Striking a balance: The centrality of the Hamiltonian/Jeffersonian Debate in American foreign policy development

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STRIKING A BALANCE: THE CENTRALITY OF THE HAMILTONIAN/JEFFERSONIAN DEBATE IN AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY DEVELOPMENT

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of

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in

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ABSTRACT

“Foreign policy is the face a nation wears to the world. The aim is the same for all states - the protection of national integrity and interest. But the manner in which a state conceives and conducts its foreign policy is greatly affected by national peculiarities.”¹ The focus of this thesis is to illuminate the national peculiarities that have put a unique face on American foreign policy. I will examine the two basic tenets, or impulses, that have characterized U.S. foreign policy development: the Jeffersonian, or idealist, impulse and the Hamiltonian, or realist, impulse. My purpose is to show that each impulse is inextricably intertwined in the political psyche of the American people and their leaders. It is my contention that the key to successful foreign policy is finding the right balance between these two essential threads of American political history and tradition.

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

"The study of history offers no manual of instructions that can be applied automatically; history teaches by analogy, shedding light on the likely consequences of comparable situations. But each generation must determine for itself which circumstances are in fact comparable."²

Henry Kissinger

The study of the affairs between nations has engaged many great minds, provoked endless debates, and filled countless volumes that crowd the shelves of untold libraries and archives. A deep and thorough understanding of foreign affairs has, however, been illusory at best. Far too many scholars and policy makers have oversimplified the complex and dynamic interaction of people, institutions and environment that provide both the stimulus and the mechanism for the conduct of foreign affairs. Scholars and academicians have gone to great effort to build models and paradigms to accurately identify the “laws” of political science in much the same manner as the natural sciences such as physics or chemistry. The diversity, complexity, and unpredictability of humans have foiled most attempts at this type of categorization and analysis. Arthur M.

Schlesinger provides a telling appraisal of the dilemma facing political scientists: "the simplifications of doctrine are forever at war with the complexity of reality." The dramatic events of 1989 and 1990: the dismantling of the Berlin Wall; the reunification of the German state; and, the dissolution of the Soviet Union were inconceivable, yet occurred in the face of almost unanimous expert opinion.

Does this make the study of political science futile or irrelevant? Not in the least! In fact, faced with such a dynamic and unpredictable environment, decisionmakers need to have a deeper understanding of how people, institutions, and their environment interact in order to make sound and effective policy decisions. Henry Kissinger, having been both a statesman and an academician, provides a perceptive insight into the challenges faced by our leaders as they search for a compass to guide them through the complex and challenging environment of the post-Cold War world.

"Intellectuals analyze the operations of international systems; statesmen build them. And there is a vast difference between the perspective of an analyst and that of a statesmen. The analyst can choose which problem he wishes to study, whereas the statesman’s problems are imposed on him. The analyst can allot whatever time is necessary to come to a clear conclusion; the overwhelming challenge to the statesman is the pressure of time. The analyst runs no risk. If his conclusions prove wrong, he can write another treatise. The statesman is permitted only one guess; his mistakes are irretrievable. The analyst has available to him all the facts; he will be judged on his intellectual power. The statesman must act on assessments that cannot be proved at the time that he is making them; he

Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., p. 67.
will be judged by history on the basis of how wisely he managed the inevitable change, and above all, by how well he preserves the peace.”

Upon what should we as a nation base our foreign policy decisions? When do we involve ourselves and what actions do we take? When is it best not to act? These are some of the questions that elected and unelected officials have to face squarely every day. The advent of computers and near real-time journalism have only compounded an already monumental task for the decision makers and compressed the time in which they have to assess the situation, formulate a response, and act. I firmly believe the relationship between scholars, politicians, and the public they serve should be a cooperative, rather than a competitive one. Academicians should study with the intent to enlighten and guide the politicians who develop and execute policies which affect the daily lives of the public that elect them.

What should guide the policy makers who must chart a course through the turbulent waters of the international political arena? What instruction book do they use to determine what role America should play in the game of nations? The answer can be found in a journey back to the wellspring of American political thought: the wisdom and genius of the Republic’s Founding Fathers. We must strive to find the answer to the

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famous question posed by J. Hector St. John Crevecoeur in 1782; “What then is the American, this new man?” Only by getting to the very essence of what it is that makes us uniquely American can we begin to understand the American approach to foreign policy development. Crevecoeur’s answer to his own question provides an appropriate starting point for our journey of self-discovery.

“He is an American, who, leaving behind him all his ancient prejudices and manners, receives new ones from the new mode of life he has embraced, the new government he obeys, and the new rank that he holds...Here individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men, whose labor and prosperity will one day cause great changes in the world. Americans are the western pilgrims, who are carrying with them that great mass of arts, sciences, vigor, and industry which began long since in the east; they will finish the great circle...The American is a new man, who acts upon new principles; he must therefore entertain new ideas, and form new opinions.”

The basic premise of this thesis will be to illustrate that for any foreign policy decision to be ultimately successful it must pass what Kissinger refers to as the “acid test”; it must be supported by the public it is intended to benefit. The ultimate goal of this thesis is to show that gaining public support hinges upon finding an acceptable balance between the two pillars of American political history and tradition; the idealistic

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5 J. Hector St. John Crevecoeur, *Letters From an American Farmer*, (1782), Letter III. The point that Crevecoeur is opening our minds to is that this “new man”, the American, has a new vision and a new worldview that is truly unique and distinct. In my opinion, it is this uniqueness that is the cornerstone of the American approach to foreign policy. This distinctness and, more importantly, our perception of that distinctness, is an inescapable reality that has embedded itself in the political mindset of the American people.
views exhorted and exemplified by Thomas Jefferson; and, the more realistic views professed by Alexander Hamilton. The debate begun by these two men has raged since the beginning of this great nation. The question of whether the United States should build and conduct its foreign affairs in a manner totally distinct from the other nations of the world, or whether it should act like one nation among many is a basic one and provides the fuel for the continuing argument between the realists and the idealists. The first area that will be addressed in this thesis is a discussion of idealism and realism in terms of foreign policy development. The two terms are used so frequently that their meanings have been clouded and confused over time and it will be essential to establish a solid working definition of those two concepts at the outset of this paper.

Once these concepts have been developed, they will be examined in relation to the peculiarities of the American political experience beginning with the debates between the Republicans, led by Thomas Jefferson, and the Federalists, led by Alexander Hamilton. The Jeffersonians adhered predominantly to the idealistic view of America as essentially distinct and different from the other nations, charged with the responsibility to be a beacon of democracy for the rest of the world. The Hamiltonians espoused the more realistic philosophy that the new nation’s role in the world be defined primarily in terms of national interest and power politics. After a thorough investigation of the foundations of this great debate, I will trace its development over time to show how amazingly
consistent the premises of these two great men have been over the course of American history.

By viewing the Jeffersonian/Hamiltonian debate over the course of time, it will become apparent that American foreign policy has ebbed and flowed between its idealistic and realistic tendencies, being dominated more by the Jeffersonian than by the Hamiltonian. Hans J. Morgenthau argued that American decision makers have placed far too much emphasis on idealistic wishful thinking, rather than critical examination of what was in the national interest of the United States. He contended that this proclivity towards idealism over national interest was a fundamental weakness of American foreign policy, especially in the twentieth century. I concur with Morgenthau’s basic contention, but believe the real weakness is not in choosing one over the other, but rather in not finding the proper balance between these two pillars of the American political psyche. Richard Nixon, in *Seize The Moment: America’s Challenge in a One-Superpower World*, captures the essential fact I want to develop in this chapter:

"Idealism has at once been our greatest strength and greatest weakness. American idealism - sometimes naive, sometimes misguided, sometimes overzealous - has always been at the center of our foreign policy. On the one hand, it has at times fostered a profound impulse toward isolationism. More comfortable with black-and-white moral choices than with the inevitable gray areas of world politics, we have often opted into isolationism in order to avoid tainting our idealism with the realities of power politics. On the other hand, this idealism has served as an
indispensable foundation to sustain our commitment to the great moral causes of the twentieth century. It has enabled us to lead not on the basis of narrow and selfish interests but through the appeal of high ideals and common values. When untempered by realism, our idealism has caused our foreign policy to swing between ideological crusades and short-sighted isolationism. When combined with hard-headed realism, America’s idealism has left a record of world leadership that no nation, past or present, can match. \(^6\)

This assessment of the inherent duality in American foreign policy is central to my main argument that the defining impulses of Jefferson and Hamilton are both inextricably embedded in the American body politic, and the key to a successful and sustainable foreign policy lies in finding the proper balance between the two.

The Vietnam and Persian Gulf Wars provide a unique and effective backdrop from which to examine the interplay of these two defining tenets, interest and idealism, and the necessity of balancing them to develop a successful and sustainable U.S. foreign policy. No foreign policy decision evokes as much public emotion and debate than the commitment of American troops, and it is my firm contention that the ultimate success of such an important foreign policy decision is whether or not the public supports such a decision. The failure of Vietnam highlights the danger of excessive idealism. The “pay any price, bear any burden” mentality of the era played a crucial role in the United States

deciding to intervene in Vietnam. Hans J. Morgenthau, in *Vietnam and the United States* argued that had the United States evaluated a military action in Vietnam in terms of national interest, we would have never sent troops to Vietnam⁷. The war with Iraq contrasts sharply with Vietnam in terms of the role of national interest in U.S. foreign policy decisionmaking. The strategic importance of oil reserves and their impact on the world economy provided a clear impetus for action, but President Bush quickly found out that public support for military action would have to be balanced with a more idealistic, moral purpose. Fighting for oil was replaced with turning back the aggression of the “Hitler of the Middle East”. I firmly believe the Bush administration succeeded where the Kennedy and Johnson administrations failed because he found an acceptable balance between the idealistic and realistic impulses inherent to the American political tradition and, more importantly, was successful in communicating it to the public.

I want to conclude the thesis by looking into the future with a foot in the past. Has the end of the Cold War changed the political landscape so drastically that the Jeffersonian/Hamiltonian debate has lost its significance and relevance? Given the turbulent and unpredictable nature of the emerging world order, it is crucial to reinvigorate the debate to help us focus again on “what is the American, this new man?”.

The idealism of Jefferson tempered by the realism of Hamilton will be the compass that

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will help the leaders of this great nation navigate the dangerous waters that lie ahead as we approach the next millennium. Only by tracing our political roots can we provide a roadmap for the future.
CHAPTER TWO
THE FOUNDATION OF FOREIGN POLICY: NATIONAL INTEREST EXPLORED

"As long as the world is politically organized into nations, the national interest is indeed the last word in world politics."

Hans J. Morgenthau

"No nation is to be trusted farther than it is bound by its interests."

George Washington

In the aftermath of the Second World War, Hans J. Morgenthau addresses the quintessential question of why a nation goes to war. "During the most recent war the ideologues of the Atlantic Charter, the Four Freedoms, and the United Nations were constantly complaining that the American soldier did not know what he was fighting for. Indeed, if he was fighting for some utopian ideal, divorced from concrete experiences and

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the interests of the country, then the complaint was well grounded. However, if he was fighting for the territorial integrity of the nation and for its survival as a free country where he could live, think, and act as he pleased, then he had never any doubt about what he was fighting for.” (my emphasis) Morgenthau goes on to state that ideological rationalizations and justifications are necessary and healthy adjuncts of all political action, but warns that there is “something unhealthy in a craving for ideological intoxication and in the inability to act and to see merit in action except under the stimulant of grandiose ideas and far-fetched schemes”. Talking about the American public, he says that “...ideologues and demagogues can sway him by appealing to his emotions. But it is also true, as American history shows in abundance...that responsible statesmen can guide him by awakening his latent understanding of the national interest.”¹⁰

The most basic building block of any foreign policy is national interest. Yet, what is national interest? How do we define it, and, more importantly, how do we give it the content it will need to make it a useful guide for action? By its very definition, national interest must derive its content from the physical, political, and cultural entity known as a nation. The concept of nations and national interest began to emerge in the mid-

¹⁰Morgenthau, “Another Great Debate”, p. 971.
seventeenth century as the medieval acceptance of universality waned. Universality was a concept of world order that represented a blending of the traditions of the Roman Empire and the Catholic Church. The world was viewed as representing Heaven on Earth. Just as God rules in Heaven, so one emperor would rule over the secular world, and one Pope over the Universal Church. With the advent of the Reformation, the hegemony of the Holy Roman Empire began to collapse and the emerging states of Europe needed some principle to regulate and guide their relations. They found their answers in raison d’état and the balance of power. Raison d’état, or reason of state, asserted that the well being of the state justified whatever means were necessary to further itself. The national interest supplanted the medieval notion of universal morality based on loyalty to the emperor and the Church. The balance of power replaced the nostalgia for a universal monarchy with the belief that each state, in pursuing its own selfish interests would ultimately result in a state of equilibrium that would contribute to the safety and progress of the others.

