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**STILL A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP? THE SIGNIFICANCE
OF UNITED STATES-UNITED KINGDOM RELATIONS
IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY**

by

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December 2011

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STILL A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP? THE SIGNIFICANCE OF UNITED STATES-UNITED KINGDOM RELATIONS IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

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ABSTRACT

The so-called Special Relationship between the United States and the United Kingdom has been a signal feature of the foreign relations of the United States and the United Kingdom, especially in the past ten years of the war against terror. As such, the topic represents an important theme of policy for U.S. officers who serve in the United Kingdom or elsewhere. The present thesis seeks to understand how leading institutions and responsible figures in Britain view the Special Relationship within the contemporary strategic and political context. Furthermore, the thesis analyzes the nature, character, and durability of this strategic idea in UK statecraft from a British perspective in three case studies: a) the Iraqi campaign of 2001–2010; b) the Afghan campaign, 2001–present, and c) the most recent Libyan episode of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization’s (NATO) operations in 2011. In particular, this inquiry comprehends the Special Relationship as a feature of British diplomatic and strategic culture, and as an expression of shared values and institutions the character of which is vital for those charged with service in an Anglo-American context as well as NATO.

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. MAJOR RESEARCH QUESTION

The so called Special Relationship between the United States and the United Kingdom has been a signal feature of the foreign relations of the United States, especially in the past ten years of the war against terror, to say nothing of the world wars in the twentieth century at which time the rivalry between the two nations was replaced by alliance. In mid-2011, President Barack Obama, on a state visit to the United Kingdom, described this connection as the “essential relationship,” a cornerstone of security and peace in the world for decades. Queen Elizabeth II responded with her own toast to the “tried, tested, and—yes—Special Relationship” between the two countries, laying particular emphasis on the U.S.-British alliance of the era of the world wars as well as the Cold war.

How do leading institutions and responsible figures in Britain view the Special Relationship within the contemporary strategic and political context in which war weariness and new challenges after a decade of conflict have made themselves felt amid the world economic crisis? The present thesis seeks to understand the nature, character, and durability of this strategic idea in UK statecraft from a British perspective in three case studies: a.) the Iraqi campaign of 2001–2010; b.) the Afghan campaign, 2001–present, and c.) the most recent Libyan episode of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization’s (NATO) operations in 2011. In particular, this inquiry seeks to understand the Special Relationship as a feature of British diplomatic and strategic culture, and as an expression of shared values and institutions the character of which is vital for those charged with service in an Anglo-American context as well as NATO. This work also examines the critics and opponents of the Special Relationship in British politics amid the particular strains that have manifested themselves in the past decade and more of conflict on various fronts. The center of gravity of the work at hand will be on

an historical analysis of political and strategic culture through values, institutions, and personalities and a contemporary-history perspective on events of yesterday and today in trans-Atlantic relations of the English speaking peoples.

B. IMPORTANCE

On 5 March 1946, Winston Churchill made his *Sinews of Peace* address at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri, more or less unveiling the Atlantic response to what presently became the Cold War and the evolution of U.S.-UK relations in the second half of the twentieth century. In his speech, Churchill made the first references to the Special Relationship. He said: “Neither the sure prevention of war, nor the continuous rise of world organization will be gained without what I have called the fraternal association of the English-speaking peoples. This means a special relationship between the British Commonwealth and Empire and the U.S.”¹ Since the Second World War, relations between the United States and the United Kingdom have set the example for bilateral cooperation and collaboration in the international system of states based on shared values, interests, the need to organize the European system of states and, more recently in face of conflict beyond Europe and North America, in the former British Empire in such places as Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as in Libya, itself a scene of British martial glory in World War II.

The Special Relationship is founded on the cultural and historical connections between the two countries, as Churchill alluded, but also the shared traditions, values, interests, and institutions of a domestic and international nature. The traditions of liberal democracy, rule of law, and common history, alongside the continued cooperation since at least 1941 in defense, security, military, intelligence, and nuclear issues, stand at the very center of what makes this relationship unlike that of such U.S. allies as France, Germany, Japan or Iraq or others. In no small part, the Special Relationship derives from a deliberate British decision more or less since 1941 that deviates from the course of the French and the Germans in the geostrategic system as expressed in their respective

¹ Winston S. Churchill, “The Sinews of Peace Address,” NATO, 5 March 1946, accessed 17 September 2011, http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/1946/s460305a_e.htm.

multilateral relations with the United States and the wider world. In this regard, the Special Relationship is, indeed, special, in the sense of being unique as well as uniquely enduring despite differences of policy and the wear and tear worked by the passage of decades in which other bilateral relationships have frayed and broken.

The ability of this relationship to endure through times of war, peace, and change requires analysis, granted the stresses and strains that have also undermined this relationship not only in the distant past, but the immediate past and present. Additionally, the role of the relationship within such multilateral organizations as the United Nations (UN) and specifically the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is both positive and meaningful to understand the link between domestic politics, values, and international institutions in collective security and collective defense in perpetual crisis.

Therefore, the details of how and why the Special Relationship has evolved in the period 2001–2012—on the basis of the longer relationship—through the wars of Iraq and Afghanistan and the NATO operations in Libya merit attention. Especially the roles of such categories as the political and strategic culture in the Special Relationship and the effects of shared values and interests are most important from a policy perspective for the United States, which, as President Obama’s words suggest, has come to rely on the persistence of this Special Relationship as the crisis-driven twenty-first century continues.

C. PROBLEMS AND HYPOTHESES

The leading basic questions that this research will explore include the following:

- Is the Special Relationship fact or fiction, romanticism or strategy, myth or reality in the twenty-first century, and if it is a myth, who, how and why has it been created and to what ends?
- What is the role of this relationship in U.S.-UK relations in security and defense and how does it reveal itself in the twenty-first century?
- What are the personalities, forces, traditions, interests, and institutions at the heart of the Special Relationship?

- How do critics of Anglo-American relations in the United Kingdom view the Special Relationship, and what of these dissenting views should be of note to makers of U.S. policy?

The Special Relationship is and will continue to be of utmost significance to NATO and to the two partners, as was most powerfully evident in the first half of 2011 with the Libyan campaign, as well as in the Iraqi and Afghan campaigns considered herein. The common values, interests, and institutions shared by the United States and the United Kingdom will be the basis by which the relationship remains close and cooperative. There is no doubt that each of the three case studies detailed in this thesis will reveal certain aspects of the relationship that are negative, as is the nature of any bilateral relationship in the international system where interests diverge apart from rhetoric and tradition. However, this thesis will argue, the staying power of the relationship will remain intact, due to the shared attitudes and interests of the two countries amid a more hostile world in which the power of the West is contested from old and new challenges and threats.

The case studies of Iraq and Afghanistan in the past ten years seek to define the character of the Special Relationship and its role in times of war from a distinctly British perspective. The evolution of British policy and strategy during these two wars and how policy and strategy has changed or has stayed the same in the wake of different personalities and circumstances is of primary importance.

The case study of Libya in 2011 seeks to explore whether the challenge the Western intervention there presents and redefines aspects of the Special Relationship and other NATO partners, i.e. France and Germany? Are there going to be any changes or refinements to the making of strategy, as well as such subordinate themes of alliance cohesion as information sharing, and other operational approaches are taken in the future, especially in light of the U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates having predicted at the start of the Libyan campaign that NATO was on its death bed?

This study will consider, in addition to official policy statement and strategic decisions, the role of personality and collective personalities within the statecraft and policy of the Special Relationship. Just how fraternal is Churchill's association of

English-speaking peoples (whose differences had also inspired some famous quotes attributed to Sir Winston)? And to what extent does it depend on the personal attention of politicians on both sides of “the pond”? Thus, the research will explore leading personalities at the macro-level, for example President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Tony Blair, as a way of analyzing policy and strategy during the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the Libyan operation.

D. LITERATURE REVIEW

The nature and character of the Special Relationship is analyzed here chiefly in an historical treatment from the works of the most important authors in the area of Anglo-American relations. The main authors include John Baylis, D. Cameron Watt, Alan P. Dobson, John Dumbrell, William Roger Louis and Hedley Bull. The main works in the field are: *Anglo-American Defense Relations, 1939–1984: The Special Relationship* by John Baylis; *Anglo-American Relations in the Twentieth Century: of Friendship, Conflict and the Rise and Decline of Superpowers* by Alan P. Dobson; *A Special Relationship: Anglo-American Relations from the Cold War to Iraq* by John Dumbrell; *Succeeding John Bull: America in Britain’s Place, 1900–1975: a Study of the Anglo-American Relationship and World Politics in the Context of British and American Foreign-Policy-Making in the Twentieth Century* by Donald Cameron Watt; and *The “Special Relationship”: Anglo-American Relations Since 1945* by William Roger Louis and Hedley Bull—among a wide literature that is enumerated in detail below.²

Watt’s book, which covers Anglo-American relations from 1900 until 1975, explores the foreign-policy-making groups on each side of the Atlantic, paying particular attention to the “foreign-policy-making elites” (which he studies as an historian and not a

² John Baylis, *Anglo-American Defense Relations 1939–1984*, (New York: St.Martin’s Press, 1984); Alan P. Dobson, *Anglo-American Relations in the Twentieth Century: of Friendship, Conflict and the Rise and Decline of Superpowers*, (Oxon: Routledge,1995); John Dumbrell, *A Special Relationship: Anglo-American Relations from the Cold War to Iraq* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); D. Cameron Watt, *Succeeding John Bull: America in Britain’s Place, 1900–1975: a Study of the Anglo-American Relationship and World Politics in the Context of British and American Foreign-Policy-Making in the Twentieth Century*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984); and William Roger Louis and Hedley Bull, ed., *The “Special Relationship”: Anglo-American Relations Since 1945*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986).

political scientist) and their attitudes and perceptions in policy-making.³ Dumbrell's book speaks to the Special Relationship as a matter of shared culture and addresses "the resilience of the closeness, not its demise" in the early twenty-first century.⁴ Such a generalization speaks to the role of values in the making of foreign policy, a theme that is central to the study at hand and which represents a signal aspect of democracy and security in the past and present as well as a source of contention among critics of such statecraft in their number. The book is significant, as well, because it characterizes the early phase of the Iraq Campaign in 2002–2004 and the personalities involved in both the United States and the United Kingdom in the decision to go to war in 2003.⁵ The discussion of shared values and culture described in the book from an analytical center of gravity in the present study as well as an important area for reflection and analysis among those actively involved in the strategic affairs and operational details of the Special Relationship in the here and now.

Baylis's book provides a part of the necessary background for the thesis by discussing the Special Relationship since the beginning of the Second World War in terms of defense cooperation, which Baylis argues is only one dimension of the relationship—but is one of the shared interests at the very core of the special relationship. Of the four main areas of defense relations, which include (a) The Strategic Relationship, (b) The Technical Relationship, (c) The Operational Relationship, and (d) The Economic/Commercial Relationship, discussed in the book, the focus for this thesis will be on the Political/Strategic Relationship, which includes both the bilateral relations of the U.S.-UK and their relations within the multilateral context, i.e., NATO.⁶

Dobson's book will assist in constructing the basic foundation of the elements of the Special Relationship. Dobson, a senior lecturer at University College Swansea, explores the defense, economic, and foreign policies of the United States and the United Kingdom from around 1900 until 1995 assessing the value and longevity of the

³ Watt, *Succeeding John Bull*, 2–20.

⁴ Dumbrell, *A Special Relationship*, 6.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 154–159, 210–215.

⁶ Baylis, *Anglo-American Defense Relations*, xviii–xix.

relationship to be based on shared beliefs and values.⁷ Along with these other studies, Louis and Bull's book is a necessary volume in the history of U.S.-UK relations. The book includes the historical, economic, and defense aspects of the relationship, with each chapter written by scholars in the field of Anglo-American relations.⁸

The chapter of this thesis that focuses on British politics will be derived from several sources of key import to this chapter will be the 2009–2010 British Parliament's House of Commons report on U.S.-UK relations, which covers the key areas of cooperation within the relationship, the British political approach to UK-U.S. relations, and the future of the relationship. It concludes that the "United Kingdom has an extremely close and valuable relationship with the U.S."⁹ In the same vein, Chatham House's report on *UK Foreign Policy: Statements by the Three Main Political Parties*, from 2010, offers policy highlights from all three major UK political parties, to include party manifestos.

E. METHODS AND SOURCES

The thesis will be written as a contemporary historical study of British policy and strategy; that is, policy analysis through historical monographs as well as works of contemporary history on a more or less scholarly basis, as well as public government documents. This thesis will proceed in a chronological manner, to begin with the Special Relationship in the early twentieth century and continuing through the present day, 2011. To be sure, the major portion of the thesis will be dedicated to the years 2001 through 2011, when the three major cases took place. However, the chronological approach will help illuminate the evolution of the Special Relationship in the last ten years, as well as providing context for the changes that the case studies reveal.

Some relevant and reliable online sources that will be incorporated into the thesis include, but are not limited to, the Chatham House Organization (The Royal Institute of

⁷ Dobson, *Anglo-American Relations in the Twentieth Century*, 168.

⁸ Louis and Bull, *The Special Relationship*, vi–xi.

⁹ Great Britain, *Global Security: UK-US Relations: Government Response to the Committee's Sixth Report of Session 2009-10: Third Special Report of Session 2009-10*. (London: Stationery Office, 2010).

International Affairs, <http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/>), and British public documents to include the Iraq Inquiry (<http://www.iraqinquiry.org.uk/>), which examines British involvement in the War in Iraq and the circumstances leading up to the 2003 invasion. The British political party websites will also be consulted in crafting the thesis: The Conservative Party (<http://www.conservatives.com/>), The Liberal Democratic (LibDems) Party (<http://www.libdems.org.uk/home.aspx>), and the Labour Party (<http://www.labour.org.uk/>).

