-war recovery in Iraq. More importantly, he also suggests that it is a tactical means by which Iran could achieve leverage against the United States if the Bush administration decided to take any preventative action against Tehran.[78] In other words, the Bush administration was facing a veiled threat from the hardliners in Iran through their ability to provoke varying degrees of instability within Iraq.

3.1.1 Contextual Issue: Support for Terrorism

Despite the United States having shared interests with Iran in both Afghanistan and Iraq, the main obstacle which was creating friction was Iran's perceived involvement with terrorism. The United States alleged that the al-Qa'ida attacks within Saudi Arabia on 12 May 2003, which saw three truck bombs detonated in a Western compound in Riyadh, killing twenty people, were actually planned in Iran. According to the United States, senior al-Qa'ida operatives were active in eastern Iran and had directed the attacks from a terrorist cell within Saudi Arabia. On face value, the United States saw Iran as complicit in these attacks as it had allowed known terrorists to freely operate within its territory. A more sober analysis, however, shows that these operatives were in an area of Iran which did not have a good governmental presence and thus it is possible to see why al-Qa'ida was able to function in Iran. Nevertheless, the perception by many within Congress and in media circles was that links somehow existed between al-Qa'ida and Iran's Sh'ia theocracy. Compounding this, Iran had allowed al-Qaeda operatives, who were involved in the attacks of 11 September 2001, free movement across Iranian territory. Indeed, the

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[76] Pollack, The Persian Puzzle 355.

[77] Ibid. 352-58.

[78] Ibid.

9/11 Commission Report indicted that Tehran had informed its immigration officials to refrain from stamping their passports.[79] Whilst the reports do not amount to an evidence of some form of substantive agreement, they are significant in that they made any form of co-operation based on mutual interests a politically charged option for the White House.

As has already been highlighted, Iran was viewed by the US government as having longstanding ties to terrorist groups opposed to the existence of Israel and the whole concept of the peace process. Despite the newly emerged contextual situation which was characterised by a determined opposition to terrorism, Iran did not alter its policy towards such groups. In June 2002, reports came to light that Hezbollah, Hamas, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, and Islamic Jihad had convened under the auspices of the Iranian government in Tehran.[80] This was significant as it indicated that a more coordinated effort on behalf of the opposition groups was being promoted by Iran. As this occurred within the context of the War on Terror, the prospect of engagement occurring without a clear change in Iran's policies was a distant prospect, and underlines how Iran's policies undermined its relationship with the United States.

The terrorist bombing of the Western compound in Riyadh in May 2003 was especially significant for the United States as seven out of the twenty fatalities were American citizens. With a link being established in the aftermath of the attacks with al-Qa'ida personnel in Iran, the United States sought their extradition. Iran's response was essentially a quid pro quo in that it requested that the MEK operatives in Iraq, who were near the Iranian border, be extradited. Iran's request was, at least on face value, perfectly reasonable in that the United States had designated the MEK as a terrorist organisation and had detained 3,800 MEK fighters in the immediate aftermath of the invasion of Iraq. The detention of the MEK fighters was actually a product of bilateral negotiations before the March 2003 invasion of Iraq and was

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[79] United States, National Commission on the Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, The 9/11 Commission Report: The Full Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 2004) 567pp. 12/01/05 <http://www.9-11commission.gov/report/index.htm>.

[80] Dennis Ross, "The Hidden Threat in the Middle East," Wall Street Journal 24 Jun. 2002, A14.

agreed on in order to secure Iranian cooperation in search and rescue missions in addition to securing the border with Iraq.

Although the United States had detained MEK operatives, the wider contextual situation which implicated Iran in the *Karine A* illicit arms shipment to the Palestinian Authority, in addition to widespread allegations on Iran's failure to arrest al-Qa'ida operatives on its territory, resulted in the Bush administration refusing Iran's extradition request as part of a quid pro quo. This highlights a degree of hypocrisy on the part of the Bush administration in that it was refusing to extradite operatives of a group it had designated as an active terrorist organisation to the country where they had carried out their attacks. However, it is more telling on US policy towards Iran under the overall framework of Persian Gulf Security: Iran's ties with terrorism precluded mutual interests being built on bilaterally with the United States and ultimately resulted in the unwillingness of the Bush administration to extradite MEK operatives who were both terrorists and opponents of the Iranian regime.

3.1.2 Iran's Nuclear Programme

Although Iran's nuclear ambitions can be traced back to the purchase of a research reactor from the United States in 1959, the central issue for the United States has been whether Iran was seeking the production of a nuclear weapon despite it being a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1968. Construction of Iran's nuclear power station at Bushehr began in 1974 by German contractors but was suspended in 1979. Iran signed an agreement with Russia on 8 January 1995 to complete the construction of the 1,000MW light water power station. As has already been highlighted, Iran maintained that it required this alternative source of energy as a result of rising oil and gas prices which it sought to sell rather than use domestically. Nevertheless, within the context of Iran's perceived involvement in international terrorism, the United States has regarded Iran's domestic nuclear programme as being ultimately geared towards the acquisition of a nuclear weapon, despite Iran being entitled to a domestic nuclear power capability under international law.

Although Iran's nuclear programme had been viewed with suspicion by the Clinton administration, there had been no evidence to support the conjecture that Iran was developing an illicit nuclear programme. This situation altered dramatically in August 2002 following the announcement by the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI) that two secret nuclear facilities had been constructed in Natanz and Arak.[81] The NCRI claimed that a nuclear production plant and a research laboratory had been constructed in Natanz, and a heavy water production plant had been constructed in Arak. Crucially these facilities had not been declared to the IAEA. According to White House Press Secretary Ari Fleischer, the covert nature of the facilities underscored the administration's view that Iran was seeking a nuclear weapon capability. Indeed, he clarified the administrations overall view on Iran's nuclear programme in December 2002 as being that "there is no economic gain for a country rich in oil and gas, like Iran, to build costly indigenous nuclear fuel cycle facilities... Iran flares off more gas every year than the equivalent power it hopes to produce with these reactors."[82]

Within the context of the War on Terror and under the rubric of the Bush Doctrine, Iran's presumed illicit development of nuclear weapons was seen to pose a grave threat to the national security of the United States. Moreover, Iran's perceived involvement in international terrorism placed it in the unenviable position of having the potential to supply unconventional weapons asymmetrically to terrorist groups. Under the Bush Doctrine, the preventative use of force was justifiable once all diplomatic avenues had been exhausted. It is important, however, to recognise that in spite of the comprehensive nature of US sanctions towards Iran, the scope for diplomacy remained. In essence, the United States could not realistically impose any further punitive sanctions on Iran, so its options were essentially twofold:

1. Use incentives as a means of achieving a moderation in Iran's nuclear policy;
2. Rely on the good offices of other countries to negotiate a change in Iran's policies.

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[81] The Associated Press, "Group: Iran's Nuke Program Growing," New York Times 15 Aug. 2002, A3.

[82] Glen Kessler, "Nuclear Sites in Iran Worry US Officials," Washington Post 14 Dec. 2002, A18.

While the options available were limited, it is important to recognise that the manifestation of Iran's covert nuclear programme became public in August 2002, at which point the administration was firmly committed to achieving regime change in Iraq through an invasion. With the United States engaged in Afghanistan and committed to an invasion of Iraq, it is reasonable to conclude that a military option towards Iran would not have been viable at that time.

Given this contextual situation, the Bush administration appears to have had little choice but to premise its foreign policy towards Iran on non-military means. But on the other hand, an easing of US unilateral sanctions as part of a quid pro quo would have been a politically difficult option for the White House. Indeed, within the context of the War on Terror, the rubric of the Bush Doctrine, and the Presidential election campaign in 2004, it would have been politically difficult for the Bush administration to reduce sanctions towards Iran as an incentive for a moderation in Tehran's policies. Therefore, the Bush administration had little choice but to opt for the policy route which relied on the European Union and other countries as a means by which a diplomatic solution could be achieved. Indeed this point was conceded by Bush in December 2004 when he commented "[w]e're relying upon others, because we've sanctioned ourselves out of influence with Iran... in other words, we don't have much leverage with the Iranians right now."[83] In essence, United States foreign policy was in a position of stalemate as it did not have credible diplomatic options available to it, and was constrained in its ability to act punitively against Tehran. US foreign policy had, therefore, succumbed to the position of being essentially dependent on a unilateral modification of Iran's own policies, or the achievement of a diplomatic resolution, which was commensurate with US policy objectives, by the European Union.

3.2 Summary Assessment

US foreign policy towards Iran during the time period 2001-03 was both the nadir and the pinnacle of bilateral relations since 1993. The contextual situation of the War

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[83] Susan Rice, "We Need a Real Iran Policy," Washington Post 30 Dec. 2004, A27.

on Terror was the product of this dichotomy. The alignment of the Taliban and al-Qa'ida brought Afghanistan into the forefront of US foreign policy in the immediate aftermath of the 9/11 attacks. By virtue of geo-politics, Iran and the United States had shared national interests in the success of the Bush administration's first phase in the War on Terror. As a direct result of this contextual situation, the Bush administration achieved direct negotiations on a wide spectre of issues with the Iranians. This was highly significant in that this historically eluded the United States. This situation arguably held the potential for being built on in a fashion whereby bilateral difference could be resolved along the same lines as what happened with Libya in December 2003.

Despite this political opportunity having so unexpectedly arisen, Iran did not refrain from undertaking policies which were simply provocative to the United States. Indeed, within the newly emerged context of the War on Terror, Iran's provision of armaments to the Palestinian Authority and inability to implement effective counterterrorism measures against al-Qa'ida operatives in Iran's eastern region was viewed by the executive and Congress as evidence of a simple unwillingness on behalf of Tehran to work with the United States. Iran's actions in this sphere undid the 'good will' that had grown in the immediate aftermath of the 9/11 attacks. This prompted the United States to reject Iran's application for an extradition of MEK operatives and thus reignited the spectre of mutual antagonism and recriminations.

With the uncovering of Iran's nuclear facilities at Arak and Natanz, the long term suspicion that Iran was intent on illicitly producing a nuclear weapon came to the fore. Although such facilities are permissible under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1968, Iran's concealment of them, coupled with its failure to declare several components and materials which can be used to manufacture a nuclear weapon, provided sufficient reason to conclude that Iran was indeed embarked on a programme to produce nuclear weapons.

Given these revelations and the manner in which the United States became engaged in Afghanistan and subsequently in Iraq, the scope for punitive action or a relaxing of US policy as a diplomatic incentive were no longer viable options. This resulted in US policy towards Iran being in a stalemate as any diplomatic movement would

conceivably only have occurred from a unilateral initiative on behalf of Iran, or through a negotiated settlement via the European Union. Therefore, despite the bilateral relationship showing a degree of promise from shared geopolitical national interests, Iran's failure to abstain from policies which were highly provocative to the United States resulted in a diplomatic stalemate.

4.0 CHAPTER CONCLUSION

What is striking from the above analysis is that following the attacks of 11 September 2001, US policy towards Persian Gulf security fundamentally changed. The neoconservative response to the attacks saw counterterrorism emerge as the primary national interest of the United States. Crucially, the means by which the Bush administration saw the root causes of terrorism being countered was through the promotion of freedom, liberty and democracy throughout the world and within the Persian Gulf in particular. Indeed, the 9/11 attacks had in essence prompted the rejection of the balance of power approach in favour of a wider Middle East transformation in order to both achieve Persian Gulf security and counter the root causes of terrorism. Iraq's failure/inability to comply with UN resolutions proved to be a tactical means of achieving this overarching strategic objective as it was stipulated as the *casus belli* for war. Indeed, Iraq did not pose an imminent threat to the United States but, under the rubric of the Bush Doctrine, the preventative use of force was seen as justifiable.

US foreign policy towards Iran in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks held the prospect of an improvement in relations based on mutual geopolitical interests. Although these shared interests prompted the onset of direct negotiations that was simply never achieved by the Clinton administration, Iran failed to refrain from policies as it had done during the Clinton era, that were highly provocative to the United States. This ultimately resulted in diplomatic stalemate and rising hostility as a result recriminations over Iran's nuclear programme.

Therefore, the Bush administration responded to the post-9/11 contextual environment with a fundamental reassessment of US grand strategy. This in turn

promoted a complete revision of US strategic policy towards the Persian Gulf. This underlines that US bilateral relations with Iran and Iraq were framed within the regional strategic interpretation during the Clintonian era: containment allowing for a balance of power. However, this regional strategic interpretation has been shown to have changed as a direct result of the Bush administrations adoption of a new global strategic agenda in the wake of the 9/11 attacks.

The new strategic agenda of ensuring US national security through combating the actual root causes of political extremism was in Iraq's case the key factor which resulted in a change in tactics being applied for the achieving the objective of regime change. In the new strategic context Iraq served the new strategic function of allowing for, in the long term, a stable liberal democratic state to be established which would create unassailable pressures on the other states in the region by way of impacting on their civil society and ruling regimes. Indeed, for the Bush administration the case of Iraq allowed for a domino theory of democratic promotion to be applied to the wider Middle East. In essence, given the perspective of the Bush administration, Iraq served a key function in the global war on terror as it was viewed as the key means by which a regional transformation could be achieved and would counter the root causes of Islamic terrorism in the long term.

Whilst this chapter has underscored that US policy towards Persian Gulf security can be satisfactorily located within the grand strategies of Bush administrations that have been outlined, the following chapter will examine the issue of US foreign policy towards the Arab-Israeli conflict. This will complement the above analysis by showing that a departure occurred in US foreign policy in accordance with US grand strategy in the era of the War on Terror.

Chapter VII

The Arab-Israeli Peace Process

"Coercion, after all, merely captures man. Freedom captivates him."

Robert S. McNamara

May 1966

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The United States has had a long-standing interest in the realisation of an Arab-Israeli peace agreement, but its involvement is one of the most complex case studies on US foreign policy. This complexity stems from the specifics of the conflict itself, and from the differential factors, arising from varying interpretations, as being the key guiding force behind US foreign policy.

The following analysis will be consistent with the metatheoretical analytical framework that has been set out for this thesis. The objective will be to establish whether US foreign policy towards the peace process in the time period 1993-2003 can be satisfactorily located within the grand strategic eras of the post-Cold War and the War on Terror. In fitting with the methodological framework of this study, the following analysis will aim to selectively draw from international, regional and domestic political factors which shaped US foreign policy. In addition to this, some attention will be paid to idiosyncratic factors in order to underline the micro forces behind the decisions which shaped US policy towards the peace process.

The following analysis will contend that Bill Clinton's policy towards the peace process was consistent with the post-Cold War grand strategic era of issues being dealt with reactively on a case-by-case approach. The study will also show that George W. Bush's policy was commensurate with the new grand strategic era of the War on Terror. This underscores the central contention of this thesis that US grand strategy is a key factor that allows the conceptual and contextualisation of US foreign policy. Nevertheless, the more qualitative nature of the metatheory analysis will clearly demonstrate that although

the localised contextual situation was highly complex, US foreign policy went through identifiable stages. The analysis will aim to demonstrate what actually shaped US foreign policy and, through a clear empirical exposition, it will rationalise its deviations and evolution.

It is outside the context of this study to encompass what the determining factors were behind the diplomatic decisions made by the parties to the Arab-Israeli dispute, and the focus will necessarily remain firmly premised on US foreign policy as a third party. But the overarching theme remains that during the post Cold War era, US policy towards the peace process was reactive to the dynamics and forces of various contextual factors whilst, with the onset of the War on Terror, US policy towards the peace process began to incorporate features which were commensurate with the new grand strategic era.

The definition of the 'peace process' encompasses US policy towards aiding the achievement of a peaceful resolution towards the state of belligerency between Israel and Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, and the Palestinians. As a result of Israel opting to negotiate bilaterally rather than multilaterally with the other parties to the dispute, the structure of this chapter will aim to deal with US policy in a chronological fashion, but also will separate US policy in terms of the specific bilateral negotiations occurring at that time. Although it is multifaceted, the focus of this study will mainly be towards the Israeli-Palestinian dispute as this was the key issue for the United States during this time period.

The following analysis will show the stages in which US foreign policy can be characterised towards the peace process. It will underscore the trajectory of US foreign policy and will show the contextual origins of the change in tact. The next section will outline the policy of facilitation adopted by Clinton 1993-1995.

