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BACK TO THE FUTURE: THE ROLE OF THE FOUNDING FATHERS IN SHAPING THE NEW WORLD ORDER

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At the close of the Cold War the United States faces the difficult task of defining what it stands for, what its long-term goals are and the means it is willing to use to attain these goals. This thesis investigates the role American core values played in the two historical operational codes of the United States—nation building of the Founding Fathers, and the Cold War containment policy. It examines the relationship of paradigm change on values, perceptions and policy. It attempts to develop case studies which exemplify that relationship. Additionally, a long-range planning model is presented for use in framing the debate on options presented for a new operational code. Finally, it goes on to suggest what part American values should play in the operational code the nation develops to shape the "New World Order."

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Back to the Future: The Role of the Founding Fathers in Shaping the New World Order

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ABSTRACT

At the close of the Cold War the United States faces the difficult task of defining what it stands for, what its long-term goals are and the means it is willing to use to attain these goals. This thesis investigates the role American core values played in the two historical operational codes of the United States—nation building of the Founding Fathers, and the Cold War containment policy. It examines the relationship of paradigm change on values, perceptions and policy. It attempts to develop case studies which exemplify that relationship. Additionally, a long-range planning model is presented for use in framing the debate on options presented for a new operational code. Finally, it goes on to suggest what part American values should play in the operational code the nation develops to shape the New World Order.

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PREFACE

The end of the Cold War has opened a Pandora's box of National Security threats. Since 1950, all national security issues were framed in relation to their effect on the bipolar rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union. If one were to suggest a new threat or goal outside this rubric, it was usually discarded before it could be resolved. The high level of American interest in the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development demonstrates how the number and priority of national security interests are changing. As the New World Order evolves, the United States has to develop a taxonomy for framing the debate on America's role in this process.

In 1974 author/philosopher Ayn Rand addressed the United States Military Academy on the importance of a well-defined philosophy. She asserted:

> But the principles you accept (consciously or unconsciously) may clash with or contradict one another; they, too, have to be integrated. What integrates them? Philosophy. A philosophic system is an integrated view of existence. As a human being, you have no choice about the fact that you need a philosophy. Your only choice is whether you define your philosophy by a conscious, rational, disciplined process of thought and scrupulously logical deliberation—or let your subconscious accumulate a junk heap of unwarranted conclusions, false generalizations, undefined contradictions, undigested slogans, unidentified wishes, doubts and fears, thrown together by chance, but integrated by your subconscious into a kind of mongrel philosophy and

> fused into a single solid weight: Self-doubt, like a ball and chain in the place where your mind's wings should have grown.[1]

Self-doubt is not a condition limited to individuals. The recent anxiety attack that the United States has suffered is an excellent example.

After persevering for forty-five years, the United States and her Western Allies have clearly won the military stand-off of the Cold War, but one has to wonder about the price of this victory. It might be expected that the United States would feel more pride in itself and its system, however the country seems to miss the Soviet threat. The Cold War provided a convenient excuse for America to avoid defining its basic philosophical tenets. The obvious inadequacy of the Soviet system helped to define what the United States was by providing a distasteful enemy to rally against. Now that this enemy is gone the more difficult task of what the country stands for looms on the horizon.

The United States faced a similar situation following the Revolutionary War. The initial unifying theme was dissatisfaction with British rule. This united the colonies in the struggle against British rule, but did not provide the philosophical basis to build a great republic. The deficiencies of the union under the Articles of Confederation forced the Founding Fathers to think abstractly and debate the merits of complex philosophical issues. "There is common agreement among modern critics that the debates over the Constitution were carried on at an intellectual level that is rare in politics, and the Constitution itself is one of the world's masterpieces of practical

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[1]Ayn Rand, *Philosophy: Who Needs It*, The Ayn Rand Library, Vol. 1, (New York: Signet, 1984), 5.

statecraft."[2] The Constitution and the *Federalist Papers* laid the intellectual and philosophical foundation for the first nation based on pluralism and toleration. At the successful end of another war, it is time for America to consciously integrate and define what it stands for and what its long term goals are. This is not the kind of debate that most Americans are comfortable with, however if the nation wants to break loose from the malaise of self doubt saturating it, Americans have no other choice.

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[2] Richard Hofstadter, *The American Political Tradition: And the Men Who Made It*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948), 15.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. THESIS STATEMENT

This thesis asserts that America has a core set of values inherited from the Founding Fathers that should serve as an integrating mechanism for strategic planning. In addition to values serving as an integrating mechanism, ". . . the value system is perhaps the most enduring part of what we think of as a society, or a social system."[3] Effective strategic planning occurs when these core values are articulated and operationalized. The purpose of this study is to show how American core values developed and were operationalized in the operational codes (paradigms) of the Founding Fathers, the policymakers of the Cold War era, and contemporary policymakers as they set out to define America's role in the New World Order.

B. OVERVIEW

This study begins with an investigation of the role that paradigms play in science and asserts that operational codes serve the same purpose for nations. This parallel is investigated because it provides an insight into the nature of paradigm shifts. The United States has had two identifiable paradigms—isolationism and the goal of nation building of the Founding Fathers and the

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[3] Seymour Martin Lipset, *The First New Nation: The United States in Historical & Comparative Perspective*, (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1979), 105-6.

containment policy of the Cold War. Today the nation is attempting to build a new paradigm or operational code to shape the new world order.

The study continues by looking at the nature of values in general and how these values can be identified. From there, the nature of American values is investigated. Inheritance from Western civilization, the Enlightenment, the rise of Individualism, and the development of a unique American philosophy are all important elements in the nature of American values. The Declaration of Independence is then shown to be an embodiment of these unique American values.

The examination of values yields the value paradigm of the Founding Fathers which continues to serve as an integrating mechanism. Once established, the operational code of the Founding Fathers is demonstrated. The best articulation of the operational code of the Founding Fathers is found in *George Washington's Farewell Address*. The statements on foreign policy and articulation of values which lead up to and follow the Farewell Address are examined and show how the operational code was formulated and put into practice from the founding of the republic to the issuance of the Monroe Doctrine.

This study then moves from the era of the Founding Fathers to the era of the Cold War. The operational codes of George Kennan and Paul Nitze are compared and contrasted. Nitze's operational code as applied in terms of Vietnam is examined. Finally, lessons learned are offered.

The paper concludes with a discussion of the role American values should play in the operational code the nation will adopt to shape the New World Order. This study then outlines a planning model that could serve as a

device for framing the debate on the new operational code and examining the codes of the past. It is critical of the National Security Strategy of August 1991 for its neglect of values. The new operational code must be based on core values inherited from the Founding Fathers in order to provide the foundation necessary for effective proactive planning by the United States as it shapes the New World Order.

C. DEFINITION OF TERMS

The most crucial definition to this study is the definition of values. For the purpose of this study, "Values . . . are the commitments of individual persons to pursue and support certain *directions* or types of actions for the collectivity as a system and hence derivatively for their own roles in the collectivity. Values are ... *directions* of action rather than specific objectives."[4] There are three types of values that this paper will be concerned with. The first type of value is an instrumental value. Instrumental values are values that a society uses to evaluate its policy, exercise societal control and are a catalyst for compliance from members of society. Examples of instrumental values are articulated in the Preamble of the Constitution:

> We the People of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.[5]

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[4] Talcott Parsons, *Structure and Process in Modern Society*, (Glencoe, IL: The Free Press, 1960),172.

[5] Richard D. Heffner, *A Documentary History of the United States*. 5th edition, (New York: Mentor, 1991) 24.

These values are utilitarian. These values can be put to work in a society and provide immediate direction to members of that society.

The second type of value is a terminal value. Terminal values are those values that act as a *source* of goals for a society. These are long term goals which are not expected to be achieved immediately. Examples of these are the values embodied in the Declaration of Independence, and articulated in the second paragraph:

> We hold these truths to be self-evident, That all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty & the pursuit of happiness.[6]

These are terminal values in the sense that slavery as an institution existed when the nation was founded. Thomas Jefferson "never really expected them to be realized in his time and preferred to place his hopes in progress, in the promise that mankind would consummate his ideals in some magnificent future."[7]

The final type of value is an aspirational value. Aspirational values are very long term goals which are not expected to be achieved. The "goals" provided by aspirational values give a society a direction to move, although the achievement of that goal is not realistic. Aspirational values are the most idealistic values. An example found in the Preamble of the Constitution is the aspirational goal of "forming a more perfect Union." Achieving a perfect Union is not in the realm of possibilities, however it gives society a goal to strive toward.

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[6] Heffner,15.

[7] Hofstadter, 25.

The next major concept that must be defined is that of operational code. Alexander George states that "Operational code serves as a prism that influences the actor's perceptions and diagnoses of the flow of political events, his definitions and estimates of particular situations. These beliefs also provide norms, standards, values and guidelines that influence the actor's choice of strategy and tactics, his structuring and weighing of alternative courses of action."[8] The operational code is the articulation of a nation's values. Parson tells us that "[v]alues are actualized, partially and imperfectly, in realistic situations of social interaction and the outcomes are always codetermined by the values and real exigencies."[9] This actualization of values is the basis of the operational code. Operational code is the confluence between instrumental values and terminal values.

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[8] Alexander L. George, "The 'Operational Code': A Neglected Approach to the Study of Political Leaders and Decision-Making", *International Studies Quarterly*, vol. 13, no. 2. June 1969.

[9] Parsons, 173.

II. THOMAS KUHN: *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*

The United States is like a gifted adolescent passing from the trials and triumphs of youth to the more difficult times of young adulthood. Initially, parents, society and inertia, define the values of a youth. As the youth passes into adulthood, it is his personal decisions that set the limits and goals of his life. Failure to take this personal responsibility would result in a life of directionless drift. For forty years (1950-1990) the United States identified itself by what it was not—communism. The definition, by default, allowed American administrations great latitude in determining what actions were in America's national interest. This nebulous definition allowed interventions simply by saying these actions were against communism and, therefore, right. These administrations seemed to lose sight of what many believed made America unique: its values. These values were used alternately to justify repressive anti-communists regimes or ignored completely when the United States imposed its will on the fates of nations to maintain some arbitrary status quo ante. As faith in the operational code of containment dropped, the search for a new operational code began. It was not until the fall of the Eastern Bloc, that the search began in earnest.

This chapter will investigate the nature of revolutions in science and draw parallels between a paradigm shift in science and an operational code change for a nation. Insights drawn from this investigation will aid our understanding of the procedure America must go through when an operational code is adopted.

In many respects what is happening today at the highest levels of government and coffee shops around the nation is what historian of science Thomas Kuhn calls a revolution in science. It is the search for a successor paradigm to replace the old paradigm of containment. In science a paradigm serves many of the same functions that grand strategy or operational code serve in government. Kuhn asserts that a paradigm, "stands for the entire constellation of beliefs, values, techniques, and so on shared by the members of a given community."[10] Kuhn's concern was with science, however, his thoughts on the function of paradigms and how they change is applicable to our investigation of operational codes and how they change.

A. NORMAL VS. REVOLUTIONARY SCIENCE

Kuhn believes there are two types of science: normal and revolutionary. He defines normal sciences as:

> research firmly based upon one or more past scientific achievements, achievements that some particular scientific community acknowledges for a time as supplying the foundation for its further practice.[11]

Normal science is analogous to regular day to day diplomacy and standard operating procedures of governmental organizations. Kuhn suggests the average scientist working in normal science, "is a solver of puzzles, not a tester of paradigms."[12] Similarly, the average diplomat spends almost all of his time solving the daily puzzles of international relations, not testing the

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10 Ibid.

11 Ibid., 10.

12 Ibid., 144.

grand strategy of the United States. Nevertheless, there are times in science or the evolution of nations when the old paradigm is just not solving the puzzles anymore. This is the time when a revolution in science is likely to occur. Kuhn defines scientific revolutions as "those non-cumulative developmental episodes in which an older paradigm is replaced in whole or in part by an incompatible new one."[13] In science, Einsteinian physics is an example of such an event; in American history, the adoption of the operational code of containment is the most current example.

B. FUNCTIONS OF PARADIGMS

Kuhn asserts paradigms "define the legitimate problems and methods of a research field."[14] Once the paradigm is accepted, it frees the practitioner "from the need constantly to re-examine its first principles, the members of that community can concentrate exclusively upon the subtlest and most esoteric of the phenomenon that concern it."[15] A common paradigm provides "a criterion for choosing problems that, while the paradigm is taken for granted, it can be assumed to have solutions...."[16] Returning to the strategy of containment the legitimate problem was communist growth and the preferred solution was superior power. The average diplomat or military officer did not bother to question the nature of the problem or the solution dictated by the strategy.

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13 Ibid., 92.

14 Ibid.

15 Ibid., 163.

16 Ibid., 37.

C. THE FALL AND RISE OF PARADIGMS

A paradigm, according to Kuhn, goes through a fairly predictable life cycle, "the emergence of new theories is generally preceded by a period of pronounced professional insecurity."[17] This insecurity is the result of "the recognition that nature has somehow violated the paradigm induced expectations that govern normal science."[18] Kuhn declares:

> the profession can no longer evade anomalies that subvert the existing tradition of scientific practice—then begin the extraordinary investigations that lead the profession at last to a new set of commitments, a new basis for the practice of science,....[19]

American policy makers are at this point. The anomalies present in the operational code of the United States cry out for new thinking to eliminate polices that are working at cross purposes.

As the anomalies surrounding a paradigm proliferate, an equal number of special explanations within the paradigm arise to explain them. As the number of explanations increase, the utility of the paradigm decreases proportionally. Younger practitioners or new arrivals to field, with less time and effort invested in the old paradigm begin the search for a new paradigm. Kuhn suggests that this period "is regularly marked by frequent and deep debates over legitimate methods, problems and standards of solution, though these serve rather to define schools than to produce agreement."[20] These

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17 Ibid., 67.

18 Ibid., 52-53.

19 Ibid., 6.

20 Ibid., 47-48.

debates are "characterized by continual competition between a number of distinct views of nature, each partially derived from, and all roughly compatible with, the dictates of scientific observation and method."[21] Proposed paradigms do not have all the answers to all the relevant questions. Kuhn believes, "The man who embraces a new paradigm at an early stage must often do so in defiance of the evidence provided by problem-solving."[22] Science tries to present itself as a process of dispassionate logic. In contrast, Kuhn thinks adopting a new paradigm involves a leap of faith in the future utility of the paradigm. He declared, "A decision between alternative ways of practicing sciences is called for and in the circumstances that decision must be based less on past achievement than on future promise."[23] As the country searches for a new operational code it would be wise to remember that no new code can prove ahead of time its total problem solving ability. At some point in time it must take a leap of faith, when it does one can only hope that the new code is in keeping with the values of the country's Founding Fathers.

D. RESULTS OF ADOPTING A NEW PARADIGM

Changing the paradigm that has supplied the questions and answers for a field is a traumatic experience. Especially, for someone who has invested a great deal of time and effort in the old one. Kuhn believes "once it has achieved the status of paradigm, a scientific theory is declared invalid only if

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21 Ibid., 4.

22 Ibid., 157.

23 Ibid., 157-158.

an alternate candidate is available to take its place."[24] This concept provides insight into what may be going through the mind of Washington policymakers now. It is probably clear to them that the strategy of containment does not work today, even when aimed at containing anarchy. They do not want to abandon it until there is another paradigm or operational code available, one which appears to better answer the questions that they face daily. Like the firestorm that followed Kennan's "Long Telegram," these paradigm shifts seem to change fully the view of the practitioners or leave them intact. Kuhn suggests even though there is mounting evidence that a paradigm is no longer working, "the transition between competing paradigms cannot be made a step at a time, forced by logic and neutral experience. Like the gestalt switch, it must occur all at once or not at all."[25] This is a personal decision for each scientist. Kuhn asserts, "The transfer of allegiance from paradigm to paradigm is a conversion experience that cannot be forced."[26] So as we stumble through this shift in operational code one can expect to see a number of new paradigms articulated. Inexplicably, the same light bulb will light up in most of the policymakers heads if the United States is going to settle on a durable operational code.

A new paradigm will not be unique in all respects, because of the shared experiences of those who previously worked in the field. Kuhn suggests a paradigm will "ordinarily incorporate much of the vocabulary and apparatus,

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24 Ibid., 77.

25 Ibid., 150.

26 Ibid., 156.

both conceptual and manipulative, that the traditional paradigm had previously employed."[27] Nevertheless, the results of applying the new paradigm fundamentally changes the field, and "though the world does not change with a change of paradigm, the scientist afterward works in a different world."[28] The paradigm shift and resulting change in world view affect "the formulation of questions and answers that accounts, for more than novel empirical discoveries."[29] So in this analogy, a switch in America's operational code might lead to novel methods in applying its power to the problems that now face the nation.

E. VALUES IN SCIENCE

Finally, in science, as in national security affairs, there is a role for values. Kuhn declares, "a problem must be characterized by more than an assured solution. There must also be rules that limit both the nature of acceptable solutions and the steps by which they are to be attained."[30] This is the realm of values. For instance, during the early years of containment and the bomb, some advised that a preemptive nuclear strike would allow the Untied States to solve its problem of expansive Soviet state.[31] This solution was a logical

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27 Ibid., 149.

28 Ibid., 121.

29 Ibid., 140.

30 Ibid., 38.

31 *NsC 68: A Report to the National Security Council on United States Objectives and Programs for National Security.* 14 April 1950. Reprinted in *Naval War College Review* May/June 1975, 54-110.

response within the operational code of containment. Luckily, the values of American leaders prevented the United States from pursuing this logical end. Kuhn believes, "shared values can be important determinants of group behavior even though the members of the group do not all apply them the same way...." This is an important distinction. Just because the values are shared does not mean their use must be uniform, in fact, insisting on uniformity would hold back both science and society. Kuhn explained, "individual variability in the application of shared values may serve functions essential to science. The points at which values must be applied are invariably also those at which risks must be taken."[32]

F. APPLICATION

From this application of Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* it is apparent that revolutions in science and changes of the operational codes of nations share many characteristics. Kuhn's analysis provides insight into the process that America must go through before adopting another operational code. Obviously the change in perception that accompanies the change in paradigm will have a large effect on the nation's outlook. The more benign international environment allows the Nation to pursue policies once thought quixotic. This process may not be smooth or outwardly logical, but without letting it run its full course it is doubtful that any proposed operational code would endure more than the term of one administration.

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32 Kuhn, 186.

When the new operational code is adopted, values will help define and limit acceptable means and ends.

III. THE NATURE OF AMERICAN VALUES

In the introduction, we defined values. Here we will examine American values. American values are a product of the country's cultural context. In this case, cultural context is the confluence of economic, social, and political reality and the current ideologies of the day. Cultural context means the "American experience." The American experience, in turn, embodies those elements which make up that experience, namely elements from inheritance, from the environment and from historical experience. Talcott Parson defines values in the following manner: "Values are the sense of commitment of individual persons to pursue and support certain *directions* or types of actions for the collectivity as a system and hence derivatively for their own roles in the collectivity."[33] In this sense, values are directions of action rather than specific goals. To identify American core values, one must examine the values of America in the time of the Founding Fathers and see how these values were embodied in such documents as the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and *The Federalist,* and how they were operationalized in American foreign policy.

American core values are not articulated explicitly. When it came to beliefs and values, America was of the "faith that its norms are self-evident."[34] America "was so sure of itself that it hardly needed to become

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[33] Parsons, 173.

[34] Louis Hartz, *The Liberal Tradition in America: An Interpretation of American Political Thought since the Revolution,* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1955), 58.

articulate."[35] One must examine the American character to discover American values. Henry Steele Commager asserts, "The forces that create a national character are as obscure as those that create an individual character, but that both are formed early and change relatively little is almost certain."[36] The fact that values remain fairly constant is crucial to this study. "'Circumstances change profoundly, but the character of the American people has not changed greatly or the nature of the principles of conduct, public and private, to which they subscribe.'"[37] Examining the American character as it was developing in the time of the Founding Fathers will allow us to discover what American core values were then and how the Founding Fathers operationalized values.