France, one of the first nation-states to emerge in Europe, was the first to practice this revolutionary approach to foreign affairs. The principle agent for this French policy was Armand Jean du Plessis, Cardinal Richelieu, first Minister of France from 1624 - 1642. Richelieu has been credited with being the father of the modern state system. He built French foreign policy around raison d’état and practiced it relentlessly. In the
course of the next century, it would become the modus operandi of all the European states. Central to the concept of raison d'etat is the idea that although man's duty is to God, the duty of the state is to the man. According to Richelieu, "Man is immortal, his salvation is the hereafter. The state has no immortality, its salvation is now or never."\textsuperscript{11} Thus, the moral duty of the nation is distinct and different than the moral duty of its citizens. States are not rewarded by doing what is right, but rather are rewarded by doing what is necessary to survive. Another essential truth of national interest addressed by Richelieu is the idea of proportionality in conducting the affairs of state. "Logic," he wrote in his Political Testament, "requires that the thing to be supported and the force that is to support it should stand in geometric proportion to each other."\textsuperscript{12} In other words, is the prize worth the price you will have to pay to get it. Determining the costs, benefits, and the risks of foreign policy decisions is central to notion of national interest.

An inherent danger in raison d'etat, as promulgated by Richelieu, is it has no built in limitations. At what point would the state's interests be satisfied? When would a state consider itself completely secure? Raison d'etat provided a rationale for the behavior of individual states, but provided no answer to the challenge of maintaining order between


states. As raison d'etat evolved, so did the idea of a balance of power. Under this new guise, states were no longer restrained by the pretense of a moral code. If the good of the state was tantamount, the duty of the ruler was to the aggrandizement of himself and his nation. The stronger states, such as France, would try to dominate, and the weaker nations would form coalitions to thwart the advances of the more dominant. If the coalition was strong enough, a balance of power was achieved, if not, hegemony would result. This new system inaugurated and postulated by Cardinal Richelieu would be tested by frequent wars as nations attempted to advance their interests at the expense of their neighbors.

England played an interesting role in this emerging system. England was the one European country whose raison d'etat did not require it to expand its territory into continental Europe. Perceiving its national interest to be in the preservation of the European balance of power, it sought only to prevent the domination of Europe by a single power. England clearly understood that a European continent dominated by a single power would threaten the very existence of the tiny island nation. England pursued its foreign policy with self preservation as the guiding principle. Territorial integrity and survival as a political entity is the very essence of national interest. Ultimately, a balance of power emerged as shifting coalitions under British leadership
were developed to prevent French attempts to conquer Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and Germany in the twentieth century.

The history of American foreign policy closely parallels that of England, as our involvement in two world wars, and the Cold War, was based on that very premise. Even the Founding Fathers recognized that the preservation of a European balance of power served the interests of our infant nation. "There is a Ballance of Power in Europe," wrote John Adams. "Nature has formed it. Practice and Habit have confirmed it and it must exist forever. It may be disturbed for a time, by the accidental Removal of a Weight from one Scale to the other; but there will be a continual Effort to restore the Equilibrium ... Congress adopted these Principles and this System in its purity."\textsuperscript{13} Even Thomas Jefferson, who personally loathed the British, would not let his personal beliefs cloud his perception of what he believed was in the best interest of America. In 1814, while in the throws of war with England, Jefferson could not even look favorably on Napoleon's successes against our common antagonist. "It cannot be to our interest that all Europe should be reduced to a single monarchy," Jefferson wrote, "... Were he again advanced to Moscow, I should again wish him such disaster as would prevent his reaching Petersburg. And were the consequences even to be the longer continuance of our war [with England],

I would rather meet them than see the whole force of Europe wielded by a single hand."\textsuperscript{14}

Although frequently maligned by the Founding Fathers, Cardinal Richelieu's principles of national interest and balance of power, were nonetheless understood and utilized by the same men that publicly loathed them. Jefferson, as the above quote indicates, was a complex and often contradictory personality who defies simple categorization. Even Hans J. Morgenthau described Jefferson as "thinking in terms of moral principles, but acting in terms of power politics."\textsuperscript{15} It should never be doubted that Jefferson based his foreign policy decisions on the realistic premise of American national interest in its purest form - survival as a nation. Although national interest was the impetus of his foreign policy, it was Jefferson's idealistic vision of America as truly distinct among nations that guided his actions in developing a foreign policy to protect the infant nation.

This was the ancien regime, the Europe of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, that the Founding Fathers sought to distance themselves from as they built a new nation. They believed that the system itself was the cause of the seemingly endless wars and conflicts in Europe, and they wanted no part of it. The Founding Fathers wanted to exempt themselves from this game played by monarchs and despots. America, a nation of free men, would take a new and different direction. This sentiment is clearly

\textsuperscript{14} As quoted in Norman A. Graebner, ed., Ideas and Diplomacy, (New York, 1964), pp. 93, 122-123.
evident in Washington’s warning to the American people in his farewell address. “Europe has a set of primary interests, which to us have none, or a very remote relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the concerns of which are essentially foreign to our concerns... therefore, it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves, by artificial ties, in the ordinary vicissitudes of her [European] politics, or the ordinary combinations and collusions of her friendships or enmities. Our detached and distant situation invites us to follow a different course.”  

This warning by our first president has been a source of much misunderstanding among historians and political scientists. Many argued that the Founding Fathers were rejecting the very concept of national interest as the basis for American foreign affairs. Washington, as well as the other Founding Fathers, understood that interest was the compass that would guide the new republic in its dealings with other nations. “No nation is to be trusted farther than it is bound by its interests.” The early architects were not rejecting the concept of national interest, but rather were rejecting the European governments and how they practiced it.

America was a different nation, something completely new under the sun, but still was a nation among others. Pursuing the national interest was not a game of chess where the people were sacrificed as the pawns of the powerful, but rather protecting this new

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16 Ibid, p. 8.
nation created by free men for free men, giving this infant nation a chance to grow, strengthen, and mature. The Founding Fathers would do as all nations must: protect their physical, political, and cultural identity against threats by other countries. Democracy, however, demands consensus. The formulation and pursuit of the national interest would have to be built upon a firm foundation of public consensus. That consensus would not be possible if the goals of the leaders of the government were not harmonized with the political traditions of the people who were represented by that government. As succinctly put by former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, "the acid test of a policy is its ability to obtain domestic support. This has two aspects: the problem of legitimizing a policy within the governmental apparatus ... and that of harmonizing it with the national experience." The key to harmonizing any policy, especially foreign policy decisions, within the context of the American political tradition is to strike a balance between the pragmatic necessities of national interest and the idealistic and moralistic impulses of the American political culture. This will be discussed in greater detail in subsequent chapters.

One of the most basic criticisms of the idea of national interest is that it is dangerously elastic and extremely elusive. There is no exact formula that prescribes what

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the national interest is in specific situations, or what actions would best serve that national interest. In practice, politicians quarrel endlessly over these very questions. The analogy used by Morgenthau that asks “what is the soldier is fighting for” is very illuminating in this regard. Individuals, as well as nations, will defend what is most precious to them; their lives, their homes, their families, and their beliefs and way of life. A government, especially a representative one, should be expected to do no less for its citizenry. Morgenthau in his treatise, “Another Great Debate”, tries to break the concept of national interest down into more manageable parts. “The content is determined by the political traditions and the total cultural context within which a nation formulates its foreign policy. The concept of national interest, then has two elements, one that is logically required and in that sense necessary, and one that is variable and determined by circumstances.”

Morgenthau goes on to argue that in a world where nations compete with and oppose each other for power, the foreign policies of all nations must necessarily refer to their survival as their minimum requirement. The Founding Fathers were keenly aware that their experiment called America did not have a large margin of safety and its future was by no means a certainty. Both Hamilton and Jefferson understood the concept of national interest in its rawest form - survival of a dream called America. Washington alludes to the precarious nature of the young republic in his first inaugural address: “The preservation of the sacred fire of liberty and the destiny of the republican form of

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government are justly considered, perhaps, as deeply, as finally, staked on the experiment intrusted to the hands of the American people."\textsuperscript{20}

The survival of the political unit, the nation, is the irreducible minimum, the necessary element of its interests vis-à-vis other nations. The determination of the necessary element of national interest is relatively simple; for it encompasses the integrity of the nation's territory, of its political institutions, and its culture\textsuperscript{21}. The situation is markedly different with respect to the variable elements of national interests, those that will vary over time and vary with circumstances. All the interplay of personalities, public opinion, sectional interests, partisan politics, bureaucratic rivalries, pressure groups, and the media are brought to bear upon their determination. The increasing public awareness of and involvement in foreign policy has, without question, complicated the task of the management of foreign affairs in today's era of instant information. The increase in information flow has led to much more public awareness and assertiveness in the conduct of foreign affairs. Vietnam brought the realities of war into the American living room. Cable television provided the American public with up-to-the-minute, 24-hour coverage of the Persian Gulf War. The result of this near real-time coverage of world events is a

\textsuperscript{20} Quoted in Schlesinger, p. 10.

\textsuperscript{21} I use the term culture to signify those often intangible social, intellectual, and artistic aspects of a nation that sets itself apart from other nations. In short, culture is a nation's core beliefs and values. Schlesinger talks about national character as those persisting traits, values, and folkways that create a national identity. (see Schlesinger, p. xii).
much more informed and vocal public. As with most decisionmaking, as the number of people involved increases, the more cumbersome the decision is to make. Tocqueville feared that the very nature of a democracy handicapped its ability to conduct foreign policy. "A democracy can only with great difficulty regulate the details of an important undertaking, preserve in a fixed design, and work out its execution in spite of serious obstacles. It cannot combine its measures with secrecy or await their consequences with patience." Tocqueville seems to view this aspect of democracy as a weakness, I however, view it as a strength. A committed, supportive public can be an invaluable source of national strength to sustain policies and endure hardship and sacrifice in pursuit of the national interest. The true test of our nation's leaders then is their ability to chose their battles wisely and illicit the support of a nation's most valuable resource - its people!

While the interests which a nation may pursue in its relations with other nations are of an infinite variety and number, the resources available to pursue those interests are necessarily limited in quantity and kind. No nation has the resources to promote all desirable objectives with equal vigor; all nations must therefore allocate their scarce

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22 Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, I, ch. xiii. The question of whether Tocqueville opposed direct popular control of foreign affairs is unclear. I do not believe he meant to imply that democracies were inferior to other forms of government in terms of conducting foreign policy, but rather points out the inherent difficulties a democracy will face when formulating and implementing its foreign policy.
resources as rationally and prudently as possible. The indispensable precondition of such rational allocation is a clear understanding between the necessary and variable elements of the national interest. Throughout the last century, America has had the luxury of an almost unlimited power base which has been directly responsible for its victories in the two World Wars and the Cold War. However, the unexpected collapse of the Soviet Union and the subsequent downsizing of the U.S. military machine, the growing burden of a huge budget deficit, and the substantial growth of the economic power of Japan, Western Europe, and the oil-rich nations in the Middle East have drastically altered the world's power equation. With other nations challenging the preeminent position of the United States, a more judicial assessment of where, when, and how to involve itself is a harsh reality of the evolving geopolitical situation. The blank check mentality is no longer valid. The Persian Gulf War and the necessity of burden sharing, both militarily and economically, between the coalition forces is clear evidence of this fundamental change in the world's geopolitical, or as some authors prefer, geoeconomic landscape.

The question of how morality fits into the equation of national interest is a basic one and must be addressed if we are to develop a clear picture of the American approach to foreign policy development. The most prevalent and persistent argument against the realists and their unflinching belief in the primacy of the national interest in the conduct of international relations, is the misconception that basing foreign policy decisions purely
in terms of the national interest contradicts the moral underpinnings of the American political tradition. The essence of the idealist argument hinges on the premise that decisions based on the harsh, cold realities of the geopolitical landscape are less desirable from a moral standpoint than those based on a more ideological or utopian foundation. Arthur Schlesinger highlights this basic schism between the realists and the idealists. “People who respond to international affairs divide temperamentally into two schools: those who first ask of a policy, ‘Is it morally right?’, and those who first ask, ‘Will it work?’; those who see policies as good or evil, and those who see them as wise or foolish. One cannot presume an ultimate metaphysical antagonism between the moralist and the realist. No realist can wholly escape perceptions of good and evil, and no policy can wholly divorce ethical from geopolitical realities.” Schlesinger is alluding to what I believe to be an essential truth in American foreign policy - the absolute necessity of finding a proper balance between the lofty goals of idealism and the harsh exigencies of realism.

Even the most adamant proponent of national interest would agree with Schlesinger that the question of morality does have its place in foreign policy formulation and execution. Yet, the question remains of how to determine right from wrong in the dealings between sovereign states. It is on this point where the two schools of thought

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23 Schlesinger, pp. 96-97.
diverge. The idealist relies upon the moral code most familiar to him - the code that governs dealings among individuals. The idealist believes that the ethical considerations that constrain and guide behavior between individuals must also constrain and guide the behavior between states. Morgenthau persuasively argued against what he believed to be this fundamental flaw in the idealist approach to international relations by elaborating on the Hobbes's dictum that the state creates morality as well as the law and that there is neither morality nor law outside the state. According to Morgenthau: “Universal moral principles, such as justice or equality, are capable of guiding political action only to the extent that they have been given concrete content and have been related to political situations by society. What justice means in the United States can within wide limits be objectively ascertained; for interests and convictions, experiences of life, and institutionalized traditions have in large measure created a consensus concerning what justice means under the conditions of American society. No such consensus exists between nations.” Morgenthau is not debating the basic right of man to defend himself, but stresses the necessity of a consensus of the governed through the state in the

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24 Morgenthau seems to be oversimplifying the essence of Hobbes’ Leviathan. Hobbes almost contradicts this notion of the state creating morality as well as law in Chapter 14 by stating “the Right of Nature, which writers commonly call Jus Naturale, is the Liberty each man hath to use his own power, as he will himselfe, for the preservation of his own Nature; that is to say, his own Life; and consequently, of doing anything, which in his own Judgement and Reason, he shall conceive to be the aptest means thereunto.” Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan, reprinted from the Edition of 1651, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1909), p. 99.