2.0 A POLICY OF FACILITATION (1993-1995)

Within the international context, it is clear that the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War era radically transformed the international system. This transformation saw the United States emerge as the sole economic and military superpower in the world. The end of the Cold War also signalled the necessary withdrawal of the Soviet Union from previous Cold War strategic spheres of influence. When this is coupled with the involvement of the United States in the 1991 Gulf War and the defeat of Iraq, Clinton entered office at a time when the United States enjoyed an unrivalled strategic dominance within the Middle East. In addition to these factors, Clinton entered office with the regional political situation in his favour as Israel enjoyed peaceful relations with Egypt; a *de facto* peace with Jordan; and with Yitzhak Rabin as Prime Minister of Israel (widely recognised as a favourable partner for the peace process).[1] One of the key commentators on US policy to the peace process, Bill Quandt, aptly comments that "[n]o President ever came to office with a more promising set of circumstances for promoting peace between Israel and its Arab neighbors than did Bill Clinton."[2]

Dennis Ross was appointed as the Senior Middle East Negotiator. Ross brought a high level of expertise to the position as prior to this he was the Director of the State Department's Policy Planning Office under George H. W. Bush and was on the National Security Council during the Reagan administration. Ross was later to become the Director of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

The US Presidential elections in 1992 were the first indication of Clinton's position towards the Arab-Israeli peace process. It became apparent as early as December 1991, that Clinton held pro-Israeli views. He was critical of incumbent President George H. W. Bush for withholding of loan agreements to pressure Israel, in order to compel it into

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[1] William B. Quandt, Peace Process: American Diplomacy and the Arab-Israeli Conflict since 1967, 2nd ed. (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2001) 321.

[2] Ibid.

attending the Madrid Peace Conference.[3] Indeed, in the run up to the election, Clinton firmly committed himself towards a 'pro-Israeli' position:

> In the Middle East, the [Bush] administration deserves credit for bringing Israel and its Arab antagonists to the negotiating table. Yet I believe the President is wrong to use public pressure tactics against Israel. In the process, he has raised Arab expectations that he'll deliver Israeli concessions and fed Israeli fears that its interests will be sacrificed to an American-imposed solution.[4]

Clinton's criticism of Bush's policy of applying pressure on Israel undoubtedly served the purpose of attracting the pro-Israeli vote from sympathetic voters and the American Jewish and Christian communities.[5] Clinton characterised his policy position on the peace process as one where the United States "can and should serve as an honest broker and, on occasion, as a catalyst."[6] In addition, he stated his personal conviction that he "opposes the creation of an independent Palestinian State."[7]

Clinton clearly campaigned on a pro-Israeli platform that advocated the policy of the United States should be on *facilitating* the peace process as a neutral third-party participant, refraining from applying pressure. For that reason, through either a personal conviction held by Clinton or through his desire to attract the 'pro-Israeli' vote, he firmly positioned himself on the electoral platform that his administration would not pressurise Israel in the peace process. It is important to recognise that Clinton's

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[3] Clyde R. Mark, "Israel: US Foreign Assistance," CRS Report for Congress, (IB85066), Washington, D.C.: CRS, Congress, 1 Apr. 2003, 17pp., 18/06/03 <www.fas.org/asmp/resources/govern/crs-ib85066.pdf>.

[4] William J. Clinton, "A New Covenant for American Security," Speech at Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.: GPO, 12 Dec. 1991. 3pp. 17/06/03 <http://www.ibiblio.org/pub/docs/speeches/clinton.dir/c28.txt>.

[5] Clinton was widely acknowledged as having received the 'pro-Jewish vote' in the 1992 election.

[6] William J. Clinton and Albert Gore, "Clinton/Gore on Israel and the Middle East," 1992 Presidential Election Position paper, Washington, D.C.: 5 Nov. 1992. 13pp. 28/09/02 <http://www.ibiblio.org/pub/docs/speeches/clinton.dir/c88.txt>.

[7] Ibid.

proposed policy of *facilitating* the peace process, rather than adopting a policy of pro-active *mediation* where the US may apply pressure on the parties to formulate an agreement, was in essence a policy declaration that favoured the Israeli position. This is on account of the unequal positions of the negotiating parties which translated to Israel having been able to control the timing and nature of the negotiations without fear of external pressure to make any concessions.

In sum, although the platform on which Clinton campaigned does clearly indicate a pro-Israeli position, Clinton stressed that he would take the position of a neutral participant in the peace process. It cannot be overlooked, however, that the parties to the dispute were on an unequal footing as Israel was in the most powerful negotiating position in terms of both military and economic strength. Through the absence of a pro-active third party participant who could redress this inequality, the policy advocated by Clinton favoured the Israeli position even though Clinton's policy stated impartiality. A further benefit of this strategy was that it was less 'politically risky' than a pro-active approach as Clinton was less implicated in the politically volatile peace process.

It can be suggested that the reason behind Clinton adopting this policy is due to his desire to obtain the majority of the pro-Israeli vote which he did indeed receive. In the election period, Clinton demonstrated his pro-Israeli credentials through his public opposition to the creation of a Palestinian State,[8] but also by maintaining his commitment to the qualitative military, economic and strategic superiority of Israel within the region. But on the other hand, Rabin was seen as being 'pro-peace' and thus the active participation of the administration may not have been seen as a necessary response to the contextual situation.

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[8] Clinton and Gore, "Clinton/Gore on Israel and the Middle East."

2.1 The Madrid Framework

When Clinton entered office in January 1993 the eighth round of talks in Washington between Israel and the Palestinians had been suspended due to the deportation to southern Lebanon of over 400 suspected Hamas activists.[9] The deportation was carried out in December 1992, and was condemned in the UN as being contrary to the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949. This Israeli action resulted in the adoption of UNSCR 799. The resolution condemned the Israeli action as contrary to international law and demanded an immediate return of the deportees. Clinton's involvement in the dispute saw a bilateral agreement reached between Israel and the United States for an acceptance of a gradual return of the deportees through their sentences being commuted or reduced. Warren Christopher commented:

> The United States believes that this process, which is being announced by Israel today, is consistent with UN Resolution 799 on the deportees. As a consequence of the steps that Israel will take, we believe that further action by the Security Council is unnecessary and could even undercut the process, which is already underway.[10]

As this bilateral agreement saw only a partial return of the deportees, it was highlighted by the Palestinian negotiators in Washington as being evidence of a US bias towards Israel.[11] The unwillingness of the United States to press for a full and complete compliance by Israel to the resolution, and by stating opposition to any further Security Council action on this matter, served to underline a perceived pro-Israeli bias. It does seem, however, that although Washington maintained it was simply facilitating a speedy resumption of the negotiations by accepting this compromise, the United States cannot

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[9] Kirsten E. Schulze, The Arab-Israeli Conflict: Seminar Studies in History (London: Longman, 1999) 86.

[10] Warren Christopher, "Progress on Resolving Israeli Deportation Issue," Excerpts from opening statement at a news conference at the US Mission to the United Nations, New York: GPO, 1 Feb. 1993. 24pp. 12/09/02 <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/erc/briefing/dispatch/1993/html/Dispatchv4no07.html>.

[11] Hanan Ashrawi, This Side of Peace: A Personal Account (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995) 230-32.

be viewed as having acted in an impartial manner.[12] Therefore, the failure of the United States to uphold international law simply served to undermine both US credibility as an impartial third party to the negotiations, and also Clinton's election pledge of being an honest broker to the peace process.[13]

Apart from the deportation issue, the Clinton administration's first main policy statement towards the Arab-Israeli conflict was the announcement in February 1993, that Warren Christopher would go to the Middle East to affirm the US commitment to the peace process, and to tour the countries involved in the dispute.[14] Clinton stated that:

> We cannot impose a solution in the Middle East. Only the leaders of the region can make peace. Theirs is an awesome responsibility. Those who oppose the process, who seek to subvert it through violence and intimidation, will find no tolerance here for their methods. But those who are willing to make peace will find in me and my administration a full partner.[15]

This statement highlights the administration's commitment to resolving the dispute within the same framework that began in co-operation with Russia at the Madrid Peace Conference. Indeed, Clinton's policy was grounded on the framework established at Madrid, and did not view UN General Assembly resolution 181 of 1947, which called for a two-state solution, as part of its policy directive.[16] More importantly, however, is the indication that the US saw the emphasis resting clearly on the participants rather than on any direct US involvement. In essence, the United States was confined to the role of

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[12] The ninth round of peace talks opened in Washington on the 27 Apr. 1993.

[13] Ashrawi, This Side of Peace 230-32.

[14] William J. Clinton, "US Commitment to Advance the Middle East Peace Negotiations," Statement by President Clinton released by the White House, Office of the Press Secretary, Washington, D.C.: GPO, 8 Feb. 1993. 12pp. 12/02/02 <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/erc/briefing/dispatch/1993/html/Dispatchv4no07.html>.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Martin Indyk, "Indyk Reviews US Policy Towards Peace Process, Iran, Iraq and Maghreb," Remarks at House International Relations Committee, Washington, D.C.: GPO, 8 Jun. 1999. 12pp. 13/04/03 <http://www.usembassy-israel.org.il/publish/peace/archives/1999/june/me0608a.html>.

facilitator rather than a mediator. This underscores Clinton's belief that the United States could not apply pressure to force a settlement. This policy pronouncement is not necessarily surprising given that Clinton had campaigned on the election platform that US policy towards the peace process should be mainly confined to facilitation. An additional dimension of US involvement in the peace process was the manner in which Clinton undertook to maintain the qualitative military superiority of Israel over its neighbors in order to offset the perceived risks of pursuing peace.[17] This was in addition to an agreement to improve the strategic relationship between the two countries.[18] Therefore, although the US was committed to impartiality towards the peace process negotiations, the Clinton administration can be described as having demonstrated favouritism in its policy towards the Israeli position.

The trip by Christopher to the Middle East was hailed as highly productive by the White House as it allowed the United States "to refocus the parties on resuming the negotiations and to sensitize the parties that it is time to delve into substance and that the United States will be there to assist them to reach agreements."[19] The real significance of the trip, however, was in the clarity it gave US policy towards the peace process in terms of objectives and priorities. Following his diplomatic tour of the Middle East, Christopher clearly outlined US policy towards the peace process:

> I want you to know that the United States is committed as a full partner to help these negotiations succeed. This does not mean that the United States plans to negotiate for the parties or to try to interpose itself between them. Clearly, direct negotiations, particularly on the issues that involve physical survival and political survival, remain the responsibility of the parties. The

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[17] William J. Clinton and Yitzak Rabin, "Strengthening US-Israeli Relations to Benefit America's Interests," Opening statements at a news conference released by the White House, Office of the Press Secretary, Washington, D.C.: GPO, 15 Mar. 1993. 17pp. 12/02/02 <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/erc/briefing/dispatch/1993/html/Dispatchv4no12.html>.

[18] Mark, "Israel: US Foreign Assistance."

[19] Edward Djerejian, "US Policy in the Middle East," Statement before the Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Washington, D.C.: GPO, 9 Mar. 1993. 17pp. 14/08/02 <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/erc/briefing/dispatch/1993/html/Dispatchv4no12.html>.

President and I have made it very clear, however, that we will do our part – as an intermediary, as an honest broker – provided that the other parties do theirs. When the Arabs, the Israelis, and the Palestinians put forward their views – seriously and realistically – we will be there to probe positions, to clarify responses, to help define common ground, [and] to offer what may be bridging ideas. This is the meaning of 'full partnership,' and it reflects our determination to work with all the parties to facilitate negotiations that will take into account the needs and concerns of Israel, of the Arabs, and of the Palestinians. Only in this way can we have a meaningful peace.[20]

The significance of this statement should not be underestimated as it clearly declared US policy towards the peace process as being limited to facilitation in an unbiased manner, and basically rejected any notion of a pro-active diplomatic involvement in terms of redressing the imbalance of the parties to the dispute. As has been indicated earlier, the adoption of a policy of facilitation, where a third party rejects the notion of redressing the unequal negotiating positions of the parties to the dispute, simply serves as *tacit support* for the strongest party in negotiations. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that the actual pronouncement of Clinton's policy towards the peace process was pro-Israeli, and that this was a continuation of his election platform.

On the international setting, an issue which commanded great importance alongside the post-Cold War role of Russia was the worsening crisis in the Bosnia-Herzegovina. It was following the breakup of Yugoslavia that its constituent regions pursued independence and as a result came into conflict with each other. The significance of the crisis for the United States was not only the reports of human rights abuses, but also the threat it posed to European security. The threat was an obvious indication that the United

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[20] Warren Christopher, "US Committed to Israel's Security and a Real Peace," Address before the American-Israeli Public Affairs Committee, New York: GPO, 23 Mar. 1993. 24pp. 21/10/02 <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/erc/briefing/dispatch/1993/html/Dispatchv4no13.html>.

States was needed to get involved in dealing with the crisis as "there was little reason to believe that Europeans could bring themselves to act in the absence of some American involvement."[21] Indeed, US involvement in NATO would have necessitated Washington's involvement. The significance of this is that it may well have detracted attention away from US involvement in the Arab-Israeli peace process as it would have made a policy of limited involvement through facilitation arguably *more politically desirable*. As the US become more embroiled in dealing with the Balkans crisis it is unlikely that Washington wanted simultaneous, high risk diplomatic efforts in two separate regions.[22] Therefore, the developing crisis in the first few months of the Clinton administration would have arguably reinforced the view that a low risk political strategy of limited involvement, directed at facilitation, was the most politically expedient strategy for the US to pursue towards the peace process.

As has been touched upon earlier, Clinton was formulating his policy within the context of the post-Cold War period where the role of Russia was uncertain. It is noticeable that the Clinton administration gave a commitment to pursuing the peace process in accordance with the framework established at Madrid in 1992. Christopher commented on the announcement of the ninth round of bilateral talks that "the United States is prepared – along with our co-sponsors, the Russian Government – to play our role as partners in this process, to assist in any way we can the parties to move these negotiations forward."[23] It is likely that the United States did not want to engage in high profile diplomatic activity towards the peace process for fear of undermining their Russian partners. Therefore, in the newly emerged post-Cold War era, a policy of facilitation would have served the role of maintaining the US-Russian partnership towards the peace process and thus not jeopardize this fledgling bilateral relationship.

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[21] Quandt, Peace Process 324.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Warren Christopher, "Secretary Welcomes Parties to Resumption of Middle East Peace Talks," Opening remarks during photo opportunity with heads of Middle East peace talks delegations, Washington, D.C.: GPO, 27 Apr. 1993. 26pp. 12/12/02 <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/erc/briefing/dispatch/1993/html/Dispatchv4no18.html>.

The actual enactment of Clinton's policy towards the peace process occurred with the start of the ninth round of peace talks in April 1993. Israel made concessions in order to set in motion the talks by agreeing to accept Faisal Husseini as a Palestinian negotiator, and also by giving a positive indication that they would accept a Palestinian police force and grant the elected body for the interim period some legislative powers.[24] In a coordinated action with Russia, the United States hosted the talks in Washington and assisted the parties in the bilateral talks. It soon became clear, however, that the negotiations were impeded by "three fundamental issues: the application of Resolution 242, the relationship between the interim phase and the final phase, and the nature and powers of the interim Palestinian authority."[25] The United States attempted to directly mediate between the parties by proposing a working paper on terms of reference for the negotiations. Of more significance, however, was the recognition in the working paper that East Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza were disputed rather than occupied territories. For the Palestinians, this was evidence of a clear pro-Israeli bias on behalf of the Clinton administration as it was a reversal of a twenty-six year old policy towards the status of the territories in question.[26] On the other hand, the United States may be considered as having acted in accordance with its policy pronouncement of impartiality towards the talks as the interpretation of the territories as being 'disputed' does not assert a predisposition towards the negotiations on the territorial status.

The subsequent tenth round of peace talks took place in June-July 1993. There the United States acted more proactively towards the negotiations by offering proposals for both the Syrian and the Palestinian bilateral negotiations. For the Israeli-Palestinian front, Washington offered a framework for bridging the divide between the parties, but this proposal was rejected by the Palestinian negotiators as being unacceptable for negotiations.[27] On the Syrian front, the United States offered security guarantees for

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[24] Avi Shlaim, The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World (London: Penguin, 2000) 510.

[25] Ibid. 511.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Ashrawi, This Side of Peace· 249.

