

**Iraq and Beyond:  
The New U.S. National Security Strategy**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE .....	iv
PREVENT DEFENSE: WHY THE BUSH DOCTRINE WILL HURT U.S. INTERESTS . . . . .	1
<i>Jonathan Kirshner</i>	
ON THE <i>NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY</i> AND AMERICAN POLICY TOWARD IRAQ .11	
<i>Barry S. Strauss</i>	
OLD ELEMENTS IN THE NEW SECURITY POLICY .....	15
<i>Maria Fanis</i>	
THE PEACE MOVEMENT’S IRAQ PROBLEM—AND OPPORTUNITY .....	19
<i>Matthew Evangelista</i>	

## PREFACE

In September 2002, the administration of President George W. Bush released a document, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, intended to provide the ideological underpinnings for U.S. foreign policy in the coming years. The document's publication coincided with increasing discussion and debate—on campuses, in editorials, in local governments, in voluntary associations, and in many informal meetings, if not so much in the U.S. Congress—on the wisdom of launching a war against Iraq. At first reluctant to involve either the Congress or the United Nations in its decision for war, the Bush administration eventually did both: President Bush addressed the United Nations General Assembly in September, received overwhelming congressional support for a resolution endorsing the use of military force against Iraq, and succeeded in fashioning a compromise resolution of the UN Security Council to resume inspections of suspected weapons of mass destruction, with an implicit threat of serious repercussions if Iraq did not fully comply. The Security Council resolution passed unanimously.

In the midst of these events, Cornell University's Peace Studies Program held one of its monthly current-events roundtable discussions on the topic, "Iraq and Beyond: The New U.S. National Security Strategy" on October 31, 2002. Participants from Cornell's Departments of Government and History represented a range of views and engendered a lively discussion. Jonathan Kirshner criticized the new Bush Doctrine's emphasis on preventive war as a dangerous departure from policies of deterrence and containment that the United States had pursued even during the darkest days of the Cold War. The new policy, he argued, will "ultimately serve to make the United States less secure at home and undermine its political interests abroad." Barry Strauss, while not endorsing all aspects of the Bush administration's foreign policy, expressed support for the new national security doctrine, particularly the U.S. commitment to "championing liberal, representative government for all peoples everywhere in the world." He criticized what he perceives as a narrow range of debate on U.S. campuses, where "virtually every academic in our elite universities defines himself as an opponent of the Bush administration." Although Strauss joined Kirshner in expressing concern about preventive war as a response to threats to U.S. security, he did offer a cautious endorsement of war with Iraq as "probably the best way of obtaining security and justice." Maria Fanis, in her contribution, provided a strong counterargument to Kirshner's view of the new national security policy as a

major departure. For her, the new strategy “really encapsulates the consensual view of America’s proper role abroad since the end of the Cold War” and is the “result of the unparalleled military strength and economic influence that the country possesses and how it chooses to use them.” Although she did not explicitly say so, her analysis implied that even a unilateral military attack against Iraq, justified on preventive-war grounds, would not be an unprecedented action in the history of U.S. foreign policy.

Given the potential importance of the new U.S. doctrine (however familiar some of its elements) and the valuable and diverse insights of our roundtable panelists, the Peace Studies Program decided to publish their views in this occasional paper. I have also included a related article of mine, first published in the November 2002 issue of *The Bookpress*, Ithaca’s newspaper of the literary arts, with kind permission of its editor, Jack Goldman.<sup>1</sup> In it, I discuss the problem that Iraq poses for U.S. peace activists, given that many of the methods they had championed during the Cold War—from conflict resolution to economic sanctions as an alternative to war—have demonstrated limited success in eliminating the Iraqi threat. I highlight the role of the United Nations and adherence to international law as providing the best means for dealing with the current crisis. The complete text of *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* is available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss.pdf>.

Whatever the ultimate outcome of the Iraq situation, the contributions gathered here should prove of enduring interest as analyses of an important statement of U.S. foreign and security policy at the dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Matthew Evangelista  
Director, Peace Studies Program  
December 2002

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<sup>1</sup> I would also like to thank Professor Robin Williams for his thoughtful review of all the papers and Sandra Kisner for editing them.

## PREVENT DEFENSE:

### WHY THE BUSH DOCTRINE WILL HURT U.S. INTERESTS

Jonathan Kirshner<sup>1</sup>

Overshadowed by the immediate confrontation with Iraq, but ultimately of greater import, are the consequences of the new U.S. national security strategy—the Bush Doctrine—a manifesto that does much more than simply provide the strategic and philosophical justification for a U.S. invasion of Iraq. This new approach to world politics, unveiled by the Bush administration as the summer of 2002 gave way to autumn, represents a fundamental shift from foundations upon which U.S. foreign policy has been based since World War II.

This strategy, the most dramatic statement of American international purpose since the adoption of NSC-68 in 1950 (which provided the foundation for the Cold-War containment of the Soviet Union)<sup>2</sup> will ultimately serve to make the United States less secure at home and undermine its political interests abroad. It is based on erroneous assumptions about the nature of international relations, and it fails to understand the crucial distinction between military might and achievement of political goals. As a result of the Bush doctrine, the United States will be less able to achieve its most highly valued strategic objectives in the short, medium and long run.

*The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* is a sweeping document of more than twelve thousand words,<sup>3</sup> but its most important attributes can be summarized with just three: supremacy, ambition, and prevention. The first, supremacy, begins with a celebration of American might—“the United States enjoys a position of unparalleled military strength”—and continues with an explicit commitment to maintain such military dominance as necessary, not simply to assure U.S. security or specific strategic objectives, but rather to guarantee sus-

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<sup>2</sup> “United States Objectives and Programs for National Security” (NSC-68, 14 April 1950), reprinted in Thomas H. Etzold and John Lewis Gaddis, eds., *Containment: Documents on American Policy and Strategy, 1945-1950* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978).

<sup>3</sup> *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, the White House, Washington, D.C., September 2002, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss.pdf>. A non-PDF version (with different pagination) is available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss.html>.

tained primacy—dominance so great as to “dissuade future military competition.” The second, ambition, is the aggressive promotion of American values—quite broadly defined—as part of U.S. foreign policy. Under the Bush doctrine, for example, the United States now includes as part of its national security strategy the promotion of “pro-growth legal and regulatory policies” and “lower marginal tax rates” throughout the world. The third, prevention, is the most immediately consequential element of the new strategy: the articulation of a doctrine of preventive war. This should not be confused with preemption—striking first at an adversary that is about to attack—rather, the doctrine is one of prevention: “America will act against such emerging threats before they are fully formed.” As the document makes clear, the United States now claims the right to attack those states that it deems may threaten it at some time in the future.

The Bush Doctrine of supremacy, ambition and prevention will backfire, and leave the United States weaker and less secure. It will quickly sabotage the war on terrorism. It will soon make the world more dangerous and less stable. And over time, it will transform world politics in a way that diminishes U.S. power and influence.

