2005

Neoconservatism and Iraq

Ryan Patrick McHargue
The members of the Committee approve the Thesis of Ryan Patrick McHargue defended on June 2, 2005.

___________________________
Peter P. Garretson
Professor Directing Thesis

___________________________
James P. Jones
Committee Member

___________________________
Max Friedman
Committee Member

The Office of Graduate Studies has verified and approved the above named committee members.
This thesis is dedicated to my father, Rod McHargue, without whom I would have never developed such a keen interest in politics and policy.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to give my utmost thanks to Dr. Peter Garretson for being just as interested as I am in the subject matter of this thesis. All of my friends, who put up with my constant complaining about the impending due date and subject matter of my thesis, all deserve many thanks for helping me through the writing process. And, of course, I would never be here if it wasn’t for the constant nagging (encouragement?) of my parents, who invested almost as much time and patience into my education as I did.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. NEOCONSERVATISM: A BRIEF BACKGROUND</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Misconceptions</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A History and Brief Overview of Neoconservative Policies</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neoconservatism in the Bush Administration</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservatism and the War in Iraq</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. IRAQ IN A NEOCONSERVATIVE FRAMEWORK</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. SEARCHING FOR A PRE-9/11 INVASION POLICY</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992-1994</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995-1996</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997-1998</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999-2000</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001-Present</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFTERWARD</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABSTRACT

The goal of this work is to answer a specific set of questions that have arisen concerning neoconservatism and its relationship with the 2003 invasion of Iraq. This thesis will begin by first giving the reader a broad background concerning the neoconservative movement, and aid in proving the assumptions necessary for the argument to be made. After showing that neoconservatism is in fact the “order of the day” for the Bush Administration’s foreign policy staff, and proving that the administration has espoused modern neoconservative policies, the role of Iraq in a neoconservative framework will be focused upon. This includes identifying and expounding upon key tenets of a neoconservative ideological framework and where Iraq fits within it. Once Iraq’s place within this framework is determined, this work will examine the statements of specific neoconservatives within the Bush administration who have written extensively concerning Iraq during the period between the end of the 1991 Persian Gulf War and the 2003 invasion of Iraq. By examining their words, it will be determined whether or not they were advocates of the invasion in 2003 prior to the events of September 11, 2001, which served as a pretext and justification for the invasion itself. By understanding the role of Iraq in a neoconservative framework, it is hoped that people will be able to better predict the possible outcomes of the conflict. It is important to note that this thesis was drafted in the early part of 2005, prior to the position changes of many of the executive officers mentioned. For example, Paul Wolfowitz has recently been given the position of head of the World Bank, Douglas Feith has since resigned his post as Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, and Zalmay Khalilzad has been given the position of Ambassador to Iraq, replacing John Negroponte, who filled the position of the newly-created office of Director of National Intelligence.
INTRODUCTION

“The neoconservative knows that a present without past memory and tradition is self-illusory and finally self-destructive.”

- David Tracy

The goal of this thesis is to answer questions raised by the March 2003 invasion of Iraq by the United States, and how it fits within the framework of a neoconservative ideology. Those questions are:

1. **Amongst the three members of the “Axis of Evil,” why was Iraq chosen for invasion and regime change when it was arguably the weakest or the least dangerous of the three?**
2. **Where does Iraq fit within a neoconservative foreign policy framework?**
3. **Did the neoconservatives advocate the forced disarmament or toppling of the Hussein regime through military means prior to the events of September 11, 2001?**

Before embarking on such an endeavor, sufficient background must be given in order to place the analysis into context. This thesis will be organized in such a manner conducive to framing that context. The first chapter will provide background information necessary for understanding the arguments made in the final analysis, define terminology, and defend assumptions, all of which will serve in aiding in the nullification of a dismissal of the context or of the arguments presented.

The first chapter of this thesis will also seek to prove assumptions made in later arguments. The term “neoconservative” will be defined and described in some detail, with mention of many of the specific policies championed by neoconservatives. It will discuss some common misconceptions of the neoconservative movement, and identify key players, highlighting their importance in the history of the neoconservative movement. Also included will be a brief discussion of the intellectual roots of the neoconservative movement, stemming from the political philosophies of Leo Strauss, Leon Trotsky, and theorist Albert Wohlstetter. Further, it will prove the assumption that the Bush administration is in fact a neoconservative one, or espouses to a great extent

---

neoconservative foreign and military policy. This chapter will show that many members of the Bush administration in policymaking positions are neoconservatives or are advocates of a neoconservative ideology. Any attempt to discuss policy in the context of neoconservatism is particularly futile if it cannot be demonstrated that the Bush administration is populated by neoconservatives and advocates policies that are neoconservative in nature. This chapter will also serve to differentiate between different factions of the conservative movement, and demonstrate that support for unilateral war in Iraq is one generally spurred on by adherents to a neoconservative ideology, and not traditional, libertarian, or moderate conservatives, when divorced from the lock-step of party politics. Without being able to adequately demonstrate that the advocacy of unilateral war in Iraq can be defined as neoconservative in nature, and not simply conservative, any argument concerning neoconservatism would be moot.

Once these assumptions are substantiated, analysis can take place. The second chapter will answer the first two questions, as they fit neatly hand-in-glove. In broader terms, the question is simply “why Iraq?” In more specific terms, the questions concern the relevance of Iraq within the framework of a neoconservative foreign policy, and, of the several nations singled out as rogue regimes and for membership in the “axis of evil,” why Iraq was chosen in lieu of North Korea or Iran.

The third and final chapter of this thesis seeks to dissect and analyze the public policy advocacy of the administration’s neoconservative policymakers between the end of the first Gulf War in 1991 and the beginning of the Iraq invasion in March 2003. This chapter will focus on the words of four specific men who were a part of the “original” group of neoconservatives, either through the University of Chicago or as a staffer for Democratic Senator “Scoop” Jackson: Paul Wolfowitz, Douglas Feith, Richard Perle, and Zalmay Khalilzad. These four men were chosen because of their posts in policymaking positions during and after the September 11 attacks and the 2003 Iraq War, and because of the extensive nature of their pre-war lobbying.

**Neoconservatism in Their Words**

With little doubt, the concepts of neoconservatism have come to the forefront of political debate in recent years. With the appointments of Donald Rumsfeld and Paul
Wolfowitz as Secretary and Undersecretary of Defense, respectively, a proponent of neoconservative military policy and one of the main architects of a neoconservative foreign policy, as well as the appointments of Douglas Feith, Zalmay Khalilzad, and the election of Dick Cheney into the Vice President’s office, neoconservative policy has become US policy.

But what is neoconservatism? Many people have much to say on the tenets of the movement, from both within and without, and much of it is conflicting. As a movement, you’re less likely to see neoconservatives writing books, and more likely to see them writing articles in a number of publications. Says neoconservative writer Mark Gerson:

What about books? Yes, the neoconservatives have written books, but as the first serious analyst of neoconservatism, Peter Steinfels, noted, “the geography of the intellectuals’ world is a geography of journals.” Irving Kristol, for instance, has never written a full-length book – his four books are collections of essays. And almost always, neoconservatives’ books are based on essays they have previously published in their magazines.\(^2\)

Indeed, Kristol was the founder or editor of many magazines, including the CIA-funded *Encounter, Commentary, The Public Interest*, and *The Reporter*, all influential magazines. Through these publications, which often have very low circulations, they define their views and attempt to peddle their influence. Indeed, *The Weekly Standard*, published by Kristol’s son, William, is one of the leading publications in the Beltway, and is hand-delivered to every member of Congress and every committee staff member on Capitol Hill, and has a total circulation of 65,000.

But neoconservatism is not so cut and dry. As columnist David Brooks writes: “If you ever read a sentence that starts with ‘Neocons believe,’ there is a 99.44% chance everything else in that sentence will be untrue.” Says James Q. Wilson of the foundation of neoconservatism:

There is no such thing as a neoconservative manifesto, credo, religion, flag, anthem, or secret handshake. As a tendency, it is shot through with inner tensions. The magazines to which I contribute are edited and written by people who in most cases are aware of these tensions and usually find easy answers hard to come by. This often leads to the statement that neoconservatives never favor anything. That’s untrue. But they are rarely in favor of things that can be stated simply. Neoconservatism is a mood,

not an ideology.\(^3\)

Indeed, to say a specific thought or specific belief is a “neoconservative” one can be relatively hard to prove. Neoconservatives in general do not necessarily espouse a specific policy, but instead a specific political philosophy, one that is almost militantly pro-American. Says Irving Kristol: “Patriotism is a natural and healthy sentiment and should be encouraged by both private and public institutions. Precisely because we are a nation of immigrants, this is a powerful American sentiment.”\(^4\)

The term “neoconservative” is pejorative in origin. According to political sociologist Seymour Martin Lipset:

Neoconservatism, both as an ideological term and as political grouping, is one of the most misunderstood concepts in the politics lexicon. The reason is simple. The word has never referred to a set of doctrines to which a given group of adherents subscribed. Rather, it was invented as an invidious label to undermine political opponents, most of whom have been unhappy with being so described.\(^5\)

Irving Kristol credits Michael Harrington with creating the term,\(^6\) originally used to characterize the Shachtmanite Trotskyites who voted for Nixon in 1972 in support of the Vietnam War.\(^7\) Kristol doesn’t seem to harbor any ill will towards the term, and in fact embraces it, calling himself a “true, self-confessed – perhaps the only – ‘neoconservative.’”\(^8\)

In 1979, Kristol attempted to define what neoconservatism means, listing specific features as he saw them:

Neoconservatism is a current of thought emerging out of the academic-intellectual world and provoked by disillusionment with contemporary liberalism. Its relation to the business community is loose and uneasy, though not necessarily unfriendly.\(^9\)

\(^9\) *Ibid*, 75-76.
Kristol draws a distinctive disconnect from modern conservatism, which he feels draws its ethos and philosophy from the business world. This is echoed by Wilson:

> I don’t feel very comfortable before business audiences because I know that in many ways they are part of the problem. Given a large government they will attempt to seize control of some of its parts to use for their own advantage.\(^{10}\)

Kristol also attempts to disconnect the philosophy of neoconservatism from its former liberal roots:

> Unlike previous such currents of thought, neoconservatism is antiromantic in substance and temperament. Indeed, it regards political romanticism – and its twin, political utopianism – of any kind as one of the plagues of our age.\(^{11}\)

This seems strange, however, as a common criticism of the current incarnation of neoconservative policy is that it seems to be very “utopian” in nature, with the spread of freedom and democracy one of its prime tenets. Perhaps Kristol is calling into question instead a potential utopian “world peace” or “world government” that some would believe is the inevitable evolution of world political systems. Says Kristol later in his career: “World government is a terrible idea since it can lead to world tyranny. International institutions that point to an ultimate world government should be regarded with the deepest suspicion.”\(^{12}\)

Kristol speaks of the philosophical origins of a neoconservative ideology, emphasizing the importance of Strauss:

> The philosophical roots of modern neoconservatism are to be found mainly in classical political philosophy. Here the teaching and writing of Leo Strauss are of importance, though many neoconservatives find themselves somewhat too wary of modernity.\(^{13}\)

Strauss, argues critic Shadia Drury, is himself wary of modernity, seeing it as the soul of American society. “Deprive her of it,” she writes, “and you might cut out her soul, and destroy her very being.” America’s “love affair with modernity,” according to Strauss, is

---

\(^{10}\) Wilson, 510.

\(^{11}\) Ibid, 76


bound to end in disaster.\textsuperscript{14}

Kristol tackles capitalism in the framework of neoconservatism, as well, stating that:

The attitude of neoconservatives to bourgeois society and the bourgeois ethos is one of detached attachment. Neoconservatives do not think that liberal-democratic capitalism is the best of all imaginable worlds – only the best, under the circumstances, of all possible worlds.\textsuperscript{15}

In his 1978 book \textit{Two Cheers for Capitalism}, Kristol acknowledges that capitalism can have anti-conservative effects, as the drive for money can undermine the stability of families and neighborhoods. This is why capitalism garners only two cheers, instead of the three that is customary for unconditional approval. He expounds further on the economics of neoconservatism:

Neoconservatism is inclined to the belief that a predominantly market economy is a necessary if not sufficient precondition for a liberal society. It also sees a market economy as favorable to economic growth. Neoconservatives believe in the importance of economic growth because they see economic growth as indispensable for social and political stability.\textsuperscript{16}

Kristol further takes on liberalism, claiming its priorities are inverted, that the attention liberalism pays to the market and capitalism and the lack of attention it pays to moral virtue is incorrect:

Neoconservatives are not libertarian in any sense. A conservative welfare state is perfectly consistent with the neoconservative perspective. Neoconservatives believe that it is natural for people to want their preferences to be elevated. The current version of liberalism, which prescribes massive government intervention in the marketplace but an absolute laissez-faire attitude towards manners and morals, strikes neoconservatives as representing a bizarre inversion of priorities.\textsuperscript{17}

As Kristol shows, he is not entirely opposed to a welfare state of some kind, which is often considered anathema to the conservative political philosophy of self-reliance and personal responsibility. But he is seemingly opposed to the government not playing an

\textsuperscript{14} Drury, Shadia, \textit{Leo Strauss and the Politics of the American Right} (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1997), 14.
\textsuperscript{15} Kristol, Irving, ‘‘Confessions of a True, Self-Confessed – Perhaps the Only – ‘‘Neoconservative’’’’ in \textit{Reflections of a Neoconservative}, 76.
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{17} Ibid, 77.
active role in regulating the morality of society. In his essay “Pornography, Obscenity, and the Case for Censorship,” Kristol shows his outward disgust for what he sees as the moral decay of society:

They wanted a world in which Desire under the Elms could be produced, or Ulysses published, without interference from philistine busybodies holding public office. They have got that, of course; but they have also got a world in which homosexual rape takes place on the stage, in which the public flocks during lunch hours to witness varieties of professional fornication, in which Times Square has become little more than a hideous market for the sale and distribution of printed filth that panders to all known sexual perversions.18

This is another reason Kristol claims that neoconservatives have left a liberalism he feels has lost track of its moral bearings. This has bearing on the neoconservative support of the traditional family unit and religion as pillars of society:

Neoconservatives look upon family and religion as indispensable pillars of a decent society. Indeed, they have a special fondness for all of those intermediate institutions of a liberal society which reconcile the need for community with the desire for liberty.19

As Kristol later states, neoconservatives have a seeming alliance with religious conservatives thanks to their close agreement on the decline of the nation’s moral fiber:

The steady decline in our democratic culture, sinking to new levels of vulgarity, does unite neocons with traditional conservatives—though not with those libertarian conservatives who are conservative in economics but unmindful of the culture. The upshot is a quite unexpected alliance between neocons, who include a fair proportion of secular intellectuals, and religious traditionalists.20

This is a defining characteristic of neoconservatism, and one of the biggest reasons the former leftists of the movement migrated right.

But the biggest influence neoconservatism has on policy today is by far its foreign policy preferences. Says neoconservative scholar Max Boot: “It is not really domestic policy that defines neoconservatism. This was a movement founded on foreign policy, and it is still here that neoconservatism carries the greatest meaning, even if its original

raison d'être - opposition to communism - has disappeared.”

Indeed, in a post cold-war world, neoconservative foreign policy has taken its place front and center on the world stage, following a long hiatus during the moderate and muddled Clinton years.

So, of course, the question looms: what exactly defines a neoconservative foreign policy? Author Jeffrey Record believes it’s based primarily on US military superiority and power:

The neoconservatives are committed to perpetuating American military primacy in the world via, if necessary, unilateral preventive military action against rising potential enemies, especially rogue states seeking to acquire nuclear weapons, and they believe that military action should be directed toward removing potentially threatening regimes.

In the summer of 1996, William Kristol and neoconservative scholar Robert Kagan wrote a piece in *Foreign Affairs* entitled “Toward a Neo-Reaganite Foreign Policy.” It was, in a sense, a neoconservative call-to-arms, outlining the aims and goals of a neoconservative foreign policy, and deriding the Clinton-era policies and what they call the “realism of Henry Kissinger” that conservatives seemed to have adopted at the time:

In Foreign policy, conservatives are adrift. They disdain the Wilsonian multilateralism of the Clinton administration; they are tempted by, but so far have resisted, the neoisolationism of Patrick Buchanan; for now, they lean uncertainly on some version of the conservative "realism" of Henry Kissinger and his disciples.

Indeed, Max Boot, six years later, echoes the same words of Bill Kristol and Kagan, calling attention to the difference between a neoconservative and conservative foreign policy:

One group of conservatives believes that we should use armed force only to defend our vital national interests, narrowly defined… The idea of bringing democracy to the Middle East they denounce as a mad, hubristic dream likely to backfire with tragic consequences. This view, which goes under the somewhat self-congratulatory moniker of "realism," is championed by foreign-policy mandarins like Henry Kissinger, Brent Scowcroft and James Baker III.

---

24 Boot, Max, “What the Heck is a Neocon?”
Boot continues, claiming that neoconservatives, including the likes of Dick Cheney and Paul Wolfowitz, feel that “we need to promote our values, for the simple reason that liberal democracies rarely fight one another, sponsor terrorism, or use weapons of mass destruction.”

Kristol and Kagan define it in broader terms, claiming the overall role of America should be one of “benevolent global hegemony:”

Having defeated the "evil empire," the United States enjoys strategic and ideological predominance. The first objective of U.S. foreign policy should be to preserve and enhance that predominance by strengthening America's security, supporting its friends, advancing its interests, and standing up for its principles around the world.

These words are indeed backed up by the words of many neoconservatives, including Wolfowitz, Cheney, Libby, and Khalilzad, all of whom had a hand in drafting the first post-Cold War neoconservative foreign policy manifesto, the Defense Planning Guidance document of 1992.

As has been seen, neoconservatism isn’t as “cut-and-dry” as many would think. Throughout the Cold War, it was an underlying political philosophy grounded mainly in the strength of American values in contrast with the values of the “evil empire,” the Soviet Union. With the fall of the Soviet Union came an unprecedented moment in world history – the rise of a single global superpower, unrivaled in military, economic, and moral strength.

Then and Now

Neoconservatism as a political philosophy has evolved greatly since the end of the Cold War. Prior to the fall of the Soviet Union, it was an overriding political philosophy with a foreign policy based on an American morality and a fierce anti-communism. There was not a specific policy espoused by neoconservatives, just a general attitude. Now, however, to call someone a neoconservative is a very specific label, espousing very specific principles.

In this sense, it is easiest to see the neoconservatives as two groups instead of one.

---

25 Ibid.
The first group, comprised of such intellectuals as Norman Podhoretz, Irving Kristol, Jeanne Kirkpatrick, and Michael Novak, became neoconservatives when they supported Richard Nixon in the 1972 presidential election, mostly in support for the Vietnam War stemming from their Shachtmanite Trotskyist roots. The second group, including such prominent policymakers as Paul Wolfowitz, Douglas Feith, Richard Perle, and Eliot Abrams, migrated to the conservative side when they abandoned Carter in 1980, supporting a Reagan presidency instead.

This thesis will focus almost exclusively on the second generation, as it is they who have personally changed the tide of US foreign policy to suit their belief structure and ideological principles.

**The Importance of Neoconservatism**

Thanks to the election of George W. Bush in 2000, subsequent reelection in 2004, and his appointment of many neoconservatives to powerful policy-making positions, neoconservatism has been propelled to the forefront of American political debate. This is precisely why it is important – it is the most powerful influence in deciding American foreign policy today. Understanding neoconservatism and the role it has played in the war in Iraq and in relations towards other countries in the region and the rest of the world is integral in understanding the course on which American foreign policy is taking us today.

It is because of this that the topic was chosen for this thesis – while many Americans may not care about politics or foreign policy, a statement reinforced by intense US voter apathy, politics most certainly cares about them. The decisions made by many in the American bureaucracy affects every person today and tomorrow, with the impacts of decisions causing ripples far in the future. Neoconservatism, as the dominant influence in foreign policy today, affects the lives of many people outside of the US and, as a direct result, the lives of Americans, as well.
CHAPTER 1

NEOCONSERVATISM: A BRIEF BACKGROUND

"A neoconservative is a liberal who's been mugged by reality."27
- Irving Kristol

Before embarking on a discussion of neoconservative foreign policy and its relevance concerning the 2003 Iraq War, it is necessary to define it in the sense it is used today and, perhaps most importantly, define and explore what it is not. The term “neoconservative” is a label often used to identify a large number of senior members of the administration of the 43rd President of the United States, George W. Bush. Unfortunately, it is also a label that is used incorrectly or disingenuously, as many people use it as an identifier of a group of people, without regard or knowledge of what the term implies.

Neoconservatism, despite its Latin prefix, is not new. For a long time it was relegated to only a small group of legislators, executives, intellectuals, and policymakers. What concerns the focus of this thesis is their current incarnation – that is, the current aims and goals of neoconservative military and foreign policy. It should be noted that there are three distinct parts of neoconservatism – military policy, foreign policy, and a socially conservative domestic policy. It is necessary to distinguish between these three aspects to clarify the discussion. But before outlining exactly what neoconservatism is, it is important to discuss common conceptions surrounding the movement and its adherents and the validity of some common criticisms. It is not the intention of this thesis to determine whether these criticisms are valid or not, but instead to simply discuss these criticisms in context.

Common Misconceptions

The Neoconservative-Likud Conspiracy

Perhaps the most vehement allegation against the neoconservative movement is

the claim that it is an ideology based solely on one thing, and that is the support of the state of Israel, even if at the expense of the security of the United States, pointing to the fact that a large number of prominent neoconservatives, such as William Kristol, Irving Kristol, Charles Krauthammer, Richard Perle, Paul Wolfowitz, Norman Podhoretz, and John Podhoretz are all Jewish. This is mentioned often by conservative commentators such as Rush Limbaugh, who claim the term “neoconservative” was simply another way to attack influential Jews, and that the term is inherently anti-Semitic. Max Boot, a neoconservative columnist, calls it a “malicious slur.”

When Buchananites toss around "neoconservative," it sometimes sounds as if what they really mean is "Jewish conservative." This is a malicious slur on two levels. First, many of the leading neocons aren't Jewish; Jeanne Kirkpatrick, Bill Bennett, Father John Neuhaus and Michael Novak aren't exactly menorah lighters. Second, support for Israel is hardly confined to Jews; its strongest constituency in America happens to be among evangelical Christians.

The term “neoconservative,” in its most modern context, is in fact derived from the migration of a group of intellectuals from the left to the right throughout the 1960s and 70s, culminating in the support of Ronald Reagan for the 1980 presidential election. These men were former “Scoop Jackson Democrats,” and many were a part of the former Senator’s staff. Scoop Jackson was known for his hawkish stance against the Soviet Union within a traditionally dovish Democratic Party. Because of the influx of these men into the conservative Republican Party, they became known as the “new” conservatives, and later the “neoconservatives.”

It is true, however, that a large part of the neoconservative movement includes intense military and financial support of Israel. The men most often connected with the “Israeli-Neoconservative conspiracy” are Richard Perle and his protégé Douglas Feith, both Pentagon officials. Both men served on the board of the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs, a think-tank that advocates military and strategic ties between Israel and the United States. In 1970, an FBI wiretap recorded Perle discussing classified information with an Israeli embassy official, although no investigation occurred. In 1983,

29 Boot, “What the Heck is a Neocon?”
Perle came under fire for receiving payments from an Israeli weapons company while working for the Reagan administration. He has had a reputation in the past for being a conduit between Capitol Hill and Israel and Israeli interests. In 1996, both men helped prepare a policy paper for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu advocating the removal of Saddam Hussein, stating that “Israel can shape its strategic environment… by weakening, containing, and even rolling back Syria. This effort can focus on removing Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq — an important Israeli strategic objective in its own right — as a means of foiling Syria’s regional ambitions.” It further states that “land for peace” will not secure “peace now,” and that the Israeli claims to the West Bank and Gaza Strip are “legitimate and noble.” In 1997, Feith wrote a piece advocating the repudiation of the Oslo Accords, reoccupying the lands ceded to the Palestinian Authority, the forced disarmament of the Palestinian Authority police forces, and even the conquering of Iraq, Syria, and Iran in concert with the United States. Feith argued that Israel should “deflate expectations of imminent peace,” and that Netanyahu should make good on his earlier promises of “peace through strength.”

In October of 2003, on the heels of an Israeli attack on an alleged Palestinian terrorist training camp in Syria, Perle commended the attack as “long overdue,” and went so far as to claim that the world should not rule out American military action against the Arab state. Feith has been even more outspoken, claiming an even-handed approach in the Israeli-Palestinian debate is fallacious at best, and that supporting such an approach leads only to the insecurity of Israelis and the intransigence of Arabs. He also claims a “land-for-peace” program is not the right route to solving the Israel-Palestine clash, stating that because of the deep roots of the crisis and that the land Israel claimed in the aftermath of the conflict is rightfully Israel’s, most of the blame for the conflict lies

31 Findley, Paul, They Dare to Speak Out (Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 1989), 160.
33 Ibid.
36 Zogby.
squarely on the shoulders of the Palestinians. He feels that despite a natural assumption that both sides must bare some burden of blame, history is “not always neat and symmetrical.”

Some neoconservative commentators, such as Max Boot, attempt to quash the allegation that neoconservatives wanted to invade Iraq because they were “doing Israel's bidding.” Boot doesn’t try to dispel a link with the Israeli conservative Likud Party, but instead calls it a link based on ideology, not ethnic identity. He goes on to clearly state the neoconservatives have just as many links with the Likud Party as they do with the British Tories and other conservative parties around the world, just as the Democratic Party has with the Israeli and British Labor Parties, another relationship based on ideology, not ethnic background. The biggest reason for their support of Israel is based not on the Jewish background of neoconservative heavyweights, but instead on the fact that Israel is a democratic nation surrounded by a large number of monarchies and dictatorships in the Middle East, all of which wish, in some capacity, its destruction.

**An American Empire**

The validity of this common criticism, often leveled by such well-known traditional conservative figures as Paul Craig Roberts and Pat Buchanan, is suspect, and often depends on a fundamental disagreement in the definition of “empire.” To most, the word conjures up images of military expansionism and the acquisition of new territory. To others, it paints a picture of American hegemony across the globe.

One of the fundamental goals of neoconservative policy is to maintain American military hegemony throughout the entire world; however, when looking through the literature, there is little to support the concept of military expansionism as a tenet of US foreign policy. Many equate the Iraq War with military expansionism, but again, with the Iraqi elections on January 30, 2005, this argument seems to hold little water. There are tentative plans to construct 14 short-term combat bases for the extended occupation of Iraq, but there are no specific plans to construct permanent US bases in Iraq without the

---

consent of the new democratic government.⁴¹

What cannot be disputed, however, is the concept of the imposition of an American democratic ideal onto other nations. This is, in fact, a key tenet of neoconservatism - through the imposition of democratic governments in states, the security of the United States will be promoted, as in the scope of history democratic societies are traditionally much more pacifistic in nature. Whether this constitutes the creation of an American empire will most likely be subject to intense debate for years to come.

A History and Brief Overview of Neoconservative Policies

Irving Kristol claims that neoconservatism is simply an evolution, based on the changing landscape of world affairs, an evolution that has made the United States unparalleled in its military and economic might. He boils neoconservatism down thusly: “…it is a fact that if you have the kind of power we now have, either you will find opportunities to use it, or the world will discover them for you.”⁴² He further states that a neoconservative is simply a “liberal mugged by reality,”⁴³ a person who uses a common sense approach to world affairs instead of an emotional one.

Neoconservative policy is easily divided into three separate divisions: domestic, military, and foreign policy. By dividing it into these divisions, it is easier to give a clearer, more concise policy overview.

**Domestic Policy**

When looking at neoconservatism, it is often hard to understand why such a “revolution” in foreign and military affairs found its place amongst the Republican elite. Neoconservative intellectual Irving Kristol claims the ideas of neoconservatism stem originally from “disillusioned liberal intellectuals in the 1970s,” but then states that a common cause exists between neoconservatives and traditional conservatives in the fear

---

that American democratic society has degraded into one of loose moral conviction. According to Kristol, this has given neoconservatives in the Republican Party a large amount of support from a large religious base, giving the neoconservatives a “certain influence.” Admittedly, there is less of an agreement between the issues with neoconservatives and libertarian conservatives.\textsuperscript{44} However, thanks to this powerful alliance between religious traditionalists and neoconservatives, and the shared view between them of the moral degradation of society coupled with an affinity for tax cuts and supply-side economics, neoconservatives are much more at home with the modern Republican Party, as opposed to the Democratic, Libertarian, or other political parties.

