

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

Promotion of Democracy

by

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ABSTRACT

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The United States has had a stated goal of promoting democracy abroad for over one hundred years. We have stated this goal in our National Security Strategy, but our actions have not always demonstrated this goal. This paper will define democracy and review recent administrations' ideology and national security strategies in respect to the promotion of democracy. Each administration has its own strategy that is based on their ideological viewpoint. Every administration has subverted its stated ideology when faced with a "Great Evil" that threatens our security or national interests. This subversion of our stated goal causes confusion and distrust of our intentions around the world. The long term approach of the promotion of democracy would foster a new confidence in the United States and eventually provide a safer and better world community. The current Bush Administration has developed a new approach to the promotion of democracy. This approach is regionally focused and links rewards for a state that is achieving success while providing an example for other states in the region to emulate. The greatest challenge is found in Islamic countries, but could prove to be very helpful in our fight against global terrorism. This paper will examine the question of democracy in Islamic cultures, and make recommendations on protecting our national security and interests without subverting our democratic ideals. The U.S. – Middle East Partnership Initiative is an inclusive program that is focused on the long term objective of fostering democracy in the Middle East. This model could be followed in the future to benefit other countries and establish the foundation needed to curb the appeal of terrorism. The global promotion of democracy is more important today and is the key to the security of the United States and the world.

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PROMOTING DEMOCRACY

The promotion of global democracy, or at least democratic values, has been a consistent element of the foreign policy of the United States for the past hundred years. Is there hypocrisy in our policy to promote democracy? Has our national security strategy supported the stated goal of promoting democracy, or have our actions lead to confusion and misunderstandings at home and throughout the world community? Are U.S. actions through the implementation of our national strategy consistent with the words in our National Security Strategy? The basic beliefs and values associated with the birth of our nation and democratic form of government must be endorsed through our foreign policy. This includes accepting risks associated with the promotion of democracy when dealing with threats to our national security. Risk is acceptable only if the damage caused, or the advantage that we sacrifice, does not threaten our national security. These risks must be acceptable, and not gambles on which we place the security of the American people in jeopardy. As a general rule all people have the same inalienable rights that our founding fathers identified. If we do not believe this as a matter of policy, then we are a nation of hypocrites. The challenge is to develop a U.S. foreign policy that promotes democracy and allows the U.S. to protect our interests and national security without depriving other people of their own inalienable rights.

The George H. Bush and Clinton administrations stated that with the Cold War over, America's ideals and interests were no longer divided.¹ In reality even with the stated increased importance of promoting democracy in U.S. foreign policy, there are still many regions where our ideals are subverted by our interests. This has caused us to support less than democratic regimes, particularly in the Middle East.²

After the terrorist attacks on September 11th, the promotion of democracy became a more focused part of our national security. The best long term defense against terrorism is to spread democratic values. The more democracy and associated values are promoted to other countries, the safer the people of the world will be. This paper will address the definition of democracy, the theory behind our foreign policy and relationships between states.

Historically our foreign policy has been subverted because of a perceived "Great Evil" which was used to justify our abandonment of ideology when our national interests or security were threatened. Throughout our history we have supported non-democratic governments when they supported our efforts against a "Great Evil". The "Great Evils" have been fascism, communism, and now terrorism. This paper will examine the question of democracy in Islamic

cultures and finally make some recommendations on how we can provide for the protection of our national interests and security without subverting our national democratic values.

Can we remain committed to the promotion of democracy and fight terrorism? We can promote democracy and fight terrorism if our actions, as an example of a nation with democratic values, are demonstrated to the world community. Decreasing our efforts to support democratic governments would be seen as hypocrisy and would harm our efforts to defeat terrorism. Promoting democracy must be a key part of our plan to defeat terrorism, while guaranteeing citizens of other nations their right to choose and hold their leaders accountable for their actions. We must not let this focus on terrorism subvert our policies on human rights. The concept of accountability to the people by their government is essential to undermining the roots of terrorist organizations. The fundamental commitments of our government and the American people to democracy, and the development of market economies, are interrelated in our campaign against terrorism. If part of our stated foreign policy is to promote democracy there are two issues that we must address. First, we must define democracy, and once defined we must develop a strategy to promote it.