Israel if it withdrew from the Golan Heights. Although this was a significant offer by the United States, the negotiations were complicated by several factors that needed to be overcome before a peace treaty could be finalised. The involvement of the United States in the tenth round of bilateral talks can, therefore, be likened with a policy of pro-active facilitation which is in accordance with the administration's stated policy towards the peace talks.

However, following the July 1993 rocket attacks by Hezbollah on Northern Israel from Lebanon, an escalation in the fighting occurred, and prompted US involvement towards brokering a cease-fire:

> Israel began a seven-day air, artillery, and naval bombardment of southern Lebanon in retaliation for the deaths of seven Israeli soldiers. In the ensuing exchange, three Israelis were killed and 28 wounded, and 130 Lebanese were killed and 525 wounded. Israeli Prime Minister Rabin said the bombardment was intended to drive civilians north to Beirut where they would force the government to stop Hizballah. As a result of the Israeli bombardment, about 250,000 Lebanese became refugees.[28]

Clinton was critical of all sides involved and called upon Rabin to halt Israeli bombardment; for Hezbollah to cease their attacks; and for Syria to exert influence to promote a peaceful resolution of the dispute.[29] In terms of US involvement, Christopher was successful in negotiating a cease-fire and reiterated the need for the parties to reach a peaceful resolution with the United States acting in the capacity of an honest broker. Therefore, the United States did not confine its role towards the peace process as one of acting as a facilitator of the Madrid peace talks, but also as a mediator when broader disputes that threatened the overall peace talks format.

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[28] Clyde R. Mark, "Lebanon," CRS Report for Congress, (IB89118), Washington, D.C.: CRS, Congress, 10 Oct. 2003, 18pp., 18/06/03 <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/crs/ib89118.pdf>.

[29] Edward Djerejian, "US Policy on Recent Developments and Other Issues in the Middle East," Statement before the Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Washington, D.C.: GPO, 27 Jul. 1993. 17pp. 24/10/02 <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/erc/briefing/dispatch/1993/html/Dispatchv4no32.html>.

2.2 Lebanon and Syria

The talks between Israel and Lebanon differed sharply from the other negotiation fronts. Crucially, it was inherently linked to the Syrian negotiations on account of the influence Syria exercised through the troops and intelligence personnel stationed in Lebanon. Carol Migdalovitz remarks that the Clinton administration was faced with a near impossible situation:

> Israel claimed no Lebanese territory but sought security and said that it would withdraw when the Lebanese army controlled the south and prevented Hizballah attacks on northern Israel. Lebanon repeatedly sought a withdrawal schedule in exchange for addressing Israel's security concerns. The two sides never agreed.[30]

The essence of Washington's approach to the Israel-Lebanon front was to encourage negotiations in accordance with stated US policy which provided for impartial facilitation between the parties.[31] The United States recognised that the negotiations could not move forward whilst Syria was able to exert influence over Lebanon. As a result of Syria's ability to control the pace of negotiations between Lebanon and Israel, the United States placed emphasis on the need for the Lebanese government to be in an independent position to undertake negotiations with Israel. Although the United States Congress had declared Syria to be in violation of the Taif Agreements which called for its withdrawal, the United States was only able to further withhold economic aid to Syria.[32] Despite this, there does not seem to be a great deal that the United States could have feasibly done to compel Syria into compliance. Therefore, the Israel–Lebanon front was seen by the United States as inherently linked to the Syrian front and thus providing

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[30] Carol Migdalovitz, "Middle East Peace Talks," CRS Report for Congress, (IB91137), Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, 24 Sep. 2002, 13.

[31] Christopher, "US Committed to Israel's Security and a Real Peace."

[32] Mark, "Lebanon."

the recognition that peace on two fronts could be achieved if Israel concluded a peace agreement with Syria.

When compared to the Israeli-Palestinian front, the dynamic of the negotiations with Syria was inherently different due to the position of the parties. The Syrian position in the negotiations was clear: Israel must *fully* withdraw from the Golan Heights to the demarcated settlement lines of 4 June 1967, before a peace settlement can be formulated. Israel conversely desired the peace talks with Syria to be an incremental process whereby confidence building measures were undertaken first.[33] A further point of contention, however, was Israel's use of the international border established in 1923 by Britain and France as a point of reference for the talks, rather than the armistice border line of 1967 as was requested by Syria.[34]

The specific role of the United States in promoting a peace settlement between Israel and Syria was initially set on encouraging and facilitating bilateral negotiations. The US characterised its role as one of active engagement[35] but more realistically was confined to using their good offices to pass diplomatic messages between the two parties.[36] For Rabin, Washington's involvement was welcomed, but he saw it as unproductive as he felt pressure needed to be applied on Syria by the United States.[37] However, it is worth remembering that the extent to which Washington could have actually applied further pressure is highly questionable as Syria was not the recipient of US economic aid, and only had limited levels of bilateral trade with the United States.[38] Overall, Washington's

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[33] Quandt, Peace Process 326.

[34] Shlaim, The Iron Wall 531.

[35] Edward Djerejian, "Defining Issues and Producing Common Ground," Opening remarks at press briefing, Washington, D.C.: GPO, 13 May. 1993. 8pp. 14/06/02 <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/dispatch/1993/html/Dispatchv4no21.html>.

[36] Shlaim, The Iron Wall 531.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Alfred B. Prados, "Syria: U.S. Relations and Bilateral Assistance," CRS Issue Brief for Congress, (IB90275), Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, 14 Mar. 2002, 14-18.

approach of facilitating the talks between the parties was in accordance with the overall US stated strategy towards the peace process of a facilitator.[39]

With the Oslo negotiations proving fruitful, Rabin believed that he had to choose between the Palestinian and the Syrian front, as he believed a dual track diplomatic engagement was not feasible. Christopher met with Rabin in Jerusalem on 3 August 1993 and, at this meeting, Rabin raised the possibility of an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights in exchange for peace.[40] Avi Shlaim comments that "without making any direct commitment, Rabin wanted Christopher to explore the Syrian response to a suggestion of full peace with Israel leading to full Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights over a period of five years."[41] It should not be forgotten, however, that in July 1993, Israel conducted large scale attacks against the Hezbollah operating in southern Lebanon which resulted in the displacement of over 250,000 people.[42] This action by Israel would have undoubtedly hindered bilateral Israeli-Syrian negotiations due to Lebanon being part of Syria's sphere of influence.

Christopher met with President Hafez al-Assad on 4 August 1993, and discussed with him Rabin's hypothetical proposals. Although Christopher found Assad's response very encouraging and positive, it was not a view shared by Rabin. Shlaim explains:

> Rabin, however, was deeply disappointed with Assad's response, for although Assad seemed to agree to contractual peace in return for full withdrawal, he expressed some significant reservations and conditions. He did not agree to give Israel some of the elements of peace before the withdrawal had been completed. Nor

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[39] Christopher, "US Committed to Israel's Security and a Real Peace."

[40] Shlaim, The Iron Wall 532.

[41] Ibid. 533.

[42] Migdalovitz, "Middle East Peace Talks," 13.

did he agree to the proposed timetable of five years to completion, suggesting six months instead.[43]

On the other front, the Oslo backchannel route had proved successful and a joint announcement by the PLO and Israel was within grasp. Following Secretary Christopher's active engagement in shuttle-style diplomacy, Rabin decided that the Oslo backchannel was more feasible and thus opted for it in favour of the Syrian route. Rabin did opt, however, to engage once more with the Syrians in Washington before officially announcing what had been achieved on the Oslo channel. On 24 August 1993, Syrian and Israeli delegations met under the auspicious of the US State Department. Following this meeting it became clear that further detailed and potentially protracted negotiations were required for a breakthrough on the Syrian front to occur. Although the United States was in favour of actively pursuing the Syrian track,[44] Israel chose to pursue the Oslo route and consequently the Israeli negotiations with Syria were put on the backburner. It is likely that the United States placed a greater emphasis on the Israeli-Syrian front as it was recognised by the Washington as being of a greater geostrategic importance than the other fronts,[45] and thus consequently would have had more importance to US national interests. Moreover, on account of the situation on the Israel-Lebanon front, Washington would have accorded more importance to the Syrian track as it was seen as the means towards achieving a peace on the Lebanon front. Thus a peace with Syria would have potentially killed two birds with one stone.

2.3 The Oslo Process

With the deadlock in the peace talks occurring in December 1992 on account of the deportation of over 400 suspected Hamas activist to Lebanon, the Israeli government

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[43] Shlaim, The Iron Wall 533.

[44] Quandt, Peace Process 327.

[45] Edward Djerejian, "War and Peace: The Problems and Prospects of American Diplomacy in the Middle East," Address before the Los Angeles World Affairs Council, Los Angeles: GPO, 30 Nov. 1993. 13pp. 20/08/02 <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/dispatch/1993/html/Dispatchv4no21.html>.

and the PLO opted to secretly negotiate under the auspices of the Norwegian government. The unofficial negotiations in Oslo allowed both parties to act without a public media spotlight on the negotiations thus giving rise to possibilities for innovation and compromise. The Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements was the product of the Oslo negotiations. It provided a programme for negotiations and, crucially, issues such as the right of return for refugees, the demarcation of borders, and the status of Jerusalem were opted to be dealt with in the final stage of negotiations. These became the so-called 'final status' issues. Although the United States played no role in direct role in the bringing about the Oslo Accord, the parties opted to have the signing ceremony at the White House in Washington.[46]

Following the mutual recognition between Israel and the PLO in September 1993, Clinton announced that the US would resume official contact with the PLO. The significance of this was the manner in which it influenced the bilateral negotiations between Israel and Jordan. It was a political obstacle for Jordan to conclude a peace agreement with Israel until the PLO received Israeli recognition and was actively involved in a meaningful dialogue with Israel towards a peaceful settlement.[47] Following the initialing of the Oslo Accord, Jordan was able to sign an agreed framework for future negotiations with Israel. The agreement was also signed in September 1993, and provided a comprehensive negotiating framework for the ultimate aim of concluding a peace treaty between the two countries.[48] The actual role of the United States in bringing about this framework for negotiations was fairly small, but clearly earned Clinton a great deal of political capital.[49] It is thus more realistic to view the Israeli-Jordanian Agenda for peace as a product of circumstances arising from the Oslo Accord.

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[46] William J. Clinton, "The Middle East: Opening the Door to a Comprehensive and Lasting Settlement," Statement at the White House, Washington, D.C.: GPO, 10 Sep. 1993. 16pp. 11/12/02 <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/erc/briefing/dispatch/1993/html/Dispatchv4no37.html>.

[47] Schulze, The Arab-Israeli Conflict 87-88.

[48] Mark, "Israel: US Foreign Assistance."

[49] Quandt, Peace Process 333.

Following the signing of the Oslo Accord, Clinton reaffirmed his commitment to promote the peace process with Russia.[50] It would have been reasonable to assume that given the US reluctance to get highly involved in the peace process, the achievement of a framework for future negotiations, without Washington's involvement, would provide a justification for an overall withdrawal of the US in the peace process. Rather than a withdrawal occurring, the US reaffirmed its commitment to the peace process and asserted that the first priority of Washington was to support the implementation of the Oslo Accord. Christopher stated that "[i]t certainly would be a great mistake if the United States were now to withdraw or shrink from its full and long-standing partnership that it has undertaken in the peace process. Our leadership is essential if this historic agreement is to realise its full potential."[51]

The political view that the Oslo Accord was a progressive and positive contribution to the peace process was not accepted by all. For example, Edward Said criticised the Oslo Accord as a disingenuous settlement as it failed to provide a comprehensive settlement and negativity impacted upon the position of the Palestinians as they had to base any future negotiations on the Oslo framework.[52] Moreover, the Oslo Accord received condemnation from several prominent Islamic organisations within the United States. Interestingly, however, as a consequence of such organisations voicing opposition to the Oslo Accord, there was a dramatic decline in their membership.[53] Therefore, the signing of the Oslo Accord resulted in a decline in the domestic support for Islamic organisations and thus as Michael Lewis argues, they suffered a decline of influence in Washington.[54]

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[50] Clinton, "The Middle East: Opening the Door to a Comprehensive and Lasting Settlement."

[51] Warren Christopher, "Building Peace in the Middle East," Address at Columbia University, co-sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations, New York: GPO, 20 Sep. 1993. 24pp. 13/09/01 <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/erc/briefing/dispatch/1993/html/Dispatchv4no39.html>.

[52] Edward W. Said, The End of the Peace Process: Oslo and After (New York: Pantheon Books, 2000) 3-7.

[53] Michael Lewis, "Israel's American Detractors - Back Again," Middle East Quarterly 4.4 (1997), 12/12/03 <http://www.meforum.org/article/372>.

[54] Ibid.

2.3.1 Economic Support

In order to support the implementation of the Oslo Accord, the United States and Russia announced the convening of an economic conference geared towards the provision of financial aid towards the Palestinians.[55] The conference saw "46 donor nations pledge US$2.4 billion for the Palestinian entity. The US administration offered US$500 million (US$125 million in loans or loan guarantees and US$375 million in grants) over 5 years for economic development of the Palestinian entity."[56] The United States was careful to ensure however that, "no US aid went directly to the PLO."[57] Clinton also attempted to secure financial aid provision to the Palestinians by requesting that King Fahd of Saudi Arabia provide economic aid.[58] Washington also encouraged the provision of aid from privately organised schemes such as the 'Builders for Peace'.[59] Al Gore endorsed this scheme which was directed at encouraging US business investment. This indicates that the Clinton administration recognised that the success of the Oslo Accord process required economic investment to the area and sought to facilitate the process by actively organising and encouraging economic aid.

For Israel, Christopher affirmed that "America's commitment to Israel's security and well-being will remain unshakable,"[60] and with this the Clinton administration proposed an aid package of US$1.8 billion in military aid and also US$1.2 billion in economic

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[55] Warren Christopher and Albert Gore, "The Conference to Support Middle East Peace," Statements at the opening of the Conference to Support Middle East Peace, Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1 Oct. 1993. 44pp. 13/10/02 <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/erc/briefing/dispatch/1993/html/Dispatchv4no41.html>.

[56] Clyde R. Mark, "Palestinians and the Middle East Peace: Issues for the United States," CRS Report for Congress, (IB92052), Washington, D.C.: CRS, Congress, 9 Apr. 2002, 19pp., 16/07/03 <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/9564.pdf>.

[57] Ibid.

[58] Barry Rubin, "United States and the Middle East, 1993," Middle East Review of International Affairs 1995 1995, 11/12/03 <http://meria.idc.ac.il/us-policy/data1993.html>.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Christopher, "Building Peace in the Middle East."

aid.[61] The total aid package was the same as in the previous Bush administration for 1992, which indicates a continuity of policy with regard to economic and military aid. Clinton did, however, inform Congress on 30 September 1993 that the annual US$2 billion in loan guarantees for Israel were to be reduced by US$437 million for 1994 as this was the amount spent by Israel on developing Jewish settlements.[62] This underlines US policy directed at discouraging the Israeli settlement development.

2.3.2 The Cairo Accord

The Oslo Accord ushered in a series of talks geared towards concluding an agreement on the nature of Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and the West Bank area. Much of the negotiations did not feature a significant US role but rather saw Egypt playing an important and active role in hosting and facilitating the talks.[63] The talks consisted of two main committees, one at ministerial-level headed by Shimon Peres and Mahmoud Abbas, and the other by experts whose primary objective was to focus on the details and practicalities.[64] The talks produced two agreements dealing with general principles and border crossings and were initialed by Arafat and Peres on 9 February 1994. The Agreement on the Gaza Strip and Jericho Area (the Cairo Accord) was formally signed at a ceremony in Cairo on 4 May 1994.

In the interim period before the Cairo Accord was signed, an American born Jewish settler, Baruch Goldstein, opened fire on Muslims who were at the religious shrine of the Tomb of the Patriarchs at the Mosque of Ibrahim. The United States became involved in the issue at the United Nations where a resolution was formulated in the UN Security Council to condemn the massacre. Although the United States voted in favour of the resolution, it forced the resolution to be passed on a paragraph-by-paragraph basis in

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[61] Mark, "Israel: US Foreign Assistance."

[62] Ibid.

[63] Quandt, Peace Process 327.