American core values are based on a number of different philosophies, beliefs and experiences. "Out of an amalgam of inheritance, environment, and historical experience, Americans fashioned a distinctive character."[38] America inherited their beliefs and philosophies from Europe, and Britain in particular, but the exposure to the American frontier transformed these values into something uniquely American.

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[35] Ibid., 58-59.

[36] Henry Steele Commager, *The American Mind*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950) 409.

[37] Lipset, (from Commager, *Living Ideas in America* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1951) 123.), xviii.

[38] Commager, 441.

A. INHERITED VALUES

America inherited the foundations for its values from Western civilization. The importance of studying the past lies in the fact that "historical events establish values and predispositions, and these in turn determine later events."[39] These historical events help identify the *direction* pursued. Commager states:

> The American character was the product of an interplay of inheritance and environment, both varied and complex. For inheritance was not only British but European, not only of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries but of two thousand years. That America was an offspring of Britain was acknowledged; that the roots of her culture and her institutions traced back to Greece and Rome and Palestine was not to be forgotten; and the basic institutions of state, church, and family which Americans maintained and the fundamental values which they cherished advertised the origin and the relationship."[40]

This inheritance was indeed diverse. From ancient Greece America received the democratic tradition. Also from Athens, came the first formulation of natural law by Plato. From Rome America inherited the tradition of law and order. Finally, from Palestine, America embraced Judeo-Christian values, and a belief in a moral law that had been carried down from the time of Moses. Americans then integrated these beliefs and values into the new ideas of the Enlightenment.

B. THE ENLIGHTENMENT AND AMERICAN VALUES

Some of the basic tenets of American values came from the Enlightenment in which America played an active role. The Enlightenment

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[39] Lipset, 7.

[40] Commager, 3.

exposed the country and the world to Newtonian physics, and the primacy of science. Science celebrated Reason above all else, and this perpetuated the belief that all knowledge could be found through scientific experimentation. In Europe this led to an abandonment of some Christian beliefs. But the historical experience, which plays a key role in the forming of values was different in America. Louis Hartz states that "[d]espite the European flavor of a Jefferson or a Frankiin, the Americans refused to join in the great Enlightenment enterprise of shattering the Christian concept of sin, replacing it with an unlimited humanism, and then emerging with an earthly paradise as glittering as the heavenly one that had been destroyed."[41] Instead, the integration of Judeo-Christian tradition into American culture was instrumental in forming the moral code of the young nation.

The Enlightenment gave the Western world the philosophy of Hobbes and Locke.[42] Hobbes put forth the idea of man in a state of nature, which is a constant state of war. This state of nature is chaos. For man to overcome this state of nature, or more precisely, give order to the state of nature, man had to work together and surrender some of his freedom. For Hobbes, man is basically selfish and contentious, and without government, anarchy and terror would reign in the state of nature.

Locke espoused the state of nature too, but for him the state of nature was governed by the Laws of Nature. Man is a rational being capable of understanding right and wrong in the sense of the philosophy of the Law of

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[41] Hartz, 39.

[42] Richard Hofstadter, *The American Political Tradition: And the Men Who Made It*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948), Chapter One.

Nature and Nature's God. Where Hobbes believed that the state of nature was disorder, the state of nature for Locke was ordered because the self-evident Laws of Nature kept it so. Although these philosophies were at odds with one another the American had no trouble accepting aspects of both. From Locke he took the beliefs of self-evident truths and natural rights. (As will be discussed later, Locke's writings rationalized the American revolution.) From Hobbes the American took the idea of man being selfish, but instead of this being a negative quality, the American was able to turn it into a virtue. This virtue was Individualism.

C. THE INDIVIDUAL IN AMERICAN VALUES

The philosophy of the Founding Fathers which contained both elements of Locke and Hobbes celebrated the individual and individual freedom. Some agreed with Hobbes saying that man's self-interest was a vice, while others saw man's self-interest, not as a vice, but as a public good. Ralph Henry Gabriel states that the Founding Fathers believed "... the general good is best served when free men pursue, each in an enlightened manner, their self-interest."[43] Man should be allowed to pursue his self-interest as long as that pursuit is limited by law.

When it came time to make the Constitution, the Founding Fathers had great confidence in Reason which stemmed from Newtonian science. Remaining true to the Enlightenment, their social philosophy emphasized atomism, which centered their interests on individual man. "They thought

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[43] Ralph Henry Gabriel, *The Course of American Democratic Thought*, 2nd edition(New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1956), 11.

man was a creature of rapacious self-interest, and yet they wanted him to be free—free, in essence, to control, to engage in an umpired strife, to use property to get property. They accepted the mercantile image of life as an eternal battleground, and assumed the Hobbesian war of each against all; they did not propose to put an end to this war, but merely to stabilize it and make it less murderous."[44] Individualism and self-interest could only be achieved if man were free. However, this freedom must be bounded by law to protect man's property and the property of others. "The sanctity of private property, the right of the individual to dispose of and invest it, the value of opportunity, and the natural evolution of self-interest and self assertion, within broad legal limits, into a beneficent social order has been staple tenets of the central faith in American political ideologies."[45] Individualism is a core American value that is embodied in both the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution.

In America, the individual flourished in the state of nature. The "state of nature" concept was actualized on the American frontier. As the individual conquered nature, or more precisely gave order to nature, he grew and matured. Like the individual, the nation grew and matured in the "state of nature" as well. But the country did not just survive, it prospered. This success vindicated the belief of the Founding Fathers in the individual, because they believed that individualism led to progress. Thus, one of the first philosophies that was native to America was the philosophy of progress.

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[44] Hofstadter, 16.

[45] Ibid., xxx.

"The doctrine of the free individual grew out of and was related to the doctrine of the fundamental law. The path that led from one to the other was the philosophy of progress."[46] But like the American character, American philosophy contained numerous elements of different philosophies, adapted these to the environment, and produced a unique philosophy from which American core values are taken.

D. THE AMERICAN PHILOSOPHY

Commager states that "American philosophy... was, like the American character, an amalgam of inheritance and experience; and if the inheritance is more obvious, the experience is more interesting. To confess that the formal corpus of philosophy was inherited tells us little, for the American was a free agent, and if the term inheritance suggests a passive role it is misleading."[47] The American experience was one of taming the wild, giving order to nature. America truly was a new world, and freed from the bondage of the past, America embarked on the greatest social and political experiment of all time. The frontier experience was by far the most significant experience, because "...the frontier promoted the formation of a composite nationality for the American people."[48] Another of the elements that contributed to this experience was the absence of the feudal tradition in America. This had a great impact on the liberal tradition in America. Hartz states, "When the Americans celebrated the uniqueness of their own society, they were on the

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[46] Gabriel, 20.

[47] Commager, 26.

[48] Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Frontier in American History," from Heffner, 187.

track of a personal insight of the profoundest importance. For the nonfeudal world in which they lived shaped every aspect of their social thought: it gave them a frame of mind that cannot be found elsewhere in the eighteenth century, or in the wider history of modern revolutions."[49] Not only did the nonfeudal tradition shape American society, it also helped shaped his philosophy.

For the most part, Americans tended to be indifferent when it came to philosophy. Americans were practical and did not concern themselves with philosophy *per se*. Their philosophy was one of common sense. Americans saw themselves with the mission of building a new nation and could not be bothered with thinking about metaphysical philosophies. What they needed was a philosophy that would help them achieve the task at hand. They needed a philosophy that was instrumental. One example of what they embraced was pragmatism.

Pragmatism was a philosophy of inclusion and expedience.[50] It put ideas to work and judged them by their results. It was a democratic philosophy, in that all ideas had an equal chance of being accepted, and every man could be a philosopher. Pragmatism was an individualistic philosophy because it celebrated the importance of the individual and allowed the individual to have a role in the results. Finally, for Pragmatism to be a humane and optimistic philosophy subscribing to the philosophy of progress, it had to be tempered by Idealism.

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[49] Hartz, 39.

[50] See William James, *Pragmatism*. Great Books in Philosophy.(Bearon Press: 1950).

As stated above, American philosophy is an amalgam of inheritance and experience. The product of this inheritance and experience was something uniquely American. As the American was building his own philosophy, "[h]e embraced ideas without rigorous inquiry into their validity, abandoned them without proof of their invalidity. He looted the philosophical stores of the past, took what pleased him without reference to logical coherence, and fitted it all together into a pattern that had symmetry only in his eyes."[51] As would be expected, the result was unique and was not free of contradictions. But strangely enough it had enjoyed a wide consensus. Commager states:

> [F]or all the reluctance of Americans to exalt formal philosophy or indulge in metaphysical speculation, they confessed, with impressive unanimity, to a common view of cosmic processes and of their significance to man, articulated their institutions to the moral structure of the universe, and acknowledged in their daily lives the binding force of moral law. The view of the universe which they held, the moral axioms which they obeyed, the values which they cherished, can be stated briefly because their moral code, though by no means free of inconsistencies, was singularly wanting in qualifications of subtleties.[52]

Despite its complex origins, this American philosophy was relatively easy for the average man to understand and accept.

Three of the major sources of American philosophy of eighteenth century America were Puritanism, rationalism and idealism. Each of these sources was naturalized. From Puritanism, America received its morals code. Although Americans placed great value on the individualism and

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[51] Commager, 28.

[52] Ibid. Also see Merle Curti, *The Social Ideas of American Educators*, (New York: Scribners, 1935) and Harvey Wish, *Society and Thought in America*, Vol. 1. (New York: Longmans, Green, 1952).

nonconformity, "[i]n one realm the American was a conformist, and that was in the realm of morals. Although he did not always observe them, he accepted without question the moral standards of the Puritans... ."[53] The moral sense of right and wrong was laid down in the Judeo-Christian tradition, and was compatible with the Law of Nature and of Nature's God. This tradition was integrated into American philosophy and values.

Rationalism in American philosophy was a product of the Enlightenment. It was simply a restatement of the primacy of Reason and science. While the incompatibility of rationalism and morality should have given rise to conflict in theory, this conflict did not materialize in practice. This resolution of contradictions in American philosophy is very common. One reason for this, as has been shown, was that the American took what he liked from numerous philosophies and discarded the rest. What he took was, for the most part, instrumental. This means that it was utilitarian. For example, Transcendentalism was an idealistic American philosophy. However, the American embraced it not for it's idealism, although the American was very idealistic, but for its emphasis on self-reliance. "Born of geography, nourished by history, confirmed by philosophy, self-reliance was elevated to a philosophical creed, and in time individualism became synonymous with Americanism."[54] Individualism and self-reliance became naturalized American philosophies.

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[53] Ibid.,22-23.

[54] Ibid., 29.

American idealism has its roots in the Transcendentalism of Emerson and Thoreau, but like all philosophies the American embraced, it was modified. Transcendentalism saw man as a creature of nature. From nature, man received his individuality and his freedom. These are sound American ideals, however Transcendentalism in its purest form was not compatible with Puritanism or certain elements of rationalism.[55] However, these inconsistencies and contradictions failed to dampen American optimism and confidence for the future:

> American thought, like the American character, was permeated with optimism, with the sense of a spacious universe, with confidence in the infinite possibilities of human development, and with reverence for a righteous God and a just moral code. Americans believed in a universe governed by laws which were immutable and unassailable but which left room, somehow, for the play of free will, and they were confident that their reason was sufficiently acute to discover these laws and their will sufficiently strong to observe them. Secular law they held to be but a transcription of the Law of Nature and of Nature's God and accorded it appropriate vicarious respect.[56]

American idealism became a philosophy of optimism, and integrated well with the philosophy of progress. This idealism and optimism are expressed in the terminal and aspirational values of the American Declaration of Independence.

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[55] For in depth discussion on Transcendentalism see: Oscar Cargill, *Intellectual America*, (New York: MacMillan, 1941) and Robert Spiller, *et al., Literary History of the United States*, Vol. 1. (New York: MacMillan, 1948)

[56] Commager, 28.

E. THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

The Declaration of Independence above all other documents articulates best America's aspirational and terminal values. "That the Declaration of Independence was a recapitulation of John Locke's *Second Treatise on Government* was wryly remarked by John Adams and has been monotonously reaffirmed, but it is pertinent to observe that Locke rationalized a revolution and Jefferson inspired one and that Locke is rather better known in the American translation than in the original."[57] The Declaration espoused the values that the Founding Fathers believed to be the best of the Enlightenment, invoking the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God in order to articulate certain self-evident truths:

> When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands, which have connected them with one another, and to assume, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station, to which the laws of nature and nature's God entitle them a decent respect to the Opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.[58]

The Declaration was written to justify a revolution, and a national war of independence. But it was also an expression of a new political ideology. "Speaking ideologically—and it was primarily ideological questions that set off the American War of Independence—this was a civil war, the most ineluctable, the most justifiable of wars."[59] The grievances listed in the Declaration made the American Revolutionary War a crusade of good against

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[57] Ibid., 26.

[58] "The Declaration of Independence" from Heffner 15.

[59] R. R. Brachberger, *Image of America*, (New York: The Viking Press, 1959), 37.

evil—of the liberty of the New World against the oppression of the Old, and King George was seen as the embodiment of that oppression.

The Declaration of Independence was not only a call to arms. It was also the articulation of a national character. The Declaration is the basis of our values when it comes to political philosophy. "This eloquent apology for a revolution is the foundation document of our political belief."[60] Carl Becker states that "[b]efore enumerating the specific grievances against the king of Great Britain, Jefferson... proceeded to formulate a general political philosophy—a philosophy upon which the case of the colonies could solidly rest. This philosophy, which affirms the right of a people to establish and to overturn its own government, is formulated in the first part of the second paragraph:

> We hold these truths to be self-evident, That all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty & the pursuit of happiness; that to secure theses rights governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its power to effect their safety and happiness."[61]

This political philosophy was based on terminal values which yielded instrumental values. The Founding Fathers believed that to secure mans inalienable rights, "governments are instituted among men, deriving their

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[60] Stephen D. Kertesz and M. A. Fitzsimons, *What America Stands For*, (South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame, 1959), p 215.

[61] Carl Lotus Becker, *The Declaration of Independence: A Study in the History ofPolitical Ideas*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1960), 8.

just powers from the consent of the governed."[62] This demonstrated the instrumental value of self-determination.

Although the document is very idealistic, the Founding Fathers were able to build upon it pragmatically when it came time to write the Constitution. Morton White asserts, "The moral ideas of the Declaration of Independence had not disappeared when it came time to make the Constitution."[63] In the Constitution and the Bill of Rights the Founding Fathers were able to establish a government based on equality and dedicated to preserving the rights of men.

The values articulated in the Declaration became uniquely American even though they were based on universal principles. The Declaration held hope for the rest of the world, and gave American democracy the element of "mission." This "mission," however, was not part of the operational code of the Founding Fathers. They were preoccupied with nation building and it was not until the closing of the frontier that the "mission" began in earnest. The Founding Fathers were striving to achieve the vital balance upon the foundations of a new nation could rest.

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[62] "The Declaration of Independence," from Heffner, 15.

[63] Morton White, *Philosophy, The Federalist, and the Constitution*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 25.

IV. AMERICAN VALUES PARADIGM: THE VITAL BALANCE

A. THE FOUNDING FATHERS

As we have seen, the body of thought from which American values are drawn is not without contradictions. Hartz tells us:

> American political thought ... is a veritable maze of polar contradictions, winding in and out of each other hopelessly: pragmatism and absolutism, historicism and rationalism, optimism and pessimism, materialism and idealism, individualism and conformism. But, after all, the human mind works by polar contradictions; and when we have evolved an interpretation of it which leads cleanly in a single direction, we may be sure that we have missed a lot.[64]

The Founding Fathers recognized these contradictions and sought a vital balance betweer the extremes of these philosophies. We have seen how they embraced the idealism of the Declaration of Independence, and yet they were able to reconcile that idealism with the pragmatism of the Constitution.

Seymour Martin Lipset in *The First New Nation* states "[m]any of the inconsistencies point up a deep contradiction between two values that are at the core of the American creed—individualism and egalitarianism. Americans believe strongly in both values, and ... the history of American social change reflects a shifting back and forth between these two core values... ."[65] The core value of individualism is best articulated in the

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[64] Hartz, 63. This theme is repeated in Robert Osgood's *Ideals and Self-Interest in American Foreign Relations: The Great Transformation of the Twentieth.* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953).

[65] Lipset, xxxiii.

terminal values of the Declaration of Independence and in the instrumental values of the Constitution.

Bruckberger comments on this "shifting back and forth." He states that "[o]ften the spectacle of America in action gives the impression that Americans are constantly shifting their ground and contradicting themselves. But what they actually do is weigh thesis and antithesis before reaching a synthesis."[66]

The main concern of the Founding Fathers was finding a vital balance, or synthesis, between freedom and democracy. If they moved too close to the extreme of freedom, it was feared that anarchy would result. If they moved too close to the extreme of a pure democracy, which James Madison in *Federalist Number Ten* defines as "a society consisting of a small number of citizens, who assemble and administer the government in person... ."[67] They feared that factionalism would arise and result in tyranny. Madison speaking of democracy comments that "[t]heoretical politicians ... have erroneously supposed that by reducing mankind to a perfect equality in their political rights, they would, at the same time, be perfectly equalized and assimilated in their possessions, their opinions, and their passions."[68] A pure democracy "can admit of no cure for the mischiefs of fraction."[69] In a pure democracy, different interest groups would emerge, and some would be more powerful

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[66] Bruckberger, 46.

[67] James Madison, *The Federalist Number Ten*, from Heffner 46.

[68] Ibid.

[69] Ibid.

than others. The result would be tyranny of the majority. Madison stated that the solution was a republic based on a representational democracy rather than pure democracy.

The solution was articulated in the Constitution and the instrumental values embodied within it. The Constitution, with its checks and balances and formula for the representation of the masses, is designed to prevent a tyranny of the majority. However, the Founding Fathers recognized that this could be a threat to the individual and individual rights. Hofstadter states, "It is ironical that the Constitution, which Americans venerate so deeply, is based upon a political theory that at one point stands in direct antithesis to the main stream of American democratic faith. Modern American folklore assumes that democracy and liberty are all but identical, and when democratic writers take the trouble to make the distinction, they usually assume that democracy is necessary to liberty. But the Founding Fathers thought that the liberty with which they were most concerned was menaced by democracy. In their minds liberty was not linked to democracy but to property."[70] This gave rise to the first ten amendments to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights.

The Bill of Rights was added to protect the rights and the property of the individual. It, like the Constitution, is the articulation of instrumental values. The Constitution and the Bill of Rights are the synthesis between the extremes of absolute freedom and pure democracy. Hofstadter states that "the Father's image of themselves as moderate republicans standing between political extremes was quite accurate. They were impelled by class motive

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[70] Hofstadter, 10.

more than pietistic writers like to admit, but they were also controlled, as Professor Beard himself has ... emphasized, by a statesmanlike sense of moderation and a scrupulously republican philosophy."[71] The Constitution and the Bill of Rights represented the achievement of a vital balance between freedom and government.

B. THE OPERATIONAL CODE OF THE FOUNDING FATHERS

The Founding Fathers knew that they had embarked on an experiment of the grandest scale. If this experiment was to succeed, three conditions had to be met. The first is that the Union had to be preserved. If the Union dissolved, the experiment would fail. The second condition that had to be met was that neutrality must be maintained. This meant no entangling alliances with the powers of Europe. Any political alliance was seen as a surrender of sovereignty and a threat to the Nation. The third condition was that peace must be maintained. Time was needed for this new nation to grow and mature. A war with a European power could sap the strength and resources of the burgeoning country and threaten the success of the experiment, if not destroy the nation outright. The best articulation of this operational code of the Founding Fathers is George Washington's Farewell Address.

