



# American Foreign Policy After September 11: The George W. Bush Administration

Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists. From this day forward any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime.

GEORGE W. BUSH  
SEPTEMBER 20, 2001

Five years into this battle, there is an understandable debate over whether the [Iraq] war was worth fighting, whether the fight is worth winning, and whether we can win it. The answers are clear to me: Removing Saddam Hussein from power was the right decision—and this is a fight America can and must win.

GEORGE W. BUSH  
MARCH 19, 2008

During the 2000 election campaign, George W. Bush announced that he would pursue a “distinctly American internationalism” in foreign policy,<sup>1</sup> largely in contrast to the liberal internationalism of the Clinton administration. He initially sought a greater emphasis on American national interests than on global interests. The events of September 11, however, quickly changed both the content of his administration’s foreign policy and the process by which it was made. As a result, President Bush’s foreign policy was universal in scope and viewed virtually all international actions as affecting American interests. The efforts to build a “coalition of the willing” to find and defeat “terrorists and tyrants” worldwide illustrate the universality of this approach, but the difficulties that the invasion and occupation of Iraq created also demonstrate its limitations. At the beginning of its second term, the Bush administration reiterated its commitment to democratization worldwide as yet another way to combat global terrorism, and it initiated some actions toward that goal. Yet its efforts were largely overshadowed by the continuing occupation of Iraq and the failure to bring that war to an end.

We begin this chapter by analyzing the Bush administration’s assumptions and policy positions prior to the events of September 11, 2001, and its initial commitment to classical realism. Next, we concentrate on the changes in orientation and content as a result of September 11 and the movement toward defensive realism and idealism as enunciated in the Bush Doctrine. We then discuss the seeming modification of the Bush Doctrine at the beginning of the second term with its “democracy initiative.” Finally, we evaluate the key legacies that the Bush administration left to its successors.

## FOREIGN POLICY LEGACIES AFTER THE COLD WAR

An important point of departure for understanding George W. Bush’s initial foreign policy approach is to consider the legacies that he inherited from Bill Clinton and from his father, George H.W. Bush. Both of these presidents experienced the seismic foreign policy shocks that the end of the Cold War wrought, and both sought to put different stamps on foreign policy to replace the anti-Soviet and anticommunist principles that had guided it for so long. One left the imprint of **political realism**, the other the imprint of **liberal internationalism**. Neither was wholly successful in setting a new foreign policy course and, in this sense, left different legacies for George W. Bush.

The administration of George H.W. Bush came to office with a commitment to continue the course that President Ronald Reagan had pursued during his second term. That course was based much less on the ideology of Reagan’s first term and much more on the pragmatism of *realpolitik*. Such an approach was attractive to the elder Bush because his impulse was toward a realism in which he would manage the relationship with the Soviet Union and stabilize relations with

other great powers. Even with the opening of the Berlin Wall, the unification of Germany, the collapse of the Soviet Union from 1989 to 1991, the disruptions of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, and the outbreak of ethnic and communal conflicts in the former Yugoslavia, the senior Bush administration defended its caution on the grounds of political realism and pragmatism in addressing the “instabilities generated by the Cold War’s demise.”<sup>2</sup> To critics, however, this approach was ad hoc, devoid of American values, and the cause of considerable uncertainty in America’s actions abroad.

Bill Clinton seized on this uncertainty to argue for “a new vision and the strength to meet a new set of opportunities and threats.”<sup>3</sup> The United States, Clinton argued, needed leadership that was “strategic, vigorous, and grounded in America’s democratic values.”<sup>4</sup> Thus, his initial foreign policy impulse was to expand the number of market democracies, which he believed offered the best prospect for creating a more pacific international system. This “liberal international” approach, focusing on promoting free markets and free peoples around the world, stood in sharp contrast to the realism of the George H.W. Bush administration.

Very soon after it took office, the Clinton administration had to confront new and frequent ethnic and communal conflicts in various parts of the world and competing centers of powers from Russia and China. Although it took a decided turn toward political realism, its liberal internationalism remained in at least three ways: a commitment to broad global involvement, a commitment to involvement in economic and social affairs manifested through the almost 300 bilateral and multilateral trade pacts completed during its tenure, and a commitment to what came to be labeled the “Clinton Doctrine,” which called for American intervention in global humanitarian crises (e.g., Bosnia, Somalia, Haiti, and Kosovo).

## **THE VALUES AND BELIEFS OF THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION: PRIOR TO SEPTEMBER 11**

Because George W. Bush was philosophically inclined to follow the foreign policy of his father’s administration, President Clinton’s legacies were particularly unwelcome. Indeed, they were a target of attack by candidate Bush and his foreign policy advisors in the 2000 election and beyond because they represented a more universal and multilateral approach (liberal internationalism) than the new administration intended. Yet Bush did not come to office with much foreign policy experience or with his own vision of America’s role in the world. Thus, he was highly dependent on his foreign policy advisors, and the team that he chose provides considerable insight into the direction that his foreign policy would take. For the most part, Bush selected political realists, foreign policy conservatives and neoconservatives, and veterans of recent Republican administrations.

## BUSH'S FOREIGN POLICY TEAM

Bush's **vice president, Dick Cheney**, quickly became a key advisor. Cheney, of course, had been a member of two previous administrations, as chief of staff in the Gerald R. Ford administration and as secretary of defense in the George H.W. Bush administration, and he had represented Wyoming in Congress for several terms. In this sense, he was readily familiar with Washington and the policy-making process. His views, too, were well established. He was generally regarded as conservative, as reflected in his voting record in Congress, but he quickly became a strong advocate of American primacy in the world. Cheney advanced his views in the Bush White House and sometimes got ahead of administration policy, especially in promoting a more vigorous approach toward Iraq in the months preceding the Iraq war.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, he soon became identified as a leader of the "neoconservatives" in the White House. (Neoconservatives believed that "American power has been and could be used for moral purposes," that the nature of the regimes within countries affect foreign policy and require attention, and that international institutions and international law should be viewed skeptically as a guide to policy.<sup>6</sup> In the neoconservative view, the United States should be more assertive and robust in its foreign policy actions.)

A second crucial Bush advisor was **Condoleezza Rice**, as assistant to the president for national security affairs, or national security adviser. A veteran of the George H.W. Bush administration, where she worked on the National Security Council (NSC) staff dealing with Soviet/Russian affairs, she was now named to head the NSC and the NSC "system" (see Chapter 10). On foreign policy matters, Rice quickly became Bush's "alter ego," much as she had been during the 2000 election campaign. Although she was not viewed as a "master global strategist like Henry Kissinger" and largely saw her role as sharpening the differences among other key advisors,<sup>7</sup> she had ready access to the president and could surely shape the direction of policy by her (largely) private advice. Moreover, her general foreign policy orientation was more toward traditional realism than the neoconservatism that came to dominate the Bush policy-making apparatus. Her deputy, Stephen Hadley, shared this policy outlook. When Rice was named Secretary of State during Bush's second term, Hadley became assistant to the president for national security. Hence, there was considerable continuity between State and the NSC during the last four years of the Bush administration.

In his first term, President Bush appointed **Colin Powell**, a veteran of several previous administrations and possessor of a wealth of foreign policy experience, as his secretary of state. Powell had served as national security advisor during the Reagan administration and as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff during the George H. W. Bush administration and in the early days of the Clinton administration.<sup>8</sup> Although instinctively a political realist, Powell was probably the most moderate among Bush's key foreign policy advisors. His deputy secretary of state, Richard Armitage, who also had served in several foreign policy making posts in the Reagan and senior Bush administrations, largely in the Department of Defense, held views compatible with Powell's, though perhaps a bit more conservative.

When Condoleezza Rice became secretary of state, she continued this more realist foreign policy perspective, both through her own views and through her principal aides. She appointed Robert Zoellick as deputy secretary of state.<sup>9</sup> He, too, had had long experience in Washington, serving as U.S. trade representative during George W. Bush's first term and in the Treasury and State departments, and as White House deputy chief of staff in the Reagan and the senior Bush administrations. Zoellick's successor, John Negroponte, a retired career Foreign Service officer, came back into government with the Bush administration in 2001. He had previously served as ambassador to the United Nations and to Iraq and briefly as the first director of national intelligence in 2005–2006.<sup>10</sup>

At the Department of Defense, the two top officials appointed in the first term were largely neoconservative voices on foreign policy, and both came to their positions with substantial policy-making experience. **Donald Rumsfeld** was appointed for a second time as secretary of defense, a post he had served in during the Ford administration. His Washington experience included several terms in Congress during the 1960s, a stint in the Nixon administration, and service as U.S. ambassador to NATO in the early 1970s. In 1998 and 2000, he served on commissions evaluating missile defense and national security strategy for space.<sup>11</sup> Rumsfeld's foreign policy views tended toward American primacy, and his policy impact became especially pronounced in the post–September 11 period. Rumsfeld's deputy secretary of defense, **Paul Wolfowitz**, shared many of Rumsfeld's views about a more vigorous and singular global role for the United States after the Cold War and after September 11. Indeed, he was also viewed as a leader of the neoconservatives in the Bush administration, who hoped to reshape American foreign policy on the Reagan model of the 1980s.<sup>12</sup>

When Rumsfeld resigned in November 2006, his successor was **Robert Gates**. Gates came from the presidency of Texas A&M University, but had had extensive government experience in previous administrations<sup>13</sup> as deputy national security adviser and CIA director during the George H.W. Bush administration and as the only CIA entry-level officer to become director of the agency in its history. His global views were more those of a traditional realist and thus were highly compatible with the views of Secretary of State Rice. Gates's deputy, Gordon England, who had served as secretary of the navy and as deputy secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, held largely these same, more moderate conservative views.<sup>14</sup>

George Tenet, as director of Central Intelligence, was a holdover from the Clinton Administration. He, too, brought a considerable amount of Washington experience—as deputy director of the CIA before assuming the directorship, as a member of the National Security Council staff, and as a member of the staff of the Senate Intelligence Committee. This experience was viewed as an asset by the new administration. However, with the events of 9/11 and the faulty intelligence related to the initiation of the Iraq War, Tenet ultimately stepped down in 2004. He was succeeded by Porter Goss, a former CIA officer and a member of Congress for several terms. Goss had led the House Intelligence Committee prior to assuming the position as CIA director. He served for two years and was succeeded by General Michael Hayden in 2006. Hayden, a career intelligence officer in the

military, a former director of the National Security Agency, and the initial deputy director of national intelligence from 2005 to 2006, thus had considerable policy-making experience in the intelligence field.<sup>15</sup>

In all, Bush's key advisors were Washington and foreign policy veterans. During the first term, as noted, several were more ideological and more unilateralist than their predecessors in the Clinton administration. During Bush's second term, several neoconservatives were replaced with more traditional conservatives and political realists. By that time, however, the basic direction of the administration's foreign policy had been set. As we note later in the chapter, there was some attempt to moderate the foreign policy direction in the second term with limited success. Still, such efforts were largely overshadowed by events and by policies already in place.

### THE INITIAL FOREIGN POLICY APPROACH: CLASSICAL REALISM

**Classical realism** is based on several important assumptions about states and state behavior that had direct implications for the Bush administration's initial foreign policy approach. First, classical realists assume that states are the principal actors in foreign policy and that actions *between* states trump any efforts to change behaviors *within* them. In this sense, relations between states are the basis for evaluating a country's foreign policy, and American policy would focus principally on state-to-state relations. Second, a state's "interests are determined by its power (meaning its material resources) relative to other nations."<sup>16</sup> As a state's relative power increases, it seeks to expand its political influence, albeit based on a careful cost/benefit analysis. In this regard, American power could and should be used to restrain states that could clearly harm the United States and its interests, but it should be exercised carefully. Third, classical realists focus on managing relations among the major powers, as these are likely to be the major threats to the international system. A guiding principle for realists is that no great power, or coalition of great powers, should dominate or endanger a nation or a group of nations. In this sense, the United States should focus on strengthening its alliances and on challenging some states, albeit prudently and selectively.