**Foreign Policy**

Current neoconservative foreign policy was born out of the end of the Cold War and fall of the Berlin Wall, which saw the destruction of the Soviet Union. With the fall of the Iron Curtain came the creation of the US as the world’s sole superpower, and it is upon this status that neoconservative foreign policy centers, no longer focusing on global conflict, such as the Cold War, and focusing anew on various regional conflicts. Neoconservative foreign policy also concentrates on strengthening ties to democratic nations, and spreading democracy to nations under the auspice of dictators, tyrants, and kings in an effort to forge new and better alliances.

This democratization and the creation of alliances with established democratic nations is also a key point in a neoconservative policy, particularly in a post 9/11 world. Says Max Boot:

\begin{quote}
[Neoconservatives] suggest that we need to promote our values, for the simple reason that liberal democracies rarely fight one another, sponsor terrorism, or use weapons of mass destruction. If we are to avoid another 9/11, they argue, we need to liberalize the Middle East – a massive undertaking, to be sure, but better than the unspeakable alternative. And if this requires occupying Iraq for an extended period, so be it.\textsuperscript{45}
\end{quote}

Instilling democracy and democratic institutions will have a sort of domino effect, spreading democracy to neighboring regions. This would have the effect where people would choose against hostility and aggression against outside nations more often than a

\textsuperscript{44} Kristol, Irving, “The Neoconservative Persuasion,” in *The Neocon Reader*, 35.

\textsuperscript{45} Boot, “What the Heck is a Neocon?”
dictator or tyrant would. As Boot says, this would have a pacifying effect, as democratic nations generally choose against hostility and aggression against outside nations. Democracy is seen by neoconservatives as being almost uniquely American, and to export democracy would be the first step in the export of American values, another key tenet of a neoconservative foreign policy.46

The overriding concern of neoconservative foreign policy is to maintain the US status of sole-superpower by any means deemed vital or necessary, extending this “advantageous position as far into the future as possible.”47 With the fall of the USSR, the United State’s primary goal should be to use its influence to contain any nation deemed hostile to US interests, and prevent them from dominating a region whose resources could lead a country onto a course to becoming a regional or global power.48 In order to keep America first, a very specific military policy was enumerated, with specific goals in mind.

Military Policy

There are very specific aspects of military policy that are central to neoconservatism, the main thrust of which is to fund and create a super-modern military force capable of instant massive deployment to various trouble-areas, as well as the ability to successfully fight simultaneous large-scale wars. This requires a large amount of spending, and neoconservatives advocate a military budget equivalent to approximately 3.8 percent of the nation’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP), so that as the economy expands and improves, the military budget increases proportionately.49 This would then easily allow the funding required to modernize the military and invest in future technologies. There is also a clearly-defined nuclear policy, born out of the work of strategist Albert Wohlstetter, focusing not just on nonproliferation abroad but also on the development of a tactical nuclear arsenal at home, believing that the importance of maintaining a nuclear arsenal is not a nation’s first-strike capabilities, but its ability to

49 Donnelly, Rebuilding America’s Defenses, 70.
respond after falling victim to a first-strike.\textsuperscript{50}

**Intellectual Foundations**

The intellectual roots of neoconservatism are often a point of contentious debate. The most common claim is that the philosophical origins of neoconservatism lie in the philosophies of the right-wing Leo Strauss and the left-wing Leon Trotsky, and much of its policy implications stem from the work of theorist Albert Wohlstetter.

Leo Strauss left Germany in 1938, fleeing from the Nazis and landing in Chicago, where he taught at the University of Chicago. While there, he wrote fifteen books on several topics, most commonly that of political philosophy, where he sought to understand the relationship between how different philosophers in history viewed themselves and their own philosophies, and how they presented those philosophies to the public. He reasoned that writers would often use their exoteric arguments as a method to convey esoteric thoughts.\textsuperscript{51} In other words, there were two forms of truth: the *esoteric* truths were the essential truths, integral to the understanding of political realities. This form of truth is to be kept in close intellectual circles, known only by those privileged or worthy enough to know the real truth. The other form is the *exoteric*, which is the truth the elite would disseminate to the masses and general population. This was necessary, he claimed, because the masses were unable to handle or understand the real truth.\textsuperscript{52}

Strauss was a strong proponent of Plato’s “noble lie,” The noble lie is one that is justifiable on the grounds that it is utilitarian in nature, or useful in some respect to the establishment. It is also potentially justifiable because, while not being the exact truth, it contains concealed in it a hidden moral truth.\textsuperscript{53} Philosopher Freidrich Nietzsche felt that the full disclosure of truth was harmful, and that the devotion of Western civilization to the truth is an attribute that led to its demise.\textsuperscript{54} Nietzsche, Strauss writes, “restored the

---


\textsuperscript{54} *Ibid*, 72.
Platonic notion of the noble delusion.” In this context, Strauss has been called an “esoteric Nietzschean.”

The connection between Straussian philosophy and neoconservatives is often “played up” by academics, journalists, and others. The connection does not lie, as is often erroneously stated, in the most visible component of neoconservatism – its foreign policy. Indeed, Paul Wolfowitz says of this common assertion:

It's a product of fevered minds who seem incapable of understanding that September 11th changed a lot of things and changed the way we need to approach the world. Since they refused to confront that, they looked for some kind of conspiracy theory to explain it… The idea that this has anything to do with U.S. foreign policy is just laughable.

The connection lies instead in the underlying means of political power and manipulation. As journalist Mary Wakefield, an outspoken critic of the 2003 Iraq War, puts it:

I am prepared to consider the possibility that Blair had altruistic motives [for lying]. Perhaps, like Paul Wolfowitz and other neo-conservatives, he is a disciple of the political philosopher Leo Strauss. Strauss was a champion of the "noble lie" - the idea that it is practically a duty to lie to the masses because only a small elite is intellectually fit to know the truth. Politicians must conceal their views, said Strauss, for two reasons: to spare the people's feelings and to protect the elite from possible reprisals. It's a version of the Moonie philosophy of truth: falsehood is OK as long as it is used to convert unbelievers to the Unification Church.

Concealing the pure truth as the means to a justifiable end, a notion very Straussian in origin, has very often been applied to the method used to garner support for the 2003 Iraq War. Many critics believe that the intelligence used to sell the war to the American and British public were either knowingly erroneous or decontextualized to justify a means to war.

Wolfowitz in fact credits Albert Wohlstetter with having the most influence in his policy concepts, dismissing a supposed connection between Strauss and Wohlstetter:

---

57 Wolfowitz, Paul, interview with Sam Tanenhaus of *Vanity Fair*, May 9, 2003.
59 See Dilip Hiro’s book *Secrets and Lies* (New York: Nation Books, 2004) for a chronicle of the accused intelligence manipulation by the Bush administration. W. Patrick Lang, in his article *Drinking the Kool-Aid*, which appeared in the journal *Middle East Policy* 11, no. 2 (2004), also does an excellent job of providing a summary of the alleged manipulation.
Wohlstetter is a much more relevant figure and it's interesting too, by the way, that the same fellow who, or one of the same fellows who discovered the Straussian Conspiracy kind of throws Wohlstetter in as a Straussian when Wohlstetter was actually philosophically a student of Quine. If there was anything anathema to Leo Strauss it was analytical philosophy.60

Albert Wohlstetter taught at the University of Chicago at the same time as Leo Strauss, but was much more inclined to discuss policy, rather than political philosophy. Wohlstetter, according to Wolfowitz, “almost painfully resisted being labeled even as to political party.”61 Wohlstetter was one who championed the marriage of technology and conventional weaponry, seeing the importance of precision military weapons.62

Wohlstetter was, more than anything, a nuclear strategic theorist, and wrote a series of pieces for the RAND Corporation concerning actions and guidelines that must be implemented by nuclear powers in order to avoid undue risks.63 Central to these requirements was that any nuclear force should be able to respond in kind after falling victim to a nuclear first strike.64 He is known by many to be one of the greatest strategic defensive thinkers in the 20th century, and provided many administrations guidance with strategic defense planning throughout the Cold War. Wohlstetter was one of few policy planners who did not agree with the generally accepted concept of “Mutually Assured Destruction,” where the security of a nation is proportionally related to the number of megatons in its nuclear arsenal, and instead argued for the creation of a super-flexible military force capable of defusing potential conflicts with either surgical military strikes (both conventional and tactically nuclear) or the threat of the deployment of such strikes.65 An emphasis on the development of a tactical nuclear arsenal (for example, nuclear “bunker-busting” bombs) in neoconservative military policy and priorities can be traced back to the theories and strategy of Wohlstetter. In the 1950s, Wohlstetter pioneered the “second strike” strategy, where he argued that it doesn’t matter how many nuclear arms you have for a first strike, but how much you would have readily deployable

60 Wolfowitz, Tanenhaus interview.
61 Ibid.
62 Ibid.
63 See Wohlstetter, "The Delicate Balance of Terror"; also, Wohlstetter, "Nuclear Sharing: NATO and the N+1 Country."
64 Jones, Gregory, “From Testing to Deploying Nuclear Forces,” RAND Corporation, 2000. This article provides an excellent summary of Wohlstetter’s work on nuclear strategy.
65 Swidey.
after being struck first.

Interestingly, the members of the “new right” have roots in the far-left Trotskyite movement, as well. When socialist critic Michael Harrington first used the term “neoconservative” to identify those on the left who had begun drifting to the right to distance themselves from, as Irving Kristol puts it, “a liberalism that has lost its moral and political bearings,” few could have foreseen the influence their ideas would have so far in the future.

The most well-known neoconservative, and one often credited with being the progenitor of the movement, Irving Kristol, has written about his drift rightward from his leftist political leanings as an activist college student at the City College of New York. “I was graduated from City College in the spring of 1940,” he writes, “and the honor I most prized was the fact that I was a member on good standing of the Young People’s Socialist League.” Kristol later supported Max Shachtman’s ideology of anti-Soviet socialism. Shachtman held that the rise of the Soviet Union as a powerful nation represented the rise of “bureaucratic collectivism,” a new form of ruling class Marx never foresaw in his theories. Originally rejecting the idea, Shachtman came finally to believe that Trotsky’s tenet of unconditional support for the Soviet Union was flawed. The idea that the Soviet Union would eliminate Trotskyists wherever Soviet influence expanded caused Shachtman to officially split with the Trotskyist movement. He and his followers felt that Stalinism was in fact simply fascism in communist’s clothing, which led him and his followers to support the Vietnam War, based on an ideology of militant anti-communism.

In 1972, Max Shachtman’s fiercely ant-Soviet socialist followers openly declared their disdain for the Democratic Party’s presidential nominee, George McGovern, and instead supported a Nixon Presidency. Harrington felt the need to name the “socialists for Nixon” phenomenon, thus creating the term “neoconservative.” They were driven further and further right by what they viewed as the left’s increasing isolationism (which they likened to the isolationism of the late 1930s), and anti-Americanism, where

---

members of the left increasingly supported, even if passively, totalitarian, pro-Soviet third-world regimes.  

Max Shachtman’s disciples drifted further and further right, driven mostly by their fervent anti-Soviet and anti-communist beliefs. In 1980, many split again with the Democratic Party and supported Ronald Reagan for the presidency because of his hawkish stance against the Soviet Union and his seemingly militant anti-communism. Many were former members of Democratic Senator Scoop Jackson’s staff in the late 1970s. Jackson made a name for himself by often breaking with the increasingly dovish Democratic Party, siding with the hawkish Republicans in matters concerning the Soviet Union. This includes many current policy officials, including Richard Perle (who still calls himself a Democrat and liberal), Paul Wolfowitz, Douglas Feith, and Elliot Abrams.

No discussion on the foundations of neoconservatism is complete without at least a cursory mention of Irving Kristol, considered by many to be the “godfather of all these neocons.” Kristol was, as discussed earlier, a former member of the Trotskyite Fourth International, and later a Shachtmanite that moved further and further right, disillusioned with a liberal movement that had lost its “moral and political bearings.”

In 1983, Kristol compiled Reflections of a Neoconservative, a series of essays in which he remembers his youth as a young Totskyist and discusses the Cold War tenets of a neoconservative policy, both foreign and domestic, much of which survive in the post-Cold War world. In it, he readily denounces the State Department, which he claims acts “as if diplomacy were no longer the handmaiden of foreign policy but its master.” The “quicksand” of treaties the State Department must swim through in conducting diplomacy, he feels, are prohibitive to the effectiveness of the agency. Private, bilateral agreements are preferable, and when these agreements don’t work out, a country as large and powerful as the US can “almost always seek other options.” He further attacks an “incoherent foreign policy,” issuing a rallying cry for more clarity in pushing for the advancement of American values. “We are a strong nation,” he writes, “and they will

---

74 Ibid, 230.
respect our strength, as well as our loyalty to our own political and social ideals, when we behave in a self-respecting way.”

He calls the NATO alliance one that is not mutually beneficial between the US and its member states, calling on the individual Western European states to take the “painful steps necessary” to build up enough military might to counter the Soviet conventional military threat. Throughout, he consistently shows himself to be a proponent of a proactive instead of reactive policy against the Soviet Union – a regime, he claims, that is “armor-plated, to be sure, but with a brittleness that cannot withstand too many shocks.”

Kristol acknowledges the influence both Trotsky and Strauss had on the evolution of a neoconservative ideology. Strauss, he claims, was “contemptuous of the modern demagogic idolatry of the common man.” According to a leading critic of Strauss, Shadia Drury, Kristol is “just as wary of modernity as Strauss is,” and “just as nostalgic for the premodern world as was Strauss.” Kristol’s title as the “godfather of neoconservatism,” it would seem, is well-deserved, bringing together into one personality and vision both his roots as a Shachtmanite Trotskyist and an ardent Straussian.

**A Brief History of Neoconservative Foreign Policy, 1992 - Present**

The first written incarnation of a modern neoconservative foreign policy can be traced to a document entitled “Defense Planning Guidance,” which was written under the supervision of then-undersecretary of policy Paul Wolfowitz on the direction of then-Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney. The document was intended to be a guide towards funding priorities and a description of the new focus of the United States military abroad in an “era of fundamental change.” It calls for the U.S. foreign policy to shift to a focus on retaining its sole-superpower status, which it gained with the fall of the Soviet Union.

---

79 Drury, 138.
and the end of the Cold War, and that establishing a “new order” is paramount to the new Pentagon framework, and that the Pentagon’s role towards emerging powerful nations is to actively “discourage them from challenging our leadership.”

Laid out in the document are possible scenarios that could open up a road to war by the end of the twentieth century, including the possible defense of Lithuania and Poland from a Russian invasion following the end of the Cold War (in an effort to consolidate Russian power in the region), wars against Iraq and North Korea in defense of their southern neighbors (Kuwait and South Korea, respectively), and smaller-scale interventions in Panama and the Philippines. Furthermore, the document weighs the possibility of use of the United States military to “preempt or punish” the use of biological, chemical, or nuclear weapons, “even in conflicts that otherwise do not directly engage US interests.” It also calls for the maintenance of US military dominance capable of “deterring potential competitors from even aspiring to a larger regional or global role.” The document clearly states that the emergence of a new global rival is a detriment to the “new order” it seeks:

Our first objective is to prevent the re-emergence of a new rival. This is a dominant consideration underlying the new regional defense strategy and requires that we endeavor to prevent any hostile power from dominating a region whose resources would, under consolidated control, be sufficient to generate global power.

This would include such energy-rich and globally-important areas such as the Middle East and the new republics of Central Asia.

Also mentioned is the “two-war” benchmark, where the armed forces are told to be prepared for the ability to fight two large wars at all times, and to purchase and have on-hand 80% of the conventional munitions required to destroy 80% of expected targets in the two most demanding Major Regional Conflict scenarios.” This would require massive military funding and a revolution in troop preparation and deployment.

The document was leaked to the New York Times and then, subsequently, to the Washington Post and to Congress, where it drew the ire of several Congressmen. Senator

82 Ibid.
83 Ibid.
84 Tyler, “Excerpts from Pentagon’s Plan: ‘Prevent the Re-Emergence of a New Rival.’”
85 Gellman.
Joseph Biden, a Delaware Democrat, called the goals of the document “literally a Pax Americana,” claiming simply that “it won't work. You can be the world superpower and still be unable to maintain peace throughout the world.” Senator Robert Byrd, a Democrat from West Virginia, called the document “myopic, shallow and disappointing,” claiming that "the basic thrust of the document seems to be this: We love being the sole remaining superpower in the world and we want so much to remain that way that we are willing to put at risk the basic health of our economy and well-being of our people to do so.”

Also weighing in was Air Force Secretary Donald B. Rice, who stated the document was simply a staff project that was about to be circulated for higher-level review, and that it “could have benefited from that review.”

In May of 1992, several months after the document was leaked to the press and Congress, it was re-released after heavy editing, with most or all of the “unilateral talk” edited out, in what the New York Times called a “striking change of tone.” The new draft claimed that “one of the primary tasks we face today in shaping the future is carrying longstanding alliances into the new era, and turning old enmities into new cooperative relationships.”

When Bill Clinton was elected to the Presidency and took office in January of 1993, the policies of Wolfowitz and Cheney fell by the wayside, as they were removed from office and replaced by Clinton’s cabinet. Wolfowitz, after Clinton’s first year as president, claimed Clinton was not “truly engaged” in foreign policy, arguing that “in his implementation of policy, Clinton has been too wedded to two limited tools of diplomacy: multilateralism and peacekeeping.”

There was little development of a neoconservative military and foreign policy throughout the mid-1990s, as Bill Clinton had effectively excised any semblance of a neoconservative policy, as well as neoconservative thinkers and policymakers from his administration, choosing instead to focus on domestic issues and the economy, and a foreign policy based on multilateral efforts (such as the NATO bombing in Bosnia) and a

86 Ibid.
87 Ibid.
89 Ibid.
policy of continued containment in Iraq.

In 1996, William Kristol (son of Irving Kristol) and Robert Kagan wrote a piece entitled “towards a neo-Reaganite Foreign Policy,” which was the clearest enumeration of a neoconservative foreign policy since the drafting of Defense Planning Guidance. In it, they argue that the primary goal of American foreign policy should be ensuring a state of benevolent global hegemony, arguing that US foreign policy should have a distinct moral purpose, based on the understanding that “its moral goals and its fundamental national interests are almost always in harmony.”

In 1997, as a means to propel the ideals of a neoconservative foreign policy to the forefront of American political debate, the Project for the New American Century (PNAC) was founded by both Kristol and Kagan. A political think-tank, PNAC is a registered nonprofit 501c3 organization, funded by the Bradley Foundation, the most prolific funder of right-wing think-tanks and policy institutes.

PNAC members include such Bush Administration heavyweights as Vice President Dick Cheney, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, Former Defense Policy Board Advisor Richard Perle, and Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz. In 1997, its members wrote and signed their statement of principles, which included four “consequences” of the inaction and lack of initiative to capitalize and build upon the “achievements of past decades,” particularly a Western victory of the Cold War: first, the need to increase military spending to carry out the responsibilities of the US military and to modernize the armed forces; secondly, the need to strengthen alliances with other democratic nations that promote the values of the United States; third, the need to promote political and economic freedom abroad; and finally, and the need to preserve and extend an international order friendly to the security, prosperity, and principles of the US.

Also in 1997, former National Security Advisor to President Carter Zbigniew Brzezinski, in a book entitled The Grand Chessboard, portrayed the Eurasian landmass as the key to world power, and Central Asia with its vast oil and gas reserves as the key to

---

92 Ibid, 27.
domination of Eurasia. While not one to be labeled a neoconservative, his arguments closely reflect those made in advocacy of a neoconservative foreign policy. He states that for the US to maintain its global primacy, it must prevent any possible adversary from controlling that region. \(^{95}\) Brzezinski was a hawk in the relatively dovish Carter administration, and has written on the maintenance of the United States’ primacy in a post-Cold War world.

On January 26, 1998, PNAC authored and sent a letter to President Bill Clinton concerning Saddam Hussein’s Iraq, deriding a policy of containment, claiming it was slowly eroding, and that said policy must cease, and be replaced by a more active policy, where “the only acceptable strategy is one that eliminates the possibility that Iraq will be able to use or threaten to use weapons of mass destruction.” \(^{96}\) The letter goes on to state that this implies a short term goal of public willingness to use military action against Hussein’s regime, and in the long term, removing Hussein’s Ba’athist regime from power, and that these two goals should become the aim of United States foreign policy. \(^{97}\)

Four months later on May 29, PNAC wrote a letter to Senator Trent Lott and Representative Newt Gingrich, urging them to make the American people aware of the consequences of capitulating to Saddam. They claimed capitulation would show a lack of US credibility, and put at risk US forces in the Persian Gulf. If this were to happen, surely, the capitulation of other nations at risk from Hussein’s weapons of mass destruction would follow. PNAC urged the two Congressmen to emphasize the following measures: all steps should be taken to challenge Hussein’s legitimacy as a leader, establish and promote free Iraqi governments in areas of Iraq not controlled by Hussein, such as the Kurdish area in the north of the country, and United States and allied military power should be used to provide protection for the “free Iraq zones” and, if necessary, remove Hussein from power. \(^{98}\)

In August of 1999, PNAC issued a statement on the defense of Taiwan, claiming that the United States must pledge all possible military support to the democratically-

---


\(^{97}\) *Ibid.*

elected government of Taiwan. This is an extension of the “democratic support” tenet of neoconservative policy – democratically-elected governments are to be supported when and where possible, most importantly in defiance and opposition of China, considered by many to be the next emerging world power.\textsuperscript{99} This reflects closely on Irving Kristol’s statement of what democracy means to neoconservatism: “Barring extraordinary events, the United States will always feel obliged to defend, if possible, a democratic nation under attack from nondemocratic forces, external or internal.”\textsuperscript{100}

In 2000, PNAC released its white paper \textit{Rebuilding America’s Defenses: Strategy, Forces, and Resources for a New Century}, a 76-page document written and released in time for the 2000 Presidential election. In this paper, the organization’s seminal document, lays a very detailed plan for transforming the United States military into a force capable of performing the tasks required, as per neoconservative goals, to retain United States global hegemony throughout the new century.

\textit{Rebuilding America’s Defenses} outlines four “essential missions” of the United States military in the new century. First, there should be a much larger emphasis on homeland defense, which includes realigning nuclear stockpiles for tactical strikes and deterring “lesser states” from acquiring WMDs that could deter American military action or attack our allies or even the American homeland. Second, the retention of sufficient numbers of troops at all times to meet the “two war” benchmark, where the United States military can effectively fight multiple simultaneous large-scale wars and still be able to act on unplanned regional conflicts at the same time is essential. Third, enough forces to act upon what are called “constabulary duties,” such as extended peacekeeping missions and treaty and sanctions enforcement, including no-fly zones and demilitarized zones, should be retained. Finally, the military should facilitate the transformation of the armed forces to one capable of near-instant and overwhelming response to conflict by taking advantage of new, advanced technology and increased military budgets.\textsuperscript{101}

On September 11, 2001, four planes were hijacked by terrorists funded by Saudi billionaire Osama bin Laden. One crashed in a field in Pennsylvania, one crashed into

\textsuperscript{101} Donnelly, \textit{Rebuilding America’s Defenses}, 6.
each tower of the World Trade Center, and one found its place in the outer ring of the Pentagon. Almost 3,000 people lost their lives that day, and it kick-started a campaign by President George W. Bush to eradicate terrorism at home and abroad. He had effectively and loudly declared a war on global terrorism. Prominent neoconservatives have written that there were very few ways to begin the transformation of US foreign and military policy. In Brzezinsky’s *The Grand Chessboard*, he states that thanks to an overall dislike for what he calls military expansionism, barring the perceived existence of a massive and pressing worldwide threat, there would be no way for the policy goals he outlined to become feasible. Further, PNAC claimed in its seminal work *Rebuilding America’s Defenses* that the only way for their “revolutionary change” in military affairs could take place was very, very slowly or with the occurrence of “some catastrophic and catalyzing event - like a new Pearl Harbor.”

The following year, the White House released the official *National Security Strategy of the United States* for 2002, which contained a large number of neoconservative policy points. These include deterring “rogue states” from acquiring WMD capability, which may “allow these states to attempt to blackmail the United States and [its] allies to prevent us from deterring or repelling [their] aggressive behavior,” “transform[ing] America’s national security institutions to meet the challenges and opportunities of the twenty-first century,” and continuing the transformation of military forces to “ensure [the] ability to conduct rapid and precise operations to achieve decisive results.” This is incredibly similar to the PNAC document *Rebuilding America’s Defenses*, which advocates the same transformation of the country’s national security apparatus.

Neoconservatism, as can be seen, is not a new ideology. It is, in fact, a rapidly evolving and changing one – it has been around for a very long time, and counts amongst its heroes, according to Irving Kristol, Teddy Roosevelt, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Ronald Reagan. It is one that espouses a foreign policy intent on using the collective will of the United States military to keep the United States in a position of power over

---

international relations, savoring the “sole-superpower” status the United States achieved following the end of the Cold War, and as a result securing international peace and stability.

**Neoconservatism in the Bush Administration**

A discussion of the Bush Administration in relation to neoconservative policies is moot if it cannot be shown that prominent members of the policymaking staff (specifically the Defense Department and Vice President’s Office) are neoconservatives or advocate a neoconservative policy. This is evidenced by their publications, spoken comments, as well as through publications by policy groups and think-tanks with which they are affiliated. What follows is a review of Administration officials and advisors and their ties to neoconservative groups and policies, as well as written, suggested, or enacted Bush Administration policies that are neoconservative in nature.

**Defense Department**

The Secretary of Defense is the principal advisor to the president concerning matters of military policy and is responsible for executing that policy as they see fit. In 2001, George W. Bush appointed Donald H. Rumsfeld as Secretary of Defense, and he remained in that position following Bush’s reelection in 2004. Rumsfeld’s political career is long, having begun in 1962 as a member of the US House of Representatives, a post he kept until 1969, when he resigned to join the staff of Richard Nixon, where he served in several capacities until 1977, including a stint as Secretary of Defense for Gerald Ford. From 1977 until 2000 he served in private industry, and occasionally took special positions in Ronald Reagan’s administration, serving as an advisor and as a special envoy to the Middle East during the Iran-Iraq War, where he met with former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein. He remained in private business until being sworn in as Secretary of Defense in 2000.\(^{105}\)

Rumsfeld’s ties to neoconservatism come in several forms. In March of 1997, he

---

coauthored an editorial with former Secretaries of Defense Caspar Weinberger and James Schlesinger calling for the Clinton Administration and Congress to not sign the Chemical Weapons Convention, as they felt it would make the United States and its allies more vulnerable to chemical attack. This was in keeping with a neoconservative zeal for abandoning or not signing treaties that no longer serve US interests as they see them. Other treaties either scrapped or not adhered to by Rumsfeld’s Defense Department include the bilateral Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, signed by Nixon in 1972. In a May 1, 2001 speech, President Bush declared a possible end to the 30-year-old treaty, and on December 13, 2001, intentions to pull out of the treaty were declared, to be effective in six months time, as per the notice of withdrawal requirement of the treaty. Rumsfeld praised the move, despite earlier stating that the US had no intention of abandoning the treaty. In 1998, Rumsfeld chaired the Commission to Assess the Ballistic Missile Threat (called the Rumsfeld Commission), which was created to do exactly as its title implies. The report concluded that no-warning launches were a distinct threat, and that Clinton’s vetoing of the defense authorization bill for 1996 (which effectively ended hopes of the revival of the National Missile Defense system, known as “Star Wars” or the “Strategic Defense Initiative” under the Reagan Administration) was a detriment to the nation’s security.

Another treaty Rumsfeld has made strides in circumventing is the Outer Space Treaty of 1967, which banned weapons of mass destruction from being deployed in space, and implied a broader demilitarization of space. A document released by the Air Force in August of 2004 highlights this concept, iterating that the Department of Defense has final jurisdiction over the “mission area of space control.” This echoes sentiments found in PNAC’s Rebuilding America’s Defenses, which advocates the creation of a new military branch – the US Space Forces – which would have the mission of “space

---

control.” Rumsfeld is a member of PNAC.

Immediately under Donald Rumsfeld stands Paul D. Wolfowitz, nominated Deputy Secretary of Defense on February 5, 2001, a title he retains after George W. Bush’s reelection in 2004. Wolfowitz is a trained mathematician and holds a PhD from the University of Chicago in Political Science, where he studied under renowned Cold Warrior and nuclear strategist Albert Wohlstetter, who was responsible for crafting much of neoconservative nuclear policy, and who was openly suspicious of international arms control treaties. Wolfowitz was Dean of the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies of Johns Hopkins University, until his appointment on March 2, 2001. Like Rumsfeld, he is a member of PNAC, but has a more prolific history in neoconservative publications, publishing editorials throughout the Clinton presidency concerning actions in Kosovo and regime change in Iraq.

