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**U.S. VICTORY IN THE FIRST GULF WAR: IMPLICATION
FOR THE FUTURE OF U.S. FOREIGN POLICY**

by

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December 2008

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THE FUTURE OF UNITED STATES FOREIGN POLICY**

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ABSTRACT

In 1991, the United States was at war — not as grand a war as the Second World War, but a significant war. This new war managed to form a coalition of many nations to fight Saddam Hussein's force and restore the ruling family of Kuwait. This thesis is an attempt to analyze whether the direct military involvement was a rational approach for the United States. The Bush administration crafted a plan that included a massive war coalition; it effectively outnumbered and overwhelmed the nearly one-million-strong enemy forces, and eventually increased the success of the coalition military mission. While the United States military strategies were successful in defeating the Iraqi forces in the Gulf War, this thesis will argue that, a decade or so from today, the way observers will perceive this event will depend in large part on whether a healthier relationship exists between the U.S. and the region at large. Clearly, much will depend on the extent to which the Gulf War diffused a crisis without producing another crisis.

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I. INTRODUCTION

In 1991, the United States was at war — not as grand a war as the Second World War, but nevertheless, a significant war. This new war managed to form a coalition of many nations to fight Saddam Hussein's force and restore the ruling family of Kuwait. This thesis is an attempt to analyze whether the direct military involvement was a rational approach for the United States. The Bush administration crafted a plan that included a massive war coalition; it effectively outnumbered and overwhelmed the nearly one-million-strong enemy forces, and eventually increased the success of the coalition military mission. While the United States military strategies were successful in defeating the Iraqi forces in the Gulf War, this thesis argues that, a decade or so from today, the way observers will perceive this event will depend in large part on whether a healthier relationship exists between the U.S. and the region at large. Clearly, much will depend on the extent to which the Gulf War diffused a crisis without producing to another crisis.

With the use of historical reports, this thesis attempts to investigate the following questions: Why were over thirty states needed to create the coalition partners, and how effective was this coalition to United States' war strategy? Was the policy that led to war positive or negative in regards to U.S. national interest, regional interests, or both, and why? Finally, almost two decades later, what is the U.S. doing or what should it start doing to make sure that, ten years from now, another conflict will not reignite in Iraq or the Gulf region in general?

The significance of this research is not to simply highlight the shortcomings of the United States' political or military strategy, but to help us better understand the crucial decisions that we as a nation made during the Gulf War. The research will, perhaps, help shed some light on how the time may have come for the United States to rethink its policy toward Iraq and many other nations of the region and elsewhere, in order to maintain long-term success. In other words, long gone is the era when America was considered a representative of freedom and democracy. The negative publicity generated

by U.S. foreign policy in the region is starting to define our identity, and I do not see that as being helpful to our future involvement, or even protecting our interests in that region and others.

The United States is the only remaining superpower in the world, but military superiority alone cannot and will not withstand the ever-changing world. It is, therefore, imperative that we analyze the history behind our foreign policy. Many Americans feel a responsibility to complain about the many shortcomings of their government, including military actions in Iraq, as well as the many negative aspects of the war. It is these reactions that makes this research so important in clarifying the facts. Television, newspapers, and the Internet have always been conducive to providing helpful information. Every now and then, however, one should be able to conduct an in-depth analysis of how U.S. foreign policy is implemented — in order to achieve a better understanding. It is this sort of information that motivates this research and makes it important. It will, hopefully, prove worthwhile in educating those of us who are part of the very instrument responsible for protecting the United States' interests around the world.

This thesis focuses on the coalition partners, especially the Arab states, and their role in the First Gulf War of 1991, both before the war and after the war. My hypothesis is that while the U.S. and coalition military operation was a success, the intention of the United States to liberate Kuwait and stop Saddam Hussein's threat to the region indirectly placed the United States in a position of playing the role of the "Big Brother." This role was more damaging to U.S. credibility as an advocate for peace and democracy; this is not to mention the respect that was desired in order to claim its position as a superpower.

It is an undeniable truth that our interest in the Gulf region is monumental, and our foreign policy in the region, Iraq in particular, is far from crystal clear. In fact, it is not an exaggeration to say that our foreign policy in the region is just as complex as the region itself. Additionally, the political ideologies of most Middle Eastern countries are not exactly compatible with those of the United States. The United States, however, is the main security guarantor — as we all witnessed during the Gulf War; furthermore,

positive political relations have always been a challenge. Therefore, while this study examines U.S. foreign policy leading to the First Gulf War, it also dissects the war strategy with U.S. national interests in mind.

The Gulf War was not just the United States' war; it was a war that included over thirty nations. One of the problems — the amount of military power used in comparison to Iraq's capability — was baffling. This thesis raises questions, such as why Kuwait did not follow the offers given by the late Iraqi leader to avoid invasion; how much of these war efforts were motivated by global economic interest; and finally, in the long run, could the shortcomings of United States foreign policy in the region have been more of a benefit to our national interest — or was it the other way around? With that in mind, the Gulf War never gave its critics the kind of victory they were looking for: Saddam was still in power and, be that as it may, the dictator was only contained. Therefore, the issues must be examined as a widespread field of information in order to honor the theme of this thesis. Solid information is needed to define the exact reason why the United States and its coalition partners claimed military victory in the Gulf War. The rationality or implication of U.S. foreign policy was debatable, however, because the United States played the role of a “Big Brother” instead of a partner, which in turn hindered the equilibrium in the region. There is more than one way to accomplish such a daunting task, and this research falls into that same predicament. Understanding the culture of the Middle East and its past political and economical history gives us clearer insights as to why this questionable policy occurred; one must examine how it really needs to change if the United States is to maintain its political clout and national interest.

It has been thought for many years that a critical U.S. civil-military assessment of the creation of the coalition against Iraq exists mainly to prevent the United States from repeating the mistakes of Vietnam war — a war that was still fresh in the minds of many Americans in 1991. The question of why it took over thirty nations to stand alongside the world's one and only standing superpower, and why it chose to stand up to Iraq and only Iraq, is in itself a controversial topic.

The Gulf War was, in fact, a legitimate war on all accounts; building a coalition to restore Kuwait sovereignty and protect Saudi Arabia from eventual Iraqi aggression made

it legitimate, both at home and within the international community. Therefore, this thesis examines the effectiveness of the coalition partners in particular as part of the United States' war strategy.

There has been chronological documentation, going back to the beginning of the 1950s, concerning the diplomatic affairs between the United States and the Gulf states. Both Cleveland's *A History of the Modern Middle East*¹ and Freedman's *The Gulf Conflict 1990-1991*² make clear emphases on historical activities leading up to what took place in the 1990s. While other authors used the comparative case study method to evaluate the war and the strategies implemented by the United States, most studies have concentrated on many different topics, such as operational planning, the politics between the ranks of U.S. Army officers, domestic politics, and, of course, the coalition's involvement, or its lack thereof.

While the majority of the reports emphasize the United States' position as a superpower and stress its influence on the coalition partners, Andrew Bennett, Joseph Leggold, and Danny Unger (1997) elaborate on the role of the coalition partners and how they should share the responsibility of the war effort.³ In the meantime, Gordon Michael and Trainor Bernard (1995) provide a detailed and analytical approach in the form of a story line. Their behind-the-scenes analyses are, without a doubt, an important report on the subject of the Gulf War.⁴

Although the studies are reliable historical documents, in their reporting, they seem to create a gap by downplaying the importance of the coalition partners' role in United States war strategy, which specifically called for Arab states to participate in the war effort. Researchers did a good job of explaining the events and the effect of the

¹ William Cleveland, *A History of the Modern Middle East* (United States: Westview Press, 2004), 193.

² Lawrence Freedman and Karsh Efraim, *The Gulf Conflict 1990-1991: Diplomacy and War in the New World Order* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993), 3-42.

³ Andrew Bennett, Joseph Leggold, and Danny Unger, *Friends In Need: Burden Sharing in the Persian Gulf* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), 3-36.

⁴ Michael Gordon and Trainor Bernard, *The General's War: The inside story of the conflict in the Gulf* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1995), 249-266.

American war plan. When it came to assessing why and how the coalition partners were effective, however, their research was not comprehensive. The study by Andrew Bennett, Joseph Lepage, and Danny Unger (1997) is informative in the sense that the authors go into great depth trying to explain the role of the coalition partners. They place so much emphasis on how the strongest member of the coalition was supported that it seems as though the whole burden was on the United States, while the presence of other coalition partners is hardly felt. Again, the emphasis on foreign policy is hardly mentioned in the lines of all of these credible reports. What is interesting is that they all seem to magnify the use of military force against Iraq as if this were a war between two equal powers. This thesis argues against this idea, emphasizing the weakness of Iraq when compared to the coalition forces. *A History of Iraq* by Charles Tripp and *What Went Wrong? The Clash between Islam and Modernity in the Middle East* by Bernard Lewis provides historical studies that clearly show the weakness of Iraqi politics. Although these two authors cover Iraq's complex history, Lewis tends to be more critical of the region in general while Tripp covers detailed historical events using a timeline leading to the First Gulf War.

In conclusion, the perspectives of the authors and some political leaders were divided between those who stress the importance of the coalition to the war effort and those who simply concentrated on U.S. war strategy, which included the coalition as a small part of the war effort. All in all, their arguments may have certain strengths, as well as weaknesses. Many of the researchers' perspectives provide a comprehensive and strong picture of the Gulf War, with a mindset to record events. Others went a little further in analyzing the events of the United States' war strategy. However, the research and the arguments of these authors are instrumental in the collection of necessary evidence, and they can lead to more research.

Overall, the multiple perspectives can be analyzed comparatively, and their differences can provide clarity as to whether the United States' foreign policy leading to the war was debatable or not. The bottom line is that in this thesis, it is my intention to identify the military success and foreign policy failure of the Gulf War in an unconventional way — through discovery, analysis, and critical observation.

The thesis uses the historical analysis method and relies on historical studies for evidence. Most researchers' studies examine historical events of the First Gulf War, while others examine issues of past events, going back as far as the Second World War. This thesis examines the historical literature leading to the First Gulf war as compared to the historical literature that followed soon afterwards. If we look at what is going on today in Iraq, it almost seems as though the inevitability of what was to happen was just that: inevitable. In short, this thesis uses historical documentation to clarify the political fallout of yesterday.

This thesis conducts a comparative study of the First Gulf War, analyzing how the situation leading to the war against Iraq in 1991 was viewed or seen through the eyes of the military, the civilian policy makers and, finally, the historians/observers of the First Gulf War.

As stated, the main objective of the thesis is to understand the direction of U.S. policy from the events surrounding the First Gulf War. The following chapters provide a logical framework toward that goal. The first chapter of this study presents the complex political history of Iraq leading up to the invasion of Kuwait. After all, Saddam's invasion of Kuwait did not occur in a vacuum, after all, and, according to history, Saddam Hussein had always felt that after the fall of the Ottoman Empire, the distribution of wealth did not favor Iraq greatly. Adding to his frustration, the Eight-Year War with Iran was a setback; the need for more oil revenue to pay for the war debt was critical.

The second chapter examines the use of military force by the United States, going back to the Second World War and the Vietnam War. The purpose is to examine the theories behind the rationality of the First Gulf War when compared to other wars in the past; moreover, it is important to see how and whether or not these conflicts are connected.

The third chapter concludes the study and furnishes a possible recommendation that might be helpful in supporting future United States foreign policy and protecting its national interests. Obviously, the Gulf War ended quickly, but its political fallout continues today. It is these fundamental ideas that we ought to consider. After all, it is

clear that we now have many independent nations that we did not have 40 years ago, and those nations are now a lot closer to each other than before. Therefore, it is very important that we have a clearer understanding of this global phenomenon in order to come up with a policy that might be effective. In other words, as the world changes, the U.S. simply cannot afford to depend on its own military might for respect. Only as a last resort should our military power be and continue to be the backbone of our diplomatic interaction. It is on these grounds that the U.S. should move on toward the art of partnership; that can only come about by avoiding bad policies such as the one that led the U.S. to the First Gulf War.

A. THE AUTHENTICITY OF OLD POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES

It is not my intention to raise any sort of conspiracy theory, but to point out how the world is changing, or not changing, and how political games are adapting to complex international relations. Thanks to globalization, civilizations are now a lot closer, and getting closer every day. In a world where the global market is the driving force behind a desirable way of living, political ideologies seem to be under the heavy influence of this global market, rather than consisting of the basic ingredients of the past; strategies that were used before will soon become useless. As the corporate world gets bigger and stronger, the authenticity of old political ideologies loses its ground more swiftly.

Indeed, I was not surprised to learn that communist China, which lends the U.S. nearly one trillion dollars annually, managed to entertain both the United States president and the former Russian president, and current Prime Minister Putin in a remarkable setting at the Olympic ceremony. One can only wonder if the Russian invasion of Georgia on August 9, 2008, evoked the same emotions from our leaders as it might have in the mind of an average man such as myself. It made one thing clear to me, however, and that is, as previously stated, the old political ideologies are just a smokescreen to help maintain political legitimacy. In other words, while this study examines the history of the Middle East and Iraq's complex social and political history, its purpose is to elaborate on the fact that situations such as the Gulf War of 1990-91 did not happen in a vacuum. Just as the United States' reactionary response to the invasion of Kuwait was not accidental, it

was also an action that the U.S could not have taken otherwise. The bottom line is that “preemptive intervention” is well rooted in American foreign policy; Saddam’s invasion of Kuwait, mixed with the social and political weakness of the Middle East, was a situation that gave the United States a chance to behave as it has always behaved. As John Lewis Gaddis writes: “Concerns about ‘failed’ or derelict states, then, are nothing new in the history of United States foreign relations, nor are strategies of preemption in dealing with them.”⁵ Therefore, knowing what we know today, one can assume that what had happened in 1991 was just another scenario, identical to what has happened in the past. Understandably, academics like to recommend placing a question mark behind every “conventional wisdom.” Eliminating conventional wisdom in analyzing the Gulf War, however, could only mean one thing: ignoring the history of the Middle East and, most importantly, denying the identification of the United States’ identity in how it has always responded to conflicts such as the situation of the invasion of Kuwait, the U.S. has threatened its own national interests in more ways than one. Therefore, it is crucial that the study dig into the fiasco of yesterday’s Middle East, as well as Iraq’s cultural and sociopolitical dilemma.

As stated previously, this information should not be new to anyone, but it should be appreciated for its twists and turns, and the excitement that it might add to the roller coaster of today’s politics. I mean no disrespect to any individual or groups as I go on to say that it was the history of corruption and political incompetence of the past that is affecting Iraq and the Middle East today. It has reached a point where it is becoming almost impossible to separate the Middle East from terrorism, or any negative connotation for that matter. As suggested earlier, we can no longer blame any individual or nation for the world’s problems; however, that does not deter me from examining the facts that led to all of these conundrums.

⁵John Lewis Gaddis, *Surprise, Security, and the American Experience* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 21.