1. Washington's Farewell Address: *Importance of Union*

In 1796 near the end of his second term, Washington delivered his Farewell Address to Congress. He stated that for America, and American values to survive, Union must be preserved. In the Farewell Address

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[71] Ibid., 15.

Washington articulated the values that are precious to all Americans and expressed the importance of Union:

> The unity of government which constitutes you one people is also now dear to you. It is justly so; for it is a main pillar in the edifice of your real independence, the support of your tranquility at home; your peace abroad; of your safety; of your prosperity; of that very liberty which you so highly prize.[72]

He goes on to state that Union must be preserved and that all Americans must be on guard because it will be under attack from without and within.

Washington then demonstrated the common cultural context that all are a part of:

> The name *American*, which belongs to you, in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of patriotism, more than any appellation derived from local discriminations. With slight shades of difference, you have the same religion, manners, habits and political principles. You have in common cause fought and triumphed together. The independence and liberty you posses are the works of joint councils, and joint efforts; of common dangers, sufferings, and successes.[73]

After he discussed the common culture and values of Americans he pointed out the main threat to Union that can come from within, and that is the rise of parties. "Parties" is synonymous with "fractions" in Madison's *Federalist Number 10* :

> In contemplating the causes which may disturb our union, it occurs as a matter of serious concern, that any ground should have been furnished for characterizing parties by geographical discriminations.... whence designing men may endeavour to excite a belief that there is a real difference of local interests and views. One of the expedients of party to

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72 "Washington's Farewell Address," from Heffner, 63.

73 Ibid.

> acquire influence, within particular districts, is to misrepresent the opinions and aims of other districts. You cannot shield yourselves too much against the jealousies and heart burnings which spring from these misrepresentations.[74]

The fear was that parties would divided the nation, and a divided nation would perish. Differences will always exist, and parties could be useful in the process of checks and balances. Washington warns that a party is "[a] fire not to be quenched; it demands a uniform vigilance to prevent its bursting into a flame, lest instead of warming it should consume... "[75]

The other danger of a divided nation is that European powers would try to exercise control or influence over certain areas. This would be a threat to American values and the nation itself. "[Party] opens the door to foreign influence and corruption, which finds a facilitated access to the government itself through the channels of party passions. Thus the policy and will of one country, are subjected to the policy and will of another."[76] Next Washington sets the operational code for neutrality and no political alliances.

2. Neutrality and "No Entangling Alliances"

Washington warned that neutrality was necessary if the United States was to preserve its sovereignty. If the neutral course was not followed, then the new nation could come under the influence of one of the European powers:

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[74] Ibid., 64-65.

[75] Ibid., 66.

[76] Ibid.

> The nation, which indulges toward another an habitual hatred, or an habitual fondness, is in some degree a slave. It is a slave to its animosity or to its affection, either of which is sufficient to lead it astray from its duty and its interest...
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> ... Sympathy for the favorite nation, facilitating the illusion of an imaginary common interest, in cases where no real common interest exists, and infusing into one the enmities of the other, betrays the former into a participation in the quarrels and the wars of the latter, without adequate inducement or justification.[77]

By becoming involved politically with other nations, America could lose sight of its own national interests and values, and come under the influence of values that are foreign to the American landscape. He warned:

> Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence, (I conjure you to believe me fellow-citizens) the jealousy of a free people ought to be constantly awake; since history and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of republican government.[78]

Washington continues by stating that the only relations that the United States should have with foreign countries are commercial relations. In these relations America should be impartial and evenhanded. This is in the American national interests. It is necessary for growth and prosperity. "The great rule of conduct for us, in regard to foreign nations is in extending our commercial relations to have with them as little political connection as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements let them be fulfilled, with perfect good faith. Here let us stop."[79]

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[77] Ibid., 67.

[78] Ibid. , 68.

[79] Ibid.

3. Cultivate Peace

The third condition that was essential for the new republic was that peace must be preserved. Peace would allow the new republic time to grow and mature. A premature conflict with one of the powers of Europe could spell disaster for the nation and cause the experiment to fail. This point is also articulated brilliantly in Washington's Farewell Address. He stresses the importance of peace in economic terms to the country, as well demonstrating the importance of preparing for war in times of peace:

> As a very important source of strength and security, cherish public credit. One method of preserving it is to use it as sparingly as possible; avoiding occasions of expense by cultivating peace, but remembering also that timely disbursements to prepare for danger frequently prevent much greater disbursements to repel it; avoiding likewise the accumulation of debt, not only by shunning occasions of expense, but by vigorous exertions in time of peace to discharge the debts which unavoidable wars may have occasioned, not ungenerously throwing upon posterity the burden which we ourselves ought to bear... .[80]

In the next paragraph Washington outlines the importance of peace to the experiment which the nation has embarked, and articulates the promise of the future:

> Observe good faith and justice towards all nations; cultivate peace and harmony with all. Religion and morality enjoin this conduct; and can it be that good policy does not equally enjoin it? It will be worthy of a free, enlightened, and, at no distant period, a great nation, to give mankind the magnanimous and too novel example of a people always guided by an exalted justice and benevolence. Who can doubt that in the course of time and things the fruits of such a plan would richly repay any temporary advantages which might be lost by a steady adherence to it? Can it be, that Providence has not connected the permanent felicity of a nation with its virtue? The experiment, at least, is recommended by

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[80] Ibid., 66-67.

every sentiment which ennobles human nature. Alas! is it rendered impossible by its vices?[81]

Washington articulates the terminal values of justice and benevolence, and states that a country founded on virtues must have time to grow to reach its rightful place among the nations of the world.

Washington's Farewell Address is the best articulation of the operational code of the Founding Fathers. This operational code was essential for the goal of nation building. They wanted to build a power base in the United States with their own resources, avoiding conflict, alliance and political entanglement with Europe. This could only be done through a strong Union, neutrality in foreign affairs, and the cultivation of peace. At the time of Washington's Farewell Address, these values were not new. These values had been articulated and operationalized even before the new nation declared its independence.

C. THE OPERATIONAL CODE IN PRACTICE

1. Thomas Paine and *Common Sense*

One of the first articulations of the dangers of political alliance appears in Thomas Paine's famous pamphlet "Common Sense." Paine called for the severance of ties with England for a number of reasons. Not only did his pamphlet help arouse and justify revolutionary feelings in the colonies which led to a declaration of independence, but, as Felix Gilbert states:

... it deserves to be mentioned that by giving precise formulation to what were felt to be the needs of America, *Common Sense* also laid out the course which the new republic would follow in its foreign policy. For a

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[81] Ibid., 67.

> long time, every utterance on foreign policy starts from Paine's words and echoes his thoughts.[82]

"Common Sense" was the foundation upon which the operational code of the Founding Fathers rested.

The break with England was not only based on the instrumental value of non-entanglement, it was also necessary in order to strive for the aspirational value of a "more perfect Union." Gilbert summarized Paine's thoughts on the subject: "it is the duty of America to break with Europe, to make use of her unique opportunities, and to realize the *ideal republic*."[83] The realization of an ideal republic is an aspirational value, and this illustrates the close link between aspirational, terminal and instrumental values.

Thomas Paine demonstrated that there were no advantages to be gained by the colonies if they maintained connections with England. He states that continued connection with England would involve America in European wars that were of no interest to the colonies. His statement foreshadows the policies put forth by Washington in 1796:

> But the injuries and disadvantages which we sustain by that connection, are without number; and our duty to mankind at large, as well as to ourselves, instruct us to renounce the alliance: because, any submission to, or dependence on, Great Britain, tends directly to involve this Continent in European wars and quarrels, and set us at variance with

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[82] Felix Gilbert, *To the Farewell Address: Ideas of Early American Foreign Policy*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), 43.

[83] Ibid., 37. (Italics ours).

> nations who would otherwise seek our friendship, and against whom we have neither anger nor complaint.[84]

Political alliances are undesirable, however, commercial relations are necessary and should be maintained with an even hand and favoritism toward none. Equitable commercial relations can only be achieved by breaking the political ties with Britain:

> As Europe is our market for trade, we ought to form no partial connection with any part of it. It is the true interest of America to steer clear of European connections, which she can never do, while, by her dependence on Britain, she is made the makeweight in the scale of British politics... .[85]

This is one of the first articulations of the operational code of the Founding Fathers. The instrumental values of union and neutrality are present in Paine's "Common Sense," union against a tyrannic Britain and neutrality in dealing with the powers of Europe. The instrumental value of peace is not included in Pain's pamphlet because it is understood that independence can only be achieved if the war, that began the previous spring at Lexington and Concord, is prosecuted to a successful end.

2. Treaty of Alliance 1778

The *Treaty of Alliance Between France and the United States* of 1778 was the first politically binding alliance the new republic entered into. This treaty would appear to most as a contradiction to America's desire for neutrality and isolation. Nevertheless, the colonist believed that it was a

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[84] Thomas Paine, "Common Sense," from Heffner,14.

[85] Ibid.

treaty of expedience, and once independence was won, the formal ties with Europe could be cut at last. Dexter Perkiness stated:

> [t]he Revolution itself was an act of isolation, of cutting the ties with the Old World, the deed of a society which felt itself different from those which existed on the other side of the Atlantic and which was, indeed, unique in its composition and its aspirations. It is not strange, therefore, that even in the extreme need of the moment the alliance with France ... was accepted reluctantly.[86]

The fact that the treaty was accepted reluctantly in a time of great need articulates the concern that the new nation had with regard to European ties.

The first article of the treaty states:

> If War should break out between [F]rance and Great Britain, during the continuence of present War betwan the United States and England, his Majesty and the said united States, shall make it a common cause, and aid each other mutually with their good Offices, their Counsels, and their forces, according to the exigencies of Conjunctures as becomes good and faithful Allies.[87]

This article formally created the political alliance to which the Founding Fathers later expressed such an aversion. They understood that an inherent risk existed in a mutual pledge of defense. Should France get involved in a war with Great Britain on the European continent, America would be obliged to assist France. Therefore, there was great care taken in formulating the rest of the treaty.

Article Six of the Treaty states:

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[86] Dexter Perkins, *The American Approach to Foreign Policy*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962), 2.

[87] "Treaty of Alliance Between France and the United States," from Ruhl J. Bartlett, *The Record of American Diplomacy: Documents and Readings in the History of American Foreign Relations*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1950), 26.

> The Most Christian King renounces for ever possession of the Islands of Bermudas as well as any part of the continent of North [A]merica which before the treaty of Paris in 1763. or in virtue of that Treaty, were acknowledged to belong to the Crown of Great Britain, or to the united States heretofore called British Colonies, or which are at this Time or have lately been under the Power of the King and Crown of Great Britain.[88]

The Founding Fathers were conscious of the danger of having another European power as a neighbor on the North American continent. After independence was won, the new nation would have two European powers bordering it and possibly threatening its sovereignty—England to the north, and Spain to the south. The last thing the United States wanted to do was invite another European power onto the continent. But, France would expect some sort of territorial gain for its role in helping to expel the British from the former colonies. This problem was addressed in the next article of the Treaty.

Article seven of the Treaty stated:

> If his Most Christian Majesty shall think proper to attack any of the Islands situated in the Gulph of Mexico, or near that Gulph, which are at present under the power of Great Britain, all said Isles, in case of success shall appertain to the Crown of [F]rance.[89]

The Founding Fathers believed that ceding some islands in the West Indies would be a small price to pay for France's cooperation against Britain. After all, America's interest in the West Indies was commerce, and the French

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[88] Ibid., 26-27.

[89] Ibid., 27.

possession of some more islands in the Caribbean would not be a threat to American trade in the area.

The *Treaty of Alliance Between France and the United States* of 1778 is a testimony to the Founding Fathers' willingness to compromise at that time. The issue of whether or not to form an alliance with France was debated at great length. Those involved in the debate were well aware of the dangers of such an alliance. But the exigency of the moment proved to be a greater danger and the alliance was entered into reluctantly. The terms of the treaty would prove to be a source of crisis long after the War of Independence was won, but in 1783, the concern was for securing a just and lasting peace.

3. Peace Treaty of 1783

The Peace Treaty of 1783 (actually ratified in January 1784) was very important to the operational code of the Founding Fathers and to their goal of nation building. The Founding Fathers had been arguing for Union since 1776, and Union was seen as a crucial element to the defeat of the British. In the first article of the Treaty, Great Britain recognizes this Union:

> *ARTICLE 1st.* His Britannic Majesty acknowledges the [said] United States, ... to be free sovereign & Independent States; that he treats them as such, and for himself and his Heirs and Successors, relinquishes all Claims to the Government Propriety & Territorial Rights of the same & every part thereof.[90]

The second article of the Treaty set the boundaries of the new nation. It set the boundaries between the United States and Canada, but more importantly, set the western boundary of the New Republic at the Mississippi

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90 "Treaty of Peace Between the United States and Great Britain: September 3, 1783.," from Bartlett, 39.

River. This gave the United States an opportunity to move west and to continue to grow, and reinforced the "nation building" mission.

The Treaty is then concerned with primarily commercial relations. Fishing rights are agreed on, credit and debts contracted before the war would not be impeded, restitution would be paid for land and property confiscated during the war, and there will be no confiscation of property in the future. Article eight of the Treaty is also concerned with commercial relations. It states that the Mississippi River "shall remain free and open to the Subjects of Great Britain and the Citizens of the United States... ."[91] This put the United States on an equal footing with Great Britain in terms of trade in North America.

Since peace was one of the most crucial elements to the new country, Article Seven may one of the most important of this Treaty. It establishes peace between Great Britain and her former colonies, and provides for the removal of all foreign troops from the United States:

> *Article 7th.* There shall be a firm and perpetual Peace between his Britannic Majesty and said States and between the Subjects of the one, and the citizens of the other, wherefore all Hostilities both by Sea and Land shall henceforth cease: All prisoners on both Sides shall be set at Liberty, and his Britannic Majesty shall with all convenient speed, and without causing any Destruction, ... withdraw all his Armies, Garrisons & Fleets from the said United States, and from every Port, Place & Harbor within the same; ...[92]

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[91] Ibid., 42.

[92] Ibid., 41-42.

This "firm and perpetual peace" was an important instrumental and terminal value of the Founding Fathers. It was an essential element of their operational code and helped to define what the country stood for. However, peace had to be cultivated. This was no easy task for the Founding Fathers, because shortly after established peace with Great Britain, a world war raged on the European continent. Due to the rise of parties in the United States there were those that wanted to side with England, represented by the Federalist party, and there were those who wanted to side with our former allies the French. The road chosen was the central road: the road of abstinence of alignment with either.

4. The Proclamation of Neutrality: 1793

The Proclamation of Neutrality was the formal articulation of an element of operational code that was to stand in United States foreign policy for years to come. This was also to contribute to Washington's Farewell Address which set the course of American foreign policy. The Proclamation begins:

> Whereas it appears that a state of war exists between Austria, Prussia, Sardinia, Great Britain, and the United Netherlands, of the one part, and France on the other; and the duty and interest of the United States require, that they should with sincerity and good faith adopt and pursue a conduct friendly and impartial toward the belligerent Powers:
>
> I have therefore thought fit by these presents to declare the dispositions of the United States to observe the conduct aforesaid towards those Powers respectively; and to exhort and warn the citizens of the United States carefully to avoid all acts and proceedings whatsoever, which may in any manner tend to contravene such disposition.

The Proclamation goes on to state that the United States cannot guarantee the legal rights of those found to be aiding or abetting the belligerents, which includes carrying contraband.

The Proclamation of Neutrality is an important episode in American history. It sets the course of American foreign policy as well as domestic policy. By proclaiming that the United States would remain aloof from the conflicts of Europe, Washington stated that this new republic would not subordinate its national interests to the interests of foreign powers. "Isolation" became a key national interest as well as an element of operational code. It was a cornerstone of the goal of nation building.

Not only was "America first" in the national interest of the United States, but the treatment of the country by the major belligerents made it difficult for even the most ardent French or British supporters to make the case for involvement. Dexter Perkins asserts that:

> The contemptuous disregard of American rights and interests that was shown by both belligerents operated also to prevent, rather than bring about, American involvement. Genet, the first minister sent by revolutionary France to the United States, conducted himself with such arrogance, so clearly defied usage and treaty forms alike, so brazenly appealed to the American people over the head of their own government, that partisans of France themselves stood confounded. On the other hand, so extreme were the misuses of British naval power, so supercilious British treatment of American complaints, that no foe of the French Revolution, however ardent, would have dared to advocate openly a connection with its great antagonist... .[93]

The Proclamation of Neutrality was not popular with the major belligerents of Europe. France believed the proclamation ran contrary to the Treaty of Alliance of 1778, while Great Britain disregarded America's proclamation with regard to the rights of neutrals. This led to the Jay Treaty between the

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[93] Dexter Perkins, *A History of the Monroe Doctrine*, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1955), 16.

United States and Great Britain which attempted to define more clearly the rights of neutrals.

5. Jay's Treaty 1794

Although relations with France continued to be strained after the Proclamation of Neutrality, there was an attempt by Washington's administration to improve relations with Great Britain. Great Britain still possessed the Northwest posts, which they had agreed to abandon in the Peace Treaty of 1783 and British tariffs placed on American shipping were hurting American trade. There were those in the government, mostly Republicans, who were French supporters, that wanted strong action to be taken against the British, and war was not out of the question. They saw diplomacy leading nowhere and wanted more to be done. However, Washington saw that diplomacy was the right path.

Washington sent John Jay to London to negotiate a treaty with the British. The result was the *Treaty of Commerce and Navigation Between the United States and Great Britain: 1794*, known as Jay's Treaty. In Article Two of the Treaty, Great Britain, once again, agreed to withdraw all troops and garrisons from the Northwest posts. The remainder of the Treaty dealt with commerce and the restrictions placed of U.S. shipping which made the Treaty look much more beneficial to the British than to the Americans. This became a sticking point and resulted in extensive debate in the United States throughout 1795. The importance of Jay's Treaty lay not in the equitable provisions for trade, but for the time it bought for peace. Peace, as we have seen, was a key element of the operational code of Washington and his administration. Describing Jay's Treaty, Heffner asserts:

> ... for though it provided for final abandonment of the northwest posts, it seemed to concede more to the British than it gained from them. But Washington correctly estimated its real value to the nation: it provided a necessary breathing spell for peace. At his insistence, then, but by an extremely close vote, a reluctant Senate ratified the treaty and, at least for the immediate future, war with England was avoided.[94]

The young nation was ill prepared to go to war again with Great Britain. Although unfair trade practices existed between the United States and Great Britain, American commerce was not treated much better by the French. The importance of Jay's Treaty lay in the fact that it avoided war. Jay's Treaty was "an honest, if not brilliantly successful effort to liquidate many of the disputes with great Britain ..."[95] which could have led to war.

Gilbert expresses similar sentiment about the value of Jay's Treaty:

In the light of later developments, the value of the Jay Treaty for the preservation of a neutral course in American foreign policy must be regarded as doubtful. French resentment over the conclusion of the Jay Treaty resulted in the 'undeclared war with France,' and the unsolved differences in the British and American views on neutrality played their part in the origin of the Anglo-American War of 1812 ... .[However, Washington] diminished the danger of conflict between Britain and America by a settlement which, unsatisfactorily as it might be in details, *removed the risk of sudden explosion.*[96]

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[94] Heffner, pp 60-61.

[95] Perkins, *A History of the Monroe Doctrine*, 16.

[96] Gilbert, 118-119. (Italics ours).

It was with this background that Washington delivered his Farewell Address.