Wolfowitz is credited with supervising the writing, under the direction of then-Defense Secretary Dick Cheney, of the “original” neoconservative foreign policy piece, titled Defense Planning Guidance, of which an unofficial and unvetted copy circulated amongst the press and Senate, to widespread criticism. Wolfowitz also sat on the Rumsfeld Commission in 1998, and has advocated and praised the release from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty and the development of a national missile defense shield. Wolfowitz is also widely regarded as the architect of the Bush Administration’s policies in the Middle East and of the Iraq War.

Richard Perle served as Chairman of the Defense Policy Board, a defense department advisory panel, until his resignation on March 27, 2003 (Perle resigned under pressure because of allegations of ethics violations and conflicts of interest when he received payments to represent two firms that did business with the Defense Department.

113 Donelly, v.
114 Swidey.
117 “Executive Summary of the Report of the Commission to Assess the Ballistic Missile Threat.”
118 Wolfowitz, Paul, in a speech given to Frontiers of Freedom, October 24, 2002.
Eight months later, in November of 2003, an investigation concluded Perle had not in fact violated ethics laws or rules\textsuperscript{120}. Perle was a protégé, much like Wolfowitz, of Albert Wohlstetter, to whom he was introduced when Wohlstetter’s daughter Joan, who sat next to him in his high school Spanish class, invited him to the family home for a swim in their pool.\textsuperscript{121} Perle, a former Democrat, worked on the staff of Democratic Senator Scoop Jackson before becoming disillusioned with the increasingly dovish Democratic Party and supporting Ronald Reagan for the presidency in 1980. These men, including Perle, Wolfowitz, and Irving Kristol, came to be known as "neoconservatives," as they were a new addition to the conservative Republican Party.\textsuperscript{122}

In 1980, Perle began a stint as an assistant defense secretary under Reagan. During his tenure in the Defense Department there he became known as the "Prince of Darkness" to advocates of arms control and international treaties because of his staunch opposition to both. He resigned his position in 1987, and was considered by many to be more powerful than Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger during his tenure.\textsuperscript{123}

Since 1987, Perle has been a Resident Fellow at the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research. The American Enterprise Institute is well-known as a neoconservative policy powerhouse, with administration members such as Perle and David Frum, and well-known neoconservatives Irving Kristol, Thomas Donnelly, and Michael Ledeen.

Along with Wolfowitz and Rumsfeld, Douglas J. Feith was appointed to the Defense Department as Undersecretary of Defense for Policy in 2001, a lead policymaking position. Prior to his appointment, he was a managing partner at the law firm Feith & Zell, P.C. for fifteen years, and prior to that, he was Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Negotiations Policy under Ronald Reagan from 1984 to 1986.\textsuperscript{124}

Feith has long been an advocate of foregoing international arms control treaties, especially the Anti Ballistic Missile Treaty, claiming it no longer had any standing under

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{121} Perle, Richard, in an interview with \textit{PBS' Thinktank}, September 14, 2002.
  \item \textsuperscript{122} Fryer.
\end{itemize}
international law. Feith is particularly well-known for his staunch support of Israel, and along with Richard Perle and others helped found the Committee on U.S. Interests in the Middle East, created in 1992 in opposition to George H.W. Bush’s policy of pressuring Israel into territorial concessions. Feith was also at the center of controversy for allegedly leaking a classified memo that detailed links between Saddam Hussein and al-Qaeda to the neoconservative publication *The Weekly Standard*, published by William Kristol. Feith was one of many Defense Department officials that staunchly advocated war and occupation in Iraq after September 11.

**Vice President’s Office**

While the Defense Department is responsible for creating and implementing military policy, nothing happens without the President’s approval, and the gap between the Defense Department and the White House is one that needs to be bridged. In the case of the Bush Administration, that bridge is generally created by officials in Vice President Dick Cheney’s office.

Dick Cheney is often called the “most powerful vice president in history,” and is in the perfect position to advance the ideas of the Defense Department to the president for enacting the policy recommendations of Feith, Perle, Wolfowitz, and Rumsfeld. Cheney has had a long relationship with all three, in various capacities. As Secretary of Defense during the George H.W. Bush Administration, he commissioned the draft of the original *Defense Planning Guidance* by Wolfowitz and his team. He also served on the board of PNAC, of which he was a founding member in 1997, having signed its statement of principles. From 1993 until 1995, he was a research fellow at the American Enterprise Institute after serving a stint as Secretary of Defense for the George H.W. Bush Administration, where he directed Operation Desert Shield and Storm against Iraq to liberate Kuwait. According to Bob Woodward, Cheney felt a “deep sense of unfinished business” about the events in Iraq, compounded by the fact that it was one of the only

---

129 Tyler, “U.S. Strategy Plan Calls for Insuring No Rivals Develop.”
countries the US intermittently bombed during the Clinton Administration. During the early 1990s, Cheney was a member of the Advisory Board of the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs, a well-known pro-Israel organization, acting as Chairman Emeritus under the co-chairmen Douglas Feith and Paul Wolfowitz.

Cheney is considered by many to be the biggest influence on the president; as Delaware Senator Joe Biden put it: “Like with a horse, Powell is always able to lead Bush to the water. But just as he is about to put his head down, Cheney up in the saddle says, 'Un-uh', and yanks up the reins before Bush can drink the water.”

Immediately under Cheney is I. Lewis “Scooter” Libby, Assistant to the President and Cheney’s Chief of Staff. Libby was a student of Paul Wolfowitz when Wolfowitz taught at Yale. It was Wolfowitz that got Libby a job in the Reagan State Department in the 1980s. When George H.W. Bush became president, he switched to the Defense Department, being named Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Policy. In the waning days of that administration, Defense Secretary Cheney ordered Wolfowitz to supervise the Defense Planning Guidance document; Wolfowitz in turn delegated supervision of the project to Libby. He left the Defense Department in 1993 upon the inauguration of Bill Clinton.

In the private sector, Libby was a founding member of PNAC, and Legal Advisor to the House of Representatives' Select Committee on U.S. National Security and Military/Commercial Concerns with the People's Republic of China, known also as the “Cox Committee.”

Most recently, Libby has been accused of being the man who leaked the name of undercover CIA officer Valerie Plame, as well as the one who prepared Secretary of State Colin Powell’s controversial report to the United Nations concerning Iraq’s

---

134 Mann, 210.
Other Administration Neoconservatives

Zalmay Khalilzad, a native Afghani, is a Special Envoy to Afghanistan within the State Department, and is one of the only neoconservatives within that department. He was the author who penned the original version of the 1992 *Defense Planning Guidance* document that was the first clear enumeration of a neoconservative foreign policy. In 1995, he published *From Containment to Global Leadership*, which further enunciated the overall neoconservative strategy of what he called “global leadership.” Another signatory of the PNAC statement of principles, Khalilzad has written extensively in the editorial pages of major press outlets concerning the overthrow of Saddam Hussein, and what to do with Iraq in general, often sharing a byline with Paul Wolfowitz. His relationship with Wolfowitz stems from his days at the University of Chicago, where he received his doctorate. At the university, he was a student of theorist Albert Wohlstetter, along with Wolfowitz. From 1985 until 1989, he worked as a special advisor to the Department of State concerning the Iran-Iraq War and the Soviet war in Afghanistan. Throughout the Clinton Administration, from 1993 through 1999, Khalilzad worked as Director of the Strategy, Doctrine and Force Structure program for RAND's Project Air Force before going back to the State Department under George W. Bush and Colin Powell. Another name that raises eyebrows is Elliot Abrams, once indicted for lying under oath about his involvement in the Iran-Contra Affair under the Reagan Administration. Another former “Scoop Jackson Democrat,” Abrams, who is the husband of Rachel Decter, the daughter of influential neoconservatives Midge Decter and Norman Podhoretz (the editor of the neoconservative publication *Commentary*, published by the American Jewish Committee), was a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute following his departure from executive employment when he was not rehired by George H.W. Bush.

---

138 Woodward, “Cheney Was Unwavering in Desire to Go to War.”
139 Mann, 210.
140 Swidey.
142 Ibid.
from 1989 until 1996, when he became president of the Ethics and Public Policy Center. In 1997, he helped found PNAC, signing its statement of principles before becoming Chairman of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom from June 2000 until May 2001, when he was appointed by National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Democracy, Human Rights, and International Operations at the National Security Council. On December 3, 2002, he was again appointed as Special Assistant to the President, this time as Senior Director for Near East and North African Affairs, which includes the Israel/Palestine issue. This appointment generated some controversy, being called “a tragedy for the Israeli and American people” by University of Chicago Mideast Historian Rashid Khalidi, and “a passionate advocate of Israel” by the New York Times, referring to Abrams’ one-sided support of Israel and his supposed ties to the Israeli conservative Likud Party.

David Frum is a former economic speechwriter for George W. Bush, having served from January 2001 until February 2002. He is widely credited as the man who coined the phrase “Axis of Evil” in Bush’s post-9/11 speech. Since then, he has written several books, including books on George W. Bush, and a book with Richard Perle. He is also a resident fellow at the American Enterprise Institute.

**Neoconservative Administration Policies**

Perhaps the best way to determine if the Bush administration has a neoconservative tilt or base is to simply examine its policies. These policies are best examined when compared to a specific benchmark. For the purposes of this thesis, the document *Rebuilding America’s Defenses*, written by Thomas Donnelly for the Project for a New American Century, and various other PNAC statements will be used, as it is

---

147 Curtiss, 11.
the most complete source concerning neoconservative foreign and military policy. Also used will be 1992’s *Defense Planning Guidance*, the precursor to the PNAC document.

**Military Budget**

The first item to examine is the military budget. In a letter to the president dated January 23, 2003, a group of PNAC members wrote that the current level of defense spending would need to increase by $70-100 billion in order to “rebuild, transform, and man our military adequately for its many missions and responsibilities” by 2007. This is in reference to the FY2002 actual defense spending, which was approximately $348.5 billion. An additional $70-$100 billion would put the PNAC budget recommendation at $418.5 - 445.5 billion.

Bush’s FY2005 military budget request totaled $420.7 billion, (it’s important to note that this does not include expenditures in Iraq, which is requested via a supplemental appropriations request, estimated this year to be approximately $50 billion. Last year, it totaled $65 billion). With an assumed supplemental appropriation of zero, the defense budget sees a jump of $72.2 billion. With an assumed appropriation of half of that projected, the difference becomes $97.2 billion. Bush’s budget request for military spending jumped almost perfectly in line with the suggested budget request by the authors of the PNAC letter.

Looking into the document *Rebuilding America’s Defenses*, the authors make a suggestion that military spending should equal between 3.5 and 3.8% of the nation’s GDP (by basing the defense budget on the nation’s GDP, it allows the budget to grow as the nation’s wealth grows). The president’s FY2005 request of $420.7 billion, based on the FY2003 GDP (annual growth is equal to approximately 4% in recent years, but lacking a complete FY2004 number, the slightly smaller numbers from the 2003 GDP

---

153 Donnelly, *Rebuilding America’s Defenses*, 70.
154 Ibid, 75.
155 Kaplan.
will be used) of $11.004 trillion, is equal to slightly more than 3.8% of GDP. Assuming a 4% growth in GDP for FY2004, creating a GDP of $11.444 trillion, a defense budget of 3.5 to 3.8% of GDP would fall from $400.5 billion to $434.9 billion. The president’s budget request does just that.

**Foreign and Military Policy**

Perhaps the most telling aspect of the Bush Administration policies concerns what has become to be known as the “Bush Doctrine,” a new, broad, far-reaching set of priorities and goals encompassing the foreign policy of the United States. The Bush Doctrine is enumerated completely in the *National Security Strategy of the United States*, published in September of 2002, but was originally unveiled as a challenge to the world on September 20, 2001: “Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists.”

The Bush Doctrine has evolved considerably. In a speech to West Point graduates, given on June 1, 2002, Bush claimed:

> Our security will require transforming the military… a military that must be ready to strike at a moment’s notice in any dark corner of the world. And our society 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."

This seemed to add a new dimension to the Bush Doctrine: that is, preemptive military action is not a foregone conclusion when dealing with rogue states, particularly ones that facilitate the spread of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile technology.

With the publication of the *National Security Strategy of the United States* in September of 2002, a clear summary of the Bush Doctrine was unveiled. In it were outlined a variety of goals for the 21st century, many of which follow very closely with *Rebuilding America’s Defenses*. The PNAC document states that that United States “must counteract the effects of the proliferation of ballistic missiles and weapons of mass destruction… of all the new and current missions for US armed forces, this must have

---

158 Bush, George W, speech to West Point graduating class, June 1, 2002.
priority.” This echoes statements made in the National Security Strategy document, which has a chapter entitled “Prevent Our Enemies from Threatening Us, Our Allies, and Our Friends with Weapons of Mass Destruction.” This chapter states goals similar to those stated in the PNAC document, claiming the US must employ “strengthened nonproliferation efforts to prevent rogue states and terrorists from acquiring the materials, technologies, and expertise necessary for weapons of mass destruction.”

The most important part of the Bush Doctrine is the strategy of preemptive warfare. The National Security Strategy enumerates this clearly:

The greater the threat, the greater is the risk of inaction - and the more 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.

This is not implicit in Rebuilding America’s Defenses, but a parallel with neoconservative policy can be found to connect this concept with the PNAC document and with neoconservatives within the administration. In the final chapter of the National Security Strategy, entitled “Transform America’s National Security Institutions to Meet the Challenges and Opportunities of the Twenty-First Century,” the document states one goal of US policy is to “dissuade future military competition.” In the 1992 Defense Planning Guidance document, this is the intended main thrust; that is, military preeminence abroad is the overriding goal of a post-Cold War policy, evidenced by the following excerpt: “[Our new regional defense strategy] requires that we endeavor to prevent any hostile power from dominating a region whose resources would, under consolidated control, be sufficient to generate global power.” This is echoed again in Rebuilding America’s Defenses, which states that the primary goal of US foreign policy is to maintain our sole-superpower status.

Another strong parallel between current US policy and neoconservative policy is the withdrawal from and lack of respect paid to international arms control treaties, laws,
and institutions. For example, on December 13, 2001, President Bush declared an intention to pull out of the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. In 2003, the United States went to war despite objections from the international community, along with claims that a unilateral US invasion of Iraq in fact violated international law. In August of 2004, the Bush Administration announced it intends to oppose provisions of a nuclear arms nonproliferation treaty that calls for inspections and verification of nuclear programs and arsenals.

It can easily be seen, through the influence of Dick Cheney and Scooter Libby, and the policy planning of a staunchly neoconservative defense department headed by Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz, and Douglas Feith, the current policies, both foreign and military, of the Bush Administration display a strong influence from neoconservatives within and without the administration. Richard Perle himself has stated clearly that “the President of the United States, on issue after issue, has reflected the thinking of neoconservatives.” There can be little doubt that the Bush Administration and its policies are in fact neoconservative in nature.

Conservatism and the War in Iraq

When discussing neoconservatism, the invasion of Iraq, and the modern Republican Party, it is vital to understand the dynamic of the politics of the party. It must be shown that support of an invasion of Iraq is more generally neoconservative in nature, and not nearly as widely supported by traditional conservative (or “paleoconservative”), or even moderate conservative voices. In order to do this, the statements of several prominent conservatives will be examined for their reasoning in their lack of support and deep criticism of the Iraq War. The growing rift between paleoconservatives and neoconservatives will also be examined and discussed, contrasting the two views of modern American conservatism.

While there are numerous conservative politicians, pundits, and intellectuals who have proclaimed their lack of support for the Iraq War, it would be impossible to catalogue and analyze their arguments as a whole, so for the sake of brevity, attention will be paid only to the most prolific and outspoken critics of the invasion and occupation policy of the Bush Administration. These will include former Reform Party presidential candidate, author, and political commentator Patrick Buchanan, former Reagan economic advisor Paul Craig Roberts, Texas Congressman Ron Paul, Tennessee Congressman John Duncan, former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, former National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft, and former Secretary of State James Baker.

**Three Factions**

In their 1996 article “Towards a Neo-Reaganite Foreign Policy,” neoconservatives Bill Kristol and Robert Kagan discussed the conservative foreign policy trends of the Republican Party, successfully dividing the policy preferences into three separate camps: Buchananite neoisolationism, Kissinger realism, and a neoconservative benevolent hegemony.\(^{169}\)

Conservative political activist and writer Pat Buchanan, often labeled a paleoconservative, advocates a policy of near-isolationism, acting abroad only in areas considered vital to national defense. This view is shared by other paleoconservatives, such as Paul Craig Roberts and Ron Paul, and marked clearly by their outspoken disdain and lack of support for the 2003 Iraq War, calling the neoconservative policy a new form of imperialism.

The Kissinger realist camp is occupied by more moderate politicians and executives, some who certainly wished for the fall of the Hussein regime, but are wary of the go-it-alone unilateralist policy of the neoconservative camp. This includes political moderates Brent Scowcroft, James Baker, and Kissinger himself. This group is generally marked by their limited support of the war, hoping to get, at the very least, a UN mandate for action, which would place a stamp of legitimacy on the invasion.

The final camp is comprised of neoconservative policy advocates, those in full support of, if necessary, a unilateral invasion of Iraq in the name of national security and,

ostensibly, to extend US hegemony in the region, and send a “message” to other rogue regimes that may have the US in their figurative crosshairs.

Before exploring these groups and what they have said concerning their support (or lack thereof) in the Iraq War, it should be noted that using simply a Congressional voting record on, for example, the October 2002 Iraq War Resolution, which authorized the president to go to war against Iraq, is ineffectual given the dynamic of party politics. Many Republican Party members (and the same is true for Democratic Party members, as well), vote in support of the Republican president’s agenda. So, in the scope of traditional party politics, the words of several representatives from each camp hold considerably more weight than the voting records of Republican Party members.

**The Conservative Rift**

When comparing the policy preferences of the three conservative foreign policy camps, the biggest distinction can be found between the paleoconservatives and neoconservatives, and a seeming rift between the two groups in the Republican Party has grown larger since the Iraq War began. When comparing the paleoconservative and neoconservative concepts of American conservatism, it is easy to see why this rift has formed. Paleoconservatives believe much that is fundamentally opposed to the concepts of neoconservatism, and this has caused a sounding-off from the Republican Party “Old Guard.” These common differences in views should be examined before arguments from specific paleoconservatives are highlighted.

The Paleoconservative ideology tends to be in direct contrast to that of the neoconservative ideology. It often rejects the concept of interventionism and internationalism, advocating force projection only when there is a direct threat to the national interests of the United States, which is often defined in economic terms. For the most part, they tend to oppose the concept of mass immigration, and are more favorably disposed to the concept of decentralization than neoconservatives tend to be.

The rift between the two conservative factions has grown wider in recent years. In

---

March of 2003, neoconservative David Frum wrote a column entitled “Unpatriotic Conservatives,” and singled out by name such noted paleoconservatives as Patrick Buchanan, Robert Novak, Lew Rockwell, and Justin Raimondo. He claimed that paleoconservatives have made “common cause with the left-wing and Islamist antiwar movements” throughout the United States and Europe. He states further that the paleoconservative movement denies and excuses terrorism, espouse defeatism, yearn for defeat, and in general blame the US policy for terrorist attacks against the United States and its interests. He cites Robert Novak’s September 13, 2001 column, where he said “the hatred toward the United States today by the terrorists is an extension of [their] hatred of Israel.” He also cites Patrick Buchanan’s statement made on a political talk show, where he said:

9/11 was a direct consequence of the United States meddling in an area of the world where we do not belong and where we are not wanted. We were attacked because we were on Saudi sacred soil and we are so-called repressing the Iraqis and we’re supporting Israel and all the rest of it.172

Frum claims that paleoconservatism is not necessarily old to begin with, and traces its modern roots to when the term and tradition was ostensibly created, in 1986. In the end, the point was well-taken: paleoconservatives are, according to Frum, unpatriotic, and are waging war against the true interests of the United States. He closed his column stating that “the paleoconservatives have chosen – and the rest of us must choose too. In a time of danger, they have turned their backs on their country. Now we turn our backs on them.”173

There was quickly a rebuttal from a wide array of paleoconservatives. In a piece entitled “The Axis of Drivel,” writer and economist David Callahan attacks Frum’s column as “one of the most pathetic pieces of writing ever to appear in the National Review, composed almost entirely of illogic and ad hominem attacks.”174 Journalist Ilana Mercer wrote in her article “David Frum, Son of Uncle Sam” that Frum’s “attempt to cast these paleo ideas as new and discontinuous is clearly ignorant of the history of the

172 Buchanan, Pat, interview with Chris Matthews on MSNBC’s Hardball, September 30, 2002.
ideas.”\textsuperscript{175} Journalist Justin Raimondo wrote in his column “Commissar Frum” that many of Frum’s allegations were untrue, often misquoted or taken out of context.\textsuperscript{176}

Now that George W. Bush has gained reelection to a second term of office, the rift could widen, as the neoconservative agenda maintains control of the policies of the Bush Administration for the next four years.

**Paloconservatives against Neoconservative Policies**

There was a large upwelling of support for President Bush in the days following 9/11, and that support stayed strong up until the threatened and announced invasion of Iraq in 2002 and 2003, when, according to one conservative, “overnight, conservatives became neoconservatives, determined to protect America by remaking the world in our image.”\textsuperscript{177}

Since the election of George W. Bush in 2000 and his installment of many influential neoconservatives into high posts in the executive offices and the Defense Department, there has been a schism in the ranks of conservative politics. Many feel that the neoconservatives have seized control of a traditionally conservative Republican party, turning it into a vehicle for a neoconservative agenda.

**Patrick Buchanan**

In October of 2002, Pat Buchanan, along with Dr. Scott McConnell and Taki Theodoracopulos, published the first issue of a new magazine entitled *The American Conservative*. Buchanan claims the magazine was created “to argue against a massive invasion of Iraq and to argue against, if you will, the neoconservative takeover—the hijacking of American foreign policy.”\textsuperscript{178} Buchanan argues that “the conservative movement has been hijacked and turned into a globalist, interventionist, open borders ideology, which is not the conservative movement I grew up with.”\textsuperscript{179}

Buchanan has written several books concerning what he calls the neoconservative “takeover” of the Republican Party. In his book “Where the Right Went Wrong,” Buchanan claims the neoconservative movement is very much aware of its roots outside the Republican Party and traditional conservatism. He cites Irving Kristol, who said:

One can say that the historical task and political purpose of neoconservatism would seem to be this: to convert the Republican party, and American conservatism in general, against their respective wills, into a new kind of conservative politics suitable to governing a modern democracy.  

On Iraq, Buchanan believes that the 2003 invasion is not in America’s interest, and is being fought largely as a proxy for Israel. He cites the connections between Bush Administration officials and Israeli and Jewish organizations, and the influence of such neoconservative publications such as *Commentary Magazine*, which is the monthly of the American Jewish Committee. Buchanan has been cited as an anti-Semite for years, but rebuffs the criticism as one made simply to discredit an argument against neoconservatives:

Indeed, it is the charge of ‘anti-Semitism’ itself that is toxic. For this venerable slander is designed to nullify public discourse by smearing and intimidating foes and censoring and blacklisting them and any who would publish them. Neocons say we attack them because they are Jewish. We do not. We attack them because their warmongering threatens our country, even as it finds a reliable echo in Ariel Sharon.

Buchanan feels the resulting “quagmire” in Iraq is one that has and will continue to bog down over 150,000 U.S. troops in an untenable situation, and that there were very credible reasons to avoid going to Baghdad during the first Gulf War, which are in fact the same reasons to avoid doing such a thing in the 2003 Iraq War. In 1998, George H.W. Bush wrote:

Trying to eliminate Saddam ... would have incurred incalculable human and political costs. Apprehending him was probably impossible. ... We would have been forced to occupy Baghdad and, in effect, rule Iraq. ...

---


[T]here was no viable 'exit strategy' we could see, violating another of our principles. Furthermore, we had been self-consciously trying to set a pattern for handling aggression in the post-Cold War world. Going in and occupying Iraq, thus unilaterally exceeding the United Nations’ mandate, would have destroyed the precedent of international response to aggression that we hoped to establish. Had we gone the invasion route, the United States could conceivably still be an occupying power in a bitterly hostile land.\(^{183}\)

Buchanan also claims the threat of Middle Eastern states doesn’t come from guns or missiles, but is cultural in nature:

Without oil, their exports are the size of Finland’s. Not one Arab nation can stand up to Israel, let alone the United States. The Islamic threat is not strategic, but demographic. If death comes to the West it will be because we embraced a culture of death—birth control, abortion, sterilization, euthanasia. Western man is dying as Islamic man migrates north to await his passing and inherit his estate.\(^{184}\)

To Buchanan, the greatest threat is America’s supposed impending loss in the culture war.

**Paul Craig Roberts**

Paul Craig Roberts served as assistant secretary of the Treasury for economic policy from 1981-82 under the Reagan Administration, during which time he played a key role in the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981. From 1975 to 1978, Roberts served on the congressional staff, where he drafted the Kemp-Roth bill and played a leading role in developing bipartisan support for a supply-side economic policy.\(^{185}\) With his policy credentials, it would be very hard to classify Roberts as anything but conservative, so his statements on the neoconservative movement and the war in Iraq are relevant.

Roberts has written extensively on the neoconservatives in the Bush Administration and the war in Iraq, characterizing the neoconservatives in a very negative light. He often refers to neoconservatives as “neo-Jacobins,”\(^{186}\) drawing parallels

---


between the neoconservatives and the Jacobins of the French Revolution, claiming they “seized the opportunity afforded by September 11 to meld America’s nationalistic response to terrorism with the Jacobin ideological agenda.” Roberts argues that neoconservatives underwent a concerted effort to convince the populace that the “War on Terrorism” can be associated with the invasion of foreign countries, and this aided in shifting the focus to the invasion and occupation of Iraq. He feels that neoconservatives “are dangerous because they lack historical understanding and rely on abstract righteousness to impose ideological unity.” After the invasion commenced, Roberts asked “Will neoconservatives be held responsible for orchestrating a war in order to pursue their Middle Eastern agenda? Will they get away with inflicting death and injury on thousands of Iraqis and Americans?” This reflects the popular view that the American populace was deceived into supporting a war in Iraq by, for example, Colin Powell’s speech to the UN, where he claimed “every statement I make today is backed up by sources, solid sources. These are not assertions. What we’re giving you are facts and conclusions based on solid intelligence.” His speech has since been decried as inaccurate in several respects.

In August of 2001, Roberts posited (perhaps jokingly) that George W. Bush just may be focusing on Iraq in an effort to take an eye off of a “recovering economy” that didn’t seem to be recovering. The following month, he wrote a column stating that “the possibility is real that a U.S. invasion would stir up one billion Muslims at a time when the U.S. has run out of both money and belief.” He argues that while Saddam Hussein is indeed “bad news,” it may not be worth the risk, both to the United States and to Israel, to topple one of the only secular governments in the entire region. Says Roberts:

> Secular rulers lack the support of large and fervent percentages of populations that are influenced by mullahs and Muslim schools. An American attack on Iraq could further compromise the Pakistani, Egyptian, and Saudi Arabian governments, leading to their eventual

---

188 Roberts, “Neo-Jacobins.”
189 Ibid.
An invasion of Iraq, reasons Roberts, can further destabilize an already unstable region.

Roberts grew more virulent with his accusations and statements as the occupation continued, railing against neoconservative Lawrence Kaplan, whose article in the Washington Post claimed that historically, as strange as it may sound, the more war dead, the more support the conflict traditionally has, drawing on the examples of Mogadishu in 1993, Lebanon in 1983, and even World War II. Roberts believes Kaplan is delusional in believing that the American public will support the war in Iraq with mounting casualties to achieve Bush’s “strategic objectives,” claiming that the “strategic objectives” have shifted so many times so as to be almost irrelevant, from ridding Hussein of Weapons of Mass Destruction, to getting rid of a state sponsor of al-Qaeda, to freeing the Iraqi people and installing a representative Democracy.

Robert’s view of the Iraqi invasion and the neoconservatives in the Bush Administration can be summed up very neatly in a single statement: “The invasion of Iraq is likely the most thoughtless action in modern history. It has the support of only two overlapping small groups: neoconservatives infused with the spirit of 18th century French Jacobins who want to impose American ‘exceptionalism’ on the rest of the world, and foreign policy advisers who believe that the primary aim of U.S. foreign policy is to make the Middle East safe for Israel.”