25 Morgenthau, In Defense of the National Interest, p. 34.
determination of morality and law. Morality and law become relevant only as men interact with each other in some organized fashion.

When we talk about the application of moral standards to the formulation and conduct of foreign affairs, therefore, we are not talking about compliance with some clear and generally accepted international code of behavior. If the policies of the United States are to made to conform to moral standards, those standards are going to have to be America's own, founded on American principles of what is right and what is wrong. When other nations fail to live up to these principles, and they have a significant and adverse effect on American interests, as distinct from our political tastes, it is within our right as a sovereign nation to take whatever action is necessary to protect and further our interests. What we cannot do is assume the moral standards we measure ourselves against are the same standards that must guide the actions of others. Few of us can lay claim to perfect knowledge or virtuousness, and as such are in no position to judge the morality of the actions undertaken by other nations. The application of "right" and "wrong" is at best arbitrary and relative. What is bad in the behavior of our opponents is good, or at least acceptable, in the behavior of our friends. What is unobjectionable to us at one period in our history is offensive and unacceptable in another. George Kennan provides some prudent guidelines for American policy-makers in their pursuit of the perfect policy. "This would be a policy founded on the recognition of the national
interest, reasonably conceived, as the legitimate motivation for a large portion of the nation's behavior, and be prepared to pursue that interest without either moral pretension or apology. It would be a policy that would seek the possibilities to morality primarily in our own behavior, not in our judgement of others. It would restrict our undertakings to the limits established by our own traditions and resources. It would see virtue in our minding our own business wherever there is not some overwhelming reason for minding the business of others."²⁶

The highest moral duty of the state must be the protection and perpetuation of its population, territory, institutions, and culture. Even though morality requires self-sacrifice on the part of the individual, the state cannot be similarly bound. "The rule of morality," Alexander Hamilton pointed out in the early days of the republic, "... is not precisely the same between nations as between individuals. The duty of making its own welfare the guide of its actions, is much stronger upon the former than upon the latter. Existing millions, and for the most part, future generations are concerned in the present measures of government; while the consequences of private action of an individual ordinarily terminate with himself, or are circumscribed with a narrow compass."²⁷

Reinhold Niebuhr, a theologian-scholar, also addressed this in *Moral Man and Immoral*...

Society. According to Niebuhr, the obligation of the individual is love and sacrifice; “from the viewpoint of the author of an action unselfishness must remain the criterion of the highest morality.” But states cannot be sacrificial. Governments are not individuals. They are not principals but agents. They are trustees for the happiness and interests of others. Niebuhr quoted Hugh Cecil’s argument that unselfishness “is inappropriate to the action of the state. No one has the right to be selfish with other people’s interests.”28 In short, the state does not exist without its citizens. The highest good the state can do is to protect its people.

The question ultimately becomes; do you sacrifice the nation to pursue an abstract moral principle? Abraham Lincoln confronted this issue when he considered whether to make freeing the slaves the ultimate standard of his policy even at the risk of destroying the Union, or whether to subordinate the more abstract principle of universal freedom to the most basic necessity of the national interest - survival. Lincoln’s unequivocal response is eloquently stated in a letter to Horace Greely. “If there be those,” he wrote on August 22, 1862,

> “who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time save slavery, I do not agree with them. If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time destroy slavery, I do not agree with them. My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union, and is not either to save or to destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing any slave I would do it, and if I could save it by

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freeing all the slaves, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone I would also do that. What I do about slavery, and the colored race, I do because I believe it helps to save the Union; and what I forebear, I forebear because I do not believe it would help to save the Union. I shall do less whenever I shall believe what I am doing hurts the cause, I shall do more whenever I shall believe doing more will help the cause. I shall try to correct errors when shown to be errors; and I shall adopt new views so fast as they shall appear to be true views.

I have here stated my purpose according to my view of official duty; and I intend no modification of my oft-expressed personal wish that all men everywhere could be free.“

As morally and personally compelling Lincoln felt freeing the slaves was, the issue of saving the nation was even more compelling, and what he felt was required of him as a trustee of the people he represented.

29 As quoted in Morgenthau, “Another Great Debate”, p. 982.
CHAPTER THREE

HAMILTON AND JEFFERSON: THE TWIN PILLARS OF AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY

"The rivalry between these two remarkable figures became the focal point not only of the emerging party system at home but also of two sharply different approaches to foreign policy. The conflict between them has echoed throughout American history."

Robert W. Tucker and David C. Hendrickson

Many would argue that the answers to the challenges of a dramatically altered political landscape of an increasingly complex world that is evolving in the aftermath of the Cold War require a radical new approach to American foreign policy development. I could not disagree more. What is required to navigate through these turbulent times of change and upheaval is a journey back to the beginnings of the republic to reexamine and relearn the wisdom and genius of the small group of enlightened men

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we call our Founding Fathers. Hans J. Morgenthau’s prescription for the political challenges at the beginning of the Cold War, ring true today as well:

“The United States offers the singular spectacle of a commonwealth whose political wisdom has not grown slowly through the accumulation and articulation of experiences. On the contrary, the full flowering of its political wisdom was coeval with its birth as an independent nation; indeed, it owed its existence and survival as an independent nation to those extraordinary qualities of political insight, historical perspective, and common sense which the first generation of Americans applied to the affairs of state.”

The birth of our fledgling republic and the building of a new form of government were inextricably linked to the development of a truly unique approach to foreign policy development. It is foolhardy, if not impossible, to trace the development of how this new nation called America would deal with the outside world without having a basic understanding of how the Founding Fathers approached the building of a new form of government. Both the basic structure of government and what would become the American approach to foreign policy were forged in the same crucible of liberty, freedom, and uncertainty. Each contributed significantly to the evolution of the other. Investigating the words and deeds of a small group of men in the formative years of the nation just after the Revolutionary War will provide a much clearer picture and deeper

understanding of the basic precepts of how the United States conducts its affairs of state.

Robert W. Tucker and David C. Hendrickson echo these same sentiments in, *Empire of Liberty: The Statecraft of Thomas Jefferson*: “Animated by the thirst for fame...the Founding Fathers self-consciously spoke to the ages, even if they often cannot be heard through the harsh din of modern life. In foreign policy, as elsewhere, their sayings still retain the capacity to illuminate the predicaments of our times; and they have freshness and a power that will doubtless continue to make them a recurring source of political wisdom and insight for future generations”

Who were these men, these visionaries who built a new nation? The monumental task of building a new nation of free men conceived in liberty and securing its place among other nations fell upon the shoulders of a small group of enlightened and dedicated men we have come to call the Founding Fathers. America’s unique response to the challenges and threats to the fledgling Republic was in large measure determined by the actions and attitudes of six men; George Washington, John Adams, John Jay, Alexander Hamilton, Thomas Jefferson, and James Madison. During the Confederation period, John Jay as secretary of foreign affairs, John Adams as minister to England, and Thomas Jefferson as minister to France outlined the beginnings of American foreign policy through the exchange of correspondence discussing the problems facing the new

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32 Tucker and Hendrickson, p. viii.
nation and suggesting solutions. All three were quick to realize the serious inadequacies of the Articles of Confederation in the conduct of business between nations. They concluded that none of their plans could be implemented without a stronger and more unified central government. Alexander Hamilton and James Madison worked in Congress to secure greater national power by successfully convening the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia. With the urging of Hamilton, George Washington attended the Convention, lending his prestige and reputation to the efforts of Hamilton and Madison to create a government capable of pursuing a vigorous foreign policy. Hamilton and Madison, with the help of John Jay, authored the Federalist Papers, which were crucial in carrying the wisdom of the new Constitution to the people and helping secure its ratification.

Taking their places in the most important offices created by the Constitution of 1789, this same group of men were now able to act on the foreign policies they had only been able to discuss during the Confederation period. George Washington was elected the Republic's first President, while John Adams became Vice President and presiding officer of the Senate. Washington appointed Thomas Jefferson Secretary of State and Alexander Hamilton Secretary of the Treasury. James Madison was elected to the House of Representatives and quickly established himself as its most influential member. John Jay became the Supreme Court's first chief justice, and although not directly responsible
for foreign affairs, he was a close advisor to the president and ultimately negotiated the most important and contentious treaties of the Washington administration. These were the decision-makers of post-revolutionary America and architects of the new nation’s foreign policy. An analysis of their ideas on foreign policy during these formative and defining years is absolutely essential if one is to truly comprehend the uniquely American approach to the conduct of affairs of state.

Of this group of men, two figures stand taller than the rest. Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton formed the twin pillars of the emerging and evolving structure and content of American foreign policy. The immediacy of building a stronger, more perfect union and securing its survival in a hostile world provided a clear impetus and focus for both Jefferson and Hamilton. Both these men were fervently dedicated to the same broad principles. They wanted to see a free, secure, and progressing America. They had given birth to a new nation, now they wanted to give it the opportunity to grow, mature, and flourish. United by a common goal, but contentiously divided on how to achieve that goal, Jefferson and Hamilton bitterly debated which direction the new Republic’s foreign policy should take. Their primordial dispute and protean antagonism was fundamental and defining. As pointed out by Robert Tucker and David Hendrickson, “Differing systems of political economy, rival conceptions of the rights and duties imposed by nations and the ‘dictates of national morality’, varying degrees of the nature and necessity
of military establishments - all these and more fueled the ferocious debate between these two men. The very purpose and meaning of the nation were thrown into the contest, which has never yielded a clear winner."\textsuperscript{33} The vast expanse of over two hundred years separates us from the sagacity and wisdom of these two great figures, but the legacy and legitimacy of their great debate persists to this day. Louis M. Hacker, in \textit{Alexander Hamilton and the American Tradition}, highlights the essential truth of the uniquely American approach to foreign affairs - the inescapable intermingling of and inherent conflict between the rival philosophies of Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton. "We are all Jeffersonians, we are all Hamiltonians; yet so profound the impact has been of these two great men, the American today is either largely a Hamiltonian or he is largely a Jeffersonian."\textsuperscript{34} The heated policy debates of today are still framed in the context of this inherent duality.

The central figure of early American diplomacy was, without question, Thomas Jefferson. In the post-revolutionary period, Jefferson held positions of critical importance in these formative years of American foreign policy - as Minister to France from 1784 - 1789, Secretary of State under President Washington from 1790 - 1793, and finally, as President from 1801 - 1809. The United States, according to Jefferson, was progenitor of

\textsuperscript{33} \textit{Ibid.}, p. xi.
a new diplomacy, built on the consent and confidence of a free and virtuous populace, and would pursue goals based on the natural and universal rights of man, using means other than war. Jefferson believed that our geographic separateness and political uniqueness had exempted America from the practices and precepts of the old European traditions of raison d’etat and the balance of power. The very notion that the security of the state and its aggrandizement should have precedence over domestic welfare, and that the actions of the state ought to be judged according to a different moral standard than individuals, were ideas utterly antithetical to Jefferson’s more enlightened approach to human nature and the progress of mankind.

Thomas Jefferson, the man, was an enigma, both puzzling and paradoxical - a Virginian nationalist, a slave-holding philosophe, an aristocratic democrat, a provincial cosmopolitan, and a pacific imperialist. Jefferson holds the key to unlocking the mysteries of the American experience. Although scholars continue to argue to this day over the wisdom of his beliefs and his conduct of domestic and foreign affairs, their seems to be almost unanimous agreement that Thomas Jefferson was the predominant figure of the early Republic. Henry Adams, the great American historian was very clear about the importance of this great man. “Almost every other American, might be
described in a parenthesis."\textsuperscript{35} According to Lawrence Kaplan, "No American statesman of the revolutionary and early national periods made a more substantial contribution to the development of American foreign policy than Thomas Jefferson ... Jefferson's idealism, tempered by a pragmatic regard for practical realities, played a key role in defining a distinctively American position toward the external world. No one ... ever blended the moralistic yearnings of the young republic for a new international order with the practical pursuit of national self-interest than he."\textsuperscript{36} Merrill Peterson argued that Jefferson was the consummate pragmatic statesman, "actively seeking realizable goals within the limits of principle."\textsuperscript{37} Gilbert Chinard was even more laudatory in describing the skills of this great statesman. Chinard's Jefferson, had "neither the pure and exalted morality of the political philosopher", nor the "cynical attitude of the political boss." He was not a "mere idealist, not simply a practical politician." Rather he made "persistent efforts to propagate that gospel of practical idealism that remains to this day one of the fundamental tenets of Americanism." This combination of pragmatic and idealistic qualities was thought by Chinard to be the essence of the American character; in this light Jefferson stood as "the Apostle of Americanism."\textsuperscript{38}

\textsuperscript{36} Lawrence Kaplan, \textit{Entangling Alliances With None: American Foreign Policy in the age of Jefferson}, (Kent, OH: Kent University Press), pp. 3 - 4.
Jefferson’s idealistic vision was to build an expansive “empire of liberty”, but without the associated corruptions of an oppressive and intrusive government - a large military establishment and the burden of taxation to support it. The conflict between his ambitious foreign policy goals of securing America’s borders, expanding its territory, and increasing its trade and the rejection of the tools needed to realize those goals went to the core of the contradictions in Jefferson’s approach to foreign policy. Jefferson resolved this dilemma by pursuing a policy aimed at “conquering without war”, confident that the new Republic could achieve its goals by economic and peaceable means. In spite of these contradictions, Jefferson never abandoned the vision of his empire of liberty. According to Lawrence S. Kaplan, “Jefferson never questioned what he wanted for America; he envisioned a society of cultivated, independent men on terms of equality with one another, keeping government as close to the local level as possible, living on farms rather than cities because the agrarian life best propagated the good life. Expansionism became part of the plan because an American empire would remove the corrupt and dangerous mode of Europe, as it would the pattern of international commerce could also be reorganized to incorporate the American alternative to mercantilism, free trade. He identified urban commercial society with class conflict, with oligarchic manipulation of politics, and with European financial control over America, most especially Great Britain’s economic interests in its former colonies. To combat such dangers, he believed
that right reason applied to the right environment would create a society embodying the best blend of the Enlightenment with the frontier. Where Hamilton looked to power and wealth to raise man above the worst aspects of his nature, Jefferson looked to agriculture. Jefferson said that "those who labor in the earth are the chosen people of God ... whose breasts He has made this peculiar deposit for substantial and genuine virtue ... Corruption of morals in the mass of cultivators is a phenomenon of which no age nor nation has furnished an example."