Jay's Treaty perpetuated the rift between Federalist and Republican. The Republicans believed that America should honor the alliance with France and that the Jay Treaty was too partial toward Britain. The Federalists believed that the British should be closer allies to America, and supported the Treaty. It was in this atmosphere of faction that Washington delivered his Farewell Address. As discussed above, Washington warned of the dangers of party to the fledgling Union, unfortunately this faction continued into the administration of John Adams.

The Federalists won the White House in the election of 1796 by a small margin. The Federalists were pro-British and they wanted to continue to strengthen the central government. On the domestic side, the spirit of compromise and tolerance on which the nation was founded was put to the test when the Alien and Sedition Acts were passed. The Republicans, led by Jefferson, saw these acts as a threat to the rights of the individual and individual freedom. On this basis, and due to the fact that the Federalists were insensitive to the demands of the people, the Republicans, with Jefferson as their candidate took the White House in 1800.

On the foreign affairs side, during the Adams administration, the United States was engaged in the quasi-war with France. The Treaty that ended the quasi-war was the *Convention of Peace, Commerce, and Navigation Between the United States and France* of 1800. This led to the abrogation of the Treaty of Alliance of 1778:

> ... *ARTICLE II.* The Ministers Plenipotentiary of the two Parties, not being able to agree at present, respecting the Treaty of Alliance of 6th February 1778, the Treaty of Amity and Commerce of the same date, and the ... Convention of 14th November 1788, nor upon the indemnities mutually due, or claimed, the Parties will negotiate further on these subjects at a convenient time, and untill they have agreed upon these points, the said Treaties, and ... Conventions shall have no operation, and the relations of the two Countries shall be regulated as follows.[97]

Dexter Perkins makes the point that with the abrogation of the Treaty of Alliance, "... from that time forward, until the momentous agreement of January 1, 1942, at the beginning of American participation in the Second World War, the United States never entered into close political association with any European power."[98]

6. Jefferson's Inaugural

When Jefferson was sworn in as president, the Republicans hoped that he would begin to overturn the policies of the Federalists which had helped to strengthen the central government. *This was not the case. In his* Inaugural Address, Jefferson echoed some of the same sentiments that Washington proclaimed in his Farewell Address. Jefferson rearticulated the operational code of Washington and stressed the instrumental values of Union, neutrality, and peace. He reasserted the theme upon which the nation is based—tolerance and compromise:

> ... All, too, will bear in mind this sacred principle, that though the will of the majority is in all cases to prevail, that will, to be rightful, must be

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[97] "Convention of Peace, Commerce, and Navigation Between the United States and France " from Bartlett, 100-101.

[98] Perkins, *The American Approach to Foreign Policy*, 3. On January 1, 1942, the United States, Great Britain, Russia, and twenty-three other nations united in an alliance against the Axis Powers.

> reasonable; that the minority possess their equal rights, which equal laws must protect, and to violate which would be oppression. Let us, then, fellow citizens, unite with one heart and one mind. Let us restore to social intercourse that harmony and affection without which liberty and even life itself are but dreary things. And let us reflect that having banished from our land that religious intolerance under which mankind so long bled and suffered, we have yet gained little if we countenance a political intolerance as despotic, as wicked, and capable of as bitter and bloody persecutions... .[99]

This was Jefferson's attempt once again to seek the "vital balance" which had been lost with the passing of the oppressive Alien and Sedition Acts.

Like Washington, Jefferson states that all Americans are of a common cultural context, and though differences may exists, the values that Americans share are the same:

> ... But every difference of opinion is not a difference of principle. We have called by different names brethren of the same principle. We are all Republicans—we are all Federalists. If there be any among us who would wish to dissolve this Union or to change its republican form, let them stand undisturbed as monuments of the safety with which error of opinion may be tolerated where reason is left free to combat it... .[100]

Jefferson then continues to stress the value of Union and the government:

> ... But would the honest patriot, in the full tide of successful experiment, abandon a government which has so far kept us free and firm, on the theoretic and visionary fear that this government, the world's best hope, may by possibility want energy to preserve itself? I trust not... .[101]

This demonstrates Jefferson's concern for the preservation of the Union, and the importance of Union on the "experiment."

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[99] "Jefferson's First Inaugural Address, 1801," from Heffner, 73.

[100] Ibid., 73-74.

[101] Ibid., 74.

The other major values of Washington are addressed by Jefferson as well—neutrality and peace. Jefferson begins to list the principles that are important to the nation and that will be pursued by his administration. Among these are:

> Equal and exact justice to all men, of whatever state or persuasion, religious or political; peace, commerce, and honest friendship, with all nations—entangling alliances with none; ...[102]

Shortly after Jefferson took office, war once again raged on the European continent. As much as the United States tried to remain aloof of European affairs, it was inevitable that she would be somehow affected.

The European conflict once again resulted in assaults on American shipping and neutrality. A series of decrees by the major belligerents made it virtually impossible for American ships to conduct trade. The first of these decrees was the Berlin Decree of November 1806. In this decree, the French stated that the British islands were in a state of blockade and all trade and correspondence with Britain was prohibited. Any vessel found to be trading with Britain was subject to confiscation. Great Britain responded with the British Orders in Council of January and November 1807. These Orders prohibited trade with France or any of her allies or colonies. Like the Berlin Decree vessels were subject to search and seizure. The French Milan Decree of December 1807 was in response the second British Orders in Council. It stated that any ship subjected to search by a British ship became denationalized and

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[102] Ibid., 75. Although the phrase "entangling alliances with none" is more often attributed to Washington's Farewell Address, it was first used by Jefferson in his First Inaugural.

was considered English property and subject to seizure by the French. The decrees and disregard for United States neutrality made it nearly impossible for the United States to conduct trade with the countries of Europe.

Jefferson's response to these affronts on American trade was the issuance of the Embargo Act of 1807. This was an effort to remain neutral and at the same time hurt the French and British so they would be coerced onto repealing the trade restrictions and recognize the rights of neutrals. This was not the case, however, because the desired result was never realized. "France seems to have been helped more than hindered by the measure. In fact, the embargo complemented France's continental system."[103] As far as Great Britain was concerned, "... England lost a part of her American market but this was offset temporarily by the opening of alternative markets in the Spanish colonies, hitherto closed to the British."[104] Jefferson's attempt to coerce the major belligerents into granting concessions on American trade was unsuccessful:

> His aim was to bring both sides to terms by withholding food and other supplies. This was the one doctrinaire and impractical measure of his career, and it proved a miserable failure. The Embargo not only failed to force Britain and France to respect American rights on the high seas, but also brought economic paralysis to the trading cities of the Northeast and the farms and plantations of the West and South. Jefferson finally admitted that the fifteen months of its operation cost more than a war. At the close of his second term the Embargo was replaced by a

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[103] Harry L. Coles, *The War of 1812*, (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1965), 9-10.

[104] Ibid., 10.

Nonintercourse Act, which opened trade with the rest of Europe but continued the costly ban on England and France.[105]

The Nonintercourse Act was an attempt to continue the peaceable coercion against Britain and France. If either country would lift its restrictions on U.S. trade, the act could be suspended.

The Nonintercourse Act was no more effective than the Embargo, and relations between Great Britain and the United States continued to deteriorate. The search and seizure of U.S. vessels and impressment of American sailors continued. Attacks by Indians on settlers in the northwest territory were thought to be incited by the British. These are the two main reasons given by Madison when addressing Congress in June of 1812.

7. The War of 1812: Mr. Madison's War

In Madison's war message he stated that the primary reason for war with Britain is the treatment of U.S. vessels on the sea. He cited the impressment of American sailors, the seizure of American goods, and the harassment of American shipping along the American coast. He goes on to state:

> Not content with the occasional expedients for laying waste our neutral trade, the Cabinet of Great Britain resorted, at length, to the sweeping system of blockades, under the name of Orders in Council, which has been moulded and managed as might best suit its political views, its commercial jealousies, or the avidity of British cruisers... .[106]

Madison then addresses the Indian problem:

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[105] Hofstadter, 39.

[106] "The War Message of President Madison, June 1, 1812," from Barlett, 142-143.

> In reviewing the conduct of Great Britain towards the United States, our attention is necessarily drawn to the warfare just renewed by the savages, on one of our extensive frontiers; a warfare which is known to spare neither age nor sex, and to be distinguished by features peculiarly shocking to humanity. It is difficult to account for the activity and combinations which have for some time been developing themselves among tribes in constant intercourse with British traders and garrisons, without connecting their hostility with that influence, and without recollecting the authenticated examples of such interpositions heretofore furnished by the officers and agents of that Government... .[107]

There are a number of possible causes of the War of 1812. Maritime grievances and the Indian problem are two of the most well known. There have been, however, many studies into the War of 1812 and many conclusions have been reached, all with a certain validity. These reasons include such motives as territorial expansion—into Canada, Florida or both, for economic reasons—depression in western and southern states, and for the ideals of national pride and the preservation of the republic. Cole states that:

> Obviously the war came not as a result of any one cause but the interplay of several.... The declaration was carried by a narrow margin and the alteration of even one factor in a complicated equation might have affected the outcome significantly.... Both sets of causes, the maritime grievances and the internal factors, are necessary to explain the coming of the war, but recent historians are right to give primary weight to the maritime factors.[108]

The factors that led to war may not be as important to the growth of the new republic as the results of the War of 1812. Though no territory was gained in the war, the war was seen as a resounding success. The fact that the nation's capital was captured and the White House burned was

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[107] *Ibid.*, 143.

[108] Coles, 33.

overshadowed by Andrew Jackson's decisive victory at New Orleans. With the Treaty of Ghent, peace was once again secured and the United States could concentrate on expansion and nation building. There was a unifying national pride that existed after the war and the faith in the American experiment was renewed. With peace at hand, neutrality and commercial relations could resume.

The nation building process continued. The Founding Fathers wanted to build a power base in the United States with their own resources, avoiding conflict, alliance and political entanglement with Europe. Hofstadter points out that the policies of Jefferson and Madison went a long way in achieving this because the policies created the need for a self-sufficient United States:

> But if the United States was to withdraw from Europe economically, as under Jefferson, or to lose its best market through war, as under Madison, it had to find a way of employing its energies and supplying its people with manufactured goods. Accordingly, capital, cut off from its normal investment outlet in overseas commerce, began to turn to manufacturing. The period of the Embargo and the War of 1812 proved to be the seedbed of American industrialism; ...[109]

This industrialism would lead to the strengthening of the economic base of the nation and complement its independence. The only threat to economic growth and continued independence that the United States recognized was that of continued imperialism in the western hemisphere. The United States responded to this threat with the Monroe Doctrine. Dexter Perkins points out that in the case of Monroe's Secretary of State, John Quincy Adams:

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[109] Hofstadter, 40.

> ... Adams' doctrine had an economic basis. Adams disliked colonialism not alone because it was a reminder of political subordination, but because it was connected in his mind with commercial monopoly, and the exclusion of the United States from the markets of the New World.[110]

The Monroe Doctrine was not just a tool for economic growth. It was also an instrument to continue the operational code of the Founding Fathers and to continue Nation Building.

8. The Monroe Doctrine

The Monroe Doctrine is the final formal pronouncement of the Founding Fathers' operational code. Like the policymakers who went before, Monroe was concerned with the growth and maturation of the young republic. After nearly a half century, the desire to remain outside of European alliances was still very strong. During this period, the United States prospered and grew, and the process of nation building was well under way. The Monroe Doctrine was the logical follow-on to the preceding policies, and the rejection of entangling alliances played a major part. Dexter Perkins asserts:

> But there can be no denial of the fact that [the Monroe Doctrine] is, in many minds, connected with a more general principle, the principle of the separation of the New World from the Old, and that it is regarded as a complement, if you will, as a foil, to the principle of no entangling alliances and no binding political connection with any European power.[111]

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[110] Perkins, *The History of the Monroe Doctrine*, 30.

[111] Ibid., 4.

Hence, one of the chief purposes of the Monroe Doctrine was the assertion of the United States in the realm of foreign policy.

The United States first recognized the former Spanish colonies as independent in 1822, after the acquisition of Florida from Spain. The U.S. was not concerned about South America for political reasons alone; economic reasons were factors as well. This they had in common with Great Britain. Great Britain was concerned about the economic situation in the New World and the effect that an attempt by the "Holy Alliance" to restore the former Spanish colonies would have on commerce. Thus, the British were willing to recognize the independence of the former Spanish colonies in a joint statement with the United States. But John Quincy Adams saw this as:

> ...a very suitable and convenient opportunity for us to take our stand against the Holy Alliance, and at the same time to decline the overture from Great Britain. It would be more candid as well as more dignified to avow our principles explicitly to Russia and France, than to come in as a cock-boat in the wake of the British man-of-war.[112]

This was the type of self-assurance that was to become commonplace in American foreign policy.

The Monroe Doctrine was addressed to the powers of Europe, specifically the members of the Holy Alliance who may have had designs on the former Spanish colonies. In the Doctrine, Monroe announced, for reasons of national interest, that the western hemisphere was closed to any further European colonization:

> In the discussions to which this interest has given rise and in the arrangements by which they may terminate the occasion has been judged

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[112] Ibid., 42-43.

> proper for asserting, as a principle in which the rights and interests of the United States are involved, that the American continents, by free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintained, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers... .[113]

But it was not for economic reasons alone that the United States wished to exclude European powers from the New World. The were also ideological reasons.

As has been discussed, the United States saw itself as very different from Europe. Based on a new political philosophy and built on the faith of self-determination, the Founding Fathers believed that the United States was different from Europe. Additionally, the Founding Fathers believed that our brothers of South America should and would share the same values of freedom and self-determination that the United States enjoyed. For this reason, Monroe states that any attempt to reassert the European political tradition in the New World would be seen as a threat to the United States:

> The political system of the allied powers is essentially different ... from that of America. This difference proceeds from that which exists in their respective Governments ... We owe it, therefore, to candor and to the amicable relations existing between the United States and those powers to declare that we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety.[114]

The instrumental values of immunity from entangling alliances and peace were still important values at the time of the issuance of the Monroe Doctrine, but it also became an avenue toward Union. The Doctrine was

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[113] "The Monroe Doctrine, 1823," from Heffner, 89.

[114] Ibid., 89-90.

instrumental in bringing the country together behind a common cause aiding the feeling of unity and strengthening the case for Union. The Monroe Doctrine was not only an expression of foreign policy, but a unifying factor for the nation. Perkins suggests:

> The *method* of the warning to Europe is no less interesting than the matter. Monroe and his advisers might have confined themselves in 1823 to the ordinary courses of diplomatic correspondence... .They chose instead the course of open diplomacy. And, how, indeed, could they have chosen better? Granted the premises upon which they acted, what could have been more skillful? How much more effective the declaration to Congress than an unostentatious diplomatic protest; how much more gratifying to the national pride, ... Whatever else the President had or had not done, he had certainly interpreted the sentiments of his countrymen, and aroused their enthusiasm and their loyalty.[115]

All the elements of the operational code of the Founding Fathers are included in the Monroe Doctrine. These values were essential to process of nation building: a process that the country would be concerned with until the turn of the century.

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[115] Perkins, *The History of the Monroe Doctrine*, 62-63. (Italics in original).

V. TOWARD THE SECOND PARADIGM

The Founding Fathers' operational code was a means to an end. This end was the process of nation building. An inevitable problem in the means/end nexus is the tendency for means to become an end. For example, neutrality and nonentanglement could have become ends, however, the Founding Fathers were able to keep sight of their values, goals and national interests and keep this from happening:

> For those Americans to whom the doctrine of nonentanglement is a fixed and abiding principle never to be debated, there is no great comfort in the position taken by Monroe and his advisers. Blind dogmatism was not the quality of mind most conspicuous in the men who made the great decisions of that far-off November.... Neither Jefferson, nor Madison, nor Monroe, nor even Adams, closed the door to the possibility of co-operation with a European power where they were convinced that the interests of the United States would be advanced by such and action. They took their stand not on formulas, but on facts... .In this... the pure gospel of isolationism was accepted with some qualifications and exceptions.[116]

Hence, the Founding Fathers did not succumb to the temptation of making the instrumental means of nonentanglement an end in itself.

The operational code of the Founding Fathers developed a foreign policy based on isolationism and a military doctrine based on strategies of mobilization. The aspirational and terminal values of America remain basically unchanged since 1825. The instrumental values of the Founding Fathers have evolved as the threats to national security have changed. From

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[116] Ibid., 48-49.

1825 to 1860 the very Union was endangered, therefore, all instrumental values were evaluated in terms of their ability to preserve the union. At the end of the Civil war America returned to the nation building operational code of the Founding Fathers.

The closing of the frontier as expounded by Frederick Jackson Turner in 1893 led America to turn outward. Turner stated that "...the American energy will continually demand a wider field for its exercise."[117] Alfred Thayer Mahan and Theodore Roosevelt converted the old theme of expansion to the new theme of imperialism. With imperialism came the idea of the "mission of America," and that mission was to export America's values to new lands. This was a major change in the American view of expansion because these new lands were not intended as full partners, like the acquisitions of the past. A "Mission of America" tied to imperialism produced an inconsistency where no vital balance existed for Americans. The exportation of America values—self-determination being a primary one—was incompatible with imperialism.

President Wilson extended this instrumental value of the "Mission of America" to the whole world when he voiced his intention of "making the world safe for democracy." The neoisolationism of the twenties and thirties gave way to the Second World War and Franklin Roosevelt's attempt to fulfill Wilson's dream of a world based on American values. The intransigence of the Soviets following the war showed the futility of this vision. Values are the result of unique cultural contexts and environments.

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[117] F. J. Turner, from Hefner, 191.

Wholesale transplantation of a value system is impossible. Values change slowly and only as a result of personal choice and experiences.

The First and Second World Wars, the advent of air power and the unleashing of the nuclear genie forced the United States to abandon the strategies of mobilization and develop the strategies of containment (deterrence). The second half of this thesis will examine the effect of core values upon the development of the containment doctrine and the new operational code of post-World War II America.

The authors do not mean to minimize the diplomatic history of the United States between the Monroe Doctrine and World War II, but we were concerned in exploring relationships between values and strategies rather than simply writing an historical narrative. This thesis seeks to use history as a means of policy analysis rather than an end unto itself.

VI. GEORGE F. KENNAN, CONTAINMENT: THE SECOND PARADIGM

George F. Kennan

The idea of a strategy of containment originated with George Kennan. The task of turning the idea into an operational code fell to Kennan and Paul Nitze, who were the first two directors of the State Department's Policy Planning Staff. These two friends, analogous to Jefferson and Adams, agreed on American aspirational and terminal values, but disagreed on the instrumental values necessary to realize them. Kennan posited, "In times of uncertainty the best the nation could do was 'see that the initial lines of its policy are as close as possible to the principles dictated by its tradition and its nature....'"[118] Nitze the guiding hand behind NSC 68, stated in that document, "The fundamental purpose of the United States is laid down in the Preamble to the Constitution...."[119] Hence, we can assume the aspirational and terminal values these men held varied little from those articulated by the Founding Fathers.

George F. Kennan's position as the paramount American strategic planner of twentieth century is almost unquestioned. Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger in his memoirs asserted, "George Kennan came as close to authoring the diplomatic doctrine of his era as any diplomat in our

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118 John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American National Security Policy*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 32.

119 *NSC 68*, 54.

history."[120] The doctrine Kissinger alludes to, of course, was the strategy of containing the Soviet Union. *The National Security Strategy of the United States*, August 1991, suggests that containment was the American grand strategy "for over 40 years" and that the changes in the Soviet Union are a challenge "to our ways of thinking about security"[121] Kennan, rather than taking pride in being the brain trust behind the strategy of containment, started distancing himself from it as soon as it became official United States policy. In Volume One of his *Memoirs*, published in 1967, he asserted, "I emphatically deny the paternity of any efforts to invoke that doctrine today in situations to which it has, and can have, no proper relevance."[122] Recognizing the unique position of Kennan in American planning, a review of his thinking seems appropriate. This chapter will review Kennan's thoughts on strategy and American diplomacy, examine his concept of containment, evaluate how it was reshaped into doctrine as NSC 68 and survey the results achieved when it was eventually applied in Vietnam.