**Representative Ron Paul**

On July 10, 2003, a Republican Congressman from Texas named Ron Paul delivered a scathing speech aimed towards the neoconservatives in the Bush Administration, claiming that the “modern-day, limited-government movement has been co-opted.” In his view, the neoconservatives had taken over the core of the Republican Party. Paul listed seventeen points that he believed drove neoconservatism, and was the

---

first to speak loudly in Congress against them. These points included a belief in preemptive war to “achieve desired ends,” reforming the face of the Middle East by force if necessary, and the unconditional support of Israel and a close alliance with the Likud Party.  

Interestingly, Paul also speaks of the intellectual roots of neoconservatism, from the Straussian concepts of the elite holders-of-power to the Trotskyite philosophy of permanent revolution. He also draws a parallel to Machiavelli, using neoconservative theorist Michael Ledeen as an example. Ledeen has written approvingly of Machiavellian tactics in his book *Machiavelli on Modern Leadership*, and mentions that Strauss, too, has written approvingly of Machiavelli.  

On Iraq, Paul mentions the advocacy of war since the 1990s, saying that “early on, they urged war against Iraq, but were disappointed with the Clinton administration, which never followed through with its periodic bombings,” and goes further to state that the intellectual heads of the neoconservative movement saw their chance to “prove their long-held theories” with the events of 9/11, and launch an “American greatness imperialistic” foreign policy.  

A year prior to the invasion, in March 2002, Paul gave a speech to Congress outlining six reasons he did not believe a war in Iraq was in the nation’s best interest. First, he felt that the war itself would be unconstitutional, and not even within the scope of a UN mandate. Second, he highlighted the fact that Iraq has never been an aggressor in any capacity against the US, no matter how evil Saddam Hussein seems, and that an invasion would jeopardize US security, not increase it. Third, he declared the war to be lacking moral justification, and that an argument of “someday in the future Saddam Hussein might pose a threat to us” simply places every nation on the planet subject to an arbitrary American invasion. Fourth, Paul felt that a war in Iraq would antagonize many important nations, including Russia, China, and all of the Middle East, and the international political capital created by the 9/11 attacks would be wasted. Fifth, he feared an attack in Iraq would possibly spread through the rest of the Middle East, involving, quite possibly, Israel as well. Finally, he mentioned the projected cost of the

---

war, calling it “prohibitive,” and compounded with the already staggering national debt and projected budget deficits of the US, the results could be disastrous. Along with this, he felt the possible loss of liberty accompanying a war in the name of “security” would be detrimental to the nation as a whole.

Six months later, in September 2002, Paul gave another speech, this time calling the concept of invasion a “serious mistake,” that the negatives would far outweigh the positives, and that even former and current military generals and experts, including Colin Powell, Brent Scowcroft, Anthony Zinni, and Norman Schwarzkopf, were beginning to warn the U.S. to abstain from war. Not a week later, on September 10, Paul listed thirty-five questions he hoped would be asked during hearings over the impending war in Iraq. In his speech, he questioned the constitutionality of the war, as well as the veracity of the evidence concerning Saddam Hussein’s Weapons of Mass Destruction programs. At one point, he insinuated it’s very possible that the war wasn’t about security, but simply about strategic dominance, hinting that oil may very well be playing a key role in the decision to go to war. Also mentioned is that containing Hussein could hardly be compared to containing Hitler, as Hussein’s army was 1/5 the size as it was in 1991, and even then, it was “totally inept” at defending its own country.

Paul later railed against the foreign policy of the Bush Administration, saying “interventionism, internationalism, inflationism, protectionism, jingoism, and bellicosity are much more popular in our nation's capital than a policy of restraint.” Several weeks later, during debate on the vote for the Iraq War Resolution, Paul listed many reasons why he felt the war was ill-advised, and how he felt the American public was being disingenuously led to war. He called into question many of the claims the Bush Administration made as justification for passing the resolution, including the state of the Iraqi biological and chemical warfare programs, as well as the state of its nuclear program. He also included a claim that it was the United States that had in fact started the Iraqi biowarfare program:

One 1986 shipment from the Virginia-based American Type Culture Collection included three strains of anthrax, six strains of the bacteria that

---

make botulinum toxin and three strains of the bacteria that cause gas
gangrene. Iraq later admitted to the United Nations that it had made
weapons out of all three.\textsuperscript{204}

While Ron Paul is a vehement conservative critic of the war in Iraq, he is not the
only conservative member of the US Congress to oppose the invasion of Iraq.

**Congressman John J. Duncan, Jr.**

John J. Duncan, Jr. is a Republican representative out of Tennessee. In late
February 2003, Duncan outlined why traditional conservatives should be against the war
in Iraq, as well as the policies of the Bush Administration in general. In his speech to the
House of Representatives, he claimed no traditional conservative would ever advocate
preemptive warfare, massive deficit spending, or being the “policeman of the world.” In
his view, the Bush Administration is an advocate of all these things, which go against the
principles of traditional conservatism. He proceeded to state that, contrary to popular
belief, there were many conservatives against a war in Iraq. He mentions names such as
Paul Craig Roberts, Former Navy Secretary James Webb, Senator Chuck Hagel, and
Charley Reese. He closed the speech with the statement “I do sincerely believe the true
conservative position, the traditional conservative position, is against this war.”\textsuperscript{205} Over a
year later, he proclaimed in front of the House that “there is nothing conservative about
this war in Iraq.”\textsuperscript{206}

**Moderates against Neoconservative Unilateralism**

Traditional conservatives were not the only ones to question a unilateral invasion
policy against Iraq in the run-up to the 2003 Iraq War. Many moderate voices, including
staffers from the elder Bush’s administration, came out openly either against the war as a
whole, or to caution against unilateral action against the Hussein regime.

**Brent Scowcroft**

In 1998, George H.W. Bush and his former National Security Advisor, Brent

\textsuperscript{204} Paul, Ron, speech in front of the US House of Representatives, October 8, 2002.
\textsuperscript{205} Duncan, John, speech in front of the US House of Representatives, February 26, 2003.
\textsuperscript{206} Duncan, John, speech in front of the US House of Representatives, June 15, 2004.
Scowcroft, collaborated on an article explaining why, following the 1991 Persian Gulf War, they didn’t remove Saddam Hussein from power:

> While we hoped that popular revolt or coup would topple Saddam, neither the U.S. nor the countries of the region wished to see the breakup of the Iraqi state. We were concerned about the long-term balance of power at the head of the Gulf. Trying to eliminate Saddam, extending the ground war into an occupation of Iraq, would have violated our guideline about not changing objectives in midstream, engaging in "mission creep," and would have incurred incalculable human and political costs.  

Scowcroft and Bush highlight the lack of stability that an occupation could cause (which is, interestingly, in stark contrast to comments made by Condoleezza Rice and George W. Bush, who regarded the mere presence of Hussein’s regime as a destabilizing force in the Middle East), mentioning a “breakup of the Iraqi State” as a possible outcome. Further, and most importantly, they state:

> We would have been forced to occupy Baghdad and, in effect, rule Iraq. The coalition would instantly have collapsed, the Arabs deserting it in anger and other allies pulling out as well. Under those circumstances, furthermore, we had been self-consciously trying to set a pattern for handling aggression in the post-cold war world. Going in and occupying Iraq, thus unilaterally exceeding the U.N.’s mandate, would have destroyed the precedent of international response to aggression we hoped to establish. Had we gone the invasion route, the U.S. could conceivably still be an occupying power in a bitterly hostile land. It would have been a dramatically different - and perhaps barren - outcome.

This is clearly a statement in favor of multilateralism, and against the neoconservative notion of unilateral war. The administration of George H.W. Bush had clearly hoped the UN-mandated and US-led liberation of Kuwait would establish a precedent of multilateral and global action against military expansionism.

Four years later, in August 2002, Scowcroft again wrote on the issue of toppling the Hussein regime, writing an editorial some felt was intended to be a surrogate voice for the elder Bush. The editorial, titled “Don’t Topple Saddam,” calls on the Bush Administration to show restraint in acting against Hussein, outlining the potential consequences of a unilateral war, and attacks even the reasoning the Bush Administration

---


208 Ibid.
was using in an attempt to sell the war to the public, stating:

There is little evidence to indicate that the United States itself is an object of his aggression. Rather, Saddam's problem with the U.S. appears to be that we stand in the way of his ambitions. He seeks weapons of mass destruction not to arm terrorists, but to deter us from intervening to block his aggressive designs.²⁰⁹

Further, Scowcroft claimed that Hussein is hardly likely to pass off his WMD supplies to terrorist organizations, as the interests of Hussein and said groups are simply not the same, and those groups would carry out attacks in pursuit of their own goals, while leaving Baghdad “as the return address.” Such a relationship would “open him and his entire regime to a devastating response by the US,” calling Hussein, above all, a “power-hungry survivor.”²¹⁰

Scowcroft also questioned the effect an invasion would have on the War on Terrorism, believing that Iraq could in fact be a fatal sidetrack, consuming resources necessary to defend the Homeland and catch all those guilty of perpetrating attacks directly against the US. If, he reasoned, a link is found between Hussein and the September 11 hijackers, or if he refused an aggressive no-notice inspection regime, it “could provide the persuasive casus belli which many claim we do not now have.” In the end, he concluded, a unilateral attack on Iraq would be a detriment to the stability and security of the Middle East and put at risk the US campaign against terrorism.²¹¹

**Henry Kissinger**

Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger wrote an editorial in September 2002, arguing for and against the concept of military preemption and unilateralism, respectively. The September 11 attacks, he argued, created an international condition that transcended the traditional concepts of the sovereign nation, committing the US to attack an organization that called no state its own, but nonetheless operated from the lands of many different states. The debate over the use of preemptive force is a result of this new condition, he argued, and is in fact “inseparable from the war against terrorism.”²¹²

Having agreed with the terms of preemption, Kissinger expands on his belief, stating that if preemption were in fact to be used as a viable military option against Iraq, it needs to be legitimate. In order to do this in the new international order of things, it should be made clear that regime change in Iraq would not be the acted-upon goal of a single nation, but the international community as a whole, and that the route to assure this was directly through the UN. Says Kissinger:

To give teeth to such a system, an internationally sanctioned military force should be established with stand-by authority to remove any obstacle to transparency. In practice, such a system would lead to regime change, for Saddam Hussein’s system is incompatible with the required transparency.²¹³

Kissinger supports a policy of regime change, feeling that Hussein is, in fact, an obstacle to US security that must be removed. However, he cautions against the use of unilateral force, saying that “as the US assumes the position of leadership, it should not launch itself unilaterally until it has tested the prospects of acting as the custodian of a global interest.”²¹⁴

James A. Baker III

James Baker was the elder Bush’s Secretary of State, and in August 2002, he wrote an editorial asking the Bush administration to use caution in the advance towards war. Regime change, if it comes to it, would require nothing less than a full substantial invasion and occupation of the country. Everything else has proved futile in the past, from insurrection to covert action. Most importantly, just as Kissinger did, he argues against unilateral action:

Although the United States could certainly succeed, we should try our best not to have to go it alone, and the president should reject the advice of those who counsel doing so. The costs in all areas will be much greater, as will the political risks, both domestic and international, if we end up going it alone or with only one or two other countries.²¹⁵

Going through the UN, he argues, would not weaken the US case for war should it be rejected by the Security Council. After such rejection, the US would still be perfectly free

---

²¹³ Ibid.
²¹⁴ Ibid.
to balance the pros and cons of going to war alone and decide if it should proceed unilaterally. If it comes down to military action against Iraq, the political, military, and monetary costs of an invasion and occupation force would be “lessened if the president brings together an international coalition behind the effort.” By acting multilaterally, with UN support, the president would be able to better build domestic support for a continuing foreign policy, “a necessary prerequisite for any foreign policy.”

After Bush went to the UN to “plead his case,” Baker wrote a second editorial, praising the diplomatic actions of the president. As he stated in his previous editorial, he felt that the action did not weaken in any way the credibility or case for war:

Win or lose, going to the United Nations will also help the president win the support of the American people and, therefore, of Congress, which is politically desirable, if not legally necessary, for any major military action.

Baker, as did Kissinger, supports regime change, acknowledging that military force is the only way to remove Hussein from power, but, again as Kissinger, feels that a multilateral approach – an invasion with international consensus, most likely, but, again as Kissinger, feels that a multilateral approach – an invasion with international consensus, most likely via the UN – would best serve the political and security interests of the US.

Conclusions

Through the three dominant policy camps found in conservative politics there are significant splits in the approach towards Iraq. The Buchananite paleoconservatives advocate no war at all, espousing a sort of neoisolationism, feeling that an invasion of Iraq is in fact against the interests of the US. Robert Novak wrote that conservatives should reject the concept of nation-building and the creation of a new American empire. Charley Reese wrote that the War in Iraq “will definitely not be our finest hour.” John Zmirak claims that “annexing” Iraq would be a big mistake, and outlines several strategic “wild cards” in the coming war, including the Kurds in the north and

216 Ibid.
Shiites partial to Iran in the South.\textsuperscript{220} Steven Chapman wrote that the neoconservatives in the Administration, despite their rhetoric concerning the disarmament of Saddam Hussein, “don't want Hussein defanged… they want him dead.”\textsuperscript{221}

Policy moderates, generally espousing “Kissinger realism,” range from not supporting the war at all (in the case of Scowcroft), to cautioning against a unilateral invasion, but generally supporting the war in its sense of national urgency. Scowcroft feels a unilateral invasion would undermine what the first Persian Gulf War accomplished, and turn into a political and strategic quagmire, while the likes of Baker and Kissinger are worried concerning the legitimacy of our actions and their consequences.

It can be seen that the policies advocated by neoconservative policymakers are not in keeping with what many self-professed “traditional conservatives” or “moderate conservatives” believe. This has opened up a rift between the sides of the Republican Party, one side occupied by the neoconservatives, one by the paleoconservatives, and another by the moderates within the party. It can be reasonable to assume or believe, then, that the invasion of Iraq in March of 2003 is an example of a foreign policy that is neoconservative (and not simply “conservative”) in nature, as the chief architects of the war are neoconservatives in charge of US foreign policy.


CHAPTER 2
IRAQ IN A NEOCONSERVATIVE FRAMEWORK

“For bureaucratic reasons, we settled on one issue, weapons of mass destruction, because it was the one reason everyone could agree on.”

-Paul Wolfowitz

“Why Iraq?” is the most enduring question in regards to the 2003 invasion. Surely, the brutal regime in North Korea, which has proclaimed itself a nuclear power and has an economy buttressed by its export of long-range missile technology, or the staunchly anti-American Iranian mullahs in charge of a repressive regime in Iran were targets more worthy of scrutiny amongst members of the “Axis of Evil.” But Iraq posed a very unique opportunity for neoconservative policymakers in the Bush administration – it could be a unique testing ground for the theories of which they were all staunch proponents. Iraq fit beautifully within a neoconservative framework.

In order to understand why, different aspects of neoconservative policy and theory need to be examined and discussed, then related to Iraq. This can be divided into two areas of policy discussion: democratic globalism/realism and global hegemony, along with corollary theories and political realities derived from both.

The Krauthammer - Fukuyama Debate

As mentioned briefly in the first chapter of this thesis, the export and support of countries with democratic institutions is a key neoconservative tenet of foreign policy, and has seemingly been embraced wholly by the Bush administration. The policy of democratic globalism is best described by the theory’s most ardent proponent, Charles Krauthammer:

It sees the spread of democracy, "the success of liberty", as John F. Kennedy put it in his inaugural address, as both the ends and the means of foreign policy. Its most public spokesmen, George W. Bush and Tony Blair, have sought to rally America and the world to a struggle over values. Its response to 9/11 is to engage in a War on Terror whose

essential element is the global spread of democracy.\footnote{Krauthammer, Charles, “In Defense of Democratic Realism,” \textit{The National Interest}, Fall 2004; Thomson Gale, FindArticles.com (accessed March 10, 2005).}

The policy is far from new. In 1985, Krauthammer wrote that “the idea of self-government does seem a wholly natural underpinning to American interventionism,” and is a possible answer to the question of justification for American interventionism in a post-Cold War world, where anticommunism is no longer an overriding principle of foreign policy. The new policy should be, he argues, based upon a Wilsonian idealism and “a theory of intervention based on the notion of promoting democracy.” There is a new moral justification to the role of America in world affairs:

There is no real case to be made that it contravenes our values to be stationing troops on German soil. Yet Germany is not ours. We have no colonial claim. Still, we do have a persuasive reason: we are needed to defend a democracy.\footnote{Krauthammer, Charles, “When to Intervene,” \textit{The New Republic}, May 6, 1985.}

Three years later, Krauthammer wrote again on Wilsonian idealism, proclaiming that “the triumph of democratic capitalism as a model for the world is nearly complete.” In the context of the coming 1988 Dukakis-Bush election, Krauthammer muses that there is an appalling lack of foreign policy debate. Four policy options present themselves with the impending fall of the Soviet Union: isolationism, realpolitik realism, international multilateralism, and a Wilsonian crusade for democracy. On Wilsonian idealism, he says:

[One policy alternative] is to carry on as we are: aggressively and (if necessary) unilaterally supporting American interests and values around the world, arming a movement here, putting pressure on a dictatorship there, as J.F.K. put it, "to assure the survival and the success of liberty." Without an Evil Empire to contend with, the job becomes easier – there is less need to support dictators in the name of anti-Communism – but harder to justify. Why make the effort? Seventy years ago, Americans were not wildly enthusiastic about Woodrow Wilson's crusade for democracy. Whether a post-Soviet America will want to embrace Wilsonian idealism any more than did a pre-Soviet America is an open question.\footnote{Krauthammer, Charles, “After the Cold War is Won,” \textit{Time Magazine}, November 7, 1988.}

Krauthammer’s zeal for the triumph of Western capitalist Democracy was echoed the following year by Francis Fukuyama, who wrote a now-famous essay entitled “The End of History,” where he declared an end to Hegelian history and the triumph of liberal
democracy:

The twentieth century saw the developed world descend into a paroxysm of ideological violence, as liberalism contended first with the remnants of absolutism, then bolshevism and fascism, and finally an updated Marxism that threatened to lead to the ultimate apocalypse of nuclear war. But the century that began full of self-confidence in the ultimate triumph of Western liberal democracy seems at its close to be returning full circle to where it started: not to an "end of ideology" or a convergence between capitalism and socialism, as earlier predicted, but to an unabashed victory of economic and political liberalism.226

Fukuyama declares that the “triumph of the West” in the Cold War exposed the fact that any and all “viable systematic alternatives to Western liberalism” had been exhausted in the market of ideas. This is marked not only by political reform, but by the embrace of Western consumerism:

This phenomenon extends beyond high politics and it can be seen also in the ineluctable spread of consumerist Western culture in such diverse contexts as the peasants’ markets and color television sets now omnipresent throughout China, the cooperative restaurants and clothing stores opened in the past year in Moscow, the Beethoven piped into Japanese department stores, and the rock music enjoyed alike in Prague, Rangoon, and Tehran.227

Communism as a whole, Fukuyama notes, is dead, and while there may be ideological holdouts the world over, they are marginal and, in the end, insignificant in the face of the future:

The passing of Marxism-Leninism first from China and then from the Soviet Union will mean its death as a living ideology of world historical significance. For while there may be some isolated true believers left in places like Managua, Pyongyang, or Cambridge, Massachusetts, the fact that there is not a single large state in which it is a going concern undermines completely its pretensions to being in the vanguard of human history.228

Throughout the 1990s there was, as Krauthammer puts it, a “holiday from history,” where the “unipolar moment” of American preeminence was pushed to the wayside in favor of international multilateralism. September 11, he claims, “reminded us

227 Ibid.
228 Ibid, 18.
rudely that history had not ended.”²²⁹ In an address to the American Enterprise Institute, Krauthammer expounded upon his policy of democratic globalism. The urge to take on the world with military might must be suppressed, he argues:

The danger of democratic globalism is its universalism, its open-ended commitment to human freedom, its temptation to plant the flag of democracy everywhere. It must learn to say no. And indeed, it does say no. But when it says no to Liberia, or Congo, or Burma, or countenances alliances with authoritarian rulers in places like Pakistan or, for that matter, Russia, it stands accused of hypocrisy. Which is why we must articulate criteria for saying yes. Where to intervene? Where to bring democracy? Where to nation-build? I propose a single criterion: where it counts.²³⁰

Krauthammer instead proposes an alternative to democratic idealism, where the commitment of US military might is done only when it is called for in the defense of US strategic interests:

Call it democratic realism. And this is its axiom: We will support democracy everywhere, but we will commit blood and treasure only in places where there is a strategic necessity – meaning, places central to the larger war against the existential enemy, the enemy that poses a global mortal threat to freedom.²³¹

Krauthammer offers a historical perspective to his proposed theory. In Germany and Japan, the militant spread of democracy “counted” in the face of the global threat of fascism during World War 2. Later, these foundations provided a bulwark against a growing communist threat. Today, Iraq “counts” thanks to the global threat to freedom created by the spread and use of terrorism. He also criticizes foreign policy realists, who complain of the overreaching idealism of creating a liberal democracy in the Middle East:

Realists have been warning against the hubris of thinking we can transform an alien culture because of some postulated natural and universal human will to freedom. And they may yet be right. But how do they know in advance? Half a century ago, we heard the same confident warnings about the imperviousness to democracy of Confucian culture. That proved stunningly wrong. Where is it written that Arabs are incapable of democracy?²³²

²²⁹ Krauthammer, Charles, “In Defense of Democratic Realism.”
²³¹ Ibid.
²³² Ibid.
Krauthammer’s ideas were loudly refuted, however, by Fukuyama. In his article, entitled “The Neoconservative Moment,” he derides Krauthammer’s excessive idealism and zeal for the export of democracy to the Middle East:

Of all of the different views that have now come to be associated with neoconservatives, the strangest one to me was the confidence that the United States could transform Iraq into a Western-style democracy, and go on from there to democratize the broader Middle East. It struck me as strange precisely because these same neoconservatives had spent much of the past generation warning about the dangers of ambitious social engineering, and how social planners could never control behavior or deal with unanticipated consequences. If the United States cannot eliminate poverty or raise test scores in Washington, DC, how does it expect to bring democracy to a part of the world that has stubbornly resisted it and is virulently anti-American to boot?²³³

Fukuyama goes on to confront the criticism often laid upon those who don’t believe the Middle East is capable of Democracy. He acknowledges the success of the democratization of Germany and Japan, but he also warns that while this is true, it is excessively idealistic:

Possibility is not likelihood, and good policy is not made by staking everything on a throw of the dice. Culture is not destiny, but culture plays an important role in making possible certain kinds of institutions—something that is usually taken to be a conservative insight. Though I, more than most people, am associated with the idea that history’s arrow points to democracy, I have never believed that democracies can be created anywhere and everywhere through sheer political will. Prior to the Iraq War, there were many reasons for thinking that building a democratic Iraq was a task of a complexity that would be nearly unmanageable. Some reasons had to do with the nature of Iraqi society: the fact that it would be decompressing rapidly from totalitarianism, its ethnic divisions, the role of politicized religion, the society’s propensity for violence, its tribal structure and the dominance of extended kin and patronage networks, and its susceptibility to influence from other parts of the Middle East that were passionately anti-American.²³⁴

Fukuyama denounces the neoconservative ideological tenet of the unilateral export of democracy, believing the US should exercise its power more judiciously than it did prior to the war:

²³⁴ Ibid.
This means doing the simple work of diplomacy and coalition-building that the Bush Administration seemed reluctant to undertake prior to the Iraq War and not gratuitously to insult the "common opinions of mankind." We do not need to embrace the UN or multilateralism for its own sake, because we somehow believe that such institutions are inherently more legitimate than nation-states. On the other hand, we need likeminded allies to accomplish both the realist and idealist portions of our agenda and should spend much more time and energy cultivating them.\textsuperscript{235}

Fukuyama understands the need to be able to utilize unilateral might, but argues that the exercise of such power must be more prudent. He also argues that abandoning international institutions in the name of exporting democracy is fallacious – historically, those who helped create the new democratic institutions in Japan and Germany also helped create such international institutions as the UN and NATO.\textsuperscript{236}

Krauthammer responded to Fukuyama’s criticisms, claiming that while he offers “a probing critique of democratic realism,” he also “demonstrates inadvertently how little the critics have to offer as an alternative.”\textsuperscript{237} He defends his views, claiming that Fukuyama is wrong in his claims that there is no “existential threat” to freedom. Said Fukuyama:

\begin{quote}
There have been such threats in the past: the Soviet Union could have annihilated us physically and conceivably could have subverted democracy in North America. But it is questionable whether any such existential threats exist now. Iraq before the U.S. invasion was certainly not one: It posed an existential threat to Kuwait, Iran and Israel, but it had no means of threatening the continuity of our regime. Al-Qaeda and other radical Islamist groups aspire to be existential threats to American civilization but do not currently have anything like the capacity to actualize their vision: They are extremely dangerous totalitarians, but pose threats primarily to regimes in the Middle East.\textsuperscript{238}
\end{quote}

Krauthammer disagrees vehemently, claiming the defining aspect of an existential threat is not its capability, but its intent. Intent, he says, is what unites every such threat the US has faced in its modern history: Hitler, when he reoccupied the Rhineland in 1936, did not have the current capability to be a threat, but his intent to expand and create a thousand-year Reich made him one. Communism, which had the capability to be a threat,

\textsuperscript{235} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{236} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{237} Krauthammer, “In Defense of Democratic Realism.”
\textsuperscript{238} Fukuyama, “The Neoconservative Moment.”
intended to spread and eradicate capitalism around the world. Both were existential threats based not primarily on their capability, but on their intent. In this respect, militant Islam is indeed an existential threat.\footnote{Krauthammer, “In Defense of Democratic Realism.”}

Krauthammer holds that democracy is the key to pacifying the Middle East, and exporting democracy and supporting democratic institutions, a key tenet of a neoconservative foreign policy, is the surest way to counter an existential threat. George W. Bush subscribes to this theory, believing the surest way to end the threat to American freedom and ideals is to instill democracy in a volatile region and facilitate its spread. The pacifying nature of democracy would then run its course, creating an environment no longer detrimental to American interests in the region.

Krauthammer claims, and correctly so, that there are actually two separate schools of thought in neoconservative foreign policy: democratic globalism and democratic realism. Democratic globalism, as he explains in his articles and columns, is espoused by George W. Bush and his cabinet, and holds that no matter what, the export of democracy, by force if necessary, is a moral and good thing, and a prime thrust of foreign policy. Democratic realism, the flavor advocated by Krauthammer, advises more prudent use of force based on the interests of the US, but a general support of democratic values abroad.\footnote{Ibid.}

These two schools of thought converge, however, in Iraq, where Fukuyama does not and Krauthammer does see an existential threat. By implanting the seeds of democracy in the geographic center of militant Islam, the threat it poses to US security and interests would be pacified.

**Global Hegemony**

Harvard political scientist Samuel P. Huntington asserted the following in a 1993 article:

A world without US primacy will be a world with more violence and disorder and less democracy and economic growth than a world where the United States continues to have more influence than any other country in shaping global affairs. The sustained international primacy of the United States is central to the welfare and security of Americans and to the future.
of freedom, democracy, open economies, and international order in the world.\textsuperscript{241}

The overriding principle in neoconservative foreign policy is not that of support for democratic institutions, but instead the continuation of America’s status as the world’s sole superpower, both for the benefit of America and for the benefit of the world as a whole.

Krauthammer wrote a piece describing the creation of this unique status in the aftermath of the Cold War:

The most striking feature of the post-Cold War world is its unipolarity. No doubt, multipolarity will come in time. In perhaps another generation or so there will be great powers coequal with the United States, and the world will, in structure, resemble the pre-World War I era. But we are not there yet, nor will we be for decades. Now is the unipolar moment.\textsuperscript{242}

The threats of the old order are no longer a threat. As Fukuyama proclaimed, communism has failed, and liberal democracy has triumphed. The new threat, Krauthammer claims, is from what he terms “the Weapon State,” and it is a distinction and prediction that has proven quite prescient.\textsuperscript{243}

The Weapon State, Krauthammer argues, is a state that has developed the ability to create and project unconventional weaponry such as biological, nuclear, and chemical weapons. These weapons give marginal states the ability to multiply power almost exponentially, and the prototype for this kind of threat in 1991 is Iraq:

It was inconceivable that a relatively small Middle Eastern state with an almost entirely imported industrial base could do anything more than threaten its neighbors. The central truth of the coming era is that this is no longer the case: relatively small, peripheral and backwards states will be able to emerge rapidly as threats not only to regional, but to world, security.\textsuperscript{244}

Thusly, he claims, the post-Cold War world is best called “the era of weapons of mass destruction.” The greatest single threat to world security, Krauthammer claims, would come from nations with the ability to project their unconventional arsenals across broad

\textsuperscript{243} \textit{Ibid.}, 30.
\textsuperscript{244} \textit{Ibid.}
During the Clinton era, the Clinton administration chose to take issues on a case-by-case basis, acting only multilaterally when it comes to the need for military action, and getting involved in areas not vital to US security interests. It is safe to say, in this respect, that the Clinton administration had no foreign policy. This led many neoconservatives to deride sharply both the Clinton non-policy and the Republican Party, which was doing seemingly nothing to help the situation.