[64] Shlaim, The Iron Wall 525.

order to voice discontent at non-operative parts of the resolution concerning the status of Jerusalem and the other disputed territories. The United States chose to abstain on the paragraphs which stated the territories were 'occupied' rather than of a 'disputed' status, as it was felt by Washington that this would jeopardise the impartiality of the United States and any future negotiations based on the Oslo Accord framework.[65] When this position of the United States is examined within the context of the Oslo Accord framework, it does seem that Washington was simply acting with a degree of impartiality rather than a pro-Israeli bias.

2.3.3 The Israel-Jordan Peace Treaty

When Clinton entered office, the relationship between Israel and Jordan was in effect that of *de facto* peace. King Hussein was unable, although not unwilling, to conclude a peace agreement with Israel until some form of settlement with the Palestinians had occurred.[66] The reason was in essence that King Hussein's own position would have come under threat if he was seen to conclude a bilateral agreement with Israel while the Palestinian issue was still uncertain. Moreover, due to the fact that a significant proportion of the Jordanian population is of Palestinian origin, a premature agreement with Israel could well have ushered in a high level of domestic unrest amongst the Jordanian-Palestinian community.

As has already been highlighted, it was through the mutual recognition between Israel and the PLO in the Oslo Accord that diplomacy between Jordan and Israel towards a final and lasting peace settlement became an actual possibility. Moreover, the wider regional situation of active Israeli-Syrian talks and a weakened Iraq made it conducive for Jordan to embark upon overt negotiations with Israel towards a final and lasting

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[65] Warren Christopher and Madeleine Albright, "Explanation of US Vote on UN Resolution Regarding the Hebron Massacre," Secretary Christopher Statement released by the Office of the Spokesman, Washington, D.C.: GPO, 18 Mar. 1994. 39pp. 12/07/04 <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/erc/briefing/dispatch/1994/html/Dispatchv5no14.html>.

[66] Schulze, The Arab-Israeli Conflict 87-88.

peace.[67] Shortly after the signing of the Israeli-PLO mutual recognition, the Israel-Jordan Agenda was initialed on 14 September 1993. It provided the framework for future negotiations between the two parties. The United States was not directly involved in the Israel-Jordan Agenda for future negotiations as the agreement was more a product of the circumstances that the Oslo Accord ushered in.

This agreement on the framework for future negotiations set in motion negotiations on water and economic cooperation, as well as on the specific text of a peace treaty between the two countries.[68] Two committees were set up under the auspices of the United States: the first was a Trilateral Economic Committee, which included the United States, and the second was a Bilateral Economic Committee.[69] The Trilateral Economic Committee saw five, two day sessions from 4 November 1993 to 20 July 1994. The final session was a ministerial level meeting which saw agreement reached "to continue work on trade, finance, and banking; civil aviation; tourism; and establishing a road link between the two countries."[70]

Following the successes in the bilateral and trilateral negotiations, on 25 July 1994 Israel and Jordan signed the Washington Declaration which officially ended the state of belligerency between the two countries. The United States remained an active facilitator between the two countries "but did not play an active mediating role... because the leaders enjoyed direct channels of communication."[71]

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[67] Quandt, Peace Process 333.

[68] Robert H. Pelletreau, "The Multilateral Dimension of the Peace Process," Address at the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C: GPO, 7 Apr. 1994. 31pp. 12/10/02 <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/erc/briefing/dispatch/1994/html/Dispatchv5no16.html>.

[69] United States, Department of State, Fact Sheet: Middle East Peace Process, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 7 Aug. 2002) 102pp. 10/01/02 <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/dispatch/1994/html/Dispatchv5Sup07.html>.

[70] Ibid.

[71] Shlaim, The Iron Wall 539.

Clinton attended the signing of the Israel-Jordanian Peace Treaty on 26 October 1994 in the Arava Desert between the two countries. With peace having been achieved, it was believed that the format used would serve as a model for future negotiations in the peace process.[72] The specific role of the United States in bring about the Israeli-Jordanian peace has been described as modest,[73] but it would be more accurate to described it as facilitating the process once it had been begun by the parties themselves. In other words, the success of the Israeli-Jordanian peace cannot be attributed to the United States as Washington neither initiated the process nor actively mediated in it.

2.3.4 Intensive US Diplomacy

Following the signing of the Oslo Accord, negotiations on the Israeli-Syrian front seemed to loose momentum. Negotiations had been occurring on a bilateral basis but were not making significant moves forward. During Christopher's tour of the Middle East in December 1993, he announced in a press conference with Syrian Foreign Minister Shara that Clinton and Assad would meet in Geneva, Switzerland, in January 1994. Christopher's engagement with the Syrians can be seen as productive since the United States was able to formulate a three stage approach with the Syrians towards reinvigorating the talks. It also marked the beginning of a concerted effort by the United States towards actively bringing about a peace agreement. Christopher announced that:

> First, I have invited Lebanon and Syria to send the heads of their delegation to Washington in early January for preparatory consultations with the United States on the key substantive issues. Second, following these consultations with the United States, all delegation heads will come to Washington on or about January 18 to meet with their counterparts for simplified and streamlined talks. We and the other parties believe that these discussions are the best way to prepare for a fully productive next round. Third, it

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[72] Quandt, Peace Process 333.

[73] Ibid.

> is expected that the heads of delegations, in consultation with the co-sponsors, will recommend that the formal negotiations resume at the end of the month or in February.[74]

Clinton met with Assad on 16 January 1993 in Geneva. At the subsequent press conference, Assad adopted a cautious approach and merely called for an honorable agreement, but Clinton clearly described Assad's position as being in favour of a normalisation of relations.[75] Although Clinton was criticised for speaking for Assad,[76] it was clear that despite the willingness for a peaceful resolution, peace was someway off.

The active US involvement in the Israeli-Syrian track continued with Christopher touring the region in April-May 1994. Christopher engaged in shuttle-style diplomacy by passing and conveying messages as an intermediary between the two countries. He commented that:

> We are in what I would describe as an exploratory stage. Each party is serious about having to explore the views of the other parties to see if there is some way to bridge the very considerable gaps that exist. I don't want to in any way mislead you into thinking that the parties are close together. There is a long road to travel. But I think that there is a seriousness about the exploration I have not seen before.[77]

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[74] Warren Christopher, "Secretary Christopher Visits Europe and the Middle East," Opening statement at a news conference following a meeting with Syrian President Asad and Foreign Minister Shara, Damascus: GPO, 5 Dec. 1993. 26pp. 11/19/02 <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/erc/briefing/dispatch/1993/html/Dispatchv4no50.html>.

[75] William J. Clinton, "Statement by President Bill Clinton," Opening statements by President al-Assad and President Bill Clinton at a news conference, Geneva: GPO, 16 Jan. 1994. 26pp. 12/10/02 <http://domino.un.org/UNISPAL.nsf/85255a0a0010ae8285255534006047 9d/0ba7b126ad99f8c78525605b00722335!OpenDocument>.

[76] Quandt, Peace Process 331.

[77] Warren Christopher, "Pursuing Peace in the Middle East and Bosnia," Secretary Christopher's Consultations on Peace in the Middle East, Washington, D.C.: GPO, 24 Oct. 1994. 66pp. 11/10/02 <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/erc/briefing/dispatch/1994/html/Dispatchv5no20.html>.

The active engagement of the United States continued with Christopher making a tour of the region and acting as an intermediary between the parties in late July and in August 1994. Despite active diplomatic engagement, it was clear by October 1994, that although progress had been made through the offices of the United States, a peace agreement was far from being achieved because of the difficulty in bridging the gaps between the parties. Christopher remarked that:

> The Israeli-Syrian negotiating track also has undergone important changes in the last year. For the first time, these once bitter enemies are engaged in serious negotiations to end their conflict. I have spent dozens of hours in intensive discussions with President Assad and Prime Minister Rabin. I can tell you that both men are deeply engaged in addressing the central issues of a settlement. We have succeeded in narrowing differences, but important gaps remain. In my view, the time is fast approaching when some very difficult decisions must be made. If these talks are to succeed, if they are to produce the "peace of the brave" of which President Assad speaks, then the deliberate pace of the current negotiations must give way to a bolder approach.[78]

Christopher's comments do indicate that despite the United States being proactive in facilitating and fostering productive negotiations, the parties were failing to make the mutual concessions needed for the talks to move forward. His talks with Assad, Rabin and Peres in December 1994, March, June, October and December 1995 highlighted the parties were committed to peaceful negotiations but were unwilling to make concessions from their positions.[79] In addition, Dennis Ross was dispatched to region to help the negotiations progress in both April and June 1995.[80] Despite the deadlock, some

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[78] Christopher, "Pursuing Peace in the Middle East and Bosnia."

[79] Christopher, "US Committed to Israel's Security and a Real Peace."

[80] Warren Christopher, "Renewing the Middle East Peace Process," Opening statement at press conference following meeting with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad, Damascus: GPO, 14 Mar. 1995. 52pp. 21/10/02 <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/erc/briefing/dispatch/1995/html/Dispatchv6no14.html>.

progress was made with an Israeli and Syrian military Chief of Staff meeting in Washington on 27 June 1995.[81] This signaled that the parties had made significant progress by beginning high level talks on strategic issues, and that the United States was actively engaged in promoting but not meditating in the negotiations.

Therefore, although the United States proactively facilitated the negotiations, Washington did not mediate or apply pressure on either party in order to move the negotiations forward on substantive issues. The actual policy adopted by Washington to help move the talks forward was to openly call for a confident and concerted effort to be made on behalf of both parties towards the talks. Barry Rubin comments that:

> The US certainly considered the conclusion of an Israel-Syria agreement to be a high priority, arguing that such a breakthrough was necessary to bring about a comprehensive regional peace, including the involvement of other Arab states, especially in the Gulf. The Clinton administration also wanted such an accord as a badly needed foreign policy success for itself.[82]

It should also not be forgotten that the US Congressional elections in 1996 would have made the attainment of a significant foreign policy achievement a political incentive, in addition to it being in the wider strategic interests of the United States in the Persian Gulf.

3.0 FACILITATION WITH PROACTIVE MEDIATION (1995-1999)

The United States continued to actively facilitate the negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians after the signing of the Oslo and Cairo Accords. This was achieved by Washington assisting but not mediating between the parties. In addition, Al Gore

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[81] Christopher, "Renewing the Middle East Peace Process."

[82] Rubin, "United States and the Middle East, 1993."

announced additional aid for the West Bank and Gaza Strip in March 1995.[83] The United States therefore facilitated the progress of the Oslo Accord by assisting and encouraging the parties to negotiate, whilst also providing economic aid to further support the implementation of the agreement.

The upcoming US Presidential elections in 1996 was also important for Clinton as it made the achievement of progress on the Oslo track a political incentive.[84] Rabin was also to face the electorate in 1996 and thus, for both the Americans and the Israelis, the motivation to achieve progress after the Cairo Accord was significant.[85]

Progress in accordance with the Oslo framework continued actively following the signing of the Cairo Accord in May 1994. The role of the United States continued as that of a facilitator and it was with the encouragement of Washington that the parties were able to formulate the Interim Agreement on the West Bank and Gaza Strip on 28 September 1995. The Oslo II Accord stated that it:

> Provided for elections to a Palestinian council, the transfer of legislative authority to this council, the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Palestinian centers of population, and the division of the West Bank into three areas – A, B and C. Area A consisted of Palestinian towns and urban areas; area B consisted of Palestinian villages and less densely populated parts; and area C consisted of the lands confiscated by Israel for settlements and roads. Area A was placed under exclusive Palestinian control and area C under exclusive Israeli control, and in area B the Palestinians exercised civilian authority while Israel continued to be in charge of security.[86]

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[83] Mark, "Palestinians and the Middle East Peace: Issues for the United States."

[84] Quandt, Peace Process 333.

[85] Ibid.

[86] Shlaim, The Iron Wall 527-28.

But following the assassination of Rabin on 4 November 1995, in a joint address with Clinton, Peres demonstrated a continuation in Israeli policy by appealing for peace with Syria.[87] There seemed to be a renewed impetus to the talks following the assassination of Rabin which can probably be attributed to the political desire for the progress made towards peace not to die with Rabin. Ambassadorial level talks began between Israel and Syria under US auspices in December at the Wye River Plantation, but following a terrorist attack in southern Lebanon by Hezbollah in March 1996, the talks were suspended. Despite this, as Shlaim explains, "Peres concluded that there was no chance of reaching an accord with Syria before October of that year. He therefore decided to go for an early election, and the date was fixed for 29 May 1996."[88]

The attacks by Hezbollah against Israel from southern Lebanon in April 1996 and the forthcoming Israeli elections made the political climate ripe for Operation Grapes of Wrath against southern Lebanon. The foreign policy of the United States towards the dispute was clear: Hezbollah was responsible for instigating it through their rocket attacks on Israel, and that the Israeli response should be restrained, but proportionate.[89] The fierce Israeli military offensive against southern Lebanon began on 11 April 1996. Shlaim comments:

> The idea was to put pressure on the civilians of southern Lebanon, for it to pressure the government of Lebanon, for it to pressure the Syrian government, and, finally, for the Syrian government to curb Hizbullah and grant immunity to the IDF in southern Lebanon. In short, the plan was to compel Syria to act as an Israeli gendarme in Lebanon.[90]

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[87] William J. Clinton, "Renewing the Middle East Peace Process," Opening remarks at a press conference, Washington, D.C.: GPO, 11 Dec. 1995. 17pp. 16/03/02 <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/erc/briefing/dispatch/1995/html/Dispatchv6no50-52.html>.

[88] Shlaim, The Iron Wall 554.

[89] Glyn Davies, Department of State,"Daily Press Briefing," Washington, D.C.: GPO, 9 Apr. 1996. 11pp. 21/10/02 <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/daily_briefings/1996/9604/960409db.html>.

[90] Shlaim, The Iron Wall 560.

The United States did not actively prevent the operation from occurring as Washington simply called for restraint and a proportional response.[91] Although the United States was proactive in bringing about a ceasefire between the parties,[92] it should not be forgotten that the Clinton administration condoned the operation in the first place.[93]

Overall, Washington's involvement in the Israeli-Lebanese negotiation front can be classed as of marginal foreign policy significance on account of the dynamic of the situation between the parties. The US did continually encourage negotiations between the parties, but quite rightly chose to concentrate their attention on the Syrian front. Success on the Syrian front was the key to achieving a peaceful resolution between Israel and Lebanon. Washington did, however, mediate proactively both in 1993 and 1996 when Israel launched incursions against Lebanon on account of Hezbollah attacks. This action by the United States was in fitting with their stated policy of facilitation, although Washington could have done more than simply urge restraint by Israel in order to avert the crises in Lebanon from occurring in the first place.

Within the context of the Israeli Grapes of Wrath operation and the announcement of an Israeli-Turkish strategic relationship, the bilateral relations with Syria and the prospects for peace had suffered a serve blow. The Israeli strategic relationship with Turkey was viewed as a threat from Damascus, and lessened the likelihood of fruitful negotiations occurring. The real significance of the Grapes of Wrath operation, and the continuing terrorist attacks on Israel, was in the manner in which Israeli domestic politics was affected. Peres lost popular support in the crucial run-up period to the election and consequently lost to his rival Binyamin Netanyahu.

Whilst the United States did maintain an active commitment in terms of facilitating talks between the Lebanese and Israeli governments, real progress was not forthcoming throughout the first term of the Clinton administration. Washington did, however,

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[91] Davies, "Daily Press Briefing."

[92] Ibid.

[93] Mark, "Lebanon."

become actively involved in brokering a ceasefire after the Israeli response to Hezbollah attacks in July 1993. The campaign resulted in over 250,000 people fleeing southern Lebanon as a direct result of Israeli attacks.