B. THE MIDDLE EAST'S CULTURAL AND SOCIOPOLITICAL DILEMMA

It is easy to wake someone who is sleeping. As for awakening someone who is pretending to be sleeping, the task is much harder — if even possible. The powerful few of the Middle Eastern societies might have known all along what was needed to modernize their societies, just as they should know how to do so today. Perhaps, it is the only way they knew to operate a corrupt government: by keeping power and wealth in the hands of the few and their family members, and religion in the hands of a selfish few, to rule the unenlightened many. This has produced similar experiences that the Middle East has faced before and is still facing today. In the book, *What Went Wrong? The Clash Between Islam and Modernity in the Middle East*, Bernard Lewis clarifies a predicament that could not have been identified otherwise:

I use this expression without intending any disrespect — of Islam, Christianity, and Judaism. The children of Israel fled from bondage, and wandered for 40 years in the wilderness before they were permitted to enter the Promised Land. Their leader Moses had only a glimpse, and was not himself permitted to enter. Jesus was humiliated and crucified, and his followers suffered persecution and martyrdom for centuries, before they were finally able to win over the ruler, and to adapt the state, its language, and its institutions to their purpose. Muhammad achieved victory and created his own state, of which he himself was supreme sovereign. As such, he promulgated laws, dispensed justice, levied taxes, raised armies, made war, and made peace. In a word, he ruled and the story of his decisions and actions as ruler is sanctified in Muslim scripture and amplified in Muslim tradition.⁶

A careful observation of the previous statement alone can answer many questions and maybe even eliminate all of the confusion that is puzzling the U.S. as it tries to understand the current situation in Iraq. Many of our leaders, both military and civilian, are in the war zone trying to install democracy; with a great deal of luck, perhaps even a functioning government can bring about peace and stability to this nation that has been a victim of both worlds.

⁶ Bernard Lewis, *What Went Wrong? The Clash Between Islam and Modernity in the Middle East* (New York: Harper Collins, 2003), 100-101.

It is also very important for this research to clarify that the aim is not intended to bash Islam or Muslims in any way or form. Unfortunately, Islam and many Muslims have been viewed negatively by the selfish few, for whatever reason, at the expense of the many Muslims who have no business in the dirty politics of most Middle Eastern leaders. As will be explained in the coming pages, religion has always been an important part of politics; if not the main course in political affairs, it is definitely a significant side dish. In the Middle East, Islam is not just a religion, but the centerpiece of what is at the core of what defines the region. In this research, I introduce Islam as one ingredient of the many ingredients that might have helped create the situation of 1990. Besides, under the pretext of religion in general, and according to Scott Atran, the author of *In God We Trust*, as for religion in “socio-economic function...it’s a friend of fascism. It’s foe of communism. It’s the spirit of capitalism. It’s whatever money can’t buy.”⁷ Needless to say, in the oil-rich environment of the Middle East, Islam is just the right catalyst needed to keep the necessary condition vibrant. And, because the global market is linked to the resources of the region, then the manifesting of external forces in internal strife is unavoidable.

Yes, internal contradictions and questionable interpretations of Qur’anic verses of this monotheistic religion might have been the greatest challenge, and perhaps even conveniently harmful to Islam and Muslims, as pressure from external forces increased. Here, the external force is mainly the West; that does not mean that the West is the main cause of the internal strife, but perhaps an active participant in the conundrum that keeps the internal flame burning.

As we look closely into what goes on in politics, especially with the enmeshed global market, we find that the mixture of good and bad can bring out a vibrant energy into this market that consistently seeks rejuvenation. This forces one to wonder if religion is even a factor, beyond what seems to be a smokescreen to help generate a condition that eventually ends up benefiting those who created it in the first place—all at the expense of the average Muslim who willingly accepts things at face value. Eventually, this results in some sort of crises. What is interesting is that it is not a situation that is impossible to

⁷ Scott Atran, *In God We Trust: The Evolutionary Landscape of Religion* (London: Oxford University Press, 2002), 7.

control. So, why not control it? The best answer to this question is another question: Why change? Who is truly suffering and who is benefiting from all of this internal strife? For example, the Wahhabi Muslims of Saudi Arabia are flexing their muscles with strict religious regulations over the subjects of the King. And they are doing so with the financial support of the royal family, which was getting ready to sign a “\$20 billion”⁸ arms deal with the United States in order to protect itself from a possible threat of any sort. This is exactly the time when one should start to wonder again if religion is a real concern or if it is being used as an invisible chain to keep the society in check? It is not an exaggeration to say that Islam, with all of its sacred Qu’ranic verses and the additional fatwas, has been conveniently the most powerful weapon used to control the majority of Muslims of the Middle East along with the support of external forces. And, yes, the effect of external forces might not be direct all the time, but indirect involvement is just as effective.

The goal of this research is not to put blame on any one nation or society, but to examine the relationships and actors who are at the center of today’s Islam/Muslim complex image; history happens to be the best witness to it all. Therefore, we must always keep in mind that no nation crosses its borders without its own interest in mind, and sometimes these interests come at the cost of internal peace, such is the situation in the Middle East today.

Separating Islam from the Middle East is hard to fathom, if at all possible. Yes, there is a reason why we do not hear about Norway’s oil wealth as much as we hear about that wealth of the Middle East. I say this simply: Crises ignite better when religion, tradition, and politics are intertwined, and that is not the case in Norway, but it is in the Middle East.

Today, our definition of Islam and Muslims takes an interesting shape, and if we are studying it and reading about it, more than likely it is because we are part of the complexity. As Tibi Bassam writes, “Islam is a religious belief, not an ideology... Ideologies do not fall from the heaven, and they do not stand in isolation. They are

⁸ David S. Cloud, *U.S. Set to offer Huge Arms Deal to Saudi Arabia* (New York: New York Times, 2007), NYTimes.com.

always articulations of specific historical conditions.”⁹ And, if we go back in history as far as the 1920s, when oil was starting to become an important commodity, there you will find the British Empire’s sophisticated methods, ruthless at times, that were used to accumulate wealth, power, land, and more. If Islam was the soft spot in exploiting the Middle East’s unguarded resource, then faith has transformed itself into ideology. Over time, with the help of a few selfish leaders of the Middle East, Islam has become the ingredient of choice for controlling a society; it was also a necessary enemy of the external forces, as needed.

In terms of being a necessary enemy, it is very easy to associate it with one group, under the cloak of their own faith: Islam. This association can manipulate or influence a group’s interest, and that has been seen as the Jihad, which carries the so-called phrase “holy war.” Our whole discussion then will be to investigate to what extent the holy war is holy, and who or what forces are benefitting from it. One’s conclusion then would determine that this holy war, unfortunately, has become in today’s world the real instrument of the old British Empire policy of “divide and conquer.” Here one can see a crystal clear picture of how and why the external force of a dominating nation has intensified in order to keep the flame of internal strife alive. How easily we forget that the Jihad that we are so concerned with was supported mainly by the United States and Saudi Arabia at the end of 1970s. “In a region shaken to its foundations by the ongoing chaos in Iran, Pakistan became the strategic hub of American policy and the beneficiary of the fourth largest foreign aid package voted annually by Congress...By 1982, the Jihad was receiving \$600 million in U.S. aid per year, with a matching amount coming from the Gulf States.”¹⁰ Yes, the manifestation of external force in internal strife continues not because we love problems but because we are not part of the solution. Here no one is without a dirty hand except the poor people who believe blindly. Before we get carried away here, let us look at each other, those of us with a master’s degree in the making; most of us are just as blind as any of the average Muslims in Saudi Arabia who do not

⁹ Bassam Tibi, *The Challenge of Fundamentalism: Political Islam and the New World Disorder* (Berkeley California: University of California Press, 1998), 139.

¹⁰ Gilles Kepel, *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2000), 143.

have a clear understanding of why the Western “guest workers” are living in isolated compounds. The nationals are told by their leaders that the non-Muslims, or Americans for that matter, are infidels; if we assume that Jihad is what Islam is all about, then we are just as clueless, not to mention politically retarded. Yes, if we are not part of the solution, we must be part of the problem. And so, the internal strife continues.

Today, too many of us here in America, especially after the end of the Cold War and as recently as September 11, 2001, sadly believe that the definition of Islam is one Muslim man, Osama bin Laden, with an unknown number of followers, claimed to be living in a cave somewhere in the mountains of Pakistan or Afghanistan; he is the man who somehow finds a way to tell his enemy that he is alive and well by using technology of some sort; and he has somehow managed to implant fear and terror into the heart of the one and only standing Superpower. Islam is Saddam Hussein, the Sunni Muslim leader in predominantly Shi’ Iraq who stood up against the United States of America and its thirty-plus coalition partners during the Gulf War, and who held power for over a decade thereafter. Islam is the terrorist who killed so many Americans on September 11, 2001. Islam is also the kid throwing rocks at an Israeli tank. Islam is the woman, veiled from head to toe, in the streets of Saudi Arabia. Islam is the green bandana of terror. Yes, that is the Islam most of us have accepted as true. And yes, it is easier to dislike it that way, as it was made to sound like it is in need of cleaning and modernizing. These are not the definitions of Islam, nor of the Middle East. Are they, however, the perfect ingredients necessary for the fabrication of make-believe reality in order to reach a goal? The fact is that we could have used any words, such as communism, cold war, or any other term, to designate a name for the product to make it sound logical when persuading an audience of choice. It is an art of manipulation that has proved to work in the past and is still working today.

Additionally, the intention here is not to persuade the reader to believe that the Qur’an might have been the best religious book to fall into the wrong hands, nor to demonstrate how this colorful monotheistic religion is compassionate, nor to show the close resemblance between Christianity and Judaism. My motive is to present information that one might call a burst of spectator reaction to the performance of

modern-day world politics. This is not a new subject to many of us; Islam and the Middle East have been a popular topic in America and in world news for many years. What this thesis will do, however, is help clarify what might be the root cause behind the entire harmful layer of false definition that is shadowing Islam and the Middle East, and perhaps even religion in general. Therefore, it is very critical that the pages of this study present the weak political and social history of the Middle East and the timeless Iraqi political crises in order to give a clear view of how the external powers might be a problem for today's Islam and Muslims. Perhaps these two important points can explain the issue with a little twist that is more logical; for once we can try to prove that the home territory of the latest prophet is just a foible of yesterday's lack of good judgment, and today's guardian of self-interest.

With that said, logically speaking, Bernard Lewis's question should have been an eye opener for the many Islamic states, and also for the United States as it designs its policy. He does not have any hidden agenda in his scripted message; all he is trying to tell the reader is that the Middle East was looking for a solution when they never clearly understood a question that was never there from the start. It is really a great example of a society that was chasing the wind; with great regret, I would say that they are still chasing that same empty dream, a dream that got them nowhere in the past. It is clear that they were paying so much attention to European society that they forgot who they were. And, as they kept trying so hard to imitate the West, their dependence on the West grew more and more to the point that they fell under total control of the West.

The Middle East was not always like the region of the world that many of us know today. In fact, at one time it was the center of great promise, and it was even the only competition to the superiority of the West. Of course, we cannot deny the fact that they were outsmarted by the West, which has always been motivated by self-interest at any cost, including deception. As the great theorist Machiavelli would say, "One who deceives will always find those who allow themselves to be deceived."¹¹ That is exactly what might have happened to the Islamic states when they opened their doors wide,

¹¹ Machiavelli, quoted in Richard K. Betts, *Conflict After The Cold War: Arguments On Causes Of War and Peace* (New York: Pearson Education, Inc. 2008), 64.

without regard to what the intention of the intruder might have been. This is not to say that Europe was closed to the Islamic states; there were many chances to send as many people there as they wanted, as ambassadors and students. For some reason, religion being one, however, Arab leaders created limitations on how to advance and what was needed to do so. The Europeans came to the Middle East and North Africa, and they were good at picking what they wanted and avoiding what they thought was not conducive to benefitting them in building political and economical interest; it was always the strong minds of European observers who helped the West to become the power that is admired today. As for the Middle East, it was a lack of judgment; purposefully ignoring intellectual growth; the failure “of an efficient bureaucratic administration in which appointment and promotion are by merit and qualification rather than by patronage and favor;”¹² the failure to print important books; not taking advantage of the clock a lot sooner; and finally, failure to adopt secularism. These mistakes might have caused the delay and obstruction to modernization.

Religion in the West, especially Protestant Christianity, was more of an asset than a hindrance to political and economic stability. Regrettably, like any other religion of the world, it has its own strengths and weaknesses, but the bottom line is that it kept moving toward the improvement of the societies that adopted it. Compare this to Islam, where it is still dragging a lot slower toward what we in the West, and even others in the Middle East, consider improvement. The Christian West did not care about who was a believer and who was not; it simply concentrated on the prize, whatever that might be. When it was critical to use slavery to boost its economy, the West used it; when women were needed to help, the West allowed them to roll up their sleeves; hence, the move forward just kept accelerating.

Bernard Lewis is not saying that the West was and is more perfect than the Middle East; he is just telling a story that was the product of intense research, and for fairness' sake, he even informs us that “the difference between the Middle Eastern and Western economic approaches can be seen even in their distinctive forms of corruption,

¹² Lewis, *What Went Wrong?* 47.

from which neither society is exempt. In the West, one makes money in the market, and uses it to buy or influence power. In the East, one seizes power, and uses it to make money.”¹³ Neither side is going to lead us to heaven; it just shows us that Western corruption is more cooperative and its perpetrators are active members of the majority, which is not so corrupt.

The Middle Eastern countries have no one to blame but themselves because, “unlike the rising powers of Asia, most of which started with a lower economic base than that of the Middle East, the countries in the region still lag behind in investment, job creation, productivity, and therefore in export and income.”¹⁴ What this means is that the wealth of the powerful can only be invested outside of the region in the more developed countries of infidels (Westerners, in the eyes of the few Muslim leaders). It is hard to implement patriotism and nationalism while living in two worlds and perfecting hypocrisy, or so it seems.

This kind of thinking can only be looked at negatively in the eyes of those who are benefitting from the dilemma that we are facing in the Middle East. Western culture is not a stationary culture; it is always on the move, and convenience is its main motivating factor. To avoid it is to fall behind in more ways than one. The power of the English language goes far beyond verbal communication; it is the engine of advancement in every aspect. The arts and the music of the Western world should never be ignored, because it is in them that one finds the growth of intellectualism, which tends to shape communal activities, and is the vehicle for spreading a message indirectly to an audience of choice. Therefore, the legitimacy of any nation can easily develop and maintain a strong central government by balancing the social, religious, and political activities of that particular nation.

The Middle East cannot, and should not, blame the West for anything; the West is always going to do what it always has done, and that is to pursue its interests in order to sustain its economy and political power, by any means necessary. The failure of the

¹³Lewis, *What Went Wrong?* 63.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 47.