Free men, free trade was the encapsulation of Jefferson's approach to the formulation and conduct of foreign policy. A disciple of the French philophes and physiocrats, Thomas Jefferson elevated free trade to an almost mystical level. Free trade would be the panacea to abolish the slavery of mercantilism and the resultant wars and international rivalries. Even though Jefferson believed that free trade would lead to a more peaceful world, it gnawed at his picture of a more virtuous, simpler, self-sufficient life on the farm. He thought it would have been better for peace and liberty to "practice neither commerce nor navigation, but stand with respect to Europe precisely on the footing of China." Jefferson feared that trade would corrupt the pureness of America's

39 Lawrence S. Kaplan, p. 7.
new form of government by leading to eventual avarice and greed. Too great an increase in trade, “will probably embark us again in the ocean of speculation, engage us to overtrade ourselves, ... divert us from Agriculture which is our wisest pursuit, because it will in the end contribute most to real wealth, good morals, and happiness. The wealth acquired by speculation and plunder is fugacious in its nature and fills society with the spirit of gambling.”

Jefferson’s lofty idealism was reigned in by the reality that trade, although dangerous, was a necessary evil if he wanted America to grow and strengthen. His dream of an empire of liberty had to be reconciled with his belief in the simple virtues of an agrarian lifestyle, as well as reconciled with the will of the nation which was not as enlightened as Jefferson was. He could not ignore the will of the people. He conceded that “our people are decided in the opinion that it is necessary for us to share in the occupation of the ocean.” Committed to the premise that it was the “duty of those entrusted with the administration of their affairs to conform themselves to the decided choice of their constituents,” Jefferson decided it was in the national interest “to share as large a portion as we can of this modern source of wealth and power.”

Still he hoped to appease his idealistic yearnings, with the desire to keep trade relegated as a “handmaiden

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42 Jefferson to Washington, August 14, 1787, ibid., Vol. XII, p. 38.
of agriculture”, carrying off America’s agricultural surplus and bringing back only those vital manufactured goods that the United States could not produce indigenously.

Thomas Jefferson’s anti-British feelings are well documented and appear to have been a source of influence over his foreign policy decisions. The destruction of the South and his own estate by the English during the War for Independence were certainly instrumental in his underlying dislike and distrust of the British. Jefferson came to believe that the British were the only people on earth who wished America ill from the bottom of their souls and considered England a natural enemy of the United States.\textsuperscript{44} Jefferson’s loathing for the British was offset by his deep fondness for the French. His warm feelings can easily be seen in a letter written to Abigail Adams. “I would not give the polite people of this country and their amiability in every point of view ... for ten such races of rich, proud, hectoring, swearing, squibbling, carnivorous animals [as the British].”\textsuperscript{45} It is crucial to note, however, that Jefferson’s oft-stated preference for the French did not cloud his judgment when pursuing the interests of the nation. He wrote John Adams in 1784, “Our interest calls for a perfect equality in our conduct towards [England and France]; but no preferences.”\textsuperscript{46}

\textsuperscript{44} Jefferson to William Carmichael, December 17, 1787, \textit{ibid.}, Vol. XII, p. 424.
\textsuperscript{45} Jefferson to Abigail Adams, June 21, 1785, \textit{ibid.}, Vol. VIII, p. 239.
\textsuperscript{46} Jefferson to John Adams, September 24, 1784, \textit{ibid.}, p. 545.
When given a choice, Jefferson would invariably lean towards France because he truly believed that France was "the only nation on whom we can solidly rely for assistance till we can stand on our own legs." He would not go as far as to stake the survival of the country by officially tying America to France. He believed that "no circumstances of morality, honor, interest, or engagement are sufficient to authorize a secure reliance on any nation, at all times and in all positions." Jefferson understood that the nation's survival required playing off one great power against the other. The primacy of American independence was a constant in Jefferson's thinking. He preferred an agriculturally based society of free land holders to an industrial society founded on commerce and trade, but realized the future of his vision of an empire of liberty was inexorably tied to the expansion of trade and commerce, and the stronger central government needed to secure those ends. Jefferson subordinated foreign to domestic policy believing that the domestic system as he envisioned it would provide the essentials of happiness and well-being; liberty, justice, and domestic tranquillity. Foreign policy was merely to be a handmaiden to these ends, defending the system from outside encroachment and influence, supplying the minimum amount of foreign trade as a market for America's agricultural surplus, and gaining territory for the expansion of the American empire.

Thomas Jefferson was caught in an almost constant struggle between his idealistic vision of America and the hard, cold truths of a pragmatic world. What remained consistent throughout his distinguished career was his unflinching belief in the justice of his policies; they were moral by virtue of their American character. For all his contradictions, he never separated national interest from morality in the formulation and conduct of foreign affairs. Hans J. Morgenthau described Jefferson as a leader who conceptualized his foreign policy in terms of moral principles and lofty idealism, but acted as all nations must, on the basis of national interest. This contradictory essence of Thomas Jefferson is the very embodiment of the inherent duality of the American approach to international relations. Just as Jefferson struggled to find a balance between the impulses pulling him in different directions, so we must struggle to search for a balance between the idealism of the American soul and the realities of the external world.

Jefferson's unique approach did not evolve immediately. Only in the course of bitter and emotionally-charged confrontations with Alexander Hamilton did Jefferson's novel diplomatic outlook fully evolve. Hamilton would play the supporting role, but a role that was just as fundamental and defining as that of Jefferson. Both Hamilton and Jefferson made significant contributions to the American political tradition, but far more important and lasting was the synergism created by their energetic and inspired interaction. What each brought to the table was formidable, but what the nation walked
away with was almost priceless. Their dynamic and differing philosophies and talents superbly complimented and balanced each other, checking the excesses of the other’s more extreme views, resulting in the nation reaping the benefit of the best that both men had to offer. Louis M. Hacker highlighted this essential truth of American politics. “If Thomas Jefferson - with his deep and abiding confidence in the intelligence, integrity, and humanity of man - unerringly guided America to a democratic commitment, Alexander Hamilton as surely and as permanently laid the basis for its success. Alexander Hamilton, in political and economic terms, built the American nation; Thomas Jefferson, in democratic and humanist terms, gave it its unique dedication.”

One of the more contentious topics of debate concerning Alexander Hamilton has been the supposition that he pursued his vision of America for personalized aggrandizement and advancing the goals of the moneyed and privileged class. One histographer, Joseph Charles advanced this theory in Hamilton and Washington: The Origins of the American Party System. According to Charles:

“Hamilton put his trust in the privileged classes and considered their interests as inseparable from those of society as a whole. He wanted a close collaboration between this country and England. He aimed at the closest possible union, even a high degree of consolidation, between the different parts of this country, and he wanted a powerful central government. These aims were so closely related in the conditions of time that they are perhaps aspects of the same plan, an he probably thought of them as different means toward a single goal. The economic program

⁴⁸ Louis M. Hacker, p. 22.
which he advanced furthered these aims in every respect. It made for the supremacy of the propertied classes; it involved as much consolidation and as great a centralization of power as would have been accepted at that time; and it brought in its train intimate commercial and diplomatic relations with Great Britain." 49

A cursory examination of the actions of Hamilton might lead to these conclusions, but Charles' interpretation of the true motivations behind these actions is somewhat naive and biased. Transplanted to our time, this could very well be the interpretation of a liberal Democrat of the fiscal policies of a conservative Republican.

There should be no question, that Alexander Hamilton was as dedicated to survival and prosperity of the new republic as Thomas Jefferson. Hamilton's philosophies and beliefs, although markedly different from those of Jefferson, are ever bit as relevant. As with most things, truth lies somewhere in between the two extremes. Hamilton firmly believed that for a nation to grow and prosper, it must have a vibrant industrial base, a stable financial system, and have a clear legal basis for the adjudication of claims. Hamilton, as distinct from the more "enlightened" views of Jefferson, read the meaning of the capital processes both realistically and imaginatively: Adam Smith was his teacher, and as the student, Hamilton understood that the wealth of a nation and its welfare went hand-in-hand. According to this conservative philosophy, a

polity will not survive unless justice, equality of opportunity, and therefore the chance to rise are always assured. Industrialization, and its concurrent diversification of the economy, provides the dynamic environment necessary for the realization of well-being and creates the opportunity for class mobility.

Some of the more damning commentaries on Hamilton suggest that his only goal was to establish the English mercantilist system on this side of the Atlantic. Russell Kirk, in his work, *The Conservative Mind*, believed that Hamilton was a Tory in patriot’s clothing seeking to establish a mercantilist America, equating welfare, through strong governmental action with the encouragement and enrichment of “particular classes and occupations.”

According to the theory of mercantilism, wealth flowed from a nation’s foreign trade and a favorable balance of payments. The crucial factor was the necessity of keeping the costs of production low, making manufactured goods competitive in foreign markets. It followed that the wealth of a nation, therefore, was in its labor force engaged in the production of goods and services for export, and the size, docility, and poverty of its labor force made possible the creation of wealth for the whole body politic. The larger, the more subservient, and the poorer a country’s laborers, the wealthier and stronger that nation would be. It was from these oppressive and stifling conditions that Europeans fled to America. Hamilton believed that in a country of free men,

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industrialization would lead to the creation of wealth not only for the privileged few, but also for the workers. Wealth would provide freedom to move not only geographically, but socially as well. Hamilton also aggressively pursued American industrialization in order to make our nation less dependent on the manufactures of other countries.

Equality of opportunity, in Hamilton’s mind, meant little if not backed by equality in political institutions, and equality before the law. He strongly believed that the transmission of English law was one of America’s greatest assets. The rule of law and a constitutionally established form of government were always utmost in the mind of Hamilton. For him, the greatest guarantors of freedom and liberty were republican institutions based on the representative principle and the separation of powers, and the safeguarding of the rights of the individual through exact, codified procedures51. Understanding Hamilton in this context, it is not hard to understand his alarm at the usurpation of power by the farmers in the Shays’s Rebellion. Hamilton must put down the Whiskey Rebellion because it threatens the authority of the constituted government, jeopardizing the very foundations of the new republic. Hamilton opposed the French

51 I must point out that Hamilton appears to have been very concerned about the economic rights and responsibilities of individuals by continually stressing the importance of codified procedures in economic and financial transactions. Interestingly, Hamilton did not support the addition of a bill of rights to the Constitution. (See Federalist 84)
Revolution on this same premise - the instability and chaos of every phase of the revolution from Jacobinism to Bonapartism threatens liberty rather than advances it.

Hamilton's belief in the importance of a strong central government is rooted in his underlying philosophy of the nature of man. Hamilton was schooled in the older Christian tradition believing man inherited and transmitted Original Sin, and, as such, was capable of good and evil. According to this traditional view of human nature, government was necessary to prevent man - as well as groups of men - from preying on others. Men, as creatures of passion were ruled by their immediate interests rather than a higher self-imposed morality. Hamilton, in almost a mocking response to the beliefs of Jefferson, wrote at the conclusion of the sixth Federalist, "It is now time to wake up from the deceitful dream of a golden age, and to adopt as a practical maxim for the direction of our political conduct that we, as well as the other inhabitants of the globe, are yet remote from the happy empire of perfect wisdom and perfect virtue." The essential nature of man necessitated a strong national government. "Great power, commerce, and riches," Hamilton wrote in 1782, "may ... be denominated evils; for they lead to insolence, and inordinate ambition, a vicious luxury, licentiousness of morals, and all those vices which corrupt government, enslave the people, and precipitate the ruin of a nation." It was the
role of government, therefore, “to guard against the encroachments upon the rights of the community.”

It is from this battlefield of competing philosophies and ideas of two great men that two main tributaries of thought ebbed and flowed, competing for dominance of the early American political psyche; one empirically based, the other more dogmatic; one viewing affairs of state from the perspective of history, the other from the perspective of ideology; one supposing that the United States shares the imperfections, weaknesses, and evils incident to all societies, the other regarding the United States as a beacon of democracy given special charge to spread the light of liberty to the other nations of the world. It is within this context that we will examine the specific external threats faced by the new republic and the basic foreign policies advocated by Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton.