A. KENNAN: VALUES, NATIONAL INTEREST & STRATEGY

George F. Kennan was a career foreign service officer whose rise to international prominence surprised himself as much as anyone. He was serving as *charge' d' affairs* in Moscow, when the mission received a cable asking for an explanation of Soviet actions relating to recent International

120 Henry Kissinger, *White House Years*, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1979), 135.

121 *The National Security Strategy of the United States*, (Washington: The White House, August 1991), 1.

122 George F. Kennan, *Memoirs 1925-1950*, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1967), 367.

Monetary and World Bank negotiations. Since Ambassador Harriman was absent, Kennan felt free to express his own views on not only these negotiations, but on negotiating with the Soviets in general. His answer was an 8000 word telegram, labeled the "Long Telegram." This telegram seemed to answer many of the questions about Soviet behavior, which were frustrating Washington, and granted him instant fame there. Commenting on the surprisingly positive and overwhelming response, he wrote:

> official Washington, whose states of receptivity or the opposite are determined by subjective emotional currents as intricately imbedded in the subconscious as those of the most complicated of Sigmound Freud's erstwhile patients, was ready to receive the given message.[123]

His convincing answers to difficult questions gave him the reputation as something of a savant. He was posted to Washington where his counsel was sought frequently over the next few years.

George Kennan is viewed, by John L. Gaddis and others, as a traditional balance of power strategist. He stressed the importance of principles and self interest in determining national strategy. Writing in his 1949 book *American Diplomacy* Kennan contended:

> our national interest is all that we are really capable of knowing and understanding ... if our own purposes and undertakings here at home are decent ones, unsullied by arrogance or hostility toward other people or delusions of superiority, then the pursuit of our national interest can never fail to be conducive to a better world.[124]

123 Ibid., 294-295.

124 George F. Kennan, *American Diplomacy*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951; expanded ed., Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1984), 103.

Later, in his *Memoirs* he commented, "when I think about foreign policy, I do not think in terms of doctrines. I think in terms of principles."[125] He did not explain here what he meant by principles or purposes. Nor did he list which principles or purposes he had in mind in these quotes. Further review of his writing suggests that his principles might coincide with this thesis's definition of values. Again, Gaddis in *Strategies of Containment* explained Kennan's view of principles in the following:

> Principles like non-intervention were of course not infallible guides to action in all situations, but they did reflect certain internal priorities distinctive to the American system of government, and could not be disregarded without in some way diminishing those priorities. "I think there is a close connection between foreign policy and internal policy," Kennan observed, "and a change in one cannot take place without a change in the other. I have a feeling if we ever get to the point ... where we cease having ideals in the field of foreign policy, something very valuable will have gone out of our internal political life. In times of uncertainty the best the nation could do was "to see that the initial lines of its policy are as close as possible to the principles dictated by its traditions and its nature, and that where it is necessary to depart from these lines, people are aware that this is a departure and understand why it is necessary."[126]

It is apparent that Kennan shares the basic hypothesis of this theses that values are necessary for successful national security planning.

Kennan emphasized that the means of an action should match the ends it attempts to obtain. He stressed the importance of recognizing the limited means available to achieve national ends, thus requiring the prioritization of interests. Commenting on this problem in 1949, he declared:

125 Kennan, *Memoirs*, 364.

126 *Strategies of Containment*, 32.

> The problems of this world are deeper, more involved, and more stubborn than many realize. The limitations on [what] this nation, or any other single nation, can accomplish with that margin of its energies and material production which it can afford to devote to outside affairs are greater than we are often inclined to remember. It is imperative, therefore, that we economize with our limited resources and that we apply them where we feel they will do the most good.[127]

Kennan clearly believed in balancing means and ends.

Kennan's concern with matching means with ends is also apparent in his particularized approach to strategy. Gaddis defined particularism in *Strategies of Containment*, using a quote from Kennan in the following:

> Particularism would not reject the idea of joining with other governments to preserve world order, but to be effective such alliances would have to be based "upon real community of interest and outlook, which is to be found only among limited groups of governments, and not upon the abstract formulation of universal international law or international organization."[128]

The way Kennan applied this outlook is evident in his reaction to the Truman Doctrine. He worried about the seemingly opened-ended commitment to all anti-communist forces. Criticizing the wording of the Truman Doctrine, he wrote that it "placed our aid to Greece in the framework of a universal policy rather than in that of a specific decision addressed to a specific of circumstances."[129] Undefined universalistic policy commitments offended the particularistic sensibilities of Kennan.

Gaddis in *Strategies of Containment* described universalism as follows:

127 Ibid., 31.

128 Ibid., 28.

129 Kennan, *Memoirs*, 320.

> Universalism assumed the possibility of harmony in international affairs, sought to achieve it through the creation of artificial structures like the League of Nations or the United Nations, and depended for its success on the willingness of nations to subordinate their own security requirements to those of the international community.[130]

Subordinating American national interest to an international body did not make sense to Kennan, who placed a great deal of importance on self interest. Kennan's concept of self interest in international affairs closely parallels those of Madison on the role of interests in domestic politics expressed in *Federalist Number Ten*. Both wanted to take advantage of man's innate concern with his own self interest. Instead of dwelling on the negative they recognized that interests change with issues. Rather than trying to control interests with laws, they believed that it is better to allow the market of conflicting interests balance itself.

Kennan feared that the adoption of a universalist approach in American foreign policy would involve the United States in the internal affairs of other countries where, he felt, it did not belong. Drawing on historical precedence of the instrumental value of nonintervention, he wrote:

> It is a traditional principle of this Government to ... refrain from interference in the internal affairs of other countries.... Whoever proposes or urges such intervention should properly bear the burden of proof (A) that there is sufficiently powerful national interest to justify our departure ... from a rule of international conduct which has been proven sound by centuries of experience, ... and (B) that we have the means to conduct such intervention successfully and can afford the cost in terms of the national effort it involves.[131]

130 *Strategies of Containment*, 27.

131 Ibid., 31.

Foreseeing the problems in the intervention, he advocated setting up specific criteria which would have to be fulfilled before America would intervene in the internal affairs of another country. At the time of Greece and the Truman Doctrine the considerations he listed were:

1. The problem at hand is one within our economic, technical, and financial capabilities.
2. If we did not take such action, the resulting situation might rebound very decidedly to the advantage of our political adversaries.
3. If, on the other hand, we do take the action in question, there is good reason to hope that the favorable consequences will carry far beyond the limits of Greece itself.[132]

In his *Memoirs* he wrote:

> Were I reacting today to the Truman Doctrine message, I would certainly have added to this list of specific requirements the willingness and ability of the threatened people to pick up and bear resolutely the overwhelming portion of the responsibility and effort in their own defense against both direct and indirect aggression....[133]

Judging from some of the results of many American interventions in the past forty years, the Nation would be wise to make these calculations prior to foreign interventions.

Kennan's particularized approach to strategy resembles the competitive strategies concept in vogue during the Reagan administration. Summarizing Kennan's approach, Gaddis wrote:

> he insisted that if competition was to take place, that it do so on terrain and with instruments best calculated to apply to American strengths

132 Kennan, *Memoirs*, 320.

133 Ibid., 321.

against Soviet weakness, thereby preserving the initiative while minimizing costs.[134]

Although this was not an idea that originated with Kennan, the method attacking at an opponents weakness rather than his strengths seems to be rediscovered by every generation.

Finally, Kennan thought it futile to try to freeze the status quo or to attempt to remake the world in the image of America. In *American Diplomacy* he again refers to the past to justify his belief. He declared:

> History has shown that the will and capacity of individual peoples to contribute to their world environment is constantly changing.... The function of a system of international relationships is not to inhibit this process of change by imposing a legal straight jacket upon it but rather to facilitate it....[135]

Kennan did not believe that the countries of the world had to try to rebuild themselves in an image of America. It was enough if diversity of the world was preserved from those who were attempting to remake it in the image of others. Kennan, once again, applied American instrumental values, in this case tolerance and self determination to planning.

B. SPECIFIC PROBLEMS IN AMERICAN STRATEGIC THOUGHT

As a career foreign service officer George Kennan developed specific beliefs about why America had difficulty in generating and implementing strategic plans.

134 *Strategies of Containment*, 56.

135 *American Diplomacy*, 96.

With his particularized outlook, Kennan abhorred what he saw as a universalistic attempt by American lawyer-diplomats to force an American construct of law and morality upon the rest of the world. In *American Diplomacy,* he asserted:

> I see the most serious fault of our policy formulation to lie in something that I might call the legalistic—moralistic approach to international problems.... It is the belief that it should be possible to suppress the chaotic and dangerous aspirations of governments in the international field by the acceptance of some system of legal rules and restraints. This belief undoubtedly represents in part an attempt to transpose the Anglo-Saxon concept of individual law into the international field and to make it applicable to governments as it is applicable here at home to individuals.[136]

Commenting on the Vandenberg Resolution that preceded the final negotiations on the Marshall Plan he declared:

> The Vandenberg Resolution struck me ... as typical of that mixture of arid legalism and semantic pretentiousness that so often passes, in the halls of our domestic-political life, for statesmanship. I had no patience with that sort of thing then; I have none today.[137]

Kennan was not against laws and morals in foreign policy. He was a very strong believer in their relevancy in framing *American* actions in international relations, but not in judging the actions of others. Writing in *American Diplomacy* he states:

> If ... we were able to refrain from constant attempts at moral appraisal—if ... instead of making ourselves slaves of the concepts of international law and morality, we would confine these concepts to the unobtrusive, almost feminine, function of the gentle civilizer of national self-interest in which they find their true value-if we were able to do these things in

136 Ibid., 95.

137 Kennan, *Memoirs,* 409.

> our dealings with the peoples of the East, then, I think, posterity might look back upon our efforts with fewer and less troubled questions.[138]

Hence, Kennan viewed the legal—moralistic pronouncements of many American statesman as misplaced, which is consistent with his strategic vision.

Kennan believed that Americans tend to simplify complex problems into uncomplicated models which bear little semblance to reality. He cited several examples in *American Diplomacy* and summarized the problem as an inclination to prefer a single evil as the source of all problems. He wrote:

> There seems to be a curious American tendency to search, at all times, for a single external center of evil, to which all our troubles can be attributed, rather than to recognize that there might be multiple sources of resistance to our purposes and undertakings, and that these sources might be relatively independent of each other.[139]

For Kennan, a corollary to this single evil, was the American assumption that American actions were the determining factor in world events. Commenting on those who believed that America "lost China", he contended, "they seriously distorted the understanding of a great many Americans about foreign policy, implying that our policy was always the decisive mover of events everywhere in the world."[140]

America's aversion to taking actions that are in its best interest but do not fall into some universalistic doctrine troubled Kennan. He wrote:

138 *American Diplomacy*, 53-54.

139 Ibid., 164.

140 Ibid., 166.

> I have been struck by the congenital aversion of Americans to taking specific decisions on specific problems, and by their persistent urge to seek universal formulae or doctrines in which to clothe and justify particular actions. We obviously dislike to discriminate.[141]

Failure to discriminate vital from nonvital interests in applying the containment strategy would prove costly to the United States. When this discrimination is necessary, understanding the core values of the nation will be absolutely critical to making a clear decision.

Kennan discounted the importance of force and coercion in international relations and strategy. He thought that unless the impetus to change came from within the targeted country, it would not last:

> Any message we may try to bring to others will be effective only if it is in accord with what we are to ourselves, and if this is something sufficiently impressive to compel the respect and confidence of a world, which ... is still more ready to recognize and respect spiritual distinction than material opulence.[142]

It was very important to him that force be used only in situations where it was apparent that the national interest could be served in no other way. The cold war preoccupation with the "physical strength, armaments, determination and solidarity with other free nations," was only meant to be a means to an end. Uses of force he concluded:

> can only remain sterile and negative if they are not given meaning and substance by something which goes deeper and looks further ahead than the mere prevention of war and the frustration of imperialistic expansion.[143]

141 Kennan, *Memoirs*, 322.

142 *American Diplomacy*, 158.

143 Ibid., 153.

Commenting on change in the Soviet Union, he declared, "the most important influence that the United States can bring to bear upon internal developments in Russia will continue to be the influence of example."[144] Hence, Kennan believed that force was to be used only as a last resort in support of deeply held values, not just to counter "imperialist expansion."

Kennan feared written doctrine. Although Kennan is still associated with the strategy of containment, he never explicitly wrote a complete text of his strategic vision. He explained, "I had no confidence in the ability of men to define hypothetically in any useful way, by means of general and legal phraseology, future situations which no one could really imagine or envisage."[145] The dearth of strategic thinking in American government following the writing of NSC 68 seems to support Kennan's concern.

C. KENNAN'S OPERATIONAL CODE: THE CONTAINMENT POLICY

George Kennan's original strategy of containment bears scant resemblance to the containment strategy that followed in later administrations. Kennan's concern was Russia, not communism. In volume one of his *Memoirs* Kennan, explained the reasoning behind his operational code of containment:

> The purpose of "containment" as then conceived was not to perpetuate the *status quo* to which the military operations and political arrangements of World War II had led; it was to tide us over a difficult time and bring us to a point where we could discuss effectively with the Russians the drawbacks and dangers this status quo involved, and to

144 Ibid.

145 Kennan, *Memoirs*, 405.

arrange with them for its peaceful replacement by a better and sounder one.[146]

Kennan saw containment as a bridge to a better more stable world, however, others saw it as a clear articulation of a paradigm for American survival.

Kennan believed the first priority of American policy should be to restore the natural balance of power in Asia and Europe. To do this he stressed the importance of improving the economic and psychological condition of Western Europe and Japan, while down playing their military weakness. Summarizing Kennan's thinking Gaddis wrote:

> More serious was the possibility of conquest by psychological means: The danger that the people of Western Europe and Japan, two of the five vital centers of industrial power, might become so demoralized by the combined dislocations of war and reconstruction as to make themselves vulnerable, through sheer lack of self-confidence, to communist-led coups, or even to communist victories in free elections.... It was against this contingency that the strategy of containment was primarily aimed--not Soviet military attack, not international communism, but rather the psychological malaise in countries bordering on the Russian sphere of influence that made them, and hence the overall balance of power, vulnerable to Soviet expansive tendencies.[147]

Ultimately, Kennan's strategy of containment aimed at this "psychological malaise."

To bring a person out of a psychological malaise is a difficult job for a trained psychiatrist, but ending it for the diverse societies of Western Europe and Japan was Herculean task. Kennan's approach was in keeping with his particularized model of planning. Kennan outlined the approach he favored

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146 Ibid., 365.

147 *Strategies of Containment*, 35.

to countering the Soviets in two *Foreign Affairs* articles, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct" in July 1947 and "America and the Russian Future" in April 1951. In these articles he advocated restoring the balance of power in Eurasia by increasing the self confidence of those threatened by Soviet expansion, exploiting the inherent instability of the Soviet system and countering Soviet actions at any point "where they show signs of encroaching upon the interests of a peaceful and stable world."[148] By aiding the organic forces of resistance in Eurasia, Kennan hoped to thwart Soviet expansion and improve America's position in the world. Kennan's particularized approach to containment stressed intervening only where the national interest was clearly threatened and using core values to judge only American actions. When Kennan's operational code of containment is compared to containment as practiced over time there are few areas of agreement.

148 George F. Kennan, *Foreign Affairs*, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," July 1947, 566-82 and George F. Kennan, *Foreign Affairs*, "American and the Russian Future," April 1951, 353-371.

VII. PAUL NITZE, NSC 68 AND *AD HOC* DECISION MAKING

Paul Nitze replaced George Kennan as head of Policy Planning Staff at the State Department. During Nitze's tenure the strategy of containment was written into doctrine as NSC 68, which served as the common starting point for national security decisions for two generations. Although Nitze served as Kennan's deputy on the Policy Planning Staff, their personalities, strengths and approaches to planning were quite different. The authors of *The Wise Men* compared them this way:

> State's new planner was a technician and a numbers man, a pragmatist who understood the military and liked it. Military considerations had been almost missing from Kennan's planning. Kennan was emotional, intuitive, he understood broad forces that swept nations, but little about the physical requirements of stopping Soviet tanks at the Rhine.[149]

Kennan opposed the writing of NSC 68 for several reasons. On principle he resisted written doctrines. Additionally, he did not believe several of the underlying assumptions that were to be used in writing it. Walter Isaacson and Evan Thomas in *The Wise Men* suggest:

> He did not believe there was a need for a massive military build up. He did not believe that the Soviets would attack the U.S. unless provoked. The document would be clumsy and overstated, he feared, and serve only to inflame politicians who interfered with the successful conduct of diplomacy...."[150]

149 Walter Isaacson and Evan Thomas, *The Wise Men Six Friends and the World They Made*, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986, Touchstone Ed. 1988), 489.

150 Ibid., 495.

Following recent Western setbacks in Czechoslovakia, China and the Soviet success in exploding an atomic device, most administration officials found it easy to disregard Kennan's apprehensions.

These "setbacks" had the effect of forcing the Truman Administration into making a decision on pursuing a hydrogen bomb. To put the decision into perspective Truman ordered, "the complete reexamination of national security policy...."[151] This reexamination is now known as NSC 68. Nitze explained the Policy Planning Staff's mandate in his memoirs as follows:

> It was my view that the investigation should take a broad perspective and examine both where we stood and where we should wish to be in the future in terms of a broad conception of our national security.[152]

Most in the Truman Administration feared the mounting build-up in Soviet military capabilities. They thought that the military balance would shift in favor of the Soviets, if the United States did not significantly increase military spending. The administration believed public and congressional support for increased spending on foreign aid and military spending was lacking. Experience showed that fear worked. Isaacson and Thomas assert that Nitze was willing to use it again:

> The public had to be persuaded. The way to that, Nitze knew from experience was to scare them: To tell them that the Soviets were poised to attack, and that the U.S. had to meet them everywhere. That was the message that Nitze gave to the drafter of NSC-68: he told them to "hit it hard."[153]

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151 *Strategies of Containment*, 82.

152 Paul H. Nitze, with Ann M. Smith and Steven L. Rearden, *From Hiroshima to Glasnost: At the Center of Decision--A Memoir*, (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1989), 93.

153 *The Wise Men*, 496-497.

Whether scaring the public was the administration's intention is open to debate, however when coupled with the Korean War that was its effect.

A. AMERICAN VALUES

NSC 68 explains the authors' concept of the "Fundamental Purpose of the United States," which was they said:

> laid down in the Preamble to the Constitution: "... to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity." In essence, the fundamental purpose is to assure the integrity and vitality of our free society, which is founded upon the dignity and worth of the individual.

Few would argue with this explanation, however, this can not be said for the description of the "Fundamental Design of the Kremlin," which was:

> to retain and solidify their absolute power, first in the Soviet Union and second in the areas now under their control. In the minds of the Soviet leaders, however, achievement of this design requires the dynamic extension of their authority and the ultimate elimination of any effective opposition to their authority.[154]

NSC 68 declares that the nature of the clash between the United States and the USSR was a "conflict in the realm of ideas and values."[155]

B. OBJECTIVES

NSC 68 lists three specific objectives:

1. Thus we must make ourselves strong, both in the way in which we affirm our values in the conduct of national life, and in the development of our military and economic strength.

154 *NSC 68*, 54.