DEFINING DEMOCRACY

Defining democracy appears to be a simple task, yet there are views and opinions that make this simple definition the most difficult part of implementing our foreign policy. Each administration has defined democracy within the context of how its promotion would best support our national security and interests. Democracy is defined as "government by the people in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised directly by them, or by their elected agents, under a free electoral system".³ President Abraham Lincoln stated that democracy is a government "of the people, by the people, and for the people".⁴ Democracy and freedom are both misunderstood because democracy and its institutions provide the framework and protection necessary for freedom.

"Freedom and democracy are often used interchangeably, but the two are not synonymous. Democracy is indeed a set of ideas and principles about freedom, but it also consists of a set of practices and procedures that have been molded through a long, often tortuous history. Democracy is the institutionalization of freedom. For this reason, it is possible to identify the time-tested fundamentals of constitutional government, human rights, and equality before the law that any society must possess to be properly called democratic."⁵

Democracy is the most difficult and complex of any form of government. In the world today, the most common form of democracy is a representative democracy that allows the people to elect their representatives to make decisions for the people, develop laws, and oversee the governmental programs developed for the population.⁶ The process used to elect representatives varies and is considered democratic as long as there are free and fair elections.⁷ Democracies must have a government that performs functions of the state, and also allows the formation of non-governmental organizations that are not controlled directly by the state.⁸ This concept of diversity is called pluralism and allows other organizations to be established that do not depend on the government for their existence, legitimacy or authority.⁹

The basic elements of a democracy will be different adaptations based on the cultural, economic and social systems found in a given society.¹⁰ The people must have certain rights over which the government has no influence.¹¹ The government must be established and maintained based on the consent of the people. There must be majority rule, but protection of minority rights.¹² The government must provide protection of basic human rights for all of the citizens in the society, equal treatment under the law and some form of due process.¹³ There must be limits placed on the government through a constitution and the acceptance of pluralism in regards to social, economic and political organizations.¹⁴ The government must foster the belief in democratic values and reinforce those values with a focus on tolerance, pragmatism, cooperation and compromise.¹⁵

In this post Cold War era, the international community has embraced the ideals of freedom, individual rights, and democratic values.¹⁶ Eastern Europe is in the initial stages of reforming their governments and institutions from their oppression under the former Soviet Union. The emergence of these new democratic states in Europe, and the optimistic outlook on reforms in Africa, Asia, and South America, is the beginning of an unprecedented era of reform in the world community.¹⁷ The agreement around the globe that freedom and the right of self government is a universal right is remarkable. The belief that democracy can be promoted and achieved by all nations does not ensure success.¹⁸ Skeptics believe that democracy is a uniquely Western form of government that will not work in non-Western culture.¹⁹

The United States and other democratic states now have a greater responsibility than ever before to assist new democracies with the challenges associated with learning how to transition and grow as a democracy. The idea of stability has been an overarching concept that becomes a justification for our government to resist change. We focus on maintaining the

status quo, sometimes even against the will of the people in a foreign country.²⁰ In 1993 the candidates in the Russian elections that supported market reform were not elected by the Russian people. The U.S. Government worked to undermine the elected officials and pursue economic reforms through other non-governmental organizations in Russia.²¹

The United States must now clearly define our strategy in order to develop and implement a supportive foreign policy with a new focus on democratization. Everyone must understand a consistent strategy that addresses our national security interests and values without denying others their interests and values. In order to develop a strategy for the future, we must understand our strategies of the past. The strategy that each administration develops is based upon personal beliefs and ideology tempered with political theories and approaches to resolving disputes between states within the international community.

STRATEGY

Our national security strategies have been based upon either a realist or idealist view of international relationships over the past fifty years. The realist views national interests as only the interests of the state.²² They believe that power and security comes from the military and not economic power or some form of universal moral high ground.²³ They seek to avoid any controls over the actions or policies of the state from international institutions.²⁴ Realists consider conflict between countries to be natural and unavoidable.²⁵ They attempt to justify any actions by our country with the idea that the ends justify the means, and that long term results in our national interests outweigh the short term question of moral judgment regarding our actions.²⁶

The idealist defines our national interests in a much broader context that includes the interests of the state, the rights of individuals and the interests of the international community.²⁷ They believe that power and security should be attained through international law and institutions like the United Nations.²⁸ They believe that conflict between countries is not a natural state and is avoidable only if international institutions function properly. They also believe that achieving the moral high ground, and the acceptance of universal values, is critical in the development of our national security strategy and foreign policy.²⁹