In 1996, William Kristol and Robert Kagan wrote a policy call-to-arms for the Republican Party, outlining what they believe to be the correct path to take regarding US foreign policy and the role of the US in a unipolar world:

What should that role be? Benevolent global hegemony. Having defeated the "evil empire," the United States enjoys strategic and ideological predominance. The first objective of U.S. foreign policy should be to preserve and enhance that predominance by strengthening America's security, supporting its friends, advancing its interests, and standing up for its principles around the world.246

US military and economic preeminence is a fact of life, they posit, and as a whole, "Americans fail to notice that they have never had it so good."247 Criticism of such a policy falls flat, they argue, particularly when the claim is made that the world would fall in line against the US if it aggressively pursued this policy:

America's allies are in a better position than those who are not its allies. Most of the world's major powers welcome U.S. global involvement and prefer America's benevolent hegemony to the alternatives. Instead of having to compete for dominant global influence with many other powers, therefore, the United States finds both the Europeans and the Japanese – after the United States, the two most powerful forces in the world – supportive of its world leadership role. Those who anticipated the dissolution of these alliances once the common threat of the Soviet Union disappeared have been proved wrong. The principal concern of America's allies these days is not that it will be too dominant but that it will withdraw.248

Global hegemony relies mostly upon the military might of the United States, and that might should be exercised in areas prudent to elevating the sole-superpower status of the

---

245 Ibid, 31-32.
248 Ibid, 21-22.
US and the stability of the region in which action is partaken.

In an effort to promote their ideals of a “neo-Reaganite” foreign policy, Kristol and Kagan founded PNAC. This organization became the center of conspiratorial accusations because of the similarities between the policies it advocated and the policies of the Bush administration. The accusations are not unfounded, however – many members of the Bush administration are also signatories of the organization’s statement of principles. In September of 2000, just in time for the election of George W. Bush as Clinton’s successor, the organization published a white paper entitled *Rebuilding America’s Defenses*. In this document, the group, (which counts as its members Paul Wolfowitz, Richard Perle, Donald Rumsfeld, Douglas Feith, I. Lewis Libby, Dick Cheney, and Zalmay Khalilzad) declared that the organization was a logical extension of the *Defense Planning Guidance* document from 1992:

> In broad terms, we saw the project as building upon the defense strategy outlined by the Cheney Defense Department in the waning days of the Bush Administration. The Defense Policy Guidance (DPG) drafted in the early months of 1992 provided a blueprint for maintaining U.S. preeminence, precluding the rise of a great power rival, and shaping the international security order in line with American principles and interests.²⁴⁹

The members of PNAC believe retention of the sole-superpower status of the US after the Cold War should be maintained at all costs, ensuring the benevolent global hegemony Kristol and Kagan advocated originally in 1996.²⁵⁰

In 2000, Kristol and Kagan edited a book of essays concerning their proposed policy of global hegemony, arguing that the inherent good of America and its values make the policy just:

> The American-led world that emerged after the Cold War is a more just world than any imaginable alternative. A multipolar world, in which power is shared more equally among great powers – including China and Russia – would be far more dangerous, and it would also be far less congenial to democracy and to individual liberties. Americans should understand that their support for American pre-eminence is as much a strike for international justice as any people is capable of making. It is also a strike for American interests, and for what might be called the American

²⁴⁹ Donnelly, ii.
Kristol and Kagan published the book as a logical extension of *Defense Planning Guidance* of 1992, their “Towards a neo-Reaganite Foreign Policy” article, and the creation of PNAC. As illustrated by these organizations and its members, the concept of benevolent global hegemony is the crux of a neoconservative foreign policy.

**Iraq and the Hegemonic Puzzle**

Global hegemony can be seen as the sum of a large number of parts. It relies on multi-regional hegemony and, importantly, resource management. In order to retain global hegemony, the hegemon must keep dominance in each specific area, separately from the others. Former Carter National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski likened it to a “grand chessboard,” but it’s perhaps best viewed as a world-sized jigsaw puzzle, each specific region representing a piece. Full hegemonic control could only be facilitated by dominating all regions, completing the puzzle.

The Persian Gulf and Central Asia are incredibly important pieces of this puzzle, containing large amounts of natural resources which, under consolidated control, could propel a regionally dominant force into a global rival, either economically, politically, or militarily. Iraq is central in this region for one reason: Saddam Hussein.

Saddam Hussein’s oft-stated long-term objective was, put simply, regional dominance. This was the underlying reason behind his invasions of both Iran and Kuwait, in which he intended to seize and consolidate control of the southern Iranian and Kuwaiti oilfields. Even after the punishing retaliation and sanctions resulting from the 1990 invasion of Kuwait, Hussein still regarded the eventual reconquest of Kuwait as simply a matter of time.

By putting the regions of these resources under consolidated control, Hussein would be able to nearly dictate the price of oil as he saw fit, cutting off production or flooding the markets whenever he chose. With a world running on fuel pumped from the sands of the Arabian Peninsula and Middle East, this would be a huge stumbling block to...
any global hegemon’s ambitions.

In this respect, Iraq was a threat to the US and its interests. By keeping an important piece of the hegemonic puzzle from being put in place for the US, Hussein would have been able to challenge US leadership. It is in this capacity that Iraq was a larger threat than Iran and North Korea. North Korea is buttressed by a strong Japan and an increasingly powerful China, both of which want to keep the unpredictable Kim Jong-II from “acting up” and creating some form of armed conflict in the region. Iran, while militantly anti-American and ardent supporters of terrorism abroad, particularly in Israel, has not invaded a surrounding country\(^{254}\) and has never acted upon a clearly enumerated regional ambition. Both countries also had a larger capacity to cause huge loss of life in a military conflict. With North Korea able to level Seoul with massive artillery barrages within hours of conflict, and Iran proving it had the stomach for a war of attrition with human wave attacks and a much larger and better-equipped military than Iraq, Iraq was, of the three, an easier target.

Additionally, the US had a pretext for a confrontation with Iraq – the 1991 Gulf War. America has, in a sense, been in an almost defacto state of war with Hussein’s regime, enforcing UN sanctions and resolutions and punishing the regime for infractions. No such military pretext existed with either Iran or North Korea.

In 1996, Zalmay Khalilzad iterated this hegemonic concern in an editorial, stating:

> The US needs to be vigilant and needs to exercise its influence. As the preeminent world power, the US can shape the Persian Gulf and other critical regions in a positive direction. Failure to do so will open the door to would-be regional hegemons and cause great strife and instability.\(^{255}\)

Being a hegemonic force in the world is not simple. It brings to bear several political realities, which are necessary in retaining a state of global hegemony: the principles of unilateral action and military preemption.

---

\(^{254}\) During the Iran-Iraq War, Iran did in fact invade Iraq in a counteroffensive, but only after Iraq first invaded and occupied Iranian territory.

In his 2004 State of the Union address, George W. Bush expressed a sense of
bewilderment on behalf of those who were a part of the “Coalition of the Willing” that
invaded Iraq in 2003.

Some critics have said our duties in Iraq must be internationalized. This
particular criticism is hard to explain to our partners in Britain, Australia,
Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, Thailand, Italy, Spain, Poland,
Denmark, Hungary, Bulgaria, Ukraine, Romania, the Netherlands,
Norway, El Salvador, and the 17 other countries that have committed
troops to Iraq. As we debate at home, we must never ignore the vital
contributions of our international partners, or dismiss their sacrifices.  

Despite this rhetoric, there is little doubt the invasion of Iraq was undertaken unilaterally.
The coalition, pieced together during the run-up to the war, generally had personal
national incentives to support the invasion (even if support is simply token in nature), and
those that didn’t were coerced or convinced by the US in a multitude of ways. Most of
New Europe  signed an agreement to aid the coalition, including Albania, Bulgaria,
Croatia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia. Of all
of those, only Croatia isn’t in line to join NATO, something they all have in their best
interests. All new memberships into NATO must be approved by all NATO members,
meaning the US could block or delay admissions if it saw fit. Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait,
Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates are all militarily dependent on
the US, through arms purchases, training, and the presence of U.S. bases, all of which
also aid their respective regimes in retaining power. Additionally, $5 billion in grants and
$10 billion in loans were offered to Turkey, as well as a promise to send 1,700 more
troops to help combat Abu Sayyaf in the Philippines. Costa Rica, which has no military,
also looks to benefit from being a moral ally with the US, as it is currently in the middle
of negotiating a free-trade agreement between Central America and the US. 

It goes without saying that the interests of the US are not the interests of the world
at large. It is in part because of this that a global hegemon must be both able and willing

---

257 “New Europe” is a term used to refer mainly to the new states of Central and Eastern Europe, while
“Old Europe” was meant to refer to the larger states, including Germany and France. It was intended, in a
sense, to be used as an insult, as the states of Old Europe generally did not offer support for the invasion.
258 Anderson, Sarah, Phyllis Bennis, and John Cavanagh, “Coalition of the Willing or Coalition of the
to undertake a unilateral effort. This is not to say neoconservatives hate or avoid a multilateral approach, a common assertion. According to Richard Perle:

   Multilateralism is fine in principle. What is not fine is having our interests adversely affected by the inability to gain a sufficient degree of multilateral support. And what is not fine is subsuming US interests, particularly where security is concerned, in some larger notion that, if the only option is unilateral, we should be paralyzed. So, multilateralism is preferable, if we can get a consensus. But if the only way you can get a consensus is by abandoning your most fundamental interests, then it is not helpful.  

This sentiment is echoed by the president himself, who in his 2004 State of the Union address stated that “there is a difference, however, between leading a coalition of many nations, and submitting to the objections of a few. America will never seek a permission slip to defend the security of our people.”

   This belief in unilateralism is buttressed by an interesting neoconservative tendency to view the world in a simple dichotomy of good and evil. During the Cold War, the US was Reagan’s “City on the Hill,” while the Soviet Union was the “Evil Empire.” It is, in a sense, the responsibility of the good nations to confront or destroy the evil ones. In this respect, by destroying the evil of Hussein’s regime, good has been accomplished not just for the US, but for the world as well. In other words, in its most simple of terms, “what’s good for America is good for the world.” This is echoed by Condoleezza Rice, who in a 2000 article wrote:

   To be sure, there is nothing wrong with doing something that benefits all humanity, but that is, in a sense, a second-order effect. America’s pursuit of the national interest will create conditions that promote freedom, markets, and peace.

   This is all, of course, subject to enormous amounts of criticism within not only the international community, but in the US as well. When neoconservatives consult with other nations, some argue, it is not an effort to identify common ground or build common positions and enumerate common goals, but is undertaken to simply gain support for US policies. Multilateralism (or the specter of it) is not designed to act on a common interest,

---

but serves as a vehicle for the support only for US interests.\textsuperscript{262} This is supported easily by the words of Rice:

So multilateral agreements and institutions should not be ends in themselves. U.S. interests are served by having strong alliances and can be promoted within the U.N. and other multilateral organizations, as well as through well-crafted international agreements.\textsuperscript{263}

Many former and even current members of the executive establishment are against or very cautious towards a unilateral policy, arguing against its effectiveness in a war not against nation-states, but against underground terrorist networks. This includes such men as Colin Powell, Brent Scowcroft, Richard Armitage, Richard Haas, and Dennis Ross.\textsuperscript{264} Says Ross:

But if we're looking at problems like terrorism, terrorism by definition requires a coalition, because it depends upon intelligence, and it can't only be our intelligence. It depends upon law enforcement, and it can't only be our law enforcement. It depends upon cutting financial flows, and we can't do that unilaterally. So there are, by definition, certain issues – whether it's terrorism or its environment or its health, like AIDS – these are each problems that are going to have to be taken on, on a multilateral basis. Proliferation, much the same.\textsuperscript{265}

Senior Fellow at the Center for Defense Information John Newhouse writes that unilateralism is threatening not just to the rest of the world, but to the United States as well:

America’s oldest allies continue to wonder why the administration has laid siege to the world order. International law and the web of multinational institutions are inherently useful to the United States because of its special responsibilities to discourage conflict and instability. The Bush preference for operating unilaterally… ignores a basic fact of international life: America and the rest of the world are interdependent, and have been, to one degree or another, for a long time. To take one in an extensive list of examples, the United States is the world’s biggest debtor, its current account running nearly half again higher than its defense spending. Sustaining this state of affairs is likely to require not just fiscal discipline, but multilateral cooperation.\textsuperscript{266}

\textsuperscript{263} Rice, “Promoting the National Interest,” 47-48.
\textsuperscript{265} Ross, Dennis, interview with \textit{PBS' Frontline}, January 27, 2003.
\textsuperscript{266} Newhouse, John, \textit{Imperial America} (New York: Knopf, 2003), 171.
The general tilt towards a preference or stomach for unilateral action is not a new concept. In 1985, Charles Krauthammer wrote:

Global unilateralism is not really a choice; it is an existing reality. The European democracies, exhausted by two world wars, depleted and turned inward, did decide to place the ultimate responsibility for their safety in the hands of the United States. It is a fact, unpleasant perhaps, but a fact nonetheless.267

Even earlier, Irving Kristol argues that alliances and military treaties with other nations are a detrimental and negative arrangement, particularly with America at the pinnacle of its power. Deferring to the votes of other nations whose help we simply do not and would not need is ridiculous. He brings up the example of the Organization of American States, established in 1948 as an alliance between states in North and South America. The organizational alliance officially gives every member state the ability to veto the use of force by any member nation, like, Kristol says, “a mini-United Nations where we can be voted down in only three languages, thereby saving translator’s fees.”268

Unilateralism is not the first choice in any situation where the use of force is an option. Neoconservatives don’t disdain multilateralism as a whole, but see its usefulness in a different light. Liberal internationalists and other foreign policy camps view international alliances and groups such as NATO and the UN as a way to find and define common interests in need of military or diplomatic actions (such as sanctions). Neoconservatives tend to view such institutions as a means to propel and sell the importance of US interests, not international ones. This is buttressed by the view that American interests are, in a defacto sense, the interests of the world. Multilateralism is acceptable and in fact preferable, but only when it supports the aims and goals of US national security or economic interests.

**Striking First**

The other policy corollary of being and actively attempting to stay a global hegemon is the concept of preemptive military action, especially in the framework of the

---

War on Terror. Many argue, including former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, that the traditional rules of international interaction have significantly been altered in the face of a global threat from terrorism and terrorist organizations. Says Kissinger:

On September 11, the world entered a new period in which private, non-state organizations have proved capable of threatening national and international security by stealth attacks. At bottom it is a debate between the traditional notion of sovereignty and the adaptation required by modern technology and the nature of the terrorist threat.269

In the face of this new order, Bush has enumerated a policy of preemptive military force in his First Strike Doctrine, which was revealed in the 2002 National Security Strategy of the United States:

While the United States will constantly strive to enlist the support of the international community, we will not hesitate to act alone, if necessary, to exercise our right of self defense by acting preemptively against such terrorists, to prevent them from doing harm against our people and our country.270

The document further attempts to justify the existence of a doctrine or policy of preemption:

Legal scholars and international jurists often conditioned the legitimacy of preemption on the existence of an imminent threat—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. Rogue states and terrorists do not seek to attack us using conventional means. They know such attacks would fail. Instead, they rely on acts of terror and, potentially, the use of weapons of mass destruction—weapons that can be easily concealed, delivered covertly, and used without warning... To forestall or prevent such hostile acts by our adversaries, the United States will, if necessary, act preemptively.271

All of these definitions and justifications point towards an imminent threat. But was Iraq an imminent threat, or an imminent enough of a threat to justify preemptive military action?

The Bush administration has given muddled answers to such a direct question, especially in the aftermath of the 2003 invasion. Prior to the invasion, the administration

269 Kissinger, “Coming Days of Justice.”
271 Ibid, 15.
expressed no doubt of the danger posed by the Hussein regime, saying that the threat was, in no uncertain terms, an imminent one. For example, Donald Rumsfeld stated:

Some have argued that the nuclear threat from Iraq is not imminent - that Saddam is at least 5-7 years away from having nuclear weapons. I would not be so certain. And we should be just as concerned about the immediate threat from biological weapons. Iraq has these weapons.\textsuperscript{272}

The following day, he repeated his belief, claiming that “no terrorist state poses a greater or more immediate threat to the security of our people and the stability of the world than the regime of Saddam Hussein in Iraq.”\textsuperscript{273} When asked if Hussein’s regime posed an imminent threat to the US, Press Secretary Ari Fleischer and his successor, Scott McClellan, answered quickly in the affirmative.

After a search for the weapons that were the basis of such claims of imminence turned up empty, the administration backtracked, downplaying their depiction of Hussein’s weapons programs and ties to terrorism as creating an imminent threat. Rumsfeld himself stated on CBS’ \textit{Face the Nation}:

Well, you're the – you and a few other critics are the only people I've heard use the phrase ‘immediate threat.’ I didn't. The president didn't. And it's become kind of folklore that that's – that's what's happened… if you have any citations, I'd like to see 'em.\textsuperscript{274}

When confronted with his previous statements, he claimed that the statements made and the case for war was presented by way of the best possible intelligence the US and the world intelligence community had at the time.

On September 30, 2004, the Duelfer Report relayed the findings of the Special Advisor to the Director of Central Intelligence on Iraq’s weapons programs to Congress and the world. The report stated that Hussein’s weapons programs had been essentially destroyed in 1991 following the first Gulf War, but Hussein retained the desire to reinstate his programs if sanctions were to be lifted, and the primary motivation for such a policy was not the US, but Iran. Concerning Hussein’s nuclear program, the report states:

Saddam Husayn [sic] ended the nuclear program in 1991 following the

\textsuperscript{272} Rumsfeld, Donald, testimony before the House Armed Services Committee, September 18, 2002.
\textsuperscript{273} Rumsfeld, Donald, testimony before the House Armed Services Committee, September 19, 2002.
\textsuperscript{274} Rumsfeld, Donald, interview on \textit{CBS’ Face the Nation}, March 14, 2004.
Gulf war. [The Iraq Survey Group] found no evidence to suggest concerted efforts to restart the program. Although Saddam clearly assigned a high value to the nuclear progress and talent that had been developed up to the 1991 war, the program ended and the intellectual capital decayed in the succeeding years.275

Two weeks prior to the invasion, Mohammed el-Baradei of the UN International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) made it the findings of the renewed inspections regime concerning Hussein’s nuclear capabilities very clear:

One, there is no indication of resumed nuclear activities in those buildings that were identified through the use of satellite imagery as being reconstructed or newly erected since 1998, nor any indication of nuclear-related prohibited activities at any inspected sites. Second, there is no indication that Iraq has attempted to import uranium since 1990. Third, there is no indication that Iraq has attempted to import aluminium tubes for use in centrifuge enrichment. Moreover, even had Iraq pursued such a plan, it would have encountered practical difficulties in manufacturing centrifuges out of the aluminium tubes in question. Fourth, although we are still reviewing issues related to magnets and magnet production, there is no indication to date that Iraq imported magnets for use in a centrifuge enrichment programme.276

This is all in very stark contrast to Vice President Dick Cheney’s statement only three days before the war began, on NBC’s Meet the Press:

We know he has been absolutely devoted to trying to acquire nuclear weapons. And we believe he has, in fact, reconstituted nuclear weapons. I think Mr. el-Baradei frankly is wrong. And I think if you look at the track record of the International Atomic Energy Agency on this kind of issue, especially where Iraq’s concerned, they have consistently underestimated or missed what Saddam Hussein was doing.277

It would seem, given the evidence, that despite real-time evidence to the contrary, Cheney and his coterie of neoconservative policymakers did everything in their power to convince the public the need to go to war was dire enough to forego a UN resolution authorizing it, contradicting the reports of the inspection regime.

The doctrine of preemption, like unilateralism, has garnered plenty of criticism. Says Newhouse:

---

A doctrine of preemption that relied on very high quality intelligence to identify an impending attack well in advance and then head it off would not raise eyebrows. But Bush’s doctrine is based instead on prevention and preeminence – that is taking military power to a level never before seen, one that would so intimidate all parties that no one would consider an attack of any kind against the United States. Threats to US interests would not just be discourage but precluded.  

Newhouse criticizes the drive for preemptive warfare against Iraq as one that doesn’t pass the intelligence test – that is, the intelligence that was offered up for justification, “whether flawed or willfully manipulated, was deceptive.”

The doctrine of preemptive warfare also draws ire from those concerned with the following of international law, particularly in regards to the UN charter and its statutes. Says Professor Roger Coate of the Richard L. Walker Institute of International Studies at the University of South Carolina:

In delineating the new US policy of acting preemptively (that is, preventively) against terrorists and rogue states that harbor them, the president implied that he, and he alone, had the right and the authority to make such a determination This policy runs counter to both the intent and the letter of the UN Charter and the international legal principles that underlie it.

To Coate, the world’s only surviving superpower after the Cold War and the world’s preeminent military power has done much to destroy international law and order:

But the fact of the matter is that the head of government of the world’s only remaining superpower, whose military might in 2004 looms larger than all other states combined, has launched on a new military doctrine that threatens to destroy the normative underpinnings of twentieth-century international relations norms.

These claims are repeated by former Reagan administration official Clyde Prestowitz in his book *Rogue Nation*:

This dramatic new doctrine of supremacy and preemptive attack not only reversed years of American national security policy, it also struck at the heart of the Treaty of Westphalia, which has underpinned the modern international system of nation states for more than three hundred years…

---

278 Newhouse, 12.
281 Ibid.
Bush’s doctrine also seemed both to contravene the Charter of the United Nations, which outlaws the “threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state,” and to contradict the conclusions of the Nuremberg trials that treated “preemptive war” as a war crime.\textsuperscript{282}

Another common criticism leveled against such a doctrine is the precedent it could possibly set for other countries. For example, Russia:

[One] model may be defined as the "green light" model. Under this view, Russia -- as a respected part of the international community -- has the right to do anything the United States has the right to do. This is regarded as the powerful engine for a so-called active Russian foreign policy -- first of all near its borders and within the scope of traditional geopolitical influence. This model of strategic thought is held by many as applicable to the current crisis in Russian-Georgian relations over the Pankisi Gorge, since it reflects Russian tactical interests in this dispute.\textsuperscript{283}

China, too, could potentially use such a precedent for military action against Taiwan, as it, too, is within the scope of their strategic interests. There is, to say the least, a rather large amount of uneasiness caused by this policy of preemptive warfare. Coate weighs in on this fact, stating that preemptive warfare, “even more than terrorism, is the greatest long-term challenge to global peace and stability in the new millennium.”\textsuperscript{284}

This all lends itself to show that divorced from an “imminent threat,” Iraq was still very much on the radar. The Hussein regime created a problem for the neoconservative heavyweights insisting on a policy advancing the global hegemony of the US. The weakening policy of containment during the Clinton era created what they felt was a perception of weakness and a lack of willingness to lead. Hussein, they believed, was only biding his time until the inevitable lifting or nullification of the effectiveness of the sanctions regime. Upon the end of the effectiveness of containment or lifting of sanctions, Hussein would enact a speedy military buildup, and his hostility in the region will begin anew, leading possibly to Hussein’s domination of the region, which would directly counter US influence in the area. In a neoconservative framework divorced from the constraints of public opinion, this was justification enough for war.

CHAPTER 3
SEARCHING FOR A PRE-9/11 INVASION POLICY

“The next time [Hussein challenges the United States], we would invade Iraq with the aim of liberating the country from his control.”285
-Zalmay Khalilzad

The final question to answer is probably the most contentious of all: did administration neoconservatives advocate the forced disarmament or toppling of the Hussein regime through military means prior to the events of September 11, 2001, which provided the pretext for the invasion?

The answer to this question is best determined by looking into statements made by Bush policy neoconservatives between the end of Operation Desert Storm in 1991 and the 2003 invasion of Iraq. Since the end of the first Gulf War, many influential neoconservative thinkers and policymakers have written prolifically on Iraq, via the editorial pages of major newspapers, several articles in political journals, official policy papers, and policy white papers from neoconservative organizations and think-tanks.

Focusing on the most prominent neoconservatives that currently do or have held positions in George W. Bush’s administration, their writings and actions concerning policy towards Hussein’s Iraq will be presented and analyzed. From this analysis, it will be determined if the policy enacted by the Bush administration – one of unilateral action against and occupation of Iraq, the toppling of the Hussein regime, and the installation of a democratically elected leadership – was in place prior to September 11, 2001.

There are many that bill themselves as neoconservatives, and even more who have spoken actively concerning US policy towards Iraq. To review and analyze everything these people have written would be a daunting task, and one that could potentially fill volumes. As such, attention will fall on the statements of four of these men, with positions within the Bush administration before and during the 2003 invasion of Iraq. These men are: Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, former Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Douglas Feith, Special Envoy to Afghanistan and former Special Presidential Envoy and Ambassador at Large for the Free Iraqis Zalmay Khalilzad

Khalilzad, and former chairman of the Defense Policy Board Richard Perle. A brief explanation as to why these men were chosen is in order.

**Paul Wolfowitz**

Paul Wolfowitz is considered by many to be the most influential neoconservative in the Department of Defense, and is one of the original “Scoop Jackson” neoconservatives. While he never served directly under Jackson, he did have a long professional relationship with him beginning in 1969, when he was enlisted by Albert Wohlstetter to help draft research papers in support of an anti-ballistic missile system.\(^{286}\)

As Undersecretary of Defense for Policy during the Bush Sr. administration, Wolfowitz was charged with developing the new post-Cold War defense strategy for the Department of Defense, under then-Defense Secretary Dick Cheney, in 1992. Entitled *Defense Planning Guidance*, the document has since become the basis of a neoconservative foreign policy in post-Cold War America.

Most importantly, Wolfowitz is often considered one of the main architects of the 2003 invasion of Iraq, and has written and spoken prolifically on Iraq, offering a very decent and open chronicle of the evolution of the policies he advocated as both a private citizen and, later, as Deputy Secretary of Defense in the George W. Bush administration.

**Douglas Feith**

Feith is another “Scoop Jackson” neoconservative, having served as a staff member for Jackson before serving as a Middle East Specialist in the Reagan administration. Feith is well-known for his advocacy of Israel, and has written several policy papers for former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, several of which mentioned Iraq as an integral part of Israeli policy throughout the 1990s. Feith, like Wolfowitz, is in a policymaking position, serving as Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, the same position Wolfowitz held in the Bush Sr. administration.

**Zalmay Khalilzad**

The influence of Zalmay Khalilzad is significantly underplayed in discussion of

\(^{286}\) Mann, 32.
neoconservative policy. He was the principal author of the 1992 *Defense Planning Guidance*, a task delegated to him by Wolfowitz and I. Lewis Libby in 1992. He is responsible then, in a sense, with being the first to clearly enumerate the post-Cold War neoconservative foreign policy. In 1995, Khalilzad wrote a small piece for the RAND Corporation (for which he worked throughout the 1990s) entitled *From Containment to Global Leadership*, which repeated closely what he wrote in 1992.

Khalilzad has also been very vocal, open, and direct with his policy preferences concerning Iraq, and has written prolifically on the subject, often sharing a byline with Paul Wolfowitz, with whom he served during the Bush Sr. and Reagan administrations. Khalilzad is currently serving as Ambassador to Afghanistan and as a special envoy to both Iraq and Afghanistan, and has acted as Special Presidential Envoy and Ambassador at Large for the Free Iraqis.

**Richard Perle**

Known as the “Prince of Darkness” by Congressional Democrats under the Reagan administration because of his disdain for international treaties, Perle is yet another “Scoop Jackson” neoconservative. He is also another one of the men considered by many to be the chief architect of the 2003 invasion of Iraq. Perle is a close associate of both Feith and Wolfowitz, thanks to their relationship with Jackson and because of their executive time together during the Reagan administration, where Perle served as assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Policy. He has also participated in several conferences with Feith during the 1990s, producing many of the same policy papers for the Israeli PM Netanyahu.