155 Ibid.

2. We must lead in building a successfully functioning political and economic system in the free world....
3. But beyond affirming our values, our policy and actions must be such as to foster a fundamental change in the nature of the Soviet system, a change toward which the frustration of the design is the first and perhaps the most important step.[156]

The document goes on to demand world leadership by the United States that requires it to "attempt, and accept the risks inherent in it, to bring about order and justice [among nations] by means consistent with the principles of freedom and democracy."[157] In pursuing this leadership role, the document does not articulate any limits on American interests.

Like any formulation of strategy, NSC 68 required numerous assertions and assumptions. These assumptions had the effect of altering greatly Kennan's strategy of containment. These assertions and assumptions paint a bleak outlook for the West, unless it took immediate corrective action. The assertion that drove the rest of the strategy was, "Without superior aggregate military strength, a policy of 'containment' which is in effect a policy of calculated and gradual coercion—is no more than a policy bluff."[158] After asserting this need of superior strength, NSC 68 goes on to explain the ways the West has fallen behind the Soviets.[159] If one believed this dismal assessment, swift corrective action was required.

156 Ibid., 57.

157 Ibid.

158 Ibid., 68.

159 First, the Soviet Union is widening the gap between its preparedness for war and the unpreparedness of the free world for war.... Second, the Communist success in China, taken with the politico-economic situation in the rest of South and South-East Asia, provides a springboard for a further incursion in this troubled Area.... Third, The Soviet Union holds

The military balance of power was particularly disturbing, according to Nitze. NSC 68 declared:

> that our present weakness would prevent us from offering resistance at any of several vital pressure points. The only deterrent we can present to the Kremlin is the evidence we make any of the critical points which we cannot hold the occasion for a global war of annihilation.[160]

Even the atomic balance that this threat of annihilation was based upon was thought to be endangered.[161] They believed the balance of atomic terror was less stable following the Soviet explosion than when America held a monopoly. "The existence of two large atomic capabilities in such a

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positions in Europe which, if it maneuvers skillfully, could be used to do great damage to the Western European economy and to the maintenance of the Western orientation of certain countries, particularly Germany and Austria. Fourth, despite (and in part because of) the Titoist defection, the Soviet Union has accelerated its efforts to integrate satellite economy with its own and to increase the degree of autarchy within the areas under its control. Fifth, meanwhile Western Europe, with American (and Canadian) assistance, has achieved a record level of production. However, it faces the prospect of a rapid tapering off of American assistance without the possibility of achieving, by its own efforts, a satisfactory equilibrium with the dollar area.... Sixth, throughout Asia the stability of the present moderate governments ... is doubtful..... Assistance in economic development is important as a means of holding out to the peoples of Asia some prospect of improvement in standards of living under their present governments....

Seventh, and perhaps most important, their are indications of a let-down of United States efforts under the pressure of the domestic budgetary situation, disillusion resulting from excessively optimistic expectations about the wisdom of continuing to strength the free nations as against preparedness measures in light of the intensity of the cold war.

Eight, there are grounds for predicting that the United States and other free nations, will within a period of a few years at most experience a decline in economic activity of serious proportions unless more positive government programs are developed than are now available. *NSC 68*, 76-77.

160 Ibid., 80.

161 It is estimated that, within the next four years, [1954] the U.S.S.R. will attain the capability of seriously damaging vital centers of the United States, provided it strikes a surprise blow and provided further that the blow is opposed by no more effective opposition than we now have programmed. Ibid., 82.

relationship might well act, therefore, not as a deterrent, but as an incitement to war."[162] The balance of power assumed by NSC 68 was a very touchy scale that required enlightened use of American money and power to survive.

C. OPERATIONAL CODE: STRIVING FOR A POSITION OF STRENGTH

Negotiating only from a position of strength is a recurring theme in NSC 68. Its drafters saw the United States and its allies in a position of weakness. They sought to improve the balance of power, especially military power, before engaging in negotiations with the Soviets. NSC 68 explained the necessity of only negotiating from a position of strength in the following:

> This situation is one which militates against successful negotiations with the Kremlin--for the terms of agreements on important pending issues would reflect present realities and would therefore be unacceptable, if not disastrous, to the United States and the rest of the free world. Unless a decision had been made and action undertaken to build up the strength, in the broadest sense, of the United States and the free world, an attempt to negotiate a general settlement on terms acceptable to us would be ineffective and probably long drawn out, and might thereby seriously delay the necessary measures to build up strength.[163]

Insisting on overwhelming position of strength before beginning negotiations defeats the purpose of negotiations. The unrealistic goal of maintaining or obtaining a position of strength in all aspects of power became the overriding driver in American policy.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

NSC 68 outlined four scenarios the United States could pursue:

162 Ibid., 82.

163 Ibid., 94-95.

1. Continuation of current policies, with current and currently projected programs for carrying out those polices;
2. Isolation;
3. War; and
4. A more rapid building up of the political, economic, and military strength of the free world than provided under a, with the purpose of reaching, if possible, a tolerable state of order among nations without war and of preparing to defend ourselves in the event that the free world is attacked.[164]

The drafters strongly recommended adopting option d. NSC 68 outlined eleven specific recommendations required, "to win the peace and frustrate the Kremlin design...."[165] The far reaching nature and expense of these

164 Ibid., 87-88.

165 These were:

(1) The development of an adequate political and economic framework for the achievement of our long range objectives.

(2) A substantial increase in expenditures for military purposes adequate to meet the requirements for the tasks listed in section D-1.

(3) A substantial increase in military assistance programs, designed to foster cooperative efforts, which will adequately and efficiently meet the requirements of our allies for the task referred to in Section D-1e.

(4) Some increase in economic assistance programs and recognition of the need to continue these programs until their purposes have been accomplished.

(5) A concerted attack on the problem of the United States balance of payment, along the lines already approved by the President. (6) Development of programs designed to build and maintain confidence among other peoples in our strength and resolution, and to wage overt psychological warfare calculated to encourage mass defections from Soviet allegiance and to frustrate the Kremlin design in other ways.

(7) Intensification of affirmative and timely measures and operations by covert means in the fields of economic warfare and political and psychological warfare with a view to fomenting and supporting unrest and revolt in selected strategic satellite countries.

(8) Development of internal security and civilian defense programs.

(9) Improvement and intensification of intelligence activities.

recommendations makes it easy to understand why the Truman Administration feared they would lack the necessary public and congressional support to enact their recommendations.

E. COMPARISON: KENNAN'S OPERATIONAL CODE VS. NITZE'S

The major differences between the strategies of containment advocated by George Kennan and NSC 68 are in the assumptions they made relating to America's role in the world and the threat posed by the Soviet Union. Although both professed a belief in maintaining the balance of power, the drafters of NSC 68 thought the scales were delicately balanced. Any additional changes to it would tilt the balance irreparably to the side of the Soviets. In contrast, Kennan argued "that there were only five meaningful centers of power in the world ... and that as long as no more than one of these was under hostile control, international equilibrium would be preserved."[166] The differing assumption on the stability of the balance of power tended to drive the differences in strategy advocated by NSC 68 and George Kennan.

Whereas Kennan believed America could pick and choose its stands and methods, NSC 68 called for holding the line against the Soviets everywhere. Kennan thought, "economic aid would produce greater benefits per dollar expended than would military build-up."[167] The growing capabilities of

(10) Reduction of Federal expenditures for purposes other than defense and foreign assistance, if necessary by the deferment of certain desirable programs.

(11) Increased taxes. Ibid., 100-101.

166 John L. Gaddis, "NSC 68 and the Soviet Threat Reconsidered," *International Security* Spring 1980, 165.

167 *Strategies of Containment*, 62.

Soviet armed forces alarmed the drafters of NSC 68. Kennan and Charles Bohlen's assessment, the administrations primary Soviet experts, that the Soviets had no intention of using their military capability against the United States in a direct confrontation carried little weight in the risk adverse bureaucracy. Paul Nitze observed, "we are in the position of being unable to prove either that the Soviets would or would not use force."[168] Faced with a verifiable increase in Soviet military strength and an unverifiable intuitive judgment that Soviet intentions remained relatively benign to American interests, NSC 68 advocated an American military build up to ensure the Western ability to counter the perceived Soviet threat. Kennan advocated the use of a variety of measures to counter the threat, including political, economic, psychological and military, in contrast to the preponderance of military force championed in NSC 68.

Since the drafters of NSC 68 perceived a delicate balance of power, no country could be allowed to fall under Soviet control no matter how insignificant industrially or politically. Samuel Wells in an article titled "Sounding the Tocsin" asserted:

> [NSC 68] identifies the mission of the United States as exercising active leadership of the free world in a global conflict with the Soviet Union that proceeds on political, military, and ideological levels.[169]

Thus the United States acquired the role of maintaining world order and abandoning the instrumental value of nonintervention outside the Western

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168 Ibid., 84.

169 Samuel F. Wells Jr., "Sounding the Tocsin: NSC 68 and the Soviet Threat," *International Security*, Fall, 1979, 139.

Hemisphere. This meant deserting Kennan's early construct of competitive strategies. "Frustrating the Kremlin design," became an end in itself, not a means to an end. Defining American interests in terms of threats was a reactive end. When combined with no apparent limit on means, it risked bankrupting the country.

Other assumptions relating to the balance of power in NSC 68 also increased the strains on the American budget. In a Spring 1980 article in *International Relations,* Gaddis contended:

> changes in the balance of power, they asserted, could occur not only as the result of military action, but also from such intangibles as intimidation, humiliation, or even loss of credibility.... World order, and with it American security, had come to depend as much on the *perception* of the balance of power as on what that balance actually was. And the perceptions involved were not just those of statesmen customarily charged with conducting international affairs; they reflected as well mass opinion, foreign as well as domestic, informed as well as uninformed .... Before such an audience, even the appearance of a shift in power relationships could have unnerving consequences; judgments based on such traditional criteria as geography, economic capacity, or military potential now had to be balanced against considerations of image, prestige, and credibility. The effect was to vastly increase the number and variety of interests deemed relevant to the national security, and to blur distinctions between them.[170]

Far flung interests and concerns, if not prioritized and limited bear little semblance to true strategic thought.

Nitze, writing after NSC 68 was made public, defended the framers of NSC 68. He asserted, We were fully aware ... of the limitations of means."[171]

170 Gaddis, "NSC 68 and the Soviet Threat Reconsidered" 166.

171 Paul Nitze, "NSC 68 and the Soviet Threat Reconsidered" *International Security,* Spring 1980, 174.

There is little doubt that Nitze did understand the limitations of means, however, he seems to forget that NSC 68 was not written for the drafters edification. Secretary Acheson later declared, "The purpose of NSC-68 was to so bludgeon the mass mind of 'top government' that not only could the President make a decision but that the decision could be carried out."[172] Isaacson and Thomas observed:

> The problem is that the cautionary, private views of men like Acheson and Nitze are quickly forgotten. Their bolder, simpler pronouncements, however, are remembered, and believed by ordinary citizens and their congressmen.[173]

It is unrealistic to assume, as Nitze does, that the bureaucracy should have understood limitations that were not included in their marching orders.

Finally, there is the difference the two codes placed on values. Both codes accepted traditional American values and a list compiled by the two would not vary substantially. How to use these values in national security affairs, however, differed greatly. Kennan thought values should be used for judging American behavior alone, while NSC 68 use American values to judge the behavior of others. In *American Diplomacy*, Kennan declared, "it behooves us Americans ... to extinguish once and for all, our tendency to judge others by the extent they contrive to be like ourselves."[174] Although NSC 68 pays lip service to tolerance of diversity, its stated objectives and recommendations

172 Dean Acheson, *Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department*, (New York: W.W Norton Co., 1969), 347.

173 *The Wise Men*, 502.

174 *American Diplomacy*, 135.

show a lack of trust in any value system other than our own to prosper on its own. For instance the second of three objectives reads:

> We must lead in building a successfully functioning political and economic system in the free world. It is only by practical affirmation, abroad as well as home, of *our essential values*, that we can preserve our own integrity, in which lies the real frustration of the Kremlin design.[175]

Stability in the third world was possible only by expanded American supported initiatives such as:

> the efforts of other important countries to develop effective institutions to improve the administration of their affairs.... [T]he moderate regimes now in power in many countries ... will probably be unable to restore or retain their popular support and authority unless the are assisted in bringing about a more rapid improvement of the economic and social structure than present programs will make possible.[176]

It seems like what they were really saying was that these administrations could not maintain power unless they became more like the United States. NSC 68 clearly saw the exportation of American values as fundamental to a stable world. It declared, "our system of values can become perhaps a powerful appeal to millions who now seek or find in authoritarianism a refuge from anxieties, bafflement and insecurity."[177] American values developed from a unique environment over several centuries. Any attempt to impose them on another culture, as NSC 68 implies, is bound for failure.

NSC 68 served as the basis of the American operational code for over a generation. In hindsight, it is easy to see that its concept of a monolithic

175 *NSC 68*, 57, (Italics ours).

176 Ibid., 94.

177 Ibid., 69.

Communist bloc was incorrect. Many of its assumptions regarding Soviet intentions, military capabilities and especially economic potential proved glaringly wrong. Nevertheless, viewed in historical context these assumptions are understandable. In the heat of the Korean War and its immediate aftermath the operational code based on NSC 68 made sense, but one has to wonder how it could have survived to the end of the eighties. Like the Sirens' song to the ancient mariners, policymakers found the operational code of NSC 68 irresistible they were when confused and insecure. They often applied this ready made, easily understood, operational code in situations that many now believed shared no commonality with the original situation.

VIII. VIETNAM: NITZE'S CODE APPLIED

When NSC 68 was drafted the probability of its recommendations being adopted fully was uncertain at best. Secretary of Defense Johnson had made holding the line on defense spending his overriding goal. Congress was tiring of America's ever expanding role in world affairs, especially the cost which made increasing domestic spending more difficult. World events, such as, the first Berlin Blockade, Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia and the Communist victory in the Chinese Civil War seemed to support NSC 68's assumptions, however, it is doubtful that the overwhelming endorsement of its recommendations in 1950 would have occurred had the Korean War not begun and seemed to fit the doctrine's warnings so well. The "Red Scare" stunted the healthy national debate normally conducted on such a far reaching national security strategy proposal. The debate collapsed into a defense spending spree based on NSC 68's recommendations when the Korean War started.

In the following case study we will trace the American Operational Code as it evolved over the next four decades, concentrating primarily on the United States involvement in Vietnam. Some of the recurring themes in the application of this operational code were: the delicate balance of power which led the United States to believe in the "domino theory;" the need to intervene militarily to prevent any country from falling to "world" communism; a new importance placed on the perception of power; reluctance to negotiate from anything but a position of power; and using American values to judge the performance of other countries behavior.

Finally, policy makers citing strategy of containment were willing to subvert traditional values for short term expediency.

A. VIETNAM

America's experience in French Indochina prior to the Second World War was almost nil. From then on, however, the United States and Vietnam seemed to be bound up in a continuous war, sometimes allies, sometimes enemies. President Roosevelt was an anti-colonialist and initially was against the reoccupation of Indochina by France at the completion of World War Two. He changed his stance because of the importance he placed on France's cooperation in Post-War Europe. Hence, Roosevelt was the first of six presidents to support intervention in Vietnam and to ignore instrumental value of nonintervention outside the Western Hemisphere.

1. Truman Administration: Supplying the French

The United States was publicly neutral in Indochina until 1950. It stated publicly that it would not "assist or participate in forceful measures for the imposition of control" by France in Indochina. President Truman allowed France to divert military aid designated for Europe to Vietnam. He saw it as a way of appeasing his French allies and gaining their support for American initiatives in Europe.[178] It was not until the fateful year of 1950 and the Korean War that the United States changed its public nonalignment and overtly aided the French in Indochina. The administration came to believe that a French defeat in Indochina was a threat to the United States. Several

178 George M. Kahin, *Intervention: How America Became Involved in Vietnam*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986), 7.

factors contributed to this belief. The Truman administration came to see colonialism as the lessor of two evils when the alternative was communism. Secretary of State Marshall asserted that he was unwilling to see "colonial empires and administrations supplanted by philosophies and political organizations emanating from the Kremlin."[179] Additionally the Truman Administration worried that if they failed to comply with French requests for aid in Indochina that the French would not support American initiatives in Western Europe.

George Herring author of *America's Longest War,* suggests that in the new game of perceptions:

> The loss of an area so large and populous would tip the balance of power against the United States. Recent Communist triumphs had already aroused nervousness in Europe, and another major victory might tempt the Europeans to reach an accommodation with the Soviet Union.[180]

To justify open military and economic aid to France in Indochina Secretary of State Acheson on 8 May 1950 declared:

> The United States Government, convinced that neither national nor democratic evolution exists in any area dominated by Soviet imperialism, considers the situation to be such as to warrant its economic and military equipment to the Associated States of Indochina and to France in order to assist them in restoring stability and permitting these states to pursue their peaceful and democratic development.[181]

179 George C. Herring *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975,* 2nd. ed., (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986), 10.

180 Ibid., 13.

181 U.S. Department of Defense, *The Pentagon Papers: The Department of Defense History of United States Decision-Making on Vietnam,* Senator Gravel Edition, Vol. 1, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971), 588.

The loss of French Indochina was thought to endanger American defense of the Pacific by possible interference in the sea lines of communication. Economically it could disrupt the Japanese economy which depended on Southeast Asia as a market for its goods and a source of food and raw materials. Finally, in the zero sum mind set of the times, it was assumed that any loss of real estate, raw materials or population by one side was an equal gain for the other and that this addition would further endanger the neighbors of the fallen dominos. Over the next twenty five years the reasons given for the importance of maintaining noncommunist governments would change, but somehow they always fit into the operational code of containment.[182]

The assumptions guiding American policy in Indochina in 1950 were "misguided" according to Herring.[183] Author George Kahin agrees, in his work *Intervention* he declared, "Most Americans could not accept the idea of a fusion of nationalism and communism in one movement...."[184] Herring suggests the United States did not understand, "the Southeast Asian revolutions were not inspired by Moscow and, although the Soviet Union and China at times sought to control them, their capacity to do so was limited ...." The American belief in a monolithic communist movement dismissed the nationalist character of Ho Chi Minh's movement. Commenting of Ho's predicament Herring asserted:

182 Herring, 13-15.

183 *America's Longest War*, 15.

184 Kahin, 27.

> Although a dedicated Communist, Ho was no mere tool of the Soviet Union, and while he was willing to accept help from the major Communist powers-indeed, he had no choice but to do so-he was not prepared to subordinate Vietnamese independence to them. Vietnam's historic fears of its larger northern neighbor made submission to China especially unlikely."[185]

These questionable assumptions carried over to successive administrations.

2. Eisenhower and Dulles: The Start of Direct Intervention

The Eisenhower administration accepted the operational code of containment developed by the Truman administration. Its application in Indochina, initially, remained virtually unchanged.[186] In his memoirs Eisenhower declared, "Ho Chi Minh was, of course, a hard core Communist, while the Vietminh ... were supported by the Chinese Communist in the North."[187] Describing the difference between the Truman and Eisenhower administrations' containment policies, Dulles's biographer Townsend Hoopes wrote:

> This could be described as a policy of "containment plus", differing from the basic Truman-Acheson strategy chiefly in its urge to be more activist, not merely "for" the free nations but "against" the communist adversary.[188]

This more activist approach manifested itself in greater intervention into the affairs of Vietnam as the situation deteriorated.

185 Herring,15.

186 Ibid., 25.

187 Dwight D. Eisenhower, *The White House Years: Mandate for Change*, (New York: Doubleday & Company, 1963; Signet, 1965), 405.

188 Townsend Hoopes, *The Devil and John Foster Dulles*, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company 1973), 162.