### **Undermining the Terror War**

The immediate effect of the new Bush doctrine will be to undermine the single most important item on America’s foreign policy agenda, prosecuting the terror war. To this point, since the attacks of September 11, the Bush administration in its conduct of foreign policy has done the things it needed to do. It fought the war in Afghanistan, embarked upon a global pursuit of the al-Qaeda network, and, crucially, from the President’s first public address after the events of September 11, made it clear that the United States recognizes no distinction between anti-U.S. terrorist organizations and those states that knowingly harbor and aid them.

But despite these early accomplishments, much remains to be done in the terror war, and extinguishing the threat of al-Qaeda-sponsored terrorism remains the most important national security objective of the United States. Reducing al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and removing their Taliban benefactors from power was an important achievement and a necessary first step, but al-Qaeda remains a threat, especially as much of the enemy’s leadership escaped the U.S. attack. Moreover, both Afghanistan and Pakistan still walk a tightrope between order and anarchy, and the U.S. role on the ground in Afghanistan is far from over if the immediate military victory is to have any significant (positive) long-term political effect. Further, the pursuit of al-Qaeda cells

beyond Afghanistan, an ambitious effort which is only just getting underway, will present challenges that are less militarily tractable and more politically ambiguous, especially if the United States is drawn into local disputes only tangentially related to global terrorism.

Given these hard realities, pouring resources into new wars not directly linked to the terror war will come at a high opportunity cost—diverting limited war fighting resources—and will also carry with it great political costs. Not only will the inescapable collateral damage and political disorder fostered by U.S. attacks provide fertile breeding ground for anti-U.S. terrorist organizations, such preventive wars will undermine political support for the United States throughout the globe. This will contrast sharply and consequentially with the broad support (or at least the tacit understanding and approval) that the United States has enjoyed from the international community in the early stages of the terror war. The wellspring of this support flows from the widespread acknowledgment of the U.S. claim that there is no practical difference between al-Qaeda and states that knowingly support it. This crucial political understanding affords the United States enormous latitude in the conduct of its foreign policy and military strategy. But overstepping these generous boundaries and launching an attack on a country solely on the basis that the target has been defined by the United States as a potential threat, without evidence of a link between that state and al-Qaeda (or some other terrorist organization known to be plotting to attack the United States), will undercut the basis upon which the United States has conducted the terror war and undermine needed international support for that effort.

This is not to say that the United States should conduct its grand strategy in search of the applause of foreign governments. However, it must be recognized that by conflating new preventive wars with the terror war, the United States will not only confuse its (vital) purpose but also likely forfeit much of the international support that it has received since September 11. And despite America's military preponderance, to be successful the U.S. war on terror will depend on broad international support—the sharing of intelligence, support of local host governments, and, necessarily, coordination of efforts to trace flows of information and of illicit financial networks. In the absence of sincere and enthusiastic international cooperation, the United States will find itself at great disadvantage as terror cells become ever more shadowy and elusive. Again, this matters because it is the surviving—and apparently significant—remnants of al-Qaeda that represent a highly motivated, extremely dangerous, clear and imminent threat to the security of the United States at home and abroad.



The global repugnance toward preventive war (as opposed to military strikes directly linked to al-Qaeda) should not be underestimated—indeed, it has been readily understood by U.S. policymakers in the past. NSC-68, for example, the *Magna Carta* of anti-communist containment, was criticized by some detractors as the template for a dangerous crusade that oversold the Soviet threat and in so doing exacerbated the Cold War. And indeed, the language of the document is rather absolutist. The Soviet Union, NSC-68 explained, “is animated by a new fanatic faith, antithetical to our own, and seeks to impose its absolute authority over the rest of the world.” The Cold War confrontation with the USSR, it continued, must be understood as “a real war in which the survival of the free world is at stake.”<sup>4</sup>

Yet the framers of NSC-68 rejected the idea of preventive war—and not on its practicality, but on its politics. They understood that “It goes without saying that the idea of “preventive” war . . . is generally unacceptable to Americans.” This point is then underscored to account for the possible counterargument that the unprecedented dangers of the Cold War might present a special exception to this general rule: “despite the provocativeness of recent Soviet behavior,” such an attack, “would be repugnant to many Americans.” Displaying a political savvy and far-sightedness that is absent from the Bush doctrine, NSC-68 further acknowledged that if U.S. citizens were somehow able shake off these moral qualms and come to terms with the need for preventive war, even the successful use of overwhelming force would be unlikely to achieve U.S. political objectives. “It would . . . be difficult after such a war to create a satisfactory international order among nations. Victory in such a war would have brought us little if at all closer to victory in the fundamental ideological conflict.”<sup>5</sup> These political realities were at one time well understood, and subsequently formed the basis, for example, of Robert Kennedy’s opposition to an attack on Cuba during the Cuban Missile Crisis (this, it should be noted, was a relatively “easy case” to make for preventive war). Kennedy insisted that “America’s traditions and history would not permit such a course of action,” and observed further that such an attack would “erode if not destroy the moral position of the United States throughout the world.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> NSC-68, 14 April 1950, pp. 385, 442.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, pp. 431-32.

<sup>6</sup> Robert F. Kennedy, *Thirteen Days: A Memoir of the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: Norton, 1971), pp. 16, 27.

The bottom line is that preventive war is (and has been) properly understood to be fundamentally different from other aspects of the use of force. The practice of preventive war under any circumstances is likely to be foolhardy, and due to its very nature almost certainly unlikely to advance the foreign policy goals of a democratic state. Worse still, embarking on such an adventure at this moment, with the unfinished business of the terror war at hand, will not only divert needed resources and attention from the greater threat, and it will subvert the international support needed to succeed in that fight.

### **A More Dangerous, Less Stable World**

Further down the road—beyond complicating and undermining the war on terror—the preventive war doctrine will also elicit specific policy responses from other states that will make the world a more dangerous place and undermine U.S. interests. Especially if the prescriptions of Bush doctrine are followed and the United States embarks upon a preventive war (or preventive wars), the results will be the accelerated global proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, greater regional instability and war, and increasing frustration at the failure of force to achieve stated political objectives.

Paradoxically, although one of the great concerns motivating the new security strategy is the possibility that weapons of mass destruction will fall into the wrong hands, the Bush doctrine actually creates strong incentives for more states to seek nuclear weapons. Any country that has reason to believe it is high on the U.S. “hit list” will certainly scramble to get its hands on whatever weapons it can. While certainly dangerous, this is to some extent little more than the acceleration of an existing problem, and arguably one that may have emerged in the absence of a change in U.S. policy. What’s new, however, and somewhat more subtle, is the likelihood that many governments, even those not currently at odds with the United States, will need to consider the possibility that they might run afoul of U.S. interests in the future. Some of these states might easily conclude that a small nuclear stockpile would be the only way to deter a preventive U.S. strike. And each state’s decision to go nuclear will set off new debates on the same issue within its neighbors. This will have a cascading effect, since there are a large number of states in the system that could plausibly go nuclear in relatively short order, but have made the political calculation that they are better off without such weapons. The Bush doctrine thus is likely to set in motion what future historians will dub the “scramble for nukes” by states previously disin-

clined to acquire such weapons, and the result will be a proliferation nightmare, made even worse by the fact that some of those new nuclear powers will have alarmingly lax command and control institutions. The effect of U.S. policy in the end will be to greatly *increase* the possibility that such weapons will fall into the wrong hands, and to make it more likely that militarized disputes in the future will involve states that have some nuclear capability.