Such contemporary, mainstream British media sources as the *BBC*, the *Telegraph* (London), the *Times* (London), and the *Independent* (London), will be incorporated into the thesis. Each media outlet has a distinct perspective on domestic politics and foreign relations, given each media outlet's political affiliations, and will provide updated views of each of the political parties as the events in the thesis took place. The *Telegraph* is a politically conservative newspaper, while the *Times*, traditionally a Conservative party supporter, came out for the Labour party during the 2001 and 2005 general elections. In 2010, the *Times* voted for the Conservative party. Although the *Independent* does not pledge its support to any one British political party, the *Independent* leans towards the Liberal Democratic Party.

In addition to the major works cited in the literature review, other authors will be considered on the topic, to include John Lamberton Harper, Wallace J. Thies, Anand Menon, Ryan C. Hendrickson, and William Wallace, in addition to the main scholarly works of John Baylis, John Dumbrell, Alan P. Dobson, D. Cameron Watt, William Roger Louis and Hedley Bull.

F. THESIS OVERVIEW

This thesis is organized into seven chapters. The first chapter consists of the introduction, detailing how the thesis will proceed. The second chapter addresses the historical background of the Special Relationship by briefly examining two periods in U.S.-UK relations: the years 1900 through 2000 and the years 2001 through the present

day, 2011. The second part of the second chapter will discuss the foundations of the Special Relationship, notably the shared values, traditions, and institutions of the United States and the United Kingdom.

The third chapter will address the three major British political parties (Conservatives, Liberal Democrats, and Labour) and the British perspective on the Special Relationship. British domestic politics is linked to the foreign policy decisions of the government of the United Kingdom and is therefore necessary to discuss in relation to the Special Relationship.

Chapters IV through VI will explore the cases of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Libya, respectively, by examining the relevant events and personalities in the United States and the United Kingdom and tracing the changing (and unchanging) aspects of the special relationship from the British perspective. Exploring how the values, traditions, and interests have evolved or remained the same throughout the three cases is of utmost significance.

The final chapter/conclusion will focus on the British perspective of the special relationship to discuss the similarities and differences between the three case studies, address how the special relationship has evolved, and address how and why the special relationship will endure in the twenty-first century from the point of view of the British.

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II. HISTORY OF THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP

A. INTRODUCTION

On 5 March in 1946, Winston Churchill made his *Sinews of Peace Address* at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri. He thereby made the first reference to the Special Relationship. He said: “Neither the sure prevention of war, nor the continuous rise of world organization will be gained without what I have called the fraternal association of the English-speaking peoples. This means a special relationship between the British Commonwealth and Empire and the United States.”¹⁰ Although U.S.-UK diplomatic relations as sovereign nation states can be traced to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Churchill’s speech and coining of the phrase Special Relationship solidified the post war bilateral relationship between the United States and the United Kingdom into the Euro-Atlantic and International system of states in a manner that contrasted with the discord that operated in the era after 1919 until 1941.

The Special Relationship has been a partnership built on common values and institutions between the two nation-states, to include cultural, economic, political, diplomatic, security, and military facets and aspects. The Special Relationship has not always had an easy road to travel given the circumstances of war, peace, and change over the last century in which the United Kingdom lost its empire and the United States acquired a sphere of influence and a role of leadership in the era of total war. After the Second World War, the Special Relationship became closer for a number of reasons, one of which was the threat posed by the Soviets to Euro-Atlantic security. It was during this time that Britain proved to be “one of the most stalwart of America’s European allies” and moreover, “the one best-placed to support the United States within and outside the Atlantic area.”¹¹ However, with the cooling of the Cold War, the fall of the Berlin Wall,

¹⁰ Churchill, “The Sinews of Peace Address.”

¹¹ Great Britain, *Global Security: UK-U.S. Relations*, 11; Dumbrell, *The Special Relationship*, 4.

and the end of the communism on the European continent, the post-modern world has created a new international order in which new allies and adversaries challenge the long-standing Special Relationship.

This thesis analyzes the Special Relationship as an unparalleled bilateral relationship between two of the most powerful nation-states in the world with a common history of cooperation over one hundred years in the making. The shared traditions, values, institutions, and personalities form the foundation for the analysis, depicting the very essence of the Special Relationship in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The Special Relationship under the leadership of President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Tony Blair during the Iraq Conflict provides a worthwhile case study detailing a period of time wherein U.S.-UK relations were tested and tried in both the Euro-Atlantic and International arenas. The British perceptions of the relationship during the period of 2003 through 2007 reflect both favorable and unfavorable critiques as well as notions of the greater European anti-Americanism, primarily the French and British variant, which have revealed the strength of the Special Relationship in the midst of negative attitudes and perspectives toward the United States. Despite the claims of U.S. unilateralism, protectionism, and isolationism, the Special Relationship endures as an example of a successful partnership that remains an integral and fundamental part of Euro-Atlantic and International relations.

B. BACKGROUND ON THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP: TRADITIONS, VALUES, INSTITUTIONS, AND PERSONALITIES

The Special Relationship is founded on a rich history of shared values, traditions, and institutions in which personalities have played an exceptionally important role in how the partnership has been conducted and how it has operated throughout the history of the Special Relationship. The ideals and values of democracy, individual rights, rule of law, and free will all account for the primary foundation upon which the Special Relationship has been built upon.

The Special Relationship is a unique partnership built on common values and ideals that span a number of ties and connections across the board from cultural and

historical ties to security and defense related connections and institutions. These common values became the cornerstone for the Special Relationship and thus, for the institutions created and shared by the United States and the United Kingdom which reflected these values, to include the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and the United Nations (UN), among others.¹²

With its origins in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries through the relations between the United States and Britain, the Special Relationship of the modern era came into existence during the Second World War and was formally recognized in Churchill's address, *Sinews of Peace*. The interactions between Churchill and President Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR) during the Second World War revealed the true nature of the modern Special Relationship and how personalities, policies, and agreements played an important role in establishing the partnership and how it would proceed from this period onward. An example of Churchill and FDR's cooperation is detailed in John Lamberton Harper's book, *American Visions of Europe*, wherein U.S.-UK relations are characterized by the bilateral agreements signed by the two leaders in an effort to combat the threats that affected both countries.¹³ These included the Quebec Agreement and the Hyde Park Agreement, which dealt with the exchange of information regarding atomic power.¹⁴

The historical character and nature of the Special Relationship is of particular interest. In the late 1890s, a series of events occurred, to include the Boer and Spanish American Wars, which let Britain and the World know that the United States wanted its own place in the International arena as well as demonstrated that the place of the British Empire was far from certain on the eve of the twentieth century. After the First World War and most certainly after the Second World War, there was a shift of power from the British to the Americans making the Americans the dominant partner in U.S.-UK relations.

¹² See Ian Q.R. Thomas, *The Promise of Alliance: NATO and the Political Imagination*, (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 1997); Wallace J. Thies, *Friendly Rivals: Bargaining and Burden-Shifting in NATO*, (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 2003); and Ryan C. Hendrickson, *Diplomacy and War at NATO: The Secretary General and Military Action after the Cold War* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2006).

¹³ John Lamberton Harper, *American Visions of Europe* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 109–111.

¹⁴ Harper, *American Visions of Europe*, 109–111.

Dr. Robin Niblett of Chatham articulated this point, in 2009, in his written testimony to the House of Commons on the basis and nature of the UK-U.S. relationship. He stated “successive British Governments realized that they no longer had the capacity to protect or project British interests around the world, and acquiesced in the replacement of Britain by the United States as the world’s dominant power.”¹⁵ Furthermore, “the United Kingdom believed that the most direct threat to British and European security—that of the Soviet military aggression and/or political subversion—could only be confronted if the United States were tightly woven into a transatlantic alliance whose principal focus was the defense of Europe and the broader Atlantic community.”¹⁶

The First World War made the United States from a debtor into a creditor, and rendered the multilateral issue of war debts among the victors and the defeated into an issue of statecraft, which equated financial power to world power.¹⁷ The United States provided countries in need with money and when the war was over, Britain, among others, was indebted to the United States.¹⁸ During the Second World War, the United States was once again the provider of loans to countries who required funds, thereby, establishing the U.S.’s place in the international arena through financial power.¹⁹

In 1919, in the period following the First World War, “Anglo-American relations had been cool and often suspicious,” according to British historian, David Reynolds.²⁰ Reynolds sums up the period of the 1920s and 1930s quite succinctly by stating, “America’s ‘betrayal’ of the League of Nations was only the first in a series of U.S. actions—over war debts, naval rivalry, the 1931–1932 Manchurian crisis, and the Depression—that convinced British leaders that the United States could not be relied

¹⁵ Great Britain, *Global Security: UK-US Relations*, 11.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Kathleen Burk, “Old World, New World: Great Britain and America from the beginning,” in *America’s ‘Special Relationships’: Foreign and Domestic Aspects of the Politics of Alliance*, edited by John Dumbrell and Axel R. Schafer (Oxon: Routledge, 2009), 34.

¹⁸ Burk, “Old World, New World,” 34.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ David Reynolds, “1940: Fulcrum of the Twentieth Century?,” *International Affairs*, 66:2 (1990), 331.

upon.”²¹ However, the result of events in 1940, namely the realization by the British that fighting a war alone was not an option and a closer relationship with the United States was necessary for a favorable outcome.²²

The Second World War began a tradition of junior and senior partners in an alliance, as was portrayed by the role of the Americans and British in military and policy making circles as well as between the personalities in command both politically and militarily.²³ The example of George Marshall and Ernest Bevin in the founding of NATO along with the role of U.S. Secretary of State Dean Acheson in supporting the transatlantic alliance loom large in the bonds established by the United States and United Kingdom not only in a transatlantic alliance of junior to senior partner, but in the makings of new institutions based on the principles of the Special Relationship.²⁴ The role of the United States as the senior partner became solidified through the events of the 1950s–1970s and has continued as such until the present day.

During the Second World War, the “Anglo-American cooperation grew out of a sense of shared threat and mutual need.”²⁵ The shared traditions between both countries aided in solidifying the alliance. A shared tradition of liberal, capitalist democracy and a shared language were some of these traditions.²⁶ During the Cold War era, the United States–UK relationship continued to flourish given the fact that the United States and the United Kingdom were diametrically opposed to the Soviet Union and communism. They continued cooperating in the sphere intelligence with the signed of the UK-U.S. Agreement of 1947, in addition to “naval cooperation and alliance on the ground in the

²¹ David Reynolds, “1940: Fulcrum of the Twentieth Century,” 331.

²² *Ibid.*, 332.

²³ Mark A. Stoler, *Allies and Adversaries: The Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Grand Alliance, and U.S. Strategy in World War II*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2000), 120–122.

²⁴ Thies, *Friendly Rivals*, 46.

²⁵ David Reynolds, “Roosevelt, Churchill, and the Wartime Anglo-American Alliance, 1939–1945: Towards a New Synthesis,” in William Roger Louis and Hedley Bull, ed., *The ‘Special Relationship’: Anglo-American Relations since 1945* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1986), 39.

²⁶ Reynolds, “Roosevelt, Churchill, and the Wartime Anglo-American Alliance,” 39.

Korean War.”²⁷ U.S. air bases in the United Kingdom that served as “staging posts to re-supply American forces in Germany as well as for conventional and nuclear bombers to deter a Soviet advance across Germany, made the United Kingdom a crucial factor in maintaining a link between the North American continent and the renewed U.S. commitment to European defense.”²⁸ The United Kingdom provided the “geographic as well as political ‘bridge’ between the American and European continents, holding the newly-imagined Atlantic Community together.”²⁹

While British scholars such as John Dumbrell promote the notion of a parent-and-child relationship to describe the Special Relationship, such others as Douglas Hurd, the former British Foreign Secretary, prefer to characterize the Special Relationship as one of partners, where each partner has a role as either the junior or senior partner.^{30,31} The idea of the Special Relationship as a partnership of junior to senior is of utmost importance in the twenty-first century, given the circumstances surrounding the Special Relationship during the Iraq War, specifically with the advent of the perception of the British government as a “poodle” to the U.S. administration and how personalities played into this perception.³²

Although the role of personalities forms only one part of the greater Special Relationship, such personalities play a central role in how the alliance is carried out through the events and crises it has repeatedly faced. In 2006, the British Secretary of State for Defense, Liam Fox, characterized the Special Relationship with the following:

The story of the Special Relationship can be depicted in light and attractive colors: the triumph of noble ideals, sacrifices rewarded, friendships forged and not forgotten. Together, America and Britain have

²⁷ William Wallace and Tim Oliver, “A Bridge Too Far: The United Kingdom and the Transatlantic Relationship,” in David M. Andrews, ed., *The Atlantic Alliance Under Stress: US-European Relations after Iraq* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 154.

²⁸ Wallace and Oliver, *A Bridge Too Far*, 155.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ John Dumbrell, “Hating Bush, supporting Washington: George W. Bush, anti-Americanism and the U.S.-UK special relationship” in *America’s ‘Special Relationships’: Foreign and Domestic Aspects of the Politics of Alliance*, ed., John Dumbrell and Axel R. Schafer (Oxon: Routledge, 2009), 47-48.

³¹ Great Britain, *Global Security: UK-US Relations*, 63.