**These assumptions largely informed the policies that the Bush administration initially supported and opposed when it took office in 2001.** First of all, Bush came to office seeking to develop a "**distinctly American internationalism.**" What that phrase implied was a much narrower definition of the American national interest than his immediate predecessor's and even his father's.<sup>17</sup> Second, candidate Bush had made clear that a top priority of his administration would be to refurbish America's alliances around the world as a tangible manifestation of managing great-power relationships. Europe and Asia would be the highest foreign policy priorities because they were home to long-time allies—and potential rivals. Third, Russia and China would be viewed more skeptically than they had been by the Clinton administration, and American military capacity would be important for exercising American influence over

them. China, for example, should be viewed as an emerging power and as “a competitor, not a strategic partner.”<sup>18</sup> Fourth, “hard power” would be preferred over “soft power” for dealing with the international system.<sup>19</sup> Hard power uses military capacity, sanctioning, and threats, among other coercive measures, as ways to influence the behavior of nations. Soft power relies on the appeal of American culture and American values to enable the United States to wield influence. Fifth, and in line with refurbishing alliances and with the use of hard power, the remaking and strengthening of the American military would be a top priority in terms of increased military pay and increased military spending overall.

**The assumptions of classical realism also pointed to the policies that the Bush administration initially opposed.** Most fundamentally, the new administration, largely in contrast to the Clinton years, sought to narrow America’s foreign involvement and focus only on strategically important actions. First, the United States would not be as caught up in changing other states internally or in promoting political democracy. As Bush stated: “We value the elegant structures of our own democracy—but realize that, in other societies, the architecture will vary. We propose our principles, but we must not impose our culture.”<sup>20</sup> Second, Bush opposed American humanitarian interventions that had no clear strategic rationale. The American military, Condoleezza Rice said, is neither “a civilian police force” nor “a political referee” in internecine and communal conflicts.<sup>21</sup> Indeed, during the 2000 election campaign, Bush demonstrated this position by indicating a willingness to pull back from American involvement in Middle East discussions, and, during his first months in office, by deciding to move away from negotiations with North Korea. Third, the Bush administration eschewed involvement with international institutions and opposed several key international agreements—rejecting the Kyoto Protocol to control global warming, opposing the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty, and showing a willingness to withdraw from the 1972 ABM Treaty in order to deploy national missile defense. Fourth, the administration was not inclined to afford much influence to Congress or America’s allies in the conduct of foreign policy. Instead, executive power in foreign affairs would be reasserted.

## THE IMPACT OF SEPTEMBER 11

Much as December 7, 1941, was a “day which will live in infamy” for earlier generations of Americans, **September 11, 2001**, will be such a day for the current American generation. Indeed, Americans will always remember where they were and what they were doing when they first heard that American Airlines flight 11 crashed into the north tower of the World Trade Center, or a few minutes later when United Airlines flight 175 crashed into the south tower. Few, too, will forget where they were a little while later when American Airlines flight 77 crashed into the Pentagon and United Airlines Flight 93 crashed into a field in Pennsylvania after an attempt by the passengers to overpower its hijackers.

From an analytical point of view, the events of that day represent **one of those rare and spectacular political events** that can change the mindset of



the public and its leaders regarding foreign policy. Such watershed events are few indeed, as one political scientist noted many years ago, but when they do occur, they can reverse or change the views of a generation or more.<sup>22</sup> The Vietnam War—or the “searing effects of Vietnam” to use the words of a political scientist at the time—was another of those spectacular events that had a jarring effect on attitudes toward war and peace and toward the use of American force abroad in an earlier period.<sup>23</sup> More recently, the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the implosion of the Soviet Union—the ending of the Cold War—might be cited as similar spectacular events. Yet September 11 appears to rank at the top because of its pervasive effect not only for the generation being socialized to politics at the time but also for the leveling effect it had on foreign policy beliefs across generations.

In this sense, September 11 has had a more profound effect than Pearl Harbor, the Vietnam War, or the Berlin Wall for at least three reasons. First, it was the **first substantial attack on the American continent** since the burning of Washington in the War of 1812. The American public had always assumed it was secure, and 9/11 shattered that assumption. It demonstrated that no state or person was safe from those determined to do harm. Second, September 11 was fundamentally **an attack on American civilians**, not military personnel (although, to be sure, military personnel were killed at the Pentagon). Even Pearl Harbor and its devastation had fundamentally been directed at the military. Third, and important, the **terrorist attack was the deadliest in American history**—costing almost 3,000 lives and surpassing the total dead at Pearl Harbor by almost 1,000.

The effects of September 11 were profound, whether measured by the changed attitudes among the American public toward foreign policy, the changed agenda within Congress with new levels of support for the president on foreign policy issues, or the changed nature of the presidency itself.

### Impact on the Public and Congress

The impact of September 11 on the American people was evident almost immediately. Hosts of Americans were suddenly flying flags from their car windows, wearing them on their lapels, and pasting them to their front windows. From people of all walks of life and from all parts of the country came a huge outpouring of support for the victims of the attacks and their families. **Support, too, for President Bush and his foreign policy actions increased across party lines.** His approval rating went from 51 percent just prior to September 11, 2001, to 86 percent immediately after. The “rally ’round the flag” effect (35 points) was the largest ever recorded by the Gallup polling organization. Indeed, Bush’s approval rating shortly reached 90 percent.<sup>24</sup>

Although the immediate show of patriotism and support for the president is not surprising given the gravity of the events of September 11, what was unusual was its staying power. The average level of public support for Bush during the first four months after September 11, 2001, was 84 percent.<sup>25</sup> A year later, his public approval was still at 70 percent, and after eighteen months in office, his average approval was 72 percent—the highest cumulative average of any post-Vietnam president and the third highest for an eighteen-month period (after Kennedy and



Johnson) of any post–World War II president.<sup>26</sup> To be sure, his support declined prior to the war with Iraq in early 2003, rose with the outbreak of war,<sup>27</sup> and declined again as post–Iraqi reconstruction proved difficult.<sup>28</sup> Still, the lingering support for President Bush (even in the midst of recession and a weak economy) seemed tied to 9/11’s residual impact.

After September 11, the American public’s foreign policy attitudes took a sharp turn away from those it had held as recently as the 1998 Chicago Council on Foreign Relations survey.<sup>29</sup> Now, those **attitudes supported a more robust American approach abroad**. In particular, although the public continued its strong support for nonmilitary measures to address terrorism, it was now willing to endorse military measures as well, including the use of American air strikes and ground troops against terrorists and even the assassination of terrorist leaders if carried out multilaterally. A large majority also favored the use of American troops against Iraq, although, again, in a multilateral action. The public strongly supported more spending on defense and more spending on intelligence gathering. Sixty–five percent wanted to increase spending on homeland security, and a majority also supported the maintenance of American military bases overseas. Overall, the public was hardly a constraint on Bush’s foreign policy actions after September 11; instead, it appeared to be endorsing whatever actions that the administration was already pursuing or contemplating.

September 11 had a similar effect on Congress and its role in policy making, especially when compared to its role over the previous three decades. The end of the Cold War had accelerated the pluralistic decision–making process that had emerged after the Vietnam War and had enhanced Congressional influence. With the collapse of the Soviet Empire and the breakup of the Soviet Union, for instance, America’s foreign policy agenda changed dramatically, and a broad array of new economic, environmental, sociocultural, and security issues now took center stage. Many of these issues allowed or required congressional action. As a result, foreign policy issues became increasingly partisan and contentious. Indeed, the Clinton administration fought numerous difficult foreign policy battles with a Republican–controlled Congress and it had a decidedly mixed record in this new political environment.<sup>30</sup>

In large measure, the **events of September 11** changed all that, and, much as with the impact on public attitudes, **served as a watershed in congressional–executive relations on foreign policy**. In particular, they seem to have resurrected an aphorism popular during the height of the Cold War: “Politics stops at the water’s edge.” Substantively, the impact of September 11 on congressional behavior manifested itself in the high degree of bipartisan support for legislation to combat international terrorism.

Within a week of the September 11 attacks, Congress had enacted **Senate Joint Resolution 23** authorizing the president to use force “against those nations, organizations, or persons, he determines planned, authorized, committed, or aided the terrorist attacks.” Just over a month later, It passed the **USA PATRIOT Act** that afforded the executive branch greater discretion in pursuing terrorist suspects and narrowed some previous civil liberty protections. Over the next several months, Congress passed several pieces of legislation waiving previous

**Table 6.1 Legislation Related to the Attack on September 11**

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Public Law #</b>	<b>Vote: House</b>	<b>Vote: Senate</b>
Congressional Sentiment	9/18/01	107-39	Without Objection	100-0
Authorization for Use of Military Force	9/18/01	107-40	420-1	98-0
Public Safety Officer Benefits bill	9/18/01	107-37	413-0	Unanimous Consent
Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act	9/18/01	107-38	422-0	Unanimous Consent
Air Transportation Safety and System Stabilization Act	9/22/01	107-42	356-54	Unanimous Consent
A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act	10/1/01	107-45	Without Objection	Unanimous Consent
USA PATRIOT Act	10/26/01	107-56	357-66	98-1
Foreign Assistance Waivers	10/27/01	107-57	Voice Vote	Unanimous Consent
Aviation and Transportation Security Act	11/19/01	107-71	410-9	Voice Vote
Designation of September 11 as Patriot Day	12/18/01	107-89	407-0	Unanimous Consent
Afghan Women and Children Relief Act	12/21/01	107-81	Voice Vote	Unanimous Consent
National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002	12/28/01	107-107	382-40	96-2
Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002	12/28/01	107-108	Voice Vote	100-0
Higher Education Relief Opportunities for Students Act	1/15/02	107-122	Voice Vote	Unanimous Consent
Victims of Terrorism Relief Act of 2001	1/23/02	107-134	418-0	Unanimous Consent
Extended Unemployment Compensation bill	3/25/02	107-154	Voice Vote	Unanimous Consent
Enhanced Border Security and Visa Entry Reform Act	5/14/02	107-173	411-0	97-0
Bioterrorism Response Act of 2001	6/12/02	107-188	425-1	98-0
Export-Import Bank Reauthorization Act	6/14/02	107-189	344-78	Unanimous Consent
Police and Fire Chaplains Public Safety Officers' Benefit Act	6/24/02	107-196	Without Objection	Unanimous Consent
Terrorist Bombings Convention Implementation Act	6/25/02	107-197	381-36	83-1

Source: <http://thomas.loc.gov/house/terrorleg/htm>.

restrictions on aid to Pakistan, enhancing border security and visa entry requirements, aiding the victims of terrorism, increasing intelligence authorization, and amending the immigration statute. As Table 6.1 shows, some 21 pieces of legislation were passed as part of the congressional response to September 11.<sup>31</sup>

The table also shows that these acts were largely passed with little dissent. In all, only five produced any opposition, all of it confined to the House of Representatives. And even those—the Air Transportation Safety and System Stabilization Act, the USA PATRIOT Act, the Terrorist Bombings Convention Implementation Act, the Export-Import Bank Reauthorization Act, and the National Defense Authorization Act—received only a modest number of opposing votes. In all, then, there was overwhelming congressional support for the president in the first year after September 11.

This congressional support continued in the second year as well, though not quite at the same level. **In October 2002, Congress passed a joint resolution authorizing the president to use force “as he determines to be necessary and appropriate in order to defend the national security of the United States against the continuing threat posed by Iraq and enforce all relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions regarding Iraq.”**<sup>32</sup> Passage was by a wide margin in each chamber (House, 296–133; Senate, 77–23). **The Department of Homeland Security Act of 2002** also passed by a wide margin in the House (295–133), but was stalled in the Senate for a time. After the Republicans’ and President Bush’s success in the 2002 congressional elections, the Senate acted quickly, passing the measure by a 90–9 vote in November 2002 and thus establishing one of the largest governmental bureaucracies in the history of the American Republic. Despite the occasional questioning of administration policy by some members of Congress, there was much bipartisan support and interbranch cooperation regarding the war on terrorism.