Non-nuclear conflicts will also be exacerbated by the Bush doctrine. It would be naïve to assume that other states will not seize upon the U.S. embrace of a preventive war doctrine to argue that they, too, can add preventive war to the list of legitimate means by which just ends can be achieved. Indeed, there are many regions of the world where potential combatants—in some cases on both sides of a given conflict—can stake an even more plausible claim than can the United States for the need to strike preventively against their adversaries. (Not to mention new windows of opportunity that may be perceived by states during the scramble for nukes.) Throughout the Middle East, on the Indian Subcontinent, across the Taiwan straits, among the constituent republics of the former Soviet Union, and on the Korean peninsula, the counsel for preventive war is no doubt heard at the highest levels of authority. One factor that restrained such aggression in the past was its perceived illegitimacy. Scholars continue to debate the extent to which international norms and concerns for legitimacy circumscribe states' behavior. But few doubt that such factors matter to some extent. By shifting the moral authority of the United States in favor of preventive war, with one stroke the President has made war in each of these areas more likely now than it had been previously.

Finally, this change in strategy—which lowers the bar regarding the use of force—will weaken the crucial link between force and politics. This argument is too easily misunderstood—it is not to deny that war will remain a necessary component of U.S. foreign policy. There are times, such as in Afghanistan, when there is no alternative to the use of force. But even there winning the military battle did not guarantee achieving political objectives. Where the case for war is less clear-cut—as it will necessarily be in a preventive war—the likelihood is even greater that there will be an enormous chasm between military victory and political success.

It is easier for a great power to start an asymmetric war than to finish it—the early fighting typically favors the powerful, and this bright prospect looms larger for decision-makers facing tough choices than do distant clouds on the horizon. But wars are fought for a reason, and after the first battles are won the question remains open as to whether the victors will have the

skill and wherewithal to reconstitute the polity of the vanquished. If the answer to this question is no, or if the conduct of the war creates new adversaries, effectively relocating the problem rather than eliminating it, then such military victories will be pyrrhic at best.

Losing sight of the fact that force only “works” to the extent that it advances political goals is perhaps the most common (and costly) blunder in the history of international politics. A preventive war doctrine—shooting first and asking questions later—is an invitation to this type of political disaster.

### **U.S. Power and Political Balancing**

Most broadly, and in the long run, the new Bush doctrine is misguided because it rests on faulty assumptions about the way that the world works. It suggests that the assertion of vast powers—“the United States enjoys a position of unparalleled military strength”—will leave enemies and potential adversaries awestruck while providing friends and fence-sitters the confidence to fall in step with the U.S. line. This is not, however, the way the world works. Most states, and especially politically influential states, strongly prefer not to be pushed around by any power, regardless of how benevolent its motives may be. The U.S. Cold-War policy of containment, at its geopolitical core, was little more than an application of the classical vision that no single state—friend or foe—should come to dominate the world’s industrial centers. Similarly, for centuries the cornerstone of British foreign policy was to assure that no single power—any power—would come to dominate the European continent. Churchill approvingly described it this way: “For four hundred years the foreign policy of England has been to oppose the strongest, most aggressive, most dominating power on the continent.” Churchill explained further that it is the concentration of power in and of itself that states must redress in an uncertain world. “The policy of England takes no account of which nation it is that seeks the overlordship of Europe. It is concerned solely with whoever is the strongest or the potentially dominating tyrant.”<sup>7</sup>

Balancing against political dominance is the innate instinct most common among sovereign states and has been a ubiquitous feature of international political history. As Henry Kis-

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<sup>7</sup> Winston Churchill, *The Second World War*, Vol. 1: *The Gathering Storm* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1948), pp. 207-08.

singer recently reiterated, “When any state threatened to become dominant, its neighbors formed a coalition—not in pursuit of a theory of international relations but out of pure self-interest to block the ambitions of the most powerful.”<sup>8</sup>

Most states simply prefer to dwell in a world where there is some check on the ambitions of the great powers. Many countries, therefore, even those not easily identified as “evil,” might still be wary of a super-state whose express goals are to maintain unchallenged military supremacy, which plans to attack those it labels as potential threats, and whose reach is so ambitious that it includes as part of its national security strategy the promotion of convergence towards its own economic model, down to the intricacies of tax and regulatory policies.

The reaction to this kind of naked arrogance and ambition is likely to be, as it always has been, balancing. In the current context, this will not take the form of military balancing; the greatest dangers here are not that new foes will emerge, or that allies will become enemies. Rather, U.S. interests will be undermined by *political balancing*: the search, by other states, for greater political space between themselves and the United States. Thus, while the European Union is extremely unlikely to arm itself in anticipation of a militarized confrontation with the United States, it will increasingly question whether Europe and America share a similar vision of world politics, and contemplate openly whether European interests are best served by a marginal increase, as opposed to a marginal reduction, in U.S. global influence. Similar discussions will also emerge, more or less cautiously, among other friends of the United States such as Japan. Among existing adversaries the debates will be briefer as voices for moderation, engagement and accommodation will be trumped by those with a more confrontational, anti-American perspective, who will simply argue that *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* confirms their long held perspective on the true nature of American intentions.

### **But What About Iraq?**

The Bush Doctrine was not written in a vacuum. To the contrary, it was formulated in a specific international political context, with one eye (at least) towards a military confrontation between the United States and Iraq. This matters (if paradoxically) because the consequences of such a war would depend fundamentally on the political context in which it was fought. There

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<sup>8</sup> Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994), p. 70.

are two stylized possibilities for such a conflict: The first is a Bush Doctrine war—that is, a war justified on the grounds of prevention, without some form of approval (or at least acquiescence) by the Security Council of the United Nations, and over the opposition of regional players such as Turkey and Saudi Arabia. The second is a U.S.-led, UN-sanctioned war—justified on the grounds of enforcing UN resolutions, with the active support of important regional powers.

The military outcome will be the same in any event: the United States will win the war. But the prospects for political success—the reason for fighting in the first place—will depend squarely on which of the two scenarios above comes closer to describing the events that unfold. A Bush Doctrine war would be a disaster, for all of the reasons discussed above about the problems inherent in the strategy. It is virtually impossible to imagine that such a war would, in the long run, advance rather than undermine U.S. political objectives. Broadly speaking, the United States appears to be motivated by two objectives: a desire to prevent a bad and dangerous regime from acquiring weapons of mass destruction; and a desire to prevent the vast oil reserves of the mid-east region from falling under the political dominance of a regime implacably opposed to U.S. interests.