In this post Cold War era, the United States has a unique opportunity to promote democracy throughout the globe. The U.S. strategy in the post Cold War has been based on three assumptions that are accepted as truths.³⁰ First, administrations insist on using the American model of democracy as the template for other democratic aspirants.³¹ These aspirants are expected to adjust or reform their social, economic, cultural and even religious

systems to conform to our template.³² Next, administrations and the policy implementers insist that these countries develop their institutions by copying our template so that we can measure whether the model selected is acceptable.³³ Finally, we assume that the transition to democracy is a natural, orderly process that has defined sequences and stages.³⁴

The programs that execute our foreign policy are divided into three main categories: elections, state institutions and civil society with each administration giving a different order of priority.³⁵ Assistance is provided to political parties, process and execution of the elections. Observing and providing assistance is the focus of our aid to improve the administration skills of electing officials running the election process.³⁶ The fact that an election occurs does not equate to democracy.³⁷ Governmental institutions are assisted through using models in order to reform the judicial, legislative, executive and other state institutions.³⁸ The focus is usually on the non-executive branches of the government.³⁹ Finally, the promotion of a civil society focuses on the substance, not the process, of institutional reforms.⁴⁰ The government should define the role of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) with a focus on them becoming an advocate of public interest.⁴¹ The government must foster a belief that NGOs can represent the issues of the people over a sustained period.⁴² These categories of programs must be diverse and exert indirect influence on institutions and organizations, but transmit ideas that will in the long run change the behavior of people.⁴³

NIXON ADMINISTRATION

The clearest example of a realist approach to international relations was the Nixon administration and its approach to resolving the crisis in the Middle East. The administration viewed the problem as an issue that threatened global peace.⁴⁴ A confrontation in this region could result in a confrontation between the U.S. and the USSR.⁴⁵ The interest of the U.S. was based on our security interests. Through the U.S. applying pressure on Israel, and the USSR on the Arab states, the two superpowers could force the two parties to reach a peaceful settlement.⁴⁶ Then with an endorsement by Britain and France, the issue would be settled.⁴⁷ The Israeli cabinet rejected the attempt by the U.S. and the USSR to impose a forced solution in order to appease the Arabs.⁴⁸

In Chile, a Marxist named Salvador Allende was elected president through fair and free elections.⁴⁹ The Nixon Administration took action to remove him by funding the opposition and encouraging the military to stage a coup.⁵⁰ The realist use of power was explained by Kissinger when he wrote in his memoirs that the use of American power is moral if it is intended "to

preserve the balance of power for the ultimate safety of all free peoples.”⁵¹ He addressed the protection of human rights as a moral goal of foreign policy and said:

“There are certain experiments that cannot be tried, not because the goals are undesirable, but because the consequences of failure would be so severe that not even the most elevated goals can justify the risk... Will we have served moral ends if we thereby jeopardize our own security?”⁵²

South Africa was a final example of the application of the realist approach to foreign policy by the Nixon Administration. Our government recognized that apartheid was morally wrong and was against our democratic values. Prior to the 70's, the United States had little involvement in Africa because we believed that the region had nothing that was important to our national interests or security.⁵³ We allowed our NATO allies to deal with African issues.⁵⁴

President Nixon believed, as did Kissinger, that Africa was not worth our consideration and that the region was not important to the United States.⁵⁵ The administration was focused on the Middle East, Vietnam and the threat of communism.⁵⁶ The overarching policy of containment of communism was more important than any moral or democratic value issue regarding the government of South Africa.⁵⁷ The idea that containment of communism as a “Great Evil” was more important than the demonstration of our commitment to our stated democratic values. The Nixon strategy was to support regional states that could provide forces to fight against communist insurgencies without the U.S. military involvement.⁵⁸ U.S. foreign policy was based on National Security Council Memorandum 39 until after 1974 and the fall of Angola and the takeover of Mozambique by a Marxist government.⁵⁹ The National Security Council approved NSCM-39 which called for a partial relaxation of American measures against minority regimes, increased aid for black African states in the regions of Botswana and Zambia, and a series of diplomatic efforts to resolve tensions between the white governments and their black neighbors.⁶⁰ Also included was the statement:

“The Whites [in Southern Africa] are here to stay and the only way that constructive change can come about is through them. There is no hope for the blacks to gain the political rights they seek through violence, which will only lead to chaos and increased opportunities for the communists.”⁶¹