These four men, then, will be used to search for a pre-September 11 policy against Iraq. Searching for a policy of invasion prior to 9/11 is best undertaken chronologically, identifying remarks and written pieces from these men between 1991 and 2003. This is the easiest way to organize and chronicle the evolution of the policies advocated by their neoconservative authors. At the end of each chronological block, a brief summary of Iraq policy points mentioned by the authors will be made, documenting the evolution of the policy and connecting the policy advocations with the Iraq policy of the Bush


1992-1994

Defense Planning Guidance

In 1992, a preliminary draft of the Department of Defense document entitled *Defense Planning Guidance* was leaked to the New York Times by “an official who believes this post-cold-war strategy debate should be carried out in the public domain.”287 This document is rewritten by the Defense Department every two years, and is intended to enumerate overall US military strategy and guides spending for the coming years.288 The drafting of this specific document (herein referred to as DPG-92) was sponsored by then-Defense Secretary Dick Cheney, who gave the responsibility to Paul Wolfowitz. Wolfowitz, in turn, passed the work on to I. Lewis Libby, who then delegated the responsibility to another well-known neoconservative, Zalmay Khalilzad, at that time a member of his staff. Khalilzad then set up a series of meetings in an effort to understand exactly what the DPG-92 document should say. Participants of these meetings included not only Wolfowitz and Libby, but Richard Perle and Albert Wohlstetter, as well. By February of 1992, the early draft of DPG-92 was completed, and then quickly leaked to the press.289

The document is the first neoconservative policy document in the post-Cold War era, and has clear neoconservative policy goals, specifically the goal of retaining the newly-captured sole-superpower status of the US:

Our first objective is to prevent the re-emergence of a new rival, either on the territory of the former Soviet Union or elsewhere, that poses a threat on the order of that posed formerly by the Soviet Union. This is a dominant consideration underlying the new regional defense strategy and requires that we endeavor to prevent any hostile power from dominating a region whose resources would, under consolidated control, be sufficient to generate global power.290

It further highlights regional threats and risks created since the end of the Cold War that

---

287 Tyler, “U.S. Strategy Plan Calls for Insuring No Rivals Develop.”
288 Mann, 209.
290 The original DPG-92 draft is classified and unavailable to the general public in its entirety. Knowledge of its content is derived from press coverage it received at the time it was leaked. Tyler, Patrick, “Excerpts From Pentagon’s Plan: ‘Prevent the Re-Emergence of a New Rival.’”
could be a threat to the dominance of the US, touching on possible conflicts in former Soviet Union, East-Central Europe, East Asia and the Pacific, Latin America, and the Middle East and Southwest Asia.  

Specifically concerning the Middle East:

In the Middle East and Southwest Asia, our overall objective is to remain the predominant outside power in the region and preserve U.S. and Western access to the region's oil. We also seek to deter further aggression in the region, foster regional stability, protect U.S. nationals and property, and safeguard our access to international air and seaways. As demonstrated by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, it remains fundamentally important to prevent a hegemon or alignment of powers from dominating the region. This pertains especially to the Arabian Peninsula. Therefore, we must continue to play a strong role through enhanced deterrence and improved cooperative security.

This draws a distinct parallel to Rumsfeld’s pre-9/11 position on Iraq in Ron Suskind’s book *The Price of Loyalty*, where former Treasury Secretary Paul O’Neill puts his views in the context of his ideology, where Hussein created an “asymmetrical threat” thanks to his objectives of regional dominance and possession of weapons of mass destruction.

The document goes on to focus specifically on Iraq, predicting that international sanctions and embargos would most likely be sufficiently weakened or rendered ineffective by 1995, and with an influx of oil money, Saddam Hussein could rebuild its military and purchase large amounts of military hardware to reequip its tank divisions and air force. Hussein’s objectives of dominating the Persian Gulf would manifest itself again, and Iraqi would again become an aggressor in the region.

The document states that the new military and operational objectives for such an attack would be to “promptly take control of the oil fields and major export terminals in Kuwait and northeastern Saudi Arabia before the U.S and its coalition partners could respond.” This time, however, the United States and its coalition partners would not have a full six months to reinforce the area (as it did during Operation Desert Shield) and deploy a large enough force to the region. The strategy for such an event would be to “deter, defend, and delay” the invading Iraqi military with Saudi and Kuwaiti forces while waiting for a larger force to

---

291 Ibid.
292 Ibid.
295 Tyler, “Excerpts From Pentagon’s Plan: ‘Prevent the Re-Emergence of a New Rival.’”
be assembled. The document predicts that US forces would prevail after 54 days of combat.\textsuperscript{296}

While DPG-92 does not specifically advocate an invasion or occupation of Iraq, it does deride the policy of containment set up by the Bush administration in 1991 and 1992, which was continued by both Clinton administrations, and paints the Hussein regime as a future threat to US hegemony in the region.

When it was leaked to the press, there was a strong backlash against Wolfowitz, who attempted to distance himself from the document and Khalilzad. Cheney, however, outwardly praised it, telling Khalilzad that he had “discovered a new rationale for our role in the world.”\textsuperscript{297}

\textbf{In Exile}

After the inauguration of Bill Clinton, the neoconservatives of the previous administration found themselves abruptly out of work, and their policy preferences out of favor.

The election, however, did not completely excise their influence. Throughout the 1990s, many neoconservatives wrote prolifically on many issues, including missile defense, US-Israeli relations, and foreign policy. This included numerous opinion editorials in many major newspapers, white papers from Washington think-tanks, journal articles, and in straightforward lobbying of Congress to elicit support for their policy goals.

In January 1994, Wolfowitz wrote a piece on Clinton’s first year as president, offering a critique of the new administration’s foreign policy. He attacked the administration’s hesitancy to use force and follow through with its force commitments, criticizing Clinton’s seemingly weak stomach and inability to lead:

The use of force cannot be approached in an experimental way, by dispatching military personnel to Haiti only to withdraw them if they meet opposition; or embarking on a hunt for Aideed to abandon it if it gets difficult.\textsuperscript{298} Nor can leadership be exercised simply by going and asking

\textsuperscript{296} Tyner, “Seven Hypothetical Conflicts Foreseen by the Pentagon.”
\textsuperscript{297} Mann, 211.
\textsuperscript{298} Aideed was the Somali General and warlord US Special Forces in Mogadishu attempted to capture in a sustained campaign that ended in the infamous “Black Hawk Down” incident, which left 18 US soldiers
other countries for their views. What is too rarely appreciated about the leadership that President Bush exercised in putting together the Gulf coalition is that it consisted of much more than placing long-distance phone calls and dispatching Secretary of State James Baker around the world. Most of all it rested on his powerful personal commitment that the United States would get the job done and that countries that signed up with America would not find themselves caught holding the bag.  

His biggest criticism was reserved for Clinton’s willingness to use force in matters that were not issues of national interest, again bringing up Somalia, saying that “President Clinton tried to improve on a modest success and ended up with a sizable fiasco.” He argues that the use of force in Somalia and Haiti were mistakes, detrimental to the image of the United States abroad in terms of the perception of the role of the nation as a world military superpower.

A telling criticism made by Wolfowitz is his opinion on Clinton’s erring towards the doctrine of the multilateral use of force:

This is a particularly odd doctrine at a time when the relative strength of the U.S. is still enormous: the demise of its Cold War competitors has left it with unchallenged military strength. Even with the defense burden reduced to little more than three percent of GNP – roughly half the burden America sustained during the Cold War – the United States is by far the world’s strongest military power.

On Iraq, Wolfowitz states that while containment has been effective on the outset, there is no clear commitment to the policy, which would certainly be tested to the fullest by Iraq, which was, with French support, trying to lift UN sanctions. He warns that if Hussein were to succeed, the stability of the entire region would be threatened:

A victory of that magnitude for Saddam Hussein would be a terrible setback for stability in the Middle East, including the very promising peace process. It also presents the very high likelihood of a repeat Iraqi attack in a few years, but with Saddam Hussein then benefiting from all the helpful analysis that he can read about why he failed in his first attempt.

---


Wolfowitz, “Clinton’s First Year,” 34.

Ibid.

Ibid, 36.

Ibid, 40.
He further takes Clinton to task on an ineffective and weak policy against Hussein:

Yet there is no sign so far of any high-level attention to this problem. And despite all the earlier criticism of President Bush by the new president and vice president, the Clinton administration has done virtually nothing to call Iraq to account for its renewed claims on Kuwait, its border incursions, its oppression of Shia in the south, or its war crimes in Kuwait.303

He also mentions the military response to the assassination attempt of George H.W. Bush, once it was uncovered, calling the effect “negligible, hardly proportionate to the enormity of what the Iraqis tried to do.”304

Summary

Modern neoconservative foreign policy was created in the 1992 DPG-92 document, written by Khalilzad and supervised by Wolfowitz. In it, the idea of retaining the sole-superpower status of the US was created as the dominant thrust of foreign policy. Following the election of Bill Clinton to the presidency, neoconservative policy fell to the wayside, but neoconservatives were not silent concerning Iraq. Wolfowitz questioned the validity of a doctrine of multilateralism, and warned about the possible collapse of containment of the Hussein regime. Wolfowitz’ rhetoric on the unilateral use of force and the unbridled strength of American power is a keen reflection of his views as a neoconservative. A correlation can easily be drawn from his not-so-kind words on the doctrine of multilateralism with the execution of the 2003 Iraq War, where one of the main criticisms against the war in Iraq was that the US acted “unilaterally,” without the aid of the UN or America’s close allies in Europe.

1995-1996

Ahmed Chalabi and the INC

In 2002, Ahmed Chalabi was rocketed into the international spotlight as the most

303 Ibid.
304 Ibid.
likely successor of Saddam Hussein as president of Iraq,\textsuperscript{305} thanks in part to his close relationship with the neoconservatives in the Bush administration. Before embarking on a discussion or analysis of the events in Iraq in 1995, the relationship of Chalabi with neoconservatives in Washington needs to be explored and discussed, as does his history with Iraq and Saddam Hussein.

Chalabi’s father was a Shiite member of the Council of Ministers and the president of the Senate under King Faisal II until the military coup led by Abdel Karim Kassem deposed him in 1958. Because of his close ties to the Hashemite monarchy, the elder Chalabi and his family fled to Jordan, when young Ahmed was 13.\textsuperscript{306}

From Jordan he found himself in Lebanon, the United Kingdom, and finally, the US, where he earned a Master’s Degree in mathematics from MIT, and a doctorate in mathematics from the University of Chicago.\textsuperscript{307} While a student in Chicago, he became acquainted with theorist Albert Wohlstetter, one of the greatest influences in the neoconservative movement.\textsuperscript{308}

Chalabi found his way back to the Middle East, taking a teaching post at the American University of Beirut. In 1977, when Chalabi was 32 years old, he was approached by the former Crown Prince Hassan of Jordan to help create and run a new bank, called Petra Bank. Petra quickly expanded to become the second-largest commercial bank in Jordan.\textsuperscript{309}

In 1985, Wohlstetter introduced Chalabi to Richard Perle, then-Undersecretary of Defense, where the two forged a close friendship, connecting Chalabi to one of the most prominent of neoconservative thinkers.\textsuperscript{310}

In 1989, Petra Bank was seized under a declaration of martial law, and Jordan’s central bank was forced to buy the bank’s assets with an influx of $164 million in an effort to keep it liquid. Chalabi fled, allegedly driven to the border by Crown Prince

\textsuperscript{305} Priest, Dana, and David Ottaway, “Congress’s Candidate to Overthrow Saddam Hussein,” \textit{Washington Post}, April 21, 1999.
\textsuperscript{308} \textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{309} Raman.
\textsuperscript{310} Dreyfuss, 28
Hassan himself.\textsuperscript{311} Chalabi was accused of embezzling $70 million, fraud, and currency-trading irregularities, and was tried in absentia by a Jordanian military court, where he was found guilty and sentenced to 22 years of hard labor.\textsuperscript{312}

Chalabi contests that his indictment was mostly politically motivated. He had been active in anti-Hussein opposition groups prior to the incident, and claimed that, by virtue of his position in the banking industry, he was able to gather intelligence concerning illegal arms transfers to Iraq from Jordan. Through his connection to Perle, he was able to pass the information to the CIA. Chalabi does not deny the bank was being used to fund opposition groups within Iraq.\textsuperscript{313} He fled to London, and soon found himself the head of the newly-created Iraqi National Congress.

After Hussein’s invasion and annexation of Kuwait, Chalabi became even more vocal in his opposition to Hussein’s regime, calling on the US to help create a democratic Iraq as a part of its policy in dealing with Hussein. In an early 1991 editorial, he wrote:

The people of Iraq need political representation. The majority needs to feel that it can determine its own destiny and not be excluded and discriminated against on the basis of sect and nationality. The only way to do that is through democracy. The alternative to democracy is another cycle escalating repression with Saddam or a Saddam clone.\textsuperscript{314}

In order to help aid in this, the US should claim its outward support for three things. First, it must openly advocate a democratic regime in Iraq. Second, it must recognize and strive to maintain the territorial integrity of Iraq, not allowing the different factions to carve out different states. Finally, the US should declare its intention to “help reintegrate a democratic Iraq in the international community and in a regional security structure and to encourage its reconstruction.” Chalabi shows his colors as one interested in leading the politics of Iraq as an ardent nationalist. He mentions that the anti-Saddam revolts in Iraq are not ethnic in origin, as many people from many ethnicities are taking part; the rebellion, he says, “belongs to the whole people of Iraq, who can no longer accept dictatorship.”\textsuperscript{315}

A month later, he repeated his call for anti-Saddam support, lamenting the fact

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{311} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{312} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{313} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{315} Ibid. 
\end{flushright}
that Hussein has met the rebellion with brutal suppression:

An unrepentant Saddam has survived the war and claimed victory, despite his defeat by coalition forces. He has also managed to occupy the cities of southern and northern Iraq after indiscriminate bombing. The inhabitants of most Iraqi cities have suffered a great deal more at the hands of Saddam... than they did from the coalition bombing.316

Chalabi calls for more US assistance in aid of the Iraqi people, claiming the UN has neglected to do what he believes they should:

The tragedy in Iraq is awesome. Millions live in razed cities and towns surrounded by the Republican Guard, a brutish force of occupation: suspicious, fearful and tainted by the death and destruction they have brought. Hundreds of thousands of people are on the move, seeking sanctuary from Saddam’s forces. They have left their homes and become refugees, some of them for the third time in 15 years. The U.N. does not recognize them as refugees, and they are not eligible for its refugee aid. The international community in the past has avoided granting any official status to refugees from Saddam.317

Chalabi feels the US has a definite role in the reconstruction of Iraq, but that the debate over what to do is “moving in circles.” He outlines three things the US could do to aid the opposition in the eventual overthrow of Hussein, and help ease the pressure of Hussein’s wrath: first, the US should condemn the massacres committed by Hussein and his military against the Iraq populace. The $10 million in aid the US promised to them, he says, is simply not enough; second, the use of helicopters against the populace, which Hussein used in his brutal suppression of the ongoing revolt, should be banned; finally, the US should discuss the massacres with the UN security council, an important step, he says, in stopping the massacres from occurring. In the end, warns Chalabi, a peaceful outcome in Iraq “cannot be inaugurated by inaction.318

Following the successful conclusion of Operation Desert Storm, on February 8, 1992, then-President George H.W. Bush notified Congress that he had authorized the CIA to undertake increased covert actions within Iraq. Bush claimed the authorization was required to allow intelligence officers within Iraq to switch to an organizational role,

---

317 Ibid.
318 Ibid.
organizing dissidents within the Hussein regime.\textsuperscript{319} Two days prior, Bush had sent CIA Director Robert Gates on an unpublicized trip to the Middle East to discuss a possible coup against Saddam Hussein with Egyptian and Saudi Arabian officials.\textsuperscript{320} The CIA had already begun dispersing money from a $20 million contingency fund to aid anti-Saddam activity in Iraq,\textsuperscript{321} including possible military support if internal forces in Iraq were to mount a coup.\textsuperscript{322} In July of 1992, after a reported coup attempt failed to oust Hussein from power, the Bush administration changed its strategy from recruiting and supporting internal rebellion amongst Hussein’s staff to supporting outside opposition groups.\textsuperscript{323} The Iraqi National Congress was one of the dissident groups that received funding, along with Iraqi National Accord.\textsuperscript{324}

In June of 1992, Chalabi called a meeting in Vienna, Austria, inviting over 200 delegates from a large number of Iraqi opposition groups. This included delegates of Massoud Barzani’s Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) and Jalal Talabani’s Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), who together controlled the Kurdish region in the north of Iraq. By gaining the support of the large Kurdish parties, the INC became the largest opposition group against Hussein. Four months later, in October of 1992, the newly-formed INC held a meeting in Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq, in the city of Salahuddin,\textsuperscript{325} where they chose a three-person leadership council and 26-member executive council. Chalabi was selected to chair the executive council.\textsuperscript{326}

The strategy of the INC was to set up a paramilitary and parliamentary presence within northern Iraq, from where it would launch attacks into Iraqi cities. The strategy was intended to create momentum for a war that would force support from the US military on the side of opposition forces, resulting in the overthrow of the Hussein regime. The efforts for this were slowed down with the election of Bill Clinton, who in

\textsuperscript{321} Tyler, “Congress Notified of Iraq Coup Plan.”
\textsuperscript{325} Dreyfuss, 30.; also, Katzman.
\textsuperscript{326} Katzman.
1993 focused mainly on containment of Hussein’s regime.\textsuperscript{327}

In 1993, upon the inauguration of Bill Clinton as President, R. James Woolsey, a neoconservative, became the director of the CIA. Woolsey, who believes that the 1993 World Trade Center bombing by Ramzi Yousef was sponsored by the Iraqi intelligence services in retaliation for the 1991 Gulf War, strongly supported Chalabi’s new umbrella group, which became the largest recipient of CIA funds earmarked for overthrowing Hussein’s regime.\textsuperscript{328} By the end of the year, Chalabi and the INC had developed what they called their “Three Cities Plan,” where the INC and Kurdish forces would take the northern cities of Mosul and Kirkuk, while INC forces and a Shia militia would capture Basra.\textsuperscript{329} The Clinton administration was not enthusiastic. According to writer and scholar Laurie Mylroie:

> The INC briefed US officials on this plan, but they were not enthusiastic. It was the first clear indication that the Clinton administration was not serious about Saddam. Above all, the administration did not want the opposition to do any fighting. In fact, although the US was funding the INC, the Clinton administration prohibited any US funds from being used for the purchase of weapons. US officials flippantly maintained that there were already enough weapons in Iraq. It was not long before the White House began to actively undermine the INC.\textsuperscript{330}

The alliance between Barzani’s KDP and Talabani’s PUK was shaky, at best. In 1992, the Kurdish north held its own elections, and the two sides split the vote, forcing both sides to accept only half-rule.\textsuperscript{331} As a result, the KDP controlled the west, centered in the city of Erbil, while the PUK controlled the East, with its base in Suleimanya. It was said that the two men have little in common – Barzani is soft-spoken, and favors negotiations with the Hussein regime, while Talabani is brash and loud, favoring confrontation with Baghdad. Both men openly hate each other.\textsuperscript{332}

In May 1994, fighting broke out between the two factions, thanks in part to a land dispute between them. In the six months of fighting that ensued, more than 2,000 Kurds were killed, until both sides agreed in November 1994 to hold new elections by May

\textsuperscript{327} Dreyfuss, 29.
\textsuperscript{328} Raman.
\textsuperscript{330} \textit{Ibid}.
\textsuperscript{332} \textit{Ibid}.
1995. The peace was broken within a month when Talabani’s forces seized Erbil, evicting Barzani’s political allies. Barzani’s military quickly surrounded the city.\footnote{Ibid.}

By February of the following year, despite the tension between the two factions, Chalabi’s INC, backed since 1992 by the CIA, informed the agency it would attempt an insurrection and coup in March 1995. The CIA was skeptical, thinking the brash Talabani and his plotters would leak news to Hussein. The plan entailed KDP and PUK forces, numbering 10,000 each, launching an offensive in the north, aided by a small INC army. An Iraqi Major General named Wafiq Samaraii, who had defected to the INC in November 1994, promised a full division loyal to him. A brigade would be tasked with capturing Hussein as he attended a family reunion in Tikrit, while Shia insurgent forces rose up in the South.\footnote{Ibid.}

The Three Cities Plan was launched in early March 1995, with Talabani’s 10,000 troops attacking the Iraqi 5\textsuperscript{th} army corps near Kirkuk. Barzani however, decided it was best to sit out the fighting, Samarii’s promised division never materialized, and the Shia forces in the south never materialized.\footnote{Ibid.} Unbeknownst to Talabani or the rest of the INC, the inactive Barzani had negotiated aid from Hussein to help recapture Erbil. This came at a time when the sympathetic Woolsey resigned from his post as CIA director in response to the Aldrich Ames spy case, which led to a decrease in support for the INC and their “rolling coup.”\footnote{Raman.}

On August 31, 1996, at 4 am, Hussein’s troops, in concert with Barzani’s forces, retook Erbil, capturing and executing up to 100 INC members.\footnote{Smith and Ottaway.} Immediately before the military sweep of the region by Bazani and Hussein, CIA officers charged with aiding the opposition in Erbil fled the city, leaving behind money, equipment, and 1,500 members of the INC. According to Abu Khadim, a surviving INC member: “I was astonished that the U.S. Air Force did not come to our rescue.”\footnote{Fedarko, Kevin, “Saddam’s CIA Coup,” \textit{Time Magazine} 148, no.15 (September 1996): 43.}
Neoconservatives and the INC

Following the failed “rolling coup” attempt by the INC, the Clinton administration changed policy stances, choosing to focus not on support of the opposition to Hussein, but instead on the perceived defense of Kuwait. In this context, he claimed the achievement of a great political and diplomatic success. This was quickly seized upon by Paul Wolfowitz, who wrote an editorial condemning Clinton’s claims that the goal of his Iraq policy was to defend the South. Claims Wolfowitz:

The president now says that our only goal is to manage southern Iraq, to stop Saddam from once again invading Kuwait. This is analogous to a coach of a football team that had been in scoring position and now is driven back to its own goal line, claiming that the only thing that matters is to keep the other team from scoring.339

He further claimed that much of Clinton’s failure in Iraq was due to a startling lack of leadership and an unwillingness to use force. He attacked the excuse that the killing in northern Iraq was simply to be blamed on Kurdish infighting, citing the fact that one of the principal targets of Hussein’s military sweep was Chalabi’s INC. He condemned Clinton’s lack of military support for the coup attempt, echoing Khadim’s wonderment, and termed the fiasco “Clinton’s Bay of Pigs.”340

Most importantly, Wolfowitz called the continuation of the Hussein regime detrimental to US strategic interests:

Iraq is not a sideshow; it is about vital American interests. We have lost a lot of ground. The US has virtually abandoned its commitment to protect a besieged people from a bloodthirsty dictator. This is not “just” a humanitarian issue. It has huge strategic consequences for American credibility in this critical region and beyond.341

Wolfowitz did not shy away from calling Hussein a threat to the US, stating that “Saddam is a convicted killer still in possession of a loaded gun – and it’s pointed at us.” His reasoning was based on the fact that he believed Hussein was in possession of chemical and biological weapons, that he “has produced enough biological weapons that, in theory, he could kill the entire population of the world,” and had also demonstrated a willingness to use chemical weapons, against the Iranians and Kurds during the Iran-Iraq

340 Ibid.
341 Ibid.
Zalmay Khalilzad, the principal author of DPG-92, similarly criticized Clinton’s Iraq policy, echoing much of what Wolfowitz wrote in deriding the administration as not acting as a leader in the international community concerning Iraq:

President Clinton has been quick to claim “victory” after lobbing a few cruise missiles into Iraq in retaliation for Saddam Hussein’s blitz into a Kurdish “safe haven.” In fact, the recent skirmishes only highlight a change for the worse in America’s position in the Persian Gulf. We have been unwilling to exercise leadership, and so the region is drifting back into its bad, old pre-Gulf War habits.\(^{343}\)

The biggest issue with Clinton’s policy was what Khalilzad perceives to be a downward slide in how the US is perceived in the Gulf Region, criticizing Clinton for not behaving “as the area’s preeminent power,” and outlining five ways in which the US can reverse that slide, the first and last of which are the most important. First, closure must be achieved in Iraq. If a coup doesn’t work, the US must be prepared to confront Hussein with “a sustained military campaign against his armed forces.” Khalilzad clearly does not shy away from the use of force, if necessary to facilitate the end of Hussein’s regime. Lastly, he claimed that the United States needs to be more willing to exercise its influence in the region, drawing on the neoconservative tenet of regional hegemony:

The US needs to be vigilant and needs to exercise its influence. As the preeminent world power, the US can shape the Persian Gulf and other critical regions in a positive direction. Failure to do so will open the door to would-be regional hegemons and cause great strife and instability.\(^{344}\)

The flexing of the military muscle of the US in the region, Khalilzad implies, is nearly as important as deposing Hussein himself.

**Summary**

The INC, under Ahmed Chalabi, became the darling of neoconservatives thanks in part to his connections with such prominent neoconservatives as Richard Perle and, through CIA Director Woolsey, received the bulk of opposition support. When Woolsey left the CIA, the INC lost a critical amount of support, and the attempted “rolling coup”

---

\(^{342}\) Ibid.


\(^{344}\) Ibid.
of 1995 and 1996 received no US military support.

This time period also saw a clearer statement of where Iraq fits in a neoconservative policy framework. Neoconservatives openly showed their disdain for the Clinton administration’s lack of support for the INC-led insurrection, with Wolfowitz terming it “Clinton’s Bay of Pigs.” He clearly stated that Iraq was not just a humanitarian concern, but a US strategic concern as well, and clearly portrayed Hussein as a real and credible threat to the US, comparing him to a loaded gun pointed at the collective head of the US. Khalilzad weighed in on the events too, echoing much of Wolfowitz’s criticism. In addition, he added a clear neoconservative tilt to his criticism, warning that perception of US military weakness in the Persian Gulf could lead to the decline of its influence in the region. Khalilzad also showed his readiness to support a possible unilateral military action against Hussein, again an easy comparison to the unilateral nature of the 2003 invasion of Iraq.

1997-1998

A Change in Policy

1997 saw a more focused attempt by Wolfowitz and other neoconservatives to define a specific strategy in Iraq. Wolfowitz wrote an article that appeared in the book “The Future of Iraq,” published by the Middle East Institute, which analyzed what he felt were the three policy options against Hussein’s Iraq: containment, engagement, and overthrowing Hussein. He came to the conclusion that the existing containment policy of Clinton was ineffective, arguing that it isn’t a “static policy,” and that the political dynamics of the Middle East will weaken sanctions, which tended to harm the Iraqi people as much as the Hussein regime. The coalition against Iraq was already weakening in the face of pressure from France, China, and Russia to weaken or lift sanctions.

Engagement with the Hussein regime would also ultimately fail, argued Wolfowitz, because it would give more power to Hussein, which would in turn destabilize the region. By normalizing relations, Hussein’s increased oil revenues would

---

345 Mann, 235.
also no doubt help further his illicit weapons programs. In the end, Wolfowitz concluded that the third option, regime change, was the most viable one. His views sharpened as the year progressed. In November 1997, Khalilzad and Wolfowitz collaborated on a piece calling for the Clinton administration to redefine its policy of containment and sanctions, claiming regime change should be the stated goal of the United States in regards to Iraq, as allowing Hussein to remain in power would be foolhardy:

Saddam Hussein’s stubborn defiance of U.N. inspectors demonstrates the importance he attaches to retaining the biological and chemical weapons, and the missile delivery systems, that he possesses. Saddam’s attachment to his weapons of mass destruction -- at the cost of continuing sanctions on Iraq’s oil exports and the risk of a punitive response from the United States or the United Nations -- is further evidence, if any were needed, that he will continue to pose a threat to the security and stability of a large and important part of the world as long as he remains in power.

Their reasoning behind their position was Hussein’s “stubborn defiance of UN inspectors,” which they believed showed the importance Hussein placed on the continuation of the development of his chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons programs. They outline a five-point strategy for dealing with the region to “reverse Saddam’s ascent.” First, a policy change would be necessary, switching from containment to regime change. Second, a military strategy should be accompanied by a political one – that is, the opposition to Hussein should be revived, supported, legitimized, and given access to frozen Iraqi assets. Third, Hussein’s rule should be delegitimized by indicting him as a war criminal and declaring all contracts signed with his regime by any company invalid in the eyes of the US. Fourth, military protection should be offered to defecting Iraqi units, and if Hussein continued to defy UN resolutions, the US should be prepared for “sustained but discriminating military action.” Finally, policy should be coordinated with regional allies, particularly Turkey, who must be assured the creation of a Kurdish state in north Iraq will not be a result of the new strategy.