“We should remain dedicated to the ideals of freedom and justice that have served as beacons of our foreign policy, but be realistic and practical about what it takes to move the world in their direction.”

President Richard M. Nixon

“No realist can wholly escape perceptions of good and evil and no policy can wholly divorce ethical from geopolitical considerations.”

Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.

Now that the political and philosophical underpinnings of the twin pillars of American foreign policy, Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton, have been examined, it is necessary to put them into a historical context by examining their struggle as they hammered out America’s foreign policy in the political storms of the early years.

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53 Richard M. Nixon, p. 278.
54 Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., p.70.
of the republic. The challenges facing these political adventurers were immense and
foreboding. They were called upon to create a Union of free men that would be lasting,
but not oppressive; to conceive, build, and implement a program of fiscal integrity that
would furnish essential public revenues and encourage private capital investment by
Americans and foreigners; and, to protect the hard-fought sovereignty from the ravages
of wars that raged around them. Jefferson and Hamilton met these challenges with
courage, wisdom, and determination, but bitterly debated one another over the courses to
be pursued to meet the obstacles that laid before them. Their accomplishment was
mighty, for they not only created a Union, they built a nation. As impressive as this
accomplishment was, it is dwarfed by the more important and enduring contribution they
made to the new republic; a firm foundation upon which America would build its truly
unique approach to foreign affairs. The inherent duality of the struggle between idealism
and interest is the lasting legacy Jefferson and Hamilton gave to the American political
tradition.

In the course of investigating the beginnings and the evolution of this great debate
over the role of idealism and national interest in American foreign affairs, three periods of
time emerge, each with a distinct historical and geopolitical backdrop which provided the
fuel and the framework for the continuation and development of the great debate begun
by Jefferson and Hamilton. The peculiar circumstances and challenges of each period
resulted in different responses to the question of what role America should play in world politics. The three periods were the emergence of a new nation - the post-revolutionary years through the War of 1812; the conquering of a continent - the realization of America’s manifest destiny between 1814 and Spanish-American War; and, the reemergence of America as a world power beginning with the Presidency of Theodore Roosevelt. Although relevant and enlightening, it would be beyond the scope of this paper to examine each of these periods in detail. My purpose will be to focus in on the debate as it raged between its two progenitors in the turbulent and tenuous years leading up to the War of 1812.

Jefferson, as well as Madison believed that trade held the key to peace between nations. Both thought trade would create a commonality of interest that would deter nations from waging war out of fear of losing valuable goods and income. They also believed that commercial retaliation could serve their vision of peace and security. Their whole policy towards England was based on that predisposition and they were convinced that commercial retaliation would forcibly remind England that its long term interests were best served by a conciliatory and cooperative posture towards the United States aimed at fostering the commonality of interest mutual trade provided. Retaliatory measures, Jefferson’s weapon of choice, would enable America to challenge Great Britain without the necessity of an army, a navy, domestic manufactures, extensive revenues, or a
strong, centralized government. This view of Jefferson and Madison was founded partly on wishful thinking and their assessment of the power situation between the two countries. It was Jefferson's fervent desire to achieve his diplomatic goals by avoiding the logic of the ancien regime and the more traditional tools of power. Predominant in Jefferson's motivation was to preserve his vision of republicanism for the new nation. Jefferson concurrently believed that the United States was in a position strong enough to force concessions from the English.

Hamilton and his followers in Congress feared that retaliatory measures would surely bring on a ruinous commercial war with England, inflicting more damage on ourselves than on our enemy. The nation's entire credit structure, the key to Hamilton's plan for a strong and powerful America, rested on the revenue derived from the tariff and tonnage duties charged on imports, with ninety percent of all American imports coming from Britain. The United States received over six million dollars annually from 1791 to 1796 from this one source of revenue. The amount generated from domestic sources only rose above six hundred thousand dollars once during that same period.\(^5\) Since the annual interest alone on America's debts amounted to over two million dollars and the cost of running the government was more than six hundred thousand dollars, the infusion

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of these trade-generated fund was absolutely essential\textsuperscript{56}. A commercial war with England, shutting off trade would be disastrous. As Hamilton wrote Jefferson, “My commercial system turns very much on giving a free course to trade, and cultivating good humor with all the world. And I feel a particular reluctance to hazard any thing, in the present state of our affairs, which may lead to a commercial warfare with any power.”\textsuperscript{57} Hamilton was also concerned that America was not yet self-sufficient, and depended on British trade to supply manufactures needed for internal stability and national defense. His solution to the dilemma was to avoid challenging England until the United States had developed its own industrial base to a point where the nation would have the goods and revenue required to see the nation through an emergency.

Madison and Jefferson disagreed with Hamilton’s assessment. Madison told Congress in 1789, “... we are now in a condition to wage commercial warfare with that country [England]. The produce of this country is more necessary to the rest of the world than that of other countries was to America.” He was afraid America would suffer in a contest because England’s “interests can be wounded almost mortally, while ours are invulnerable.”\textsuperscript{58} Hamilton strongly opposed what he believed to be a serious


overestimation of American strength and a dangerous underestimation of the importance of British trade to the economic well-being of the nation. He argued the United States could not do without British manufactures the Americans had come to rely on, and the crucial revenue from duties on British trade. Jefferson and Madison were convinced the United States was almost totally self-sufficient in the three essentials of life - food, clothing, and shelter. They naively believed that British products were merely luxuries that the noble and virtuous farmer would gladly do without. As good agrarians, Jefferson and Madison surmised that the only benefit of trade with England, especially the British West Indies, was to supply a market for America’s agricultural surpluses. According to their theory, as it went with the farmer, so it went with the nation.

Hamilton, who regarded nations and individuals as instinctively selfish and interest driven, was not surprised nor offended by British policies. In his opinion, these policies were the result of Britain pursuing its interests, but incorrectly calculating what actions and policies with the United States would best serve those interests. Hamilton did not believe the English would bite off their nose to spite their face, and that their dealings with the United States were not motivated by anger or hatred. If England could be convinced that its true interests lay in conciliating rather than opposing the United States, it would change its policy. Retaliation, would force a hostile reaction and response; and then reason and interest would give way to passion. Hamilton argued that the new
republic had limited policy options because it was ill-equipped for confrontation; it lacked even the most basic elements of national power - an army, a navy, an indigenous industrial base, and an extensive and invulnerable source of revenue.

Had Jefferson accepted the premises of Hamilton's argument, he would have been faced with a difficult choice; appease Britain or build a power base capable of confrontation. But, making America strong would endanger those things that Jefferson held so dear; domestic happiness, liberty, justice, and tranquillity. Jefferson sidestepped and avoided confronting the dilemma by judging America had the weapon necessary to exert significant influence without threatening its domestic system of government. That weapon was trade.

Hamilton did not succumb to the idealistic vision that trade was the cure for war and that commerce between nations would breed peaceful relations because others would hesitate to fight the United States for fear of losing valuable trade. For Hamilton, trade was only part of the power equation that would make the young nation strong. Fearing that commercial confrontation with England would eventually lead to armed conflict that America was not prepared to fight, he advocated great moderation to avoid war with Great Britain. Hamilton believed the best way to preserve peace was to be prepared for war. In The Federalist he sounds a warning for his countrymen, "Let us recollect, that
peace or war, will not always be left to our option; that however moderate or unambitious we may be, we cannot count upon the moderation, or hope to extinguish the ambition of others ... To judge from the history of mankind, we shall be compelled to conclude, that the fiery and destructive passions of war, reign in the human breast, with much more powerful sway, than the mild and beneficent sentiments of peace; and, that to model our political systems upon the speculations of lasting tranquillity, is to calculate on the weaker springs of the human character."  

A strong navy and a standing army were key elements of Hamilton’s plan for a powerful and secure nation. The major purpose of a navy, as Hamilton saw it was to protect America’s trade. Without an offensive navy, “our commerce would be prey to the wanton untermDDLings of all nations at war with each other; Who having nothing to fear from us, would with little scruple of remorse supply their wants by depredations on our property, as often as it fell their way. The rights of neutrality will only be respected, when they are defended by an adequate power. A nation, despicable by its weakness, forfeits even the privilege of being neutral.”  

Even more contentious was Hamilton’s desire for a regular army. Jefferson, as well as most Americans, feared a standing army as a serious threat to internal liberty. Hamilton regarded it as a necessity for the defense

60 Federalist No. 11, *ibid.*, pp. 68-69.
the nation: "The steady operations of war against a regular and disciplined army, can only be successfully conducted by a force of the same kind." \[^{61}\]

Hamilton’s ideas were put to the test in the Nookta Sound crisis of 1790 between Spain and the United States. This incident erupted when England challenged Spain’s claim to unilateral control of the Pacific Ocean, threatening war between America’s two closest neighbors. The war offered both an opportunity and a danger to the United States. The belligerents might be willing to make concessions in trade, borders, posts, or navigation of the Mississippi to keep America from joining or assisting the other side. Both Spain and England had things America needed to secure its tenuous position in the New World. On the other hand, the United States could find itself in the middle of hostilities. Great Britain might demand the right to cross American soil to attack Spanish colonies. If America refused, it might bring war with England; if she acceded, it might bring war with Spain. Hamilton wanted war with neither, but was determined to avoid war with England, who he felt was by far the more serious threat. When Washington asked his cabinet for advice, Hamilton argued that the United States should agree to allow the British to march across the territory because the new nation had no power to enforce a negative response. “The consequence ... of refusal, if not effectual, must be absolute

\[^{61}\] Federalist No. 25, \textit{ibid.}, p. 162.
Hamilton did not want to force a confrontation with England and risk fighting a war on the weaker side. Hamilton’s answer was not in balancing superior power, but rather in joining it. In advising Washington to give British forces passage, he was acting on the assumption that if America failed to acquiesce, Great Britain would simply seize Louisiana and the Floridas on her own. Such a situation would be intolerable for the Americans because it would dangerously increase England’s presence and influence on the western frontier and damage commercial relations between the two nations. Hamilton warned that, “by rendering New Orleans the emporium of products of the Western country, Britain would, at a period not very distant, have little occasion for supplies or provisions for their Islands from the Atlantic States; and for their European Market they would derive from the same source copious supplies of Tobacco and other articles now furnished by the Southern States; Whence a great diminution of the motives to establish liberal terms of commercial Intercourse with the United States collectively.” Anglophilia played little part in the decision; fear, not friendship motivated Hamilton. Hamilton’s policy was never put to the test because England never requested passage across the American frontier, but it clearly showed that he conceptualized foreign policy in the context of what he believed would further the nation’s interests. Jefferson accepted Hamilton’s assessment of the situation, but felt that

by tipping our hand to the English lessened our chances of extracting concessions from
England for permission to use our territory to wage war on the Spanish. His preferred
policy was to maintain American neutrality, allowing American ships to carry the goods
of both belligerents, and providing incentives to both England and Spain to modify their
positions on the Mississippi and the western posts. Jefferson believed the interests of the
republic would be better served if we pressured England rather than ally with her. He
instructed Gouverneur Morris to relay to the British that America would remain neutral if
Britain would “execute the treaty fairly and attempt no conquests adjoining us.”64 This
brief period of relative consensus between these two antagonists was the calm before the
storm.

In the spring of 1793, Washington received letters from Jefferson and Hamilton
informing him of the fact that France had declared war on almost every other nation in
Europe. Washington knew that a war in Europe would stir the passions of the American
public and could prove divisive. Hoping that the general desire for peace would override
the sympathies for England and France, he decided on a policy of strict neutrality.
Washington, as well as Jefferson and Hamilton, did not want to embroil the young
republic in a conflict that was being fought on distant shores and for reasons of little

64 Jefferson to Gouverneur Morris, August 12, 1790, in Paul Leicester Ford, ed., The Writings of Thomas
concern for America. Washington, heeding the counsel of his young lieutenant, Hamilton, issued what came to be known as his Proclamation of Neutrality, formally declaring that the United States would not participate in the war on behalf of either belligerent. The heated debate between Jefferson and Hamilton over exactly how and why America would remain neutral brought into sharper focus the emerging duality in American foreign policy.

America was caught in a dilemma: France was at war; and France had claims on America, sentimental ties, claims of gratitude for aid during our struggle for independence, and the bonds of two treaties. Two treaties were entered into with France in 1778. One was a treaty of alliance; which guaranteed the territorial integrity of both countries “forever against all powers.” The other was a treaty of amity and commerce, which permitted France and the United States to use each other’s ports for anchorage of warships and for privateers and their bounty. Compounding the problem for the Administration, was the fact that America also had a treaty of peace with Great Britain. Washington hoped to solve this dilemma by declaring strict neutrality on the part of the United States.

It was in the course of defending Washington’s Proclamation of Neutrality, which was issued on April 22, 1793, that Alexander Hamilton laid out in detail and eloquent
fashion the concept of national interest as the driving force behind America’s foreign policy. Between June 29 and July 20, 1793, he wrote seven newspaper essays, under the pen name of “Paci ficus”, in which he addressed the questions being so bitterly debated as a result of Washington’s proclamation. Among the arguments against the proclamation were three derived from primarily moral and idealistic considerations: faithfulness to treaty obligations; gratitude toward a country who had lent its assistance to our fight for freedom; and, the affinity of republican forms of government. Hamilton unashamedly addressed these three principles invoking the national interest of the United States as his rule and his guide. 