CARTER ADMINISTRATION

The clearest example of an idealist approach to international relations occurred during the Carter administration. The basic belief was that morality provided the base on which American foreign policy could be formed.⁶² They rejected the realist approach to foreign policy. They believed that traditional military power was no longer relevant. The foreign policy of the United States should be focused on supporting widespread human aspirations.⁶³ This would prove the long term solutions to world problems, which in turn was seen as the best way to protect our interests.⁶⁴ Carter believed that human rights and democracy were the essence of what America stood for and it could be used to attract people of the world. He was willing to promote human rights and democracy instead of maintaining the status quo.⁶⁵

“The basic thrust of human affairs points toward a more universal demand for fundamental human rights. The United States has a historical birthright to be associated with this process.... Ours is a commitment, and not just a political posture. I know perhaps as well as anyone that our own ideals in the area of human rights have not always been attained in the United States. But the American People have an abiding commitment to the full realization of these ideals.”⁶⁶

The Carter Administration did not see the Soviet Union as a great threat.⁶⁷ They believed that the United States had the moral high ground and that we were much stronger economically, politically, morally, and militarily.⁶⁸ They also believed that the Soviet Union had limited national capabilities not only as compared to the United States, but also compared to the international community.⁶⁹ The Soviets were believed to be cooperative and our goal should be balancing our interests and theirs to achieve mutual security.⁷⁰ The administration chose not to use military force in 1978 during the crisis in the Horn of Africa, the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, and initially against the taking of hostages in Iran. They believed that diplomacy and the condemnation of the international community could resolve any act of aggression by a nation.⁷¹ This approach caused the American public and the world to view the administration as weak, and Carter finally addressed that perception in 1980 with what has been called the “Carter Doctrine.”⁷²

“Let our position be absolutely clear: An attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States of America, and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force.”⁷³

The Carter administration also subverted its stated ideology when our national interests were threatened. The threat by a “Great Evil” of communism in the form of the Soviet Union caused the administration to abandon its belief that nations could be controlled by international institutions and law instead of military force.⁷⁴ Even after his presidency, Carter still believed that his idealist approach to foreign policy was the correct course for America.

“I was familiar with the widely accepted arguments that we had to choose between idealism and realism, or between morality and the exertion of power, but I rejected those claims. To me, the demonstration of American idealism was a practical and realistic approach to foreign affairs, and the moral principles were the best foundation for the exertion of American power and influence.”⁷⁵

REAGAN ADMINISTRATION

The 1988 National Security Strategy (NSS) of the Reagan Administration stated that our policy toward the Third World would focus on economic and security assistance.⁷⁶ There were broad goals to be used as a guide for America’s leadership role in the world. There were stated commitments to world freedom, peace and prosperity, active assistance to those who are struggling for their own self-determination, freedom, and a reasonable standard of living and development.⁷⁷ The Reagan Administration in the 1987 NSS, demonstrated a willingness to be realistic about the Soviet Union and defined publicly the crucial moral distinctions between totalitarianism and democracy.⁷⁸ In 1988, our National Security Strategy was to defend and advance the cause of democracy, freedom, and human rights throughout the world.⁷⁹ If the United States ignored the fate of millions around the world who sought freedom then we would betray our national heritage and over time would endanger our own freedom and that of our allies.⁸⁰ The Reagan security strategy stated for the first time that the failure to promote democracy would endanger Americans and promoting democracy was essential to the protection of our national security and interests.⁸¹ He addressed his views on promoting democracy to the British parliament in a speech in 1982.

“Americans have a positive version of the future, of a world- a realistic and idealistic vision. We want a world that lives in peace and freedom under the consent of the governed. So far, however, we and the other democracies haven’t done a very good job of explaining democracy and free economy to emerging nations. Some people argue that any attempt to do that represents interference in the affairs of other, an attempt to impose our way of life. It’s nothing of the kind. Every nation has the right to determine its own destiny. But to deny the democratic values and that they have any relevance to the

developing world today, or to the millions who are oppressed by communist domination, is to reject the universal significance of the basic timeless credo that all men are created equal and that they're endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights. People living today in Africa, Latin America, in Central Asia, possess the same inalienable right to choose their own governors and decide their own destiny as we do. By wedding the timeless truths and values Americans have always cherished to the realities of today's world, we have forged the beginnings of a fundamentally new direction in American foreign policy, a policy based on the unashamed, unapologetic explaining of our own priceless free institutions and proof that they work and describing the social and economic progress they so uniquely foster. History is not a darkening path twisted inevitably toward tyranny, as the forces of totalitarianism would have us to believe. Indeed, the one clear pattern in world events; a pattern that's grown with each passing year of this century is in the opposite direction. It is the growing determination of men and women of all races and conditions to gain control of their own destinies and to free themselves from arbitrary domination. More than any other single force, this is the driving aspiration that unites the human family today, the burning desire to live unhindered in a world that respects the rights of individuals and nations." ⁸²