³² Ibid., 6.

helped remake much of the world in the image of liberty and democracy. The rule of law, rights of property, respect for individual rights—these formative ideas have transformed the prospects of nations that lived in the darkness of fear and despair.³³

One of the essential elements of the “Special Relationship,” as described by Fox was that of “friendships forged and not forgotten.”³⁴ This idea of friendships leads to an important aspect of the U.S.-UK relationship, which is that of personalities. Throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, personalities on both sides of the Atlantic have had a positive effect and lasting impression on the relationship. Close friendships and working alliances between the countries’ leaders have been one of the hallmarks of the U.S.-UK relationship.

Among the most notable personalities that depicted the Special Relationship after Churchill and FDR, were Prime Minister Anthony Eden and President Dwight D. Eisenhower; Prime Minister Harold MacMillan and President John F. Kennedy; Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and President Ronald Reagan; Prime Minister Tony Blair and Presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush.^{35,36}

The events of 9/11 marked a turning point in the history of the Special Relationship. The war in Afghanistan and the subsequent war in Iraq were especially difficult on the Special Relationship both domestically and internationally. Throughout the aftermath of 9/11, the Special Relationship has undergone serious scrutiny from both sides of the Atlantic and from allies and enemies in the International arena. The case of Bush and Blair during the Iraq War illuminate how the traditions, values, institutions, and personalities of the Special Relationship cooperate and collaborate during one of the most important yet critiqued and televised events in modern Euro-Atlantic history.

³³ Liam Fox, “Security and Defense: Making Sense of the Special Relationship,” *Heritage Lectures*, 939 (Washington, D.C.: Heritage Foundation, 2006), 2.

³⁴ Fox, *Security and Defense*, 2.

³⁵ John Dumbrell, *A Special Relationship: Anglo-American Relations from the Cold War to Iraq* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 5.

³⁶ Tim Shipman, “History of Britain’s special relationship with America,” *The Telegraph*, 1 March 2009, accessed 2 September 2011, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/northamerica/usa/4885895/History-of-Britains-special-relationship-with-America.html>.

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III. POLITICAL PARTIES OF THE UNITED KINGDOM

A. INTRODUCTION

The three leading political parties in the United Kingdom, are also the largest, and these comprise the Conservative Party, the Labour Party, and the Liberal Democrat Party. This chapter treats the parties' histories, along with their 2010 party manifestos, foreign policy philosophies, and postures on global security and reform of the international system. Such material is essential to understand these main political parties and their role in the British domestic and international political system. These factors ultimately affect the foreign policies and actions of the British government in bilateral relations and are essential for analysis by a U.S. officer entrusted with the execution of security and defense affairs. The British Parliament as the queen of all parliaments, and like the U.S. Congress, is center of the United Kingdom's democratic institution of government, and inevitably plays an important role in the decision-making and policy-making institutions of the government with international effects of the most profound kind.

The United Kingdom is the world's oldest parliamentary democracy. At the basis of any parliamentary system of government are the political parties that vie for positions of power throughout that system.³⁷ Political parties are particularly important in the United Kingdom's government, given that political parties in the United Kingdom are domestically, regionally, and internationally focused.³⁸ Domestic politics and policy in the United Kingdom play a special role in the realization of international politics. Furthermore, the three major political parties of the United Kingdom, the Conservative Party, the Labour Party, and the Liberal Democrat Party are of importance to the

³⁷ Michael Gallagher, Michael Laver, and Peter Mair, *Representative Government in Modern Europe: Institutions, Parties, and Governments* (New York: McGraw Hill, 2006), 187–189.

³⁸ The Royal Institute of International Affairs (RUSI) Chatham House, *Rethinking the UK's International Ambitions and Choices: UK Foreign Policy: Statements by the Three Main Political Parties* (London: Chatham House, August 2010), 2–14.

discussion of the Special Relationship, given their ability to affect foreign policy decisions, by detailing each party's primary preferences and stances towards the United States.³⁹

B. THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY

The Conservative Party is the “oldest political party in the world” and has its origins in the seventeenth century, under the Tories.⁴⁰ In the mid-1830s, Sir Robert Peel “reinterpreted key elements of the Tory tradition to create the modern Conservative Party, and led a reforming government” which brought in social reforms.⁴¹ In the 1860s, Benjamin Disraeli further reformed the Conservative Party by adding “national and social unity to the Party's fundamental purposes.”⁴² Under Lord Salisbury and Alfred Balfour, the Conservative Party was reformed again and focused on “empowering individuals and communities.”⁴³

In the twenty-first century, the Conservative Manifesto proposes the following:

A stronger Britain in a safer world: A Conservative government will defend our national security and support our brave Armed Forces in everything they do. We will promote our national interest with an active foreign policy. We will work constructively with the EU, but we will not hand over any more areas of power and we will never join the Euro. We will honor our aid commitments and make sure this money works for the poorest nations.⁴⁴

William Hague, the current British First Secretary and Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, presented the five key tenets for future Conservative

³⁹ The Royal Institute of International Affairs (RUSI) Chatham House, *Rethinking the UK's International Ambitions and Choices: UK Foreign Policy: Statements by the Three Main Political Parties*, (London: Chatham House, August 2010), 2–14.

⁴⁰ “History of the Conservatives,” Conservative Party, accessed 31 October 2011, http://www.conservatives.com/People/The_History_of_the_Conservatives/Origins.aspx.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ “The Conservative Manifesto 2010: Invitation to Join the Government of Britain,” Conservative Party, 13 April 2010, accessed 31 October 2011, <http://www.conservatives.com/Policy/Manifesto.aspx>, 103.

foreign policy in a number of speeches between 2007 and 2010, “A major reform of decision-making in foreign policy, a renewed commitment to the transatlantic alliance, the cementing of relationships with old allies and the elevation of links with new partners, the reform and development of international institutions, including the European Union, and the upholding of our values.”⁴⁵ Throughout his speeches in 2009 and 2010, Hague revealed his major commitment to the transatlantic alliance.

Regarding the topic of global security and reform of the international system on the nature of twenty-first century power and threats, the Conservative Party states,

We no longer inhabit a world in which foreign and defense issues can be separated from domestically-generated threats. Instead we live in a world in which dangers, events and actions abroad are independent with threats to our security at home. We must meet the threats we face with a concerted response from the state. That response cannot just come from how we conduct our foreign affairs, or organize our defense and internal security - it must cut across energy, education, community cohesion, health, technology, international development and the environment too.⁴⁶

Conservative party members who served in British government positions during the last ten years include David Cameron, the current Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, who assumed office on 11 May 2010 and also serves as the current Leader of the Conservative Party, and William Hague, British First Secretary and Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs from 10 May 2010 until the present.

C. THE LABOUR PARTY

In 1900, “working people, trade unionists, and socialists, united by the goal of changing the British Parliament to represent the interests of everybody,” founded the

⁴⁵ Chatham House, 6. William Hague’s quotation, which is detailed above is documented in the Chatham House document on page 6, along with additional information on speeches given in 2007 and 2009. The information on the speeches are cited verbatim from the Chatham House document: “William Hague, *The Foreign Policy Framework of a New Conservative Government*, speech at the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), London, 10 March 2010. For an earlier exposition of the five themes see: William Hague, *The Future of British Foreign Policy with a Conservative Government*,’ speech at the International Institute for Strategic Studies, London, 21 July 2009 and William Hague, *Thinking Ahead: The Foreign Policy Of The Next Conservative Government*,’ speech at Chatham House, London, 31 January 2007.”

⁴⁶ “The Conservative Manifesto 2010.”

Labour Party as part of the socialist movement of the late nineteenth century in the wake of industrialization and the failures of liberals in the second half of the same century.⁴⁷ Throughout the last one hundred years, the Labour Party has been involved in the “establishment of the National Health Service, the enshrining in law of equality of opportunity for all and the creation and maintenance of an empowering welfare state.”⁴⁸ The Labour party also played a central role in the anti-communism of the early Cold War, and the foundation of the Atlantic alliance. As such, it has a major stake in the special relationship begun under the conservative Winston Churchill.

In the twenty-first century, the Labour Party is committed to “the challenge for Britain: To harness our strengths and values, as we develop Britain’s world role in a global era, using our alliances and networks in order to promote security, economic prosperity, development and to safeguard the environment.”⁴⁹ With respect to the Foreign Policy philosophy of the Labour Party, Gordon Brown’s speech in 2007 highlights the party’s philosophy of “hard-headed internationalism.”⁵⁰ Brown stated that his approach was

... internationalist because global challenges need global solutions and nations must cooperate across borders - often with hard-headed intervention - to give expression to our shared interests and shared values; - hard-headed because we will not shirk from the difficult long term decisions and because only through reform of our international rules and institutions will we achieve concrete, on-the-ground results.⁵¹

On the topic of global security and reform of the international system, the Labour party contends the following: “Human rights and democracy are a central feature of our foreign policy for a simple reason—we believe human rights are universal and it is the

⁴⁷ “History of the Labour Party,” Labour Party, accessed 31 October 2011, http://www.labour.org.uk/history_of_the_labour_party.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ “The Labour Election Manifesto 2010: A Future Fair for All,” Labour Party, 12 April 2010, accessed 24 October 2011, <http://www.labour.org.uk/uploads/TheLabourPartyManifesto-2010.pdf>, 66.

⁵⁰ Chatham House, 2.

⁵¹ Ibid.

job of strong and mature democracies to support the development of free societies everywhere—while upholding our own legal and moral obligations.”⁵²

Labour Party members who served in British government positions during the last ten years include Tony Blair, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, who was in office from 2 May 1997 until 27 June 2007, during which time he served as the leader of the Labour Party; Gordon Brown, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, who was in office from 27 June 2007 until 11 May 2010, when he served as the leader of the Labour Party; and David Miliband, the UK Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, who was in office from 28 June 2007 to 11 May 2010 and had previously served as the United Kingdom Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

D. THE LIBERAL DEMOCRAT PARTY

The Liberal Democrat Party originated in 1988 with the merger between the Liberal Party and the Social Democratic Party.⁵³ The Liberal party has a long tradition in British politics, reaching back to the early nineteenth century. The Liberal Democrat Party is considered to be the center party between the Conservative and Labour parties. In 2010, the Liberal Democrat Party manifesto stated, “Britain must work together with our partners abroad if we are to have the best hope of meeting the challenges the world faces. We believe in freedom, justice, prosperity and human rights for all and will do all we can to work towards a world where these hopes become reality.”⁵⁴

The Liberal Democrat Party is “wary of the implications of a ‘subservient relationship with the United States.,’” an attitude that recalls a school of policy in British statecraft since at least the Suez debacle in 1956 when the United States could be said to have pulled the rug out from under its Anglo-Saxon ally over Nasser and the canal.⁵⁵ In 2010, in a speech at Chatham House, Liberal Democrat Nick Clegg suggested that “what

⁵² Labour Party Manifesto, 68; also cited in Chatham House’s document.

⁵³ David Boothroyd, *Politico’s Guide to the History of British Political Parties* (London: Politico’s Publishing, 2001), 145.

⁵⁴ “Liberal Democrat Election Manifesto 2010: Change that works for you. Building a Fairer Britain,” Liberal Democrat Party, 14 April 2010, accessed 31 October 2011, 56.

⁵⁵ Chatham House, 10.

Britain requires is “self-confidence, a rebalanced partnership with the United States, a repatriated foreign policy which is in British interests alone, articulated through a strong, united and forceful EU.”⁵⁶

Regarding global security and reform of the international system, the Liberal Democrat party manifesto proposal states it will

... support efforts to create an International Arms Trade Treaty; will establish a ‘code of conduct’ for arms brokers; propose a ‘full judicial inquiry into allegations of British complicity in torture and state kidnapping’; the only party to rule out military action in Iran, instead placing an emphasis on diplomatic engagement; and committed to the two-state solution for Israel-Palestine, and acting through the EU to ‘put pressure on Israel and Egypt to end the blockade of Gaza.’⁵⁷

Liberal Democrat Party members who served in British government positions during the last ten years include Nicholas “Nick” Clegg, the current Deputy Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, who assumed office on 11 May 2010 and also serves as Lord President of the Council, Minister for Constitutional and Political Reform, and as leader of the Liberal Democrat Party, and Edward Davey, who assumed office on 20 May 2010 as the UK Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

E. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the Conservative Party, the Labour Party, and the Liberal Democrat Party together provide an invaluable service to the British government and its people by the articulation of their party platforms and manifestos. Each parties’ attention to domestic, regional, and international issues provides the necessary foundation from which the British government and its people are able to identify and coalesce those aspects of international policy, security, and defense each are willing to agree on and feel the government should participate in to function coherently and comprehensively, according to the norms of British politics and society.

⁵⁶ Chatham House, 10.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 11.

Political parties are an important part of British policy and statecraft in which parties are able to affect the international world order and most specifically, in this case, that of the Special Relationship. Whether the British government and its people choose to support or challenge the status quo of an agreement or alliance is, for the most part, in the hands of the political parties who are able to garner the support needed for such an action.

The most recent example of the political parties ability to affect international norms and alliances came in May 2010, when newly appointed Prime Minister David Cameron and Deputy Prime Minister Clegg signed the Coalition Agreement, a combined Conservative party and Liberal Democrat party program for the British government for the next five years.⁵⁸ In the Coalition Agreement, relations between the United Kingdom and the United States are among the ten priorities in the Foreign Affairs portion of the document.⁵⁹ The intent of the current British government is on maintaining “a strong, close, and frank relationship with the United States.”⁶⁰ The acknowledgement by the two parties of the British Coalition government is an indication of the continued commitment of the United Kingdom in the Special Relationship with the United States and furthermore, an indication of the power of political parties in Britain.

58 “The Coalition: Our Programme for Government,” Liberal Democrats, Crown Copyright; Publication Date May 2010, accessed 15 August 2011, http://www.libdems.org.uk/coalition_agreement.aspx, 1–35.