It is not obvious that any war—even a war fought under the best of circumstances—would achieve those goals. Again, the problem would not rest with the war itself, but with the political consequences of the fight. It is hard to say how difficult the military battle will be, since much would depend on the extent to which the Iraqi military put up a fierce resistance. But it would be a mistake to assume that the war will be a cakewalk, and a bloody conquest of Iraq is likely to heighten anti-Americanism in the region. And after victory, the challenges would only get harder—there will likely be sharp political disagreements about (and practical limitations to) how the victors will supervise Iraq's political reconstitution. Taking these concerns together, and adding in the unpredictability of war, illustrates the gap between the use of force and achieving political goals. If a “successful” war leads to chaos in Iraq, or contributes to the destabilization of (nuclear armed) Pakistan, or results in a sharp deterioration in U.S.-Saudi relations—then the war would help bring about the very world it was designed to prevent.

Still, there is a case for war. Disarming Iraq and removing the current regime would certainly be a good thing, most obviously by ending the rule of a horribly brutal dictator. And there are risks of inaction: given Hussein's pattern of behavior as a ruthless and unrestrained serial aggressor, and given his apparent willingness to take risks, the prospect that he might acquire

nuclear weapons is not a pleasant one. Thus, while a UN war would still be rife with political danger, it would at least stand a chance of achieving U.S. political objectives.

In short, doctrine matters. The merits of war against Iraq are debatable—my own assessment is that the political costs of (the best possible) war are very likely to outweigh the political benefits. But of much greater import than *whether* the war is fought is *how* the war is fought. A Bush Doctrine war would be an unmitigated disaster, because it would almost certainly be self-defeating. The United States would win the military fight in Iraq, but cultivate the problems that the resort to force was designed to suppress.

In the context of the Iraq war, the Bush Doctrine will likely create a more dangerous, less stable Middle East, and one more hostile towards the United States. More broadly and from all quarters, political balancing—from the cautious distancing of friends to the increasingly intractable opposition of foes—will, over the long run, be the legacy of the new National Security Strategy. In sum, rather than advance U.S. interests, American claims to permanent supremacy, by engendering political balancing, will create a world of states pre-disposed to resist U.S. policy objectives.

**ON THE *NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY*  
AND AMERICAN POLICY TOWARD IRAQ**

Barry S. Strauss<sup>1</sup>

Before discussing the Bush administration's *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* of September 2002 or the possibility of war with Iraq, it is necessary to say a word first about the conditions of debate in the academy today. Unfortunately, those conditions are not good.

The search for truth requires subjecting theories to vigorous criticism. Indeed, without testing a theory by means of the toughest critique, it is impossible to be sure whether or not it is true. As a practical matter, an intellectual institution needs to represent a wide variety of schools of thought, methodologies, and political opinions in order to ensure that every theory be put to a hard-hitting test.

Unfortunately, elite universities in America no longer represent the necessary intellectual diversity. Instead, today's elite universities are dominated by one set of opinions and one set only: liberal, left-wing, politically and theoretically correct opinions. The elite university is in danger of becoming a "unicality": that is, an institution that rejects its historic mission of airing the universe of ideas and instead becomes an institution where only one set of ideas is allowed. (Cornell's Peace Studies Program is an honorable exception.)

In today's elite American university, conservatives, dissenters, heretics, and free thinkers are rarely hired; if they are hired, they are rarely promoted; if they manage to be promoted, they rarely receive professional encouragement, let alone fellowships or endowed chairs. A young academic who wants to have a successful university career knows that he is unlikely to have a future unless he adheres to the p.c. party line. As a practical matter, it is difficult if not impossible to search for truth under such conditions.

The result, in terms of the matters under discussion today, is to skew debate. Since virtually every academic in our elite universities defines himself as an opponent of the Bush administration, it becomes almost a heuristic necessity to take the opposite position. In order to keep the

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<sup>1</sup> Professor of History and Classics at Cornell.



academy honest, one is constrained to take an extreme position in defense of the administration. To put it bluntly, I don't want to be yet another professor throwing stones at the president.

The ironic and unintended consequence of political correctness, therefore, is to drive a minority of academics into the arms of the right. The middle ground disappears.

Were things different, it would be easier to dwell on the flaws of the *National Security Strategy*. One might point out, for instance, that the document's call for "moderate and modern" governments in the Muslim world is altogether too timid (page 6). Muslims are no less deserving of democracy than every other inhabitant of this planet. One might also take exception with the statement that America's enemy is terrorism (page 5). Terrorism is a tactic, and as such it is open to use by anyone. America's enemy is both more specific and more general: it is Islamism and its anti-democratic ideology.

Islamism must be distinguished from Islam; Islam is a great religion, while Islamism is a political philosophy that distorts religion in the interests of creating anti-democratic regimes. America must never be hostile to Islam or to Muslims. Nor must America be hostile to democratic political parties that employ Muslim values while guaranteeing freedom to all, regardless of religion. Islamists, however, are an altogether different matter. Because they oppose democracy, Islamists are enemies of America, just as fascists and communists are enemies of America. While terrorism is a primary tool of Islamism, other tools are also open to that ideology and are no less objectionable. For example, an Islamist party that wins power in an election and then proceeds to legislate an end to democracy is also America's enemy, even if it does not employ terrorism.

Finally, one might also take issue with the *National Security Strategy's* emphasis on preventive war (e.g., page 15). While it may be necessary for states to wage preventive war under extreme circumstances, it is also dangerous, and therefore not something to be encouraged. It would have been more prudent, as it would also have been adequate, for the statement to have focused instead on the need to enforce treaties and to strike treaty-breakers before they have a chance to strike first.

Yet these are all asides. The thrust of this paper's argument is to praise the *National Security Strategy*. The Bush administration is to be commended merely for having undertaken to redefine American security, a task that is as difficult as it is necessary after the attacks of 11 September 2001. It is to be applauded for re-committing the United States to championing liberal,

representative government for all peoples everywhere in the world. It does exactly the right thing in stating the existence of rogue states and their potential threat to world peace. It correctly emphasizes the United States' new strategic relationship with Russia, which is likely to play an increasingly important role in an era of weakness, self-doubt, and greed among such traditional NATO allies as France and Germany.

The administration is exactly right to draw a line between the past policy of deterrence and the new security strategy that is needed today. It is to be congratulated for stating forthrightly that America will defend itself "against . . . emerging threats before they are fully formed" (page v). With the caveat about preventive war noted above, one can support the administration's policy fully—and in particular, in regard to Iraq.

Whether there will be a war with Iraq is currently (November 2002) unclear. If the United States and its allies can find a way to pressure Saddam to honor his treaty commitments and give up all weapons of mass destruction completely, and if the alliance can also find an ironclad way of monitoring his compliance, then a war may not be necessary. Neither proposition, however, seems likely.

Saddam Hussein is a homicidal megalomaniac with a proven track record of aggression and mass murder. He hates the United States and wants to harm it. Although there is no proof positive that he is working with al-Qaeda, many pieces of evidence suggest that conclusion. In any case, he has every reason to support al-Qaeda, because for all the differences between their philosophies, they share a common goal: driving the United States out of the Muslim world and especially out of the Middle East. Al-Qaeda's terror tactics advance that goal. If Saddam acquires heavy-enriched uranium, he could pass it on to terrorists who could smuggle a Hiroshima-sized bomb into an American city.