Middle East seems to have been and continues to be an advantage to the West, because of dependencies of all sorts; this translates into being controlled unconditionally. Until the Middle East chooses to clean up its most corrupted political and economical systems and improve self-sufficiency, what was always wrong will continue to be wrong. The blame game can only help to recruit the financially and intellectually deprived citizens to aim their attack toward the make-believe enemy, which in this case is the West. Finally, if information such as this is rejected, it can only mean one thing: History will continue to repeat itself.

It is very hard for people to comprehend the message behind Bernard Lewis's clean-cut statements; after all, we live in a society that is so taken and deeply controlled by the concept of political correctness that we are unintentionally becoming liars. The sad news is that, after a while, no one knows the difference between fact and fiction, as they should, simply because sugarcoating has become the norm to live by as part of our communal living. So, if we are saturated with such a dilemma of political correctness, how do we answer questions that ask: Why is Islam at the center of attention and why is it gaining almost equal notoriety as communism did a few decades ago? One might say that it was mostly accidental, but then again that is just a hypocritical way of looking at it; in reality, it seems that most political accidents are well crafted in advance. As long as we are involved in the world of politics, and no matter how one wants to look at it, the game of politics is dirty — and dirtier when religion is included. Does the current situation in Iraq sound familiar?

C. IRAQ'S UNSTABLE POLITICAL HISTORY

Iraq is just a small and recent sample of what has been going on in the Middle East for many years. It would be difficult for anyone with even a minimal education not to feel somewhat puzzled by the crisis in Iraq and, believe it or not, it is nearly impossible to avoid. The information superhighway is moving at unbelievable speed and is increasing its traffic all around the world. There is, without a doubt, unlimited, 24 hours a day, seven days a week of bombardment. For this very reason, it is in one's interest not to assume that the world is well informed about Iraqi politics and that the effects are felt not

only by the people of Iraq, but by many others as well. I believe that information is just like salt in your food: it can only be consumed when the right quantity and quality are present. Otherwise, there is no value to the product at hand. With this in mind, I can say that not many of us are ready to take an active part in a panel that speaks with confidence about what is really going on in Iraq. We hear so much about Iraq from so many different sources and, sadly, not everything we hear can be assumed as true; for a careful observer, false information usually does not fall too far from the truth. Accuracy might not be there, but it is a hint that requires further investigation.

Let us now review in brief a re-cap of some historical events of twentieth century Iraq. The early 1900s brought about the formation of many different political organizations that were bred from the three Mesopotamian provinces. It was also the beginning of the end of the Ottoman Empire. Perhaps it was this period of total confusion and interdependence that helped shape what was to become the state of Iraq. “However, events elsewhere were taking a course that would have a lasting impact on the three provinces, paving the way for their eventual incorporation into the new state of Iraq.”¹⁵ Therefore, it was easier for the British, after they eliminated the Ottoman rule, just to turn around and take over the three provinces that formed Iraq under the League of Nations Mandate. Starting in 1919, and on into 1920, as Britain kept implementing its plans for Iraq, the dissatisfaction among the Sunni Arabs and Shi’i mujtahids was increasing, resulting in an armed revolt that claimed the lives of many Iraqis, as well as British soldiers.

In 1920, in order to stop the revolt, the British government set up a government with the minority Sunni Arabs in power. While scholars such as Charles Tripp claim that the Sunnis were more qualified to lead because of the experience they had working under the Ottoman administration, I say that it was clearly not the case. The Shi’ were larger in number and they were the ones who started the anti-British revolt; so the smart thing for the administration to do would have been to put the minority in power to keep them permanently dependent. In addition, to make sure that the British interest remained intact

¹⁵ Charles Tripp, *A History of Iraq* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 29.

during the Cairo Conference in 1921, “the decision was taken to establish a kingdom of Iraq and to offer the throne to the Hashemite Amir Faisal.”¹⁶ Furthermore, Iraq’s problem continued to gain momentum with Amir Faisal as the crown tool for the British, as they controlled the oil wealth of Iraq. The British-supported Hashemite Monarchy under King Faisal came to an end in 1933, only to be replaced by his son Ghazi. King Ghazi, with little interest in politics, ruled Iraq for six years. Unlike his father, he did not continue to support the British activity in Iraq, and “like many in Iraq, he also resented British domination.”¹⁷ By creating the animosity with the British, surrounded by an unhappy Shi’ite majority, “the circle of royal patronage” was soon faced with the inevitable; unrest broke out, and the leader was none other than Ayatollah Muhammad Kashif al-Ghita. The politically motivated unrest prevailed throughout the late 1930s and continued through the 1940s, which, together with the Kurdish people’s uproar, created even more instability.

In the late 1950s, Iraq’s political picture looked as though it was heading toward a liberal and democratic system — but not quite. “Instead, Iraqis found themselves subject to the command of individuals, more or less skilled at manipulating systems of patronage and coercion, who exercised a power greater than any enjoyed by the politicians under the monarchy.”¹⁸ Violence was always at the ready, and the central government, with its ministry of interior, managed to keep order; but that did not mean peace by any means.

Clearly, the oil revenue did give the government a huge advantage in shaping the decade of the 1950s the way it did. But, unlike many Gulf countries where an oil economy demonstrated a lavish lifestyle and political stability of some sort, for Iraq, oil revenue was more of a curse than a promise for the average Iraqi. Moreover, as the price of oil kept moving up, so did the political elites, and, as one can imagine, “this was a recipe for a thoroughgoing patrimonialism in which the underlying social and economic inequality would remain unchallenged.”¹⁹

¹⁶ Tripp, *A History of Iraq*, 47.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 81.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 149.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 139.

The evidence is clear: many changes did take place in the political arena, and recorded history tells us that Iraqi political transformation was always coercive and would fall far short of a peaceful resolution of any sort. The political energy of the Iraqi people has always been on the move; these were dispirited people willing to try anything. Some changes were positive, like the empowerment of women in the arena of Iraqi politics, which was unique to the region at the time. Sadly, they were all short-lived dreams that led to more political unrest. We cannot ignore the fact, however, that it was in the 1960s that Iraq seemed to look more like a legitimate state heading toward economic stability under the influence of the Nasserists and pan-Arabists. In the 1970s, the rise of oil revenues helped increase the control that was needed for the government officials to forcefully demand obedience; as one can imagine, this led to many arrests of those who were labeled a threat to the regime. As for the following decade, the Kurdish, and Shi' struggle kept the fire going, and there was still more oil revenue to support the ever-growing military muscle of the Ba'thists. With the main players of the party, including Saddam Hussein, the Ba'th party dominated in all aspects of the state. This meant that if one could not play by the Ba'th party's rules, the only option to avoid death or imprisonment was to cross the border to Iran, "which was now to become the chief focus of the Iraqi government's attention."²⁰ Ironically, the most legitimate government of Iraq was under Saddam Hussein — legitimate in a sense that Iraq was on its way to a promising future that no other Gulf nation could have ever imagined. Saddam was the only ruler who faced serious challenges, such as the Eight Year War and the Gulf War in 1991 against the world's only superpower and its coalition members, and he still persisted as the most powerful Arab leader. Iraq would have had a better chance of economic growth and stability under Saddam's regime had he not invaded Kuwait.

It can be said that Iraq was and is the victim of its own poor judgment, and that it continues to be what it always has been. First, clan-based political rulers were active then and now. Second, oil politics might have helped in gaining autonomy, but it might have also invited the situation at hand now. Lastly, as we witness the chaos today in Iraq, the

²⁰ Tripp, *A History of Iraq*, 230.

violence is just a continuation of the complex Iraqi politics of the past. As if politics were not enough of a challenge, Sunni and Shi' problems only added fuel to the fire and it continues to burn, even to this day.

This complex baggage must have been totally undermined by the policy makers in the U.S. when America went to war in 1991. The platform was inviting. One can even say that what Saddam did mixed with the reputation of the region, and was an absolute relevance for the United States and its allies to take action against the dictator. The problem was the choreography; how it played out was wrong and irrational. Yes, the United States and its coalition members were victorious, but, as explained in depth in the next chapter, the First Gulf War victory was a military victory and only a military victory, because we failed diplomatically. To the military commanders, the Gulf War was a mission to be won, and in four weeks, that is exactly what they accomplished. To the historian/observer, not to exclude the military leaders, the Gulf War was a mistake in the making, as evidenced by the fact that we are still fighting a war that we started in 1991.

D. NO ONE NATION TAKES ALL THE BLAME

Most of us would like to call ourselves civilized and live a life that is considered modest and guided by core values that are, overall, well received by our community. No one in his/her mind, however, can claim to be perfect. With that said, no one should expect our government, or any government for that matter, to be perfect. This is because a government is an institution made up of the same people who proudly claim that they are not perfect. Perhaps now we can clarify that the Gulf War was a war consisting of limited decisions made by a few people on both sides of the conflict. Why not? The average Iraqi did not know much about the New World Order, nor did the average American for that matter. All of the complexity reported in previous pages is mostly intended not for the average citizen of the Middle East/Iraq nor the average citizen here in the United States; it is the result of the forces of the ruling elite who are either elected to the position or, like many in the Middle East, who came to power by force.

Therefore, as this research navigates through the scenario of the Gulf War, it is crucial to clarify who the real actors are. When one understands the historical facts that

led to the Gulf War, it is easier to determine whether the reason the international community went to war against one nation was rational or irrational. Moreover, the fact that the United Nations was involved in this scenario does not guarantee rationality, because, when members deviate from what the UN really stands for, then the UN does not mean anything, nor can it function as it was intended. After all, “the United Nations depends on agreement among members of the Security Council if there is to be any action.”²¹ One can run around all day preaching that democracy always prevails at the UN, but in reality, the democracy of “one man one vote” is just a theory; in the world of the *haves* and *have-nots*, it is the *haves* that influence the actions of both parties. This does not suggest that the *have-nots* are powerless, but it does indicate that no one nation or group of people should shoulder the total blame for the world crisis. The matter of the fact is that, as globalization spreads, the blame game is shared by all, either directly or indirectly.

²¹ Lawrence Freedman and Efraim Karsh, *The Gulf Conflict 1990-1991: Diplomacy and War in the New World Order* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993), xxix.

II. THE FIRST GULF WAR

A snake is very dangerous, but to a careful farmer, a snake is a good pesticide. Therefore, as long as it does not affect the farmer's safety, the snake is not a danger to him/her, but a fantastic enemy to the insects that are harmful to the farm. This kind of rational thinking in international relations is called, "the enemy of my enemy is my friend." Saddam Hussein was that snake when Iran was the major concern for United States interest during the rule of the Ayatollah Khomeini. Just like the farmer would kill the snake if the snake were more of a threat to the safety of the farmer than a benefit, so would the United States when its interest is threatened. One might ask what our interest is. Well, that is exactly what we heard about during the presidential election of 2008 as the U.S. was handing out billions of dollars to people who hate us. It is funny how it works, but it was to protect those people who hate us that we went to war in 1991.

It is a great discomfort for many when psychology is used to explain a point, but it should be easy because wars and the like seem to always dance in the realm of the unbalanced emotions — mostly uncertain, and so well connected to fear, an emotion war cannot live without. Surprising, yes, but are we not concerned with radical Islam today just as we were with communism during the Cold War? In addition, the political vaccine can only be generated from the source of what the First Gulf War was all about. Otherwise, if history keeps repeating itself as it has since WWII, then Iraq is just one on the list of many to follow. Either we change our habits or the international community changes our habits for us.

It is also very crucial that this study highlight the ingredients that legitimize the First Gulf War by comparing it to the Second World War for reasons of clarity, which many consider legitimate. The comparative method creates an understanding of a comprehensive trend toward United States identity when it comes to why we go to war. Hence, the war scenario becomes the skeleton that supports the very characteristics of the U.S. and why it is the power that it is. Moreover, if we are to predict the future of the

United States foreign relations agenda as a result of the First Gulf War, then it helps to make a comparative analysis of the war itself.

With that said, let me say (very carefully rather than sarcastically) that, because of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, the U.S. created a major concern for itself and, later, the coalition partners. Therefore, upon the invasion, Operation Desert Shield was created in order to defend Saudi Arabia. There was also rising speculation that Saddam was on a mission to exert his influence over the Persian Gulf and to control the region under a unified Arab state, with Iraq in the center.

Saddam Hussein had always felt that after the fall of the Ottoman Empire, the distribution of wealth did not favor Iraq. Adding to his frustration, the Eight-year war with Iran was a setback; the need for more oil revenue to pay for the war debt was critical. He was a man with a great ego, a man on a mission, and a major threat to the weak neighboring states.

Indeed, he had the most powerful military in the Gulf region, and the invasion of Kuwait in order to increase his dominance over the oil economy might have been ideal in his mind; according to the rest of the world, however, it was a huge mistake. He must have miscalculated the economic connections that existed between Kuwait and the West; moreover, it was hard to predict that over 30 countries would join forces to go after him. The United States has the upper hand in the global market and Kuwait is a strong participant as one supplier state, so it is no surprise that Kuwait was not worried about its security, and there was no need for Kuwait to be fearful of Saddam Husain's threat. Moreover, as it was demonstrated clearly after the invasion, the ruling family of Kuwait was hiding in some of the best hotels in Saudi Arabia, while the American-led coalition provided the military force that freed Kuwait.

A. GULF WAR COALITION PARTNERS

Legally, the U.S. could have easily done a lot of damage under the United Nations (UN) Security Council article 51 "of the UN Charter, which affirms the inherent right of

individual or collective self-defense.”²² But it was the diplomatic superiority that was needed most in order to make sure that the war did not seem as if America and the West were against the Arab states. Perhaps, through the UN Security Council, the creation of the coalition might have eased the work for the U.S. in imposing the trade embargo and stopping Saddam Hussein from protracting the war for many years. With that in mind, this study argues that the coalition partners proved to be more of an asset than a constraint to effective U.S. strategy during the Gulf War.

Operation Desert Shield’s main goal was to protect Saudi Arabia from Iraqi aggression. So, by October 1990, assuming that Saddam was not going to stop at Kuwait, the United States had sent 200,000 troops to Saudi Arabia. Overall, the U.S. had 500,000 troops on the ground with more than 30 countries participating, forming a combined total of 245,000 troops and at a cost of over \$60 billion. The major financial contributions came from Germany, Japan, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait. The large military contributions came from Britain, France, Egypt, and others. “It was the widest, most geopolitically disparate military coalition in history.”²³

There was no doubt in anyone’s mind that the United States could have destroyed Saddam’s military, without any other nation’s help. Also, perhaps, U.S. air superiority alone could have been enough, not to mention the fact that there were six U.S. Navy carrier battle groups and 500,000 troops at the ready with the world’s finest and latest weapons. The intention was not to flex its military power, but to protect its vital interests. With that in mind, building the coalition met the Bush administrations’ objectives of securing financial contributions for a military buildup and helping to compensate the weaker coalition members for their economic losses; the second objective was to secure military contributions, which included 245,000 coalition troops, and to deploy a 14-country naval force in order to enforce the UN sanctions and to protect Saudi Arabia.