59 “The Coalition Agreement.”

60 Ibid.

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IV. IRAQ

A. INTRODUCTION

On 20 March 2003, the United States and the United Kingdom invaded Iraq opening a new and troubling chapter in the Special Relationship. The invasion was based on official allegations of Iraq's ability to employ weapons of mass destruction (WMD) (later disproven by fact), which inevitably posed a direct threat to the United States and the United Kingdom in the post 11 September 2001 cosmos of war and peace. The Iraq War, which defied the efforts of United States and United Kingdom planners to predict its outcome, prove to be a pivotal event in the history of the Special Relationship. Exploring some British perceptions of the Special Relationship during the Iraq War gives a view of the Special Relationship from the standpoint of the junior partner, which supported the senior partner resolutely through an unpopular war from the standpoint of the British public.

The protraction and problems of the Iraq War placed a heavy burden on the Special Relationship. In this chapter, the Special Relationship will be revealed from the viewpoint of the Blair-Bush Relationship, the Brown-Bush Relationship, and the inquiries conducted by the Government of the United Kingdom from 2009 and 2010. Those inquiries addressed the nature, perceptions, and role of the Special Relationship during the Iraq War.

B. THE BLAIR-BUSH RELATIONSHIP

In the wake of the bin Laden assault on the United State's east coast, the Special Relationship became closer. Prime Minister Blair's understanding of the trauma and impact of 9/11 on the American people and his shared vision of democracy in the Middle East to be achieved by defusing the fundamentalist Islamic threat, made the Blair-Bush bond closer than the era of accord of the Blair-Clinton bond.⁶¹ According to the

⁶¹ Jane M.O. Sharp. Tony Blair, Iraq, and the Special Relationship: Poodle or Partner? *International Journal* 59, no. 1 (2003/2004): 62.

Telegraph, Blair and Bush agreed on the issues of terrorism and Iraq and reported “Britain’s support has never been more appreciated.”⁶² In the same article, however, the *Telegraph* reported that the failures of Blair to “win favors from Washington in return did more to undermine the Special Relationship in the eyes of the British public than anything else since Suez.”⁶³ Although it is clear that Blair was doing his best to support Bush in what was understood as an international threat, his domestic support was dwindling for various reasons and his ability effectively to act as a partner in a bilateral relationship was questioned, both during his time in office and after.

According to John Dumbrell, “Blair’s commitment to Washington’s War on Terror was controversial and highly personal. The Special Relationship, however, provided the context for the commitment.”⁶⁴

1. The “Inevitable” United Kingdom Support for War

Various British scholars have argued the word “inevitable” should not be used in the case of British support to the United States. They state that the idea of British support to the War in Iraq as “inevitable” is incorrect and misleading given the case of the Falklands/Malvinas War in 1982, an event that had slipped from the minds of most but illustrated the Reagan Thatcher chapter of the Special Relationship three decades ago. During the Falklands/Malvinas war, the United States did not initially support British military objectives, citing the conflict as a modern manifestation of Britain’s imperial past and also as a manifestation of divergences within the U.S. foreign policy establishment, especially between the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, Jeanne Kirkpatrick, as a leading Latin Americanist, and U.S. Secretary of Defense Caspar

⁶² Tim Shipman, “History of Britain’s special relationship with America,” *The Telegraph*, 1 March 2009, accessed 2 September 2011, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/northamerica/usa/4885895/History-of-Britains-special-relationship-with-America.html>, 1–3.

⁶³ *The Telegraph*, 3.

⁶⁴ John Dumbrell. “Working with Allies: The United States, the United Kingdom, and the War on Terror,” *Politics & Policy* 34, no. 2 (2006): 457.

Weinberger as a representative in said epoch of the Special Relationship.⁶⁵ During that time, the Reagan administration's Latin Americanist faction was vying for neutrality and therefore was not willing to get involved in the conflict.⁶⁶ It was only later in the conflict that the United States sided with the United Kingdom due to its military and intelligence agreements, but the United States did not send ground troops to assist the British military in the Falkands.⁶⁷ Another factor in 1982 was the question of NATO cohesion at the time of the intermediate nuclear forces crisis, at which time the humiliation of the United Kingdom would have damaged NATO in the face of Soviet missiles.

The Falklands/Malvinas War revealed the inability of the United Kingdom to act independently from the United States in its own conflicts. However, given the realization of U.S. support during the Falklands war, neither the United Kingdom nor the United States, given the United Kingdom's lack of support during the Vietnam conflict, were to assume either would necessarily come to the other's rescue or assistance during a conflict or war.⁶⁸ In the post Cold-War environment of the 1990s, and especially in the twenty-first century, the Special Relationship would be strikingly different from what it had been during the Vietnam and Falklands/Malvinas wars.

Given the result of the Falklands/Malvinas War, support by the United States to the United Kingdom was not inevitable. Therefore, the question of why the United Kingdom became involved in supporting the war in Iraq, in 2003 is of importance. The personal level of the Special Relationship is that Blair's support to the United States was part of his own understanding of UK policy towards the United States⁶⁹ Although the U.S. would be recognized the world over as the principal ally of the United Kingdom, the relationship does not stipulate that the United Kingdom will respond automatically at the least demand by the U.S. to support its national objectives.⁷⁰

⁶⁵ John Dumbrell, *A Special Relationship: Anglo-American Relations from the Cold War to Iraq* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006) 188.

⁶⁶ Dumbrell, "Working with Allies," 461.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Dumbrell, *A Special Relationship*, 187.

⁶⁹ Dumbrell, "Working with Allies," 462.

⁷⁰ Dumbrell, *A Special Relationship*, 188.

2. Blair's Mission, Priorities, and Perceptions

The United Kingdom supported the United States in the second Gulf War of 1990–1991, in the intervention in Afghanistan in 2001–2, and in the Iraq campaign in 2003. Blair's own mission, priorities, and perceptions of the Global War on Terror and, in this case, the Iraq War, were indicative of the practice of the Special Relationship, both domestically and internationally. Blair proved his loyalty at home as an ardent supporter of the U.S., and internationally, most notably, by the consistent support to the United States in the UN Security Council in a decisive phase when the French defected to the German-Russian pact against the Bush policies.⁷¹

The Special Relationship continued to endure at the practical and operational level throughout the years; even when at times the strategic and personal levels were not at their best. Dumbrell points to the facet of military and intelligence cooperation within the greater Special Relationship as an important part of the relationship, but plainly not the reason for fighting wars on each other's behalf.⁷² Furthermore, Dumbrell states, "Bureaucratic intertwining reinforces mutual cooperation. Yet intelligence sharing does not lead automatically to providing military support, especially in the extremely controversial circumstances of the 2003 Iraqi invasion."⁷³ Therefore, there needs to be another reason for the level of involvement by the United Kingdom in the Global War on Terror. The explanation lies in Blair himself and his idea of statecraft, intervention and the attempt to advance the interests of United Kingdom in the face of the French and the Germans within the EU.

In explaining why Blair supported the United States for the Iraqi invasion, Dumbrell, and others, contend that it was a matter that "can only be explained in highly personal terms."⁷⁴ Blair's policy "reflected his personal interpretation of 'Special Relationship' responsibilities."⁷⁵ Blair's policy, therefore, was founded on the notion

⁷¹ Dumbrell, "Working with Allies," 459.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 461.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 462.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

that “British interests are best served by closeness between Britain and the United States.”⁷⁶ As had been the case before, when speaking to the closeness of the Special Relationship and what the benefits were for the United Kingdom, Dumbrell states, “proximity to power allows Britain ‘to punch above its international weight.’”⁷⁷ And this fact contrasts with the policies of Schroeder and Chirac in league with Putin in the years 2002–2003, as well as the earlier episode of French-German ambivalence to Atlanticism in the 1960s and 1970s.

However, British policymakers have seen “British influence as a good in itself; not only in terms of Britain’s global profile, but also in terms of substantive impacting [sic] on U.S. policy.”⁷⁸ During the War on Terror, including the invasion of Iraq, Blair “saw strong British involvement in all aspects as a good in itself.”⁷⁹ This “faith in the inherent benefits of British influence, extending beyond any narrow definition of the ‘British interest,’ is a persistent, almost defining feature in British views of the Special Relationship.”⁸⁰

In the case of the Iraq War in 2003, the goal of the U.S. was regime change, “whereby evidence or the lack of it, regarding the existence of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction or of any connection between Baghdad and 9/11, was secondary.”⁸¹ Blair’s priorities, however, were to “support America, to push Washington away from unilateralism and, if at all possible, to bring British and Western European opinion behind Washington.”⁸²

⁷⁶ Dumbrell, “Working with Allies,” 462.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Dumbrell, “Working with Allies,” 462.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 463.

⁸¹ Dumbrell, *A Special Relationship*, 155.

⁸² Ibid.

Yet, another reason for Blair's support came from "his personal conviction that Saddam Hussein's regime was a threat to global security."⁸³

Blair's own perceptions of the Special Relationship during this time and the perceived "reasoning behind Blair's reaction to Bush's reaction to 9/11 was complex" and of utmost importance to defining the Special Relationship.⁸⁴ There were three parts to Blair's reasoning which were—(1) serving as the "Atlantic Bridge," (2) the Greeks and Romans analogy to express British influence, and (3) Blair's own beliefs, previously addressed, which included international change and world order.⁸⁵

In the first of the three components of Blair's reasoning, the Prime Minister perceived his role as the "encourager of transatlantic mutuality," which has been a tenet of British foreign and security policy more or less since 1941 or so.⁸⁶ Through Blair, the transatlantic dialogue between Europe and the U.S. would continue to prosper and become closer in the face of new threats. Echoing the rhetoric and views of Prime Minister Harold Macmillan in the era after Suez in the late 1950s, Blair pursued a strategy of "Greeks and Romans." Greeks were to symbolize the British and Romans to symbolize the Americans, to indicate how the British would influence American policy.⁸⁷ Through this component of the reasoning, Blair would press the U.S. for assistance and cooperation for his international agenda, which dealt with issues of multilateralism, the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, and aid to Africa.⁸⁸

Lastly, Blair's own beliefs became an important part of his reason for supporting the United States. Blair's support was more than an issue of supporting "British obligations under the Special Relationship," but about his own beliefs regarding

⁸³ William Wallace and Tim Oliver, "A Bridge Too Far: The United Kingdom and the Transatlantic Relationship," in David M. Andrews, ed., *The Atlantic Alliance Under Stress: US-European Relations after Iraq* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) 152.

⁸⁴ Dumbrell, *A Special Relationship*, 151.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 151.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ Dumbrell, "Working with Allies," 463.

⁸⁸ Dumbrell, *A Special Relationship*, 152.

international change and world order.⁸⁹ As was previously stated, Blair's "decision for war stemmed from his genuine and profound apprehensions, which he certainly shared with Bush, about Saddam's links with terrorism, and about the possibility of WMDs falling into terrorist hands," as well as the "state of contemporary politics."⁹⁰

3. Perceptions of the Bush Administration

The position of the United States is somewhat ambiguous as to whether or not the United States wanted the United Kingdom involved in the Iraq invasion. The Republicans had embraced the principle of the mission defines the coalition, and stood with a skeptical or hostile attitude to the experience of NATO and its consultation and consensus. While reports of Donald Rumsfeld's comments to the British remain unclear regarding the U.S.'s ability to go forward without the British, as being helpful or hurtful, other sources within the Bush administration, including that of the President's own rhetoric, offer insight into the divided government in Washington DC that subsumed the U.S. at the time of the Iraq invasion.⁹¹

Dumbrell argues "Britain participated in the Iraq invasion despite President Bush's explicit concern that Blair's government would suffer politically."⁹² That being said, "Blair was apparently given the explicit option of being involved only in an Iraqi 'second wave' as 'peacekeepers or something.'"⁹³ The fact that Bush was cognizant of what participating in the invasion posed to Blair's government is telling of his perhaps under appreciated insight into the dynamics of alliance cohesion. It speaks to role of Bush and his awareness of how Blair's involvement in the Iraq invasion could mean troubles for both his government and his career. If Bush had not cared, why would he even speak to this point? Obviously, he did care, or at least he uttered the words, making it seem as if he did. Moreover, Bush showed his insights into the dimension of domestic politics as a

⁸⁹ Dumbrell, *A Special Relationship*, 152.

⁹⁰ Dumbrell, "Working with Allies, 464.

⁹¹ Wallace and Oliver, "A Bridge Too Far," 170.

⁹² Dumbrell, "Working with Allies," 461.

⁹³ *Ibid.*

feature of alliance cohesion, in this case, as concerns the Janus faced behavior of the German chancellor Gerhard Schroeder in 2001–2002. The latter did or did not promise Bush support in the face of a U.S. invasion of Iraq, and then mounted an anti-U.S. election campaign in the year 2002, which caused the collapse of the German–U.S. relationship in the pact of weasel’s rhetoric of 2003.