### Impact on the President

Finally, and importantly, the events of September 11, 2001, appeared to have had a profound impact on **George W. Bush himself**, both **personally and in his approach to policy**. On the night of those tragic events, he dictated for his diary that “the Pearl Harbor of the 21st century took place today.”<sup>33</sup> With that assessment, Bush appeared to realize that he had new responsibilities. “He was now a wartime president,”<sup>34</sup> as Bob Woodward noted, with all that this implied for his leadership.

Fred Greenstein (2004), a long-time student of presidents, argues that Bush’s cognitive style and his effectiveness with the public were the areas most affected by the terrorist attacks. His emotional intelligence was strengthened in that he was able to face this national tragedy, and his political skills were sharpened by his need to put together a coalition against terrorism.<sup>35</sup> Thomas Preston and Margaret Hermann reach a similar conclusion: “[Bush’s] normal lack of interest in foreign affairs and desire to delegate the formulation and implementation of foreign policy to others, which had been the dominant pattern within his advisory system before the terrorist attacks, was forced to give way to his current, more active and involved pattern.”<sup>36</sup> Political psychologist Stanley Renshon also argues that 9/11 was a transforming moment for the president: “**Those moments [on 9/11] changed the public’s view of the Bush presidency, the president’s view of the presidency, and, crucially, the president himself.**” They

helped him find “his place and his purpose.” He then “turned his efforts toward transforming America’s place in the world and the world in which America has its place.”<sup>37</sup>

### **THE VALUES AND BELIEFS OF THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION: AFTER SEPTEMBER 11**

If aspects of President Bush’s leadership style were affected by the tragic events at the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, his administration’s foreign policy changed as well. Although these events ironically confirmed some of the administration’s assumptions about the world and its approach to it (e.g., the importance of hard power over soft power and the need for enhanced military preparedness), they also suggested the limits of Bush’s commitment to classical realism. The administration did not do a *volte-face* in its policy, but it did change from classical realism to what we would describe as “defensive realism” that incorporated a distinct form of idealism.

#### **Defensive Realism and “Revival Wilsonians”<sup>38</sup>**

Defensive realism makes many of the same assumptions as classical realism, but it differs in one important aspect: the importance of “insecurity” as the motivating force for state actions. Fareed Zakaria summarizes this fundamental difference:

While the latter implies that states expand out of confidence, or at least out of an awareness of increased resources, the former maintains that states expand out of fear and nervousness. For the classical realist, states expand because they can; for the defensive realist, states expand because they must.<sup>39</sup>

The new threatening environment after September 11, 2001 thus propelled the Bush administration to rethink some of its assumptions and actions—and eventually to create a new defensive security strategy.

Along with a new defensive realism, the Bush administration embraced a form of idealism in foreign affairs, especially in regard to combating international terrorism in the post-9/11 era. A nation pursuing an idealist foreign policy approach is motivated by a moral imperative and seeks to promote common values within and across states. In this sense, U.S. foreign policy became more than state-to-state relations among the strong and now sought to advance universal norms. That is, the administration would promote a worldwide imperative against terrorism even as it pursued greater global democratization. Thus, it became increasingly concerned about the actions of all states (and groups) and the internal composition of many, especially as it influenced their attitude toward terrorism. Put somewhat differently, the administration appeared to embrace the **Wilsonian tradition in American foreign policy**, albeit driven rather singularly by the imperative to combat terrorism and doing so in a particular way.<sup>40</sup>

This change in approach—and the Bush administration’s combining of realism and idealism—might be described essentially as its adoption of what Fukuyama labels “**the neoconservative legacy.**” The administration came to accept that the “internal characteristics of regimes matter” in the conduct of foreign policy, that American power and capabilities can and should be used for moral purposes even within states, and that international institutions and international law should be viewed skeptically in the conduct of foreign policy. At the same time, it continued to view social engineering by governments suspiciously.<sup>41</sup> Walter Russell Mead labels the Bush administration adherents of the neoconservative legacy as “**Revival Wilsonians.**”<sup>42</sup> That is, they believed in the spread of democracy and the goodness of American intentions and actions—without Wilson’s embrace of international law and institutions. This revamped Wilsonianism was driven fundamentally by domestic American values and implemented primarily by American power and American unilateralism.

### Changes in Assumptions and Policy Direction

Three of Bush’s initial foreign policy assumptions changed as a result of 9/11.<sup>43</sup> First, and perhaps most significantly, his administration moved **from a narrow or particularistic foreign policy approach to a more universal approach.** That is, it moved from narrowing American national interests to broadening them to combat international terrorism. Second, it moved away from its rather narrowly defined unilateralism to a **greater multilateralism, albeit with a unilateralist option.** Although the United States would pursue multilateral efforts, Bush threatened to act unilaterally if multilateral support did not come—much as the war against Iraq would demonstrate. Third, the administration moved from its reliance on a stark realism in foreign policy—without much concern for the internal dynamics of states—to a version of idealism that was **clearly concerned with the internal dynamics of some states.** In this regard, humanitarian interventions, peacekeeping efforts, and peacemaking actions within states had now become part and parcel of Bush’s foreign policy approach, much as they had in his immediate predecessor’s.

Several administration actions evidenced these changes in assumptions. President Bush addressed a joint session of Congress shortly after September 11 to call for a new universalism. Instead of a “distinctly American internationalism,” he now adopted what might be called a “**comprehensive American globalism,**” defined and animated by the moral outrage against the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. In other words, Bush committed the United States to fighting terrorism, and states that support it everywhere—and with all means, stating

Our enemy is a radical network of terrorists, and every government that supports them. . . .

Our war on terror begins with al Qaeda, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated.<sup>44</sup>

In words reminiscent of the Truman Doctrine at the start of the Cold War, Bush outlined the **dichotomous and stark nature of the global struggle**—a struggle between the way of terror and the way of freedom, a struggle between states that support terror and those that do not, and a struggle between the uncivilized and civilized world.

These terrorists kill not merely to end lives, but to disrupt and end a way of life. With every atrocity, they hope that America grows fearful, retreating from the world and forsaking our friends. They stand against us, because we stand in their way.

[W]e will pursue nations that provide aid or safe haven to terrorism. Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists. From this day forward any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime.

This is not . . . just America's fight. And what is at stake is not just America's freedom. This is the world's fight. This is civilization's fight.<sup>45</sup>

The President also conveyed the multilateral nature of this new foreign policy approach in his initial speech on the war on terrorism, which was demonstrated by his administration's actions.

Our response involves far more than instant retaliation and isolated strikes. Americans should not expect one battle, but a lengthy campaign, unlike any other we have ever seen. . . . We will starve terrorist of funding, turn them one against another, drive them from place to place, until there is no refuge or no rest. . . .

We ask every nation to join us. We will ask, and we will need, the help of police forces, intelligence services and banking systems around the world. The United States is grateful that many nations and many international organizations have already responded—with sympathy and with support. Nations from Latin America, to Asia, to Africa, to Europe, to the Islamic world.<sup>46</sup>

**Most dramatic about Bush's new foreign policy approach was its decision to mount a coalitional effort**, the speed with which it was put together, and the variety of participants that it included—especially in light of his foreign policy assumptions when he took office. Table 6.2 lists some of the bilateral and multilateral actions within the first 20 days of the terrorist attacks as summarized by the Department of State. It conveys the collective effort undertaken to address those attacks. In addition, of course, were cooperative efforts to freeze the financial assets of known or suspected terrorist organizations within the United States and around the world. The Office (and later Department) of Homeland Security was created, new security standards were imposed at airports, and stricter standards were initiated for immigration into the United States. In short, law enforcement at home and abroad was dramatically enhanced.

**Table 6.2 Examples of Bilateral and Multilateral Efforts to Assist the United States Immediately after September 11**

- Russia was the first nation to call the United States, offering to share information and the use of its airspace for humanitarian efforts.
- China, India, and Pakistan immediately offered to share information and/or provide support.
- Twenty-seven nations offered the United States overflight and landing rights in connection with its actions against Afghanistan.
- Forty-six declarations of support came from multilateral organizations.
- One hundred nations offered to provide intelligence support to the United States.
- The UN Security Council adopted a resolution instructing all nations to pursue terrorists and their supporters.
- Australia invoked Article IV of the ANZUS Treaty and declared that the attacks on September 11, 2001, represented an attack on it.
- NATO invoked Article V, thus viewing September 11, 2001, as an attack on its members.

Source: Drawn from Department of State, "Operation Enduring Freedom Overview," <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/fs/2001/5194.htm>, March 27, 2003.

By the time that a military operation was commenced in Afghanistan on October 7, 2001, several allied countries (Britain, Canada, Australia, Germany, and France, among others) had pledged to assist with it. And more than forty nations had approved American overflight and landing rights.<sup>47</sup> This assistance came from several continents and regions (the Middle East, Africa, Europe, and Asia). Furthermore, Operation Anaconda in Afghanistan eventually included contributions from some twenty countries from around the world.

A third dimension to this post–September 11 change was the **administration's interests and actions regarding communal and regional conflicts**. The decision to focus on the internal situation in Afghanistan is hardly surprising in light of September 11, but what is surprising is the extent to which the administration committed itself to changing or assisting in changing the domestic situations in other countries. These range from the effort to pursue the "axis of evil" countries—Iran, Iraq, and North Korea—to the commitments for military training and advisory units to the Philippines, Yemen, and Georgia, among others, for assistance with internal problems and to efforts to use American naval power around Sudan to block possibly escaping al-Qaeda fighters.

The administration's efforts to resolve conflict in the Middle East and between India and Pakistan and its reopening of discussions with North Korea also illustrate a newfound concern with the internal dynamics of various countries and regions. Almost immediately after September 11, the administration appointed a special envoy, General Anthony Zinni, to the Middle East, and Secretary of State Colin Powell traveled to India and Pakistan in an attempt to defuse the situation over Kashmir. President Bush reiterated his willingness to open discussions with the North Koreans over peace and stability on the Korean peninsula (although this was a position adopted as early as the summer of 2001). At the same time, the administration was willing to look past internal concerns with some nations



(e.g. China, Russia, Pakistan), especially their human rights conditions, because their cooperation in the war on terrorism was more important than anything else for the United States.

In sum, the thrust of the new approach, quickly labeled the **Bush Doctrine**, was to hunt down terrorists, and those that supported terrorists, on a worldwide scale. In this effort the cooperation and support of other countries would be sought, but the United States would go it alone if necessary. The globalism of this effort and the motivation for its actions represent the major transformations of the policy approach of the Bush administration after September 11, 2001.

### **FORMALIZING THE BUSH DOCTRINE: THE NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY STATEMENT**

Although its statements and actions conveyed President Bush's new foreign policy approach, the administration issued a fuller rationale for its policy direction almost exactly one year after 9/11. This was *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, which declared that the fundamental aim of American foreign policy was "to create a balance of power that favors freedom."<sup>48</sup> To create such a balance, the United States would "defend the peace by fighting terrorists and tyrants . . . will preserve peace by building good relations among the great powers . . . [and would] extend the peace by encouraging free and open societies on every continent."

This statement demonstrates how much American actions would now be motivated by the new threat environment, much as defensive realism postulated. It also conveyed the idealist and universal nature of the proposed foreign policy agenda with its concern for the internal make-up and operations of states and groups: "The United States is now threatened less by conquering states than . . . by failing ones . . . less by fleets and armies than by catastrophic technologies in the hands of the embittered few." The statement moreover recognized and accepted the fact that the United States possessed "unprecedented—and unequaled—strength and influence in the world" and acknowledged that "this position comes with unparalleled responsibilities, obligations, and opportunity."

The Bush administration outlined seven courses of action to promote its fundamental goal of promoting freedom and advancing the "nonnegotiable demands of human dignity." These included rallying nations and alliances around the world to defeat terrorism (and relying on a broad array of actions to do so); addressing (and hopefully resolving) regional conflicts to reduce their impact on global stability; and focusing on "rogue states" and terrorists who might gain access to weapons of mass destruction (WMD). The administration also indicated that it would seek to lead a broad coalition to promote a balance of power.