In spite of US efforts to facilitate negotiations for peace, the dynamics of the Arab-Israeli dispute had undone much of what had been achieved. Significantly, the United States had done little to diffuse the escalating crisis which led to the Grapes of Wrath campaign, but it is speculative as to what the application of pressure would have achieved. In any case, the Clinton administration condoned it. It was with the election of Netanyahu as Prime Minister of Israel, that the prospects for the United States facilitating peace negotiations between Israel and Syria effectively ended. Netanyahu adopted a new strategic approach to the negotiations, which was commensurate with the guidelines set out in a report by the Israeli think-tank: the Institute for Advanced Strategic and Political Studies.[94] The report, entitled: "A Clean Break A New Strategy for Securing the Realm" was the product of a working group, headed by Richard Perle, which also acted as official advisors to Netanyahu. The report was significant as it rejected the Oslo approach and the land for peace formula. It stated:

> We have for four years pursued peace based on a *New Middle East*. We in Israel cannot play innocents abroad in a world that is not innocent. Peace depends on the character and behavior of our foes. We live in a dangerous neighborhood, with fragile states and bitter rivalries. Displaying *moral ambivalence* between the effort to build a Jewish state and the desire to annihilate it by trading *"land for peace"* will not secure *"peace now."* Our claim to the land — to which we have clung for hope for 2000 years – is legitimate and noble.... Negotiations with repressive regimes like Syria's require cautious realism. One cannot sensibly assume the other side's good faith. It is dangerous for Israel to deal naively with a regime murderous of its own people, openly aggressive toward its neighbors, criminally involved with international drug

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[94] Richard Perle, et al., "A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm," A New Israeli Strategy Toward 2000 Study Group, Jerusalem: Institute for Advanced Strategic and Political Studies, Jun. 1996, 6pp., 12/11/03 <http://www.israeleconomy.org/strat1.htm>.

traffickers and counterfeiters, and supportive of the most deadly terrorist organizations... We believe that the Palestinian Authority must be held to the same minimal standards of accountability as other recipients of U.S. foreign aid. A firm peace cannot tolerate repression and injustice. A regime that cannot fulfill the most rudimentary obligations to its own people cannot be counted upon to fulfill its obligations to its neighbors.[95]

Netanyahu adopted these recommendations which saw the official rejection of the 'land for peace' equation that had been the cornerstone of previous negotiations with Syria. With this change in policy, negotiations hit an impasse.[96] Despite US efforts to persuade Netanyahu to reengage, it became clear that this was in vain. This was further compounded by Netanyahu's rejection of the 'Aims and Principles of Security Arrangements' which was the key achievement of US sponsored talks. Christopher had little choice but to accept that Netanyahu's position that it was not binding under international law, and thus was obliged to accept the derailing of the key product of US diplomatic efforts on this front.[97]

3.1 The Hebron Agreement

The negotiations between the parties progressed at a slower pace following the election of Netanyahu as Prime Minister of Israel in May 1996. Netanyahu actively undermined the progress by pursuing policies designed to increase Israeli security, which at the same time were highly antagonistic and harsh towards the Palestinian people.[98] It was, however, with his decision to open an archaeological tunnel near the al-Aska Mosque, which linked the Wailing Wall to the Dome of the Rock, on 25 September 1996 which

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[95] Perle, et al., "A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm," Original emphasis.

[96] Shlaim, The Iron Wall 558.

[97] Ibid.

[98] Ibid. 576.

saw the climax of the deteriorated relations. For Palestinians, this was highly antagonistic and instigated a violent confrontation which involved Palestinian Authority police being engaged in skirmishes with Israeli soldiers.

Clinton intervened directly by hosting a summit meeting designed to defuse the tensions.[99] Dennis Ross played a key role in the negotiations and, despite the proactive efforts of the United States "the meeting ended without any agreement being reached."[100] With Washington being faced with the prospect of the progress made on the Oslo track being undone, and also Netanyahu showing an uncompromising attitude, Clinton adopted a more proactive position by sending Ross to the region to broker an agreement on Hebron. Hebron was the only Palestinian city that had a small Jewish settlement within it, and the evacuation of Jewish settlers was required by the Oslo agreement. Within the context of the *intifadh*, which was sparked by the opening of the tunnel under the al-Aska Mosque, Hebron took on a renewed importance as "Arafat wanted to know that Netanyahu would not walk away from Oslo, and many in Bibi's [Netanyahu] right-wing base wanted to see that he would."[101] In essence, the success or failure of Oslo depended on a breakthrough being achieved over Hebron. Shlaim characterizes the diplomacy over Hebron:

> It took the parties three and a half months to reach agreement. The process itself was noteworthy both because of the active part played by the United States and because this was the first time that the Likud government engaged in negotiations with the Palestinians on the basis of the Declaration of Principles and the Interim Agreement.[102]

The foreign policy of the United States was, therefore, clearly challenged by the election of Netanyahu on the grounds that he was not in favour of pursuing peace according to

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[99] Nicholas Burns, Department of State,"Daily Press Briefing," Washington, D.C.: GPO, 30 Sep. 1996. 19pp. 21/10/02 <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/briefing/daily_briefings/1996/9609/960930db.html>.

[100] Shlaim, The Iron Wall 577.

[101] Ibid.

[102] Ibid. 579.

the Oslo framework which the United States was diplomatically committed to. In the absence of a willing partner on the Israeli side, Clinton's policy of facilitation was rendered ineffective, especially in the face of the high stakes involved over Hebron. As a result, Washington departed slightly from the role of impartial facilitator towards a mediating role in resolving this impasse. Moreover, this provides an indication that the United States was willing to act beyond its role as an impartial facilitator when there was a prospect of the peace process becoming completely derailed. This *unstated flexibility* in policy by the United States was productive as the parties were, after difficult discussion, able to reach an agreement on Hebron. The Protocol Concerning Redeployment in Hebron was a diplomatic achievement for the US because of the active role they played in concluding it. It was signed on 15 January 1997, just days before the end of the first Clinton administration.

It is therefore reasonable to conclude that Washington was prepared to engage in this active manner by virtue of the realisation that a failure to have done so would have potentially have signaled the end of progress on the Oslo front, and also that a greater degree of engagement was more politically feasible now that Clinton had won a second term of office. But crucially, the diplomatic engagement over Hebron, which was prompted by the localized contextual, had resulted in the Clinton administration moving beyond a policy of facilitation.

3.1.1 Wye River II

Clinton's convincing re-election held promise for US diplomatic engagement in the peace process: for the first two years of a second term, presidents are at the zenith of their influence and power. With a movement towards engagement, rather than simple facilitation, which occurred around the time of Clinton securing a second term of office, there was ample reason to believe that concerted engagement would stem from the White House.

Although Clinton was at the pinnacle of his power, allegations surfaced in early 1998 that he had had an affair with a White House intern, Monica Lewinsky. More importantly, further allegations surfaced that Clinton had lied about the affair and had attempted to get Ms. Lewinsky to commit perjury. As Bill Quandt wrote, "a cloud was hanging over the Presidency during much of 1998."[103] While the Lewinsky scandal and the prospect of Congressional impeachment potentially held a detrimental impact upon Clinton's willingness to engage in 'high risk' diplomacy, it appears that the opposite is true. In spite of Clinton's domestic political problems, US foreign policy towards the Middle East became more 'high profile' in general, especially with regard to Iraq, and culminated in Operation Desert Fox in December 1998; this coincided with Clinton's impeachment proceeding. In a similar regard, Clinton's foreign policy towards the peace process was not distracted by his domestic political situation. Indeed, the move away from facilitation towards engagement deepened further.

Following the signing of the Hebron Agreement, Netanyahu came under political pressure from the right-wing elements within his government. Although he was under pressure by the United States to make the withdrawals that had been agreed by the previous government, neither he nor most of his Likud government were in favour of the land for peace formula. Netanyahu's formula was based on the slogan of reciprocity: security provisions were required *before* Israel made withdrawals. Although this provision allowed extremists to basically derail any diplomacy, the key issue facing the negotiations was the willingness of Netanyahu to make concessions to his right-wing in spite of pressure from the United States. A key concession made by Netanyahu after the Hebron Agreement allowed the building of Israeli settlements on the land of East Jerusalem. Specifically, permission was granted for the building of 6,500 new homes in the Arab area of Jabal Abu Ghunaym, known by the Israelis as Har Homa. Not surprisingly, this 'concession' resulted in a breakdown in the negotiations and the onset of diplomatic stalemate.

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[103] Quandt, Peace Process 352.

The White House had come to see Netanyahu as an unwilling partner for peace as his government's policies towards the Palestinians had resulted in this breakdown of diplomacy. Moreover, the administration's "regional interests were being damaged as Arab leaders and Europeans alike complained that Bibi [Netanyahu] was killing any prospect for peace."[104] When this is viewed within the context of the diplomacy over Iraq, Israel was arguably a diplomatic liability on account of Netanyahu. The response of the White House to this quagmire contrasted with the general policy of facilitation characteristic of the first Clinton administration, as pressure tactics were used as part of the overall policy of engagement. Netanyahu was informed by Ross of a package of steps Clinton saw as enabling a reinvigoration of the peace process. Crucially, Ross saw this as presenting Netanyahu with two problems: "[h]e would either have to respond to us, enraging the Israeli right, or he could try to resist our proposal, enraging the mainstream in Israel."[105]

Despite the United States having raised the diplomatic stakes, Hamas conducted a double terrorist bombing in Jerusalem on 30 July 1997 which killed sixteen Israelis. This altered the contextual situation in which US foreign policy was operating as the application of diplomatic pressure on Netanyahu to implement Israel's obligations was rendered an ineffective approach. Indeed, Madeline Albright visited the region shortly afterwards and found that little pressure could be applied on Netanyahu whilst terrorist attacks continued.[106]

In an effort to bring the peace process back on track, the Clinton administration opted for summit diplomacy. The Wye River summit was convened in October 1997, in order to overcome the deadlock that had arisen after the Hebron Agreement. According to Quandt, the concessions required were straightforward:

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[104] Dennis Ross, The Missing Peace: The inside Story of the Fight for Middle East Peace (New York: Farrar, 2004) 350.

[105] Ibid. 353.

[106] Ibid. 354-56.

Arafat would have to make a major effort on security and perhaps once again reject the parts of the National Charter that challenged Israel's right to exist; and Nethanyahu would have to agree to further withdrawals from Zones B and C, totaling at least another 13 percent of the West Bank and Gaza.[107]

Although Clinton was not present for the entire summit, once an agreement was within sight he personally became fully engaged and pulled his famous "all-nighter" in order to achieve an agreement. On 24 October, and agreement was achieved although it amounted to little more than the Palestinian's recommitting themselves to the provision of security whilst Israel agreed to small scale withdrawals as a confidence building measure. Nevertheless, it was a significant achievement as it reinvigorated the peace process and, crucially, this was achieved through direct engagement and mediation.

4.0 MEDIATION WITH INTENSIVE TRIANGULAR DIPLOMACY (1999-2001)

On 4 May 1999, the five year deadline for the Oslo Accord and the declaration of Palestinian statehood expired without it having been achieved. The main reason why Edward Said's notable prediction on the inevitable failure of the Oslo process was ultimately realized was because of a complex interplay of localized, regional and international factors.

Shortly after the Wye River negotiations, the House Judiciary Committee voted in favour of four articles of impeachment on Clinton for his conduct in the Lewinsky affair. From January 1999, the Clinton administration was preoccupied with the Congressional trial. Although Clinton survived the impeachment which took place in early February, during that period of time his Presidency was vulnerable to the domestic political environment given his need for support in the Senate. With Netanyahu's position

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[107] Quandt, Peace Process 353.

suffering politically from the right-wing within his own government, he announced, during the congressional trial, his decision to hold an early general election on the 17 May 1999. Given the context of the impeachment, it can be concluded that Clinton could not have realistically afforded a diplomatic standoff with Netanyahu over the implementation of the Oslo Accord and the scheduling of the Israeli elections. But, for Netanyahu, the date he selected for the election was a shrewd political move: a premature declaration of statehood by Arafat would have created a political crisis only two weeks before the Israeli elections, and thus enhanced Netanyahu's prospects of re-election.

The Clinton administration pressed Arafat to refrain from declaring statehood as they had little desire to see Netanyahu re-elected for a second term. With Arafat postponing the declaration, Ehud Barak won the Israeli election. Barak was the most decorated general in Israeli history, and a well known advocate of peace who was seen by many as a successor to Rabin. The outcome of the election fitted well with US interests as Barak's mandate in the Knesset was seen as allowing for greater diplomatic scope. Clinton commented that "Barak's large victory margin had given him the chance to have a governing coalition in the Knesset that would support the hard steps to peace, something Prime Minister Netanyahu never had."[108]

The election of Barak was significant in that, unlike Netanyahu, he was widely viewed as a credible proponent for the peace process. During the stalemate which ensured from Netanyahu's policies, the United States was forced to move at times beyond facilitation towards direct mediation and intervention. In some respects, Barak's victory resulted in the emphasis returning to the two parties of the dispute resolving the crisis themselves. However, the United States did not backtrack towards a policy of facilitating the negotiations, and indeed became more committed towards constructive engagement and mediation.

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[108] William J. Clinton, My Life (New York: Knopf, 2004) 855-56.

4.1 Camp David II

The initial sign that US policy had become fully committed to mediation was following Albright's persuasion of Hafiz Al-Assad to resume Syria's negotiations with Israel. Discussions were held in Washington in late 1999, and in Shepardstown, West Virginia, in January 2000. Crucially, Clinton intervened directly and produced a draft peace treaty for consideration by Al-Assad. The treaty's provisions were by no means as far reaching as what Rabin had floated with Al-Assad, as Barak did not feel his political standing was capable of achieving a pullback to the 1967 lines. It is interesting, however, that Clinton opted to present a draft treaty directly to Al-Assad which included conditions which failed to meet the longstanding Syrian demand of a full withdrawal. James Baker criticised Clinton for failing to offer Syria a return to the 1967 border, in order to allow for a full restoration of relations.[109] Indeed, Baker did not see any other means of achieving an agreement. Even though diplomacy failed with Syria, Barak kept his election pledge on Lebanon as Israeli troops were withdrawn by the end of May 2000. Nevertheless, without an agreement with Syria, the Israeli border with Lebanon was far from being resolved. Although Clinton's proposal was flatly rejected by Al-Assad, it serves to underline that the administration had come to interpret its role as that of a direct mediator rather than a simple facilitator.

With diplomacy reaching an impasse on the Syrian route, attention turned back to the Palestinian question. Clinton hosted a summit in Camp David in July 2000, which was widely billed his final effort at resolving the dispute. The United States engaged itself in the negotiations mainly through providing a series of proposals, but did not give its position on final status issues.[110] Although Barak was willing to concede 92% of the disputed territory, the key divisions occurred over final status issues: the full right of return for refugees and the status of Jerusalem. Barak was willing to allow for a partial right of return for the refuges, and a degree of Palestinian sovereignty over East

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[109] James Baker, "Peace, One Step at a Time," New York Times 27 Jul. 2000, A27.

[110] Ross, The Missing Peace 650-711.

Jerusalem. Although these concessions by Barak were far reaching and more than what the United States had expected, Arafat was unwilling to compromise over Jerusalem or the right of return issue. The summit's press release reflected that Arafat's unwillingness, or inability, to compromise had killed the possibly of an agreement being reached. Ross aptly writes, "I knew the [press release] would be seen as an implicit criticism of Arafat – something his performance at Camp David warranted."[111]

The Clinton administration did not see Camp David as a complete failure, but the key question was why was Arafat so unwilling to compromise, especially given the concessions Barak had made? Whilst Clinton initially put it down to Arafat's brinkmanship,[112] Ross was more scathing in that he saw it simply as Arafat's inability, or willingness, to make the tough decisions required. True, Arafat's support base rested mainly on his uncompromising position, but politicians also have to be realistic. The prospect of Arafat achieving his demands without compromise was simply not a viable option. The reason for this is that despite the legitimacy of Arafat's demands, the contextual situation on the ground had altered to such an extent that it was no longer realistic for a full return of refugees, or indeed a complete Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank: such an undertaking was simply not a politically viable option for Barak, and the proportional representative nature of the Israeli political system was unlikely to result in a strong and stable government that could carry through such proposals in the future. Therefore, given Arafat's uncompromising position on final status issues, and his failure to go beyond his historic concession in 1993 where he recognized Israel – the Oslo process, or indeed any incremental process – was unlikely to succeed until a degree of diplomatic latitude could be undertaken by both sides on final status issues.

The Clinton administration's efforts at securing an agreement did not dwindle with the failure at Camp David as Clinton subsequently put forward a framework to both Arafat

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[111] Ross, The Missing Peace 710.

[112] Clinton, My Life 916.

and Barak based on the Camp David formula in October 2000.[113] However, since Camp David, violence had broken out in the occupied territories following a visit by Likud party leader, Ariel Sharon, to the Haram al-Sharif. The visit was particularly poignant for the Palestinians as Sharon's police escort was seen as underlining Israel's illegitimate control over the religious site. Violence broke out the following day with Jews being stoned at the walling wall. This prompted the onset of a new *intifadh* and widespread violence on a daily basis. The prospects of building on Camp David were clearly tainted by this violence but, more significantly, it undermined the position of Barak. Indeed, the outbreak of violence made the granting of concessions by Barak a politically more difficult option. It placed a greater importance on concluding an agreement before the concessions Barak was willing to grant became a politically unrealistic option.