The relationship between Blair and Bush has been characterized by an unprecedented level of intimacy between presidents and prime ministers in the policy decision-making process.⁹⁴ However, the Blair-Bush relationship “exposed limits of British influence over American policy.”⁹⁵ Dumbrell contends correctly and with clear insight that the role of the British Prime Minister in receiving aid to Africa or “altered attitudes towards climate change” in exchange for the support for the invasion, “betrayed both an exaggerated sense of Britain’s importance to the United States and an ignorance of the American politics of separated powers, wherein the U.S. Congress holds the purse-strings and the U.S. Senate ratifies treaties.”⁹⁶

C. THE BROWN-BUSH RELATIONSHIP

Blair’s resignation in disgrace as Prime Minister in late June 2007 ushered in a weakened socialist leadership in the United Kingdom less seized of foreign policy and soon to be ensnared in the world financial crisis. Gordon Brown became the new Prime Minister and his approach towards the Special Relationship was perceived as somewhat different from Blair’s. Beginning with the use of rhetoric in the media and during his speeches, Brown used different words and phrases to characterize the Special Relationship. Instead of using the phrase “the Special Relationship,” Brown insisted on depicting U.S.-UK relations in the form of a bilateral relationship.⁹⁷ Rather than continuing to use Blair’s “bridge” to symbolize the UK’s role between Europe and the

⁹⁴ David Hastings Dunn, “UK-U.S. Relations After the Three Bs – Blair, Brown and Bush,” *Defense & Security Analysis* 27, no. 1 (2011): 5–18.

⁹⁵ Dumbrell, *A Special Relationship*, 158.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ David Hastings Dunn, “The Double Interregnum: UK-U.S. relations beyond Blair and Bush,” *International Affairs* 84, no. 6 (2008): 1136.

United States, Brown decided to use the image of a beacon, stating “our British values should make us a beacon for Europe, America, and the rest of the world, building a pro-Atlantic, pro-European consensus.”⁹⁸ Brown continually spoke to the bonds between Europe and America versus those of the United States and the United Kingdom.⁹⁹ That is, Brown, with his background in the treasury, had a more balanced sense of the role of the EU in British policy than his ill-fated predecessor in the mode of Churchill and Thatcher.

Brown decided to make his separation from the former Prime Minister apparent in other ways as well. Upon becoming Prime Minister, Brown appointed various critics of the invasion of Iraq to prominent positions within his cabinet, to include John Denham, David Miliband, and Mark Malloch Brown.¹⁰⁰ John Denham had served in the Blair Cabinet, however had resigned from his position over the issue of Iraq.¹⁰¹ David Miliband, who was a critic of the UK policy in Iraq, was made Foreign Secretary, and Mark Malloch Brown, the former UN Deputy Secretary General and ardent critic of the Bush administration, minister for foreign affairs.¹⁰²

The most visible example of Brown’s distance from the U.S. came from his first meeting with Bush in 2007.¹⁰³ Not only had Brown already met with both Angela Merkel and Nicolas Sarkozy prior to his meeting with Bush, (which signaled Brown’s role for the U.S. in relation to his European counterparts,) there was not the special personal connection between the two leaders that had been previously the case.¹⁰⁴

With Brown as Prime Minister, “close military and intelligence cooperation continued and the harmony of outlook on many international questions remained

⁹⁸ Dunn, “The Double Interregnum,” 1134.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 1136.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 1135.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Dunn, “The Double Interregnum,” 1136.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

constant” with the exception of Iraq.¹⁰⁵ According to Dunn, the “UK government announced its intention to halve the British presence in Basra province and to withdraw the forces there to the air station in an ‘oversight’ role.”¹⁰⁶ Brown “sought to compensate for it by announcing an increase of British troop numbers in Afghanistan.”¹⁰⁷ His decisions in Iraq and Afghanistan reflected his government’s views on the wars. While the war in Afghanistan was being fought as the “good war,” the UK government remained ambiguous in its support for military action in Iraq.¹⁰⁸ The perception of the United Kingdom as a “good and loyal ally” was maintained by the support of the United Kingdom in Afghanistan.¹⁰⁹ While maintaining this appearance, Brown was able to lessen the UK government’s support to the war in Iraq.¹¹⁰

However, Dunn concludes, “steps taken to signal distance were more presentational than substantive.”¹¹¹ The Brown government kept military forces in Iraq, but with a “reduced mandate and role...they were neither fully withdrawn nor fully engaged.”¹¹² This was indicative of the UK policy towards the United States at the strategic level, at which the British government found itself struggling to carry out its domestic and strategic objectives and policies.¹¹³ While attempting to be anti-Bush and pro-American, the Brown government was unsuccessful at both.¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 1136.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 1137.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

D. THE ROLE OF THE INQUIRY: THE IRAQ INQUIRY AND THE HOUSE OF COMMONS UK-U.S. RELATIONS INQUIRY

On 15 June 2009, Prime Minister Gordon Brown stated that an official inquiry on the lessons learned from the Iraq War would be conducted by the British government and chaired by Sir John Chilcot.¹¹⁵ The inquiry's terms of reference included the following: "the period from the summer of 2001 to the end of July 2009, ...the United Kingdom's involvement in Iraq, including the way decisions were made and actions taken, to establish, as accurately as possible, what happened and to identify the lessons that can be learned."¹¹⁶ The overall intent of the inquiry was to uncover the cause and effect of intervention in the Iraq War to "help ensure that, if we (the British Government) face similar situations in future, the government of the day is best equipped to respond to those situations in the most effective manner in the best interests of the country."¹¹⁷ Although the inquiry's final report has not been written as of late 2011, nor has the inquiry been debated in Parliament, the testimonies and evidence given thus far in the inquiry suggest how decisions were made and the reasons behind those actions.

In this regard, one of the most important decision-makers and personalities in the Iraq Inquiry has been Blair himself. His testimony on 29 January 2010, was particularly illuminating to the position of the United Kingdom in the Iraq War along with his own perceptions of the role of the United Kingdom in both the European system of nation-states and the greater international system of states. During his interview, Blair stated that he would not have done anything differently in either the prelude to the Iraq War in 2002 or during it in 2003.¹¹⁸ The former Prime Minister's testimony during the Inquiry is indicative of the strong relationship between the two countries, and how given the chance to do it all again, the Prime Minister would act in the same manner in which he

¹¹⁵ The Iraq Inquiry, accessed 10 September 2011, www.iraqinquiry.org.uk/about.aspx.

¹¹⁶ "Terms of Reference," The Iraq Inquiry, accessed 10 September 2011, www.iraqinquiry.org.uk/about.aspx.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ "Iraq inquiry hears defiant Blair say: I'd do it again" BBC, 29 January 2010, accessed 14 September 2011, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8485694.stm>.

had acted previously. Furthermore, the values and traditions of the Special Relationship are at the core of this argument for which Blair contended that the Iraqi people are today better off than they were under Saddam's regime.¹¹⁹

In July 2009, a second government inquiry was launched by the House of Commons, Foreign Affairs Committee, to re-assess the state of the UK's relationship with its "most important bilateral ally," the United States.¹²⁰ The Global Security, UK-U.S. Relations Inquiry was regarded as the last in a series of inquiries by the House of Commons that began in 2001 and addressed the role of UK-U.S. relations since the events of 9/11.¹²¹ According to the Foreign Affairs Committee, the fact that two inquiries within the British government, the Iraq Inquiry and the UK-U.S. Relations Inquiry, were being conducted at the same time, was purely coincidental.¹²² Each of the inquiries addressed separate issues and although there would be some small overlap, there would be no replication of work between the inquiries.¹²³

The role of the UK-U.S. Relations Inquiry, was to identify the "the relationship between the United Kingdom and the U.S., and the implications this has on foreign policy." Issues addressed in the Inquiry included the following:

- the basis of the bilateral relationship between the United Kingdom and the U.S.;
- United Kingdom and United States views on the nature and value of the bilateral relationship and the contribution of the UK-U.S. foreign policy relationship to global security;
- the extent to which UK and U.S. interests align in key foreign policy related areas including security, defense, and intelligence cooperation;

¹¹⁹ "Iraq inquiry hears defiant Blair say: I'd do it again" *BBC*, 29 January 2010, accessed 14 September 2011, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8485694.stm>.

¹²⁰ Great Britain, *Global Security: UK-U.S. Relations*, 9.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

¹²² *Ibid.*

¹²³ *Ibid.*

- the extent to which the United Kingdom is able to influence U.S. foreign policy and UK policy is influenced by the United States under the Obama Administration;
- the extent to which the Special Relationship still exists and the factors which determine this;
- the implications of any changes in the nature of the bilateral relationship for British foreign policy.¹²⁴

Given the previous assertions and perceptions orchestrated to depict Britain as the subservient partner in the Special Relationship, a number of testimonies regarding the subject were considered and the Foreign Affairs Committee, concluded that,

The perception that the British Government was a subservient “poodle” to the U.S. Administration leading up to the period of the invasion of Iraq and its aftermath is widespread both among the British public and overseas and that this perception, whatever its relation to reality, is deeply damaging to the reputation and interests of the United Kingdom.¹²⁵

With respect to the role of the leadership within the Special Relationship, the Foreign Affairs Committee “concluded that the Prime Minister/President relationship is an important aspect of the UK-U.S. relationship.”¹²⁶ The Committee also concluded that it was “equally important to ensure that the United Kingdom does not conduct foreign policy on the basis of this relationship alone.”¹²⁷ The Committee ended the topic of leadership by addressing the role of Ministers, Parliament and Congress by stating that “strong and enduring links are nurtured at the wider Ministerial level and between Parliament and Congress,” thus, giving credence to the role of other government policy-makers and decision makers in each of the countries.¹²⁸

¹²⁴ Great Britain, *Global Security: UK-U.S. Relations*, 8–9.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 68.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

1. The Role of the Junior Partner

Another important dimension of leadership, as detailed by former foreign minister Douglas Hurd during his testimony, was the role of the junior partner. “He stated that neither Winston Churchill nor Margaret Thatcher was by nature or temperament a junior partner but they both learned reluctantly the art.”¹²⁹ He contends that Blair did not learn the art of being the junior partner and confused it with subservience instead of subordination.¹³⁰ From this subservience to the senior partner, came the notion of Britain as a “poodle” during the Iraq War. According to the transcripts of the Inquiry, the view of “British subservience” was not a unanimous sentiment by all the witnesses; however, it was important enough to be addressed throughout not only this Inquiry, but the Iraq Inquiry.¹³¹

The UK-U.S. Relations Inquiry “concluded that there are many lessons to be learned from the UK’s political approach towards the United States in respect to the Iraq War.”¹³² Much is left to the Iraq Inquiry to reveal the nature of the conflict from all aspects of the UK government, however the UK-U.S. Relations Inquiry had its own conclusions to make, which dealt specifically with the role of perception of the British Government as a subservient “poodle.” A term that contrasted with the former glory of Britain as a world power and recalled the sense of betrayal of Suez in 1956, or the Skybolt Affair of 1962–3.

The role of British influence in U.S. policy is of particular interest and has an important place in the context of the Iraq war, as well as the war in Afghanistan and the conflict in Libya. “British and European politicians have been over-optimistic about the extent of influence they have over the United States.”¹³³ That being said, the Inquiry “recommend(ed) that the Government (United Kingdom) continues its informed and

¹²⁹ Great Britain, *Global Security: UK-U.S. Relations*, 63.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹ Great Britain, *Global Security: UK-U.S. Relations*, 63.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 6.

¹³³ *Ibid.*

measured approach to the United States whilst remaining mindful that the United States is, and will continue to be, Britain's most important ally."¹³⁴

Overall, the importance of these inquiries lies in the ability of the British government and its institutions to address the last ten years as a point from which to learn from both within their own domestic institutions, as well as their international partnerships and alliances, specifically with the United States. Moreover, these inquiries indicate the need of the British government to understand the past decisions of its leadership and the need to address its relationships with its most important ally, the United States, in an effort to continue the indispensable partnership well into the future.

E. CONCLUSION

During the Iraq War, the strategic level discussion appeared to have failed in certain terms, while the substantive level of the Special Relationship, that of defense and intelligence cooperation, among others, continued.¹³⁵ At the strategic level, Blair insisted, "A successful British foreign policy would emerge only out of a strong commitment to both the United States and the EU."¹³⁶ Unfortunately, Blair was unable to bridge the gap between the United States and the EU during his time as Prime Minister. In the case of Brown and his government, Brown had failed to learn the lesson that President Sarkozy did, which simply stated, was "you cannot hope to build a united Europe that is divided towards the United States."¹³⁷

However, in terms of the Special Relationship, the United States and the United Kingdom maintained the strongest bilateral relationship, due to the many facets of the relationship that worked together and weathered the storm of the Iraq War and international criticism.

¹³⁴ Great Britain, *Global Security: UK-U.S. Relations*, 63.

¹³⁵ Dunn, "The Double Interregnum," 1140.

¹³⁶ Dumbrell, "Working with Allies," 464.

¹³⁷ Dunn, "The Double Interregnum," 1139.

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V. AFGHANISTAN

A. INTRODUCTION

Shortly after the assault upon the World Trade Center in New York City in September 2001, Prime Minister Blair “pledged his solidarity with the United States” and said, “we stand shoulder to shoulder with our American friends in this hour of tragedy, and we, like them, will not rest until this evil is driven from our world.”¹³⁸ Relations between the United Kingdom and the United States were instantly revived due to the terrorist actions of the September 11 attacks.

On 7 October 2001, the campaign against the Taliban in Afghanistan began and in 2003, the operation in Iraq signified a new stage amid peril of strategy and alliance cohesion of the Special Relationship. The operation in Afghanistan revealed how the Special Relationship aspired to fight on two fronts simultaneously as well as how the “good war” in Afghanistan was preferred by Gordon Brown and other members of the British government in 2006 to that of the war in Iraq.¹³⁹ The Iraq mission was questioned by both British officials and the public—a circumstance that recalled diverge of alliance cohesion in the Second World War and the Korean conflict. For the British, the primary mission arising from bin Laden terror was in Afghanistan. The bottom line was that British elites and the public alike preferred fighting the war in Afghanistan more so than fighting the war in Iraq.