The aggression that was committed by Saddam made it easier to build a coalition of this magnitude. Indeed, the cooperation between the Gulf countries and the U.S. was

²² Freedman and Efraim, *The Gulf Conflict 1990-1991*, 144.

²³ Andrew Bennett, Joseph Leggold, and Danny Unger, *Friends In Need: Burden Sharing in the Persian Gulf* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1997), 4.

just a continuation of prior history. Since the 1950s, billions of dollars in security aid had gone to Egypt. Countries like Qatar, Bahrain, Oman, the United Arab Emirates, and Kuwait have also been favored customers of the U.S. In the 1970s, Saudi Arabia purchased military equipment at a hefty price, and it was the United States' key trade partner in the region.

Building the coalition helped the United States fight for a cause that was validated by many nations; the Bush administration won congressional support, which helped increase the political capital on the home front; it also gained political backing in the Middle East. The support of all these countries came in handy for the U.S.; we now had the advantage and could control the political clout in the region, which expedited the punishment of Iraq through the United Nations' resolutions and decreased Iraq's military activity. The UN passed over a dozen Security Council resolutions between 1990 and 1991, which required the blessings of all the coalition partners. Therefore, "multilateral assistance was almost as important to winning the war as it was to getting in position to win it. Although U.S. forces made up the bulk of coalition land, air, and naval units, other countries played important political as well as military roles in the war."²⁴

Sadly, whenever two or more nations come to work together, one cannot expect perfection. Therefore, the coalition was also a constraint on U.S. strategy; when the United States wanted to "limit Arab condemnation of its military intervention in Arabia, the United States sought to persuade Arab countries outside the Gulf to support Operation Desert Shield. The Arab response to the U.S. diplomatic initiatives was divided."²⁵

One must keep in mind that the cultural and political differences between the U.S. and most Arab states are not compatible, at least not on the surface. The ruling officials of these societies have to walk that fine line in bringing everyone onto the same page, and that can be time-consuming. The U.S. had to assume the leadership position at every level. For example, Saudi Arabia was an important coalition partner in a key

²⁴ Michael J. Mazarr, Don M. Snider, James J. Blackwell, *Desert Storm: The Gulf War and What We Learned* (San Francisco: Westview Press, 1993), 135.

²⁵ William L. Cleveland, *A History of the Modern Middle East* (United States and United Kingdom: Westview Press, 2004), 481.

geographical position, but having “Christian” America so close to the holiest Muslim city was a challenge. For the United States, it was a political challenge because Saudi Arabia is not exactly the model of democracy in the region, and that was definitely a challenge for U.S. political ideology and image. It was not easy to work with Arab countries that liked the American support but wanted the Americans to keep a low profile. Unlike Europe during WWII, when the American presence was admired and even celebrated at times, the Gulf was a different place with different cultures, religion, and ideologies.

Not every nation in the coalition was capable of giving an equal amount of support and, in return, that could have created a burden to U.S. strategy. In the case of Syria and France, they were a constraint because of their “half-hearted” support to the cause. When the war approached, “the Syrians got cold feet and CENTCOM cast them in a reserve role. The role of the Syrian army was so minimal, Schwarzkopf recalled, that he met the Syrian commander only one time, and that was for a photo op.”²⁶ When United States asked for over-flight rights for the missiles fired from the naval forces stationed in the Mediterranean, the response was time-consuming and negative. Therefore, it can be said that Syria was a coalition partner that was kept for political reasons only.

The French had a problem operating under CENTCOM and, because of that, they conducted only a limited air campaign, which created problems with coordination. The Iraqi military, especially the air force, was equipped with Soviet and French technology; this was an obstacle for coalition forces in identifying friend or foe.

The American side was not happy about the peacekeeping game the Soviet Union played, because it was simply a waste of time. In the diplomatic arena, “The French and Egyptian appeals were kept under wraps, but the Russian peace initiative risked a split in the coalition just as the war was reaching its denouement.”²⁷

For some Arab nations, the war was more of an opportunity to profit economically than just to help the team. They took advantage of the situation, and the

²⁶ Michael R. Gordon, and Bernard Trainor, *The General's War: The inside story of the conflict in the Gulf* (Boston, New York and London: Little, Brown and Company), 253.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 334.

U.S. extended its support to gain political support in return. Of course, one cannot really expect all members to sacrifice equally, because the Iraq war did not burden each coalition member equally. Therefore, the nations that were affected more should have given more; but then again, because of a global economy, it is hard for any one nation not to feel the effect equally. The U.S. has the most powerful economy; so many nations must have felt they had to dance to the same music, regardless;

What is at stake is more than one small country: it is a big idea: a new world order—where diverse nations are drawn together in common cause, to achieve the universal aspirations of mankind: peace and security, freedom and the rule of law.²⁸

This is a powerful statement that sounds romantic in some ways, and I wonder if Egypt felt the same when it was charging “\$200,000 for each transport ship”²⁹ to cross the Suez Canal; when Turkey was charging for the airstrip; when France was trying to sell her weapons; and when oil-producing countries had to sell more because of the war. The list goes on and on. Looking back, it seems the coalition partners needed the U.S. more than the U.S. needed the coalition. Historically, war appears to rejuvenate economic development, and this war was no different from the wars in the past:

Wars and the threat of war breed mercantilism in times of war and even when war is simply on the horizon, institutional states give priority to building up their fighting capacity. A strong, independent economy is given precedence over ideas of free trade and liberalization. America during its civil war and Britain and other European powers during the first and second world wars attest to this war-induced protectionist impulse. The neomercantilist export-oriented policies of the successful economies of East and Southeast Asia can be said to fit into this general pattern. Similarly, during war states and the private sector often cooperate extensively to defend national integrity. In a number of the East and Southeast Asian economies grew as states developed special relations with the major companies. These companies grew as states either dispensed U.S. aid or directed funds generated by increased government revenues from rising exports created by the burgeoning overseas markets associated with the Korean and Vietnam wars.³⁰

²⁸ Freedman and Karsh, *The Gulf Conflict 1990-1991*, xxix.

²⁹ Gordon, and Trainor, *The General's War*, 59.

³⁰ Richard Stubbs, *War and Economic Development: Export-Oriented Industrialization in East and Southeast Asia* (New York: City University of New York Press, 1999), 350.

I just returned from a 15-month deployment to the Middle East, and what I saw amazed me. This area of the world that used to be known as a desert and the land of camels is now the land of shopping centers and resort areas similar to those in Florida, if not better. No one would think to look for a ski resort in the state of Texas, but one can have winter and summer activities in one of the largest malls in the Gulf countries. Perhaps Taiwan, Hong Kong, Japan, and South Korea can relate to that, not because of the Gulf war, but because of the Vietnam War.

It is fair to say that the United States civilian leadership played a powerful role in the diplomatic arena since the war started. They did not try to run the war; they simply left the military leadership alone. They gave the right amount of space when it was needed and handed the military all that it needed to win the war. General Powell did not forget what had happened in Vietnam; this time the administration gave him all the equipment he needed to win this war, with minimum American casualties and strong public support. To go back a few years:

The State Department still saw the readiness to use force as an essential underpinning of all diplomacy. This view was countered by the Secretary of Defense, Caspar Weinberger, who argued forcefully that the United States should not engage in conflicts which it could lose and certainly not without the full backing of the American people.³¹

Moreover, one must keep in mind that this idea was still fresh in the minds of the U.S. civilian and military leadership as they started the military buildup; first came Operation Desert Shield, then Operation Desert Storm; finally, Kuwait was liberated, which involved ground forces.

For President Bush and his administration, building the coalition was a powerful step in creating the powerful force that was needed to overwhelm the enemy beyond its expectations; it worked. The United States did not have to finance the Gulf War alone, and that could not have been done without the coalition partners' involvement. All these examples show the legitimacy of a sophisticated political work of art, backed by military technology second to none.

³¹ Freedman and Karsh, *The Gulf Conflict 1990-1991*, 6.

The allies showed remarkable cohesion. The power and effectiveness of American troops, weapons, and equipment were so impressive as to leave no doubt that the United States was the most powerful nation on earth.³²

The coalition partners were the orchestra, the United States was the conductor, Iraq was the baton, and the war was the music that followed the score in whatever way the United States wanted it to flow. And that requires the methods used to protect our national interest to extraordinary heights. This is the kind of war that I would like to call a limited war, one that brought the United States and its coalition partners an unlimited victory. I cannot say that the coalition partners did not constrict United States war strategy, but when the assets outweigh the constraint and manage to claim victory, then one has no choice but to say the coalition was an asset to U.S. war strategy. The previous statement might sound somewhat insensitive, but to understand how all these nations interact is no different from any community challenge with which we are all familiar.

B. THE GULF WAR SUCCESS

Many are familiar with the economic stimulus package plan that the United States government proposed recently. No one knows what the outcome will be, but we all know that the intention of the government is to help the economy get back to what is desired — a stable economy, since our economy depends heavily on consumer spending. Without sounding too insensitive, in a strange way, war is just another means of creating that economic stimulus. The United States has been going to war for many years now, and these wars somehow have all been connected to domestic economic ups and downs. In 1991, the United States and its coalition partners went to war against Iraq because of oil. Hence, it was a necessity for the United States, as the leading force in the global market, to protect Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf countries from the rising military threat of Saddam Hussein. As I suggested earlier, it is not any different from what we saw during the Vietnam War. Many of us simply remember the many military men and civilians who were lost, and we are reminded of the typical devastation for which war is well known. It was also the main fuel that helped the United States build trade partners that are now an

³² Gordon and Trainor, *The General's War*, xv.

important part of our economy. The only difference is that now the United States and some of its coalition members are more efficient at calculating the risks, especially when using force.

So, what was the key factor that supported the argument of this analysis of the United States victory in the Gulf War? The Gulf War might have helped a great deal in the transition that was needed after the collapse of the USSR. The complex political and economic history of the Gulf region, which was intensified by Saddam's miscalculated aggression, came to be an invitation for the United States' initiation into becoming the one and only standing superpower in the world. After all, as the great scholar Samuel Huntington says, "if being an American means being committed to the principles of liberty, democracy, individualism, and private property, and if there is no evil empire out there threatening those principles, what indeed does it mean to be an American, and what becomes of American national interests?"³³ Clearly, this is a statement that is very hard to disregard, because the near half-century phenomenon of the Cold War, which followed the Second World War, had a lot to do with the identification so eloquently worded by Huntington. This is not to say that the United States is always out there craving war, but to point out the factors that helped the United States maintain the momentum of its economic stability.

C. REALITY AT WORK

As a nation, America took the leading role against Saddam with over 200,000 troops and the finest weapons known to man. The goal, in the words of Machiavelli,

everybody sees what you appear to be, few feel what you are, and those few will not dare to oppose themselves to the many, who have the majesty of the state to defend them; and in the actions of men,...from which there is no appeal, the end justifies the means.³⁴

³³ Eugene R. Wittkopf and James M. McCormick, *The Domestic Sources of American Foreign Policy* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1999), 12.

³⁴ Betts, *Conflict After the Cold War*, 65.

Leaders and leading nations are forced into such positions in order to maintain a strong central power that helps one society or, in the case of the United States, play the role of a superpower. This sometimes requires “Doing Evil in Order to Do Good.”³⁵ A leader who is feared is more respected than a leader who is not, and he/she who is respected is loved for the most part. After all, as Machiavelli wrote, “if men were all good, this precept would not be a good one; but as they are bad, and would not observe their faith with you, so you are not bound to keep faith with them.”³⁶

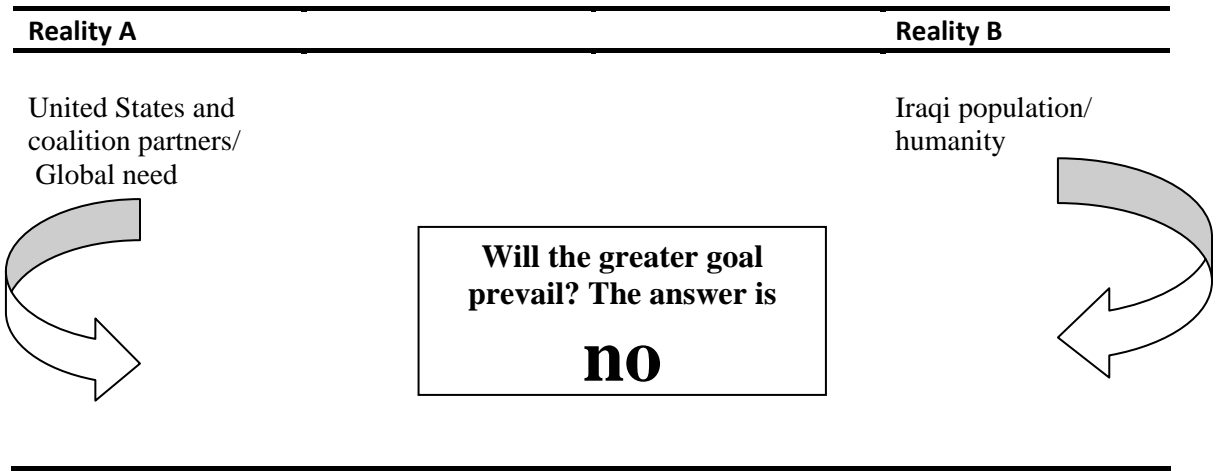
At the end of the day, it is about maintaining the status quo for the United States and its allies to reinforce political and economic stability. Moreover, it should be no surprise to anyone now that I divide reality into two sections: Reality A and Reality B.

This is not a dichotomy; it is a choice between A and B or a question of priority and global strategy to benefit and/or serve the majority of mankind, or so it seems. Every policy exacts a price. Here, for the time being, the price is at the expense of Reality B. Foreign policy is the extension of domestic policy. It is a bitter truth that no state and/or nation cross its national boundary without its own interest in mind. There is a time to kill and a time to heal; this is needed for the greater cause. And, this should be the perception of comparatively more rational beings. It is time for the greater good of global interest, and better service to mankind, that we take the part of Reality A and leave no options.

³⁵ Betts, *Conflict After the Cold War*, 61.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 64.

Table 1. Reality A and Reality B



D. FIRST GULF WAR VS. SECOND WORLD WAR

Implementing old policy would not be a problem if and only if the old policy is going to bring the same results, as it did with the problems of the past. In a changing world, however, this kind of wishful thinking is just not possible. In the business world, careful management of change means a sustainable profit flow. I do not want to be the bearer of bad news, but isn't the United States in the business of exporting security? Therefore, no one should expect the U.S. to change its profitable recipe in an expeditious fashion that only fools are capable of executing. A sharp turnaround is not an option, but with a careful calculation of the political wind's direction, this vessel of ours that we call United States continues to sail graciously. Again, it is not the beginning or the ends of wars that builds the legitimacy, but the details between the beginnings and ends that matter the most.