The *National Security Strategy* included commitments to ignite global economic growth, fundamentally through free trade initiatives but also through increased development assistance and the expansion of global democracies. Finally, it called for transforming national security institutions at home by improving the military

**Table 6.3 Key Components of the National Security Strategy of the Bush Administration, 2002**

Aim: To create a balance of power that favors freedom and that advances the “nonnegotiable demands of human dignity”

I. American actions for *defending the peace*:

- Strengthen alliances to defeat global terrorism and work to prevent attacks against us and against our friends.
- Work with others to defuse regional conflicts.
- Prevent our enemies from threatening us, our allies, and our friends with weapons of mass destruction.
- Transform America’s national security institutions to meet the challenges and opportunities of the twenty-first century.

II. American actions for *preserving the peace*:

- Develop agendas for cooperative action with other main centers of global power.

III. American actions for *extending the peace*:

- Ignite a new era of global economic growth through free markets and free trade.
- Expand the circle of development by opening societies and building the infrastructure of democracy.

Source: Abstracted from *The National Security Strategy of the United States*, September, 2002.

and the intelligence communities and strengthening homeland security to defend peace at home and abroad.<sup>49</sup> Table 6.3 provides a brief summary of the courses of action outlined in the Bush Doctrine.

To provide a better sense of the direction of the Bush administration’s foreign policy and to identify its emphases, we group these courses of actions, under what appear to be the proper themes of defending, preserving, and extending the peace.

### Defending the Peace

The first three courses of action explicitly focused on defending the peace against terrorists and rogue states. The administration would **rally nations and alliances around the world to defeat terrorism**. The new adversary was now “not a single political regime or person or religion or ideology” but an “elusive enemy” that would “be fought on many fronts” and “over an extended period of time. Progress would come through the persistent accumulation of successes—some seen, some unseen.”<sup>50</sup> Moreover, a broad array of actions would be used to defeat terrorism—disrupting the funding of terrorists through various means, taking direct actions against terrorists and terrorist organizations, denying territorial sanctuaries to terrorist groups in failed countries, addressing domestic conditions that breed terrorism, and strengthening homeland security. Although the *National Security Strategy* makes clear that regional and international organizations would be used in pursuing this objective, it also states that the United States would act alone or through a “coalition of the willing” if necessary.

The second course of action to defend the peace would be to address **the regional conflicts in the world**. These conflicts could “strain our alliances,

rekindle rivalries among the great powers, and create horrifying affronts to human dignity.” The Bush administration committed itself to a variety of actions to reduce the impact of regional conflicts on global stability and, where possible, to aid in their resolution. However, it made clear that there were to be limits on how much the United States could and would do: “The United States should be realistic about its ability to help those who are unwilling or unready to help themselves.”

A third dimension of defending the peace focused on **rogue states and terrorists** that might gain access to weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). That is, the Bush administration would use the threat of WMDs as a way to link terrorists and rogue states and to identify both as the combined enemies of American foreign policy. These rogue states, while small in number, were states “that brutalize their own people”; “display no regard for international law”; are “determined to acquire weapons of mass destruction”; “sponsor terrorism around the globe; and reject human values and hate the United States and everything for which it stands.” In particular, the United States would have to be prepared to “deter and defend” against terrorists and rogue states, strengthen nonproliferation efforts against them, and have “effective consequence management” against the effects of WMD if deterrence failed.

### Preserving the Peace

The first three courses of action would contribute to preserving the peace, but the sixth course—**developing cooperation with other centers of power**—explicitly focused on that goal. The United States would seek to lead a broad coalition, “as broad as practicable,” to promote a balance of power in favor of freedom. This coalition-building effort would involve America’s traditional allies, such as NATO (and an expanded NATO), Japan, Australia, Korea, Thailand, and the Philippines, but it would also include Russia, India, and China. In this sense, the Bush administration advocated submerging differences that might exist between the United States and key countries (e.g., Russia, China, India, and Pakistan) in an effort to build a larger and nearly universal coalition against international terrorism. What is particularly noteworthy about this section of the document is its relative silence on the role of international organizations, save for some discussion of NATO and the European Union.

### Extending the Peace

The fourth and fifth courses of action—**igniting global economic growth and expanding the number of open societies and democracies**—reflected the economic and political components of the administration’s foreign policy approach (as contrasted with the security dimension so evident in the other courses of action). They also reflected its effort to bring more states into this balance of power for freedom as well as some of its idealistic underpinnings. The Bush administration’s view was that economic growth “creates new jobs and higher incomes. It allows people to lift their lives out of poverty, spurs economic and legal reform, and the fight against corruption, and it reinforces the habits of liberty.” Thus, the

United States would be committed to “a return to economic growth in Europe and Japan” and “to policies that will help emerging markets achieve access to larger capital flows at lower costs.” In particular, the Bush administration reaffirmed its commitment to global, regional, and bilateral free trade initiatives as the way to foster global economic growth and development. In the belief that protection of the environment should accompany this commitment, the administration pledged to reduce U.S. greenhouse gas intensity by 18 percent during the next 10 years. (This commitment would be accomplished outside the Kyoto Protocol, however.)

For the Bush administration, development and economic growth were closely tied. The *National Security Strategy* recognized that “a world where some live in comfort and plenty, while half . . . lives on less than \$2 a day, is neither just nor stable.” As such, development was to be “a moral imperative” for the United States. The administration thus pledged to increase its development assistance by 50 percent, to work for reform of the World Bank and its activities to help the poor, to develop measures to document progress within countries, and to increase the amount of funding in the form of grants, as opposed to loans. At the same time, it would continue to view trade and investment as “the real engines of economic growth.” Finally, the administration reiterated its emphasis on basic needs within poor countries, such as public health, education, and agricultural development.

The last course of action in the statement called for **transforming national security institutions at home**. Although such a transformation would have an impact on the defending, preserving, and expanding of peace, its priorities were improving the military and the intelligence communities and strengthening homeland security to defend the peace at home and abroad. There was a brief mention of improving diplomacy and the Department of State, but the emphasis was surely more on “hard-power” rather than on “soft-power” ways to accomplish this.

In what became the most controversial statements in the document, the Bush administration asserted that the United States must have available “**the option of preemptive actions** to counter a sufficient threat to our national security.” It concluded with the administration’s commitment **to act unilaterally if collective efforts fail**: “In exercising our leadership, we will respect the values, judgment, and interests of our friends and partners. Still, we will be prepared to act apart when our interests and unique responsibilities require.” These statements concerning preemption and the unilateral option would ultimately capture the most attention of critics at home and abroad and would soon undermine the administration’s initial effort to produce a “grand strategy” against terrorism with broad support.

## **POLICY IMPLICATIONS OF THE BUSH DOCTRINE: IRAQ AND OTHER ROGUE STATES**

After Afghanistan, the first real test of the Bush Doctrine of pursuing terrorists and tyrants was, of course, the pursuit of Saddam Hussein’s Iraq. Indeed, Iraq became a focus of administration discussions almost immediately after September 11.

In the first meetings of policy makers after the terrorist attacks, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld “raised the question of Iraq,” although the Pentagon “had been working for months on developing a military option” dealing with Hussein.”<sup>51</sup> At the time, however, because President Bush wanted more attention directed toward Afghanistan—particularly al-Qaeda and the Taliban—Iraq was placed on the back burner for a time.

### Policy toward Iraq

By early 2002, Iraq had once again gained the attention of President Bush and his key policy makers because Saddam Hussein’s regime had used chemical and biological weapons against its own people and had started the development of a nuclear weapons program. Although its link to terrorists was still unclear to many, the possibility of the **joining together of a “rogue state”** (in the administration’s definition) **with nonstate terrorist groups** was considered lethal for the United States and the international community. See Map 6.1 for the location and size of Iraq.

By summer 2002, the Iraq issue had set off a pitched debate within the administration. Some key advisors supported quick and unilateral action to remove Saddam Hussein, whereas others, most prominently Colin Powell and his deputy, Richard Armitage, argued that this had “risks and complexities” that needed more analysis.<sup>52</sup> In addition, the possibility of a war against Hussein had alienated Republican allies in Congress and former officials from previous administrations, notably former secretary of state Henry Kissinger and former national security advisor Brent Scowcroft. Kissinger and Scowcroft supported the need to remove Hussein, but they were concerned that the administration’s plan would “alienat[e] allies, creating greater instability in the Middle East, and harming long-term American interests.”

By fall 2002, the Bush administration had decided to challenge the international community, and the United Nations, to address the issue of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq by seeking a multilateral solution. In a speech to the United Nations, President Bush issued just such a challenge.<sup>53</sup>

After five weeks of negotiation, on November 8, 2002, the UN Security Council unanimously passed **Resolution 1441**,<sup>54</sup> which found Iraq in “material breach” of a previous UN resolution. (This was UN Resolution 687, passed at the end of the Gulf War in 1991, which called for Iraq’s disarmament of its weapons of mass destruction.) In addition, it required Iraq to report within 30 days on all aspects of its programs related to weapons of mass destruction and ordered that Iraq immediately allow UN and IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) inspectors back into the country. Significantly, the resolution stated, “that the Council has repeatedly warned Iraq that it will face serious consequences as a result of its continued violations of its obligations.”

In accordance with Resolution 1441, **Iraq provided a report to the UN in December 2002** on its weapons program and allowed UN and IAEA inspectors into the country. Over the next several months, the chief inspectors provided reports to the UN Security Council on the status of the inspections and the



**MAP 6.1** Iraq

Source: <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/liz.html>.

disarmament that indicated that Iraq was not fully complying with either the resolution or with the inspectors. However, the inspectors requested more time from the Security Council to complete their work.

By March 2003, the Bush administration's patience had run out on the failure of the UN Security Council to act against Iraq. At the urging of the British prime minister, Tony Blair, the United States, Great Britain, and Spain circulated another draft UN resolution explicitly to find Iraq in "material breach" and implicitly to obtain approval for military action to enforce Resolution 1441. This new resolution never reached a vote because several nations on the council, led principally by the French and the potential use of its veto, did not support it. Indeed, France indicated that it would not support any resolution that would lead to war.

As a result, **President Bush issued an ultimatum to Iraq and its leadership on March 17, 2003:** "Saddam Hussein and his sons must leave Iraq within

48 hours. Their refusal to do so will result in military conflict, commenced at a time of our choosing.”<sup>55</sup> When the Iraqi leadership refused to comply, the United States attacked a command bunker in Baghdad, and the war, called Operation Iraqi Freedom, began. The president took this action without another UN resolution and instead relied on the congressional resolution passed in October 2002. The administration put together a “coalition of the willing” (some 42 nations initially), much as the *National Security Strategy* of a few months earlier had stated. Yet the United States and Great Britain carried out the principal military action, with some assistance from Australia and a few other countries. Clearly, the Bush administration was willing to act alone (or with an informal coalition) in going after tyrants and terrorists and in implementing its national security strategy.

The war went well and quickly for the United States and Great Britain, with the loss of relatively few lives. **The United States gained control of Baghdad by April 9**, only three weeks after the start of the war, and **President Bush declared “major combat operations” over on May 1**. Still, winning the peace and establishing a stable democratic government proved more difficult. Indeed, American deaths mounted over the following months as Iraqi resistance continued. Equally challenging was the effort to uncover clear evidence of weapons of mass destruction—the fundamental rationale for the war—and to capture Saddam Hussein.

By summer 2003, as the number of American killed in postwar Iraq increased and as weapons of mass destruction remained undiscovered, criticism of Bush policy by the bureaucracy and Capitol Hill began to surface. **Some charged that the administration had skewed intelligence data** to support its war against Iraq or had pressured intelligence analysts to provide supportive estimates.<sup>56</sup> The Pentagon was accused of developing its own “hard-line view of intelligence related to Iraq” to justify American military actions there.<sup>57</sup> Even though the Bush administration denied such charges, skepticism remained and Congress initiated inquiries. In July 2003, the criticism reached a crescendo when the administration was forced to admit that a statement in the president’s 2003 State of the Union Address claiming that Iraq had tried to obtain uranium from an African nation was not supported by American intelligence. George Tenet, director of Central Intelligence, took formal responsibility for this error,<sup>58</sup> but the episode reinforced the view that the administration had been determined to dig up evidence to justify military action against Iraq. The integrity of the Bush administration’s policy making was called into question, and the Senate Intelligence Committee called hearings to investigate. Although Saddam Hussein was ultimately captured in December 2003, the Bush administration’s foreign policy continued to face scrutiny and criticism both at home and abroad.