“There would be no proportion between the mischiefs and perils to which the United States would expose themselves, by embarking in the war, and the benefit which the nature of their stipulation aims at securing to France, or that which it would be in their power actually to render her by becoming a party. 

This disproportion would be a valid reason for not executing the guaranty. All contracts are to receive a reasonable construction. Self-preservation is the first duty of a nation; and though in the performances of stipulations relating to war, good faith requires that its ordinary hazards should be fairly met, because they are directly contemplated by such stipulations, yet it does not require that extraordinary and extreme hazards should be run ... 

The basis of gratitude is a benefit received or intended which there was no right to claim, originating in a regard to the interest or advantage of the party on whom the benefit is, or is meant to be conferred. If a service is rendered from views relative to the immediate interest of the party who performs it, and is productive of reciprocal advantages, there seems scarcely, in such a case, to be an adequate basis for a sentiment like that of
gratitude ... It may be affirmed as a general principle, that the predominant
motive of good offices from one nation to another, is the interest or
advantage of the nation which performs them.

Indeed, the rule of morality in this respect is not precisely the same
between nations as between individuals. The duty of making it owns
welfare the guide of its actions, is much stronger upon the former than on
the latter; in proportion to the greater magnitude and importance of
national compared with individual happiness, and to the greater
permanency of the effects of national than individual conduct. Existing
millions, and for the most part future generations, are concerned in the
present measures of a government; while the consequences of the private
actions of an individual ordinarily terminate with himself, or are
circumscribed within a narrow compass.

Whence it follows that an individual may, on numerous occasions,
meritoriously indulge the emotions of generosity and benevolence, not
only without an eye to, but even at the expense of, his own interest. But a
government can rarely, if at all, be justifiable in pursuing a similar course;
and if it does so, ought to confine itself within much stricter bounds ...
Good offices which are indifferent to the interest of a nation performing
them, or which are compensated by the existence or expectation of some
reasonable equivalent, or which produce an essential good to the nation to
which they are rendered, without real detriment to the affairs of the
benefactors, prescribe perhaps the limits of national generosity or
benevolence ...

But we are sometimes told, by way of the answer, that the cause of
France is the cause of liberty; and that we are bound to assist the nation on
the score of their being engaged in the defense of that cause ...

The obligation to assist the cause of liberty must be deduced from
the merits of that cause and from the interest we have in its support. 65

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65 Hamilton, as quoted in Hans J. Morgenthau, In Defense of the National Interest, p. 16-18.
Make no mistake, Jefferson was as strong an advocate for American neutrality as was Hamilton. When writing to the President to inform him that the war had actually broke out, Jefferson emphasized that it was “necessary in my opinion that we take every justifiable measure for preserving our neutrality.” However, Jefferson’s conception of neutrality differed markedly from that of Hamilton. Jefferson leaned towards a neutrality favoring France, while Hamilton envisioned a neutrality favoring Britain. Jefferson felt strongly that Washington should withhold any announcement of neutrality until England and France had an opportunity to bid for it. He thought that the United States should ask “the broadest privileges of neutral nations.” It was on this basis that Jefferson opposed the issuance of Washington’s Proclamation of Neutrality; he felt he could barter for a better deal. Hamilton felt the young nation did not have the necessary bargaining position to extract the concession Jefferson thought he could get from England, and, more importantly, Hamilton feared the devastating effects a war with England would have on America. As well as outlining the role of national interest in his “Pacificus” articles, Hamilton, also warns of the dangers of a war with Great Britain. “With the possessions of Great Britain and Spain on both flanks[Spain being allied with Britain at this time], the numerous Indian tribes under the influence and direction of these powers, along our whole interior, with an extended seacoast, with no maritime force of our own, and with

the maritime force of all Europe against us, with no fortifications whatever, and with a population not exceeding four millions...,” war with England would bring the destruction of American trade “and the most calamitous inconveniences in other respects.” While Hamilton saw the possibility of grave danger for America in the war between England and France, Jefferson saw a unique opportunity. Jefferson thought that England, already in a life-and-death struggle with France, would be reluctant to provoke any additional enemies, and would therefore be willing to make concessions to the United States to keep her out of the contest. The issuance of the Proclamation of Neutrality was only the beginning of the turmoil, the United States would have to now defend its rights of neutrality from the wrath of the belligerents.

In December 1793, the British negotiated a truce between Portugal and the Algerian pirates which allowed the pirates to harass and plunder ships conducting trade in the Atlantic. American would ultimately bear the brunt of this truce, because it was the only nation with a large Atlantic trade that did not have any treaty with the Algerians, and American ships would be likely and frequent targets of the pirates. The Portuguese-Algerian truce was the first in a series of diplomatic maneuvers that brought England and the United States to the brink of war. America was now becoming increasingly concerned not over whether to remain neutral, but rather, how to remain neutral and

protect its assets and interests. Addressing Congress in December 1793 following the news of the Algerian truce, Washington, with the advice and concurrence of Hamilton, stressed, "I cannot recommend to your notice measures for the fulfillment of our duties to the rest of the world, without again pressing upon you the necessity of placing ourselves in a condition of compleat defence, and or exacting from them the fulfillment of their duties towards us. If we desire to avoid insult, we must be able to repel it; if we desire to secure peace, one of the most powerful instruments of our rising prosperity, it must be known, that we are at all times ready for War." While the President spoke of preparing for war as a means of defending our neutrality, his Secretary of State was approaching the problem from another angle. Jefferson, in line with his early pronouncements, advocated the use of commercial retaliation. Addressing Congress, he stated that although free trade should be our guiding principle; "... should any nation, contrary to our wishes, suppose it better find its advantage by continuing its system of prohibitions, duties, and regulations, it behooves us to protect our citizens, their commerce and navigation, by counter prohibitions, duties, and regulations also. Free commerce and navigation are not to be given in exchange for restrictions and vexations; nor are they likely to produce a relaxation of them." In a last-ditch effort to avoid what seemed to an unavoidable armed conflict with England, Washington sent John Jay to London in early 1794 to begin

the negotiations that would eventually result in the Jay Treaty, one of the most bitterly contested treaties in the history of the United States.

According to Robert W. Tucker and David C. Hendickson, the conclusion and the ratification of the Jay Treaty of 1794 and the Pinckney Treaty of 1795, securing America’s effective title to the eastern Mississippi valley, was the zenith of Federalist statecraft. Washington, and the Federalists, had made peace with both England and Spain. From Britain Jay secured the evacuation of the Northwest posts and obtained rights to trade with the British colonies of the East and West Indies; from Spain Pinckney obtained recognition of the 31st Parallel as the boundary between the United States and Spanish Florida, the navigation of the Mississippi, and the right of deposit in New Orleans. The Pinckney Treaty achieved most of its stated objectives and was viewed as a success by both the Federalists and the Republicans. The Jay Treaty, however, was the source of bitter debate and great conjecture. The Federalists contend that it was the best bargain that could have been obtained; it secured the western territories of the growing nation and kept America out of a war it was so ill prepared to fight. But these concessions were bought at a heavy price, and the treaty would be severely criticized despite its success in keeping the peace until 1812.
The main source of disagreement was over the apparent inequities in the terms of trade between America and England. The Republicans felt that the United States was in a strong enough position to demand much more than was obtained by Jay. In fact, Jefferson denounced the treaty in particularly harsh terms. To him, it was a “monument of folly and venality,” an “infamous act, which is nothing more than a treaty of alliance between England and the Anglomen of this country against the legislature and people of the United States”\(^\text{71}\) The Republicans knew that England had no great desire to start a war with America, given their tenuous position in Europe. What Jefferson and the Republicans failed to fully appreciate was that Britain was even less inclined to give up their maritime advantages. Hamilton argued, as he had previously, that commercial retaliation against England would force a military confrontation, leaving America with two unacceptable choices; either fight a stronger enemy, or concede in disgrace. The debate raged in the halls of Congress as well as in the streets of the nation. In the end, the Federalists emerged victorious. By securing peace, the Jay Treaty bought valuable time for the country to grow stronger and less susceptible to the wishes of a distant Europe. For the Federalists this meant no less than the survival of the nation. As bad as the treaty was, it preserved the peace, and as Washington wrote, “Twenty years peace with such increase of population and resources as we have a right to expect; added to our remote situation from the jarring power, will in all probability enable us in a just cause, to bid

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defiance to any power on earth." For the Republicans, the prognosis was markedly different. They felt that America was already strong enough to confront any foe, and peace did not have to be bought at the price of humiliation.

Thus, while the Jay Treaty preserved a precarious peace between England and the United States, it fueled the already heated political debate between Thomas Jefferson and the Republicans, and Alexander Hamilton and the Federalists. The quarrel between these two figureheads of American political tradition over America's proper goals and the extent of power necessary to implement them developed into the two enduring and defining impulses of the American political mindset. The conflict had developed out of differing concepts of the nature, the necessary extent, and the use of American power in foreign affairs. The Jay Treaty was a watershed signaling the decline of the Federalists and their influence, and the ascendancy of Thomas Jefferson and the Republicans. The drama of the Jay Treaty was replayed from 1805 to 1812, this time with the Republican principles emerging victorious. The Republicans would wield their sword of commercial retaliation with the Embargo of 1807, resulting not in British concessions, but ending in a war the Federalists had always feared and predicted.

As the eighteenth century drew to a close, the political power structure made a dramatic shift away from the Federalists and their more traditional and historical\footnote{I use the term historical in the sense of viewing America primarily as one among many, rather than totally distinct and exempt from the forces that have shaped the interactions of nations in the past.} approach to foreign affairs, toward the more enlightened approach of Thomas Jefferson and the Republicans. The new century ushered in by a new president and a new party was still in a state of turmoil and upheaval, and the dangers for the Republic were both real and immediate.

The outlook Jefferson brought to the Presidency in 1801 had also made a dramatic shift. The constant struggle with Hamilton and the Federalists had turned him into a radical opponent of a strong, and according to Jefferson, intrusive central government. Armies, navies, and diplomatic establishments which he had previously accepted as necessary to the survival of the new nation, were now envisioned as grave threats to the republican experiment at home. Even his commitment to spreading the republican ideal abroad had cooled dramatically. The Convention of Mortfontaine, dissolving the American alliance with France was fully consistent with Jefferson’s new thinking, which called for “peace, commerce, and honest friendship with all nations - entangling alliances with none.”\footnote{First Inaugural, March 4, 1801, Jefferson, \textit{Writings}, (Memorial Edition), Vol. III, p. 321.} Napoleon Bonaparte’s rise to power and the termination of America’s alliance with France fed Jefferson’s notion of American exceptionalism. As he entered
the Presidency, Jefferson was blessed to govern “a rising nation, spread out over a wide and fruitful land, traversing all the seas with the rich productions of their industry, engaged in commerce with nations who feel power and forget right, advancing to destinies beyond the mortal eye.” Freed from the shackles of Federalism, Jefferson believed the republican experiment, to which he was religiously committed, was about to firmly take root. He wrote; “A just and solid republican government maintained here, will be a standing monument & example for the aim & imitation of the people of other countries; and I join with you in the hope and belief that they will see, from our example, that a free government is of all others the most energetic; that the inquiry which has been excited among the mass of mankind by our revolution & its consequences, will ameliorate the condition of man over a great portion of the globe.” America would indeed be the beacon of democracy for the rest of the world.

It is somewhat ironic that Jefferson would build his empire of liberty on a premise which he felt the young nation could exempt and immune from; that concept being the balance-of-power. His enlightened vision would be built on the very foundation of the system he sought to escape - the ancien regime. Jefferson’s America would play the role of jackal, living off the spoils it could steal from more powerful predators praying on each other. And being the jackal, America would not always be able to escape the wrath

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of the more powerful adversaries. Jefferson looked at the turmoil in Europe as a tremendous advantage and opportunity for the young nation. "Tremendous times in Europe! How mighty this battle of lions and tigers! With what sensations should the common herd of cattle look on it? With no partialities certainly. If they can so far worry one another as to destroy their powers of tyrannizing, the one over the earth, the other the waters, the world may perhaps enjoy peace ..." He expected not only to avoid entanglements, but also hoped the Republic would "fatten on the follies of the old [nations] by winning new territory and new concessions from their wars."\textsuperscript{76}

As President, and as advisor to his successor, James Madison, Jefferson would chip America's niche out of the emerging balance-of-power. For Jefferson, the balance-of-power in Europe would produce an equilibrium achieved through the distribution of economic and military strength between the major powers of Europe where no one nation would be strong enough to destroy the others or menace the security of a non-belligerent like the United States. He hoped the resultant deadlock in Europe would free America to expand her territory at the expense of the preoccupied nations of the Old World. Jefferson built his foreign policy on the pragmatic reality of the balance-of-power in Europe to advance his idealistic visions of liberty and republicanism in America. This was the very essence of Jefferson's strategy to conquer without war.