It would be difficult indeed to envision, let alone enforce, an inspections regime capable of stopping a man like Saddam. The alternative is regime change in Iraq, and that will surely require a war.

It will neither be easy nor bloodless to deny Saddam the ability to unleash such weapons on the United States or on his neighbors. To fight him will stir up a storm of criticism, particularly in the Muslim world. One must face this without illusion but also without fear, because the alternative is far worse.

Besides, the United States is already at war with Saddam. American forces patrol the Gulf, at great cost to the taxpayer. American power ensures that northern Iraq is virtually an independent Kurdish state. American weapons and soldiers engage in intermittent combat with Saddam's forces.

The United States, moreover, enforces an embargo on Iraq. Saddam cynically exploits the rules of this embargo to inflict great suffering on ordinary Iraqis while building up his military and enriching himself and his friends. The result is little short of a humanitarian crisis. Americans are a great and good people, and they need to think seriously about whether they want such a policy to continue to be carried out in their name.

For these reasons, friends of freedom, peace and security, as well as people of goodwill, ought to support a war against Saddam. Let us consider, finally, what a postwar world might look like.

As the victor, the United States will bear primary responsibility for rebuilding Iraq and for fostering democracy there. The job will not be done overnight, any more than it was done overnight in Germany, Japan, South Korea, or Taiwan. By staying the course, however, the United States eventually oversaw the establishment of democracies in all of these states, an achievement of which Americans ought justly to be proud.

American power in post-war Iraq offers the best hope to the Iraqi people of a free and prosperous future. By the same token, it should pay dividends in moving—ever so slowly—such neighboring states as Iran and Saudi Arabia in a pro-American and liberal direction. And by demonstrating America's seriousness of purpose, it will also encourage those states to play a more active role in tightening the net around al-Qaeda and similar terrorists who might be active on their territory.

In short, as sad as the prospect of war must always be, in the imperfect world in which we live, it is sometimes necessary. Today, war with Iraq is probably the best way of obtaining security and justice, just as it is the best way of implementing the praiseworthy and noble ideals of the Bush administration's *National Security Strategy*.

## OLD ELEMENTS IN THE NEW SECURITY POLICY

Maria Fanis<sup>1</sup>

Most of the arguments in support of the recent American foreign policy under the Bush administration, as well as, of course, the Bush administration itself, portray the adoption of this new national security strategy as the result of the new threat of terrorism. I would argue that the new national security strategy is more a result of the unparalleled military strength and economic influence that the country possesses and how it chooses to use them. I would also argue that how the country currently chooses to use its military strength and harness its economic prowess is a continuation of, rather than a departure from, American foreign policy objectives as they were set at the end of the Cold War.

In essence, I am arguing that President Bush's seemingly new national security strategy really encapsulates the consensual view of America's proper role abroad since the end of the Cold War. This post-Cold War national consensus over the country's foreign policy is reflected not only in President Bush's recently announced national security policy, but is also evident in the foreign policies of his two predecessors. In this regard, the events of September 11 acted more as a catalyst to a well-formed foreign policy agenda than as a formative experience in the nation's life.

The evolution of this national consensus over foreign policy can be traced back by looking at political leaders' beliefs and how these informed their vision about American foreign policy, and at the concrete steps they took to implement this vision. What one notices then is the common thread that unites, rather than differentiates, the fundamental beliefs about foreign policy goals that guided Democratic and Republican presidents alike. One also sees a distinct similarity in the manner with which these administrations attempted to translate their beliefs into foreign policy.

The first element that permeates America's post-Cold War behavior abroad is the belief in the exceptional character of the American nation. The country's unique political and eco-

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conomic makeup, best defined as democratic capitalism,<sup>2</sup> has, since the inception of the republic, rendered the home front immune to class, religious, and ethnic cleavages, has promised equal opportunity to all, and has recently created the unprecedented affluence of the 1990s. Abroad, democratic capitalism seems to have succeeded in crippling the former Soviet Union and its alternative politico-economic experiment, has reinstated Kuwait's national sovereignty, and has restored respect for human rights in areas like Bosnia and Kosovo. All these tangible successes, both at home and abroad, could not but point to the leadership role with which the United States has been entrusted by history, by virtue of its unique ability to succeed where all other countries have failed, both domestically and at the international level.

Such belief in the centrality and righteousness of the American role abroad was echoed by President Bill Clinton when he argued that "the country is on the right side of history." In contrast, Clinton found China at the time on the "wrong side of history." Thus, prior to his trip to China in 1998 he said that he intended to offer the Chinese "a new a different historical reality."<sup>3</sup> The same theme was continued with George W. Bush, then governor of Texas, when he said in 1999 that "we firmly believe that our nation is on the right side of history."<sup>4</sup> This belief in the country's right choice is now explicitly included in the new security document where it is stated that there is "a single sustainable model for national success: freedom, democracy, and free enterprise."

Another constituent element of this consensual view of the American role abroad is the promise of an open international trading system. In order to achieve this end the Bush administration wants to expand the circle of development by opening societies and building the infrastructure of democracy. According to the national security document, the United States will "provide resources to aid countries that have met the challenge of national reform." In particular, the United States calls for "pro-growth" legal and regulatory policies, "tax policies—par-

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<sup>2</sup> Eugene R. Wittkopf, Charles W. Kegley, Jr., James M. Scott, *American Foreign Policy: Pattern and Process*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, 2003), p. 246.

<sup>3</sup> Andrew J. Bacevich, *Different Drummers, Same Drum*, in *Annual Editions on American Foreign Policy*, (New York: McGraw-Hill/Dushkin, 2002), p. 20.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, p. 20.

ticularly lower marginal tax rates—that improve incentives for work and investment,” and free trade that “fosters the diffusion of technologies and ideas.”

This is not so different from Bill Clinton’s pledges in 1993 to “expand and strengthen the world’s community of market-based economies” and his demands that Japan open more of its markets to American exports.<sup>5</sup> The liberalization of world trade was guaranteed with the signing of the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in 1994, and the creation of a new World Trade Organization was seen by Clinton as means for the “economic renewal” of the United States and the world.<sup>6</sup>

If the beliefs of the post-Cold war presidents seem to be quite similar, so were the means they used to secure their preferred foreign policies abroad. Even before September 11, George W. Bush was arguing that the defensive barrier around the United States was rapidly eroding and that to do nothing would be perilous to the country. President Bush had argued at the time that the country was threatened by “all the unconventional and invisible threats of new technologies and old hatreds.”<sup>7</sup> The end of the Cold War saw not the dissolution of what could have been considered a Cold-War relic, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), but rather the expansion of its mission. Instead of dissolving, following the demise of the reason for its existence—Soviet military power—NATO redefined itself and its mission. It now sought to deal with issues such as ethnic conflict in the Balkans, viewed as a threat to the security of NATO members, and the promotion of democracy in the former Soviet bloc as means to maintaining the peace. The transformation of NATO took shape in the 1990s when the Pentagon announced its “strategy of engagement” in so-called out-of-area operations. The elder Bush first proposed the program of NATO enlargement to the East. Clinton converted that idea into reality. With the alliance’s enlargement, its mission to help spread democratic institutions took central stage in how NATO saw itself and was seen by others. In essence, it saw itself, and was seen by others, as useful and necessary.