By this time, too, **foreign policy, and the Iraq War in particular, became a central issue in the 2004 presidential election campaign**. Former Vermont governor Howard Dean and Representative Dennis Kucinich, who both opposed the war in Iraq, had voiced criticism for some time, but other presidential contenders (Representative Richard Gephardt and Senator John Kerry) who had supported the war followed suit in the summer and fall of 2003. Representative Gephardt, for example, charged the president with “stunning incompetence”



in foreign policy.<sup>59</sup> Senator Kerry accused the administration of failing to have a plan to win the peace in Iraq, pointing to the “arrogant absence of any major international effort to build what’s needed.”<sup>60</sup> Another contender for a time, Senator Bob Graham, called for further investigations into Bush’s policy making. American policy toward Iraq and the Bush Doctrine more generally had become sources of domestic debate after a long post-9/11 hiatus.

### Policy toward North Korea, Iran, and Libya

In his January 2002 State of the Union address, President Bush had identified North Korea and Iran, along with Iraq, as the “axis of evil.” The Bush Doctrine thus had important implications for American policy toward those states as well: The administration made a sustained effort to deter their attempts to develop weapons of mass destruction, but its approach was markedly different from the approach toward Iraq. Deterrence and diplomatic efforts became its preferred strategy.

**North Korea became a source of increased attention and international tension when, in October 2002, it informed a “visiting American delegation to Pyongyang that it had maintained a clandestine nuclear weapons program.”**<sup>61</sup> Furthermore, North Korea announced in December 2002 that it would reopen a previously closed nuclear facility at Yongbyon in violation of the 1994 Agreed Framework with the United States. A month later, North Korea renounced its adherence to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), claiming that it needed to have a nuclear capability to deter the United States from taking action against it, especially after the perceived aggressive statements by the Bush administration.

**Unlike its policy toward Iraq, however, the United States did not pursue a preemptive course; instead, the Bush administration sought to employ a multilateral diplomatic effort to deter and roll back the North Korean actions.** Although North Korea called for direct, bilateral talks with the United States and initially demanded a nonaggression pact between the two countries in exchange for moving away from its nuclear program, the Bush administration held out for a joint effort made up of interested states and the international community. In August 2003, the initial **Six-Party Talks**—among the United States, North Korea, South Korea, Japan, China, and Russia—were held in Beijing.<sup>62</sup> Progress was slow and at best episodic, and, as we will show, continued in the second term as well.

Toward Iran, the Bush policy looked more like that adopted toward North Korea than toward Iraq, even as the administration continued to insist that Iran possessed chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons. In the heady days immediately after the fall of Baghdad, the administration appeared to make a veiled threat about moving against Iran, but its comments were quickly downplayed. Instead, diplomatic and economic tracks were pursued. By December 2003, John Bolton, undersecretary of state for arms control and international security, continued to maintain that **the Bush administration’s basic strategy was “bilateral and multilateral pressure to end” this nuclear threat.**<sup>63</sup> Moreover, the approach to Iran’s biological and chemical weapons appeared to follow the same pattern.

The administration's strategy on Iran's nuclear policy yielded some progress by the end of 2003. In November of that year, the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) passed a resolution that deplored the failure of Iran to adhere to its obligations under its Safeguard Agreement pursuant to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Fearing that the IAEA might go to the United Nations Security Council, Iran agreed in mid-December to an accord that would allow United Nations experts "full access" to various of its nuclear research facilities. The Bush administration saw the accord as "a useful step in the right direction," but remained skeptical that Iran was being fully forthcoming.<sup>64</sup> Like Iraq and North Korea, Iran would continue to be a challenge, but the administration's response would remain relatively the same.

Although not explicitly mentioned by President Bush in his "axis of evil" statement in 2002, **Libya also became a target of administration action over its efforts to acquire weapons of mass destruction.** The United States had imposed economic sanctions on Libya over its past involvement with terrorism, but it had also been concerned about Libya's efforts to acquire (and even use) WMDs over the years. Indeed, its mercurial leader, Colonel Muammar al-Qaddafi, had been accused of developing and using chemical weapons by Washington since the 1980s. In a key diplomatic initiative in March 2003, the Bush administration, in conjunction with Great Britain, began secret discussions with Libya at the very time that it was initiating war against Iraq. Nine months later, **in late December 2003, those efforts proved successful when Prime Minister Tony Blair and President Bush announced that Qaddafi "had agreed to give up all of his nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons" and to submit to international inspections.**<sup>65</sup> Although Libya claimed that it made this decision of its own "free will," the Bush administration cited it as bolstering its policy of confronting countries with WMDs.<sup>66</sup> The administration's policy instruments in obtaining Libya's capitulation were largely economic and diplomatic, albeit against the backdrop of the Iraq War. In this sense, coercive diplomacy might well be a more apt description of its policy approach in the Libyan situation.

## **POLICY IMPLICATIONS OF THE BUSH DOCTRINE: RUSSIA AND CHINA**

Although the Bush Doctrine was fundamentally directed against terrorists and states that might obtain weapons of mass destruction, it also had an effect on U.S. relations with other major powers, its allies, and its friends around the world. Indeed, the events of September 11 and the application of the doctrine toward Iraq altered the approach of the Bush administration toward two key states, Russia and China. Initially, the administration sought to treat these powers more as competitors than as partners (in contrast to the Clinton administration's approach), but 9/11 changed that policy. **After September 11, both Russia and China immediately provided support for the United States, and the Bush administration reciprocated with closer ties with them.**

These closer ties began when President Vladimir Putin was the first to call the United States after September 11, declaring that “we are with you.”<sup>67</sup> In short order, too, Putin offered his diplomatic support and Russian aid in fighting terrorism, and he expressed a willingness to work more closely with NATO. Putin also accepted the American decision to withdraw from **the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty** and pledged to continue good relations despite this decision. In turn, the United States made several concessions to Russia. It agreed to a new strategic arms pact—**the Treaty of Moscow**—that further reduced the number of nuclear warheads available to the two states, to a range of 1,700 to 2,200 by 2010; that designated Russia as possessing “market economy” status in the world; and that offered full membership to Russia in the Group of Eight (G-8) countries. Additionally, the United States toned down its criticism of Russian actions in Chechnya and began to encourage Russia’s closer ties to NATO as well.<sup>68</sup> In short, **a strategic partnership increasingly seemed to characterize the relationship.**

**The formal enunciation of the Bush Doctrine and the movement toward war with Iraq dampened those ties, but only modestly.** Russia, as a former patron of Iraq, was not supportive of the war and announced that it would oppose such authorization by the UN Security Council. Although the war itself did not erase the progress that had been made in Russian–U.S. ties, it did cool the ties between the two states for a time. Once the major fighting was over, Russia was willing to work with the United States in the United Nations to pass resolutions calling for aid from other states and working toward democracy in that country. Importantly, in December 2003, Russia agreed to cancel a large portion of the debt owed it by the former Iraqi government to assist with the reconstruction process.

By the end of 2003, some further deterioration in relations had taken hold, especially over American concerns about Russian interference in the internal affairs of Ukraine and Georgia and about the “managed democracy” in Russia itself, where some freedoms were coming under increased pressure from the Putin government. In early 2004, the United States expressed concerns over the level of democratic participation in the Russian presidential election, which also raised Moscow’s ire.

**U.S.–Russian differences over Iraq remained during the balance of the Bush administration.** The cooling relations between the two states appeared to be due less to Iraq than to other policy actions by Russia at home and in the “near abroad” nations. Russia’s military intervention in August 2008 into the independent country (and former Soviet republic) of Georgia, now an increasingly a close ally of the U.S., only served to exacerbate tensions between the United States and Russia. Its delay in departing Georgia caused further tensions as well. Still, by 2008, Russia and Iraq signed agreements to write off some of Iraq’s past debt, and Russia committed to an investment of up to \$4 billion in the Iraqi economy.<sup>69</sup> In this sense, Russia, despite its policy differences with the United States, sought to stabilize Iraq, even as it tried to exercise some economic and political influence there. In sum, while the Iraq War had soured the close ties between Russia and the United States, the relationship generally remained stable despite some clear differences in interests and outlook as well as in regard to a growing list of other issues, especially over the Russian intervention in Georgia.

The events of September 11 and then the Iraq War had a parallel effect on U.S.–Chinese relations. **After September 11, China provided immediate diplomatic support in the United Nations and acquiesced in America’s military action in Afghanistan.** At the ensuing Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum in Shanghai shortly after September 11, the United States toned down its criticism of China over such vexing issues as Taiwan, its sales of missiles abroad, and its treatment of Tibetans. Additionally, a “cooperative tone continued” during President Bush’s visit to Beijing in February 2002.<sup>70</sup>

**Once again, the proclamation of the Bush Doctrine and the time immediately prior to the war with Iraq began to sour those immediate post-September 11 ties but they did not break them.** China, like Russia, was opposed to American action against Iraq, and it made its position known. It largely favored allowing more time for UN inspectors to do their work rather than using military force against Saddam Hussein’s regime. China did not immediately contribute to reconstruction efforts in Iraq, but it did not veto efforts by the United States to pass resolutions to promote reconstruction.

Somewhat later, China did indeed contribute to Iraqi reconstruction. In June 2007, for example, China, like Russia, sought to exercise its influence in that country by signing four agreements with the Iraqi government.<sup>71</sup> These agreements focused on debt relief, but they also set up cooperation agreements between the foreign ministries of the two countries, established economic and technical cooperation, and supported human resources training. Furthermore, a short time earlier, the Chinese government had reaffirmed its commitment to maintaining the sovereignty and independence of Iraq and indicated that it would continue to work with the United States on a broad array of issues.<sup>72</sup> In this sense, Chinese–American relations were on an even keel, despite the effects of the war.

One Asian analyst described the relationship between the United States and China that had evolved as a “**selective partnership**” in which the two countries cooperate when they can. That is, it was neither the strategic competition that the Bush administration portended nor the strategic partnership that the Clinton administration had hoped for.<sup>73</sup> In this sense, the changed relationship between the two countries since the first days of the Bush administration was “one of the biggest foreign policy shifts of this administration,” in the view of another Asian expert.<sup>74</sup> Part of the explanation for this change may be the events of September 11, but undoubtedly it had to do with the recognition by both nations of their converging and conflicting interests.

## **POLICY IMPLICATIONS OF THE BUSH DOCTRINE: AMERICA’S ALLIES**

If September 11 and the application of the Bush Doctrine toward Iraq had the dual effect of improving ties with Russia and China and then chilling them for a time, the same can be said of some of America’s traditional allies in Europe and Canada, albeit with an important difference. That difference appears to be a more sustained chill over the implications of the Bush Doctrine. Although there

were episodic changes in America's relationships with its allies from late 2003 and into 2004, the general direction was a decline, despite some initial efforts by the administration at the beginning of its second term in 2005. Moreover, **this chill was one of the lingering legacies of the Bush Doctrine and, more specifically, of the Iraq War.**

In the immediate aftermath of September 11, U.S. ties with all European states, like other states, grew closer. As one analyst noted, "even the traditionally skeptical French press declared, 'We are all Americans.'"<sup>75</sup> And both allies and friends, and even adversaries, initially supported the change in Bush's foreign policy approach. The acknowledgment that America needed help from other states in fighting terrorism, its initial turn to international institutions, and its recognition of multiple actors in the international arena undoubtedly struck a responsive chord. Moreover, friends and allies accepted U.S. concern over the internal dynamics of some states and the need to address festering regional and communal conflicts. After all, Article V of the NATO pact was invoked, for the first time in the fifty-nine-year history of the alliance, immediately after 9/11, and virtually all European nations agreed to provide some assistance against al-Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan.