\textsuperscript{76} As quoted in Lawrence S. Kaplan, pp. 112-113.
The unexpected acquisition of Louisiana would be the crown jewel of the statecraft of Thomas Jefferson. Almost half a continent was obtained by peaceable means and at a negligible price. This triumph of truth and reason over the power of the sword, would seem to affirm the Republican's assessment of the balance-of-power and their strategy to conquer without war. But, in reality, the Louisiana Purchase was one of the most fortuitous windfalls in the history of the United States. Jefferson based everything on the premise of peace for America, and the promise of war for England and France. He hoped to barter America's neutrality for concessions from the belligerents. The most pressing issue of national interest facing Jefferson was to secure the control of the Mississippi River, the major avenue for westward expansion. The control of the Mississippi valley by the Spanish was of little concern for the Jefferson administration; Spanish rule in Louisiana was steadily declining in effectiveness and the Spanish posed little threat to the security of the United States. It would be France who would provoke the crisis with the signing of the Treaty of San Ildefonso on October 1, 1800 by which Spain would conditionally retrocede Louisiana to France. And it would be France who would end the crisis when Napoleon, beset by difficulties in Haiti, startled American negotiators in Paris, by offering to sell the whole of Louisiana to the United States. Control of the western borders and access to the Mississippi by either France or England was unthinkable to Republicans and Federalists alike. In early 1803, Hamilton urged the administration to pursue a more vigorous policy to meet the threat of French control of
Louisiana. As he saw it only two courses of action were available: “First, to negotiate and endeavor to purchase, and if this fails to go to war. Secondly, to seize at once on the Floridas and New Orleans and then negotiate.” Hamilton, being far more hawkish in his outlook, favored the “shoot first-then negotiate” option, and to this end urged immediate increases in the army and navy. Consistent with his more pacific philosophy and the desire to avoid threatening his vision of republicanism, Jefferson decided to negotiate and try to play his trump card of a possible alliance with Great Britain against France. In his famous letter to the newly appointed Minister to France, Jefferson clearly laid out his strategy to deal with the crisis over Louisiana. “Although our natural friend,” he wrote, in possessing New Orleans, France must become “our natural and habitual enemy.” By doing so, he warned, France would seal its own fate, for in taking New Orleans it would not only force America into an alliance with Great Britain but require the United States “to turn all our attention to a maritime force, for which our resources place us on very high grounds.” When war broke out again in Europe, the United States would seize the opportunity to tear up any settlement France had made, and would then hold “the two continents of America in sequestration for the common purpose of the united British and American nations.” In such a contest of arms, France would immediately lose New Orleans. “For however great her force is than ours compared in the abstract, it is nothing

in comparison of ours when to be exerted on our own soil." This letter is considered the fullest and most complete expression Jefferson gave to his diplomatic strategy in regards to the Louisiana crisis.

It has not been ascertained if the letter every reached the French government, but nonetheless it did lay out the essentials of Jefferson’s diplomatic approach to the crisis - a threat of alliance with Great Britain against France. The President did not want an alliance with England, but rather he only wanted to use the threat of an alliance as a lever to force France into a favorable settlement. Robert W. Tucker and David C. Hendrickson illuminate the dilemma that Jefferson placed himself in the middle of: “He wished in particular to avoid both war with France and alliance with England. He was loathe to accept either prospect not because he failed to appreciate the interests that were at stake but because he was persuaded that either course of action would mean the sacrifice of his vision of domestic society. The one would threaten the corruption of the Republican experiment, which depended so heavily on avoiding the debt and taxes that war would bring; the other would compromise America’s status of independence.”

Jefferson played a dangerous game by talking strongly, while carrying a small stick! Time and circumstance proved to be on the side of Jefferson: war between France and

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79 Tucker and Hendrickson, Empire of Liberty, p. 125.
England re-ignited and the unforeseen setback of the French forces against the slaves in Santa Domingo forced Napoleon to reevaluate his whole position on French designs on the American continent. Jefferson's strategy of conquering without war had won a major battle, but the victory would prove to be short-lived.

As the war in Europe progressed, the question of neutral rights would again be put to the diplomatic test. The dispute with England centered on two points of contentions; impressment of American sailors, and growing restrictions on American trade. Jefferson sent two envoys, James Monroe and William Pinckney, to England to negotiate a treaty addressing these two contentious issues. Secretary of State Madison issued very clear instructions to the two envoys. An acceptable treaty would have to include a pledge by the English to refrain from all impressments on the high seas; and, at least restore the favorable conditions of trade laid out in the 1800 Polly rule. These two stipulations were sine qua non for Jefferson; without them the nonimportation bill would go into effect. Jefferson would again unsheathe his weapon of choice, trade. The British, assessing the Americans would be hurt more by retaliatory trade measures, called Jefferson's bluff and summarily rejected the treaty as proposed by Monroe and Pinckney. Madison, overestimating the power situation of the United States, warned that if an

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80 The Polly decision of 1800 conferred immunity on the carrying trade in colonial goods so long as neutral vessels broke their voyage by stopping in a neutral port, unloading their cargo, and paying import duties.
agreeable treaty was not made America had the power to deliver a fatal and crippling blow to Great Britain. "The necessities of life and of cultivation, can be furnished to [the British West Indies] from no other source than the United States," he said, "immediate ruin would ensue if this source were shut up." The United States might cut off the supply of naval stores and grain, on which Britain would likely become increasingly dependent. Britain could retaliate with no commercial injury worth mentioning, and a resort to war would be a losing proposition. Great Britain was unmoved by such verbal threats and the Embargo of 1807 took effect. The end result would be the war of 1812.

Ironically, Jefferson's consummate belief that America could completely exempt itself from the harsh realities of the age old game of statecraft and protect his idealistic vision of the republican experiment from the dangers of conflict would ultimately result in exactly what he had hoped to avoid, war. Hamilton, who believed the best way to protect and preserve the fledging republic against the predatory lusts of other nations was to prepare itself for war, would be the one who kept his country out of war. Even as both these men faded from the political landscape their ideas and debate was indelibly etched onto the American political psyche.

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After the War of 1812, the United States, having secured a foothold on the new continent, withdrew into the cocoon of Manifest Destiny to settle a country and build a nation. The words of Jefferson and Hamilton were muffled by the din of expansionism. The new nation’s respite from the rigors and dangers of world affairs were relatively short-lived. As the 19th century came to a close, two factors would combine to irrevocably thrust the United States onto the world scene and to the forefront of international politics; America’s rapidly expanding power, and, the deterioration of the international system centered on Europe. The great debate began by Jefferson and Hamilton was surfacing again, but with new disciples and a significantly altered political landscape. Theodore Roosevelt spoke in the more realist tones of Alexander Hamilton, while Woodrow Wilson emerged as the champion of Jeffersonian idealism.

Roosevelt, well versed in the politics of the Old World, was a sophisticated analyst of the balance of power. He staunchly advocated an international role for the United States because its national interest demanded it. Wilson also saw a leadership role for America, but, for Wilson, the justification of America’s international role was messianic: America’s mission was not to throw its weight in to balance the crumbling powers of Europe, but to spread its idealistic and democratic principles throughout the world. The essence of Wilsonianism is that peace, the perpetual peace as envisaged by Kant, would be built upon the foundation of democracy, that nation-states should be held
to the same moral standards as individuals, and the national interest consisted of adhering to a universal system of law and collective security. Wilson's vision for America was one of internationalism and intervention, whereas Jefferson's vision for America was one of idealism and isolation. It is absolutely essential to understand that Woodrow Wilson and Thomas Jefferson were not cast from the same political or idealistic mold. Jefferson, although idealistic in tone, never lost touch with the national interest of the young Republic. Wilson, on the other hand, could never conceptualize American foreign policy other than in idealistic terms. There was no difference between what motivated his actions and the actions themselves. Even the stalwart realist, Hans J. Morgenthau, highlighted the fundamental difference between Jefferson's and Wilson's brand of idealism.

"The illusion that a nation can escape, if it wants to, from power politics into a realm where action is guided by moral principles rather than by considerations of power is deeply rooted in the American mind. Yet it took more than a century for that illusion to crowd out the older notion that international politics is an unending struggle for power in which the interests of individual nations must necessarily be defined in terms of power. Out of the struggle between these two opposing conceptions, three types of American foreign policy have emerged: the realistic - thinking and acting in terms of power - represented by Alexander Hamilton; the ideological - thinking in terms of moral principles, but acting in terms of power - represented by Thomas Jefferson and John Quincy Adams; and, the moralistic - thinking and acting in terms of moral principles - represented by Woodrow Wilson."\(^{82}\)

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\(^{82}\) Morgenthau, pp. 13-14.
The influence of Wilson should not be underestimated. Henry Kissinger goes as far to state: "...It is above all to the drumbeat of Wilsonian idealism that American foreign policy has marched since his watershed presidency, and continues to march today."\textsuperscript{83} The call by John F. Kennedy for his country to "bear any burden and pay any price" clearly shows that Wilson's brand of idealism has persevered.

\textsuperscript{83} Kissinger, p. 30.
CHAPTER FIVE

VIETNAM: IDEALISM OVER INTEREST

"Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty."  

President John F. Kennedy

"Perhaps the most serious, and surely the most hurtful, domino which fell as a result of the Vietnam War was the cohesion of American society."

Henry Kissinger

On January 23, 1973, when U.S. Secretary of State William Rogers signed the Paris peace agreements, the United States "won" the Vietnam War. According to President Nixon, the United States had achieved its goal of "peace with honor", but I find this assessment of victory by the former President to be overly self-congratulatory and dangerously self-deluding. What the signing of the Paris peace accords really indicated

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was the United States had finally formally extricated itself from a conflict that it had no business involving itself in. After ten years of direct military involvement, with a human toll of 50,000 American lives, and at a cost of over $50 billion, the Vietnam war can hardly be assessed in any terms other than a tragic defeat. Never before had America paid such a heavy price for so little gained. The Vietnam experience tore at the American soul and plunged the country into a period of self-doubt and political paralysis. President Nixon, surprisingly, provides a fitting epitaph for this regrettable period in American foreign policy. "The Vietnam War has grotesquely distorted the debate over American foreign policy. The willingness to use power to defend national interests is the foundation of any effective foreign policy, but our ineptness in Vietnam led many Americans to question the wisdom of using our power at all."86 I strongly agree with Mr. Nixon’s assessment of the importance of basing foreign policy decisions on a thorough and proper determination of what constitutes the national interest, and then reconciling the ever-present ideological tendencies of the American political psyche with the harsh realities of world politics and international relations. Had Presidents Kennedy and Johnson properly harmonized the Jeffersonian and Hamiltonian impulses, the United States would not have decided to involve itself in what became a tragedy in American foreign policy.

How could Kennedy and Johnson, and to a smaller degree, Truman and Eisenhower, have made such a serious miscalculation? George Ball, one of the few advisors who argued from the outset against direct military involvement in Vietnam provides what, in my opinion, is the most incisive and accurate post mortems on the decision to “assist” the South Vietnamese in their struggle against the Communist onslaught from the North. Ball, somewhat sarcastically, addresses some of the more fashionable explanations of why the United involved itself in Vietnam.

“We enmeshed ourselves in Vietnam, so they tell us, because our ‘foreign policy establishment’ - whatever that banal term may mean - was co-opted from too narrow a stratum of American society to reflect the wisdom of the people, or - according to others - because the ‘military and industrial complex’ - that all-purpose bogeyman - gained the upper hand, or because the State Department was far too obsessed with Europe to understand Asia, or finally - so the Marxists solemnly assert - because the war was inevitably dictated by capitalism’s contradictions. Such pseudo-explanations should not be taken seriously; they are roughly at the intellectual level of the student who confidently assured me on a campus some years ago, ‘everyone knows why we are in Vietnam; it is because we want their tin.”

Ball uncovers what is, in my opinion, the essential truth of why both President Kennedy and President Johnson bogged the country down in the quagmire of the Vietnam conflict. “Proceeding down quite discreet paths marked out by their individual logic and expertise, two Presidents and substantially the same group of advisors converged by unhappy destiny on a common conclusion: That a South Vietnamese defeat would endanger vital

United States' interests, and that we must intervene to prevent it. I contended at the time - and events have confirmed that contention - that involved a misappraisal of the situation.”

Four American presidents and their administrations let idealistic and moralistic concerns unduly influence their assessment of the strategic importance of Vietnam to the United States. Each of the four ignored the warning of their nineteenth century predecessor, John Quincy Adams who had cautioned his countrymen against venturing abroad in pursuit of “distant monsters.” Communism was indeed a monster in need of slaying, just as Germany had been in the two world wars, but the Wilsonian approach to foreign policy allowed no distinction to be made among the monsters to be slain. The colors of the Cold War world were black and white. Wilsonian idealism was incapable of distinction and differentiation, unable and unwilling to analyze the relative importance of various countries and regions of the world. America was duty bound to fight for what was right, regardless of local circumstances and the price to be paid. A more pragmatic approach geared to an analysis of America’s national interest would have differentiated between what was of vital importance and what was peripheral. It would have brought to

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88 Ibid., p. 47. Excellent accounts of George Ball’s role of devil’s advocate in the policy debate over Vietnam can be found in: Clark Clifford, Counsel to the President, (New York: Random House, 1991); and David L. Dileo, George Ball, Vietnam, and the Rethinking of Containment, (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991)
light the logic of why an obscure, embattled Asian country was significantly more important to the security of the United States than the sleeping giant of China.

Each of the four Presidents baptized in the fire of the Cold War, elevated the role of the redeemer nation from a beacon of democracy to a crusading angel of liberty. Truman, in his inaugural address, committed his country to the objective of a world in which “all nations and all peoples are free to govern themselves as they see fit.” The United States would “strengthen freedom-loving nations against the dangers of aggression” by providing “military advice and equipment to free nations which will cooperate with us in the maintenance of peace and security.”