Over and over again, the UK has been referred to by scholars of international affairs as America’s closest ally.¹⁴⁰ Throughout the last ten years, “Officials, diplomats, and indeed political leaders have continued to share an internationalist worldview and work diplomatically to advance a common view of the global order.”¹⁴¹ This being said,

¹³⁸ Lawrence D. Freedman, “The Special Relationship, Then and Now,” *Foreign Affairs* 85, no. 3 (2006): 61.

¹³⁹ Dunn, “The Double Interregnum,” 1136.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 1137.

¹⁴¹ Dunn, “After the Three B’s,” 6.

“The collaboration on defense policy within NATO and bilaterally is more integrated [with the USA] than with any other state, and the integration of their intelligence operations is unprecedented in its scale and its trust.”¹⁴² Given these two statements, the war in Afghanistan is an example of how officials, diplomats, and political leaders have worked together, and moreover, how collaboration within NATO, has brought about a deeper and more profound dialogue about the war and the Special Relationship.

This chapter explores the character of the Special Relationship in the past decade shaped by the experience of Iraq and Afghanistan, beginning with the relationship between Bush and Blair in the context of the war in Afghanistan, the Brown Premiership, addressing Bush and Obama’s presidencies, and the Cameron—Obama relationship. The chapter will conclude by examining the role of the House of Commons’ UK-U.S. Relations Inquiry of 2009–2010 and the role of the United Nations in the war in Afghanistan with respect to the Special Relationship in the UN Security Council.

B. THE BLAIR-BUSH RELATIONSHIP

The Blair–Bush Relationship during the war in Afghanistan was another example of the UK’s close relationship with the United States. As was the case in the war in Iraq, Blair offered close support to the United States in Afghanistan.¹⁴³ Dunn refers to the most immediate legacy of the New Labour period as “the lasting impact of Blair’s support in Iraq and Afghanistan.”¹⁴⁴

Interestingly, regarding Blair’s role in the War on Terror was Blair’s ability to communicate, more clearly than Washington, the intent of the war as not being “a crusade against Islam.”¹⁴⁵ Although some scholars and politicians argue that Blair’s abilities to assist the U.S. held an important role in defining Britain’s influence on U.S. foreign policy, Dumbrell suggests that by “seeking to broaden and soften the American

¹⁴² Dunn, “After the Three B’s,” 6.

¹⁴³ Dumbrell, *A Special Relationship*, 6.

¹⁴⁴ Dunn, “After the Three B’s,” 6.

¹⁴⁵ Dumbrell, *A Special Relationship*, 155.

agenda, Blair opened himself to the charge of being taken for granted by Washington.”¹⁴⁶ However, “after September 11, he gained increasing popularity and prestige within the United States as a leader who stood four-square with the Americans, and indeed one who could articulate the case for standing up to terrorists more fluently than their president.”¹⁴⁷ One could say that such a phenomenon reached back to the experience of Churchill in the years 1941–1946 whereby Europeans better articulated an Atlantic interest than did the U.S. policy makers themselves, and also had lately been manifest in the roles of Walesa and Havel in the early 1990s in the articulation of the need for a renewed commitment by the U.S. to Atlantic security in the midst of the end of the Cold War.

In the post–September 11 environment, there was a renewed sense of the Special Relationship that had been burdened in the experience of ex-Yugoslavia in the middle to late 1990s relations between the United States and the United Kingdom evolved and transitioned during this period. In the aftermath of the attacks on the United States, the Blair government supported its principle ally and immediately mobilized its forces to include the British Special Forces, the British Royal Navy, and over 1800 UK troops that “led and coordinated the initial deployment of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan.”¹⁴⁸ The support by the Blair government in defense matters was not the only example of support to the Bush government.

Throughout the Blair-Bush relationship, this renewed sense of the Special Relationship was also made evident by the policy statements of officials within each of the governments. Rhetoric by the United States and the UK, namely the ability to convey messages of cooperation and understanding, are at the very core of the Special Relationship. One key example of is that of Nicholas Burns, at the time, the undersecretary at the U.S. State Department for Europe, who regarded the “renewed sense of purpose, compromise and unity in transatlantic relations” in a key speech at

¹⁴⁶ Dumbrell, *A Special Relationship*, 155.

¹⁴⁷ Wallace and Oliver, “A Bridge Too Far,” 170.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 169.

Chatham House in London on 6 April 2005.¹⁴⁹ This example especially from the U.S. State Department within the cosmos of agencies of the U.S. government as a whole illustrates how positive transatlantic relations were present in the rhetoric and dialogue between the two nations even in the midst of war and the chorus of international criticism that grew in the face of the especially the Iraqi campaign and its setbacks.

C. THE BROWN PREMIERSHIP: THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH BUSH AND OBAMA

Upon becoming Prime Minister in July 2007, the unlucky and less statesman like Gordon Brown began distancing himself from the unpopular war in Iraq in the face of domestic politics, but continued to support the war in Afghanistan. Brown's approach was regarded "both anti-Bush and pro-American," but achieved neither one.¹⁵⁰ Dunn suggests this view of Brown in light of the "broader policy towards the United States" in which the British government "found itself isolated between two poles."¹⁵¹ That being said, Brown's support to the war effort in Afghanistan suffered no lapses. In fact, Brown increased the number of troops in Afghanistan in support of the "good war."¹⁵²

In March 2009, Brown became the first European leader to meet with newly elected President Barack Obama. During the visit, both Brown and Obama spoke of the importance of the Special Relationship. Brown said he had come to "to renew our Special Relationship for new times."¹⁵³ He continued by saying, "It is a partnership of purpose born out of shared values. It is a partnership of purpose founded on determination to rise to every challenge."¹⁵⁴ Obama agreed with Brown and said, "Great Britain is one of our

¹⁴⁹ Dumbrell, *The Special Relationship*, 157. The speech referred to by Dumbrell was Nicholas Burns' speech, "A Transatlantic Agenda for the Year Ahead," given on 6 April 2005 at the Royal Institute for International Affairs (RUSI), Chatham House, London.

¹⁵⁰ Dunn, "The Double Interregnum," 1137.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 1136.

¹⁵³ "Obama hails special relationship," *BBC*, 3 March 2009, accessed 2 September 2009, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/politics/7918345.stm.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

closest and strongest allies and there is a link and bond that will not break.”¹⁵⁵ He followed by saying, “This notion that somehow there is any lessening of that Special Relationship is misguided... The relationship is not only special and strong but will only get stronger as time goes on.”¹⁵⁶ Although the central topic of the meeting was the economy, these statements by each of the leaders revealed the nature of the Special Relationship regarding all aspects of the course of Brown and Obama’s terms as leaders of the two countries.

D. THE CAMERON-OBAMA RELATIONSHIP

On 11 May 2010, President Obama telephoned newly elected Prime Minister David Cameron, wherein the “two leaders reaffirmed their commitment to the UK-U.S. Special Relationship.”¹⁵⁷ In an official statement released after the phone call, Obama said, “the United States has no closer friend and ally than the United Kingdom, and I reiterated my deep and personal commitment to the Special Relationship between our two countries—a bond that has endured for generations and across party lines, and that is essential to the security and prosperity of our two countries, and the world.”¹⁵⁸ He concluded with, “I have no doubt that the ties between our two countries will continue to thrive in the years to come.”¹⁵⁹

On Cameron’s behalf, a Downing Street spokesman said that Cameron and Obama discussed Afghanistan, among other things.¹⁶⁰ This phone call set the stage for the following year and a half at the leadership levels of Prime Minister/President for the Special Relationship in which Afghanistan would be a priority for both leaders to address at domestic and international levels.

¹⁵⁵ “Obama hails special relationship,” *BBC*, 3 March 2009, accessed 2 September 2009, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/politics/7918345.stm.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁷ “President Barack Obama calls David Cameron,” *British Prime Minister’s Office*, 11 May 2010, accessed 2 September 2011, <http://www.number10.gov.uk/news/president-barack-obama-calls-david-cameron/>.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

In June 2010, during Cameron and Obama's first meeting at the G8 and G20 meetings in Canada, the two leaders agreed "the Afghanistan war must show progress in a 'critical stage' this year."¹⁶¹ Furthermore, the BBC reports stated that Obama articulated "operations were entering a 'critical' period" while Cameron said, "Making progress this year, putting everything we have into getting it right this year is vitally important."¹⁶² The continued commitment to the war in Afghanistan was evident during this meeting as was the countries' commitment to the Special Relationship. Obama went on to add that the Special Relationship was "built on a rock solid foundation and would only get stronger."¹⁶³

The relationship between Obama and Cameron is one highlighted by the surge/withdrawal approach to the war in Afghanistan. The new approach as identified in March 2009, was unveiled by Obama as a "new strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan to combat an increasingly 'perilous situation,'" wherein 4,000 U.S. personnel were sent in to "train and bolster the Afghan army and police."¹⁶⁴ Additionally, "support for civilian development" was also included in the new strategy.¹⁶⁵ This new strategy was echoed by the Cameron administration as well.

With the death of the chief enemy, Osama bin Laden, in May 2011 in Pakistan, a certain feeling of accomplishment manifested within the Obama administration, and furthermore, within the Special Relationship. Cameron's speech on 5 May 2011 highlighted the close relationship between the United States and the United Kingdom regarding the War on Terror and the war in Afghanistan.

The losses from both sides of the Atlantic in the September 11 attacks reveals yet another example of all that is shared between the United States and the United Kingdom.

¹⁶¹ "Obama and Cameron want Afghanistan 'progress'," *BBC*, 26 June 2010, accessed 31 October 2011, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/10423050>.

¹⁶² "Obama and Cameron want Afghanistan 'progress'," *BBC*, 26 June 2010, accessed 31 October 2011, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/10423050>.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁴ "Afghanistan Profile: A chronology of key events," *BBC*, 4 October 2011, accessed 2 November 2011, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-12024253>.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

Cameron's speech makes it clear that the British have been standing side by side the Americans in the fight and should be remembered thusly.¹⁶⁶

We should remember today in particular the brave British servicemen and women who have given their lives in the fight against terrorism across the world. And we should pay tribute especially to those British forces who have played their part over the last decade in the hunt for bin Laden. He was the man who was responsible for 9/11—which was not only an horrific killing of Americans, but remains to this day, the largest loss of British life in any terrorist attack.¹⁶⁷

In June 2011, *The Telegraph* reported Cameron's intent to order more British troops out of Afghanistan.¹⁶⁸ The announcement followed Obama's announcement for a withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan. The significant issue within this statement, expressed in the first line of the article, was that Obama and Cameron were on the phone coordinating the troop withdrawal prior to Obama's announcement to the United States.¹⁶⁹ The coordination between the United States and the United Kingdom at its highest levels is key and illustrates the closeness between the two countries and their leaders in the war in Afghanistan.

E. THE ROLE OF THE PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY: THE HOUSE OF COMMONS UK-U.S. RELATIONS INQUIRY

The UK-U.S. Inquiry conducted by Parliament, which officially began on 30 July 2009 revealed some of the major issues, from the British perspective, regarding U.S.-UK involvement in Afghanistan. Overall, the inquiry spoke to military and defense cooperation, a central tenet of the Special Relationship, and also took into account the future of the UK's involvement in U.S. led initiatives, specifically that of Afghanistan.

¹⁶⁶ "Statement on the death of Usama bin Laden, and counter terrorism," *British Prime Minister's Office*, 5 May 2011, accessed 6 November 2011, <http://www.number10.gov.uk/news/statement-on-the-death-of-usama-bin-laden-and-counter-terrorism/>.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ *The Telegraph*, London "Afghan troop withdrawal: David Cameron set to order more British troops home" (accessed 31 October 2011) 22 June 2011 <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/afghanistan/8592975/Afghan-troop-withdrawal-David-Cameron-set-to-order-more-British-troops-home.html>

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

In 2010, the UK's inquiry revealed various key points regarding the nature and character of the war in Afghanistan from the British viewpoint. Despite criticism of how intelligence was handled in the prelude to the Iraq campaign, as well as other issues of alliance cohesion (i.e. Blair the poodle), the UK government inquiry placed a high value on the role of UK-U.S. military and defense cooperation.¹⁷⁰ Moreover, the manner in which military and defense cooperation manifested itself in the conflict of Afghanistan is of particular interest and reveals how the government of the United Kingdom envisions the role of the UK-U.S. in the conflict.

With regard to UK-U.S. military and defense cooperation, the inquiry "Concluded that stabilization in Afghanistan does require provision of security, good governance, and a belief within the local population that international forces will outlast the insurgents."¹⁷¹ That being said,

There can be no question of the international community abandoning Afghanistan, and that the need for the international community to convey publicly that it intends to outlast the insurgency and remain in Afghanistan until the Afghan authorities are able to take control of their own security, must be a primary objective.¹⁷²

The inquiry "concluded that in the short term, the United Kingdom should continue to do all it can to assist the United States in the areas where it is also in the UK's security interests to do so, most notably in Afghanistan..."¹⁷³ Furthermore, "In the longer term, the Government's foreign and security policy needs to be driven by the UK's national security obligations including those towards Britain's Overseas Territories, its NATO commitments and its security partnership with the United States"¹⁷⁴

The inquiry addresses the importance of stability, security, and good governance, which are all central to the ideals of the United States and the United Kingdom. The inquiry's assessment of the long-term goals of the UK's foreign and security policy is of

¹⁷⁰ Great Britain, *Global Security: UK-U.S. Relations*, 23.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 3.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, 4.

¹⁷⁴ Great Britain, *Global Security: UK-U.S. Relations*, 4.

particular importance given its acknowledgment of the UK's national security obligations which include its security partnership with the United States. Thus, the continued coordination and cooperation of the United Kingdom and the United States will continue well into the future, attesting to the centrality of the Special Relationship in the foreign and security policies of the United Kingdom.