Having decided to back the French efforts in Indochina in 1950, the United States was faced with another big policy decision in 1954. The futility of the French military effort was made shockingly apparent by the debacle at Deinbienphu. The French pleaded for American military intervention to reverse their predicament on the eve of the Geneva Conference. Dulles and Eisenhower demanded the fulfillment of three strict requirements before the United States would intervene directly. The requirements according to Eisenhower's memoirs were: "a legal right under international law; second, was a favorable climate of Free World opinion; and third favorable action by congress."[189] Dulles reasoned that American prestige would be "engaged to a point where we would want to have a success. We could not afford a defeat that would have world-wide repercussions."[190] Congressional leaders set three conditions of their own. The most difficult of these required that "United States intervention must be part of a coalition to include the other free nations of Southeast Asia, the Philippines, and the British Commonwealth."[191]

When it became apparent that meeting this condition was not going to happen, Congressional leaders held back support. Even though Congress did not question the "assessment of the gravity of the situation," Herring reports, "Congressmen insisted that there must be 'no more Koreas, with the

189 Eisenhower, 412.

190 Herring, 31.

191 Eisenhower, 420.

United States furnishing 90% of the Manpower....'"[192] The administration unable to secure foreign backing and unwilling to act without Congressional support, allowed the French to surrender Deinbienphu without any direct American intervention.

a. Geneva Conference

The Geneva Conference of 1954 placed the United States in a position it was unaccustomed to in peace negotiations. The United States had allied itself strongly with the French, who were clearly not the undisputed victors in Indochina. The Eisenhower administration was unable to dictate terms, and rather than negotiate with communists on equal terms, preferred not to negotiate at all. Commenting on the American position at the Geneva Conference Anthony Short wrote:

> On the assumption that, in the absence of victory, negotiation usually involves concession, the prospect of a negotiated settlement at Geneva as far as the US was concerned seemed to have disappeared the moment Dulles set foot in Geneva.... [W]ith the US negotiating position set at auto-destruct, it is hardly surprising that the Conference turned into a sort of surrealist boxing match....[193]

This refusal to negotiate was consistent with the operational code of NSC 68, which advocated negotiation from a position of strength only. Even before the Geneva Conference was over the Eisenhower administration began developing a strategy to deny all of Indochina to the Communists.

192 Herring, 33.

193 Antony Short, *The Origins of the Vietnam War*, (London and New York: Logman, 1989), 153.

b. Direct Intervention

Some writers believe the Eisenhower decision to assume part of the load previously carried by France in Vietnam began the inevitable slide into the Vietnam War. George Kahin wrote:

> The middle months of 1954 marked a major turning point in the American relationship with Vietnam. It was during this period that the United States made the most fundamental decision of its thirty-year involvement.[194]

The conclusion of the Geneva Conference and the temporary partition of Vietnam forced the administration to make a decision on the ultimate character of the revolution in Vietnam. If it was nationalistic, the United States could accept reuniting Vietnam under Ho following the national elections required by 1956. If Ho was seen as a mere tool of international Communism, America could claim self-defense in intervening in southern Vietnam. Following the logic of monolithic communism presented in NSC 68 the administration decided on the latter:

> At this point, the Eisenhower administration adopted a change of policy with momentous long-range implications.... Dulles informed Congressional leaders on June 24 that any agreement that emerged from Geneva would be "something we would have to gag about," but nevertheless expressed optimism that the United States might still be able to "salvage something" in Southeast Asia "free of the taint of French colonialism." The United States would have to take over from France responsibility for defending Laos, Cambodia and that part of Vietnam beneath the partition.[195]

194 Kahin, 66.

195 Herring, 39.

The completion of an international agreement could have provided some political cover to the administration had it chosen to accept the Geneva Declaration. Although their is no doubt that Eisenhower believed Vietnam was a test case for international communism, his memoirs contain several passages that indicate some flexibility of thought. For instance, he wrote, "It was generally conceded that had an election been held, Ho Chi Minh would have been elected."[196] Additionally he admitted, "there was no incontrovertible evidence of overt Red Chinese participation in the Indochina conflict."[197] Had he placed more faith in the instrumental value of self determination, and characterized the Vietnamese Revolution as a nationalist revolution led by a Communist, it would have given him an idealistic leg to stand on to weather the storm of criticism.

South Vietnam was not a place to attempt to build a country. Herring in *America's Longest War* asserted:

> Had it looked all over the world, the United States could not have chosen a less promising place for an experiment in nation-building.... Dulles admitted the chances of success might not be better than one in ten.[198]

Eisenhower and Dulles were experienced statesman and one has to wonder why they would commit the United States to a policy that had such a low chance of succeeding. When asked, "Mr. President, would you mind

196 Eisenhower, 409.

197 Ibid., 412.

198 Herring, 46,47.

commenting on the strategic importance of Indochina to the free world?" at press conference 7 April 1954, Eisenhower replied:

You have, of course, both the specific and the general when you talk about such things. First of all, you have the specific value of a locality in its production of materials that the world needs. Then you have the possibility that many human beings pass under a dictatorship that is inimical to the free world. Finally, you have broader considerations that might follow what you would call the 'falling domino' principle. You have a row of dominoes set up, you knock over the first one, and what will happen to the last one is the certainty that it will go over very quickly. So you could have a beginning of a disintegration that would have the most profound influences.[199]

Accepting the President's analysis one still has to wonder why he was willing to risk American money and prestige in an area with such a low chance of success. Kahin suggests five reasons in his book *Intervention*:

> The enduring myth of communism was global and monolithic; the conviction that China was expansionist; and American domestic political pressures centering on the "loss of China" syndrome.... John Foster Dulles's retrospective analysis—subscribed to by Eisenhower—of American failure in China, and the lesson he derived from this for policy toward Southeast Asia ["The territorial integrity of China became shibboleth. We finally got a territorially integrated China—for whose benefit? The Communists?"]; and ... the inspiration he and Eisenhower drew from a set of analogies between conditions and the potential for American actions in Vietnam, and recent American and British experiences in other parts of the world.[200]

199 *Pentagon Papers*, Vol. 1, 597.

200 Kahin, 66-67.

When these reasons are compared with Kennan's critique of typical American mistakes in foreign policy; universalistic legal-moral policies, simplification of complex problems, refusal to discriminate vital from nonvital and a propensity for force; one is struck by the number of typical faults Kennan would and did find with this kind of reasoning.

The United States was determined to make an anti-commu. 'st state out of South Vietnam and towards that end it poured funds into South Vietnam. From 1955 to 1961, the United States gave more than $1 billion in economic and military assistance to South Vietnam. In keeping with the military bias of NSC 68, the Eisenhower administration gave four times as much military aid as it did economic and technical assistance. Characterizing America's early attempts at nation building in Vietnam George Herring wrote:

> The massive infusion of American aid thus kept South Vietnam alive, but it fostered dependency rather than laying the foundation for a genuinely independent nation.... Americans naively assumed that Diem shared their political values; others were preoccupied with the security problems which seemed most urgent.... In the eyes of most Americans, moreover, the President's [Diem] vigorous anti-Communism more than compensated for his shortcomings."[201]

No one, in power, seemed to stop and reevaluate the importance of Vietnam to American national security or national interests in light of the Diem government's performance in nation building or in changes to the world environment, especially the growing strains in the Chinese-Soviet relationship.

201 Herring, 57,62,63,66.

3. Kennedy Administration: "Go anywhere, pay any price"

By anyone's standards, Vietnam represents the most tragic legacy of the Kennedy era's "go anywhere, pay any price rhetoric." President Kennedy for all his talk of change, accepted most of the assumptions and policy recommendations inherited from the Eisenhower administration with regards to Vietnam. Summarizing the Kennedy view of Vietnam, Professor George Kahin wrote:

> John F. Kennedy assumed the presidency on January 20, 1961, with much the same world view and set of assumptions about Vietnam as the Eisenhower administration. This was also true of most of his advisors. Despite growing evidence of serious strain between Moscow and Peking, the forces of communism were regarded as an interlocked threat that had to be met by the United States on a global basis. Nearly all American officials still perceived Vietnamese communism as one of the fronts of contest with the Soviet Union and China—critically dependent on these two major communist powers rather than drawing most of its strength from a fundamentally autonomous national foundation. And in terms of American national interest, Vietnam remained a "domino" whose fall would undermine and topple noncommunist regimes in neighboring states.[202]

Kahin's assessment is supported by numerous public statements by administration officials. In an address on 28 April 1961, President Kennedy asserted:

> We live in a hazardous and dangerous time. I do not think it's possible to overstate it.... Tonight, in Viet-nam, where the President was re-elected recently in the last two weeks by a majority of 75 to 80 percent, yet a small army of guerrillas, organized and sustained by the Communist Viet Minh in the north, control most of the countryside in the nighttime.... Now our great responsibility is to be the chief defender of freedom, in this time of danger. Only the United States has the power and the resources and the determination. We have committed

202 Kahin, 126.

> ourselves to the defense of dozens of countries stretched around the globe who look to us for independence, who look to us for the defense of their freedom. We are prepared to meet our obligations, but we can only defend the freedom of those who are determined to be free themselves.... The Russians and the Chinese, containing within their borders nearly a billion people, totally mobilized for the advance of the Communist system....[203]

Adding President Kennedy's "go anywhere, pay any price" rhetoric to an already poorly thought out strategy set the stage for a tragedy.

Faced with disappointing results from Eisenhower's nation building program, Kennedy increased American military intervention in Vietnam. In fact, the number of American advisors was allowed to exceed the limit of 685 set at Geneva, and by the time of his death the number of military advisors had reached sixteen thousand. Kahin suggests:

> Kennedy apparently had few reservations about having U.S.-piloted helicopters and American military advisors go into combat, and soon ordered this.... He might have gone further and introduced ground combat units had Diem been willing to accept this....[204]

In keeping with NSC 68 thinking the Kennedy administration, when faced with declining fortunes in South Vietnam, increased their military efforts.

a. Mansfield Mission

In December of 1962, Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield visited South Vietnam at the President's request and privately reported to President Kennedy on lack of progress since his last visit in 1955. He also published a statement of his appraisal. "Had Kennedy been disposed to change course in Vietnam, he could have used this well-publicized

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203 *Pentagon Papers*, Vol 2, 802-803.

204 Kahin, 129.

assessment as a foundation upon which to build a new policy."[205] Additionally, the feud between China and the Soviet Union was made public in October of 1962, which should have lessened the fear of monolithic communism. Presented with these and several other opportunities to exit South Vietnam gracefully, President Kennedy chose to stay within the comfortable confines of NSC 68.

4. Johnson Administration: Open Ended Commitment

The administration of Lyndon Baines Johnson marks the end of limited commitments to South Vietnam. George Herring asserted in *America's Longest War* that the Johnson administration "transformed a limited commitment to assist the South Vietnamese government into an open-ended commitment to preserve an independent, non-Communist South Vietnam."[206]

Initially, President Johnson kept on most of the advisors he inherited from Kennedy and the administration's policy towards Vietnam did not change. Nevertheless, as the political environment heated up Johnson felt the need to act. Kahin asserted:

> During the fall of 1964, as the political substance and military capacity of the South Vietnamese government eroded ever more rapidly, it had become starkly evident to Johnson's advisors that the policies they had

205 Kahin, 146., For additional reading see, Dean Rusk with Richard Rusk, *As I Saw It*, (New York: W.W. Norton, 1990) Arthur Schlesinger Jr., *A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy and His Times*, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin 1978), Theodore C. Sorenson, *Kennedy*, New York 1965.

206 Herring, 108.

been shaping ever since John F. Kennedy assumed the presidency had failed.[207]

The operational code developed from NSC 68 provided the answer of why the United States' nation building efforts in South Vietnam were failing. It was not because the South Vietnamese government was incompetent, but because communist aggression from the North was too powerful. Therefore, if the North was the cause of the problems in the South, the way to fix the problem was, of course, the application of military force.

a. Gulf of Tonkin Resolution

The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution normally serves as the line of demarcation for Americans between hot and cold war in Vietnam. President Johnson stressed the continuity of American policy toward Vietnam in requesting the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution. He said:

> These latest actions of the North Vietnamese regime have given a new and grave turn to the already serious situation in Southeast Asia. Our commitments in the area are well known to the Congress. They were first made in 1954 by President Eisenhower. They were further defined in the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty approved by the Senate in February 1955.
>
> This treaty with its accompanying protocol obligates the United States and other members to act in accordance with their constitutional processes to meet communist aggression against any of the parties or protocol states.

Our policy in Southeast Asia has been consistent and unchanged since 1954. I summarized it on June 2 in four simple propositions:

1. *America keeps her word.* Here as elsewhere, we must and shall honor our commitments.

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207 Kahin, 245.

2. *The issue is the future of Southeast Asia as a whole.* A threat to any nation in that region is a threat to all, and a threat to us.
3. *Our purpose is peace.* We have no military, political, or territorial ambitions in the area.
4. *This is not just a jungle war, but a struggle for freedom on every front of human activity.* Our military and economic assistance to South Vietnam and Laos in particular has the purpose of helping these countries to repel aggression and strengthen their independence. [208]

It is interesting that the first reason that President Johnson listed was "America keeps her word." This suggests that the administration was concerned more with the perception others held of it, than with doing what was right under the circumstances. The importance placed on perception is illustrated by an incident related in *America's Longest War*:

> When a French diplomat observed that "the stakes in Europe were enormous," but that if South Vietnam fell "we would not be losing much," Secretary of State Rusk hotly retorted that if the United States did not protect Vietnam, "our guarantees with regard to Berlin would lose their credibility."[209]

Perceptions rather than national interest started to be perhaps the most important driver for the rest of the conflict.

The Johnson Administration stands out in adherence to the operational code of NSC 68. The administration was determined to defeat the outside aggression. National Security Action Memorandum 273 declared that the "'the central objective of the United States' was to assist the 'people and government' of South Vietnam 'to win their contest against the externally

208 *Pentagon Papers*, Vol. 3, 720. (Italics in original).

209 Herring, 115.

directed and supported communist conspiracy."[210] The administration continued to believe that the problems of South Vietnam were solvable by American military might. The administration intervened directly with ever increasing United States military pressure. When South Vietnamese governments did not live up to American needs they went around them. Independence of South Vietnam, according to Secretary of Defense McNamara, "would demonstrate to the rest of the world [in] this 'test case' the capacity of the United States to help a nation meet a Communist 'war of liberation.'"[211] Finally, when the futility of the American strategy started to become clear, and negotiations became a possibility, the administration began playing the part of the victor. "The administration took a hard line from the outset..... the terms for which they were prepared to hold out made virtually certain that nothing would be accomplished."[212]

5. Nixon Administration: Peace With Honor?

"Throughout the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, Richard Nixon, in his role as a major Republican spokesman, applauded our Vietnam effort,"[213] so asserted Paul Warnke in *Vietnam Settlement: Why 1973, not 1969?*. In a 1967 *Foreign Affairs* article, Nixon defended the presence of American troops in South Vietnam, who had helped to contain China and

210 Ibid., 110.

211 Kahin, 312.

212 Herring, 209.

213 Paul C. Warnke, et al., *Vietnam Settlement: Why 1973, Not 1969*, Rational Debate Series, (Washington D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy, 1973), 83.

allowed other "free nations" time to develop. Justifying American efforts Nixon wrote, "Whatever one may think of the domino theory it is beyond question that without the American Commitment in Vietnam, Asia would be a far different place today."[214] Although President Nixon did eventually negotiate a peace treaty, he abandoned the operational code of NSC 68 reluctantly. In a national address on 14 May 1969 he made it clear that he still accepted the ideas of a delicate balance of power and the importance of maintaining a perception of power in the eyes of possible opponents. Commenting on the need for a negotiated peace he declared:

> Abandoning the South Vietnamese people, however, would jeopardize more than lives in South Vietnam. It would threaten our long term hopes for peace in the world. A great nation must be worthy of trust.[215]

The conditions set for a peace treaty in this address also indicate the traditional bias against negotiating without a clear military victory. Abram Chayes later asserted that these conditions were not supportable by the actual conditions in Vietnam. Writing in 1973, he alleged:

> Although these proposals sounded good for domestic consumption ... they were tantamount to a complete defeat for the North Vietnamese and the Viet Cong. These objectives could not be achieved by negotiation, only by military victory.[216]

214 Richard M. Nixon, "Asia After Vietnam," *Foreign Affairs*, October 1967, 111.

215 Richard M. Nixon, *Setting the Course: The First Year*, (New York, Funk and Wagnalls, 1970), 14.

216 Abram Chayes, et al., *Vietnam Settlement: Why 1973, Not 1969*, Rational Debate Series, (Washington D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy, 1973), 26.

The crash program to Vietnamization of the war helped to reduce American guilt. The quick collapse of the South Vietnamese government suggests the American effort was doomed from the start because the heart of the majority of South Vietnamese people was not in the fight.

B. LESSONS LEARNED?

Looking back at this case in United States history, one is amazed at the ability of an operational code to survive basically intact throughout the American intervention in Vietnam. The various administrations fed the changing variables into this unchanging code, received the same answers and applied those answers unquestioningly with the differences being only in scale. The fear of defeat, and with it change in perception of power overseas, that successive administrations voiced in reference to Vietnam, failed to materialize. Even though the United States suffered a defeat in Vietnam, it still possessed all of the elements of power that it held before the loss. In fact, the events in Vietnam should have brought into question the whole operational code of containment. Commenting on the lessons learned or not learned Professor Herring declared:

> The fundamental weakness of many of the lessens learned thus far is that they assume the continued necessity and practicability of the containment policy, at least in modified form, thereby evading or ignoring altogether the central questions raised by the war.[217]

Nevertheless, having settled on an operational code that seemed to work in most other areas, the policymakers of the nation continued to use it into the nineties.

217 Herring, 279.

From the American experience in Vietnam, several lesson relating to values can be drawn:

1. In order to bring all the elements of national power to bear on a problem it must be seen as furthering the core values of the nation.
2. Public support for a protracted war is possible only when core values are at stake.
3. Gradual escalation is possible only if it is continually explained in terms of values, by a charismatic leader and accepted by public opinion.
4. Democracies may not be able to fight a protracted war without continuing legitimization from political leaders.

Although it is impossible to prove, a case can be made suggesting that had American policy makers placed more faith in traditional American values such as tolerance, self determination and nonintervention, and less in the importance of the application of force, this terrible chapter in American history would not have been written. Successive American administrations discounted the ability of the Vietnamese to make decisions on their own. As American involvement increased, these administrations made more and more decisions and eventually took responsibility for governing South Vietnam. This is in complete defiance of the most fundamental values of the United States. The Declaration of Independence posits, "all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights.... That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers form the consent of the governed." This means all men possess the ability to make their own decisions and the responsibility to live with the results. American policymakers, obsessed with the operational code of containment, abandoned this the most basic of American values. They became the arbitrators of who had the right of self determination, not

only in Vietnam, but in most trouble spots around the world. One has to wonder, if the debate had been framed in terms of aspirational and terminal values, rather than in terms of the instrumental value of thwarting communist expansion, whether the successive administrations would have consistently followed the dictates of containment in Vietnam and elsewhere.

IX. BUILDING A NEW PARADIGM FOR NATIONAL SECURITY

A recurring theme in the current national security debate is the need for a long term strategy to shape the new world order in terms favorable to American ends.[218] There seems to be agreement among most policymakers about the need for a long term approach to planning, however, developing this approach has proven difficult. Traditionally, American policymakers plan in an ad hoc manner, much like practitioners of normal science they want to solve the current puzzle. Long-range planning presents many problems which do not occur in short term planning that most people face daily. Developing a successful operational code requires the same kind of process that occurs in a revolution in science. The planning model described in the following could serve as means of focusing and integrating the debate on any suggested operational code.