Reagan gives us the best description of the "Great Evil" of communism, and once identified, it became the focal point of our national security strategy, policies and programs. The administration subverted their ideology to the more important goal of protecting our national security from the threat from the "Great Evil." Reagan became a semi- idealist in his approach and believed that ideas could win the Cold War. President Reagan believed that good would triumph over evil, that we should announce to the world unashamed that our values are right, and the world will be better when these democratic values are accepted by everyone. ⁸³

CLINTON ADMINISTRATION

President Clinton believed that there was a close, almost intimate connection between international and domestic issues, especially economically. ⁸⁴ He believed that they were two sides of the same coin. ⁸⁵ If the United States was going to compete economically, we must promote a more stable international system. ⁸⁶ In the post Cold War era, we cannot separate domestic and foreign policy because they are so interrelated. Clinton stated in a speech at the University of Wisconsin in 1992 that he believed Bush was too much of a realist and tended to 'coddle dictators' instead of supporting liberal values abroad. ⁸⁷ He also stressed that he would not upset established U.S. relations with autocratic allies if elected stressing that he would not want to isolate China or any important allies. ⁸⁸ He stated that he would do more than Bush I to support the cause of democracy by establishing a 'democracy corps' and reinforcing the 'National Endowment for Democracy'. ⁸⁹ He believed that sometimes the promotion of

democracy and human rights would be subverted by our economic interests or security.⁹⁰ The promotion of democracy was not a moral duty that would override all other goals, but one objective amongst a host of others that would help guarantee America's place in a complex international system.⁹¹

Clinton was almost a realist in his approach to a security strategy. He believed that there was no substitute for power.⁹² A strong military and alliances were important lessons from two World Wars and the Cold War.⁹³ Power that did not use diplomacy was dangerous, but diplomacy that was not backed up with power was doomed, and America should always negotiate from a position of strength.⁹⁴ The Clinton administration believed that there was a connection between capitalism and democracy, and over time a democracy could not survive without the free market and free trade.⁹⁵ These are required to build and sustain a democracy. This connection created the term 'market democracy' that was used to describe the policy of enlargement which became linked with the Clinton view of his promotion of democracy policy.⁹⁶ The Clinton concept of enlargement was not a political theory, but part of the relationship between democracy and democracy promotion based on the market and global capitalism.⁹⁷ Possibly the most interesting idea that the Clinton administration believed was that democracies do not go to war with each other.⁹⁸ This idea that democracies do not go to war with each other was the reason we should care about how other people govern themselves.⁹⁹ In summary, Clinton could be called a conservative idealist because when the idea of promoting democracy supported U.S. security and economic interests the ideology applied, but when important national security and interests were threatened, then ideology would be subverted.

REAGAN AND CLINTON ADMINISTRATIONS

On the surface these two administrations do not seem similar in their approach to foreign policy. There are, however, many similarities in regards to their focus on the promotion of democracy. Reagan was initially faced with the USSR, which he named the "Evil Empire." Clinton was faced with failed states and the challenges associated with how the United States and the world would respond. Both developed foreign policies that focused on promoting democracy as a key element of their strategy, but each defined democracy in a different manner. Both took ideas from both the realist and idealist views of international relationships and applied these concepts to the development of their foreign policy. Clearly Reagan was more inclined to the "realists view" and Clinton to the "idealist view".