F. THE ROLE OF THE UNITED NATIONS

The integration of United Nations (UN) authority and decision making into the war in Afghanistan was unlike the case of Iraq in 2002–2003 with the motto of the “mission defines the coalition.” Different from the war in Iraq in its opening phases, the role of the United Nations has loomed large in the war in Afghanistan, given the U.S. and UK's initiatives to involve the organization, which is the bedrock of international organizations and collective security as well as collective defense. With the release of UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1386 on 20 December 2001, the establishment of an International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) was an immediate action that has resulted in a multilateral effort, authorizing the deployment for six months of an ISAF which in its first phase was limited to the security of Kabul and then took on additional roles and missions.¹⁷⁵ Follow-on resolutions have continued to provide guidance and authorization to the western and allied campaign in Afghanistan.

Even with the multilateral effort that as of 2006 assumed a more pronounced NATO character and operational dimension, the United States and the United Kingdom remain the largest contributors of troops to Afghanistan.¹⁷⁶ The multilateral context of the war in Afghanistan, compounded by the cause of the war, has created a perception different from that of the Iraq war in the minds of British and American citizens alike. While the unpopular war in Iraq comes to a close, the war in Afghanistan continues and

¹⁷⁵ “Security Council authorizes International Security Force for Afghanistan, Welcomes United Kingdom's Offer To Be Initial Lead Nation,” *United Nations*, 12 December 2011, accessed 7 November 2011, <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2001/sc7248.doc.htm>.

¹⁷⁶ Dunn, “The Double Interregnum,” 1136.

is becoming increasingly unpopular, however for different reasons in the United Kingdom, there mostly related to defense budget cuts, the economy, and the status of the forces.

Overall, the Special Relationship continues to be a powerful force within the United Nations and by extension, NATO. Conversely, the United Nations and NATO have played an important role in the Special Relationship by assisting in the legitimization of the war in Afghanistan and by bringing a multilateral approach to the role of intervention in Afghanistan.

G. CONCLUSION

The war in Afghanistan has proved to be an example of the Special Relationship leading the world towards greater democracy, rule of law, human rights, and fighting in a multilateral context. Perceptions of the United Kingdom and the United States have shifted from perceptions of unilateralism and “going at it alone” to a new approach embracing multilateral policies in the fight against terror. In the war in Afghanistan, especially, a sense of cooperation and coordination between the two partners has characterized the Special Relationship.

In the war in Afghanistan, the Special Relationship has gone through changes that are important to the role of the Special Relationship in the twenty-first century. Although the Special Relationship has been close at the personal level since the Bush–Blair administration, and has remained close at some points albeit to a perceived lesser degree, the role of military action by coalitions at the international level and within the construct of the United Nations has made the Special Relationship a popular institution and force within the international system of states.

The United Nations has played a role in Afghanistan that is poignantly different from the role the United Nations played in the war Iraq. It is clear the UN resolutions and the creation of the ISAF in Afghanistan have proven to be the vehicle through which the war has been fought and continues to be fought in late 2011. However, with the impending withdrawal of U.S. and UK forces as portrayed by Prime Minister Cameron

and President Obama in 2011, only time will tell the true benefit provided by the military, diplomatic, and political dimensions of the Special Relationship in the future of the country of Afghanistan.

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VI. LIBYA

A. INTRODUCTION

In February 2011, the Special Relationship again confronted conflict of an unexpected kind in a new phase of a new century that had seen a major political upheaval in the Arab world that overturned the ruling order of more than half a century. In the North African country of Libya, an uprising against Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi, a figure who had been a thorn in the side of the United States and United Kingdom for decades, beginning in the city of Benghazi led to an attack against protesters by Libyan forces. While numerous Libyan diplomats resigned from their positions in protest to the attack, Qaddafi insisted, “that he would not quit.”¹⁷⁷ In March 2011, the UN Security Council released United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1973, which authorized a no-fly zone over Libya, as well as air strikes, to be conducted by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), in order to protect civilians.¹⁷⁸⁻¹⁷⁹ On 20 October 2011, Qaddafi was killed and the Libyan National Transitional Council (NTC) officially declared Libya as liberated on 23 October 2011.¹⁸⁰

Under NATO, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and other allies and partners conducted military operations in Libya in support of UNSCR 1973. While the United States and the United Kingdom were involved in the entire process, President Obama’s approach to supporting the war in Libya was constructed in a multilateral context from the very beginning and conceived in plain contrast to the mission defines the coalition approach of the era 2001 and 2002 in preparation for the Iraqi campaign of

¹⁷⁷ “Libya Profile: A Chronology of Key Events,” *BBC*, 23 October 2011, accessed 31 October 2011, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13755445>.

¹⁷⁸ “United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973,” *United Nations Security Council*, 17 March 2011, accessed 31 October 2011, <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N11/268/39/PDF/N1126839.pdf?OpenElement>.

¹⁷⁹ More information on the follow-on UNSCRs in 2011 related to the Libyan Civil War can be found at http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/unscl_resolutions11.htm.

¹⁸⁰ “Libya Profile: A Chronology of Key Events,” *BBC*, 23 October 2011, accessed 31 October 2011, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13755445>.

the following year. Obama's expression of a need for a multilateral approach to the action in Libya was undertaken and NATO acted as a kind of alibi of a nation for the U.S. desire to avoid what seemed to many makers of policy as the errors of alliance cohesion in the years 2003 and following. Unlike the case of Iraq, the Libyan case demonstrated the United States and the United Kingdom's willingness and belief in the necessity to act in a multilateral manner under the United Nations and within the construct of NATO. This policy also included a major role for the French, whose reintegration into the NATO military command organization had unfolded months before.

In this chapter, the Special Relationship will be revealed from the viewpoint of the Cameron-Obama bilateral relationship. Obama's approach in dealing with Libya is of particular interest to identifying the nature and character of the Special Relationship during 2011, that is, as war in Iraq has been more or less ending and the winding down phase of operations in Afghanistan. Also addressed in this chapter is the role of NATO as the organization leading the military effort in Libya.

B. THE CAMERON-OBAMA RELATIONSHIP

The multilateral approach by President Barack Obama, as opposed to the unilateral policies of the Bush administration, has been important to the strategic debate of the Libyan conflict and the role for intervention in North Africa. From the very beginning, it seemed as if the Obama administration was not willing to proceed in Libya only with a U.S. coalition of the willing, per se, but instead within the auspices of a UN-NATO multilateral operation as has been more or less the custom of U.S. statecraft for more than a century and was dumped with great sound by the Bush administration after September 2001.

The role of international institutions in the conflict in Libya, a vital element within the Special Relationship, was as important in Libya as it was throughout the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. Most notably, that of the United Nations and NATO—working through institutions that were originally founded by the partners of the Special Relationship—to deal with the issues of the world in a multilateral fashion is well worth analysis as concerns the values that are at the core of the Special Relationship, as well as

the shared interests. The ability of the Special Relationship to employ these international institutions in the case of Libya, was first demonstrated by the administrations of Cameron and then Obama working through the UN to seek a Resolution for the conflict in Libya. Also, the ability of the United States and the United Kingdom to seek out diplomatic, economic, and political options, versus solely the use of combat as a substitute for policy, was highlighted throughout the discussions between Obama and Cameron prior to the approval of UNSCR 1973.

On 8 March 2011, *The Telegraph* reported Obama and Cameron's "full spectrum plan of action on Libya."¹⁸¹ Within the ideas being discussed for a plan, there was a request by the Libyan rebels for a no-fly zone.¹⁸² Surveillance and enforcement of the arms embargo against Libya were also considerations within the plan.¹⁸³ These features of policy recalled the Balkans in the 1990s, whose errors of policy loomed large in the need to act at the moment in 2011. An important aspect of the plan in relation to the no-fly zone was Obama's reluctance, more so than that of Cameron and President Nicolas Sarkozy of France, in supporting the no-fly zone.¹⁸⁴ Obama's reluctance would also be visible in later negotiations of the path to take in actions in Libya.

On 21 April 2011, *The Telegraph* reported Cameron and Obama "agreed that UN Security Council resolutions demanding that the Libyan government cease violence against civilians must be fully implemented."¹⁸⁵ Furthermore, according to a White House statement, "In addition to increasing military pressure and protecting civilians through the coalition operation that NATO is leading, the leaders discussed the

¹⁸¹ Richard Spencer, Adrian Blomfield and James Kirkup, "Libya: David Cameron and Barack Obama plan 'full spectrum' of action on Libya" *The Telegraph*, 8 March 2011, accessed 4 November 2011, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/libya/8369700/Libya-David-Cameron-and-Barack-Obama-plan-full-spectrum-of-action-on-Libya.html>.

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ "Libya: David Cameron and Barack Obama discuss need to increase military pressure," *The Telegraph*, 21 April 2011, accessed 4 November 2011, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/libya/8465174/Libya-David-Cameron-and-Barack-Obama-discuss-need-to-increase-military-pressure.html>.

importance of increasing diplomatic and economic pressure on the Gaddafi regime to cease attacks on civilians and comply with UN Security Council resolutions.”¹⁸⁶

Obama was reported by *The Telegraph* as supporting “A French and British move to dispatch military advisers to help rebels fighting Gaddafi,” although he “still opposes sending U.S. ground troops to Libya.”¹⁸⁷ Although Cameron and Obama agreed on the use of military pressure in Libya, the way in which each President chose to deal with the issue militarily was slightly different. In the same White House comments given by White House Spokesman, Jay Carney, and reported in *The Telegraph*, “The president obviously is aware of this decision and supports it, and hopes and believes it will help the opposition,” “But it does not at all change the president’s policy on no ‘boots on the ground’ for American troops.”¹⁸⁸

In May 2011, just before Obama’s state visit to the UK, tensions were reportedly rising between the U.S. and UK regarding each other’s involvement in Libya.¹⁸⁹ On the one hand, “Britain wants the U.S. to take more of a defined role in the campaign, with UK military chiefs protesting that the effectiveness of bombing raids is being lessened by the absence of American leadership.”¹⁹⁰ While on the other hand, “U.S. diplomatic sources, meanwhile, have criticized Britain as a ‘skittish’ and unpredictable ally which frequently issues a ‘red card’ -- effectively vetoing a target, causing confusion and greatly hampering proper planning.”¹⁹¹ This kind of exchange also recalled the burden sharing back-biting of the Cold War and particularly the issue of policy and strategy in south eastern Europe in the middle and late 1990s. Sensing the differences between the two

¹⁸⁶ “Libya: David Cameron and Barack Obama discuss need to increase military pressure,” *The Telegraph*, 21 April 2011, accessed 4 November 2011, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/libya/8465174/Libya-David-Cameron-and-Barack-Obama-discuss-need-to-increase-military-pressure.html>.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Patrick Hennessy, Philip Sherwell and Andrew Gilligan, “Barack Obama’s state visit to Britain hit by splits over Libya,” *The Telegraph*, 21 May 2011, accessed 4 November 2011, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/libya/8528195/Barack-Obamas-state-visit-to-Britain-hit-by-splits-over-Libya.html>.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

allies, Obama issued a letter to Congress in which he addressed the lack of leadership and pointed to the limited nature of the campaign in Libya.¹⁹² Furthermore, in addressing Congress with the letter, Obama who is “facing rising political clamor in the U.S. against the Libyan campaign,” stated “It has always been my view that it is better to take military action, even in limited actions such as this, with Congressional engagement, consultation, and support.”¹⁹³ This statement, of course, signaled the importance of Congressional support, which similar to the role of Parliament to the Prime Minister, is necessary to the U.S. Presidency. However, in the case of the U.S. president, the anti-European and anti-NATO rhetoric of a particular party operated in this case, as well as the heirs of Robert Taft in the great debate to limit presidential power in national security affairs.

In light of these differences, Obama and Cameron were going to address the issue during the state visit, among a host of other issues at hand. During the visit, both leaders came together on the subject of Libya on a number of points. Cameron started the dialogue by stating, that “in their (Cameron and Obama’s) approach to North Africa they had ‘ruled out occupying forces and invading armies,’” thus differentiating the Obama–Cameron approach in Libya to that of the Bush–Blair approach to Iraq.¹⁹⁴ Obama followed by stating, “they were using military power ‘in a strategically careful way.’”¹⁹⁵

The two leaders continued exhibiting this sense of cooperation, coordination, and commitment to the Special Relationship and to the charge at hand, the events in Libya, throughout Obama’s state visit. The Special Relationship “was not just ‘special,’ but ‘essential’ too” and it was not only between these two particular leaders, but with every

¹⁹² Patrick Hennessy, Philip Sherwell and Andrew Gilligan, “Barack Obama's state visit to Britain hit by splits over Libya,” *The Telegraph*, 21 May 2011, accessed 4 November 2011, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/libya/8528195/Barack-Obamas-state-visit-to-Britain-hit-by-splits-over-Libya.html>.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Andrew Sparrow, “David Cameron and Barack Obama's press conference: The Main Points,” *The Guardian*, 25 May 2011, accessed 18 July 2011, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/blog/2011/may/25/obama-cameron-press-conference-main-points>.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

leader of the UK and U.S.¹⁹⁶ In his own words, Obama “insisted that the relationship between the two countries didn’t just depend on the relationship between the two leaders. The alliance would be consistent ‘regardless of who the president or the prime minister is and it’s going to be consistent regardless of what parties we come from.’”¹⁹⁷ Obama continued by saying, “I believe it (the Special Relationship) is stronger than it’s ever been...and I’m committed to making sure it stays that way.”¹⁹⁸

Turning back to the issue of Libya, Obama stated that both he and Cameron agreed that they could not deploy ground troops to Libya and the “Libyan opposition needed to play the role on the ground.”¹⁹⁹ Instead, as Cameron said, “patience and persistence was needed from the alliance” as the “Libyan opposition was being built up.”²⁰⁰ Both leaders agreed that there would be “no let up” and Qaddafi needed to go.²⁰¹

The National Transitional Council (NTC) officially declared Libya to have been liberated on 23 October 2011, just three days after the death of Qaddafi on 20 October 2011.²⁰² On 31 October 2011, NATO forces concluded the last mission of Operation Unified Protector in Libya.²⁰³

¹⁹⁶ Andrew Sparrow, “David Cameron and Barack Obama’s press conference: The Main Points,” *The Guardian*, 25 May 2011, accessed 18 July 2011, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/blog/2011/may/25/obama-cameron-press-conference-main-points>.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ Andrew Porter, “Barack Obama visit: Special Relationship between Britain and U.S. now essential and stronger than ever,” *The Telegraph*, 25 May 2011, accessed 2 September 2011, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/barackobama/8535774/Barack-Obama-visit-special-relationship-between-Britain-and-US-now-essential-and-stronger-than-ever.html>.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

²⁰¹ Matt Falloon and Joseph Logan, “Obama warns Gaddafi of ‘no let up’,” *Reuters*, 25 May 2011, accessed 2 September 2011, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/05/25/us-libya-idUSTRE7270JP20110525>.