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<sup>5</sup> *New York Times*, September 28, 1993.

<sup>6</sup> Thomas Patterson, J. Garry Clifford, and Kenneth Hagan, *American Foreign Relations: A History Since 1895*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed., vol. 2, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2002), p. 470.

<sup>7</sup> Bacevich, *Different Drummers, Same Drum*, p. 22.

The closest parallel to America's "new" thinking of a borderless defense perimeter is where the nation had drawn its defense borders during the Cold War period. Back then, as now, American presidents from Truman to Reagan had vowed to resist communism wherever it existed, no matter how far from the homeland. Equally evocative of President Bush's foreign policy triad of economic goals, military means, and international diplomacy was the country's foreign policy during the Cold War, which was similarly operating in all three spheres. But what seems to show most clearly the similarity between the content of American foreign policy in the Cold War era and at present is the justification behind the militarization of the country's foreign policy in both eras. The pre-eminent document that signified the militarization of American foreign policy after World War II was NSC-68 in 1950. Back then, as now, an international crisis was presented as the reason for a massive military build-up during peacetime. In June of 1950, it was the outbreak of the Korean War that made NSC-68 the blueprint for American foreign policy for the next forty years. In 2002, it is the terrorist attacks against the homeland on September 11 that have justified the militarization of foreign policy.

But, is it really the case that national disasters redefine nations? In the case of the adoption of NSC-68, the Korean War was just the catalyst that helped put into practice the national consensus over America's foreign policy that had been building since 1944. In the post-Cold War era, if one were to look at the foreign policy continuity between the Clinton and Bush administrations, one can see the emergence of this national consensus over foreign policy before the terrorist attacks of September 2001. The tragic events of September 11, therefore, seem to have solidified in the nation's mind a vision of its foreign policy mission that had been taking shape since the end of the Cold War, rather than to have helped the nation redefine itself.

## THE PEACE MOVEMENT'S IRAQ PROBLEM—AND OPPORTUNITY

Matthew Evangelista<sup>1</sup>

The last decade has not been an easy one for the peace movement in the United States. The end of the Cold War saw many of its key goals achieved—reductions in nuclear weapons, withdrawal of Soviet and American troops from central Europe and substantial cuts in conventional weaponry, the end of the Soviet war in Afghanistan and U.S. military intervention in Nicaragua, the demise of communist rule and the promise of democracy in Eastern Europe and Russia. Yet subsequent challenges divided the movement—if we can still speak of it in those terms—with erstwhile allies taking opposing positions on U.S. policy. Some former opponents of U.S. intervention in Central America, for example, endorsed sending the marines to reinstate the ousted president of Haiti, Jean Bertrand Aristide, whereas others suspected U.S. motives and balked at the use of military power even to right such an obvious injustice. Some critics of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization who had protested against the alliance's deployments of U.S. nuclear missiles in Europe in the 1980s came a decade later to support the expansion of NATO right up to Russia's borders in the interest of stability and democracy. Others continued to see NATO as part of the problem rather than the solution, and wished it would go the way of the Warsaw Pact and cease to exist. Many peace activists who in the past had steadfastly opposed bloated U.S. military budgets found themselves calling for the United States to use its air forces to bomb Serbian targets in Bosnia and Kosovo, and to send ground troops to halt the genocidal actions of Slobodan Milosevic. Others found the bombing-for-peace approach unacceptable, especially when carried out by the NATO alliance in the face of opposition from key members of the United Nations Security Council.

No issue has been more troubling for supporters of peace than Iraq. As a new generation of activists emerges to protest the Bush administration's rush to war, it would do well to reflect upon the problems that the Iraq situation has posed for the peace movement over the years. The traditional approaches pursued by peace activists have not proved very successful: nonviolent resolution of disputes, sensitivity to the "security dilemma" (the notion that even countries that procure weapons solely for defensive purposes can appear threatening to others), and reliance on

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economic sanctions and UN resolutions as alternatives to military action. Saddam Hussein's rule of the country has led Iraq into two disastrous wars. Barely a year after coming to power in 1979 he provoked a war with Iran over a boundary dispute, anticipating an easy victory against a country in the throes of Islamic revolution. The war dragged on for eight years, with no clear victor, but with a toll of well over a million victims. In the midst of the war, Hussein's army pursued a separate campaign against the Kurdish communities of Iraq, destroying thousands of villages and displacing or killing tens of thousands of people—many of them attacked with chemical weapons, which the Iraqi forces also used against the Iranian army. A UN-brokered cease-fire ended the war with Iran, but Hussein hardly paused to catch his breath. In August 1990, he ordered an invasion of neighboring Kuwait, ostensibly in response to a dispute over oil production. Once Iraqi forces had overwhelmed Kuwait's limited defenses, Hussein declared the country's annexation while his troops carried out a brutal occupation in which Kuwaiti citizens and foreign guestworkers (Palestinians, Indians, and others) suffered alike.

The peacemakers's toolkit—negotiations, arms control treaties, conflict resolution—did not seem very effective in dealing with Saddam Hussein's Iraq. Those techniques were developed in the context of a superpower nuclear rivalry, which, as British historian and disarmament activist E.P. Thompson famously put it, was mainly about itself.<sup>2</sup> Neither the United States nor the Soviet Union intended to attack each other (although they invaded countries in their "spheres of influence" many times). The arms race served the domestic interests of the ruling elites on each side, but was in turn vulnerable to unilateral initiatives of restraint promoted from the grassroots. It ended when the Soviet leadership under Mikhail Gorbachev heeded the advice of transnational activists and pursued a conciliatory foreign policy under the banner of "new thinking." All that was needed was for the United States to acknowledge the change, and Ronald Reagan, to his credit, did so, even if his successor, George H.W. Bush, feared that he was being too hasty.

What finally persuaded the first President Bush that Gorbachev's changes were real was the Soviet reaction to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990. The USSR backed UN Security Council resolutions intended to induce Iraq's withdrawal. Gorbachev, whose rhetoric and ideas often drew upon those of the peace movement, advocated a nonviolent approach, at least to start. Thus

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<sup>2</sup> Edward P. Thompson, *Beyond the Cold War* (New York: Pantheon, 1982).

the Soviet Union, a major supplier of weapons to Iraq, endorsed the U.S. proposal for a UN-sponsored arms embargo. Then it supported an overall trade embargo, with a naval blockade of Iraq's oil tankers. When Iraq still refused to withdraw its forces from Kuwait, the Security Council issued Resolution 678 authorizing the use of "all necessary means" to reverse the Iraqi invasion, a transparent euphemism for military force. Iraq was given until January 15, 1991 to comply. The Soviet Union joined the three other permanent members of the Council who voted in favor of the resolution—the United States, Britain, and France—while China abstained. The USSR, through its special envoy Evgenii Primakov, a Middle East specialist who had known Saddam Hussein for years, tried to persuade Iraq to face reality and withdraw. But Hussein would not even do his "friend" the courtesy of allowing Soviet civilian and military advisers to leave the country; he preferred to keep them as hostages, in a futile attempt to undermine the uneasy Soviet support for military action.