GEORGE W. BUSH ADMINISTRATION

The current president campaigned for limited U.S. involvement overseas, calling for a “distinctly American Internationalism” with the U.S. acting only when our security or vital interests were threatened.¹⁰⁰ We would stand against dictators, communists, and terrorists and keep moral issues out of foreign policy.¹⁰¹ This was a vintage realist approach to foreign policy. He wanted to set limits to U.S. involvement overseas. He initially backed off the Clinton Administrations support of the reunification of North and South Korea, and ignored the special role the U.S. had played in the Middle East.¹⁰² Bush reversed our commitments to such international agreements as the Kyoto Agreement on global warming and the 1972 ABM treaty, and had a stated goal of withdrawing troops from Bosnia.¹⁰³ Was the Bush Administration going to eliminate the goal of promoting democracy as a foreign policy goal? In 2001, the administration did not address the issue of promoting civil societies, rule of law, free elections and open political processes.¹⁰⁴ Foreign policy seemed to be based on military security and power and defined in terms of military capabilities. There was no mention of freedom, democratic values, or the promotion of democracy.¹⁰⁵ The administration did not link Argentina’s economic problems to U.S. vital interests even though Argentina had adopted free market policies, adopted the dollar as its currency, and made a strong commitment to democracy but, they did eventually agreed to support an IMF loan.¹⁰⁶

Then the terrorist attack on 9/11 occurred and other nations quickly offered assistance to the United States. These overtures received a lukewarm response from the administration. On December 12, 2002, Secretary of State Colin Powell made a speech to the Heritage Foundation in Washington D.C. In this speech he outlined a major shift in the Bush Administrations foreign policy in regard to the promotion of democracy. This is the first attempt by an administration to develop a comprehensive long term approach to promote democracy.

The program is called the U.S. - Middle East Partnership Initiative. This initiative will provide the framework and funding for the U.S. to work with the governments and people in the Arab world to expand economic, political and educational opportunities. It will include \$1 billion in assistance that the U.S. government gives to Arab countries this year. Initial additional funding of \$29 million was provided to fund pilot projects with significant additional funds being requested for next year. This is a partnership with Arab governments, other donors, academic institutions, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations. The U.S. will review all assistance programs in the region in order to provide the most effective and efficient assistance possible, with particular emphasis on women and children. The Deputy Secretary of State, Richard Armitage will serve as the coordinator for the initiative and it will be managed by the Near East Affairs Bureau of the Department of State. There will be three major areas of

focus for this initiative: education, economic reform with private sector development, and strengthening civil society.¹⁰⁷

ADJUSTMENTS TO OUR STRATEGY

Promotion of democracy must include aid as well as diplomatic and economic rewards and punishments. Our strategy must be based on long term goals with no expectations of overnight success.¹⁰⁸ We must not try to change the fundamental social, economic and political structures that are part of the cultures and people in other countries.¹⁰⁹ We must accept the fact that U.S. influence over the countries' political and economic systems will cause problems when we attempt to help them transition to a democracy.¹¹⁰ We must not restrict our foreign policy by limiting it to a realist or idealist approach.¹¹¹ Our foreign policy must be based on "idealistic aspiration tempered by deeply realist considerations".¹¹²

The U.S. aid organizations usually focus on the concepts found within our form of democracy and develop a plan based on the American model.¹¹³ There are ways that aid could be improved without changing the end result. Our strategy tends to address complex issues by providing a simplistic checklist that, if followed sequentially, will result in a successful democratic government.¹¹⁴ It seems to promote hope verses being based on the realities found in a country, and attempts to apply a mathematical solution to the problem.¹¹⁵ Our strategy must change from using formulas to measure success, to applying a process with a focus on the desired endstate.¹¹⁶ Simply stated, we cannot teach people how to become a democracy, we must teach them what a democracy is and allow them to build and develop their own variant with our assistance.¹¹⁷ Our strategy must be less American style democracy, and present different potential forms of democracy to the developing state that allows different paths to achieve the same goal.¹¹⁸ It must address the structures that build the political institutions and processes within the culture and region, instead of attempting to mold the country without considering the variables involved.¹¹⁹ We must not expect a mathematical sequence. Instead, we must allow the country to develop their own understanding and approach to the problem, and accept an answer that falls within an acceptable range of solutions.¹²⁰

DEMOCRACY VERSUS ISLAM

Our greatest challenge is the promotion of democracy in Islamic countries. There is a common view that the Islamic religion and democracy are not compatible.¹²¹ In the 19th century there was a belief among intellectuals that Catholicism and democracy were

incompatible.¹²² This belief that a religion with beliefs that are viewed by the believers as having universal authority over the secular state would never allow itself to be controlled by an immoral or secular government.¹²³ Ralph Waldo Emerson once stated that, "Catholic priests will sympathize with a despot versus a government that separates itself from the Catholic Church."