This international receptivity was short-lived, however. The 2002 State of the Union Address in which President Bush identified the "axis of evil" nations and appeared to foreshadow actions against one or more of them caused immediate alarm. As the French foreign minister, Hubert Vedrine, noted: "We are currently threatened by a simplified approach which reduces all problems of the world to the mere struggle against terrorism." Javier Solana Madariaga, the European Union's minister for foreign affairs, warned about "the dangers of global unilateralism" and German foreign minister Joschka Fischer called the "axis of evil" notion "not in accordance with our political ethos."<sup>76</sup>

**Support and cooperation with allies lasted throughout the 2001–2002 campaign in Afghanistan, but relations with some European states— notably France and Germany—quickly soured as the Bush administration turned its sights on Iraq.** In addition, the *National Security Strategy*, with its unilateral option for the United States, appeared to signal once again that the Bush administration was reverting to a more unilateral approach in global affairs.

France and Germany, in particular, counseled for a slower and more multilateral approach. The opposition of these two nations became particularly intense when the United States sought a second resolution in the United Nations to support the war against Iraq in early 2003. When that effort failed, the United States worked to put together a "coalition of the willing" to initiate the war. France and Germany, along with a number of other traditional allies, including Canada, refused to join. Some Western and Eastern European nations, including Spain, the Netherlands, Poland, and Italy, ultimately lent their support, but the fissure in American and Western European ties wrought by Iraq was clear.

Indeed, **the divisions between France and Germany and the United States continued in the post-Iraq War period.** The two European powers kept up their pressure on the United States to turn over more Iraqi reconstruction activities and political control to the United Nations. When the United States was unwilling to make these changes immediately, political differences continued. Moreover, the electoral defeat in March 2004 of the Spanish political party whose

leader had supported the United States in the Iraq War, as well as the massive demonstrations in allied and friendly countries on the war's first anniversary, conveyed the opposition to the Bush Doctrine.

**These differences were more broadly manifested in changing European opinion of the United States and its foreign policy.** Increasingly, the European public took a less favorable view of the United States and its policies after the Iraq War, especially when compared to the post-September 11 period. In Germany, for example, the percentage of the public viewing the United States favorably fell from 61 percent in the summer of 2002 to 45 percent about a year later. In France, the decline was even steeper, from 63 percent favorable in summer 2002 to only 43 percent in 2003. Even in Canada, the public's favorable view of the United States declined nine percentage points from 72 percent to 63 percent.<sup>77</sup> In another survey at about the same time, 64 percent of Europeans surveyed across France, Germany, Italy, Britain, Netherlands, Poland, and Portugal disapproved of the Bush administration's foreign policy.

The administration did take some actions to improve ties with its alliance partners, and they responded in kind. In mid-2003, bilateral discussions at the G-8 summit meetings and other diplomatic initiatives (see the discussion to come) produced a thaw in the strained ties. By fall 2003, the Europeans and the Americans were cooperating on new United Nations resolutions on reconstruction in Iraq, and this cooperation represented compromise on both sides. By the end of 2003, in a shift in policy, Germany and France indicated that they would be willing to forgive Iraq's debts and thus contribute to the reconstruction efforts.<sup>78</sup> In December 2003, Canada, under the leadership of a new prime minister, Paul Martin, indicated that improving the relationship with the United States was a key priority and that steps would be taken to do so.

None of the Bush's administration's actions reflected a fundamental shift from the approach adopted after September 11, 2001. Indeed, terrorist incidents in Saudi Arabia and Morocco in the spring of 2003 (and attributed to al-Qaeda) and the Madrid bombing of March 11, 2004, only reinforced the administration's stance. However, mounting foreign and domestic criticism of the administration's unilateral and ideological approach appeared to introduce a cautionary note in considerations of further military responses, whether against North Korea, Iran, or elsewhere. Also, presidential popularity had declined to pre-9/11 levels, and support for the Iraq War was beginning to wane by late 2004. Still, **the policy slogan was "stay the course,"** and it applied not only to Iraq but equally to the unique combination of defensive realism and limited idealism that the Bush administration had adopted in the post-9/11 period.

## **AFTER REELECTION: A NEW FOREIGN POLICY APPROACH?**

George W. Bush won a narrow victory in the 2004 presidential election, partly on his antiterrorist foreign policy stance. However, the second-term Bush administration initially sought to alter its foreign policy approach, including the war on



terrorism. **The initial hint of a change came in a meeting with the British prime minister, Tony Blair, shortly after his reelection.** At the end of that meeting, President Bush declared that “[in] my second term, I will work to deepen our trans-Atlantic [sic] ties to nations of Europe.” He also declared that stronger ties between Europe and America were vital to the “promotion of worldwide democracy.”<sup>79</sup>

### The Democracy Imperative

President Bush more fully signaled a modified approach in his second inaugural address and in his State of the Union Address a few weeks later. In his inaugural address, for example, he directly tied America’s well-being to the expansion of freedom and liberty around the world.<sup>80</sup> America and the world would become secure only by promoting these principles and by using them to reconstruct the international system. “The survival of liberty in our land,” he declared, “increasingly depends on the success of liberty in other lands. The best hope for peace in our world is the expansion of freedom in the world.” Later in his address he added, “It is the policy of the United States to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture, with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in the world.”

**In his State of the Union address a short time later, President Bush continued to link America’s well-being at home with the promotion of freedom abroad.** A principal goal for his administration, he declared, would be “to pass along to our children all the freedoms we enjoy—and chief among them is freedom from fear.” Key passages from this address convey these sentiments.

Pursuing our enemies is a vital commitment of the war on terror . . . [but] in the long term, the peace we seek will only be achieved by eliminating the conditions that feed radicalism and ideologies of murder. If whole regions of the world remain in despair and grow in hatred, they will be recruiting grounds for terror, and that terror will stalk America and other free nations for decades. The only force powerful enough to stop the rise of tyranny and terror, and replace hatred with hope, is the force of human freedom.<sup>81</sup>

Bush emphasized that this transformational foreign policy would not be imposed from abroad or implemented by military means. Instead, it would have to be evoked, or encouraged, by the global community.

**At her Senate confirmation hearings in early 2005, Condoleezza Rice, too, was quick to outline some new central themes of the administration: to unite, strengthen, and spread democracies around the world and to do so through diplomacy.** In her words, “[w]e must use American diplomacy to help create a balance of power in the world that favors freedom. And the time for diplomacy is now.”<sup>82</sup> To be sure, such themes were not entirely new for the Bush administration. After all, the notion of creating “a balance of power favoring freedom” seemingly was straight out of the 2002 *National Security Strategy* and the discussion of promoting democracy was a theme that President Bush had enunciated in his visit to Britain in November 2003, during which he called for “the global expansion of democracy” as a key pillar of American security.<sup>83</sup>



What was new, however, was the initial effort that President Bush and the new secretary of state undertook to assuage allies, particularly the Europeans. Condoleezza Rice's "peace offensive" to several European capitals was one such effort. It was generally well received, and it did not stop with that initial trip. By one analysis, Rice visited 49 countries in her first year and "nearly 70 percent of Rice's time abroad in 2005 was spent in Europe."<sup>84</sup> President Bush, too, sought to send a different signal to the Europeans in 2005 by visiting NATO and the European Union headquarters and by having "long meetings" with two key European skeptics of the Bush approach, French president, Jacques Chirac, and German chancellor, Gerhard Schroeder.

### Changes in Personnel and Policy Actions

**The administration also made changes in foreign policy personnel at home as part of this seeming new direction.** Early in the second term key neoconservatives (Paul Wolfowitz and Doug Feith at Defense and John Bolton at State) left the administration, and new pragmatists and foreign policy realists filled these important posts.<sup>85</sup> In particular, Robert Zoellick was appointed as deputy secretary of state, Nicholas Burns assumed the number-three position as undersecretary of state for political affairs, and Christopher Hill became assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs (and eventually the American lead negotiator with North Korea). Immediately after the 2006 congressional elections, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld resigned and was replaced by Robert Gates, an experienced Washington policy maker and former head of the Central Intelligence Agency. Gates's political perspective tended more toward classical realism than the neoconservatism that had previously dominated the civilian leadership at the Pentagon.

**Multilateral diplomatic initiatives began or were restarted toward two "axis of evil" countries, Iran and North Korea, and became Bush's principal foreign policy approach toward these countries.** Partly as a result of President Bush's trip to Europe in 2005, the "EU-3"—France, Germany, and Great Britain—agreed to work with the United States on a diplomatic initiative with Iran to forestall its potential development of nuclear weapons. This initiative ultimately led to a series of economic sanctions against Iran and to considerable unity among the U.S. and these key European allies over the next three years. Multilateral diplomacy remained the principal foreign policy vehicle for the Bush administration during the balance of its second term, despite some of the administration's rhetoric to the contrary.

By mid-2005, too, the Six-Party Talks over North Korea's development of nuclear weapons were resurrected, even though the North Koreans had declared several months earlier that they were "indefinitely suspending" their nuclear program. Indeed, by mid-September 2005, all parties had reaffirmed the goal of the talks as the "verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula in a peaceful manner."<sup>86</sup> Although the Six-Party Talks experienced ups and down over the next three years (including UN-imposed sanctions over a North Korean nuclear test), they ultimately resulted in an agreement in 2007 on the phased shutdown, and

eventual dismantlement, of North Korea's nuclear facilities. Rapid implementation of these agreements, however, eluded the Bush administration. North Korea did submit a listing of the extent of its nuclear program in late June 2008 in accord with the Six-Party Talks, and the United States lifted trading restrictions on that country and signaled its intent to remove North Korea's designation as a "State Sponsor of Terrorism." Although the administration noted that more action needed to be done by North Korea to meet its obligations under the Six-Party Talks, it reaffirmed its commitment to following a multilateral diplomatic course in dealing with this "axis of evil" state.<sup>87</sup>

Finally, **several other modest changes in the Bush administration approach near the beginning of the second term, and later, suggested a slightly different course.** Some changes were made in the administration's position on foreign aid, especially more aid for Africa, and on climate change, including a statement that it was "largely a man-made problem." Halting steps, too, were evident in working with international organizations, including some favorable actions vis-à-vis the International Criminal Court and UN efforts over Darfur in the Sudan.<sup>88</sup> In 2007 and 2008, the Bush administration stepped up its efforts to move peace negotiations between the Palestinians and the Israelis along. It also worked collectively with its NATO allies for expansion of that organization once again, although it did not get all the new members desired. Still, by 2008, the administration had obtained unanimous support from its European NATO allies for the placement of missile shields in Poland and the Czech Republic, even in the face of repeated Russian objections.

## THE IRAQ WAR AND OPPOSITION TO THE BUSH FOREIGN POLICY

Despite changes in personnel and actions, sharp doubts continued among foreign leaders and publics about the Bush administration and its foreign policy. A majority of the American public and numerous members of Congress also voiced doubts, especially about the Iraq War.

### Sustained Criticism from Abroad

**Skepticism about any real change in direction by the Bush administration was largely driven by the unpopularity of the Iraq War** (and the unilateralist approach that it reflected), but it was also driven by Bush's rhetoric and personal unpopularity. Any goodwill created after 9/11 among Europeans, for example, quickly dissipated in the run-up to the Iraq War, and it largely did not rebound. In March 2003, at about the start of the Iraq War, only 48 percent of the public in Britain, 34 percent in Italy, 25 percent in Germany, 31 percent in France, and 14 percent in Spain expressed a favorable view of the United States.<sup>89</sup> Three years later, and more than a year into President Bush's second term (April 2006), the favorable percentages had improved only slightly among key European allies.