347 Ibid, 112.
349 Ibid.
Nine days later, on November 18, Wolfowitz authored a piece in the *Wall Street Journal* urging Clinton to rebuild the anti-Saddam coalition by coaxing other nations to pledge more concrete support for militarily enforcing UN resolutions. The reason many nations have shied away from clear support, according to Wolfowitz, is a seeming lack of clarity in US policy – in order to garner the support of regional allies, the US must convince them any military action against Iraq was part of a clear, serious strategy. Former regional allies, he claimed, fear that because of ineffective US responses to UN violations and increasing pressure from China, France, and Russia to lift sanctions, it would be foolhardy not to make peace with the Hussein regime in some fashion, as they may be forced to confront a rearmed and vindictive Iraq if they do not. He ended his column arguing that as the leader, sometimes the US must be willing to act unilaterally, and that simply displaying a willingness to act unilaterally is usually the best way to “secure collective action.”

On December 1, 1997, Khalilzad and Wolfowitz again collaborated on a piece, this time in *The Weekly Standard*. In it, their tone became more dire, claiming that “at this point, only the substantial use of military force could prove that the United States is serious and reverse the slow collapse of the international coalition.” They again advocated a clearer policy in the region, one aimed at toppling the regime while giving support and legitimacy to opposition groups, claiming that the option of containment will grow weaker and weaker as more and more nations begin to accommodate Hussein.

Wolfowitz and Khalilzad, in their editorials and articles, effectively resolved to call for the ouster of Saddam Hussein, by unilateral military force if necessary. This was the clearest enunciation of that policy until the Iraq invasion of 2003. The neoconservatives, effectively exiled from policy roles in the Clinton administration, were beating the drumbeat loudly for action against the Hussein regime in Iraq. Throughout 1998, Hussein periodically claimed he would no longer cooperate with UN weapons inspectors, drawing the ire of the international community.

By January of 1998, the neoconservatives’ pushing for action on Iraq had become much more organized. The previous year, William Kristol established the think-tank

---

352 Ibid.
Project for the New American Century, which was created to help collect, consolidate, and lobby for a neoconservative foreign and military policy. Its members, as such, included many prominent neoconservatives, including Wolfowitz, Perle, Cheney, and Khalilzad. On January 26, 1998, the group sent an open letter to Clinton concerning Iraq, and what they felt should be done about Hussein’s regime. The letter characterized the containment policy as one that was slowly becoming more and more ineffective, and advocated a new strategy, one that “should aim, above all, at the removal of Saddam Hussein’s regime from power.” The group did not shy away from the use of military action if it was deemed necessary in their pursuit of bringing down the Hussein regime:

The only acceptable strategy is one that eliminates the possibility that Iraq will be able to use or threaten to use weapons of mass destruction. In the near term, this means a willingness to undertake military action as diplomacy is clearly failing. In the long term, it means removing Saddam Hussein and his regime from power.

The letter further argues that if necessary, unilateral action against Hussein should be taken, stating that “American policy cannot continue to be crippled by a misguided insistence on unanimity in the UN Security Council.”

When the letter had no effect on Clinton’s policy, Project members wrote another letter, this time to House Speaker Newt Gingrich and Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott. They again enumerated their proposed policy suggestions, outlined in their previous letter, urging them to bring the issues to the Congress in an effort to affect some change in Clinton’s policy.

Less than a month later, a group of men writing under the auspice of the Center for Security Policy, again including many prominent neoconservatives such as Wolfowitz, Rumsfeld, Feith, and Khalilzad, published an open letter to the president outlining what they believed to be the necessary steps to take towards regime change, the first of which is to “recognize a provisional government of Iraq based on the principles and leaders of the Iraqi National Congress (INC) that is representative of all the peoples

---

353 “Letter to President Clinton on Iraq.”
354 Ibid.
355 Ibid.
356 “Letter to Gingrich and Lott on Iraq.”
of Iraq.” 357 The letter echoed much of what Khalilzad and Wolfowitz had written in the preceding months, including delegitimizing the Hussein regime, releasing frozen assets to the opposition, and renewing a call for support of anti-Saddam groups, saying that “Iraq today is ripe for a broad-based insurrection,” and that that opportunity must be exploited. 358

Richard Perle wrote in early 1998 that “given the prospect of chemical and biological weapons in Saddam Hussein’s murderous hands, military action is long overdue.” 359 He argued that the threat in the region is Hussein himself, and that the US should arm and encourage a new provisional government, “alone, if necessary, with our friends, if possible.” 360 Perle called for an open policy of regime change, along with open support of opposition groups, specifically the INC. Support, he said, would need to be comprehensive, and not “administered in an inept, half-hearted and ineffective way by the CIA.” 361 He outlined a five-point strategy to implement US policy, which echoed almost exactly Wolfowitz’s and Khalilzad’s recommendations in their earlier editorials.

A month later in late March 1998, Douglas Feith wrote an editorial in the Jerusalem Post advocating support for the INC, propounding many of the same points Wolfowitz and Khalilzad did, arguing for the release of frozen assets to Saddam’s opposition, specifically the INC. Feith believed sanctions in the areas not under Hussein’s direct control, specifically in the Kurdish north and parts of the Shiite south, should be lifted in an effort to show the world “America aims not to punish innocents in Iraq, but to relieve Iraqis of penalties they suffer as a result of Saddam’s rule.” 362 Feith advocated, like Wolfowitz and Khalilzad, the replacement of Hussein’s regime with a friendlier one.

By that summer, the call to renew support of Iraqi opposition groups was aided by the creation of the Downing Plan, a revision of Chalabi’s “End Game” plan of 1993 by Army General Wayne Downing. 363 The plan called for simultaneous insurrections in the Kurdish north, in the cities of Mosul and Kirkuk, and in the south, in Basra.

358 Ibid.
360 Ibid.
361 Ibid.
Approximately two hundred military instructors would be recruited to train up to five thousand Iraqi dissidents, supplemented by a number of mercenary forces. The US would institute a “no-drive zone” to protect the insurgency from Iraqi tanks. According to an INC advisor, “you insert this force into southern Iraq, perhaps an abandoned airbase west of Basra, and you sit there and let Saddam come to you, and if he doesn’t come you go home and say we failed… if the insurgent force took Basra - that’s the end. You don’t have to go to Baghdad. You tie up his oil and he’ll collapse.”364 By seizing Basra, Iraq would instantly be devoid of its huge southern oilfields. The plan called for the US to fund six mobile battalions of armed Toyota trucks, which Chalabi and Downing believed would lead to “massive defections.”365

Once inside Iraq, when Hussein begins to move against the insurrection in Basra, the INC’s supporters in northern Iraq would begin posturing for an attack. According to the plan, this would lead to confusion amongst the armed forces and, in the end, mass defection. Hussein would be forced to decide to either move south against the insurrection, or keep his elite divisions near him to protect himself against an invasion from the north.366

The plan, submitted to Clinton that summer, was rejected by the Clinton administration. Marine General Anthony Zinni, head of US Central Command at the time, dismissed the idea as an Iraqi Bay of Pigs:

But at the same time, there's the President, thinking out loud in a recent meeting and saying, "Why can't we ever drive a stake through the hearts of any of these guys? ...the answer, of course, is that you must have the political will – and that means the will of the administration, the Congress, and the American people. All must be united in a desire for action. Instead, however, we try to get results on the cheap. There are congressmen today who want to fund the Iraqi Liberation Act, and let some silk-suited, Rolex-wearing guys in London gin up an expedition. We'll equip a thousand fighters and arm them with $97 million worth of AK-47s and insert them into Iraq. And what will we have? A Bay of Goats, most likely.367

Referring to Chalabi and the INC as “silk-suited, Rolex-wearing guys in London,” Zinni

364 Hersh, “The Iraq Hawks.”
365 Ibid.
366 Ibid.
367 Zinni, Anthony, farewell retirement speech to the US Naval Institute, March 2000.
showed an obvious skepticism concerning their ability and motives. This skepticism would be repeated during the run-up to the 2003 Iraq War, most notably by Richard Armitage, a former supporter of the Iraqi opposition groups, and his colleagues in the State Department.\(^{368}\)

Saddam Hussein ceased cooperation with the UN weapons inspectors on August 5, 1998, and nine days later, on August 14, President Clinton signed Public Law 105-235, which declared that “the Government of Iraq is in material breach of its international obligations,” and further urged the president to “take appropriate action, in accordance with the Constitution and relevant laws of the United States, to bring Iraq into compliance with its international obligations.”\(^{370}\) A month later, on September 16, 1998, Paul Wolfowitz testified in front of the House National Security Committee on the subject of US policy towards Iraq. In his testimony, Wolfowitz repeated claims of the imminent failure of Clinton’s containment policy:

> In fact, it is hard to know what US policy is toward Iraq because it is such a muddle of confusion and pretense… that kind of hair splitting only further convinces both our friends and adversaries in the Middle East that we are not serious and that our policy is collapsing.\(^{371}\)

He took the Clinton administration to task on a policy that was lacking as to promised or proposed military action:

> The administration is engaged in a game of pretending that everything is fine, that Saddam Hussein remains within a “strategic box” and if he tries to break out “our response will be swift and strong.” The fact is that it has now been 42 days since there have been any weapons inspections in Iraq and the swift and strong response that the administration threatened… is nowhere to be seen.\(^{372}\)

He again asserted that regime change is the most viable option, one that would “aim at liberating the Iraqi people from Saddam’s tyrannical grasp and free Iraq’s neighbors from Saddam’s murderous threats.”\(^{373}\) It is Wolfowitz’s belief that a clear and decisive action towards this end would help persuade members of the 1991 coalition to stiffen their

\(^{368}\) Armitage was a signatory of both the PNAC and Center for Security Policy letters to Clinton urging a policy of regime change and support of opposition groups.

\(^{369}\) Hersh, “The Iraq Hawks.”

\(^{370}\) “Public Law 105-235,” 105th Congress, August 14, 1998.


\(^{372}\) Ibid.

\(^{373}\) Ibid.
stance and rejoin US efforts in the Persian Gulf. This echoes his statement from almost a year prior – that a willingness to act unilaterally against the regime would help hasten and solidify collective action.

Wolfowitz, Khalilzad, Perle, and Chalabi’s INC scored a major victory in October 1998 with the passage of the Iraq Liberation Act of 1998. Passed on October 31, it effectively enunciated regime change as the stated policy of the US towards Iraq and the regime of Saddam Hussein. After a list of findings, the law clearly stated that regime change was now the policy priority of the Clinton administration:

It should be the policy of the United States to support efforts to remove the regime headed by Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq and to promote the emergence of a democratic government to replace that regime.374

The law further made available an aggregate amount of $97 million to Iraqi democratic opposition organizations, and a further $2 million for the 1999 fiscal year for anti-Saddam propaganda in the form of radio and television broadcasts.375

Not surprisingly, this event created a flurry of editorial activity. The following month, Zalmay Khalilzad wrote a piece outlining what he saw as the two policy options for the US: unilateral military action to topple the Hussein regime and “liberating the country from his control,” versus arming and aiding the opposition to do it for the US. He acknowledged the first option as being “the potentially quicker way,” but warned that it could end up in a lengthy conflict within Iraq. Khalilzad posited that the second choice, while taking longer, is the more prudent one, and while officially the US has been aiding the opposition, it has been doing so in a manner inconsistent with the desired results:

For now, this is the better choice because it puts the Iraqis in the driver’s seat for determining their own future without the United States walking away from its responsibility. Some would argue that we have been doing this already, but in fact, our efforts have been half-hearted and flawed.”376

Khalilzad repeated earlier statements advocating increased funding for opposition groups and propaganda efforts. While putting the option of unilateral US invasion on the table, he did not feel that such an action would be prudent given the other options present.

Only three days later, an editorial by Wolfowitz appeared in Canada’s Ottawa

375 Ibid.
376 Khalilzad, “Getting Rid of Saddam.”
Citizen. Wolfowitz was straightforward, starting his piece saying, in no uncertain terms, that the only way US interests could be served in the Persian Gulf would be through the overthrow of the Hussein regime in Iraq:

Toppling Saddam is the only outcome that can satisfy vital US interests in a stable and secure region, because, to a degree unique among contemporary tyrannies, the Iraqi regime is Saddam Hussein. This fact has critical moral, political, and even strategic implications.377

He criticized the Bay of Pigs analogy for the Downing Plan as “particularly weak,” saying the two situations simply did not compare in any reasonable way, claiming the threat of Hussein was much larger than the threat of Castro. The only parallel between the two would be the possible lack of US support during an insurrection.378

The conversation over policy came to a head on the eve of a possible vote over Clinton’s impending impeachment. On December 15, the UN reported Hussein was impeding weapons inspections by denying access to specific sites and relocating equipment from site to site. The next day, December 16, 1998, Operation Desert Fox was launched, which entailed sustained missile and bombing strikes on a large number of Iraqi military and security targets. The goal of the operation was to diminish Hussein’s capacity to produce weapons of mass destruction and to hurt his relationship with his military and security apparatus.379 At a press conference, Clinton reiterated his new policy of regime change in Iraq:

"Saddam Hussein must not be allowed to threaten his neighbors, or the world, with nuclear weapons, poison gas or biological weapons. Other countries possess weapons of mass destruction… with Saddam, there is one big difference: He has used them. Left unchecked, Saddam Hussein will use these terrible weapons again. The hard fact is that so long as Saddam remains in power, he threatens the well-being of his people, the peace of his region, the security of the world. The best way to end that threat once and for all is with a new Iraqi government."380

The attack was carried out from carrier groups stationed in the Persian Gulf, with the aid of the British military. Due to the unfortunate timing of events, Clinton was attacked by Congressional Republicans, who claimed the strikes were simply a smokescreen to delay

378 Ibid.
380 Ibid.
the impeachment vote.\textsuperscript{381}

In the end, however, the effect of the Desert Fox bombings were minimal. Hussein’s military and security apparatus sustained damage from the attacks, but the regime maintained control over the country, and despite authorization to spend money arming and aiding the opposition groups via the Iraq Liberation Act, Clinton was hesitant to disburse the funds.

**Summary**

1997 and 1998 saw a much clearer pronouncement of neoconservative aims and goals, with Perle, Feith, Wolfowitz, and Khalilzad all openly advocating support of the Iraqi opposition in the INC and calling for the eventual ouster of Saddam Hussein, citing the crumbling of the containment regime weakly implemented by the Clinton administration. Khalilzad put the option of unilateral invasion on the table during this period, and while advocating strong support of opposition groups, he did not shy from the possibility should it become a reality. Khalilzad’s words were in fact nearly prescient, stating that a unilateral invasion, while quicker in garnering results than supporting the opposition groups, could result in a long occupation and huge expense.

With the passing of the Iraqi Liberation Act in late 1998, neoconservatives scored a victory, however Pyrrhic it ended up being. They successfully brought to the forefront of policy discussion the question of Iraq, lobbying aggressively and successfully for making the overthrow of the Hussein regime the number one Iraq policy priority of the Clinton administration.

**1999-2000**

Two months after the Desert Fox air strikes, an article in *Foreign Affairs* dismissed what it called “the rollback fantasy,” claiming that policy advocates lobbying for regime change had only proposed ideas that are “militarily ludicrous, anathema to key US allies, or unacceptable to the American Public.” They outlined the three most-talked-
about approaches: the airpower approach, the enclave approach, and the Afghan approach.\textsuperscript{382}

The first approach involved a joint campaign between opposition forces and the US military, with the US military bearing a vast majority of the expense and risk. The authors posit that there is too much risk of a diminished return – that is, despite the prohibitive cost, there is no guarantee of success.\textsuperscript{383}

The second approach was the one advocated by the neoconservatives in their editorials. Arming the opposition (specifically the INC), supporting and protecting a safe enclave for them to operate from are the key tenets. The authors are not kind concerning this plan:

The catch is that the INC plan is so flawed and unrealistic that it would lead inexorably to a replay of the Bay of Pigs. US officials would ultimately face the choice of intervening directly or watching the rebels get butchered – as happened with the INC’s last attempt to spark an insurrection, in northern Iraq from 1992 to 1996.\textsuperscript{384}

The INC, they point out, has more support in Washington than they do in Baghdad, and a vast majority of its military power comes from two rival Kurdish factions in the north and a fundamentalist Shiite militia in the south, all of whom have their own agenda and have distanced themselves from the INC. The enclave plan, the authors say, requires one of two assumptions to be true: either the Iraqi military will simply disintegrate when presented with a significant challenge, or that a few light infantry brigades can defeat, in open combat, several heavy Iraqi divisions. Both assumptions, they say, are simply wrong.\textsuperscript{385}

The third option was what the authors called “the Afghan approach.” In this approach, the US would aid the opposition in mounting an insurgency modeled after the Afghan mujahideen, where a long, drawn-out rebellion based in a neighboring country would slowly gain momentum and eventually, after many years, topple the regime. The authors deride this approach as unlikely for several reasons, the first of which is the fact that there is no neighboring state that would be willing to support a broad insurrection in

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{382} Byman, Daniel, Kenneth Pollack and Gideon Rose, “The Rollback Fantasy,” \textit{Foreign Affairs} 78, no. 1 (1999)
\bibitem{383} Ibid, 26-29.
\bibitem{384} Ibid, 30.
\bibitem{385} Ibid, 32-33.
\end{thebibliography}
neighboring Iraq. Second, it would be detrimental to US international prestige, as a
drawn-out insurgency would “stick in the craw of world opinion… the US would find
itself increasingly isolated in the United Nations and elsewhere, which would effect other
foreign policy issues” – the least of which includes the current inspection and
containment regime.\footnote{386} Finally, the result of an insurgent victory in Baghdad could very
well turn Iraq into a fractured nation, with no real leadership, or possibly a protracted
civil war – an “Afghan-like descent into chaos.”\footnote{387}

The authors argue that the only truly viable policy option for the US was that of
renewed containment, and that the proponents of rollback are simply fooling themselves:

All current rollback plans involving the Iraqi opposition come up short. Those who tout these nostrums as superior to existing U.S. policy are
therefore either engaging in wishful thinking or cynically playing politics. Either way, for the United States to try moving from containment to
rollback in Iraq would be a terrible mistake that could easily lead to
thousands of unnecessary deaths.”\footnote{388}

In the following issue of \textit{Foreign Affairs}, Wolfowitz, who was singled out as one
of the largest proponents of regime change in the “Rollback” article, published a letter to
the editor of \textit{Foreign Affairs} with the aid of former Democratic Congressman Stephen
Solarz in response to the accusations. They argued that their support for the policy of
regime change in Iraq was misrepresented – they never once said it could be done
cheaply, as the authors claimed, nor that it would be a simple solution. They accuse the
authors of overestimating the strength of Saddam, and using a possible worst-case
scenario to paralyze debate on the subject of facilitating regime change in Iraq. In the
end, after admitting that no side of the debate has “a monopoly on responsible judgment,”
Wolfowitz and Solarz assert that a continued policy of containment carries with it much
greater long-term risks than does a policy of using force to enact regime change.\footnote{389}

By May, Khalilzad wrote an editorial again advocating arming the opposition
groups against Saddam while using airstrikes to promote a coup:

The recent series of strikes against Iraqi air defenses represents an

\footnotetext{386}{\textit{Ibid.}, 36.} \footnotetext{387}{\textit{Ibid.}, 37.} \footnotetext{388}{\textit{Ibid.}, 25.} \footnotetext{389}{Solarz, Stephen, and Paul Wolfowitz. “How to Overthrow Saddam.” \textit{Foreign Affairs} 78, no. 2 (1999):161.}
incremental escalation in our ongoing efforts to contend with Saddam Hussein. The reasons for the change are not clear. However, it would be a mistake to limit our objectives to the enforcement of the no-fly zones. Instead our attacks should help facilitate Saddam’s overthrow. 390

Khalilzad contended that the way to promote a coup was through pressure on the Republican Guards, through both the arming of the insurgency against Hussein and by warning them through airstrikes to other structures in Hussein’s regime:

Our future attacks should target the Special Presidential Guards, command and control centers, and Iraqi intelligence but avoid attacking the Republican Guards. We must warn the Republican Guard commanders that unless they carry out a coup their forces will be targeted. We should also make it clear to them that unless they move quickly we will expand support for a broad-based insurgency which would exclude them from power once Saddam is gone. To demonstrate seriousness, arming and training the Iraqi opposition should begin now. 391

Khalilzad again derided the policy of containment against the Hussein regime, while acknowledging that any policy that leads to the ouster of Hussein must include containment to work.

During the campaigning season of 2000, PNAC released the zenith of their research and policy points, entitled Rebuilding America’s Defenses. This document is the clearest enunciation of the overall foreign and military policy goals of the neoconservative movement. The white paper repeats the central goal of the original DPG-92 document, asserting that currently the US has no global military or economic rival, and “America’s grand strategy should aim to preserve and extend this advantageous position as far into the future as possible.” 392 Indeed, it even cites DPG-92 as providing a “blueprint for maintaining US preeminence, precluding the rise of a great power rival.” 393 The paper embraces the concept Democratic Senator Joseph Biden coined as a “pax Americana,” using the term to describe the thrust of their movement. The document did not advocate specific policy actions, but did mention that forward-based forces should be retained in the region, as Iran could very possibly become the next threat in the area. 394

391 Ibid.
392 Donnelly, ii.
393 Ibid.
394 Ibid, 17.
By 2004, in post-Saddam Iraq, there were plans for the construction of fourteen “enduring bases,” intended to help support the current occupation in Iraq. It could be possible that these bases would serve as a means to shift the force present in Saudi Arabia to a more forward-leaning presence in Iraq.\textsuperscript{395}

**Summary**

In the face of criticism for being excessively idealistic, Wolfowitz countered that the accusations of idealism were unfounded, and that no neoconservative ever said it would be and easy and cheap effort to oust Hussein. This was contradictory to the original statements made by the Bush administration and Wolfowitz himself. For example, the director of USAID, Andrew Natsios, claimed the total US taxpayer cost was to be around $1.7 billion. When questioned about whether he actually meant that taxpayer cost of the war would be so low, he responded:

> Well, in terms of the American taxpayers contribution, I do, this is it for the US. The rest of the rebuilding of Iraq will be done by other countries who have already made pledges, Britain, Germany, Norway, Japan, Canada, and Iraqi oil revenues, eventually in several years, when it's up and running and there's a new government that's been democratically elected, will finish the job with their own revenues. They're going to get in $20 billion a year in oil revenues. But the American part of this will be $1.7 billion. We have no plans for any further-on funding for this.\textsuperscript{396}

Wolfowitz himself refused to give a number concerning the expected cost of rebuilding Iraq, claiming it was impossible to know the actual cost of the undertaking. He did, however, attempt to allay fears of the prohibitive cost, claiming:

> The oil revenues of Iraq could bring between $50 and $100 billion over the course of the next two or three years…We're dealing with a country that can really finance its own reconstruction, and relatively soon.\textsuperscript{397}

The cost of the war in Iraq, despite the numbers given by the Pentagon on USAID, has allegedly reached over $200 billion in direct US taxpayer cost.\textsuperscript{398}

This period of time also saw the release of the seminal neoconservative military

\textsuperscript{395} Spolar, Christine, “14 ‘Enduring Bases’ Set in Iraq.
\textsuperscript{396} Natsios, Andrew, interview with ABC’s Nightline, April 23, 2003.
\textsuperscript{397} Wolfowitz, Paul, Congressional testimony, March 27, 2003.
document, *Rebuilding America’s Defenses*, designed to outline how to realign the military to support the goals of a policy centered upon Kristol and Kagan’s benevolent global hegemony. Members of PNAC, which produced the document, include the likes of Wolfowitz, Perle, Feith, and Khalilzad. It marks, in a sense, the pinnacle of evolution in neoconservative policy, finally enumerated in a single policy document.

**2001-Present**

**Inside the War Room**

In early 2003, Paul O’Neill was fired from his post as Treasury Secretary for vocally disagreeing with Bush’s second round of tax cuts. One year later, in January 2004, author Ron Suskind’s book *The Price of Loyalty* was published. The book, subtitled “George W. Bush, the White House, and the Education of Paul O’Neill,” drew on information gathered from interviews with numerous White House staffers, as well as over 19,000 documents provided to Suskind by O’Neill. The book was the first in a series of allegations that the Bush White House had planned for and advocated an invasion of Iraq before September 11 or, lacking evidence, immediately thereafter.

O’Neill, a close friend of Rumsfeld since the 1960s and the man who originally recommended him for the Defense Secretary post to Bush, alleged that planning for the Iraq invasion began ten days into the administration. The first National Security Council meeting concerned Iraq and how it was “destabilizing the region.” Bush had decided that it was “time to pull out” of the Arab-Israeli situation. This came as a surprise to Secretary of State Colin Powell, who felt that abandoning the situation could give Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and the Israeli army carte blanche to act harshly against the Palestinians. Iraq was now the primary foreign policy focus in the Middle East, with National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice commenting that Iraq could possibly be the key to “reshaping the entire region.”

O’Neill felt the entire meeting was scripted. Rumsfeld and Cheney had spoken

---


400 Suskind, 72.
little, despite their well-known advocacy of overthrowing Saddam Hussein, and Tenet had already had a presentation ready for the president, highlighting what he claimed to be a building used for the creation of chemical or biological weapons. O’Neill contested the intelligence, stating that he had “seen a lot of factories around the world that look a lot like this one,” and asking Tenet just what it was that made him suspect it was in fact producing chemical or biological agents intended for weaponization. Tenet’s response was circumstantial – constant shipments to and from the plant via railroad tracks. He went on to confess there was in fact “no confirming intelligence” concerning the actual materials produced at the plant.  

After the first meeting, O’Neill was unsure why Hussein was number one on the agenda. There was a seeming gap in reasoning – they had jumped straight from the what to the how. To O’Neill, there already seemed to be an “in” and “out” group at the very first meeting – the “in” crowd consisting of Rice, who orchestrated the meeting, Rumsfeld, and Cheney. Powell and Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Henry Shelton both seemed concerned at the new focus of policy in the Middle East.  

At the second meeting of the National Security Council, which again focused on Iraq, it became clear to O’Neill just why Iraq had become the number one priority. Hussein’s broad goal was to dominate the Persian Gulf region, evidenced by his invasions of both Iran and Kuwait. His hostility to the United States, aspirations of dominance, and possible ownership of chemical, biological, or possibly nuclear weapons would create an “asymmetrical threat,” where Hussein’s influence could replace US influence in the region. Knowing what he knew of Rumsfeld’s neoconservative views, O’Neill knew the point of an invasion to disarm Hussein would act as a message to other regimes with an eye on developing weapons of mass destruction, and dissuading other regimes from aspiring to goals of regional dominance. The switch to a focus on Iraq and Saddam Hussein was much clearer when placed in the context of a broader neoconservative ideology. Rumsfeld even stated that regime change wasn’t necessarily the number one priority – disarmament was the more urgent issue. It didn’t take long

401 Ibid, 76.
402 Ibid.
403 Ibid, 86.
404 Ibid, 85.
before Rumsfeld and the Defense Intelligence Agency started to plan on how to divvy up oil assets in the event of a US-led invasion of Iraq.\textsuperscript{405} According to Suskind, one of the intelligence documents included a map of Iraq with areas divided into blocks of territory earmarked for oil exploration by foreign “suitors” for oilfield contracts.\textsuperscript{406}

By May of 2001, the State Department, Defense Department, and CIA had all looked further into the issue of Iraq. State had issued dozens of reports concerning the situation in Iraq, Defense had prepared documents concerning how post-Saddam Iraq would be run, including how to secure the nation after the fall of the regime, or if a coup were to take place. CIA director George Tenet presented evidence of Hussein’s supposed weapons programs, stressing that it was still only speculation that Hussein was continuing to develop chemical, biological, or nuclear weapons. According to O’Neill, Tenet was careful to point out that there was very little we did know, and a great deal we did not.\textsuperscript{407} Hussein’s ties to terrorism were mentioned only once, and only in passing by Tenet, who mentioned Saddam’s alleged payments to the families of Palestinian suicide bombers.\textsuperscript{408}

The Bush Administration’s reaction to O’Neill’s accusations came in stride, with Bush stating at a press conference in Monterrey, Mexico that his goals with Hussein were clear from the outset: the focus was simply on re-evaluating the ways the US and Britain were enforcing the northern and southern no-fly zones in Iraq. Despite the seeming contradiction of Rumsfeld’s statement in the first meeting that regime change wasn’t his “specific objective,”\textsuperscript{409} he went on to say that “like previous administrations, we were for regime change.”\textsuperscript{410} Administration officials said that while contingency planning did take place to counter any perceived threat Iraq might pose, no one was looking for “pretexts to mount a military campaign.”\textsuperscript{411}

The Clinton administration’s policy against Hussein was not one that advocated

\textsuperscript{405} Ibid, 96.
\textsuperscript{406} The document in question is entitled “Foreign Suitors for Iraqi Oilfield Contracts.” It has since been shown that the document was in fact a survey created during Vice President Cheney’s much-publicized Energy Task Force, which met to discuss and formulate energy policy in early 2001.
\textsuperscript{407} Suskind, 161.
\textsuperscript{408} Ibid, 74.
\textsuperscript{409} Suskind, 85.
\textsuperscript{410} Stevenson.
\textsuperscript{411} Ibid.
invasion, but instead advocated the support of anti-Saddam leaders; in an interview with the *BBC*, when asked about his Iraq policy in relation to George W. Bush’s, Clinton stated “I said we ought to support the opposition elements and just keep working until we get a new leader… I didn’t have any profound difference with the policy until it was decided to invade Iraq.”