¹²⁴ This has been disproved in a world where Catholics support democratic political parties throughout Europe and the Americas.¹²⁵ The argument of incompatibility is also incorrect because political and religious authority is synonymous in most Islamic countries.¹²⁶ The leadership and governments authority and legitimacy is not from the people, but from Islam much like the royal families in Europe and the Catholic Church. The history of the foreign policy of the United States in Islamic countries has been an example of the hypocrisy of our actions versus our stated policy of promoting democracy.

The truth is, there are few examples of democratic Islamic states.¹²⁷ The closest would be Turkey that has been in transition over the past 80 years into a democracy.¹²⁸ Turkey has held democratic elections and has strong Islamic influence, but it appears to be committed to democracy and human rights.¹²⁹ Islamic societies that do not have legitimate democratic processes for the people to dissent and institutions that allow their ideas for change and rights all create breeding grounds for disillusion and terrorism.¹³⁰ This disillusion is usually focused on the perceived cause of their unhappiness and is usually focused against the United States and other Western democracies.¹³¹ Many educated Muslims, religious leaders, and even the governments encourage this hatred of the U.S. because it takes the focus away from the internal problems within the Islamic society.¹³² Many people that have positive views of Americans cannot accept our hypocritical support of autocracies that are friendly to the United States.¹³³ Many who believe the U.S. should not support democracy in the Middle East base their views on deeper held anti- Muslim religious feelings.¹³⁴ They cite examples of radical Muslim views that are minority groups within the Muslim religion.¹³⁵

"They ignore the fact that there are democratic views within the religion such as *Ijmaa* (consensus) and *Shurah* (consultation)".¹³⁶ "Thomas Jefferson used a concept from the *Qur'an* that there is no coercion in religion".¹³⁷ To believe that all concepts in democracy are Western is not true.¹³⁸ Muslims should not focus on transferring Western ideas of democracy into their cultures; instead, they should seek ideas from Islam and use them to establish their own form of democracy based on the teachings of Islam.¹³⁹

"An example of a city that was democratic, multi-ethnic and multi-religious can be found in the writings of the Prophet Mohammed". In the city of Al-Medina, decisions were made by the *shura* and a voice in the government was given to

non-Muslims. All people were treated with respect and allowed to participate in the political process. Moderate and liberal Muslims believe that Islam teaches all Muslims to enlighten others. This is done through *ijtihad* which means to exert yourself and others to understand the teachings of Islam. The last option is *jihad* or holy war, which is the first option for radical Muslims. The United States does not oppose Islam, just look at the number of Mosques and Muslims in American cities.

The strength that current governments in the Middle East draw from the religious leaders is based on each supporting the other in order to maintain control over the masses. The elites that are in power do not support democracy because they fear the ideas, institutions and power that would be given to the masses. The religious leaders cooperate with the government in order to implement the Islamic laws for the masses. This interesting alliance prevents the emergence of a strong state with democratic institutions. The requirement for the elite to be convinced to transition to democracy is overlooked many times. The focus on the conversion of the masses assumes that they have some inherent power to change their government. The truth is that even the American experience started with the elite who had more to lose than the masses.¹⁴⁰

If our aid and democracy promotion policies can influence the elite and religious leaders, the country will transition to a democracy without resorting to violence. The focus should be on a peaceful transition, not using the American example of a revolution to create a democracy.

U.S. MIDDLE EAST PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE

The recently announced initiative by the current Bush Administration is a model for the future of promoting democracy.

It focuses on the three major areas of education, economics and societal reforms needed to transform a state into a democracy. This initiative is a long term program that provides aid and assistance to enable countries to develop the understanding and desire to become democratic.

The education programs are focused on the entire society. "Partnerships for Learning" will share knowledge throughout all levels of society in the Middle East. Partnerships with universities will train non-governmental leaders. Literacy and training programs will focus on children and women to improve their lives and understanding of responsibilities within their society. There will be programs to expand the knowledge base and access to schools and education through the Internet as well as teacher training programs that will be established for all school levels to include higher education. Scholarships will be given to allow study in the United States at our universities and universities in the Middle East. These would focus on economics, education, business, information technology and the sciences to provide the tools needed to develop strong economies needed to compete in the world market.