Without getting too dramatic, let me take you back to the comparison of these two crucial war scenarios: In 1990, the United States was on the verge of securing its position as the only superpower in the world, but even at the time of WWII, the U.S. was on its way to becoming the power that it is today. The threat of WWII was greater for the time,

and the prized possession, which was freedom, was at stake. Economic stability for the future was part of the plan that made this war a road to prosperity. It was a war that created the Cold War, a war that might have been harmful to the Third World; but, to the great powers of the West and USSR, the Cold War was profit through and through. The Gulf War did not have the same juice in its scenario of the claimed victory, and did not result in the kind of societal vibration that WWII did when it created the “Greatest Generation,” of whom we are so proud. The Gulf War was won before it started, and it appeared to be as so, in order to maintain the status quo.

In the Gulf War, the United States military was defending a closed society that proudly called our members of the military “infidels.” In the Gulf War, the coalition members, especially the Arab States, were just members for the most part; their military capability was weak and national pride was not seen, and if it was, we were not looking. Finally, the Gulf War was just an introduction to what we see today in Iraq and the region in general. Our victory in the Gulf War of 1991 created a diplomatic failure, and as a result, we had events such as 9/11, and continue to have threats that are irrational by our standard. These irrational threats were created because of our own irrational approach toward Iraq during the Gulf War of 1990-91.

WWII was not just a military victory, but it was a total victory for the United States. With that in mind, let me draw the picture of WWII in such a way that it will show the similarities and the major differences with the Gulf War. The central factor that led to the Allied victory in World War II had to be the creation of the Grand Alliance between Britain, the United States, and the USSR. It has been called the most successful military coalition in modern history because it was a coalition among three powerful nations that came together with one aim in mind: to destroy Hitler’s Germany by any means necessary. Despite the differences they had politically, economically, and militarily, they created an alliance that was carefully crafted to meet the situation at hand.

The Gulf War coalition was created simply for political propaganda more than for military reasons, and most of the coalition members were heavily dependent on the United States in many ways. It was an alliance that looked more like little children following their mother into the park, totally excited about playing war. The war did not

destroy the reputation of our military, but it should be an embarrassment to the policy makers in Washington who were still romanticizing about WWII and who forgot that fighting for oil — or the love fest resulting from a victory — is a lot different from fighting the Germans and defending the very freedom we take for granted. This freedom was a result of the environment that was created by the “Greatest Generation,” as many would like to call our predecessors.

What is it that makes WWII unique? Clearly, the Grand Alliance (1941-1945) was unique in more ways than one can imagine. One can see their ideological, political, economical, and military differences, and say that it must have been the weakness of the coalition. Indeed, these differences created some obstacles that were necessary to overcome in order to defeat the Axis powers (Italy, Germany, and Japan). Each country in the Alliance came with its own strategy and, like anything, each one’s strategy was always more important. The United States had to limit its war effort, not just because of distance shipping and German submarines, but because it was facing another war in the Pacific with Japan. The Soviet Union wanted to execute an attack across the English Channel; the American think tank was also in favor of this plan, but Great Britain was against it. Another weakness was the fact that each coalition member was heavily concentrating on the outcome of the war, far beyond the current situation at hand.

The obvious strength of the Grand Alliance was the fact that “Superior resources won the war: the victors had greater numbers of men and women and made more weapons. In population and in industrial capacity, the allies, even after losing France, were stronger than the axis powers.”³⁷ Similar was the case in the Gulf War, not to mention the outstanding technological advancement.

³⁷ R. A. C. Parker, *Struggle for Survival: The History of the Second World War* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 131.

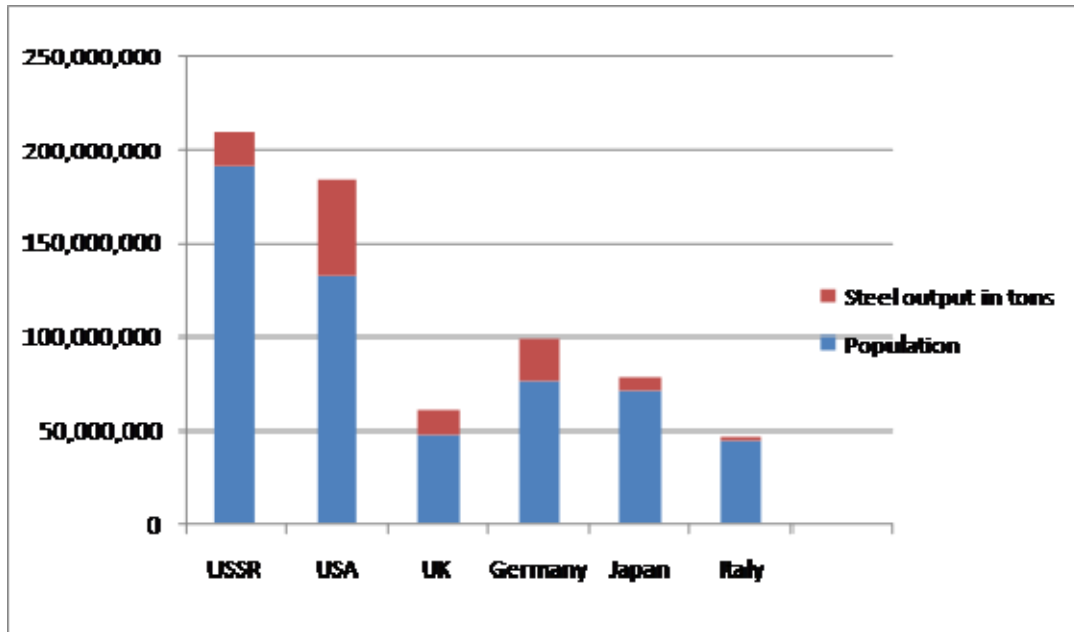


Figure 1. Natural resources and population output in WWII.³⁸

Besides having a huge population to work the factories, and unlimited natural resources to keep material productivities running, the Grand Alliance had a very strong common enemy. They also shared key geographical positioning for the war, with strong leaders who really knew how to win and knew where they wanted to be soon after the victory. One might argue that the victory was followed by the cloud of the Cold War, but in reality, the Cold War was not as much of a problem as it was for the Third World puppets who suffered the frostbite of the Cold War.

During WWII, on the home front, the coalition members knew how to use the art of “propaganda,”³⁹ especially on the American side; and the British were just as good. Even when the Germans had the advantage in submarine technology, its effectiveness was demoralized because they could not keep up with the speed of the “allies’ shipbuilding.”⁴⁰ The American and British air warfare machine was far superior to that of

³⁸ (Drawn from) Parker, *Struggle for Survival*, 131.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 154.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 95.

the Germans.⁴¹ All this meant that our home front was vibrant, and it created a desired stimulus to the economy that the country needed at that time, and long after the war.

The Gulf War created the world that we live in today. We can talk about WWII for many years to come, even after the men and women who served, now in their 80s, are gone. But, the Gulf War took place only 19 year ago, and it will be remembered mostly in textbooks. Moreover, it will be blamed for the discomfort that it generated and continues to generate today. I would not in a million years compare Bin Laden and his followers with Hitler, but out of respect to our military and civilian intelligence community, let me just say that it was our foreign policy failure that helped the Bin Laden we fear today.

In WWII, we went to war against fascism and Nazism; we defended ourselves from the wrath of Japanese kamikaze attacks and put an end to the death toll of European Jews and others. As for the Gulf War, what was it that we were fighting against? Let me just say that Islam is not going to take the blame. Nor will I compare the Battle of Midway with Desert Storm, where the desert sand was more confident than the Iraqi forces that the 30 coalition members were ready to attack. This had nothing to do with the military, but with a policy gone wrong.

Additionally, the Grand Alliance of WWII was a coalition that was led by three powerful and independent-thinking heads of state. These were not just symbolic figures of each state, they were representatives and negotiators as well. They were also the minds behind each decision that was made during the war. According to Admiral Leahy, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill were the strategists of the main events of the Second World War. The President once overruled his Chief of Staff, in support of his friend Mr. Churchill; this led to victory in North Africa, and knocked Mussolini out of the war soon after. Operation Torch helped Great Britain gain access to the Mediterranean, North Africa, and India. This event also cleared the way to some degree for reducing the military concentration later on for Operation Overlord in France. President Roosevelt also knew how to use the Soviets to delay the entrance of American forces into the war by adopting the lend-lease program: support the

⁴¹ Parker, *Struggle for Survival*, 133.

allies without sending the manpower. Stalin, on the other hand, did not have the same leverage that both Churchill and FDR had; he was killing his military officers who were any threat to his regime. He might have weakened his military leadership, but it gave him the independence he needed to run a one-man show. President Roosevelt had political capital, and he took advantage of it to help the nation economically; he did this by working hand in hand with the coalition and by using a tactful, diplomatic approach. For example, the “Destroyer for Bases”⁴² agreement gave America a sweet deal; not only did America win key geographical positions for American naval bases, but it slowed, if not stopped, British imperial diffusion. He had no intention of spreading political ideology, and this helped the public to ignore the fact that he had befriended an enemy in order to reach his goal: to help open Europe for a free market. His strategy seemingly helped to crash the German economy, without allowing the Soviets to gain strength. It was just enough to destroy Germany, however, and prevent it from becoming a postwar threat to the United States and Great Britain. He helped the English survive Hitler’s wrath, but it was not without a price, and was enough to slow Britain’s imperial expansion. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor came just at the right time to help FDR move forward with his plan to make sure that his *Europe First* plan held its ground; in the American public’s eyes, it gave him the leverage to enter the war without much opposition of any sort.

Another major strength of the Grand Alliance was the strong common sense and strategically timed wartime conferences. Under the close supervision of President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill, and later with Stalin, the conferences were truly the blueprints that led the coalition forces to victory. The blueprints that led the Gulf War of 1991 started with the following statements by President Bush: “ this will not stand, this aggression against Kuwait.”⁴³ Statements like this are not conducive, not in the beginning of a crises. Meaningful meeting and conferences cannot start with this kind of mindsets, especially when dealing with the Middle East, because of its tradition and

⁴² Parker, *Struggle for Survival*, 57.

⁴³ James A. Baker, with Thomas M. Defrank, *The Politics of Diplomacy: Revolution, War and Peace 1989-1992* (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1995), 267.

countries that claimed boundaries at the mercy of the British rule. Again, President Bush continued to say, “we are doing what’s right; we’re doing what is clearly in the national interest of the United States. Whatever else happens, so be it.”⁴⁴ At the time when the United States should have been prepared to start a new chapter leading the world under the umbrella of partnership, the United States reactionary policy fell short. Unlike the Second World War meetings, where diplomacy was just as powerful as the weapons that brought Hitler’s Germany to an end, the Gulf War meetings were not up to the par, nor were they meant to be effective, at least it seems that way.

Without a doubt, this war was more destructive than any war of the past and definitely did not include the Gulf War; the evidence of its brutality was unbelievable. What makes this war a bit different from other world conflicts, however, was the fact that it was as political as it was physical. Many lives were sacrificed in the name of future speculations. The focus was not as much on real-time solutions to real-time problems; it was more of a mathematical and well-calculated war game than just fighting an enemy because it deserved to be destroyed. If WWII is to be dissected and placed under a political microscope, the results of this observation should indicate that the war among the three coalition members was just as important as the war that destroyed Hitler.

The German military stemmed from a strong and reputable military tradition, and that is why Germany managed to accomplish its short-lived victory in Europe before it was bulldozed by the Grand Alliance, but Germany was not the only problem for the Allies.

To explore further the U.S. and its relationship with the Europeans, let me return to Roosevelt’s tactics, both short-term and long-range. The United States was not very fond of Great Britain’s imperial power, and communist Russia was not to be trusted at all. Perhaps, they could hold hands until they won the war against Germany, but the victory had to include the weakening of each nation afterwards. That was the goal of the American side, and for that matter it, was the goal of each other member as well. Otherwise, the manpower and material superiority of the coalition members could have

⁴⁴ Baker, *The Politics of Diplomacy*, 277.

neutralized the Axis powers in a shorter time than it took. The Cold War was the unfinished business of Second World War, and with the Axis forces defeated, the wartime coalition was now left with continued suspicion and bitterness on all sides. All three countries had a collective victory and eliminated the one threat that was in their way, but the strategies that were used remain questionable. Mathematically, the United States was the overall victor, and its geographical positioning helped in many ways. The Soviet Union did not have to aid the coalition, but in trying to defend itself, it split the war against Hitler into two fronts, and that was enough help for the other members. Sadly, Stalin sacrificed many of the lives of his countrymen because he was the odd man at the poker table between Roosevelt and Churchill. Most of the strategies of the war favored Britain, and in return, it favored the United States indirectly; Stalin was just the tool needed to win the war. A strong alliance with Germany could have helped the Soviets, Japan, and Italy win the war against Britain and maybe even the United States. Hitler and Mussolini could have concentrated on Great Britain, while the USSR and Japan harassed the United States. More than likely, the United States would have remained neutral as long as its trade with Europe continued. Then again, that would have required a great deal of diplomacy between the U.S. and the Axis powers. The war with Japan could have been handled by the United States alone, but it was used as an excuse for the U.S. to let the Russians believe that they were being helped so they could return the favor later. It gave the Russians a motive and made sense logically for the U.S. to help; it was that kind of belief that kept Stalin in a comfort zone with Churchill's plan. If Stalin had wanted to expedite the cross channel attack or join Japan if the U.S. got involved, the outcome of the war would have been more in favor of the USSR than Great Britain. Once the coalition was defined, Hitler's defeat was inevitable. Who would have the upper hand after the defeat depended on how much a nation sacrificed during the war. It was a slam-dunk finish by the United States and gave America the status of superpower.

The Japanese never saw it coming, nor did the Soviets; the atomic bomb was a well-kept secret that even Vice President Truman did not know about initially. Strategically speaking, by the time the United States concluded "Europe First," logic

would have it that the United States had had it prior to 1942; but there was no need to use such a weapon if the country was still active in more ways than one. The point of having a war is to reach a goal that will help the nation's economy and security. Because of the United States' lavish natural resources, the longevity of the war meant economical stability. Also, Japan was more of a threat to the United States than Germany, so it made more sense to intimidate the nearest enemy in order to maintain a long-lasting peace afterwards.

Hitler had fomented the Grand Alliance, which eventually defeated him and his mighty force; this was the strength of the coalition, and he was a powerful enemy. Sad but true, Saddam was no Hitler. We created Saddam just to turn around and call him an enemy.

Each nation within the Grand Alliance was capable of resisting the enemy alone, but there was no point in exhausting one's own forces if it could be done by other means; this was evident in World War II and it caused the hostility to continue into the Cold War. A complex alliance between United States and England created long-term stability. When they included the Soviet Union in the mix, they won the war and that eventually led to the Cold War; this was nothing other than a means to protect national interests without crossing boundaries.

Saddam Hussein was no Hitler, nor were the Iraqis the Germans. How quickly we forget that it was Germans Jews who helped the United States end WWII by creating the most powerful and feared weapon known to man. If there was any society in the world that was advanced technologically for the time, it was the Germans. Iraq, on the other hand, was dragged down and lifted up by external powers — none other than the British and later the United States over the past century or so.