²⁰² “Libya Profile: A Chronology of Key Events,” *BBC*, 23 October 2011, accessed 31 October 2011, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13755445>.

²⁰³ “NATO and Libya,” NATO, 31 October 2011, accessed 8 November 2011, <http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/71679.htm>.

C. THE ROLE OF NATO

While the war in Afghanistan became the most difficult out-of-area deployment for NATO forces, the campaign in Libya would prove to be a new chapter of a different kind that recalled the early phase of the Afghan campaign, as well as other episodes in the history of the alliance. The NATO role in taking over control for military operations under UNSCR 1973, marked the second time NATO forces have agreed to fight an out-of-area conflict. Yugoslavia was the first real out of area conflict, even if it was in Europe, it was not technically in the NATO area. Under the name, Operation Unified Protector (OUP), NATO's mission is "to protect civilians and civilian-populated areas under threat of attack."²⁰⁴ Also, NATO forces would be involved in "enforcing an arms embargo and maintaining a no-fly zone."²⁰⁵

During the operation, no NATO ground troops were involved.²⁰⁶ According to NATO, "NATO's success to date has been achieved solely with air and sea forces."²⁰⁷ In April 2011, NATO allies and non-NATO allies agreed to be

Committed to using all necessary resources and maximum operational flexibility to meet the UN mandate until such time that: all attacks on civilians and civilian-populated areas have ended, the Qaddafi regime withdraws all military and paramilitary forces to bases, and the Qaddafi regime permits immediate, full, safe and unhindered access to humanitarian aid for the Libyan people.²⁰⁸

Anders Fogh Rasmussen, the NATO Secretary General, during a visit to the United States on 10 May 2011, attested to NATO's "acting under the authority of an historic UN Security Council Resolution."²⁰⁹ He stated, "Just like Afghanistan, Libya is

²⁰⁴ "NATO and Libya – Operation Unified Protector," NATO, 25 October 2011, accessed 8 November 2011, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_71652.htm.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ "Defending Freedom and Common Values in the 21st Century," NATO, 10 May 2011, accessed 20 July 2011, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions_73685.htm?selectedLocale=en.

a strong demonstration of NATO's resolve."²¹⁰ Through shared values and freedoms, the NATO allies together can counter those who threaten the alliance.

Interestingly enough, Rasmussen's comments contain the tenets of the Special Relationship as same are evident in the institution of NATO. The organization, founded over sixty years ago, still shares the same "values of freedom, democracy, and humanity," remains true to the founders' intent and vision for a safer Euro-Atlantic region as enshrined in the articles of the Washington Treaty and as these have evolved since 1949 in a series of crises. Even though the campaign in Libya was fought in a multilateral fashion through the institution of NATO, the United States and the United Kingdom remained central to the formation of policy and its realization in combat. The forces of the Special Relationship were not only evident in NATO at its beginning after the Second World War, but still continue as a formidable power in the twenty-first century.

D. CONCLUSION

The conflict in Libya demonstrated the continued cooperation and coordination between the United States and the United Kingdom at various levels within the Special Relationship. The search for diplomatic, economic, and political options, as well as military ones, to solve the conflict in Libya highlights the role of the leadership within the Special Relationship, and its continued focus on dealing with challenges in an ever-changing world.

The ability of the United States and the United Kingdom to seek a multilateral approach from the inception of the Libyan crisis is completely different from that of Iraq and Afghanistan. Obama's unwillingness to go it alone versus that of Bush's unilateralist push into war in Iraq was a change in U.S. statecraft that resonated within the Cameron government. Involvement by the United Nations and furthermore by NATO as the

²¹⁰"Defending Freedom and Common Values in the 21st Century," NATO, 10 May 2011, accessed 20 July 2011, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions_73685.htm?selectedLocale=en.

organization leading the military effort was not only key in the Libyan crisis, but indicative of a changing pattern in how the leaders of the Special Relationship were going to conduct military operations in the new decade.

The campaign in Libya reflects how the policy and strategy of the United States and the United Kingdom has changed under the administrations of Obama and Cameron in coordinating and cooperating to achieve a multilateral approach, but the campaign also demonstrates the staying power of institutions within democracies such as evidenced by the U.S. Congress and the UK military, who remain focused on their priorities to achieve the mission.

In conclusion, the campaign in Libya serves as a springboard for new multilateral operations based on the institutions, values, and precepts of the Special Relationship, where the issue of burden-sharing and alliance cohesion may be less of an issue than in the recent campaigns of Iraq and Afghanistan.

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VII. CONCLUSION

A. HISTORY OF SHARED INTERESTS, COOPERATION, AND UNDERSTANDING

Critics on both sides of the Atlantic have reflected upon and criticized the policy and strategy of the United States and the United Kingdom in the campaigns in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Libya. The question that requires attention, however, is the Special Relationship and its durability, purpose, relevance and significance in the twenty-first century. With this question in mind, the Special Relationship continues to be a force within the European system of states and the international system of states as a whole.

The Special Relationship is a distinctive partnership built upon a history of shared values, interests, culture, and cooperation in peace and war. From the diplomatic, political, and economic ties to its connections in the realm of military, security, nuclear, and defense affairs, the Special Relationship's uniqueness and deep ties prove its durability and its ability to change and continue as a force for democratic values, human rights, and rule of law in the world. This pact has been especially subject to stress in the last ten years since 11 September, but shows more durability than say, the United States and German relationship, which had been formerly a close one and has become problematic since the Schroeder chancellorship and the advent of a German policy of equidistance with its allies and others.

The three case studies demonstrate the evolution of the Special Relationship, beginning with the Bush-Blair connection to the Brown premiership during the Bush and Obama presidencies to the Cameron-Obama relationship. From a policy point of mission defines the coalition to fighting in a multilateral context within the institutions of NATO and the UN, the Special Relationship has endured not only policy changes and strategic reassessments, but has faced these crisis together.

The case studies further reveal the strength and enduring qualities of the Special Relationship in values, interests, as well as personalities and the institutions within the bilateral relationship. While the personalities at the highest levels of the U.S. and UK

governments provide the strategy and policy context of this relationship, the other aspects of the relationship, for example, the military, defense, and security cooperation and coordination that exists within the Special Relationship continues to thrive at the operational and tactical levels ultimately providing the momentum and drive to move together into the next decade. The closeness of military affairs in the wake of the last decade is noteworthy and reflects a degree of integration and cooperation on an unprecedented scale.

B. THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP IN 2011: THE WAY AHEAD?

The Special Relationship continues with a renewed focus based on the shared values, traditions, and institutions that have sustained this bilateral feature of the international system through crisis and calm. The most recent example of U.S.-UK cooperation has been President Obama's visit to the United Kingdom in May 2011. The three-day state visit to the United Kingdom marked the first visit by a U.S. President since the year 2003 and the first time a U.S. President has addressed members of the House of Commons and peers in Westminster Hall.

The speeches and statements made by President Obama and Prime Minister Cameron are indicative of the direction in which the Special Relationship appears to be headed in the remaining years of the decade. Obama and Cameron began the state visit by agreeing that the bilateral relationship between the two countries "is an essential one."²¹¹ This particular point was highlighted by other media outlets such as the *BBC* with its joint article in the *Times* reporting,

Mr. Obama and Mr. Cameron have described the relationship between the United Kingdom and the United States as essential. Ours is not just a special relationship, it is an essential relationship - for us and for the

²¹¹ Andrew Porter, "Barack Obama visit: Special Relationship between Britain and U.S. now essential and stronger than ever," *The Telegraph*, 25 May 2011, accessed 25 May 2011, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/barackobama/8535774/Barack-Obama-visit-special-relationship-between-Britain-and-US-now-essential-and-stronger-than-ever.html>.

world. When the United States and Britain stand together, our people and people around the world can become more secure and more prosperous.²¹²

During the visit, President Obama remarked that the Special Relationship would continue “regardless of who the president or the prime minister is and it’s going to be consistent regardless of what parties we come from.”²¹³ This statement is an ambitious one that makes a process seem to be easy that actually has been far from it especially in the legacy of a decade of conflict as well as the world financial crisis which has particularly harmed London and Washington. Obama continued by stating, “there are few nations that stand firmer, speak louder and fight harder to defend democratic values around the world than the United States and the United Kingdom.”²¹⁴ The United States and the United Kingdom would be entering a “new chapter in our shared history with new challenges” and the time had come for the United States and its European allies, the West, to lead.²¹⁵

The state visit was one filled with purpose and vision for the future collaboration between the two countries. This hope was demonstrated by Obama and Cameron’s press conference whereby they defined “six specific areas where the United Kingdom and the United States will strengthen their co-operation in the coming months.”²¹⁶ These six areas are primarily focused on the following areas, as detailed by the UK’s Foreign and Commonwealth Office: security and support to Armed Forces personnel; commitments to collaboration in science, higher education, volunteerism, and international development; and the development of cyberspace.²¹⁷ Within the area of security, a U.S.-UK Joint

²¹² Michael Hirst, et al., “Barack Obama’s visit to the UK,” *BBC*, 25 May 2011, accessed 11 September 2011, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-13518279>.

²¹³ Andrew Sparrow, “*David Cameron and Barack Obama’s press conference: the main points*,” *The Guardian*, 25 May 2011, accessed 18 July 2011, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/blog/2011/may/25/obama-cameron-press-conference-main-points>.

²¹⁴ “President Obama: Now is time for US and West to lead,” *BBC*, 25 May 2011, 2 September 2011, www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-13533306.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*

²¹⁶ “Prime Minister and U.S. President strengthen collaboration,” UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO), 25 May 2011, accessed 2 September 2011, <http://www.fco.gov.uk/resources/en/news/2011/may/pm-obama-deliverables250511>, 1.

²¹⁷ FCO, 1.

Strategy Board will be formed to “develop a coordinated approach to long term challenges in the global economic and security environment.”²¹⁸ This serves as yet another example of the Special Relationship’s shared tradition of institution building which forms an especially vital aspect of this force in the international system. Overall, these six areas signify the diversity of the special relationship in its ability to address challenges and collaborate within a number of areas within society.

In 2008, Dunn articulated the following,

For the UK to maintain good relations with Washington requires more than the continuation of its long-established military, economic, financial and intelligence links. It also demands that its leaders maintain good personal relations with the incumbent of the White House as a matter of necessity, whoever that incumbent might be. The atmospherics of diplomacy, style, good presentation, supportive rhetoric and the avoidance of public criticism are all necessary for continued harmony in relations on the more fundamental issues.²¹⁹

In 2011, the meetings between Obama and Cameron exemplify this very suggestion for the affairs of the Special Relationship.

Given the context of the last ten years throughout the episodes of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Libya, the Special Relationship has remained a powerful force-player in the international system of states. With its renewed focus and commitment, as exhibited by President Obama and Prime Minister Cameron in 2011, there is no doubt that the Special Relationship will continue well onto the future.

C. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the Special Relationship has persevered and survived through some of the most difficult crises of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Born in crisis at the darkest moments of the Second World War, the special relationship endured in the crises of the cold war and has further evolved in the challenges of the present. These include the Iraq, Afghanistan, and Libya campaigns to the issues of the International economic crisis,

²¹⁸ FCO, 1.

²¹⁹ Dunn, “The Double Interregnum,” 1143.

the British and U.S. National debt and defense budget cut issues, the Special Relationship continues. This complicated relationship between the two English-speaking countries endures in spite of the negative attitudes of Anti-Americanism. Built upon the values and traditions of the United States and United Kingdom and supported by the commitment of its leadership and institutions, the Special Relationship will continue as the principal bilateral relationship in the world for the next one hundred years.

Furthermore, the significance of the Special Relationship lies in the shared values, traditions, and institutions of the United States and the United Kingdom. As evidenced throughout the thesis, the personalities, institutions, strategies, and policies shared between the two countries garner a sense of cooperation and understanding unlike any other bilateral relationship in the world. Ultimately, the importance of the Special Relationship lies in the fact that the Special Relationship is neither fiction nor myth. The Special Relationship is a real partnership that has endured crises of all sorts and continues to flourish and prosper even after ten years of hardship and war. The Special Relationship has once again passed the test and it is here to stay.

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