Clinton even departed from his traditional role and sought Crown Prince Abdullah and Mubarak's agreement to apply pressure on Arafat. Nevertheless, despite Barak agreeing to Clinton's framework, which enjoyed widespread support amongst the leaders of Arab countries, the same problem occurred in that Arafat was not willing to commit to a compromise on final status issues despite being under pressure from Arab leaders.[114] As a direct result of Arafat's position, the prospect of a settlement which had been within sight was beyond reach. Clinton's final conversation with Arafat before leaving office is noteworthy:

> [Arafat] thanked me for all my efforts and told me what a great man I was. "Mr Chairman," I replied, "I am not a great man. I am a failure, and you have made me one." I warned Arafat that he was single-handedly electing Sharon and that he would reap the whirlwind.[115]

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[113] Ross, The Missing Peace 752-53.

[114] Clinton, My Life 937-38.

[115] Ibid. 944.

Clinton's prediction was accurate in that Ariel Sharon won a sweeping victory at the subsequent Israeli election, and this had a far-reaching effect on the schisms of the peace process. Overall, when Clinton left office, the peace process was in diplomatic stalemate, and the ongoing *intifadh* and the newly elected Likud government held little prospect other than a worsening of the contextual situation within the occupied territories. In sum, it appears Clinton is justified to write, "Arafat's rejection of my proposal after Barak accepted it was an error of historic proportions."[116]

The key question, however, was why did Clinton become so engaged in the peace process towards the end of his Presidency? The generally accepted explanation is that Clinton was simply thinking of his legacy. Although this was indeed a factor, it is an interpretation which overlooks the contextual situation which had evolved since the death of Rabin. The onset of the Netanyahu government resulted in a move away from the Oslo process, and thus a more proactive policy was required in order to prevent the total collapse of the peace process. Significantly, this coincided well with Clinton's second term of office: his administration was politically more able to become actively engaged in high risk diplomacy. With the election of Barak, who was widely regarded as Rabin's protégé, the US found a new Israeli government committed to the peace process. Barak's election crucially allowed the US and Israel to formulate a degree of agreement over what were acceptable concessions that could be made to the Palestinians. Therefore, the onus shifted on 'selling' the agreement to Arafat within the finite 'window of opportunity' whilst Barak was in power. The overall product was that the contextual situation resulted in the United States recognizing that mediation and the application of pressure was required in order for an agreement to be achieved before any Barak lost his political mandate.

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[116] Clinton, My Life 945.

5.0 DISENGAGEMENT

Following the failure of the Clinton administration's high profile initiative, the contextual situation inherited by George W. Bush was that of a fractured and stagnant peace process. According to former Secretary to the Treasury Paul O'Neill, at Bush's first meeting of the National Security Council on 30 January 2001, the decision to change tact and disengage was made as a result of the new context. Bush is reported as having said, [i]f the two sides don't want peace, there's no way we can force them."[117] The essence of Bush's decision to depart from Clinton era policy stemmed from his belief that Clinton pressed for peace prematurely.[118] Specifically, the parties' failure to reach an agreement despite the United States having unveiled a final status framework indicated that, at a base level, they were not ready to take the hard choices required for an agreement. A further factor, however, was the election of Ariel Sharon. Ross highlights that "the Sharon-led government in Israel meant little would be possible diplomatically."[119] Nevertheless, this altered contextual situation coincided with the administration handover, and thus adequately explains why this fundamentally new policy direction was taken.

While in some respects the Bush administration's strategy was a prudent policy response, its complete withdrawal from the peace process also had the potential to make things go from bad to worse. The problem of US disengagement was that it removed the central arbitrator who could have eased tensions, and prevented a substantive deterioration of the situation. Although an agreement was not foreseeable given the divergent positions of the two sides, diplomatic engagement at least had the potential to maintain a degree of semblance of the status quo.

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[117] Ron Suskind, The Price of Loyalty: George W. Bush, the White House, and the Education of Paul O'Neill (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004) 71.

[118] Rachel Bronson, "The Reluctant Mediator," Washington Quarterly 25.4 (2002), 12/11/03 <http://www.cfr.org/pub4967/rachel_bronson/the_reluctant_mediator.php>. 7pp.

[119] Ross, The Missing Peace 784.

With the publication of the Mitchell Report in May 2001, a series of recommendations were made to both the Israelis and the Palestinians as a means of countering the causes of the *intifadh*. Senator George Mitchell had been given a mandate in late 2000 to investigate the causes of the Palestinian uprising shortly after Camp David, and to provide proposals to stem the ongoing violence. The report was significant in that it did prompt the resumption of negotiations but, crucially, the United States did not facilitate, or engage in diplomacy to aid the talks. Whilst this was commensurate with the Bush administration's disengagement policy, it predictably resulted in the talks quickly ending in failure.

The problem with the absence of any diplomacy to resolve the crisis was that it fueled the use of violent extremism as a means of achieving political objectives. Indeed, on 31 May 2001, a Palestinian suicide bomber attacked a nightclub in Tel Aviv, resulting in over twenty fatalities. The net effect of such attacks was that it demonstrated the inadequacy of Arafat's security assurances, and fueled political pressure on Sharon to distance his government away from diplomacy with Arafat along with the need to take punitive action against the Palestinians.

With the breakdown of security being a key underlying issue, the Bush administration sent CIA Director George Tenet in June 2001 to the region with the mandate of developing proposals to reestablish a level of security which could allow for the parties to diplomatically reengage. Although Tenet engaged in shuttle-style diplomacy, his proposals were confined to issues pertaining to security. His mandate did not encompass negotiations over a peace settlement. But even though Tenet did publish a range of proposals to combat insecurity, the administration cannot be described as taking a proactive approach in that Tenet left the area shortly after publishing his proposals. In some respects, Tenet was a poor choice who, as the Director of the CIA, had other pressing concerns and served to underline the nature of the Bush administrations commitment.

With the violence continuing unabated, Colin Powell was dispatched shortly after Tenet's departure in order to broker a ceasefire.[120] Although Powell's active participation demonstrates a mediating role, his mandate was confined to bringing a halt to the violence. His mission ultimately achieved little as Arafat was not prepared to move against the militant factions. Indeed, Arafat commented, "I am not looking for Hamas or Islamic Jihad because we respect all these parties and there is a union between all of us."[121]

By late July 2001, the stalemate in the peace process had resulted in the White House coming under increasing pressure from European and Arab countries to reengage.[122] The US policy of disengagement was not a solution to the problem and was arguably not diplomatically sustainable. What is interesting is that in August 2001, Bush set out a change in US policy to Crown Prince Abdullah in a private letter, which stated that the United States would engage proactively for a two-state solution between the Palestinians and the Israelis.[123] This was an important policy move as the Clinton administration had never officially supported a two-state solution. Although Clinton's framework for peace shortly after the failure at Camp David in 2000 saw two-states as an end product, Bush's position clarified the US position as favouring a particular outcome, rather than simply leaving the two parties to come to an agreement themselves. But, it also marked a shift away from disengagement towards a policy of proactive engagement.

In terms of why the Bush administration adopted this position, it has been widely speculated that it was a direct result of the diplomatic pressure the United States was under to reengage in the peace process. Nevertheless, according to Robert Kaiser, the US disengagement from the peace process and the escalation of the *intifadh* had a direct

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[120] Jane Perlez, "Powell Backing Plan to Monitor Mideast Truce," New York Times 29 Jun. 2001, A1.

[121] Deborah Sontag, "Arafat Sits Down with the Press," New York Times 29 Jun. 2001, A1.

[122] United States, House. Foreign Affairs Committee. Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East, US Policy Towards the Palestinians, 107th Cong., Sess. 1st, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 26 Jul. 2001) 43pp. 11/12/03 <http://commdocs.house.gov/committees/intlrel/hfa74233.000/hfa74233_0.htm>.

[123] Robert Kaiser and David Ottway, "Bush's Response Eased a Deep Rift on Mideast Policy; Then Came Sept. 11," Washington Post 10 Feb. 2002, A01.

bearing on US interests in the Persian Gulf area. Crown Prince Abdullah had reportedly threatened a fundamental reassessment of US-Saudi relations if the United States did not take a more proactive and evenhanded approach to the peace process.[124] On a wider level, the policy of disengagement was having detrimental ramifications on US policy towards Iraq where the administration was soliciting support for a revitalization of the sanctions and inspection mandate. Indeed, disengagement was widely equated with a pro-Israeli policy which made support from the GCC more difficult to obtain. The significance, however, is that wider contextual issues, in addition to US relations with Saudi Arabia and US interests in the Gulf region, forced a reversion back to Clinton era diplomacy. Disengagement was therefore a short-lived policy undertaking.

6.0 SUMMARY ASSESSMENT

The policy of the United States towards the peace process from 1993-2001 can be separated into four distinct stages:

1. Facilitation (1993-1995)
2. Facilitation with mediation to resolve the stagnant peace process (1995-1999)
3. Mediation and intensive triangular diplomacy (1999-2000)
4. Disengagement (2001)

What can be concluded from these four stages is that they were both a product of the nuances specific to the Arab-Israeli dispute in addition to contextual factors on a domestic political level within the United States. The main influencing factor, however, was the localized dynamics of the Arab-Israeli peace process. This is telling as it indicates that US policy within this timeframe lacked a clear and coherent strategy, and thus was mainly a reactive based foreign policy. Although the United States was an active participant in the peace process throughout, the use of triangular diplomacy to resolve the dispute only really came into being with the election of Ehud Barak.

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[124] Kaiser and Ottway, "Bush's Response Eased a Deep Rift on Mideast Policy; Then Came Sept. 11," A01.

As has already been discussed, the Clinton administration initially opted for facilitation as it saw the Israelis being pro-peace under Rabin, and thus facilitating the negotiations was seen as the most prudent policy response. Moreover, it was in fitting with the domestic political environment within the United States as this policy was, in essence, biased towards the Israeli position as it did not correct the inherent imbalance between the two parties.

The second phase was marked by the assassination of Rabin. The election of Netanyahu saw the adoption of a more nationalistic Israeli foreign policy which placed the implementation of the Oslo Accord into a secondary concern after security. With the diplomatic stalemate that ensued, the Clinton administration opted for a limited policy of mediation designed to 'kick-start' the negotiations. Again, the main reason why the Clinton administration moved beyond a policy of facilitation was that the dynamics of the dispute required some form of mediation in order to end the stalemate.

The third stage was marked by the election of Ehud Barak, who was seen by the White House as epitomizing the aspirations Rabin had held. Although the Clinton administration moved towards a policy of direct mediation and intensive triangular diplomacy, culminating in the Camp David summit, the key question remains as to why then, and not before? A reasonable explanation to take is that the election of Barak signaled the onset of a new contextual climate which was more conducive to peace. Of course, this raises the question: why did Clinton not resort to the policy of facilitation that he had undertaken when Rabin was alive? The most reasonable explanation is that the onset of a promising contextual climate with the election of Barak offered the potential of a historic diplomatic coup for Clinton. With the conditions appearing rife for an agreement, it is likely that the Clinton administration saw *both* the need to act quickly to achieve it, and was motivated by his desire to leave a historic legacy by brokering an agreement through meaningful triangular diplomacy.

Although Clinton's efforts towards the peace process in the final years of his administration are worthy of recognition, it is important to understand why he ultimately failed in his efforts to achieve a settlement. Despite the offer made by Barak in the aftermath of Camp David, it is important to recognize that although it was more far reaching than had ever been offered, Arafat's failure to accept Barak's proposal ultimately ended any prospect for an agreement. The reasons why Arafat refused Barak's proposal are outside the context of this thesis, but it is worth recognizing that Arafat may have lost his own powerbase if he had accepted Barak's terms. His powerbase was firmly grounded in not compromising over final status issues. Overall, Arafat's position was structurally incompatible with diplomatic compromise: only through Palestinian leadership which had a sufficient mandate and power base, which allowed for some degree of diplomatic compromise, could an agreement be achieved. This is especially pertinent as it is arguably unrealistic to see a complete Israeli compliance with Arafat's demands on final status issues, and thus a degree of diplomatic compromise was required.

But, with the onset of the Bush administration, it appears that the realities of the peace process and the high profile failure of the Clinton's efforts at Camp David, resulted in Bush seeing disengagement as the most prudent political choice. This was a significant departure in a long-standing US position towards the peace process. With Clinton's failure at Camp David and the election of Ariel Sharon as a successor to Barak even the contextual situation of the ground made the prospect of some form of agreement very remote. Indeed, it was not realistic to view Sharon as being willing to go beyond Barak's offer so Bush's decision to disengage was a realistic foreign policy given the situation inherited from Clinton. It is therefore reasonable to view Bush's policy as a reasonably pragmatic, but it was, however, a short-lived policy.

The impact of the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks fundamentally changed the contextual situation. The following section will analyze the manner in which the grand strategy of the War on Terror altered the ad hoc reactive policy characteristic of the post-Cold War era.

Overall, one can deduce from Clinton era foreign policy towards the peace process that it was reactive based to the localised geopolitical situation of the conflict itself, whilst also taking into consideration various contextual issues within the region. Indeed, this is in fitting with the interpretation of US grand strategy during the Clinton administration offered in this thesis. Specifically, with Clintonian grand strategy being based on geoeconomics it resulted in political policy being reactive based and ad hoc: this offers an original level of explanation on US foreign policy towards the peace process. This is an important observation in that it will be shown to be in contrast with the Bush administration's policy in the post-9/11 context. This will underscore that in the aftermath of 9/11 terrorist attacks US foreign policy became guided by a new grand strategic concept which impacted upon the manner in which the Bush administration approached its involvement in the peace process.

7.0 THE WAR ON TERROR: PEACE AFTER POLITICAL REFORM

The attacks of 11 September 2001 marked the onset of a new grand strategy in US foreign policy. Moving away from the incoherence and case-by-case approach that was present during the post-Cold War era, the 9/11 attacks resulted in the adoption of a grand strategy which would ultimately guide US foreign policy as had occurred with the onset of the Cold War. The initial priority became transfixed on Afghanistan, and the peace process was relegated in importance. The undertaking that Bush had made to Crown Prince Abdullah was thus not announced as expected since US priorities had clearly shifted. With Bush's diplomatic initiative now on hold, the policy of disengagement continued.

As has already been discussed, without the active involvement of the United States, the reestablishment of security was uncertain at best. In a similar fashion to the previous diplomatic initiative with George Tenet, the White House dispatched the retired General Anthony Zinni at the end of 2001 to broker a diplomatic settlement over security. Zinni's mandate was also limited to security and did not encompass issues relating to the

peace process per se. Although Zinni's involvement was more high profile and he engaged in the issue more than Tenet, little real progress was achieved. The reason why no cessation could be reason was seen by members of Congress as being that Arafat was neither effectively providing security nor working towards ending the *intifadh*.[125] But on the other hand, it should not be forgotten that Sharon appeared to be using the political cover of the War on Terror to justify an aggressive repression of the Palestinian *intifadh*. Indeed, Arafat had been effectively marginalized by the Israelis as he was confined to his Presidential compound in Ramallah.[126] Indeed, Israel's policy was effectively weakening Arafat's position and making it less likely that he would be either politically or realistically able to effectively end the *intifadh* and fulfill Israel's security demands.

In the context of this, Israel uncovered an illegal weapons cache onboard the ship the *Karine-A* which had sailed from Iran. The discovery of the weapons was highly significant as it underlined suspicions that Arafat was not a committed partner for peace. It has to be remembered that this occurred within the context of the War on Terror and, as the Palestinian Authority was clearly implicated, Arafat had lost a great deal of diplomatic credibility with the United States and had served to provide some legitimacy of Israel's actions in the eyes of the Bush administration.