O’Neill wasn’t the only former administration official to level charges about an early policy focus on Iraq. Former counterterrorism chief Richard Clarke, who resigned from his post in February 2003, concurred. In April 2001, Clarke attended a White House meeting he had convened to discuss terrorism and, specifically, al Qaeda, and the threat it posed to the United States. In response to the meeting agenda, Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz declared that Osama bin Laden, widely recognized as the head of the al Qaeda terror network, was just a single man, and others sponsored terrorism as much, if not more: “Iraqi terrorism, for example.” Wolfowitz even countered al Qaeda’s role in the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, claiming Clarke gave bin Laden “too much credit,” and that bin Laden couldn’t do things without the aide of a state sponsor.

According to Clifford Kiracofe, a professor at the Virginia Military Institute, some time during the spring of 2000, Stephen Hadley, then-Deputy National Security Advisor (and current National Security Advisor), briefed a small group of Republican party policymakers. He claimed the focus of the new administration would not be the Arab-Israeli situation, which had dominated US policy in the region, and that instead the “number-one foreign policy agenda” of a Bush presidency would in fact be Iraq, with a focus specifically on regime change, calling it “unfinished business.” Hadley was a former aide to Paul Wolfowitz during the first Bush administration, and a member of the group of neoconservative foreign policy intellectuals known collectively as the “Vulcans,” a term used to refer to former Reagan and Bush administration foreign policymakers that were given positions under George W. Bush.

Immediately following September 11, there was a renewed drive to act against Iraq in retaliation for the attacks. Donald Rumsfeld’s notes show that he was intent on

---

414 Lang, 40.
416 Mann, xvi.
finding justification for attacking Iraq in the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon: “Judge whether good enough to hit SH at same time. Not only UBL.” SH and UBL respectively refer to Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden.\footnote{Bazinet, Kenneth, and Richard Sisk, “W. Will Seek OK on Iraq,” \textit{New York Daily News}, September 5, 2002.} The note was written only hours after the attacks.

The following day, on September 12, Richard Clarke attended a White House meeting, expecting to talk about the previous day’s events and the possibility of other attacks in the near future. He claims:

\begin{quote}
...instead I walked into a series of discussions about Iraq... I realized...that Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz were going to take advantage of this national tragedy to promote their agenda about Iraq. Since the beginning of the administration, indeed well before, they had been pressing for a war with Iraq.\footnote{Clarke, 30.}
\end{quote}

By the afternoon, Rumsfeld was still talking about Iraq and, after Powell suggested it would be more prudent to focus on al Qaeda, he simply renewed his push, complaining of a lack of “decent targets” in Afghanistan, and that bombing Iraq should be considered, as it had “better targets.”\footnote{Ibid.} The following day, according to journalist Bob Woodward, Rumsfeld questioned why they couldn’t attack Iraq as well, and not just al Qaeda. As Woodward notes, “Rumsfeld was speaking not just for himself when he raised the question. His deputy, Paul D. Wolfowitz, was committed to a policy that would make Iraq a principal target of the first round in the war on terrorism.”\footnote{Woodward, Bob, \textit{Plan of Attack} (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2002), 49.} Powell countered that al Qaeda needed to be the primary focus at the time, not Iraq, as that was who the American populace were focused on; according to Powell, “any action needs public support.”\footnote{Ibid.}

Wolfowitz was not quiet about his opinions on Iraq and Afghanistan. At a National Security Council meeting, when the topic of Iraq was mentioned by Rice, Wolfowitz didn’t hesitate to speak up. He said that an attack on Afghanistan would be uncertain, and that there was a possibility that over 100,000 US troops could easily be bogged down in mountain and guerilla fighting for an extended period of time. In
contrast, he argued, Iraq was a “brittle, oppressive regime that might break easily.” By the end of the day, however, Cheney, Powell, Tenet, and White House Chief of Staff Andrew Card all agreed that the coalition created by the attacks was too fragile and could quickly disintegrate if Iraq was attacked without evidence linking them to the attacks. 

Summary

With the election of George W. Bush to the presidency, many prominent neoconservatives or neoconservative policy advocates were appointed to important positions within the Pentagon and other important agencies. Immediately, policy talk centered on Iraq, with many neoconservatives advocating more stringent action against Hussein instead of continued containment. While there was plenty of dissent, coming mainly from military commanders and the likes of Colin Powell and, to a lesser extent, Paul O’Neill, Iraq remained the center of Bush’s new foreign policy.

Following the attacks on September 11, 2001, journalist Bob Woodward notes that “Paul D. Wolfowitz… was committed to a policy that would make Iraq a principal target of the first round in the war on terrorism.” Iraq, Wolfowitz argued, would be an easier target than Afghanistan.

On March 19, 2003, US forces began the invasion of Iraq, to oust Hussein from power and install a democracy in the region. Former DIA official W. Patrick Lang called it the “ultimate imperial moment,” and it was the absolute culmination of a decade of neoconservative policy evolution and lobbying. The reasoning behind the invasion in respects to a neoconservative ideological goal is clear: Hussein’s presence was a testament to the inability of the US to effectively flex its military might to remove a regional threat. By proving the US is strong – indeed, unbeatable on the battlefield – Iraq would be able to serve as an example to would-be regional powers, while simultaneously restoring US preeminence in the region. The message would be clear – do not perceive to threaten the United States in any way, as doing so may force you to bear the brunt of its military dominance.

---

422 Ibid, 83.
423 Ibid, 91.
424 Woodward, Plan of Attack, 49.
425 Lang, 60.
CONCLUSIONS

The first chapter of this thesis served to define neoconservatism and attempt to prove the following assumptions: policies espoused by the administration of George W. Bush are in fact neoconservative in nature; neoconservative policies are very specific in nature, and differ from traditional or moderate conservative thought in very specific and clearly defined ways; and that support for the 2003 Iraq invasion was more generally neoconservative in nature or for the benefit of a neoconservative worldview, and not in line with the principles of other forms of conservative foreign policy, such as Buchanan’s neoisolationism and Kissinger’s realism.

Three questions were asked in the beginning of this thesis. They are:

1. **Amongst the three members of the “Axis of Evil,” why was Iraq chosen for invasion and regime change when it was arguably the weakest or the least dangerous of the three?**
2. **Where does Iraq fit within a neoconservative foreign policy framework?**
3. **Did the neoconservatives advocate the forced disarmament or toppling of the Hussein regime through military means prior to the events of September 11, 2001?**

The second chapter sought to answer the first two questions by giving an in-depth review of tenets of neoconservative foreign policy, and placing Iraq in such a framework. Through the works of many neoconservative authors, and even the 2002 National Security Strategy of the United States, the answers to these questions were evident.

The third chapter reviewed and analyzed the statements of administration policymakers to determine the answer to the third question. Through these statements, the answer to the question was clear. The answers to all three questions will be summarized
Amongst the three members of the “Axis of Evil,” why was Iraq chosen for invasion and regime change when it was arguably the weakest or the least dangerous of the three?

Iraq was a more pressing need in the framework of neoconservatism than the regimes of Iran and North Korea. The region Iraq occupied was incredibly important in the name of global stability, thanks mainly to the vast oil resources upon which it sits.

North Korea is not as dangerous as Iraq is currently thanks to its location. It is surrounded by a powerful China and a strong Japan, neither of which want North Korea to create a lasting conflict in the area. North Korea also has the ability to do serious damage to an ally of the US, South Korea. This includes a massive artillery buildup in the south of the country, with the possible ability to level Seoul in a matter of days, and with little warning, serving as an able deterrent from pressure and invasion by the US.

Iran has shown that it has the stomach for conflict in the past, waging a war of attrition against Iraq during the 1980s and using human wave attacks to beat back the Iraqi invasion. Further, Iran has never shown that it has imperial or hegemonic designs, as Hussein did with his invasions of both Kuwait and Iran.

Iraq, on the other hand, has been in a defacto state of war with the US since the end of Operation Desert Storm in 1991. Saddam Hussein has repeatedly demonstrated his belligerence in the face of UN sanctions and international pressures. As such, justifying a war with Iraq would be a much easier process than a war with Iran or North Korea. As the weakest of the three militarily, Iraq was also a much easier sell to the American public; it is much easier to sell a war with a nation that has very little military capability in comparison with the US. As political officeholders, George W. Bush and his neoconservative policymakers are ultimately accountable to the people – Iraq, of the three, would by far be the easiest conflict in terms of a military campaign. September 11 provided a pretext for war with all three members of the “axis of evil,” but a decade of international wrangling largely buttressed the case for war against Iraq.

426 The Ayatollah Khomeini had a stated goal of bringing an Islamic Republican political model to the rest of the secular Arab Regimes in the region, but his ambitions were political and religious, not territorial.
Where does Iraq fit within a neoconservative foreign policy framework?

In the context of neoconservatism, Iraq is an important part of the “hegemonic puzzle.” The pieces of the puzzle fit together, much like a jigsaw puzzle. Global hegemony is only achievable when all the pieces of the puzzle are in place. The pieces of the puzzle are not arbitrary. For example, Southeast Asia is a specific piece of the puzzle because of the economic power it possesses at the doorstep of a militarizing and fast-growing China, hence intense US support of both Taiwan and South Korea. Central Asia is important because of immense energy reserves, particularly natural gas, which under consolidated control could create enough wealth and power to challenge US economic influence and dominance in the region. This could help explain why the US has a good, developing relationship with Uzbekistan’s president Karimov. Uzbekistan provided the US with airbases during the 2003 Iraq invasion, and on several occasions, Donald Rumsfeld has met with Karimov since September 11, as has George W. Bush and Colin Powell. Karimov is clearly a tyrannical dictator that has been shown to torture political dissidents by boiling them alive.

The Middle East is a piece of the puzzle because if a regional power became more dominant in the area and put the reserves of Persian Gulf oil under consolidated control, it could co-opt US influence in the area, and possibly cripple the economy of the US, a country dependent on foreign oil for over 62% of its oil consumption. Hussein has repeatedly made his intentions of regional dominance known, and this is evidenced not only by his statements but by his actions, particularly the invasion of Iran, with a strategic objective of capturing the Shatt al-Arab waterway and the southwestern oilfields, and the invasion of Kuwait, in an effort to consolidate control of the regions oil markets. By dominating and consolidating the resources present in the Persian Gulf, Hussein could possibly gain more influence than the US in a vitally important region. This would undermine American global hegemony, which is the crux of a neoconservative foreign policy.

Further, the angle of Krauthammer’s democratic realism comes into play in the region. Iraq is surrounded by dictatorial governments, some of which, like Iran and Saudi Arabia, have close relationships with terrorist organizations. The entire region, as a whole, has been pegged as a hotbed of anti-US Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism. By
pacifying Iraq, which stands at the geographical center of the region, the dominoes would start to fall, and democracy would spread to neighboring countries. Democracies, the theory holds, have fewer problems with breeding terrorism, as a free people would not stand for such activities taking place within the borders of their respective countries.

Of the neoconservatives whose statements were examined, Khalilzad was by far the most direct on the correlation between advocacy of removing Hussein from power and his neoconservative views, stating that “as the pre-eminent world power, the US can shape the Persian Gulf and other critical regions in a positive direction. Failure to do so will open the door to would-be regional hegemons and cause great strife and instability.”

Another motive in direct relation to the concept of military preeminence in the neoconservative ideology is simple military showmanship, a need to demonstrate to the region and to the world that, in no uncertain terms, the US is militarily dominant, and to attempt to counter its influence or hegemony in any way would be a massive folly. Khalilzad states the US needs to “exercise its power.” Wolfowitz joined Khalilzad in saying that “only the substantial use of military force could prove that the United States is serious.” In addition, a unilateral show of force could, they reason, galvanize an old coalition into acting, showing them that the US, as the coalition’s leader, does in fact mean business, and does in fact have a specific policy objective.

Further, by ending the Hussein regime and replacing it with a friendlier, pro-West democracy, neoconservatives would be in a better position to counter a possible threat from Iran in the region. Iran, they believe, has the potential to become a much greater threat itself, and by positioning forward-leaning bases in Iraq, the US would have an easier time in keeping the Iranian mullahs in check.

**Did the neoconservatives advocate the forced disarmament or toppling of the Hussein regime through military means prior to the events of September 11, 2001?**

The answer to this question is a loud and resounding “yes.” Khalilzad was the

---

427 Khalilzad, “The US Failure in Iraq.”
428 Ibid.
429 Wolfowitz and Khalilzad, “Overthrow Him.”
430 Wolfowitz, “Clinton’s First Year.”
first to openly and publicly call for the end of the Hussein regime in 1996, calling the policy of continued containment “pointless and costly,” and that the next response to any aggressive posturing by Hussein should be “a sustained military campaign” against his armed forces.\textsuperscript{431} That same year, Perle and Feith also recommended regime change in Iraq to then-Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu as a means of “foiling Syria’s regional ambitions.”\textsuperscript{432}

The views of Paul Wolfowitz did not harden into a specific call for regime change in Iraq until late 1997. Prior to that, he took a more general stance, arguing not for any specific policy, but arguing against a continuation of Clinton’s policy of containment. By late 1997, Wolfowitz was writing clearly in favor of regime change. His support did not include support for Clinton’s policy of posturing and supporting groups in hopes of an internal coup, but went so far as to advocate sustained military action against Hussein’s forces should they move against opposition groups in the north or south no-fly zones of Iraq. Say both Wolfowitz and Khalilzad: “Revival of the opposition should not be a matter of organized coup plots, which would be doomed, nor should it consist of CIA manipulation of exile groups. What is needed is the assurance of economic, military, and political support of those Iraqis prepared to take charge of their own future.”\textsuperscript{433} In one editorial, both men clearly and plainly state their belief: “What we need most is a redefinition of policy. Not just a continuation of sanctions and inspections, but the removal of Saddam’s regime.”\textsuperscript{434}

It should be clearly stated that while this group of men did advocate use of force to topple the Hussein regime, they generally advocated not invasion and occupation, but deferred instead to massive military support of the opposition should an insurrection be mounted. In the case of such an insurrection, the US would provide the brunt of military force. Through the use of surrogates, they reason, they would put “the Iraqis in the driver’s seat for determining their own future without the United States walking away from the responsibility.”\textsuperscript{435} During the 1990s, there was no dire sense of impending danger, but rather a fear that Iraq could escalate into a dangerous situation, so unilateral

\textsuperscript{431} Khalilzad, “The US Failure in Iraq.”
\textsuperscript{433} Wolfowitz and Khalilzad, “Overthrow Him.”
\textsuperscript{434} Wolfowitz and Khalilzad, “We Must Lead the Way in Deposing Saddam.”
\textsuperscript{435} Khalilzad, “Getting Rid of Saddam.”

119
military action by the US to invade Iraq, overthrow the Hussein regime by use of force, and occupy the country was not the preferred option by neoconservatives at the time.

September 11, of course, changed the course of history. Neoconservatives saw an opportunity to take Hussein out quickly and with public support – by attempting to link the Hussein regime with the attacks on September 11, and creating a sense of emergency in regards to the prolonged existence of the Hussein regime, they would be able to justify an immediate invasion and occupation. This would allow the US to retain influence in the region, counter a rising Iran at its own borders, and install a democratic regime which would serve as a means to pacify the region and counter terrorism at home, in keeping with Krauthammer’s theory of democratic realism.

**Studying the Past and Looking Ahead**

The goal of this thesis is not simply to analyze and answer questions concerning events happening in the Middle East under the Bush administration. Instead, the true goal is to influence debate about the subject of neoconservatism in Iraq and, most importantly, increase scrutiny of the policies of global hegemony and democratic realism in historical context: where it has worked, where it has failed, and the possibilities of success or failure in the Middle East. Now is not a time to sit and reflect, but a time to look ahead and prepare for the challenges such policies create for the US and the world at large. History is being made every day, and its effect on the future is just as important as any other lessons learned.

Hopefully, by reading this thesis people will understand more clearly the implications of neoconservatism and the effects of their policies abroad, and be able to predict or prevent any long-term ramifications of such a policy.
The Future of the Unipolar World

In a 1991 article Charles Krauthammer wrote that the unique status of America as the world’s only superpower will not last forever:

No doubt, multipolarity will come in time. In perhaps another generation or so there will be great powers coequal with the United States, and the world will, in structure, resemble the pre-World War I era.\(^{436}\)

Krauthammer titled his essay “The Unipolar Moment” because he didn’t believe the time in which the US held its unique world status would be any more than fleeting. Says Thomas Donnelly, principle author of PNAC’s *Rebuilding America’s Defenses*:

The collapse of the Soviet empire left the United States as the world's "sole superpower." After decades of Cold War competition, and centuries of struggle among Europe's great powers, the notion of an extended American peace seemed counterintuitive, to put it mildly. Even at the moment of triumph, essayist Charles Krauthammer anticipated no more than a "unipolar moment," a blink in time.\(^{437}\)

Political Scientist Chalmers Johnson was fond of saying “The Cold War is over, and Japan won.” Similarly, a newly unified Germany was fingered as a possible world competitor. Both countries were seen as economic giants, and the most plausible competitors of US global dominance. Krauthammer called both of these countries “economic dynamos.”\(^{438}\)

Thirteen years after his famous essay, Krauthammer called the 1990s a “holiday from history.”\(^{439}\) As Donnelly puts it:

The 1990s were a deeply disappointing decade for political scientists of various stripes, as potential challengers to U.S. preeminence stumbled or fell out of the competition completely. Japan and Germany, the two great

\(^{439}\) Krauthammer, “In Defense of Global Realism.”
powers who had appropriately exploited the U.S. defense umbrella of the Cold War to rebuild modern industrial economies, discovered – to the surprise of many – that economic power alone did not translate directly into geopolitical strength; the era of "geoeconomics" never materialized. And then the Japanese and German economies stagnated while the U.S. economy grew like a weed.\textsuperscript{440}

Because of these completely unpredictable turn of events in the past decade, the unipolar moment has been extended to an undetermined amount of time. To quote Robert Tucker, professor emeritus of American foreign policy at Johns Hopkins University, “the ‘unipolar moment,’ to use Charles Krauthammer’s terminology, has become the ‘unipolar era.’ Years have been replaced by decades.”\textsuperscript{441}

So the question inevitably arises: “When will it end?” If the Dick Cheneys, William Kristols, and Paul Wolfowitzes of the world can help it, never. But outside of massive military exercises in the face of rising non-aggressive powers, inevitably, another power will arise in some capacity or another to challenge America’s place on the world stage. There are several possible sources of a new multipolar challenge.

\textbf{People’s Republic of China}

Thanks to China’s quickly liberalizing economy, they are fast becoming an economic powerhouse in not only Southeast Asia, but globally as well. This year, with the end of all quotas on textiles and apparel worldwide, profits in that industry surged 75\% in January, with America importing $1.2 billion in that month alone, up from $701 million the previous year.\textsuperscript{442}

On the heels of staggering economic growth during China’s slow tilt towards a market economy comes an annual double-digit increase in military spending. In the first week of March, 2005, the Chinese legislature passed a law allowing them to use force if Taiwan were to press for secession. If Taiwan, which denounced the new legislation, were to be attacked by China, US legislation obliges the US to come to the aid of

\textsuperscript{440} Donnelly, “The Proof of Primacy.”
While the US can certainly defeat China in a conventional war today, several decades down the road may prove different if America overextends itself with its global commitments without significantly increasing its own military spending.

Russia

Following the end of the Cold War, one of the immediate fears of the US, as stated in the 1992 *Defense Planning Guidance* document, was a neoimperialist Russia rising out of the ashes of the Soviet Empire. As the economy stagnated and retracted throughout the 1990s under the seemingly inept leadership of Russian president Boris Yeltsin, the fear quickly subsided.

With the ascendency of Vladimir Putin to the head of the Russian state, the tides very well may have turned. In the wake of the Beslan school siege in fall of 2004, Putin tightened control on his position as president, in the name of unification and fighting terror. He eliminated district elections that make up half of the country’s parliament, called the Duma, which effectively excised a majority of the parliamentary opposition, as the eliminated elections accounted for all of the seats carried by the independents and liberals in the country.\(^{444}\)

Putin has increasingly flexed his economic muscle in the Middle East, doing his best to challenge US hegemony to the region. He has sold missile systems to Syria, and aided Iran in its nuclear program. If the Asad regime in Syria and the Islamic regime in Iran last into the near future, Russia is positioning itself to gain influence in leaps and bounds in the region.

Recently, Putin has agreed to joint Chinese-Russian military exercises concerning Taiwan, to take place in the South China Sea. While Russia won’t sell its newest top-of-the-line Sukhoi fighter jets to China, relations between the two nations are growing closer and closer. This could spell trouble if a conflict in national interest between the US or either Russia or China comes to blows.


**European Union**

While not a specific national entity, the whole point of the European Union is to create a balance against the economic might of the US. With the value of the Euro rapidly rising against the value of the dollar, some national banks are changing standards.

OPEC, too, has felt the power of the Euro. With the value of the dollar falling and oil prices based on the US dollar, Europe has been able to buy more oil for a cheaper price, harming profits. Prior to the invasion of Iraq, OPEC was considering setting prices based on the Euro, which would effectively cost the US economy, dependent upon massive imports of crude oil and petroleum products from the Middle East, billions if not trillions of dollars.

**United States**

Possibly the biggest stumbling block towards a continuation of a unipolar world is the United States itself. With the lack of a cohesive enemy (terrorism has provided the US with its monolithic threat now, but it would most likely be safe to assume it won’t be there forever), Washington may be unable to persuade the people that hold it accountable to fund or support more foreign entanglements. Says Economist and Political Scientist Ethan Epstein:

> It may be that, absent the Cold War, Washington will find itself unable to define much less defend a “national interest” that transcends special-interest groups, and instead will find itself pulled-and-hauled in ways that undermine its ability to act… Hegemonic stability theorists have long said that a dominant power needs domestic “willingness” to write and enforce the rules of the game, and it is here the United States appears at its weakest.\(^{445}\)

Without a clearly-defined national threat, it would become exceedingly difficult to justify intervention or military action against nations that may be on the rise militarily or economically, but have not postured aggressively towards the United States or its interests. As a result, it’s always possible the hegemonic power and influence would decline in the face of another rising power.

---

The Uncertainty of History

This is all, of course, simple speculation. History has shown us that the future of political reality is all but predictable. The rising powers of Germany and Japan have stagnated, and neoconservatism, once thought to effectively be a dead movement, was propelled to the forefront of US policy by the events of September 11. The unrivaled power of America could very well stay unrivaled, but the political possibility of that occurring is marginal. It would most likely behoove the US to begin preparing for such a state now, not by acting belligerently to rising powers or flaunting its own superiority in the face of the international community, but by acting as an ambassador of good will and working to secure whatever common interests the two states or entities may have, instead of deriding the interests of other nations as a non-issue.

The Democratization of the Middle East

Supporters of the 2003 invasion of Iraq are quick to point out the success of the January 2005 elections as a “turning point” in the region, along with political demonstrations occurring in Beirut, Lebanon following the assassination of anti-Syria politician Rafik Harriri. While a closer parallel can more easily be drawn with the events of the contested Ukranian elections in 2004, the argument that the democratization of the region is in fact working and working well is hard to counter.

However, the question is not if it will work in the short-term. The streets of Baghdad are patrolled by huge numbers of US military forces, and the US will most likely have a prolonged occupation of Iraq. This is defacto protection from the likes of military coups, such as that which occurred in 1958 under Qassem, and other coup attempts, such as the coup of 1963 and the Ba’athist power grab in 1968, which led eventually to Hussein’s rule in 1979. When the occupation is over, and the number of US troops present dwindles to zero, such protection is gone.

Winston Churchill once said that the Germans are “either at your throat or at your feet.” Since then, many have compared the statement to that of the Arab populace. This brings up a fundamental question of culture – absent the provisional democracies installed by the US military, there are exactly zero long-term “true” Arab democracies.
This is not a coincidence - the Middle East is only recently becoming acquainted with the international community, and its deep cultural, tribal, and religious divisions make a peaceful representative government difficult. Charles Krauthammer asks: “where is it written that Arabs are incapable of democracy?” Francis Fukuyama responds:

Prior to the Iraq War, there were many reasons for thinking that building a democratic Iraq was a task of a complexity that would be nearly unmanageable. Some reasons had to do with the nature of Iraqi society: the fact that it would be decompressing rapidly from totalitarianism, its ethnic divisions, the role of politicized religion, the society's propensity for violence, its tribal structure and the dominance of extended kin and patronage networks, and its susceptibility to influence from other parts of the Middle East that were passionately anti-American.

The cultural question is an argument often beset with accusations of an anti-Arab mentality or bias. While this can be true in some cases, culture is a genuine concern. It is not to say that the whole of Arab society is antithetical to the establishment of democracy – indeed, it is probably a safe argument to say that a vast majority of the Arab population is intensely supportive of the establishment of a peaceful democratic regime. It is the minority that raises concerns – a majority of the Iraqi population did not support the brutal Hussein regime, but the minority that did had the will to keep him in control of the country. In a country where tribal or religious affiliation is often more important than a broader political ideal, such as democracy, the seeds of such a political system find it difficult to take root.

History certainly contains examples of the political failure of democracy. The Weimar Republic, set up after the German defeat in World War I, was a democratic regime created by the victors of the war. Fifteen years later, Hitler’s rise to power in 1933 turned the Democratic regime into a dictatorial one, leading Europe onto the road to an even greater conflict in World War II. So too, much further back in history, was the Roman Empire a republic. Until a man named Julius Caesar took control of the Empire after crossing the Rubicon, the regime was representative of the populace.

When asked about the significance of the 1789 French Revolution, Chinese minister Chou en-Lai allegedly responded by saying it was simply too soon to tell. The

446 Krauthammer, speech to the American Enterprise Institute.
447 Fukuyama, Francis, “The Neoconservative Moment.”
same can be said of the democratization of the Arab world. It is not the short-term successes that count – any country can install a democracy if it invades and sets one up. What truly counts is the long-term stability and power of the new regime. Fukuyama was correct in asserting the questions of the cultural difficulties of democracy in the region, and only in time – most likely a long time – will we know whether or not political freedom is more powerful than the cultural forces in the region.

The international security created by democratic nations – a key reason for the drive of democratic realism – can also be suspect. Few people seem to consider the objective fact that in world affairs, the United States, a long-standing democratic nation, is the only true current international belligerent, having invaded two nations in as many years. The rules, as many have claimed, seem not to apply to the US, particularly in the context of a neoconservative tendency to view the US as the “city on the hill” and its enemies as some variation of an “evil empire.”

In the end, the concepts and theories of democratic realism are, for the most part, completely untested, and seeming instances in the past have had some magnificent failures. As Fukuyama stated, “possibility is not likelihood, and good policy is not made by staking everything on a throw of the dice.” For the sake of the security of the US, one would hope the theories propounded by the likes of policy neoconservatives are in fact true in every facet, and that the seeds of democracy will grow in the region, eliminating Krauthammer’s existential threat, as a failure of that policy could have powerful repercussions and consequences, including the further undermining of US credibility abroad.

---

448 Fukuyama, Francis, “The Neoconservative Moment.”
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Buchanan, Pat. Interview with Chris Matthews on *MSNBC’s Hardball*, September 30, 2002.


Bush, George W. Speech to the West Point graduating class, June 1, 2002.


Rumsfeld, Donald. Interview on CBS’ Face the Nation, March 14, 2004.


Rumsfeld, Donald. Testimony before the House Armed Services Committee, September 18, 2002.

Rumsfeld, Donald. Testimony before the House Armed Services Committee, September 19, 2002.


Wolfowitz, Paul. Interview with Sam Tanenhaus of *Vanity Fair*, Friday, May 9, 2003.


Zinni, Anthony. Farewell retirement speech to the US Naval Institute, March 2000.


Ryan McHargue was born in Springfield, Virginia in June of 1982. Moving to Sarasota, Florida when his father retired from the FBI in 1992, he started his college career in Fall of 2000, majoring in and receiving a degree in Anthropology from Florida State University in Summer of 2003. Having developed a keen interest in politics and policy concerning the Middle East, he entered graduate school in the Florida State University history department, where he studied US policy towards the Middle East during the 1980s, 1990s, and through the present. After earning his MA degree, the author plans to enter the league of professionals working for the Federal Government in Washington, DC.