There is a reason why this study has included the history of the Middle East region, and has included religion from the onset. I do not intend to sound insensitive, but Iraq was not the home of men like Martin Luther, Karl Marx and Albert Einstein, who later became an American. Iraqi men and women could not have produced quality leaders under the shadows of the British influence, but Iraq was divided into many tribal clans

that extend to its neighboring countries through the Shi'-Sunni dilemma. Thanks to globalization that is more vibrant today than during WWII, more confusion to boundaries and ideological unity has been created. Most importantly, the trust needed between these boundaries has been compromised. Therefore, old policy had no place during the Gulf War, or today, as we continue to remain active on the frontlines in Iraq.

E. U.S. DIPLOMACY DILEMMA IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The Gulf War was not a challenge to the United States and its coalition partners militarily, but the political challenge was huge. It was not a surprise; the U.S. never had a smooth line of diplomatic intervention in the region. The U.S. always acted as the “Big Brother,” and the many autocratic governments of the region kept their dependence at a level they could not free themselves from. One example is the Israeli-Palestinian situation, which is always linked to most crises of the region. If one pays close attention to our role in resolving the situation of this region of the world, then one may be able to see the failure of U.S. diplomatic effort and the so-called international community that has backed up the failed diplomacy. By contrast, the Gulf War is not an isolated incident, and when it comes to internal strife in the region at large, there are no boundaries. It is so convenient and perhaps even convincing to keep the many incidents of the Middle East isolated, as we see fit.

Let me remind the reader that some of us became a bit emotional when Saddam threatened Israel and got mad when Yasser Arafat supported Saddam Hussein. Iraq is too far from New York, but Israel is a lot closer in the hearts and minds of many Americans, and when it concerns only a few barrels of oil, our hearts beat at the same rate. War, conflict, and the mind of an enemy or friend can be identifiable with a great deal of ease; but when dealing with corrupt leaders of the Middle East who care only about themselves, the situation, and the political games are quite different.

The Israeli-Palestinian situation is far too simple to be that complicated. This may sound convoluted, and it might seem that this region has somehow earned such meaningless statements; this is due to the frustration it generates for anyone who even

attempts to understand the endless dilemma. Logic is missing somewhere. By now, the international community should know that two lions cannot live in the same den, as these people have demonstrated for many years.

Tony Judt claims, “The Middle East peace process is finished.”⁴⁵ But one might argue that the peace process never started in the first place. Imposing peace treaties is not a peace process. The main problem is the external forces, the United States in particular, along with some members of the European Union, and certainly some members of the Arab League. These external forces had many chances to play a major role in resolving the chaos a lot sooner, but for some reason they have been more of a problem than a solution. An honest broker should not play the role of a lawyer who defends both sides. From the beginning, this should have been divided in such a way that the line between defendant and plaintiff is clear; regrettably, that was never the case.

If the United States is willing to support Israel at any cost endlessly — if this option is not a problem for the United States — then logic should conclude that it is a deliberate plan. No disrespect intended, but the right question to ask should be: Can the United States afford peace in the region? For the past 30 years or so, chaos has been the norm in the region because the choices we have made have been well maintained at the expense of both societies, not to mention the uninformed citizens of the United States who might not have had a clear explanation as to why Israel has been supported for so long. The First Gulf War and post-Gulf War have increased the confusion that was already a norm, and have added fuel to the firestorm that is still raging.

If our credibility were measured by the many handshakes and smiles that are exchanged between our own leaders and the autocratic leaders of the Middle East, then we could have claimed that things are fine — but that is not the case. Unlike during WWII, when an American was considered a symbol of freedom and democracy, this image is long gone. The negative publicity that our foreign policy in the region is receiving is starting to define our identity, and I do not see that as being helpful to our future involvement, or even protecting our interest in that region and others.

⁴⁵ Tony Judt, *Israel: The Alternative* (New York: The New York Review of Books, 2003), 1.

How did we get here? Without 1991 Gulf War policy, and with the current administration that supports Israel unconditionally; under logical observation it can only be seen as irrational, and yet it is beneficial in a very odd way. War needs a strong rationale to maintain its legitimacy and gain public support for the financial cost. For us to support Israel, we must have some kind of interest. If we are having a hard time trying to fix the crises of such a small land and people, then it can only mean one thing: we are satisfied with whatever it is that is going on there. Perhaps we can even stir up the necessary enemy by what Machiavelli might call, “doing evil in order to do good.”⁴⁶ Therefore, especially after the end of the Cold War, the Gulf War might have helped a great deal in the transition that was needed after the collapse of the USSR. Let us just say that the complex political and economic history of the Gulf region, which includes Israel directly or indirectly, was intensified by Saddam’s miscalculated aggression, and it became an invitation for the United States to see itself as the one-and-only standing superpower in the world. After all, Tony Judt is absolutely right when he says:

Israel’s behavior has been a disaster for American foreign policy. With American support, Jerusalem has consistently and bluntly flouted UN resolutions requiring it to withdraw from land seized and occupied in war. Israel is the only Middle Eastern state known to possess genuine and lethal weapons of mass destruction. By turning a blind eye, the U.S. has effectively scuttled its own increasing frantic efforts to prevent such weapons from falling into the hands of other small and potentially belligerent states. Washington’s unconditional support for Israel even in spite of (silent) misgivings is the main reason why most of the rest of the world no longer credits our good faith.⁴⁷

The United States should never have involved itself in such a dilemma, and as the world changes, the U.S. simply cannot afford to depend on its military might for respect. Only as a last resort should our military power be and continue to be the backbone of our diplomatic interaction. On these grounds, we as a nation should move toward the art of partnership. This move can come about only by avoiding bad policies — such as the

⁴⁶ Machiavelli, quoted in Betts, *Conflict After The Cold War*, 61.

⁴⁷ Judt, *Israel: The Alternative*, 2.

policies of unconditional support to Israel — or by playing the role of a big brother as we did when protecting Saudi Arabia and freeing Kuwait in 1991, and put an end to the realities of yesterday.

It is true that United States' responsibility extends far beyond its borders and, with globalization on the rise, so does the magnitude of United States' responsibilities to the world. Yesterday's reality might have been necessary until today, and putting an end to this is not only for good faith with the international community, but because that is what it will take to protect our interest in the Middle East as we compete with the rising powers such as China and India.

As for war, the United States has proven time after time that it is capable; it is not even an exaggeration to say that it is the finest military power. One can assume, however, that the United States is not up to par when it comes to resolving conflicts by other means or with the same intensity as its military campaign would. Unfortunately, the United States' action during the Gulf War of 1991, with the exception of the successful military campaign, was a disaster at best. Naiveté was not the case, and no one should be too quick to say that we are not capable of meeting the requirements needed of a rational actor.

We cannot forget that the United States helped create the League of Nations and the United Nations, which at one time or another served as the beacons of diplomacy (that might be giving a bit too much credit to the UN). These are not institutions of ultimate solutions to world problems; nevertheless, these are the examples of American domestic policy extending beyond its boundaries. In 1991, however, with our mighty arsenal leading the coalition members, we compromised the very idea of what both the League of Nations and United Nations stand for — to respect the integrity of any sovereign nation.

The Middle East is not just unified under the umbrella of Islam, but also by tradition and a sturdy family tree. The borders that exist between them are lines in the sand created at the mercy of the British Empire. By getting involved irrationally, we entered a family feud and killed the equilibrium that previously existed between them. As

a result, trust was diminished, not just against the U.S., but among the Arabs as well. All we did was exit the Cold War with our heads up and then entered the First Gulf War with our eyes closed with the hope to maintain what we have always maintained during a Cold War. Perhaps, what Gorbachev's advisor said was right: "We are doing something really terrible to you—we are depriving you of an enemy."⁴⁸ Huntington's explanation of Georgiy Arbatov's comment was explained as such:

Psychologists generally agree that individuals and groups define their identity by differentiating themselves from and placing themselves in opposition to others. While wars at times may have a divisive effect on society, a common enemy can often help to promote identity and cohesion among people. The weakening or absence of a common enemy can do just the reverse.⁴⁹

Samuel Huntington's explanation is fine and it sounds logical. Based on explanations of this kind, I can assume that the Cold War was like a dogfight where as long as the two dogs were alive and willing to keep on fighting, the game kept on going. This game might land men like the football star Michael Vick in prison for animal cruelty charges. Why? To the football star and his friends, the game was profitable, perhaps even enjoyable, at the expense of the poor dogs that did not know any better; they were just fighting, thinking that they were attacking an enemy of their master. In this game, all the master had to do was not to play the role of the dog by keeping his dog in front of him. In the Gulf War of 1991, the United States and its coalition member's forces were dragged down to the role of the bulldog fighting a chihuahua. Yes, it can be called a dogfight, but it is not worthy of the excitement needed for legitimacy, because the outcome is clear. Our credibility was sacrificed, not to mention the fact that our diplomatic effort in the region was not too savvy to begin with. If it is not irrational to watch while over 30 nations, led by the most powerful military superpower in the world, go after one small country as intensely as they did, then we do not know what rationality is.

⁴⁸ Wittkopf and McCormick, *The Domestic Sources of American Foreign Policy: Insights and Evidence* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1999) 13.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

If we as a nation believe that the United States' action during the Gulf War was indeed rational, setting aside the inevitable military victory — while most of the world cheered us on, then our political fallout was not a mistake; it was simply a necessity that we could not have lived without. The major question then remains as to whether we can afford the peace. That is strange, a doctor cannot practice medical without patients; the Pope would have no role if there were no heaven and hell in the minds of many; there is no rain without a cloud; and an angel needs a devil for its visibility. Therefore, what would the United States — the biggest security exporter in the world — do if there is no conflict out there such as the Gulf War of 1991? Again, it is a question of survival, and looking at the global market, so is the survival (I say survival for a lack of a better word) of every nation that supported the United States in attacking Saddam Hussein.

The crisis went beyond American interest to impact on every region, from the European Community's attempt to turn itself into as substantial a force in global political affairs as in economic affairs, to Eastern Europe's programme of post-communist reconstruction, to Japan's sense of its international obligations, to China's attempt to ingratiate itself back into the international community, to North Africa's political and economical neuroses, as well as the whole gamut of Middle Eastern disputes.⁵⁰

Therefore, Iraq was a sacrificial lamb the U.S could or should not have sacrificed. Then again, the same thing can be said about past war campaigns. The significant difference of the First Gulf War from other conflicts is perhaps the visibility it received through the media and advanced communication technology. In reality, this war victory can only be justified by the inevitability it created, and if fear and instability is the end result, then victory is depreciated.

Most of us like to be in control of our own health, money and many other things, and our comfort zone is shaped by the measure of this control. Therefore, fear of the unknown or the cloud of uncertainty means loss of comfort to many of us, Americans especially. The Cold War was a war because it elevated that same emotion of fear that made the era worthy of such a name. The Gulf War continued that same tradition of fear that many people had anticipated; perhaps they are living it today with the threat of

⁵⁰ Freedman and Karsh, *The Gulf Conflict 1990-1991*, xxx.

terrorism and radicalism. Unlike WWII, which was fought within a designated time and a quantifiable closure, the First Gulf War started with major military campaign that was short-lived, but managed to leave a residue of the same aroma that the Cold War had. That was the main reason why it was critical for this study to analyze the historical characteristics in order to show the differences. It was also important to clarify why the Gulf War might be the reason that we as a nation are still fighting in the Gulf region, hoping for stability. No one in his or her right mind can question our military capability. Nevertheless, the scenario of the First Gulf War was a clear diplomatic failure for the United States decision-making body. The U.S. political machine miscalculated the cultural affinity of the region and used the very clout made of military and economic superiority to create the coalition against Saddam Hussein, who was only one man. In the Second World War, the “Grand Alliance had arisen out of necessity.”⁵¹ The Gulf War was a result of greed, at best, and failure of foreign policy that might be affecting our relations in the region. Perhaps it was even debilitating to the credibility of our leadership as a whole.

⁵¹ John Lewis Gaddis, *Surprise, Security and the American Experience* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2004), 51.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

According to Morgenthau, “The test of political success is the degree to which one is able to maintain, to increase, or to demonstrate one’s power over others.”⁵² With that said, the First Gulf War’s situation, followed by victory favoring the United States, was a visual demonstration to the scripted explanation of Morgenthau’s explicit explanation. Interestingly, this also translates to a similar political behavior that took place in the past and continues today. This diffusion of chaos to gain economic and political stability is part of the very identity that led us to the First Gulf War and beyond. Critical observation of this kind will guide this thesis’ conclusion to come up with an idea of implementing the art of partnership, as an upward mobility in projecting the theory of “soft power,” for the United States’ future foreign policies.

Why soft power? Well, it might sound like a new theory because of its name, but soft power is a phenomenon that the United States has used effectively in the past. Lately, it might not seem to be placed at the frontline of our diplomatic efforts because of our reality but, make no mistake; soft power might be the next threat that we might have to face.

Soft power compromises the integrity of hard power and the umbrella of fear, an emotion that has been guarded throughout the Cold War in shaping international relations, just as it has worked for religion, influencing societies by either fearing God or the devil, whichever works best. Therefore, under this powerful emotion, somewhat conditioned societies have been created that have become susceptible to the norm. With that in mind, “live and let live,” as an attractive agenda closely related to soft power, is in many ways a real threat to the very political institutions that have functioned by using the emotion of fear as a tool to maintain a legitimacy to govern. Hence, the theories of national or international relations, under the supervision of the powerful members of societies, have been shaped in such a way that fueled the energy that has seemingly

⁵² Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, the State and War: a theoretical analysis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 35.

sustained the emotion of fear. Therefore, it would be reasonable not to concentrate on a narrow view of how the increase and decrease of soft power affects the United States. Better yet, we should simply keep searching for way to help increase soft power by first looking into the political tradition — a norm that we have not deviated from since WWII and perhaps even as far as the colonial era.

As I attempt to analyze soft power regarding the U.S., it is important to keep in mind that although soft power in its pure form is capable of creating a suitable condition for desired international relations, this does not mean it is a solution to our reality. In fact, it might even be a major disaster for the reality that many of us enjoy so much. Our hard power truly does play a major role in keeping up this expensive reality of ours. After all, our government spends near \$300 billion in its military. We are one of the top security exporters in the world. The mathematical minds know more about than the critics who are quick to say that soft power is the only option, and who do not realize that there is a conflict of interest behind this very attractive theory. Under that context, this thesis will discuss the decrease and increase of soft power in U.S foreign policy. Additionally, as my father used to say, “water kills and water saves,” so I place soft power in the same category as water.

With that said, this study will attempt to answer the question of what the U.S. has done to increase or decrease soft power. In order to find a viable answer to this question, I will highlight Nye’s definition of what soft power is, identify the factors that increase and decrease soft power in U.S. policy, and conclude with a meaningful recommendation that might be helpful to future U.S. foreign policy.