Americans pride themselves on being doers and often denigrate those who insist on planning details of every event. Not all planning requires the train table precision that Americans like to avoid. For instance the vision of America developed by the Founding Fathers lacked a specific blueprint for realizing it. Nevertheless, it set out the direction that they believed the country should go and the values necessary to judge American behavior. At the most abstract level this was the basis of America's first operational code. It served the country well, but with the closing of the frontier the era of

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[218] *National Security Strategy of the United States*, (White House, August 1991).

nation building was over. The United States tried imperialism following the Spanish American War but it was not compatible with America's principle of self-determination, which was based on its core values. Wilsonian idealism attempted to impose American values on the war torn Europe. Their environment and history had not prepared them for such a large departure from past policy. When Wilson's experiment failed the nation retreated into isolationism. World War II showed that America could not remain aloof from the world, but the problems of over involvement of the Cold War has left America unsure of where its future lies.

A. LIMITS OF SHORT RANGE PLANNING

The reactive operational code of the Cold War led many leaders in the United States to believe that planning short term operations constituted long term strategic planning. Planning a campaign to thwart communist interest in an area was thought to be strategy at the highest level. This mind set is now finding it difficult to think in terms of lifetimes rather than years. Most people are familiar and comfortable with the type of short range planning the United States conducted during the Cold War. When faced with a situation requiring a longer term outlook, they merely expanded their short term model. This approach is of marginal effectiveness when applied to nations over generations. As explained by Paul Bracken, a consultant to the RAND Corporation:

> An attempt to predict exactly what future military threats will be in ten years will not work because (a) U.S. interests are so diverse; (b) in many situations decisions are often made by idiosyncratic groups and individuals that are intrinsically unpredictable (e.g., Future "Qaddafis"); and (c) our general ability to make long-term precise predictions is poor.

> For these reasons it would be foolish to design forces to meet a specific list of predicted threats.[219]

Therefore a different approach to long range planning is needed to address the dynamic nature of today's world.

B. PLANNING MODEL

In long range planning, a balance must be struck between interests, stated at a high enough level of generality that allows consensus to be achieved, (e.g. the Preamble to the Constitution), and those interests specific enough to provide direction for planning (e. g. the Middle East peace process, reducing Russian nuclear arms, Yugoslavia and the challenge of Japanese economic power). The planner must allow for changing environments, and therefore prepare alternative scenarios. These alternative scenarios could lead to alternative national strategies, based on the actions of the actors outside the United States. Adopting a completely scenario-driven national security strategy would thus be reactive and ineffective. Although the United States cannot unilaterally determine the world environment, its decisions have a profound effect in shaping that environment. Therefore, the best a strategic planner can do is to design a preferred environment and a basic strategy to achieve it.

Interests, together with this core part of the environments, are relatively constant and can therefore be employed to generate a specific set of recommendations to policymakers. A 1973 Army War College Study, which

219 Paul Bracken, *Strategic Planning for National Security: Lessons from Business Experience*, (Santa Monica: The RAND Strategy Assessment Center, Prepared for the Defense Advisory Group Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, February, 1990), 18, N3005-DAG/USDP.

serves as the theoretical basis of this approach to long range planning, explained the core strategy this way:

> The core strategy consists of all those policies which remain constant irrespective of differing environments.... The nation's core strategy is necessarily abstract and extremely flexible, simply and directly stated for the same reasons that mathematical axioms must be simply and straight forwardly stated. For this reason it is convenient to present the nation's core strategy as an elaboration of a few axiomatic principles which, together, constitute a *national doctrine*. America's core strategies have traditionally consisted of both the strategy and its associated doctrines, but the formulation of both the strategy and its associated doctrine have typically been less deliberate and self-conscious than intended.[220]

Similarly, Paul Bracken commented, "A core strategy consists of all those elements of policy that remain constant regardless of which environment occurs."[221] There are few things in American History that have remained as constant its values. A clear understanding of these values is necessary in order to formulate the core strategy, which should be the starting point for any operational code.

C. UNCHANGING VALUES & CHANGING ENVIRONMENTS

American aspirational and terminal values plus interests are the basis of the core strategy, which has remained stable over time. The American conception of what the preferred environment is and how best to realize it has changed more often than the core strategy. For decades the preferred environment was a contained Soviet Union. Having achieved that

220 Glikes, Richard J., Richard E. Mack, Robert M. Reuter, William V. Kennedy, William H. Overholt, *An Approach to Long-Range Strategic Planning*. Carlisle Barracks. PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 15 October 1973, 2, MIRM 73-3. (Italics ours).

221 Bracken, 14.

environment the United States is now cautiously looking for a new preferred environment. In this planning model the means used to attain the preferred environment are part of the basic strategy. To gain a consensus for a new operational code, America must decide just what the preferred environment they are striving for is. Then they must determine the means that they are willing to use to work toward it. This model could serve to frame the debate, which currently seems focused primarily on the margins. Finally, the unfulfilled aspirational and terminal values of the Founding Fathers should serve as the starting point for any discussion of the core and preferred environments.

X. KARL POPPER AND THE IMPORTANCE OF PROCESS

Should the United States actually articulate a new operational code, we must bear in mind that this is just the beginning of a long process. "As Max Weber pointed out, democracy must be regarded as a process rather than as an attribute which a system does or does not possess."[222] A democracy is an on going process that requires active maintenance by its citizens, should we fail in upholding this the most basic requirement of a democracy, then no amount of planning or strategy will save the country.

Philosopher Karl Popper points out two basic approaches to governing in his book *The Open Society and Its Enemies*. He calls them the piecemeal social engineering process and the utopian social engineering process. Popper believed that the piecemeal approach was the only way for a free society and democracy to survive. He described this process as:

> The politician who adopts this method may or may not have a blueprint of society before his mind, he may or may not hope that mankind will one day realize and ideal state, and achieve happiness and perfection on earth. But he will be aware that perfection, if at all attainable, is far distant, and that every generation of men, and therefore also the living, have a claim; perhaps not so much a claim to be made happy, for there are no institutional means of making a man happy, but a claim not to be made unhappy, where it can be avoided. They have a claim to be given all possible help, if they suffer. The piecemeal engineer will, accordingly, adopt the method of searching for, and fighting against, the greatest and most urgent evils of society, rather than searching for, and fighting for, its greatest ultimate good.[223]

222 Lipest, 316.

223 Popper, Vol. 1, 158.

Pragmatic Americans have traditionally followed this piecemeal process, which fits hand and glove with the Madisonian Model. In applying this idea to strategy one must bear in mind that individuals are the key to any democratic strategy and the final say on all matters. Therefore they must somehow be included in the debate over a new operational code.

Popper defines the utopian process in the following:

> It is rational in the same degree as it pursues its aim consciously and consistently, and as it determines its means according to this end.... These principles, if applied to the realm of political actively, demand that we must determine our ultimate aim, or the Ideal State, before taking any practical action. Only when this ultimate aim is determined, in rough outline at least, only when we are in possession of something like a blueprint of the society at which we aim, only then can we begin to consider the best ways and means for its realization, and to draw up a plan for practical action.[224]

Americans have only flirted with this process of governing and rejected it following painful results, such as, the red scare.

A. ASSUMPTIONS

Like any system or process, Popper's process of piecemeal social engineering postulates several assumptions, which it shares with the American political tradition. The piecemeal engineer, "believes that man is the creator of his own destiny and that, in accordance with our aims, we can influence or change the history of man just as we have changed the face of the earth."[225] This means that "laws can be made and changed by man ... and

224 Popper, 157.

225 Ibid., 22.

that it is therefore man who is morally responsible for them."[226] Therefore, the piecemeal engineer postulates that "it is quite wrong to blame democracy for the political shortcomings of a democratic state. We should rather blame ourselves, that is to say, the citizens of the democratic state."[227] Hence, Popper suggests that the individual should be the center of the democratic process and the final judge of its success or failure of any operational code. As the Nation debates the merits of what will become a new paradigm, the primacy of the individual in the open society must be kept in constantly in mind.

B. JUDGING POLICY

The American political system is a republic, which imparts duties as well as rights upon its citizens. Referring back to his funeral oration, Pericles reminds us, "'only a few may originate a policy, we are all able to judge it....'"[228] To accept this view Popper believes "the only attitude that I can consider to be morally right is one which recognizes that we owe it to other men to treat them and ourselves as rational,"[229] and therefore able to judge policy decisions themselves. Since Popper views democracy as a process he does not see any logical end. He asserts, "The proper test is not that of finality,

226 Ibid., 61.

227 Ibid., 127.

228 Ibid., 186.

229 Karl Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, Vol. 2, 5th ed., (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966; reprint, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), 240.

but of progress."[230] The only way to measure this progress is in relation to our values.

The end of any new strategy, whether viewed from the standpoint of the Founding Fathers or the architects of the Cold War policy, must be based on the terminal values of the Declaration of Independence or the Preamble of the Constitution. It must restate the instrumental values of individual welfare and continue along the well trodded path of democracy and the free market. The complexities of the modern world only make more difficult the search for the preferred environment and for a strategy for Americans in the future.

230 Ibid., 247.

XI. THE NEW WORLD ORDER AND THE THIRD PARADIGM

Since the idea of a "new world order" first appeared, some people have expected that soon a detailed blueprint would appear and definitively answer all of their questions. Defining the "new world order," will prove to be difficult. The consensus that developed behind the containment policy of the Cold War did not solidify until the outbreak of the Korean War, which seemed to confirm the assumptions of NSC 68. To expect the vision of the new world order to evolve more rapidly than that of the Cold War policy of containment is unreasonable.

Americans have been accused of acting rashly. This is not completely accurate. Americans are actually slow to reach a decision, but swift in carrying it out. French commentator R.L. Bruckberger in his 1959 work *Image of America* asserted:

> American are slow because they are profoundly aware that life is a continuous movement, advancing only through contradictions and becoming fuller and richer only as it succeeds in reconciling as far as possible there contradictions, never when it ignores or silences them....
>
> Americans are a slow people because of two seemingly contradictory elements in their nature: a desire for compromise at almost, though not quite, any price, and an undeniable rigidity wherever their honor and their interest are concerned. But once they have reached a decision—either to compromise or, if compromise proves impossible, to refuse to compromise—they are then as swift and direct in carrying out their decision as they were slow and indirect in coming to it.... If Americans

seem obsessed by the need for haste, it is because they are always slow to start.[231]

Before America can define its role in the new world order, it must reconcile the contradiction between self-determination and revolution on the one hand, and intervention and international order on the other.

For more than half of its existence the United States was able to follow Jefferson's dictum of "no entangling alliances." Great Britain maintained the balance of power in Europe, which allowed the United States access to European markets and a free hand in the Western Hemisphere. According to Robert Tucker and David Hendrickson the authors of *The Imperial Temptation* during this period, "America was, 'the well-wisher to the freedom and independence of all,' but she was 'the champion and vindicator only of her own.'"[232] The decline of British power had the effect of dragging the United States into the power vacuum. President Wilson partially justified American involvement in the First World War with the rhetoric that America was fighting to make the world safe for democracy. This set a precedent later used to justify intervention throughout the Cold War in countries whose significance to American vital interests was often negligible. Now that the stability of the balance of power is no longer considered as delicate as it was during the Cold War, the United States must establish criteria for what constitutes a threat to its vital interests and world stability.

231 Bruckberger, 45-46.

232 Robert W. Tucker and David C. Hendrickson, *The Imperial Temptation: The New World Order and America's Purpose*, Uncorrected and Unrevised Proofs, (New York: Council on Foreign Relation), 174.

The National Security Strategy of August 1991 asserts, "We cannot be the world's policeman with responsibility for solving all the world's security problems. But we remain the country to whom others turn when in distress." The strategy goes on to say, "In the end, we are answerable to our own interests and our own conscience--to our ideals and to history--for what we do with the power we have."[233] This would seem to indicate a return to the particularist balance of power policies that Kennan advocated and the Founding Fathers practiced.

The rhetoric of the Gulf War has led some to question the Bush administration's commitment to avoiding the world policeman role. Tucker and Hendrickson in *The Imperial Temptation* argue:

> The outlook that informs American foreign policy today, of which Bush's vision of a new world order is a vivid expression, assumes that aggression, wherever it might occur, is a disease to which this nation must supply the antidote.[234]

In contrast to this fear of universalism, there are a number of media commentators who advocate a just such an universalistic policy to "solve" the current unrest in the Balkans. For example, a *New York Times* editorial of 23 April 1992 titled, "What if Bosnia Had Oil?" concludes, "If Americans believe in the principle that aggression is intolerable, they will stand up for it, oil or no oil."[235] Adopting this sort of reasoning assumes that the people of the Balkans can not restore order themselves and that it must be imposed on

233 *The National Security Strategy*, 2.

234 Tucker, 206-7.

235 *The New York Times*, "What if Bosnia Had Oil?" 23 April 1992, A18.

them from the outside. Particularists Tucker and Hendrickson suggest, "A more detached view would allow us to see that aggression normally generates powerful opposing forces among those most immediately threatened by it."[236]

America would be wise to adopt a particularist approach to the new world order. The United States can do much to shape the new world order and advance its national interest. To do this it must recognize the limited American means available to counter the unlimited threats to national security. To ensure its strength is not spent on peripheral issues, it should develop a operational code based upon a clear articulation of the national interest, the preferred environment it is striving for and the core values used to select and judge *American* actions.

National Security Strategy

The Bush administration's *National Security Strategy of the United States* August 1991 is now the broadest public statement of national security policy. The *National Security Strategy* mentions four main interests or objectives with numerous sub-objectives.[237] The four stated objectives are:

1. The survival of the United States as a free and independent nation, with its fundamental values intact and its institutions and people secure.
2. A healthy and growing U.S. economy to ensure opportunity for individual prosperity and resources for national endeavors at home and abroad.
3. Healthy, cooperative and politically vigorous relations with allies and friendly nations.

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236 Tucker, 207.

237 In January 1992 the Department of Defense released *The National Military Strategy of the United States*, which shares these same interests and objectives.

4. A stable and secure world, where political and economic freedom, human rights and democratic institutions flourish.[238]

According to Captain Mike Farmer, Assistant Deputy Director for Strategy and Plans, Joint Staff J-5, the national security planning process develops it defense strategy by planning to accomplish these objectives or insure these interests.[239] This indicates the Joint Chiefs have not abandoned the use of the short term planning model of the Cold War. Today's dynamic international situation calls for a different approach to planning which thinks in terms of generations.

These interests and objectives are general enough that one can assume they will last into any long term scenario. Nevertheless, something is missing from the *National Security Strategy*. Currently one would have a hard time identifying what makes this strategy uniquely American. These four main objectives could easily be mistaken for any of the other industrialized democracies. The strategy gives no indication of a hierarchy or decision matrix for use in deciding alternate courses of action when two or more of the objectives are in conflict. Finally, it does not define what the America's core and preferred environment are. Without a clear statement of American core values and the preferred environment, the generalized statement is of little practical value to the strategic planner.

238 *National Security Strategy*, 3-4.

239 Captain Mike Farmer, Assistant Deputy Director of Strategy and Plans, Joint Staff J-5, Lecture delivered at the Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California, 3 February 1992.

A. VALUES AND PLANNING

Politicians frequently call for the need to return to "traditional American values." *The National Security Strategy Of The United States* does nothing to fill the need. In the Preface President Bush wrote:

> We have within our grasp an extraordinary possibility that few generations have enjoyed-to build a new international system in accordance with our own values and ideals, as old patterns and certainties crumble around us.[240]

Later in the same document under the heading "The Contest Of Ideas And The Nurturing Of Democracy" it states:

> Recent history has shown how much ideas count. The Cold War was in its decisive aspect, a war of ideas. But ideas count only when knowledge spreads. In today's evolving political environment, and in the face of the global explosion of information, we must make clear to our friends and potential adversaries what we stand for.[241]

If you accept this premise on the importance of values and ideals, *The National Security Strategy* leaves you wondering just exactly the President had in mind. Values are rarely mentioned and never clearly stated. The "Ideas" section concludes:

> Through broadcasts, academic and cultural exchanges, press briefings, publications, speakers and conferences, we engage those abroad in a dialogue about who and what we are—to inform foreign audiences about our policies, democratic tradition, pluralistic society and rich academic and cultural diversity. We will increase our efforts to clarify what America has to contribute to the solution of global problems—and to drive home democracy's place in this process.[242]

240 *The National Security Strategy*, V.

241 Ibid., 14.

242 Ibid.

The preceding excerpts of the strategy are the closest it comes to defining what these values are that America wants to spread and theoretically build upon for its long term planning. The question that begs answering is which ideas or values? The ideas of Jefferson and Madison or those of McCarthy. Obviously, not all American values have proven equally lasting.

As America leaves the reactive Cold War mind set behind, recognizing and internalizing the dictum of the ancient Greek philosopher Pericles funeral oration would prove fruitful. He declared:

> Our political system does not compete with institutions which are elsewhere in force. We do not copy our neighbours, but try to be an example. Our administration favours the many instead of the few: This is why it is called a democracy.[243]

It is time for America to stop looking over its shoulder to see who's gaining. It should set the pace itself by defining what its core values are and what its preferred future environment is. The only logical starting point for this process is the core values inherited from the Founding Fathers.

B. CONCLUSION

The 17 February 1992 edition of *The New York Times* printed seven confidential scenarios that the Defense Department was developing as a basis for planning.[244] The initial hostile congressional reaction to these scenarios underlines the difficulty of selling long term defense planning, when the strategy relies on short term threats and assumptions. The reaction of

243 Karl Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, Vol. 1, 5th ed., (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966; reprint, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), 186.

244 Patrick E. Tyler, "Pentagon Imagines New Enemies to Fight in Post-Cold War Era: Plans for Hypothetical Conflicts and Big Budgets," *The New York Times* 17 February 1992, A1.

Congressmen Les Aspin, Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee is an excellent example. Less than a week later Congressman Aspin had announced his own set of planning scenarios. Commenting on his scenarios Congressman Aspin declared, "it is important that the choices be made through a bottom-up method that relates force structure choices and the different capabilities they buy to the sorts of threats America may face in the new era."[245] If the Administration engages in a good scenario-bad scenario game with the Congress, one thing is certain, the long term planning needed to insure American security into the next millennium will be ad hoc at best; like it was throughout the twentieth century. The days of bean counting strategy should have passed away with the Soviets. What is needed is a new approach to planning. A "bottom up" system is fine as long as the bottom begins with the basic metaphysical assumptions of the Nation. Anything else is akin to starting the walls of a house without first laying a solid foundation.

The new operational code of the United States can not insist upon some easily quanitifiable utopia, that comes equipped with a lockstep program to march right to it. The world and humans are too complex to take such a simplistic approach. American democracy is a process, as such, America's operational code will be a process too. We must realize that the citizens of America are not perfect, and that there will be discrepancies in their actions. This does not excuse inappropriate behavior, but acknowledges that there will be inconsistencies in the nation's application of its values.

245 Tyler, "Top Congressman Seeks Deeper Cuts in Military Budget: Counters Bush Proposal," *The New York Times*, 23 February 1992, A11.

Samuel P. Huntington asserted in *The Dilemma of American Ideals and Institutions in Foreign Policy*, "Critics say that America is a lie because its reality falls so far short of its ideals. They are wrong. America is not a lie; it is a disappointment. But it can be a disappointment only because it is also a hope."[246] We must allow for this disappointment, but strive to eliminate it. Finally, as the calls for a profound change to the American system resonate throughout the current political campaign, it might be wise to remember a line from William James classic book *Pragmatism*. When discussing changes to an individuals belief system, he declared, "The most violent revolutions in an individual's beliefs leaves most of his old order standing."[247] Any changes to the "old order" should build on the already strong foundation that the Founding Fathers laid. America has used this foundation to erect the framing of an open society and now must decide on some of the esoteric features of the building, but starting all over again would be foolish, wasteful and dangerous.

246 Samuel P. Huntington, *The Dilemma of American Ideals and Institutions in Foreign Policy*, (Washington: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1981), 17.

247 William James, *Pragmatism*, Great Books in Philosophy, (Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 1991), 29.

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