With Colin Powell having been dispatched on what was to be an unsuccessful mission to the region in April 2002 to broker a ceasefire, it was clear that disengagement was proving wholly ineffective. Given that Arafat had been implicated in the *Karine-A* affair and little progress had been made in brokering a ceasefire, it quickly became clear after Powell's unsuccessful mission that Arafat was seen as the root cause by the Bush administration. Interestingly, this was a position which mirrored the Clinton administration's view after the failure of the Camp David summit in 2000. But on a wider contextual level, the administration was coming under clear international pressure to change course on its policy towards the peace process: this had a great deal of

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[125] United States, House. Foreign Affairs Committee. Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East, US Policy Towards the Palestinians, Part 2, 107th Cong., Sess. 1st, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 25 Sep. 2001) 43pp. 11/12/03 <http://commdocs.house.gov/committees/intlrel/hfa74233.000/hfa74233_1.HTM>.

[126] Ibid.

poignancy as the White House was attempting to broker wider diplomatic support for its campaign against Iraq. Overall, there was a pressing need for reengagement, but Arafat was not seen as having diplomatic credibility.

The Bush administration announced its departure from the policy of disengagement on 24 June 2002. Bush outlined his vision for a two-state solution to the conflict and called upon Israel to end "the Israeli occupation that began in 1967... through a settlement negotiated between the parties, based on UN Resolutions 242 and 338, with Israeli withdrawal to secure and recognized borders."[127] Bush's proposal went clearly beyond what Clinton had proposed. The proposal was in line with Bush's private undertaking to Crown Prince Abdullah in August 2001; however, there was now a caveat: the Palestinian Authority had to undertake reform and new leaders had to be elected who were not implicated in terrorism. This caveat, different from the undertaking Bush had made to Crown Prince Abdullah, is most likely a product of the localized contextual situation where Arafat was seen as the key obstacle preventing an agreement being reached. Nevertheless, the new contextual underpinnings of the War on Terror underscored the need for political reform: the underlying belief that freedom, liberty and democracy need to be universally adopted in order to combat the root causes of violent political extremism. When applied to the Arab-Israeli conflict, political reform held the prospect of combating the grass root support base of Hamas and other radical political Islamic movements. Therefore, Arafat had effectively fallen from grace as a result of Washington seeing him as having no diplomatic credibility or intention to achieve a peace settlement. The emergence of a new grand strategic era which saw the promotion of freedom and democracy as the primary guides of foreign policy underlined the need for new Palestinian leaders.

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[127] George H. W. Bush, "President Bush Calls for New Palestinian Leadership," The Rose Garden, Washington, D.C.: 24 Jun. 2002. 3pp. 27/08/2002 <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/06/20020624-3.html>.

7.1 Tactical Multilateral Diplomacy

With the Bush administration calling for reform and the democratic election of new Palestinian leaders before it reengaged in diplomacy towards the now stated goal of a two-state solution, there was little likelihood that any movement would occur until this condition had been fulfilled. The response from the Arab league was predictable in that whilst the two-state solution was widely welcomed, the onus on the Palestinians to effectively sideline Arafat and elect new leaders was generally seen as too ambitious and was viewed with some degree of skepticism. More specifically, Bush's plan maintained the position of disengagement until these conditions had been fulfilled, and this was the key problem for the Arab league: disengagement inflamed the situation and made a resolution more problematic. In a similar fashion, the EU was reasonably united in its calls on the United States to reengage in the peace process.

Within the context of international pressure to reengage in the peace process, the Bush administration duly announced that it would work with the other Quartet member states: the UN, EU, and Russia, to develop a roadmap for the peace process. Although this went someway to meet the demands being levied on the White House from the international community, it would be a mistake to presume that it was a policy gesture stemming solely from this wide spectrum of diplomatic pressure. It has to be remembered that the White House was perusing an additional strategic objective towards Persian Gulf security: Iraq. Specifically, the response of the Bush administration to the 9/11 attacks had added the strategic objective of a political and social transformation of the Middle East in order to combat the root causes of radical political Islam and terrorism. The point being made here is that the Bush administration was moving towards mounting an invasion of Iraq and its recommitment towards the Quartet was a diplomatic gesture to help it garner support for its Iraq policy.

The product of the Quartet negotiations was a "roadmap" for resolving the dispute between Israel and the Palestinians. Although an initial unveiling of the project was announced in September 2002, it was not until shortly after the invasion of Iraq in the

end of April 2003, that it was published. It gave a series of recommendations to Israel and the Palestinians on final status issues and a timetable for achieving them by 2005. The roadmap was:

> [B]ased on the foundations on the Madrid Conference, the principle of land for peace, UNSCRs 242, 338 and 1397, agreements previously reached by the parties, and the initiative of Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah – endorsed by the Beirut Arab League Summit – calling for acceptance of Israel as a neighbor living in peace and security, in the context of a comprehensive settlement.[128]

But on a wider level, it was viewed as a means of promoting "a comprehensive peace on all tracks, including the Syrian-Israeli and Lebanese-Israeli tracks."[129] Crucially, however, neither Israel nor the Palestinian Authority was involved in formulating these proposals. Ross is right to highlight that the construction of the proposals without reference to the parties was an inherent flaw: the plan neither reflected what the parties were prepared to do nor what outcome they sought.[130] However, in terms of US foreign policy, it is important to recognize that without 'new leadership' within the Palestinian Authority, the Bush administration remained disengaged from direct mediation between the two parties. Therefore, the roadmap was a useful diplomatic endeavor which garnered some degree of support for US policy towards the Persian Gulf, and clarified what settlement the international community desired from the peace process. Nevertheless, US policy remained firmly positioned on disengagement from direct mediation *until* reforms had been undertaken which allowed for the democratic election of new Palestinian leaders.

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[128] United States, et al., A Performance-Based Road Map to a Permanent Two-State Solution to the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1 May 2003) 6pp. 25/09/03 <http://www.mideastweb.org/quartetrm3.htm>.

[129] Ibid.

[130] Ross, The Missing Peace 789.

7.2 Structural Barriers to Political Reform

Following the defeat of Saddam Hussein's regime by a coalition led by the United States, it seems appropriate to recognize that the Bush administration had affirmed its dominant position with the region and this underscored its diplomatic leverage.[131] Although one can argue that the Bush administration was in a unique position which was comparable with the leverage the United States had after the liberation of Kuwait in 1991, it is noticeable that a reengagement similar to the Madrid peace talks was not adopted. Although Bush personally participated in summits at Aqaba and Sharm al-Sheikh in June 2003, which specifically focused on the peace process, the US involvement cannot be described as having departed from the position of disengagement. The end result of the summits basically affirmed the primacy of the roadmap as a means of resolving the dispute. Nevertheless, with the Bush administration having maintained its position that it would only reengage once new Palestinian leaders had been elected who delivered an effective response to Israeli security concerns, the likelihood of any real progress being made on the roadmap was thwarted. Indeed, without the active engagement of the United States, it is difficult to see how any substantive progress could have been made.

The key issue was, therefore, why did the United States fail to reengage despite the positive contextual situation in the aftermath of the invasion of Iraq? Whilst it is true that the United States was in a unique diplomatic position in the immediate aftermath of the invasion of Iraq, one cannot overlook that the prospects of the successful application of US pressure was unlikely to be forthcoming while Arafat was in power. It is true that the general unwillingness of the Israelis to make concessions *unilaterally* without the Palestinian Authority having made progress on security matters first was a key additional problem, but Arafat's position after Camp David showed that he was either unwilling or unable, to compromise. In either case, Arafat's position towards the Clinton-Barak framework showed that he was not going to compromise over final status issues, or the land for peace formula, and thus diplomacy held little real prospect of

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[131] Ibid. 794.

success while he remained in power. Bush's response was, therefore, reactive to the contextual situation in that further negotiations with Arafat were not a credible diplomatic option. The policy of disengagement was maintained.

The policy of disengagement was upheld by the Bush administration consistently throughout the remaining time period of this study. Although reforms were implemented under Arafat which resulted in the appointment of Mahmoud Abbas as Prime Minister, his power and authority was limited by Arafat.[132] But, even then, Ross is critical of the Bush administration for not having moved beyond this disengagement policy in order to provide a degree of support for Mahmoud Abbas position.[133] Whilst there may be some degree of truth in this, it is debatable how effectively Arafat could have actually been marginalized whilst he retained the Presidency.

8.0 CHAPTER CONCLUSION

From the above analysis of United States foreign policy towards the peace process it can be deduced that it was mainly reactive to the localized context of the dispute. Although US domestic politics was a key factor which influenced the character and bias of Clinton's foreign policy, this study shows that it was a secondary issue to the dynamics of the peace process itself. In other words, although there was an inherent bias in Clinton's policy in favour of Israel, whether Clinton merely facilitated or engaged was mainly determined by the dynamics of the local context of the peace process. Indeed, Clinton only moved beyond facilitation when it was clear that without a degree of mediation to resolve a diplomatic stalemate, the peace process would effectively grind to a halt. Whilst it is possible to infer that Clinton only moved beyond facilitation once he had secured a second term of office, this approach overlooks the fact that the Oslo process had become stagnant and was unraveling because of the counterproductive

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[132] Jerrold Kessel, "Abu Mazen Confirmed as Palestinian Prime Minister," CNN Online 1 May. 2003, 17/08/04 <http://www.cnn.com/2003/WORLD/meast/04/29/palestinian.cabinet/>.

[133] Ross, The Missing Peace 792-96.

policy of Netanyahu. The localized context thus required third party intervention to mediate over the issues which were preventing the two parties from actually engaging in constructive diplomacy.

Clinton's decision to actively mediate between Barak and Arafat was surprising in that one would have expected Clinton to revert to facilitation as he had done when Barak's likeminded predecessor was in power. Although it is tempting to explain Clinton's proactive engagement and triangular diplomacy as a simple product of his desire to reach a historic agreement before his Presidency ended, this overlooks significant aspects of Barak's election: it presented a unique opportunity which had a finite timeframe. Given this finite window of opportunity, the available evidence indicates that the administration opted for this particular foreign policy response as a means of achieving an agreement while possible. Nevertheless, it is reasonable to assume that the prospect of resolving the Palestinian question was a significant motivating factor for Clinton. But the underlying reason why Clinton failed in his efforts to achieve an agreement following the Camp David Summit in 2000 was as a result of the inability, or unwillingness, of Arafat to compromise over final status issues. Therefore, during the Clintonian post-Cold War era up until the onset of the War on Terror, US foreign policy was, more often than not, reactive to the localized contextual situation of the Arab Israeli dispute.

The reactive nature of Clintonian era policy indicates that there was no overarching global political strategy dictating US policy towards the peace process. This is commensurate with the post-Cold War grand strategic pillar of geoeconomics which has been identified. Indeed, this was continued in the Bush administration up until the new grand strategic era of the War on Terror was adopted.

With the onset of the War on Terror, the Bush administration's decision to maintain its position of disengagement appears to have also been a product of the localized contextual situation. This shows a degree of consistency from post-Cold War era policy. However, the call for political reform was also a radical departure for US foreign policy.

The available evidence indicates that this was not a policy position prior to the onset of the War on Terror. It is true that it was a policy response which fitted in well with the underlying reasons behind disengagement, but also was in fitting with the new grand strategy of the War on Terror: the promotion of freedom and democracy in order to counter the support base of terrorist groups. Given the propensity of radical political Islamic groups within the dispute, it can be concluded from the rubric of post-9/11 grand strategy that the promotion of such values was seen as countering such groups hindering the peace process.

In addition to Bush's post-9/11 approach being commensurate with combating the root causes of extremism as has been outlined in chapter four, the promotion of such ideals also served a key secondary purpose of equal importance: conflict resolution. Within the context of the neoconservative school of thought and the Reaganism which resonated within the Bush administration, the promotion of democracy through political reform was seen as a key means of promoting a resolution to the conflict itself. This primarily stems from the view that negotiations would be more *meaningful* and *productive* given the belief that compromise was more feasible when those negotiating have a legitimate mandate from the people. So in certain respects Bush's approach could be considered pragmatic if this optimistic analysis is accepted. However, it is important to recognise that the promotion of democracy in Palestine also held the risk that political groups such as Hamas could gain power over the ruling Fattah party which could further lessen the likelihood of reconciliation.

Given the above analysis it seems reasonable to conclude that whilst Clinton era foreign policy towards the peace process was representative of a geoeconomic grand strategy which was lacking a political strategy and was thus reactive based, on the other hand US policy post-9/11 actually encompassed the guiding tenets of the War on Terror and was a clear political strategy that then guided US involvement in the peace process. This underscores the manner in which grand strategy can impact upon a geopolitical foreign policy.

Overall, this chapter has underscored that US policy towards the Arab-Israeli peace process can be satisfactorily understood through the lenses of the grand strategies of the Clinton and Bush administrations that have been outlined. Therefore this allows for the conclusion that the 9/11 attacks resulted in the adoption of a new grand strategy and this was indeed applied to US policy towards the Arab Israeli peace process. Moreover, the ad hoc and reactive based policy of the Clinton era which stemmed from its own grand strategic approach was wholly commensurate with the character of its foreign policy towards the peace process. This indicates that the issue of US grand strategy is a key factor which can be used for analytical interpretations and predictive generalisations. Also this form of interpretation of US foreign policy towards the peace process is an original framework for conceptualizing US involvement as a third party to this conflict.

Chapter VIII

Concluding Comments

"Power consists in one's capacity to link his will with the purpose of others, to lead by reason and a gift of cooperation."

Woodrow Wilson

September 1913

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This case study has underscored that the Middle East is one of the most complex political arenas for United States foreign policy. Not only does US foreign policy have to navigate the complex schisms based on religion, history and culture, it also has to find an appropriate balance between US national interests and those of regional actors. Nevertheless, given the Bush administration's response to the 9/11 attacks, the new approach under the War on Terror indicates that it is an arena which has taken on an even greater strategic significance for the United States.

In terms of the importance of the specific conclusions that can be made from this study, the following section will provide a clear account of both what has been achieved from this research, and what contribution it has made to the current scholarship on this area. The final section will highlight some areas for additional research based on the findings of this study.

2.0 THESIS REVISITED

This study's examination of US foreign policy has been revealing not only for the complexity in which US foreign policy was formulated, but also for the markedly different observations that can be made when comparing the presidencies of Bill Clinton and George W. Bush. The first substantive section concerned a comparative foreign policy analysis of Bill Clinton and George Bush in chapter three. The very character and priorities of the administrations formed a near dichotomy and this was reflected in the idiosyncrasies of the key people in the bureaucracies and foreign policy. As with the onset of the Cold War and the post-Cold War eras, the very

character of the Bush administration has given rise to the new grand strategic era of the War on Terror in the wake of the trauma of the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks.

The comparative foreign policy analysis on the idiosyncrasies, bureaucratic character, and foreign policy of Bill Clinton and George W. Bush in chapter three has provided a significant contribution to the current body of scholarship. It was the first comprehensive foreign policy analysis to deal with the idiosyncratic and bureaucratic factors which shaped the foreign policy of both administrations. It has provided a clear analysis of the Clinton presidency and the initial years of the first Bush administration in order to show that a fundamental transitional phase in US international relations occurred as a response to the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks. Moreover, it has tested these prescriptions through a case study of US foreign policy towards key policy issues within the Middle East and thus can claim validity.

The post-Cold War era was characterised by no readily identifiable overarching strategic threat to US national security as had been the case in the Cold War. The optimism this period held was a golden age for US foreign policy as it was premised on geoeconomics and resulted in unprecedented global economic growth. This Hamiltonian foreign policy, which characterised the Clintonian era, had clear advantages but also lacked a political strategic purpose that relegated decisions to an ad hoc and reactive level as geoeconomics is not an effective substitute for a political strategy.

The terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 were the catalyst for a radical departure from the post-Cold War order. The policy response to the 9/11 attacks was commensurate with the idiosyncrasies of George W. Bush and key members of the administration. However, the impact of the attacks had a more telling affect as the issue of safeguarding US national security through combating terrorism and the risks posed by unconventional weapons became a commonly held strategic purpose for American polity. As with the onset of the Cold War era, the far-reaching domestic and foreign policy context resulted in the emergence of a readily identifiable threat to US national security which required a comprehensive response from the state

apparatus. With this *perception* resonating within domestic society, terrorism with global reach had emerged as a defining factor for grand strategy. In essence, the era of the War on Terror had emerged.