Fifty-six percent of the British, 39 percent of the French, 37 percent of the Germans, and 23 percent of the Spanish expressed favorable opinions. This skepticism or downright opposition was not confined to Europe, of course. In a 2006 Pew survey of global attitudes toward the United States, only in three countries of the ten surveyed did a majority of the public view the United States favorably. These countries were Japan, India, and Nigeria. The rest (Russia, Indonesia, Egypt, Pakistan, Jordan, Turkey, and China) had favorability ratings ranging from 12 percent positive in Turkey to 47 percent positive in China.<sup>90</sup>

President Bush's personal unpopularity undoubtedly continued to cloud any change in policy direction. In a BBC World Service poll in 2005, in only three countries (out of 22 surveyed) did a majority or a plurality positively view Bush's reelection. These were India and the Philippines (majorities) and Poland (a plurality). The rest, including respondents in five European countries, viewed the reelection of Bush as "negative for peace and security for the world."<sup>91</sup>

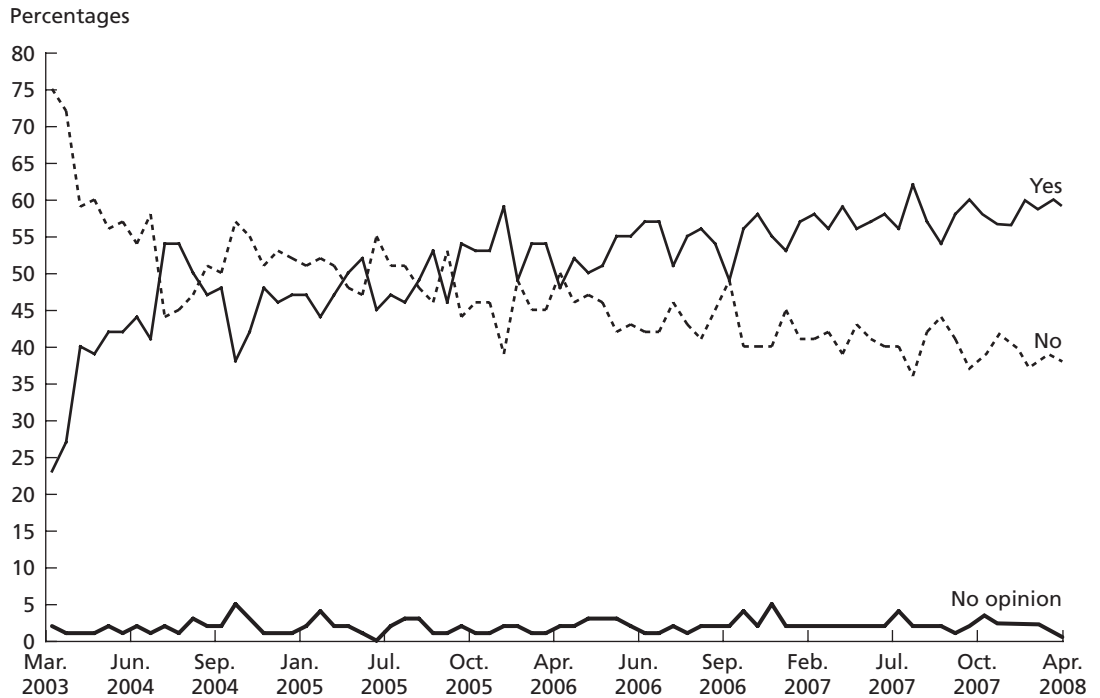
**The skepticism of key European publics (and others) was mirrored at the governmental level.** Only a few European states were willing to provide much assistance in the effort to stabilize Iraq. Even those that did withdrew or announced their withdrawal of forces, often because of opposition at home. Still, some of the states most critical of the United States over the war were willing to train Iraqi security personnel (e.g., Germany) and provided some resources for reconstruction (e.g., France). Yet there were clear limits on how far they would go to endorse the Bush administration's foreign policy approach.

With new leaders elected in Germany in November 2005 (**Chancellor Angela Merkel**) and in France in May 2007 (**President Nicolas Sarkozy**) and with the selection of **Gordon Brown** to replace Tony Blair as British prime minister in 2007, President Bush now had a new set of leaders who were generally more willing to cooperate with the United States than those (except for Blair) at the height of the Iraq War. Nonetheless, the war would hang heavy over other nations moving too close to the United States—and it would continue to impinge on any enthusiastic alliance support for the administration.

### **Increasing Opposition at Home**

Although the Bush administration was successful in winning the White House and in keeping Republicans in control of Congress in the 2004 elections, based in part on a campaign of antiterrorism, **domestic support for the president and his Iraq policy quickly began to erode by mid-2005.** Indeed, public approval of the president had dropped significantly since the initiation of the war and by the beginning of 2008 hovered just slightly above 30 percent. Since March 2005, when his presidential job approval dropped to 45 percent, there had been only two instances in the weekly Gallup tracking polls (April, 4–7, 2005, and May 2–5, 2005) when the president's approval rating was at 50 percent. Instead, the trend was consistently downward from March 2005, reaching its lowest level (up to that time) at 31 percent in the polling of May 5–7, 2006.<sup>92</sup>

With the full formation of the Iraqi government and the killing of Iraqi al-Qaeda leader, Abu al-Zarqawi, in 2006, President Bush's approval rating inched



Percentage of responses to the question: "In view of the developments since we first sent our troops to Iraq, do you think the United States made a mistake in sending troops to Iraq, or not?" (Gallup Poll Organization data)

**FIGURE 6.1** The "Mistake" Question on Iraq

Source: The data are from Frank Newport, "Public: Situation in Iraq Getting Worse for U.S.," <http://www.gallup.com/poll/102055/Public-Situation-Iraq-Getting-Worse-US.aspx><http://www.gallup.com/poll/102055/Public-Situation-Iraq-Getting-Worse-US.aspx>; and USA Today/Gallup Poll, April Wave 1, April 18-20, 2008, Final Topline.

back up a bit to the high 30s and even to 42 percent, but it fell to 29 percent in July 2007, and in April 2008, it dropped to 28 percent.<sup>93</sup> In all, a majority of the public over nearly all of Bush's second term disapproved of his job performance—and much of that disapproval, of course, was related to foreign policy and specifically to Iraq.

The public response to the frequently asked question of whether the sending of troops to Iraq was a mistake also steadily eroded over the second term to where, at the time of writing, a large majority agreed with this position (See Figure 6.1.) **As early as June 2004, a majority of the public responded that the United States had "made a mistake in sending troops to Iraq" in Gallup tracking polls.** Over the next year, though, a slim majority usually disagreed with this statement, but, after June 2005, a widening majority of the public generally viewed the action as a "mistake" in the periodic polling by the Gallup organization.<sup>94</sup>

**By April, 2008, 58 percent of the public viewed the Iraq War as a mistake.** In this sense, although the majority opposition to the administration's Iraq policy was probably more recent than many might believe, the general opinion that the Iraq invasion was a mistake was stable from 2005 through the end of the Bush presidency. Moreover, in his comparison of the Iraq, Vietnam, and Korean wars, political scientist John Mueller reports that what is most striking is how much more quickly domestic support eroded in the case of Iraq.<sup>95</sup>

**The sharp drop in public support was equally matched by the rise in criticism of the Bush administration's foreign policy by analysts, commentators, and members of Congress.** In March 2006, the Bush administration released its **second National Security Strategy statement**, in which it assessed its previous four years of action in the war on terrorism and advanced its new emphasis on promoting democracy as the way that this war would be won. In a broad critique of the new strategy statement, analysts Lawrence Korb and Caroline Wadhams fault the administration for failing to learn "from the mistakes of its first term" and, more generally, for failing to advance a new and workable foreign policy approach.<sup>96</sup> In particular, they fault the administration for continuing to confuse preemption and preventive war, for embracing the "unachievable goal of 'ending tyranny' completely throughout the world," and failing "to make a realistic assessment of the threats to our security." Finally, and importantly, they criticize the administration's emphasis on democracy as too grandiose because it subordinated all other goals and because its vision "has been excessively focused on elections, while underemphasizing the more difficult tasks of building an overall culture of open civil society and institutions based on the rule of law." In their view, little had changed in the basic flawed policy of the Bush administration after more than five years in office (by 2006).

A short time later, in 2006, David Broder, the dean of the Washington press corps, summarized the problems facing the administration by putting himself in the President's position and asking how the world looked from his vantage point.<sup>97</sup> His answer was a single word: "trouble." Indeed, across the foreign policy horizon at that time—whether in its dealings with Mexico and Canada in the Western Hemisphere; with China, North Korea, and Russia in Asia and Europe; or with Iraq, Iran, Israel, or Lebanon in the Middle East—the administration was encountering trouble in pursuing its foreign policy objectives. More important, as Broder noted, the administration seemed to lack good ideas for addressing these challenges.

In an intriguing analysis from the same period, political scientist Steve Schier pointed to the Iraq War to account for why things had gone so badly for the administration.<sup>98</sup> That is, he charted the number of positive and negative effects of both discretionary events (on which the President had an impact) and nondiscretionary events (on which he had no direct impact), and he found, not surprisingly, that the Iraq War was a clear turning point for the administration. What is compelling, though, is the dramatic decline in the ratio of positive to negative events before and after the initiation of the war. Overall, discretionary events were at a ratio of 4 to 1 positive from 2001 to 2005, but declined from 2003 onward. The nondiscretionary events were at a 1:4 ratio on the negative side over the time

period. The important message is how costly the Iraq War had been for the administration both in events that it could affect and in those that it could not. The “soft power” (to borrow Joseph Nye’s felicitous phrase) of the United States had suffered at home and abroad as a consequence of the Iraq War.

During this same period, congressional criticism of the Bush administration’s Iraq policy began to escalate on both sides of the political aisle. Two military veterans in the Congress dramatized the changing nature of the political environment and epitomized the growing opposition in that body. In late November 2005, **Representative John Murtha** (D-Pennsylvania), the ranking Democrat on the House Subcommittee on Appropriations, a former Marine, and a supporter of the Iraq War, broke with the Bush administration and called for the withdrawal of American troops from Iraq within six months: “The military has done everything that has been asked of them. The U.S. cannot accomplish anything further in Iraq militarily. It is time to bring the troops home.”<sup>99</sup> On the Republican side, **Senator Chuck Hagel** (R-Nebraska), a Vietnam veteran and a “media favorite” for his outspokenness on the administration’s postwar Iraq policy became an increasingly vocal critic as well.<sup>100</sup> One profile of Hagel characterized his determination in this way: “He did not let up, despite extreme pressure from party leaders to cool it.”<sup>101</sup> These congressional critics were not alone, and the push by Congress for greater White House accountability on the Iraq War escalated in 2005 and 2006, especially with elections on the horizon. As a result, the 2006 congressional elections became a referendum on Iraq policy specifically and on the Bush approach to foreign policy generally.

### A Change in Course?

In a news conference a day after the 2006 congressional elections, President Bush characterized the results as a “thumping” for his party. Republicans lost six seats in the Senate and 30 seats in the House, and control of both chambers changed from Republican to Democratic. In short order, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld resigned, a new commander was appointed in Iraq, and the president considered a new Iraq strategy. Within a month, the **Iraq Study Group**, an independent, bipartisan group led by former Secretary of State James Baker and former Congressman Lee Hamilton, issued its report with 79 recommendations outlining “the way forward in Iraq.”

The thrust of the study group’s recommendations called for the United States to launch “a new diplomatic initiative to build an international consensus for stability in Iraq and the region” and to “adjust its role in Iraq to encourage the Iraqi people to take control of their own destiny.” The United States military “should evolve into one of supporting the Iraqi military,” the report concluded, with principal responsibility left to the Iraqis themselves. Furthermore, the American government “should work closely with Iraq’s leaders to support the achievement of specific objectives . . . on national reconciliation, security, and governance.”<sup>102</sup> In short, the group called for new diplomatic initiatives toward Iraq’s neighbors, reduced American military involvement, except for training and some embedded units, enhanced Iraqi progress on internal reconciliation among religious groups, and improved national governance.

President Bush indicated that he would carefully review the Iraq Study Group's recommendations, but he quickly moved in a different direction. In early 2007, he adopted a new Iraq strategy prepared by **General David Petraeus**, the coalition commander. Popularly called the "**surge strategy**," it called for an increase of American troops by about 21,000 in an effort to quell the sectarian violence and to provide the Iraqi government with time to make progress on internal political reconciliation. This policy change provoked sharp criticism from Congress. Senator Hagel, for example, called the president's speech about the surge strategy "the most dangerous foreign policy blunder in this country since Vietnam."<sup>103</sup> The House of Representatives subsequently passed a nonbinding resolution disapproving the surge, although the Senate failed to do so.