Economic reform and private sector development should be addressed through aid and assistance. The program will include technical assistance to Arab

members of the World Trade Organization (WTO) to help them comply with requirements. We will promote private sector management to provide capital and technical assistance to entrepreneurs and their businesses. New micro-enterprise programs will be established and assistance for new micro-businesses provided. There will be internships with American businesses through the Department of Commerce Special American Business Internship Training scholarships. Networks and training opportunities for women in the Middle East will be developed. Assistance will be provided to reform the financial institutions of the governments throughout the region and fight corruption in the Middle East.

Finally, there will be programs to strengthen civil society in the Middle East. This initiative will provide assistance to non-governmental organizations and individuals working on political reform. The money would come from the Middle East Democracy Fund. Judicial programs will be implemented to increase the transparency of laws, regulations and improve the administration of the legal systems. Our government and businesses will assist in the establishment and support for NGOs, independent media outlets, polling organizations, think tanks, and business associations. These organizations will provide the foundation for a country to transition into a democracy. There will be training programs for candidates for public office, members of the government, and other elected officials. Additional training and exchange programs will be developed for news and print journalists. All of these programs will be done in partnership with the governments in the Middle East. We will not force this initiative on any country, but will convince them that if they partner with us in this initiative they will provide a better life for their citizens and the world.¹⁴¹

CONCLUSION

The United States should promote democracy because it is in the best interest of mankind, the international community and the United States. Are the rights established in our democracy reserved only for American citizens? Is our country somehow special and deserves more than the rest of the world? Most Americans believe that the freedoms, liberties and rights that are afforded them as citizens of a democratic government are essential requirements for life. Democratic governments are not without faults, but if we truly care about all people in this world then assisting others in their pursuit of better lives should be one of our highest priorities. Americans can not be isolationists in an interconnected global world economy. Assistance and aid throughout the world will continue as long as the American people feel a duty to ease the suffering of others. The greatest long term assistance Americans can give other people is a government based on democratic values and the right to the freedoms that we enjoy. When we do not support liberty and freedom as a basic right of all people, then we are hypocrites.¹⁴²

In democratic governments, the citizens are less often killed by civil unrest or mistreated by the government.¹⁴³ Authoritarian and totalitarian regimes have been responsible for the

majority of the genocides, mass murders, and other physical abuses in the world.¹⁴⁴ Examples in the past have been the Soviet Union, China, Germany, Japan, and Iraq.¹⁴⁵ In a democracy, there are institutions that check the power of the government by limiting the ability of one group to commit crimes against the population.¹⁴⁶ A democratic government has a process for transition of power and provides a way for the people to express their dissatisfaction without violence.¹⁴⁷ Democracies are more likely to have long term economic goals.¹⁴⁸ If there is a stable government where wealth can be accumulated and protected through government supported institutions, the wealthy will not focus on small short term money when they can accumulate greater long term wealth.¹⁴⁹ Also, the government has the ability to make hard economic choices without the fear of being overthrown.¹⁵⁰ Democracies are less likely to have famines, due to the people's ability to influence the actions of the elected officials.¹⁵¹ This is because the leaders have the incentive to provide for the people in order to stay in power and a free press that provides information to the public prevents the government from hiding problems from the people.¹⁵² Economically, democracies will make better trading partners and will produce fewer international emergencies that require a massive response from the world community.¹⁵³

Democracy is good for the world community because democracies generally do not go to war with each other.¹⁵⁴ The reason could be shared norms or internal institutional constraints found in democracies. States that resolve their internal conflicts with institutions have experience in conflict resolution that does not involve force.¹⁵⁵ The leadership must answer to the people and the checks and balances found within the government prevent the use of force without consultation.¹⁵⁶

Finally, the spread of democracy is good for the United States.¹⁵⁷ We will have fewer enemies if democracies tend to avoid going to war. Spreading democracy will assist our fight against global terrorism, because democratic governments will not support terrorist acts against the United States.¹⁵⁸ It will reduce the number of immigrations to the United States due to political reasons and the fleeing of refugees due to conditions caused by authoritarian or totalitarian regimes.¹⁵⁹ Democratic governments usually make better allies.¹⁶⁰ By adopting our ideals other democracies have common norms of behavior and values more like our own. Democracies are more likely to adopt market economies that will allow free trade which would be beneficial to the United States.¹⁶¹ The future of our nation and our relationship with the international community is tied with our ability to promote democracy without coercion and insistence that our model of democracy is the only choice for their country.

WORD COUNT=7,108

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