The Bush Doctrine emerged as the administration's policy framework under the strategic rubric of the War on Terror. The doctrine underlined the strategic departure from Clintonian geoeconomics and that a radical change in US foreign policy and had occurred. The central pillar of the Bush Doctrine was for the global promotion of liberal democracy. Admittedly, this is an agenda which has a historical vintage in US foreign policy. However, its promotion under the Bush Doctrine was deemed a national security requirement given the intellectual interpretation adopted on the root causes of political extremism and terrorism. The issue of US policy towards political Islam is thus of critical importance for understanding the nature of the Bush Doctrine and the new grand strategic era.

As secondary key aspect to the Bush Doctrine was for the use of anticipatory self defence in cases where hostile states attempt to acquire unconventional weapons and fail to be dissuaded through diplomacy. This is the most controversial aspect to the Bush Doctrine and also the one which poses scope for additional research. The central issue is whether this will be applied universally by the Bush administration towards the other countries listed as part of an axis of evil, namely North Korea and Iran. If the Bush administration refrains from applying this pillar to other applicable cases, its official use against Iraq is brought into question. Specifically, it would underline the point that the invasion of Iraq was carried out for the strategic purpose of promoting liberal democracy as a long term counterterrorism initiative.

In order to test these prescriptions this thesis has used a case study approach of US foreign policy towards key arenas concerning US foreign policy in the Middle East. Two key interrelated areas of US foreign relations towards the Middle East were selected: Persian Gulf security and the Arab-Israeli peace process. The question of political Islam was also addressed in chapter four but here the purpose was not to provide a case study analysis but rather to demonstrate the strategic element in the Bush administration's effort to combat the root causes of political extremism. In essence this was to underscore and clarify the very character of the grand strategy in

the War on Terror era. This formed a key part of the thesis in that it demonstrated the nature and external threat that US grand strategy in the era of the War on Terror was a response towards. Specifically it showed the linkage between the promotion of the universal ideals of freedom, equality and human rights, and how they link in with the US national interest of combating the root causes of terrorism and thus countering terrorism and securing US national security in the long term.

The case study on Persian Gulf security was subdivided into two distinct chapters. Chapter five examined US policy during the Clinton administrations which was symbolic of the grand strategic era of the post-Cold War. Here the definition of Persian Gulf security was defined as US foreign policy towards Iran and Iraq as a means of ensuring actual security of this strategically important area. Chapter six examined US policy towards Persian Gulf security in the era of the War on Terror in order to underscore the differential nature of US foreign policy since the redefinition of US grand strategy occurred in the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

The analysis of US foreign policy towards Iraq and Iran has served the purpose of demonstrating the validity of the conceptualisation offered in chapter three on US grand strategy. Moreover, it has also provided for a contribution to the existing body of scholarship on the trajectory of US foreign policy towards each country. In the case of Iraq, this thesis has uncovered original information that allows for a significant reinterpretation of US foreign policy. Whilst the current body of scholarship has been shown to suggest various interpretations on US foreign policy trajectory towards Iraq; this thesis has offered a distinction between strategy and tactics by way of showing that the United States sought regime change in Iraq since 1991. The commitment towards an Iraqi compliance with sanctions was, therefore, a tactical means of achieving this strategic objective. Therefore, this underscores the level of continuity in US foreign policy from the George H. W. Bush presidency. Indeed, the only departure from the tactics for achieving this objective was shown to have occurred in the wake of the 11 September 2001 attacks which saw a military invasion used rather than the traditional containment leading to regime change equation.

In the case of Iran the analysis indicates that Clintonian policy was commensurate with the grand strategic framework identified in chapter three. However the driving force of US foreign policy was the domestic political level which usurped the foreign policy prerogative of the executive. Although the Clinton administration was premised on containment leading to reconciliation subject to a change in provocative Iranian policies, Congressional legislation limited the options available to Clinton. Iran's opposition towards Israel was the main factor which drove this. Nevertheless, the objective of Clintonian US foreign policy towards Iran can be interpreted as commensurate with the US grand strategy at the time: containing Iran in order to ensure the security of the Gulf States in order to further Hamiltonian interests. The departure from this only occurred after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. The promotion of liberal democracy and prevention of Iran acquiring unconventional weapons became the key issue for the Bush administration. This shows that US grand strategy in the War on Terror resulted in a alteration of US policy towards Iran.

For the Clinton presidency, debate has been shown to exist on its character, but this thesis firmly holds the position that Clinton had reduced his foreign policy to *geoeconomics*; and arguments suggesting that it also incorporated the Jeffersonian pursuit of democracy seem not to apply in the case of the Persian Gulf. Indeed, it appears that a distinction between rhetoric and substance exists in Clintonian grand strategy. The importance of the Persian Gulf security case study in chapter four is that US geostrategy fundamentally changed in the context of the global War on Terror. The objectives of the post-Cold War era were for maintenance of the regional balance of power but, following the 9/11 attacks, US geostrategy fell under the rubric of US grand strategy and thus a complete rejection of the long standing balance of power approach was witnessed. This underscores the validity of the comparative foreign policy analysis conducted in chapter three.

The second case study examined was US foreign policy towards the Arab-Israeli peace process in chapter five. The findings from this examination underscored that the idiosyncratic factors of the Clinton administration had a clear correlation with the nature of US foreign policy towards conflict resolution. Moreover, this was compounded by domestic political factors within the United States. Clinton's approach inherently favoured the Israeli position as the emphasis on facilitation

equated to a support for the process dictated by the dominate party to the negotiations. Clinton's policy has been shown to have evolved through stages where mediation was used selectively until its culmination at Camp David in 2000. The manner in which this equates with the interpretation offered in chapter three is that the absence of a clear grand strategy that went beyond geoeconomics resulted in an ad hoc approach towards the peace process. This underscored the approach adopted by Clinton.

The contextual situation inherited by Bush was of a stagnant peace process and the realisation that Arafat's unwillingness or inability to compromise made a resolution even with American mediation an unrealistic conception. The manner which the Bush administration approached the peace process after the 9/11 attacks has been shown to be in fitting with the international context of the War on Terror. Specifically, the emphasis on democratic elections and new Palestinian leadership not only reflected the post-Camp David scenario but also was in fitting with the Bush Doctrine. The foreign policy analysis showed that the emphasis on new democratic elections and new Palestinian leadership was increased following the 9/11 attacks and thus underscores the manner in which the grand strategic design of the War on Terror permeated throughout US foreign policy. This interpretation is original in that it offers an interpretation of US foreign policy towards the peace process through a wider conceptual lens than the current scholarship has offered on this subject as indicated in chapter two. This demonstrates that whilst there has been a discernable change in grand strategy, this has so far impacted more upon tactics employed than ....

The final case study concerned US foreign policy towards political Islam. This is an academic area which is of fundamental importance for understanding and conceptualising the central aspects of the transition always from the post-Cold War era. The analysis of US foreign policy has confirmed the accuracy of the current body of scholarship on the Clintonian approach towards political Islam. Specifically, the empirical evidence supports the conjecture that the Clinton administration recognised that the promotion of liberal democracy was the most effective means for combating the extremist and unrepresentative element of political Islam. However, the case study offered in chapter four and five on the Persian Gulf has underscored

that the Jeffersonian/Wilsonian pursuit of democracy was subordinated against US Hamiltonian interests within the Persian Gulf area. Therefore, even though Clinton articulated a dual grand strategy of geoeconomics and the promotion of liberal democracy, this thesis has shown that combating the root causes of extremist political Islam was a secondary policy concern.

With the onset of the Bush administration, this policy position was maintained until the 9/11 terrorist attacks. The administration's response to the attacks was geared towards combating the immediate concerns of the combination of unconventional weapons and terrorism but, most crucially, it recognised that the lack of legitimate avenues for political expression with the Middle East was the root cause of extremist Islamism. Therefore, political extremism became an issue of primary concern in US foreign policy and was equated with the grand strategic objective of safeguarding US national security through combating its root causes in the long term. The longstanding US policy towards maintenance of a balance of power within the Persian Gulf was thus rejected at the expense of the ambitious proposal of reordering the Middle East through a radical political reform process. Indeed, the invasion of Iraq in 2003 was shown to have been carried out in order to achieve this ambitious strategic objective.

The contribution of this study's analysis to the scholarship of US foreign policy towards political Islam is that it offers an interpretation of the change that occurred in the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. It also shows how this equates with the Bush Doctrine and the grand strategic era of the War on Terror. As this thesis analyses US foreign policy towards the Persian Gulf and the Arab-Israeli peace process, it also emphasises the degree to which it has become a primary policy issue for US foreign policy.

In sum, this thesis has demonstrated that a period of fundamental change has occurred in US foreign policy following the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks. The position of this study is that a new grand strategic era of the War on Terror has emerged and has replaced the post-Cold War. Bush's agenda is fundamentally optimistic and ambitious and can be equated with a neo-Wilsonian vision for the international system. By using case studies, this thesis has shown the validity of this

conjecture in addition to the nature, trajectory and contextual origins of US foreign policy towards the Middle East in the time period 1993-2003.

The reflections that can be made on this evolution of US policy are that the future trajectory of US policy, for the duration that it continues to be based on this position, will result in unprecedented changes in the international system. The desire to rework the international environment through US exceptionalism clearly has a strong vintage; however, the manner in which such a strategy has been defined as being the essence of providing for US national security is a very new and potentially destabilising agenda. But whilst US foreign policy makers would recognise this potential instability, the logic of the doctrine would see it as a necessary evil as the outlook for US grand strategy in the era of the War on Terror is fundamentally long term in its outlook. The challenge for US foreign policy will be whether such a change is controllable in times of flux. But overall, such a strategy would be well advised to seek a level of empathy by way seeking an understanding other countries situations: without this key ingredient in US foreign policy, it will reduce itself to a zero-sum game where diplomacy becomes a façade for unilateralism and ultimatums. Indeed, this is especially pertinent when dealing with scenarios of unconventional weapons being produced by states that are perceived as hostile actors by the United States.[1]

2.1 Assessment of Grand Strategy

The concept of grand strategy in US foreign policy is a highly useful and informative proposal in understanding the nature and contextual origin of foreign policy. Whilst foreign policy may often be tactical, only through understanding the objective through the lens of grand strategy can one gain an approximation with a degree of validity on what the given policy may be. During the Cold War it was clear that the ideological and military threat posed by the Soviet Union was the accepted key

[1] Wright, S. M., H. Huuhtanen, et al. (2005, 8 Mar.). "Briefing Paper: US and Iran on a Confrontational Course." 2005, from http://www.upi-fiia.fi/julkaisut/muut/Briefing%20Paper%208%20March%202005.pdf.

external threat to US national security. With this it is understandable in international relations that the grand global chessboard was dictated by the maxims of Cold War era grand strategy. But with the implosion of the Soviet Union and unopposed fall of the Berlin Wall by the Soviet block, the end of this grand strategic era had effectively ended. In the post-Cold War era which encapsulated the two terms of office of Bill Clinton, this thesis has demonstrated that although Clinton articulated a dual grand strategy of geoeconomics and democratic promotion, the later was merely a rhetorical pronouncement and it is thus accurate to view geoeconomics as being the strategic maxim. Given the absence of a key external threat to US national security, or at least a rival competitor, the United States' unrivalled global dominance in all spheres resulted in the Hamiltonian goal of a global promotion of economic investment and trade – geoeconomics – forming the essence of US grand strategy.

Whilst geoeconomics as a grand strategy for a superpower such as the United States was a welcome agenda by other nation-states, it also resulted in there being no clearly defined strategic political agenda. In essence, foreign policy is reduced to operating on a reactive and ad hoc basis to political events. This point has been underscored by this thesis's examination of US engagement in the Arab-Israeli peace process during the Clinton era. Moreover, in areas of instability the lack of a clear agenda by the United States results in a lack of leadership from the sole superpower and thus weakens any multilateral response as an alternative.

The interpretation of grand strategy is a highly useful concept for analysing and understanding the nature and direction of US foreign policy. For the post-Cold War era it underscores the need to view US foreign policy as reactive towards the localised geopolitical context which allows us to provide more valid interpretations. However, the response of the Bush administration to the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 saw the spectre of terrorism defined as the key national security threat to the United States. The adoption of a political agenda towards combating the root causes of political extremism in the long term thus became the new grand strategy which replaced that characteristic of the post-Cold War.

The grand strategy of the War on Terror has been shown in this thesis to be based on the recognition that the overriding cause of radical extremism stems from the lack of

freedom, equality, human rights and equality which resonates in varying degrees across the world. With the understanding from a neoconservative perspective that these are fundamentally universal values in their applicability and that their absence actually is the cause of terrorism, their promotion under the grand strategy of the War on terror is thus clearly a national security interest. Indeed, historically speaking the promotion of these values have been a key aspect in US foreign relations, however, it was only in the post-9/11 context that they have been identified as being a national security imperative.

The concept of grand strategy in the War on Terror has been shown by this thesis, through Ikenberry's methodological framework, to be a highly useful and informative means of understanding US foreign policy. Importantly it allows for foreign policy to be separated on *tactical* and *strategic* levels which in the case of the Iraq invasion in 2003 allowed this thesis to provide a rich analysis of the logic behind the war. Here key comparisons can be made with the onset of US involvement in Vietnam during the Cold War.[2] But more importantly, the concept of grand strategy in the era of the War on Terror is of critical importance to understanding US foreign relations per se: it is clearly a political strategy unlike that of the post-Cold War era and thus is an overarching reference point and lens to which foreign policy is formulated. So whilst during the post-Cold War it was appropriate to view foreign policy within geopolitical and regional geostrategic sense where each event was ad hoc, foreign policy in the War on Terror for the United States is guided by an overarching framework which shapes the maxims of its policy.

Nevertheless, the concept of grand strategy cannot be used as a carte blanche to which all aspects of US foreign policy can be related to. Some aspects of foreign policy may simply not be motivated by the agenda of achieving a grand strategic objective and this would not be able to offer a satisfactory explanation. Nevertheless, Ikenberry's approach is useful in that a foreign policy is evaluated against the concept of grand strategy so through this framework there is the allowance for this shortfall: therefore the analyst's objective is to ascertain whether this is the case or not.

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[2] Gelb, L. H. and R. K. Betts (1979). The Irony of Vietnam: the system worked. Washington, Brookings Institution.

Overall, this thesis has found that an analytical methodology on US foreign relations which uses the concept of grand strategy is a highly effective means of understanding US foreign policy. Through using this concept this thesis has been able to offer original interpretations of US foreign policy during the two presidencies through the use of key case studies towards the Middle East.

3.0 SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The nature of this study has been to provide for a greater understanding of US foreign policy towards the Middle East, in addition to a contextualisation and interpretation that has wider applicability within international relations scholarship. As this study has provided a geopolitical account of US foreign policy towards the Middle East in addition to observations on a global strategic level, there is scope for further research on a cross regional comparative level. By conducting an analysis of US foreign policy within the same time period but within a different regional geostrategic arena, it will be possible to test the applicability of both conclusions on US grand strategy within the post-Cold War era and the War on Terror. Indeed, to what extent is US Middle Eastern geostrategy commensurate with the strategic issues of Eurasia?[3]

A second area for further study is a more in-depth examination of the bureaucratic decision making process on particular issues within this timeframe and scope of this case study. Key decisions could be isolated from this study and explored in great depth through documentary evidence once it is declassified. This will provide a further complementary level of analysis which will show the bureaucratic reasoning and internal debates that occurred in making foreign policy decisions.

A third area is the manner in which the Bush administration approaches the issue of Iran's and North Korea's nuclear programmes. Whilst North Korea is widely

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[3] Brzezinski, Z. (1997). The grand chessboard: American primacy and its geostrategic imperatives. New York, Basic Books.

regarded as having acquired nuclear weapons, Iran's legitimate pursuit of a nuclear power programme allows it to have the potential for acquiring a nuclear weapon capability through enrichment or reprocessing. As indicated above, the Bush Doctrine is clear that in cases where diplomacy fails to dissuade a country presumed by the United States as intent on producing nuclear weapons it would be subject to the preventative use of force. In essence this is a zero-sum approach to nuclear proliferation. The case of Iran's nuclear programme is a key area for future research as the manner in which the United States approaches this potential impasse will allow for a comparative study with the case of Iraq on the application of the Bush Doctrine.

A final issue which could be explored through additional research is the nature of the policy review that was conducted by the Bush administration in the time leading up to the 11 September 2001. To what extent were changes in policy strategy being planned? This will allow for a greater understanding of the true impact the 9/11 attacks actually had on US foreign policy. Nevertheless, such a level of analysis is still dependent on the declassification of material on this subject.

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