In the ensuing months of 2007, the **Democratic majority made various attempts to cut off funding for Iraq and to set a date for American withdrawal**. These efforts were in response to the President's action as well as part of the Democrats' perceived election mandate. (See Table 6.4.) The Senate sought to invoke cloture (cutting off Senate debate) to possibly pass resolutions on troop increases, but it failed to reach the needed 60 votes. A supplemental Iraq/Afghanistan funding measure was passed by Congress in late April 2007 with language requiring the withdrawal of troops if certain "benchmarks" were not achieved. However, it was vetoed by President Bush on May 1, 2007, and the veto was upheld by the House a day later.<sup>104</sup> Other amendments (e.g., the Feingold and Levin amendments) were introduced in the Senate later, but they, too, failed to pass with the required number of votes. In all, **Congress was unsuccessful with these legislative measures over the Iraq War**.

Several factors account for the president's success in staving off congressional actions. First, the veto (or even the threat of a veto) is an effective instrument for the president. Second, Bush was largely able to maintain the support of his Republican colleagues in the House and Senate, even in the face of a united Democratic opposition. Third, Senate rules requiring 60 votes to end cloture worked in Bush's favor, as did the Senate rule requiring a 60-vote majority for a measure to pass. Finally, and importantly, Democrats (and Republicans) had to face the real difficulty of cutting off funds for the troops in the field and had to gauge the political backlash that such action might create among their constituents back home.

Although the surge strategy proved successful in dampening sectarian violence in Iraq in 2007 and into 2008, the Iraqi government's progress on national reconciliation among competing sectarian groups was markedly slow, as documented by an independent assessment by the U.S. Government Accountability Office and as confirmed by General Petraeus's testimony before Congress on two different occasions.<sup>105</sup> By April 2008, moreover, because of increases in Iraqi violence, General Petraeus was forced to ask for a "pause" in the drawdown of surge forces started a year earlier to consolidate progress that had been achieved. Such actions, along with the continuing loss of American lives, made foreign policy, and specifically the Iraq War, a central issue in the 2008 presidential campaign. In this sense, more than five years after the start of the war, Iraq continued to cast a long shadow over the presidential candidates and over the direction of American foreign policy.



**Table 6.4 Congressional Attempts to Change Iraq War Policy, 2007**

	Date	Bill/Resolution	Vote: House	Vote: Senate
House Vote Disapproving a Troop Increase in Iraq	2/16/07	H.Con.Res 63	Approved, 246–182	
Senate Cloture Vote on U.S. Troop Increase in Iraq	2/05/07	S. 470		Rejected, 49–47 <sup>a</sup>
Senate Cloture Vote on U.S. Troop Increase in Iraq	2/17/07	S. 574		Rejected, 56–34 <sup>a</sup>
Senate Vote limiting mission in Iraq and setting a goal of withdrawal	3/15/07	S.J. Res. 9		Rejected, 48–50
House and Senate Votes on Supplemental Funding for Iraq/Afghanistan and Setting of Redeployment Goal for American forces in Iraq	4/25/07; 4/26/07	H.R. 1591	Approved, 218–208	Approved, 51–46
House Vote on Veto Override Attempt of H.R. 1591	5/2/07	H.R. 1591	Rejected, 222–203 <sup>b</sup>	
Senate Vote on Feingold Amendment for Troop withdrawal within 90 Days	12/18/07	H.R. 2764		Rejected, 24–71 <sup>c</sup>
Senate Vote on Levin Amendment expressing Sense of Congress to Transition Mission in Iraq by end of 2008	12/18/07	H.R. 2764		Rejected, 50–45 <sup>c</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Sixty votes are required for approval of cloture.

<sup>b</sup>A veto override requires a 2/3 majority of the members voting.

<sup>c</sup>By unanimous consent in the Senate, these amendments required 60 votes for approval.

Sources: *CQ Weekly Report* (various issues); <http://www.house.gov>; <http://www.senate.gov>.

## CONCLUDING COMMENTS

What, then, are the principal foreign policy legacies of the Bush administration across its two terms? How did the values and beliefs that George W. Bush brought to foreign policy affect the United States and the rest of the world? What policy challenges did his administration leave for future presidents? In large measure, of course, it was the Bush administration's response to September 11 and to Iraq—and the subsequent Iraq War—that shaped its foreign policy legacies.

**The Bush administration came to office committed to a “distinctly American internationalism”** through which it would limit American involvement abroad and pursue a narrower interpretation of national interest than the Clinton administration had. In effect, this approach was based on classical realism where relative capabilities would largely shape actions abroad and relations with major powers would dominate the agenda. **With the events of September 11, however, the administration jettisoned its classical realist approach and embraced defensive realism, where foreign policy actions were driven**

**more by the threat environment.** The broadening threat environment that terrorism posed pushed the administration toward a more globalist strategy than it initially envisioned. It also compelled it to embrace elements of Wilsonian idealism by pursuing regime change abroad, most notably reflected in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and in its military support of several states threatened by internal (and terrorist) insurgencies (e.g., Georgia and the Philippines).

**The events of September 11 had a profound effect on several dimensions of American foreign policy.** On the policy-making side, September 11 enhanced the authority of the president, increased congressional deference to the executive, rallied public opinion behind the president's actions, and, in a sense, narrowed America's foreign policy agenda. On the content side, September 11 altered some assumptions that the Bush administration had brought to office (e.g., opposition to humanitarian interventions and a global strategy) and confirmed others (e.g., the need for hard power over soft power and the importance of security issues over political and economic issues). At the same time, the terrorist attacks seemingly afforded the Bush administration the opportunity to forge a "grand strategy" of foreign policy for the years ahead. That strategy was grounded in the belief that terrorism and rogue states were the major adversaries of the United States and that a "coalition of the willing" should be developed worldwide to isolate and defeat them. Important, too, the United States reserved the right to act alone if necessary and to engage in preemptive actions, especially when weapons of mass destruction were in the hands of its enemies. The actions against the Taliban and al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and the war with Iraq illustrate the different dimensions of this new strategy.

The post-9/11 approach of the Bush administration represented a determined effort to restore a more consistent, coherent, and universal foreign policy, one that more closely resembled the early years of Ronald Reagan than that of any other recent president. Although the context had changed markedly from the early 1980s to the early years of the new century, the ideological and universal nature of American actions during the Reagan and younger Bush administrations—one staunchly anticommunist, the other, staunchly antiterrorist—is strikingly similar. Both were strongly committed to setting a clear course for American actions abroad, and both were willing to act alone and use America's military might if necessary.

**The Iraq War dramatically affected the transformative foreign policy that the Bush administration had initiated after 9/11.** The contested rationale for the Iraq invasion (that is, the existence of weapons of mass destruction in the hands of a rouge state), the failure of reconstruction planning and implementation after the initial invasion, and the difficulties of bringing democracy to a country fraught with sectarian divisions brought into serious question Bush's transformative foreign policy approach. Furthermore, the largely unilateral nature of the Iraqi invasion—despite the "coalition of the willing" veneer—the opposition of key allies, and the failure to gain UN endorsement tarnished America's image abroad and weakened its attractiveness in the international community. In short, the transformative foreign policy that the Bush administration attempted was largely left fallow by actions and events surrounding Iraq and the Iraq War. More than five years after the invasion, America's global reputation remained

weakened and its vision of a grand strategy against international terrorism and the promotion of democracy were left in serious doubt.

To be sure, **the administration sought to recast its foreign policy approach at the beginning of its second term into one of promoting democracy and eliminating tyranny worldwide.** It tried to modify its approach—by removing or having key neoconservative advisers resign, by reaching out to the Europeans, and by initiating a number of multilateral diplomatic efforts toward Iran and North Korea and toward other international concerns, such as Darfur and the Middle East. Yet these initiatives were largely lost because of the deteriorating situation in Iraq, the stay-the-course strategy, and the administration's continued embrace of the rhetoric of the immediate post-9/11 period. **Because of the dominance of the Iraq issue and the caricatured way in which the president was portrayed at home and abroad, the Bush administration, and the United States more generally, had a difficult time exercising international influence.** In this sense, America's global reputation was yet another casualty of the Iraq War

As a result, several foreign policy challenges face the United States as we near the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century. Some relate to specific foreign policy questions; others relate to the general approach that the Bush administration adopted toward the world.

**Two specific foreign policy challenges are how to conclude the Iraq war and how to confront terrorism.** On the issue of Iraq, the 2008 presidential contenders have each outlined a plan either for immediate withdrawal or for a sustained commitment. However, the political reality is that some option between the two courses will be the likely direction for the next administration. Put bluntly, American interests and commitments in Iraq (and in the larger Middle East) make a rapid exit impossible.<sup>106</sup>

On the issue of international terrorism, the new administration must decide among several options.

One is to continue with terrorism as the central and dominant issue in American foreign policy and continue to rely on hard power—primarily American hard power—to address it. However, although analysts agree that some hard power options are necessary, they argue that such a singular approach will ultimately be unsuccessful. Furthermore, the extent of international support will likely continue to be an issue, and the opportunity costs of addressing other foreign policy issues may be considerable.

A second option is to increasingly focus on social, economic, and political reform, largely in the Islamic world, to reduce the attractiveness of terrorism, and to change some American policies that feed this threat, such as those regarding the Israeli–Palestinian conflict.<sup>107</sup> This will take time and considerable resources, and it will necessitate Americans' patience—a commodity often in short supply among the body politic. However, such an approach has the prospect of long-term benefit, albeit without guarantees.

A third option, which builds on the second, harkens back to the “containment policy” against communism introduced after World War II.<sup>108</sup> A series of actions—defensive measures, aid to promote reform in the Middle East, changes in foreign

policy, and reduced American involvement, particularly in Iraq—can be undertaken to reduce the appeal of terrorism and, in turn, create a “backlash” against it in the Islamic world. Much as communism lost its appeal and was undermined internally in the countries where it existed, international terrorism over time may suffer a similar fate.

**Other concerns relate to the general approach to foreign policy adopted by the Bush administration.** If the Clinton administration left the George W. Bush administration a legacy of too much reliance on multilateralism, the Bush legacy is the very opposite: an inordinate reliance on unilateralism. Although the next administration will hardly eschew the possibility of unilateral action on occasion, it must not rely on it slavishly, especially in an interdependent world. The rebalancing of these two policy options and the realization that they exist on a continuum will be an important challenge in the years ahead.

Two other important policy legacies of the Bush administration—preemption and preventive war—require the same kind of adjustment and clarification in dealing with the rest of the world. Once again, few states will exclude the possibility of preemptive action when survival is at stake and the threat is truly imminent, but the threat must truly be imminent or will wrongly become the rationale for a preemptive war.

**This reliance on unilateralism and the right of preemption by the Bush administration (along with its strident rhetoric) had the effect of tarnishing America’s image abroad and, more generally, of eroding its “soft power”—that is, the attractiveness of its values and culture and its ability to influence international actions.** Changes in these two areas by a new administration, as well as broader policy changes, will likely improve America’s reputation and restore its influence. This improved image—and the appeal of American values and culture—will promote democratic values abroad. Still, no new administration need be under any illusion regarding the difficulty and complexity of advancing democracy in other countries.

In sum, only by addressing all these important challenges can a new foreign policy consensus be forged in the post-9/11 and post-Iraq period.

## NOTES

1. George W. Bush, “A Distinctly American Internationalism,” speech delivered at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, November 19, 1999, <http://www.georgewbush.com/speeches/foreignpolicy/foreignpolicy.asp>.

2. Lawrence Eagleburger, “Charting the Course: U.S. Foreign Policy in a Time of Transition,” *Dispatch* 4 (January 11, 1993) 16–19.

3. William Clinton, “A New Covenant for American Security,” address delivered at Georgetown University, December 12, 1991.

4. Bill Clinton, “Remarks of Governor Bill Clinton,” Los Angeles World Affairs Council, August 13, 1992.

5. See Evan Thomas, “Condoleezza Rice, Bush’s Secret White House Weapon,” *Newsweek*, December 16, 2002, 26, in which Rice apparently had to moderate some of Vice President Cheney’s remarks on Iraq.

6. Francis Fukuyama, *America at the Crossroads: Democracy, Power, and the Neoconservative Legacy* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006), pp. 48–49.