A. SOFT POWER

According to Joseph S. Nye, who is responsible for coining the term, “Soft Power is the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments.”⁵³ This is not an idea or definition coming from a romance novel or Michael Moore, but from a former dean of the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and

⁵³ Joseph S. Nye, *Soft Power: The Means To Success In World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, a member of the Perseus Books Group, 2004), 5.

former Chairman of the National Intelligence Council, as well as an Assistant Secretary of Defense in the Clinton Administration. Now, one can say, how ironic because it is the very exceptional character of the United States — the greatest military power in the world, and, most importantly, the major security exporter — from whom the definition of soft power was generated. The definition is straightforward and, to the rational thinker, it seems logical in its approach.

What is fascinating is that the definer and the definition might also indicate that the theory of soft power did not occur in a vacuum; rather, a process of an unquantifiable entity has given it a title for the system's sake.

1. Increasing and Decreasing Factors of Soft Power

Hard power is used to settle a competition between two competitors. Their tool is war, and war is fought between two enemies who are under the supervision of powerful minds that use fear to create a common enemy who is threatening a valued possession. Hence, soft power in the hands of our enemies means a disruption of the very tools that keep our fighting force conditioned, just as the society that breeds these men and women. Therefore, implementing soft power in a way interrupts the norm. In this case, the norms are represented by decreasing and increasing factors of soft power. While these factors are perfectly acceptable in measuring soft power's negative and positive forces, they become elements that can differentiate between soft power and hard power; and they are just particles that help shape the characteristics of United States policies.

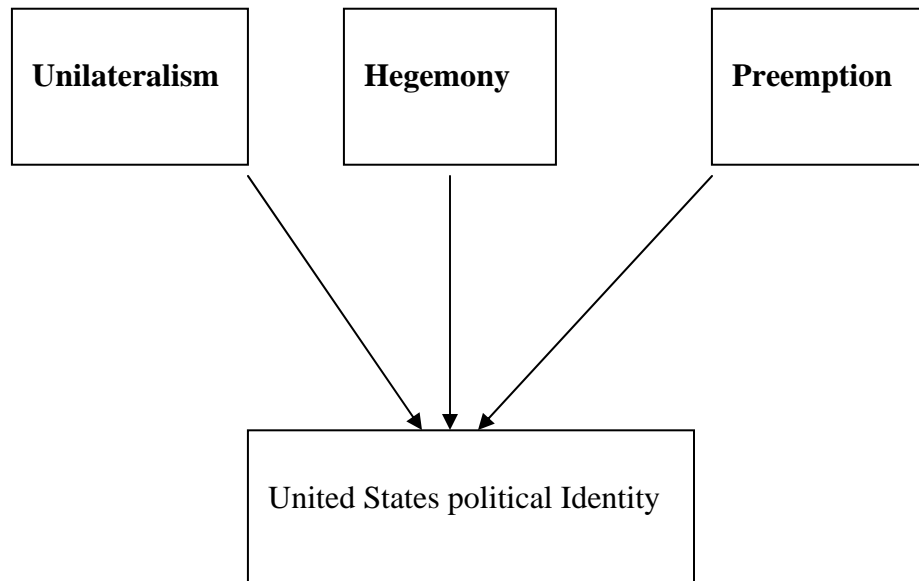
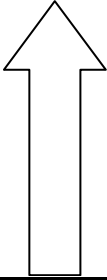
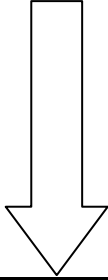


Figure 2. Ingredients of United States political identity.

The three independent variables that make up the United States' political identity come from a tradition that has maintained a steady flow that has always managed to shape our policy in many ways. The following factors that I have classified as increasing and decreasing factors of soft power are the very entities that took part in the political system that has proven unchanged from its traditional identity. Therefore, it is accurate to identify the increasing and decreasing factors as a tool of measurement on the scale suitable to the theory of soft power; it is a bit complicated if used in measuring the complex political practices of the United States. These complexities will be explained in the following pages.

Table 2. Increasing and Decreasing Factor of Soft Power

Increasing Factors	Decreasing Factors
<p data-bbox="250 363 363 394">-USAID</p> <p data-bbox="250 468 581 499">-The Marshal Plan 1947</p> <p data-bbox="250 573 834 604">-The Lend-Lease program from 1941-1945</p> 	<p data-bbox="1024 363 1308 394">- The Vietnam War</p> <p data-bbox="1024 468 1328 499">- The First Gulf War</p> <p data-bbox="1024 573 1393 604">- The Ottawa Treaty 1997</p> 

These are just few examples of a list that goes on and on. In the process of searching for examples of increasing and decreasing factors of soft power, I realized that the United States’ position in international relations is so unique that increasing the positive factors of soft power, with all its good intentions, might actually have the tendency of being a disadvantage to the United States reality — a reality that is not necessarily chosen or rational. It is a reality that has become the norm by default as a result of United States’ role as a superpower.

For example, the action of the United States in regards to the Ottawa Treaty can be classified as a decreasing factor of the soft power for the United States. Sadly, the anti-personnel landmine is nightmarish beyond the conventional dimension of weaponry; most of us are familiar with this fact. Its deceitful nature, plus the physical pain that it inflicts, gives it an extra dimension that can only be identified as an unjustifiable human cruelty, which is what the anti-personnel landmine seems to represent. It is inhumane, to say the least. Those of us who grew up in Third World countries know firsthand that it is not just something you hear about on CNN, but it is part of a chapter of reality, either directly or indirectly. The idea of banning anti-personnel landmines meant so much to

many victims, as well as human rights advocates, such as Princess Diana. The irony was that what seemed to be an ill-conceived plan was the result of a decision that President Clinton made, which ended with the U.S. not signing the Ottawa Treaty banning the APL.

First and foremost, this situation gave the United States negative publicity, not because the United States was in total abandonment of the situation, but because of guilt by association. Among the countries that did not sign the Ottawa Treaty were North Korea, Russia, and China. Hence, the U.S. was placed in the same category as those who were expected to be the offenders in the eyes of many critics. In return, that might have seemed as though the United States government was contradicting its reputation as a human rights advocate. The truth of the matter is that the Clinton administration had many reasons for avoiding the signing; we must not forget that at no time did the U.S. run away from the desperately needed responsibilities that were required by the Ottawa Treaty in order to save lives around the world. In fact, the United States, in its effort to support demining “increased spending levels from \$7 million in 1997 to almost \$40 million in 2000 and 2001, for a total of almost \$142 million.”⁵⁴ This might not get the attention it deserves, but in actuality, it is an important contribution that helped save many lives, including our military forces deployed overseas.

⁵⁴ George E. Teague, *Anti-Personnel Landmines: A U.S. Policy-Making Minefield* (New Port: Naval War College, 2003), 21.

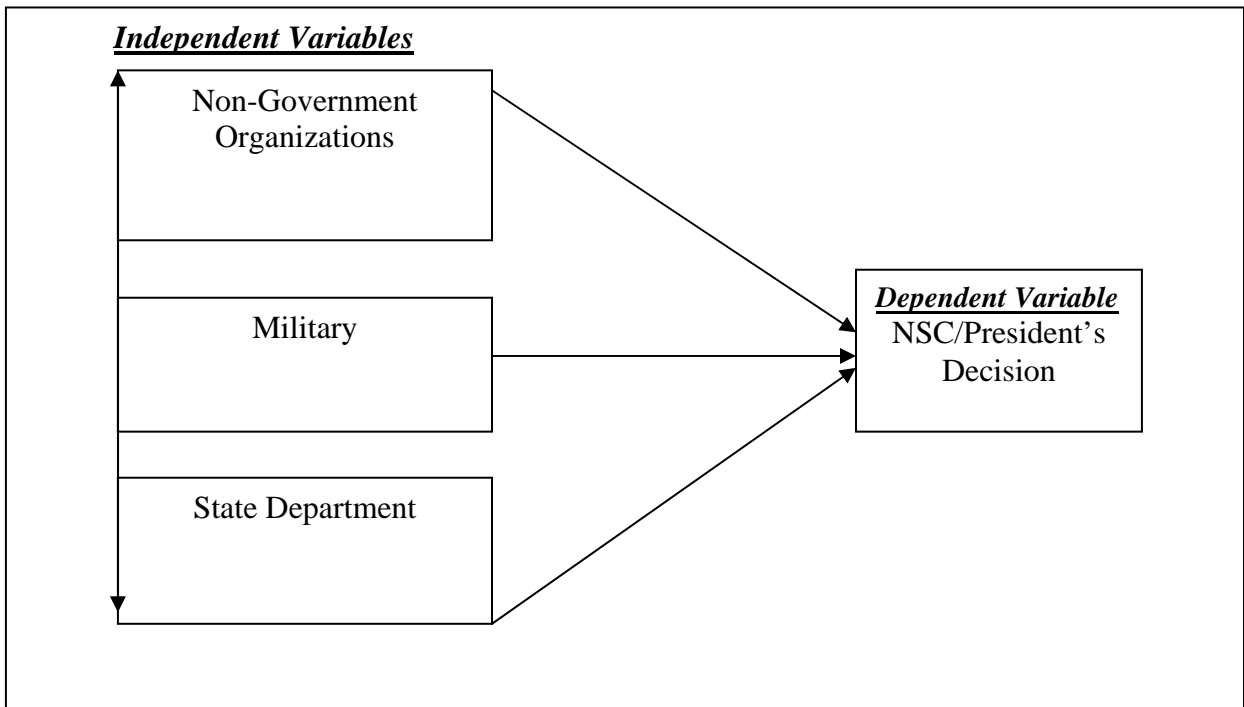


Figure 3. Key Factors That led to the National Security Decision

One of the major factors affecting the national decision was “objections voiced by the Pentagon. Antipersonnel mines were viewed by the American military as an essential weapon in the defense of South Korea.”⁵⁵ Therefore, after President Clinton gathered the required information:

The option that he chose was one that maintained U.S. leadership on this issue, protected our forces, and acknowledged values held by the American public. The key new elements of his 17 September 1997 policy were the commitment to develop alternatives to APL use outside of Korea by 2003 and within Korea by 2006. And the appointment of General Jones, former CJCS and an APL ban supporter, as the president’s landmine advisor. He also directed a significant increase in funding for demining operations, to include research and development, expanded training, and increased assistance for mine victims. And the last step was to renew our efforts to negotiate a global APL ban at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Warren I. Cohen, *America’s Failing Empire: U.S. Foreign Relations since the Cold War* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 119.

⁵⁶ Teague, *Anti-Personnel Landmines*, 18.

The national security decision-making process would have been a lot easier if this situation were just a Pentagon issue, but the problem branched out in many different directions. On the military side, the United States Army was in the middle of this case, because of the complex situation of the Korean peninsula. Equally important was the uncertainty of funds allocation in support of research and development. Thick tensions between the Army and the Air force were generated under the pretext of who would take the bigger slice of the pie. After all, research and technological advancement is an aim that is shared by both forces, with the Air Force being an exception because of its intake of expensive hardware and developmental leverages.

Aside from the Pentagon, the United States Congress was also involved, as one can easily have predicted. This was a result of its monetary responsibility, and also one of its members, Senator Patrick Leahy, an award-winning advocate to the cause. Under the supervision of the president, the State Department was vibrant in diffusing the diplomatic efforts; this was, by the way, crucial and most helpful in supporting demining.

Because this was an issue that involved civilian casualties, non-governmental agencies such as the International Red Cross, Human Rights Watch, and others were at the front line of the banning of mines. Their role was important in saving lives and keeping this tantamount and well energized. With the help of Senator Leahy of Vermont, the issue roamed around Washington as much as it did all over the world.

Overall, President Clinton, with the support of the National Security Council, was not sold on the idea of a total ban of antipersonnel landmines; he preferred a rational approach. To the United States military, this was a victory both at the financial level and from the mission-oriented perspective. To the non-governmental agencies, the president's decision was a setback to their mission of having all the world governments' support, and especially the very nations that produce these weapons.

B. THE IMPACT OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY DECISION

The danger of antipersonnel landmines affects us all, including our military that is scattered all over the world; this is not a weapon that discriminates. Not signing the

Ottawa Treaty as one entity might not have been a grave danger to our diplomatic effort around the world; but, as an addition to other unpopular steps that our country had made and perhaps might continue to make, the action we took will keep on disturbing the credibility that we seek as a key member of the international community. As the phenomena of “soft power” keeps resonating globally, credibility becomes an important ingredient that the U.S. cannot afford to risk.

Clearly, one is not going to find many organizations that are going to say it was a good idea for the U.S. not to sign the treaty alongside Russia, North Korea and China. The bottom line is that it was a rational move for the United States to act in such a way; this should not be mistaken for arrogance and hypocrisy, but as indispensable property of the responsibility required of the U.S. as a leader. The United States acted unilaterally but always kept multilateral benefits in mind.

Treaties such as this might look harmless on the surface, to the point that it might lead a sympathetic audience into array; but the fact of the matter is that treaties can also be harmful. If all treaties were effective, all the peace treaties that have been imposed between the Arabs and Israelis would have resulted in harmony in the Middle East. Therefore, one should not be too quick to place judgment whenever the U.S. fails to sign a treaty.

Additionally, treaties do not always affect all parties equally. The Ottawa Treaty might have helped some nations and their people, but what we have to understand is that the United States of America is not like many other nations. It is the only standing superpower in the world; therefore, its responsibility cannot and should not be graded on the same scale as other nations that do not have the same clout as the U.S.

The United States’ responsibility is borderless; rushing into signing treaties for the sake of a glorified reputation under the shadows of soft power is not just dangerous but irresponsible altogether. This treaty does not just affect our national interest both financially and security-wise, but also the flexibility that we heavily depend on in executing our mission around the world — without the entanglement of treaties that will create limitations to our efforts. I am not saying that our decision was perfect, but it was a

quantifiable necessity for the time being in today's reality, until intellectual equality is achieved by all. Besides, it is fair to say that our government did more to save lives than most of those countries that signed the treaty. The critics of the United States need to stop and look at the rational world rather than chasing a signature that is not worth a dime.

Regrettably, the First Gulf War has been and continues to be an endless example of what can be perceived as a decreasing factor to our soft power. The United States and its coalition partners' action in the First Gulf War was a major blow to the United States' image. If there were a better time to change the direction of the traditional political characteristic of the United States, it would have been in 1991 when it was marking the end of the Cold War. But sadly, our tradition got the best out of us, and the political fallout of the Gulf War continues today, because Iraq and the region's complex political history set the condition that has become the bait to United States international relations policy as it was seen both during the Gulf War and in the aftermath of 9/11. How so? Well, "concerns about failed or derelict states, then are nothing new in the history of the United States foreign relations, nor are strategies of preemption in dealing with them."⁵⁷ What is so discouraging is that this is not a behavior that the United States cannot deviate from, when needed and as needed. While soft power theory might sound like the silver bullet today for many of us, it is not a new strategy. As a matter of fact, we had attractive strategies in the past, such as the Marshall Plan, a policy started by George C. Marshall and continued by George F. Kennan.