Operation Desert Storm—the war against Iraq—began on January 16, 1991, the day after the expiration of the Security Council resolution. Thirty-three countries participated in the war, but the United States clearly dominated the military campaign. The strategy was heavily dependent on massive bombing, with much damage inflicted on basic infrastructure—electricity grids, sewage and water systems, communications facilities. Destruction of such targets undoubtedly hindered the Iraqi military forces, but at enormous cost—especially in the long term—to the civilian population. In combination with the punishing sanctions regime, the toll on innocent civilians over the decade since the Gulf War has been devastating.

Perhaps most disturbing to the peace movement was not only that the economic sanctions—intended as a nonviolent alternative to war—failed to secure Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait. Pursued tenaciously by the United States long after Iraq's defeat, and exploited for propaganda purposes by Hussein, the sanctions wrought terrible damage on the weakest, most innocent members of Iraqi society.

Does the peace movement then deserve blame for the dangerous mess that Iraq has become? Hardly. If Saddam Hussein is a monster, as hardly anyone would doubt, the United States is in many respects his Dr. Frankenstein. Viewing Iraq as a secular bulwark against Iran's Islamic revolution, the U.S. government encouraged its aggressive actions against the Ayatollahs' regime. For years U.S. and other Western companies knowingly sold Iraq the components that enabled Hussein's scientists to pursue development of chemical, biological, and nuclear

weapons. During the war against Iran, the United States provided satellite imagery to assist the Iraqi air force in locating Iranian targets for chemical-weapons attacks. In planning his assault on Kuwait Saddam Hussein is widely believed to have received a green light from the United States in his infamous meeting with Ambassador April Glaspie. The United States evidently failed to anticipate the voraciousness of Hussein's appetite for aggression, as he swallowed Kuwait and claimed it as Iraq's nineteenth province.

In opposing the Iraqi invasion, George Bush groped for justifications that would lead Americans to support U.S. military action. Saddam as Hitler seemed a bit exaggerated, higher prices at the gas pumps crassly insulting in the assumption that U.S. citizens cared mainly about their pocketbooks. Appealing to the United Nations Charter, to the fundamental right of national sovereignty and defense against aggression, appeared to do the trick. Never mind that the U.S. government itself was only selectively sensitive to such appeals, ignoring or abetting over the years the Chinese annexation of Tibet, the Indonesian invasion of East Timor, Israeli's "security zone" in southern Lebanon, and illegal occupation of Palestinian lands. Many Americans put aside their doubts and hoped that Bush's vision of a New World Order would be one founded on respect for the rule of law and the institutions of international governance, such as the United Nations.

In retrospect one can doubt the extent to which such high-mindedness motivated the Bush team. Much of the administration's behavior smacked of the triumphalism that has since become the defining feature of U.S. foreign policy. The Gulf War provided an opportunity, not to be missed, to make clear which country won the Cold War and would dictate the terms of the peace. This is the father's legacy, which the son inherited along with many of the advisers who helped fashion it. The new *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, issued in September 2002, makes explicit that the United States intends to continue its military domination of the world and to prevent the rise of any potential challengers. The administration has rejected a range of international treaties, from the Kyoto Protocol on global warming to the International Criminal Court—reflecting a go-it-alone attitude that is out of step with American public opinion and international realities. Bush, in his speech to the United Nations on September 12, 2002 implicitly acknowledged that the unilateralism had gone too far, as he sought to put concerns about Iraq in the context of UN resolutions. Official U.S. acknowledgment of the importance of the United Nations, however fleeting, provides an opportunity that the peace movement should

not miss. The speech nevertheless left many doubts about the administration's sincerity. The perennial issue of double standards was unavoidable. Iraq is hardly the only country to have flagrantly violated UN resolutions, invaded and occupied neighboring territories, pursued secret programs to develop weapons of mass destruction, and perpetrated or condoned acts of terrorism against innocent civilians.

By itself, accusing the United States of pursuing double standards does not constitute an effective argument against going to war with Iraq. However justified the critique of U.S. behavior, it is unlikely to reassure Americans about Iraq enough for them to oppose the war. Moreover, there does not seem much to be gained by playing down the danger that Saddam Hussein poses. The point is to put that danger into perspective and to consider what greater dangers the United States risks by rushing into a war.

After the September 11<sup>th</sup> tragedies, the danger that naturally preoccupies many Americans is terrorism, and, particularly, the threat of further attacks by the al-Qaeda organization. One of the strongest arguments against war with Iraq—one that hawks and doves alike can embrace—is that it will distract the United States from a necessary focus on preventing terrorism. Hawks will emphasize spreading U.S. armed forces too thin and the implausibility of being adequately prepared to counter a sudden terrorist threat while troops are engaged in a major battle in Iraq. A full-page advertisement in the *New York Times* in mid-September made this case. It was signed by more than two dozen leading professors of international security policy, most with a reputation as hard-nosed “realists.” Doves can endorse these concerns and add additional ones: that war in Iraq will kill many innocent civilians and sow the seeds for further terrorist activity.

Here the issue of double standards becomes relevant. Critics of the United States, in the Middle East, for example, will make much of the selective U.S. concern about violations of UN resolutions and pursuit of weapons of mass destruction, and wonder why Israel gets a free hand in both domains. The Security Council's Resolution 242, for example, requires Israel to withdraw its armed forces from territories occupied in the 1967 war (and for Israel and its neighbors alike to acknowledge “the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force”—a clear requirement to accept Israel's right to exist). U.S. tolerance of Israel's continued military actions in the occupied territories, despite their justification as

a response to terrorism, will strike many in the region as inconsistent with insistence on Iraq's strict adherence to UN dictates. On the question of "regime change," at least, the United States seems more consistent. It favors overthrowing Saddam Hussein and looks the other way as Israel seeks to do the same with Yasser Arafat. In this case, the consistency will only serve to create more enemies for the United States and boost the popularity of both Arafat and Hussein, neither of whom would otherwise garner much sympathy in the region. Furthermore, Israel's undeclared possession of several hundred nuclear weapons has never drawn U.S. criticism. U.S. officials seem confident that Israel would not use its nuclear arms unless the very survival of the state were at stake. Few would give Iraq the same benefit of the doubt, although a recent CIA report suggested that the event most likely to provoke Iraq's use of weapons of mass destruction would be a U.S. invasion.