Indeed, it is important to highlight that the United States is more than capable of implementing soft power. What might seem like a decrease is not necessarily true, because it might be a result of other countries' effective use of soft power. Today, countries like China are not standing on the sidelines. Without going into too much detail, China has proven that we are not "it" any more on the runway that displays soft power. The cooperation of world civilizations took place in China as it hosted the Olympic Games. For anyone who was paying close attention, China's presentation was spectacular in more ways than one. It can be said that this was the best initiation ceremony for China

⁵⁷ Gaddis, *Surprise, Security, and the American Experience*, 21.

to enter the hearts and minds of anyone who might have been blinded by the residue of communism — an ideology that never resonated in the minds of many. China hit the high note, starting at the opening ceremony; they entertained the world with such an amazing performance that was well qualified to be given a standing ovation. China seems to have shown us how powerful soft power is, and it is multidimensional. China is now among the powerful, and its power is not hiding behind a massive military but the energy of national coherence and stability. It is resonating far beyond its boundaries in such a way that is not quantifiable. The fact that no one can quantify China's ability with great accuracy makes it lead in what might be called soft power at its acme.

It is also true that superiority is never liked, but that is if superiority is built by mixing both hard power and soft power. China's superiority is attractive because its soft power was not heavily supported by hard power. Unlike the West, soft power seems to have been used many times as bait, and when not effective, it was followed by hard power or the threat of using hard power. For example, in considering U.S. aid, its intention should have increased United States soft power policy, but U.S. aid is not looked upon as its intention suggests; some countries, such as Cuba, Eritrea, and others around the world — in dire need of aid — are rejecting it.

Moreover, countries such as Egypt are not fond of U.S. aid because it comes with restrictions. The 110th Congress “on February 15, 2007, passed H.J Res 20; the FY 2007 Revised Continuing Appropriations Resolution (P.L. 110-5) Section 20405 of the act rescinds \$200 million in previously appropriated economic assistance to Egypt.”⁵⁸ The congressional action is one example of decreasing soft power at a time when, in reality, increasing soft power is needed the most. If we are to win the global war on terror, we are going to need countries like Egypt to stand at our side and cut aid or handle aid. Restriction is a form of imposition and it is not the way to increase soft power, because imposition used as a tool in diplomatic affairs is irrational. This is not avoiding accountability, but implementing guidelines under the umbrella of partnership. It is important to mention that Iraq was a friend at one time, just as Egypt is now.

⁵⁸ Jeremy M. Sharp, *CRS Report for Congress, Egypt: Background and U.S. Relations* (Washington D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 2007), 13-14.

No one can deny the fact that Egypt was a critical and credible player in most of the United States' diplomatic efforts to stabilize the region, and it continues to play that role today. Now, U.S. lawmakers are changing the policy for the worse, or at least it seems that way. The U.S. should never retreat; it should move forward with more support, which can maximize the economic growth of Egypt. This should be the only option that can lead toward democracy and regional stability. Then, the policy review should state just that, and only that. Perhaps the policy makers should consistently remind themselves of the following points as they keep reducing or shifting aid going to Egypt:

- Egypt was the first Arab country to recognize Israel.
- Egypt supported the U.S. militarily during the first Gulf War.
- Egypt is in a key geographical location.
- Egypt is the most populated Arab state in the region.

There is no nation that crosses its boundaries without self-interest in mind. Clearly, the longevity of the relationship that exists between the United States and Egypt is a testimony of how the alliance between the two countries overcame the communist influence in the region. Now, similar cooperation can be seen as both countries stand side by side in the war against global terrorism. With that said, when it comes to U.S. foreign policy, it should never be a choice between “black or white,” nor “my way or the highway.” It is imperative that, as a superpower, the United States should always base its policies on partnerships with key allies. It is critical that the U.S. practice flexibility in its policies toward Egypt and the like, and not dwell on the definition of democratization. The United States must not forget the uniqueness and importance of this vital ally and its political clout. Therefore:

- Imposition of any sort cannot work.
- Stop imposing democratization and support Egypt in maintaining its political stability.
- Handing out aid should never be used as a tool of imposition, especially for democratization that has no guarantee toward stability.

- The U.S. should continue to aid and support Egypt without any restraints. Help cut off all external pressure, support the government of Egypt, and allow its people to move toward democratization at their own pace...such is the way to increase soft power.

The United States' leadership will not hold any ground unless it masters the art of partnership. If Congress is willing to sacrifice the Egyptian government's stability by reducing aid and handing out whatever is left over with conditions, it will only create friction between the U.S. and the current Egyptian government. If democratization could guarantee stability in Egypt, it would be a risk worth taking; however, reality has not proven this to be so. Egypt is too important an ally for U.S. policy makers to gamble with an ideology that has no guarantee of supporting U.S. interests. Again, soft power is developed by positive attraction, not imposition of any sort.

The United States might be the friend of Egypt, but it is not *the* Friend. Its relations with the outside world are intact — Russia and China are its allies, to name a few. Beyond its geopolitical importance, Egypt has political clout over the rest of the region. Egypt has been the crossroads in the past and continues to be so today. As uncomfortable as it may sound, it is the regimental democracy that is keeping Egypt where it is today. Furthermore, because Egypt is not an extremist-free nation, enforcing democratization might just lead to what we see happening in Palestine today. For the time being at least, the United States should support Egypt as it always has and, if necessary, increase monetary aid in order to help Egypt's economy grow. Then, perhaps, democracy can find its place.

In conclusion, let me just say that it is amazing how far we have come, and even more amazing how fast we are heading into the future of uncertainty. This does not suggest that the present and future are necessarily bad; after all, it is fair to say that we might be witnessing the lowest amount of bloodshed, when compared to the lives that were lost in WWI, WWII, and the Vietnam War. In that sense, the world should celebrate its well-deserved accomplishment in heading toward improving the many social, political, and economic issues of the past. Its intellectual capacity seems to be tipping the scale, which is inherently in proper relative position with soft power as we know it, through the precise definition given by its author, Joseph S. Nye.

Soft power is anything but superficial. In today's international relations, soft power seems to be on the rise globally as an option that is mutually inclusive. This phenomenon is capable of securing its compatibility with globalization, and easily diffused because of the modern technology of communication.

Therefore, our current policy of intensifying hard power can only lead to a short-lived victory in protecting our national interest. Long-lasting success can only come from our diplomatic interaction, backed up by a powerful military force in the background. Perhaps, it is very important that we change the direction/tone of our public diplomacy. Clearly, the world is far from being called a firmament, and it will never become one; but I disagree with post-Cold War theory that says the "conflict between civilizations will be the latest phase in the evolution of conflict in the modern world."⁵⁹ It is simply hard for me to swallow. It is this kind of theory that generates a big "if" in my mind. In addition, when one pays close attention to Samuel Huntington's prediction, and one is under the heavy influence of make-believe propaganda, one can always refer to the many conflicts that have occurred over the past few years. This might suit the reader's predilection if and only if one steers clear of close and careful scrutiny of his exact words.

The Iraq War had nothing to do with Eastern civilization and Western civilization, but there was no doubt that it was a collaboration based on self-interest and interest only. Perhaps I am disagreeing with Huntington because I had to read his theory with the goal of analyzing his work, and I can only wonder how much of an effect this article might have had if it were read solely as a news article. One might think that China and the Middle East are building up their military in order to get ready to challenge a Western civilization, so the West must come together and revamp its power. The reality is that many people do not get the simple fact that the Chinese military is pathetic compared to our military. As for the Middle East, with the exception of Israel, these countries might have the latest toys in their inventory, but I would venture to say that the American Girl Scouts might be seen as a better organized "Army" than those militaries in the Middle

⁵⁹ Samuel Huntington, in Betts, *Conflict after the Cold War*, 34.

East; that is, if you were to consider their organizational skills. Who are we kidding here? It is not just Japan that is becoming more Western now; Westernization is spreading like wildfire all over the world. The Western culture is a culture of convenience, and where there is convenience there are followers; the whole world seems to be following this course.

Prior to the First World War, we can say that Huntington's prediction perhaps would have been more convincing to the audience of that particular generation; he would have been a prophet to us then as we read his masterpiece. The fact of the matter is that the Second World War generation, during FDR and Churchill's administrations in particular, somehow managed to create a reality that they, and the rest of the world, responded to: the Cold War. It was a strategic product of WWII; therefore, post-Cold War theorists have had no choice but to find a replacement to those theories that occupied mankind for so long by coming up with response theories of similar magnitude. Hint: Islam replaces communism, and the mechanism of fear has to be the nuclear development in the hands of others besides the Western powers. Speculations only add to the mumbo jumbo, and terrorism just adds more flavor to the mix.

I wonder now if people like Samuel Huntington would feel the same way if we had the chance to take a walk together inside the largest Wal-Mart, located in China, and to sip on a Starbucks cappuccino near Tiananmen Square. Who would have thought that the guardian of Mecca and Medina and head of Wahhabi Islam would meet with the head of the Catholic Church at the Vatican? The Sudanese government has pardoned an English woman who allowed her students to name a teddy bear "Mohammed." Where in the old days this might have become a deal breaker, it is hard to ignore the situation of the past few months in Pakistan, and the exemplary diplomacy of India's political leaders. To this I can only say that it is partnership at its best. Let us face it — the cooperation of world civilizations took place in China as it hosted the Olympic Games. The beautiful Chinese culture that won the hearts and minds in 2008 is a good example of one of the many hopeful medals awarded for the diffusion of Chinese social and economical progress. I would not dare to mention "politics" in the same sentence, because China seems to have shown us its skills of perfecting international relations to

the point that it gives the word “politics” a totally different meaning. With that in mind, let us just say that it used to be a simple world, with a huge audience and few actors on the stage. Now it seems the other way around, to say the least. It is a vibrant world where all are on the stage; creating an audience from upon the stage depends on how well one dances to the vibrations on that same stage. Isolation is no longer an option, and that leaves very little room for mistakes. We cannot wage a war similar to the wars of the past, such as the First and Second World Wars. Conventional war no longer exists, and I do not think it is an exaggeration to say that in our time, an accident of war with the magnitude of World War Two could well be the end of mankind.

We have many independent nations now that we did not have 40 years ago, and those independent nations are now a lot closer to each other than before; they are dancing to the same music. Therefore, it is very important that we have a clear understanding of this global phenomenon in order to come up with a policy that might be effective. In other words, we need to stop and cut off the pre-Cold War mentality; we need to get with the same program that is helping China and India become so important that we are being forced to come up with a policy specifically designed around them. It is also true that the United States is a military power second to none. The question is: How does one go about defending or attacking a warm handshake and smile? It is difficult to believe, but aren't we now fearful of China's and India's steady growth toward what might possibly undermine the upper hand of the political and economical relevance we have enjoyed for so long? This is not a question of what countries one and two will do, but a question of what the other 192 will do because of those one and two. We can scratch our heads, but carefully, because it might otherwise hurt the deal. We are a bit late in recognizing the possible danger, but there is always room for limiting further damage and keeping a close watch from now on.

This early-to-mid 21st century is the “China-India, facilitate USSR-Uncle Sam” century. The superpowers of the Cold War ruled and dominated more in a psychological manner than what I would call practical. Propaganda and all the fabricated and invisible realities generated so much fear in the minds of many. This eventually ended up in a simple statement from our former president Ronald Reagan when he said, “Mr.

Gorbachev, tear down this wall.”⁶⁰ Believe it or not, only President Reagan could have addressed another head of a superpower state as “Mister” and leave no options for anyone to dare challenge the beloved president’s statement. It is that kind of charisma, so badly needed now more than ever, that might give America the chance to reclaim a position that no nation has dared to challenge.

C. THE ART OF PARTNERSHIP

We ought to implement a policy of partnership and go back to the basics of “live and let live.” In an open and free world, it is the charisma of our leaders and their diplomatic approach that is going to prevail. War is not an answer, nor is it a long-term fix, but a short-lived success. Being everywhere and occupying everywhere should never translate to becoming a universal police force. The shifting of policy is not a bad thing. In fact, we should do that always — move from point A to point B and continue to point C instead of returning to point A. It is okay to carry a big gun, but it is that right hand that needs to be seen extended in peace at all times. Never leave the mark of any sort of animosity, and do not be marked as an enemy.

Yes, we are where we are because of the wars of the past; and yes, the important word here is the word “past.” China’s and India’s strongest offensive weapon is peace, and they are now ahead in the game of partnership. Superiority is never liked, and it only serves to create a magnet for small enemies to attach themselves to our rivals; those are the enemies helping China and India grow. Many people talk about terror as if it were a new phenomenon, but terror did not start with the Arabs of the Middle East. Actually, they are the weakest kind of terrorists. American inner city gang members have more common sense than these current idiots.

China-India is not the problem that we might be facing; it is the world as a whole we need to worry about now. China and India have become the VIPs of third world nations, or shall I say, the small nations that we have forgotten about until now. There is a reason why we have the U.S. African Command that we should have had perhaps 25

⁶⁰ Romesh Ratnesar, *20 Years After Tear Down This Wall* (New York: Time, Inc., 2007), accessed at Time.com on 18 November 2008.

years ago. No one in his or her right mind should be able to sleep now, thinking that we still have the upper hand in world affairs. There is a reason why we are talking about China and India now, and not a few years ago, when many Americans did not even know where these countries were on the map. The only reason the confidence of our society is still bloated is because we are not paying attention to the daily activities of these nations and the great advances they are making. We are not the number one nation in all things any longer. Anyone can see now the fragile nature of our economy as it swings up and down for as simple a reason as the real estate market and the problem with sub-prime loans. Our technology industry is flooded with foreigners and foreign-born citizens. Indians are now tutoring our children over the phone and Internet with their math homework. Wal-Mart is now all over China and will soon be in India. And yes, they are both nuclear-capable countries. And yes, they are the most populated nations in the world. And yes, they have closer ties to the world that we are trying to reach — Africa.

Why are these two a threat to our well-being? Because economic power is a comfort to any society. America needs to stand up and look the bull in the eye, and it is not going to do this with bullets. China is now the America of the 1800s and early 1900s, on the one hand, and perhaps the British Empire without its naval fleet, on the other hand. It must be handled as a partner, at any cost. Our policy must be determined by and suit the culture approached, and this must be accomplished by politicians of great wisdom, not politicians who are good at fundraising events. We do not want money to represent America, but sharp minds who know clearly the art of diplomacy, and who understand that partnership means equality. Extending our hand to help does not mean we have to dictate and control whomever we help; trust and reputation are everything. We have to change our view toward the world; we cannot use the outdated 1930's and 1940's policy with the many independent nations of today, who are in many ways better informed of our culture and our people than we are of theirs. We saw the sun set over the British Empire not too long ago; the espionage games of the Cold War are no more; the world is now getting a lot closer to becoming one, more than the way Huntington assumed it would. We have a better chance of falling into the hands of partnership than of going to war representing a civilization of disjointed policies.

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