For many Americans, fear of Saddam Hussein's nuclear intentions is one of the more plausible rationales for war put forward by the Bush administration (as long as evidence of Iraq's connections to al-Qaeda terrorists remains flimsy). Here the criticism of double standard, however telling, serves poorly as an anti-war argument. Yes, the United States possesses the most destructive force of nuclear weapons the planet has ever known; it is the only country to have used them, against Hiroshima and Nagasaki; it has developed the world's most advanced arsenal of chemical arms, and is at the forefront of research on biological weaponry. Moreover, the current administration has abandoned or sought to undermine key international treaties intended to control weapons, from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty to the Biological Weapons Convention. But such an argument, a pot-calling-the-kettle-black approach, does not seem to resonate with the American public. It is also in evident tension with another argument one sometimes hears from peace activists: we need not worry about a nuclear-armed Iraq, because it would always fear a devastating U.S. nuclear retaliation if it sought to use its own weapons. Principled opponents of nuclear arms, who understand them as weapons of genocide, should resist taking this tack. A long-term objective of the peace movement should be to stigmatize the possession of nuclear weapons, so that they will no longer be a symbol of great-power status, to which challengers like Iraq aspire, but a sign of moral depravity. That end is not served by invoking U.S. nuclear might as an anti-war argument.

Fortunately there are better arguments for opposing unilateral U.S. military action without seeming complacent about Iraq's nuclear potential. No country wants Iraq to have weapons

of mass destruction, whether or not the United States has them. The point is that threatening to invade the country in order to topple Saddam Hussein is hardly likely to diminish his fervor for obtaining the only weapons that he might hope could deter such a U.S. attack. The system of international inspections developed at the end of the 1991 war, despite its flaws, did more to hinder Iraq's pursuit of weapons of mass destruction than any military action. A natural argument for peace activists—and one that a majority of Americans could endorse—is to support the United Nations as it seeks to restore a meaningful inspections regime.

The history of the UN inspections in Iraq attests to their effectiveness, as well as offering ample evidence why they were and still are necessary. The original regime was created by Security Council Resolution 687 in 1991. Iraq accepted its terms as part of the peace agreement that ended the war. The inspection system depended on two organizations, the already existing International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), established to monitor civilian nuclear power plants and prevent diversion to weapons production; and the newly created United Nations Special Committee (UNSCOM), intended to discover and destroy facilities involved in development and production of chemical and biological weapons. UNSCOM withdrew its teams from Iraq in 1998, as Hussein's regime continually hindered its work and as UNSCOM itself came under criticism for allowing its staff to engage in espionage. UNSCOM was superseded in December 1999 by the UN Monitoring, Verification, and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC, created under Resolution 1284), which until the current crisis had not had access to Iraq.

On a modest budget and in the face of the Iraqi government's consistent deception and efforts to undermine its work, the inspections regime achieved a great deal. With a team of 21 international arms control experts and supporting staff, UNSCOM conducted 250 inspections between 1991 and 1998. The IAEA conducted a further 500 inspections during roughly the same period. Iraq initially claimed that it was in compliance with the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and denied that it had conducted any nuclear activities beyond those already monitored by the IAEA. Inspections, however, revealed an extensive, secret effort oriented toward the production of nuclear weapons, including several undeclared projects to enrich uranium for use in weapons.

UNSCOM's work was equally effective in identifying illegal weapons programs. The commission found 80 undeclared SCUD missiles, 45 warheads adapted for biological or chemical use, and 30,000 chemical munitions. Iraq had initially denied the existence of any biological

weapons program, but UNSCOM inspectors confronted Baghdad with enough evidence that the government acknowledged several production facilities, where anthrax and botulinum toxin were developed, and declared 25 SCUD warheads and more than 150 aerial bombs prepared for use in biological attacks.

When the inspectors left in 1998, they had been unable to locate many weapons components for which they had evidence (from shipping invoices, cross-references in other Iraqi documents, and so forth). The missing items include missile warheads, rocket fuel, and some 17 tons of growth media for biological agents. Iraq failed to account for thousands of suspected chemical munitions and some 4,000 tons of precursor chemicals which the government insisted it had destroyed (but not under UNSCOM supervision, as required). These chemicals, if they still exist, could be turned into thousands more weapons. The current inspections must seek to clarify the situation.

Despite impressive mobilization over a relatively short time period, the peace movement was unable to influence a majority of the U.S. Congress to refrain from endorsing President Bush's war resolution. In the days leading up to the vote, it was nearly impossible to get through by telephone to the offices of New York's senators. Charles Schumer's line was constantly busy and calling Hillary Clinton's number yielded only this encouraging message: "Senator Clinton's voice mailbox is full. Good-bye." Yet a key argument, advanced by many peace activists and supported by broad segments of American public opinion, did apparently get through. Many of the Democratic representatives and senators who issued the Bush administration a blank check for war nevertheless offered various (non-binding) qualifications as they justified their votes. In effect they argued that the United States should not initiate war against Iraq without specific endorsement from the United Nations Security Council and support from U.S. allies. It may be that the blank check will prove more meaningful to the president than the qualifications, but here is where continued activity of opponents of the war can play a crucial role—by stressing the potentially disastrous consequences of a go-it-alone approach.

The long-term agenda of the peace movement, regardless of how the current Iraq situation is resolved, should be to emphasize the role of international institutions and law. The United Nations Security Council is not without its faults, dominated as it is by the world's major nuclear powers, four of which (France, Britain, Russia, and the United States) have oil interests at stake in Iraq. Yet it is precisely the other major powers that should be concerned about U.S.

pretensions to act independently of any international legal constraints. There is a growing recognition across the world of the value of law as a means of governing the international system. Evidence is found in the widespread support for such initiatives as the Kyoto Protocol within the environmental sphere, or the Treaty Banning Land Mines in the area of security, or the International Criminal Court in the realm of human rights. The United States constitutes a notable exception to this general trend of support for international law. In fact, the U.S. resistance to international law hints at a change in the role of law in the international system. In the past, as E.H. Carr has pointed out and most other observers have agreed, international law was established by the dominant powers to serve and perpetuate their interests.<sup>3</sup> Today much of the impetus for new initiatives in international law comes not from the United States, the most powerful country in the system, but from countries that are trying to rein in U.S. power, or at least get the United States to abide by the rules.

In the dark days of the Cold War, democratic opponents of the communist regimes in Eastern Europe and Russia, such as Vaclav Havel, used to argue that if people would live and act *as if* they were free, then they could create the parallel structures for an alternative to the regimes which sought to control them. In his essay, "The Power of the Powerless," Havel wrote that the work of the so-called dissidents was "based on the principle of legality: they operate publicly and openly, insisting not only that their activity is in line with the law, but that achieving respect for the law is one of their main aims."<sup>4</sup> As the peace movement seeks to limit the dangerous excesses of the Bush administration's unilateralism in places like Iraq, it should keep its eye on the bigger prize. The goal would be, in Havel's words, "achieving respect for the law," for international law in this case, on the part of the United States.

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<sup>3</sup> E.H. Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919-1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Harper and Row, 1946).

<sup>4</sup> Vaclav Havel, "The Power of the Powerless" (1978), reprinted in William M. Brinton and Alan Rinzler, eds., *Without Force or Lies: Voices from the Revolution of Central Europe in 1989-90* (San Francisco: Mercury House, 1990), especially pp. 96-97.