Eisenhower continued to build upon this theme of tying the freedom of every single independent nation to the national interest of the United States, regardless of their geopolitical significance. “Conceiving the defense of freedom, like freedom itself, to be one and indivisible, we hold all continents and peoples in equal regard and honor. We reject any insinuation that one race or another, one people or another, is in any sense inferior or expendable.”

Collective security, rather than national security, was becoming the dominant force of American foreign policy. Kennedy’s inaugural would become the very embodiment of

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American altruism. His soaring language stirred the souls of an idealistic generation and pledged not to "permit the slow undoing of those human rights to which this nation has always been committed, and to which we are committed today at home and around the world. Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and success of liberty." President Johnson could not escape the ideological shackles forged by his political predecessors, and could do no less than to commit his country to protect the fires of freedom around the globe. "Terrific dangers and troubles that we once called 'foreign' now constantly live among us. If American lives must end, and American treasure was to be spilled, in countries that we barely know, then that is the price that change has demanded of convictions and of our enduring covenant." An ideological altar was being built that many American lives would soon be sacrificed upon.

The monolithic threat of Communism was the devil incarnate and it was America's dogmatic duty to fight it wherever and whenever it reared its ugly head. Geopolitical analysis of the specific dangers posed by the communist conquest of an

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unknown country in Indochina was usurped by the more ideologically palatable goals of resisting aggression in the abstract and preventing the spread of communism at all costs.

The most fundamental error made was to the character of the conflict itself. For many, the conflict in Vietnam equated roughly to the Korean War. Yet, unlike Korea, the struggle in Vietnam was not a classical invasion by one country into another. The geopolitical realities of Vietnam were far more complex. Even though the Viet Cong were supplied and supported, and to a considerable extent, directed from Ho Chi Minh and the Communists in North Vietnam, their was indigenous support for overthrowing the government of South Vietnam. By labeling the Viet Cong as mere agents of Hanoi, the inner circle of policy advisors reinforced their diagnosis of external aggression, thereby legitimizing their basis for involvement. Too much rationalizing and not enough serious diagnosis was taking place. The fact that the struggle did have the makings of a civil war was discounted because of the fact it still wore a Communist face, and a victory in Vietnam would mean a victory for the Communist hegemony. Given our policy makers idealistic predisposition to bear any burden, pay any price to defeat the evil empire of communism, it was not hard to justify making a stand at the 17th Parallel. From Truman on, geopolitical analysis of the specific dangers posed by the conquest of a distant country, in this case Vietnam, was deemed subordinate to the twin policy goals of resisting aggression in the abstract and preventing the further spread of communism. The
fall of China to Mao and the communists cemented the conviction of American leaders and policy makers that no further communist expansion could be tolerated.

Policy documents and official statements clearly show that this conviction went largely unchallenged. Just prior to the start of the Korean conflict, National Security Council (NSC) document 64 stated that Indochina was "a key area of South East Asia and is under immediate threat." NSC 64 outlined what was to become known as the Domino Theory, which postulated that if Indochina fell to the communists, Burma, and Thailand would follow, and that "the balance of Southeast Asia would then be in grave hazard." A month later, in April 1950, NSC document 68 concluded that nothing less than the global equilibrium was at stake in Indochina: "...any substantial further extension of the area under the domination of the Kremlin would raise the possibility that no coalition adequate to confront the Kremlin with greater strength could be assembled." In 1952, a National Security Council document formalized the emerging Domino Theory and gave it a more menacing face. It argued that the loss of even a single Southeast Asian country would lead "to relatively swift submission to or alignment with communism by the remainder. Furthermore, an alignment with communism of the rest of

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94 Ibid., p. 73.
Southeast Asia and India, and in the longer term, of the Middle East (with the possible exceptions of at least Pakistan and Turkey) would in all probability progressively follow. The crucial fact that eluded most of the policy debate from the 1950s onward, was that Vietnam, and Southeast Asia as a whole was of little strategic value to the United States. The communist threat was being perceived as monolithic in nature and being controlled by the Kremlin. Analysts, making a gross error in logic, considered a loss of Indochina to communism would be of the same strategic importance of a loss of Europe to the communists. Idealistic blinders were preventing the serious geopolitical evaluation of the importance of Vietnam to the interests of the United States.

*The Pentagon Papers* published by the *New York Times* in June and July 1971, are an invaluable source of information describing the decision making behind America’s involvement in the Vietnam conflict. The record shows that President Kennedy made his decisions on Vietnam following the strong advice of his Vice President, Lyndon Johnson, who visited Vietnam in May, 1961. The Vice President summed up his findings as follows. “The fundamental decision required of the United States - and time is of the greatest importance - is whether we are to attempt to meet the challenge of Communist

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expansion now in Southeast Asia by a major effort in support of the forces of freedom in the area or throw in the towel.” He goes on to point out the possible costs involved in such a commitment. “This decision must be made in full realization of the very heavy and continuing costs involved in terms of money, of effort, and of United States prestige. It must be made with the knowledge that at some point we may be faced with the further decision of whether we commit major United States forces to the area or we cut our losses and withdraw should our efforts fail.” Johnson concludes his report by calling attention to the broader implications of this critical decision. “What we do in Southeast Asia should be part of a rational program to meet the threat we face in the region as a whole. It should include a clear-cut pattern of specific contributions to be expected by each partner according to his ability and resources. I recommend we proceed with a clear-cut and strong program of action.”

In October 1961, two other key advisors traveled to South Vietnam to further assess the security situation and report back to President Kennedy. General Maxwell Taylor, special advisor to the President on military affairs, and Walt Rostow, Chairman of the State Department Policy Planning Council. The recommendations by Taylor and Rostow played a key role in President Kennedy’s decision to continue and expand America’s involvement in Southeast Asia. General Taylor concluded that the outcome of

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97 “Report by Vice President Johnson on His Visit to Asian Countries”, *Pentagon Papers*, p. 130.
the struggle in Vietnam depended largely on what the United States decided to do, or not to do, and he strongly recommended to the President that the United States make a "broad commitment to a joint effort with Diem" to mobilize the resources of both the United States and South Vietnam to win the struggle against the Communists, including the introduction of American combat forces into South Vietnam.\(^9\) Taylor did warn of the risks involved:

a. The strategic reserve of U.S. forces is presently so weak that we can ill afford any detachment of forces to a peripheral area of the Communist bloc where they will be pinned down for uncertain duration.
b. Although U.S. prestige is already engaged in SVN, it will become more so by sending troops.
c. If the first contingent is not enough to accomplish the necessary results, it will be difficult to resist the pressure to reinforce. If the ultimate result is the closing of the frontiers and clean-up of the insurgents within SVN, there is no limit to our possible commitment (unless we attack the source in Hanoi).
d. The introduction of U.S. forces may increase tensions and risk escalation into a major war in Asia. (my emphasis)

Taylor concluded with the assertion that the introduction of a "military task force without delay offers definitely more advantages than it creates risk and difficulties. I do not believe our program to SVN will succeed without it."\(^9\)

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\(^9\) "Cable from Taylor to Kennedy on Introduction of U.S. Troops", Pentagon Papers, pp. 141-142.
The report of the Taylor mission set into high gear the policy-making apparatus of the Kennedy administration, culminating in a National Security Council meeting in November 1961. Two key questions were raised: how important is Vietnam to the national interest of the United States in Southeast Asia, and in Asia as a whole; and, what price is the United States willing to pay to prevent a Communist takeover in South Vietnam? Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara reported that he, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Deputy Secretary of Defense Roswell Gilpatric were in agreement. "The fall of South Vietnam to Communism would lead to the fairly rapid extension of Communist control, or complete accommodation to Communism, in the rest of mainland Southeast Asia and Indonesia. The strategic implications worldwide, particularly in the Orient would be extremely serious." McNamara echoed the same warnings that General Taylor had previously provided. "The chances against, probably sharply against, preventing that fall by any measures short of the introduction of U.S. forces on a substantial scale ... we would almost be certain to get mired down in an inconclusive struggle."

Secretary of State Dean Rusk made his recommendations to the President in a memorandum dated November 11, 1961. Rusk addressed the question of American national interests in specific terms. "The deteriorating situation in South Vietnam requires attention to the nature and scope of the United States national interests in that country. The loss of South Vietnam would make pointless any further discussion about
the importance of Southeast Asia to the free world; we would have to face the near
certainty that the remainder of Southeast Asia and Indonesia would move to a complete
accommodation with Communism, if not formal incorporation with the Communist bloc.
The United States, as a member of SEATO, has commitments with respect to South
Vietnam under the protocol to the SEATO Treaty ... the loss of South Vietnam to
Communism would not only destroy SEATO but would undermine the credibility of
American commitments elsewhere. Further, loss of South Vietnam would stimulate bitter
domestic controversies in the United States and would be seized upon by extreme
elements to divide the country and harass the Administration.” Rusk concluded his
recommendation by stating the introduction of a large military force was not warranted at
that time and the major effort by the United States should be to improve and better equip
the South Vietnamese armed forces to deal more effectively with their own insurgency.

Even though President Kennedy decided against the introduction of American
combat forces in 1961, it was clear that the principal members of the National Security
Council were in basic agreement that South Vietnam constituted a vital national interest
of the United States and had to be protected by United States armed forces if that became
necessary. All the key players in this drama in 1961, with the exception of President
Kennedy, were still the principal policy-makers in 1964-1965 when President Johnson
made the final and fatal decision to fully commit the United States to protect South Vietnam by the introduction of a major military task force to the region.

As the Pentagon Papers so clearly illuminate, the Kennedy and Johnson administrations did not blunder into an expansive war in Southeast Asia, but actually weighed the costs as they saw them against the benefits they hoped to achieve by committing the United States to the defense of South Vietnam. The major failing, however, was in conceptualizing our national interest in almost entirely idealistic terms. None of the inner circle of advisors ever raised the more realistic question of if South Vietnam ultimately did fall into the hands of the Communists, in and of itself, what strategic impact would that have on the United States. The overzealous interpretation of George Kennan’s theory of containment, as outlined in the Domino Theory, and our inability and unwillingness to distinguish between the relative importance of various countries led the decision-makers to believe that a zero-sum game was being conducted with the Communists. Any gain by the Communists by definition had to be a loss to the United States. This single-mindedness combined with a huge and seemingly inexhaustible power base, militarily and economically, blinded our policy-makers to the more urgent questions of national interest. They were never forced to make realistic appraisals and establish priorities. One of the great ideological fallacies of the Cold War,
that still lingers today, is the fact that just because the United States can do something, does not necessarily mean it should do something.

An even more disturbing reality was the very fact the United States had involved itself was a compelling reason for our continued involvement. America’s prestige and worthiness as an ally was on the line. According to George Ball, “...we transmuted our perception of the war from a conflict between North and South Vietnam into a test of our will and ability to stay the course - and, by a breathtaking leap in logic, a test of our credibility as a dependable ally anywhere in the world. We had to win because we had told Vietnam we would do so, and if we did not prevail, who would trust us in Berlin?”100 The question of prestige should not be underestimated. As America was being pulled further into the abyss, the predominant reasoning of staying the course in Vietnam despite growing disillusionment among the populace and the ever increasing unrest on campuses across the country, was the fact that America had never “lost” a war and this was not the time to start. David Halberstam discusses this at length in his treatise on the decision-makers and the decision-making process of the Vietnam conflict, *The Best and the Brightest*: “The commitment was already operative, burning with a special fuel of its own - bureaucratic momentum and individual ambition - men let loose in Saigon and Washington, who never questioned whether that something was right or

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100 Ball, *Diplomacy For a Crowded World*, p. 49.
wrong, or whether it worked or not. In government it is always easier to go forward with a program that does not work that to stop it all together and admit failure."\textsuperscript{101}

Writing in 1965, as President Johnson was poised at the precipice of total commitment in Vietnam, Hans J. Morgenthau tries to show that a withdrawal from Vietnam would not destroy the prestige of the United States, but would rather be a temporary setback. "The prestige of a nation is not determined by the success or failure of a particular operation at a particular moment in history. Quite the contrary, it reflects the sum total of a nation’s qualities and actions, of its successes and failures, of its historic memories and aspirations."\textsuperscript{102} (my emphasis) Realists continually reassess their policy decisions in more pragmatic terms of costs versus benefits, and stand ready to abandon a poorly conceived policy if the costs outweigh any potential gains. Ideologues, on the other hand, view issues in terms of universal moral truths and, as such, are far less likely to give up on a policy once it has been decided upon because that would mean they would have to compromise their principles in the process. Unfortunately, in the case of Vietnam, idealism won out over interests.


\textsuperscript{102} Hans J. Morgenthau, \textit{Vietnam and the United States}, p. 10.
Another pervasive problem area was the lack of long-term policy planning in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, as there had been in earlier administrations. Crisis management was taking the place of policy planning. Advocates of this approach to foreign affairs, armed with the success of the Cuban missile crisis, instilled the belief that an American president, so far as possible, must ‘preserve his options’. What this encouraged in Vietnam, and still does, is an ad hoc approach to crisis situations. It discouraged efforts to rigorously examine long-range objectives or estimate anticipated costs and associated risks in any given situation. This provides a planning tool to guide decision makers in determining how far a given course of action should be pursued, and more importantly, when it should be terminated. Because no benchmark of success was ever firmly established, the graduated response insidiously drew America into the morass of the Vietnam tragedy. President Johnson was unable to find an acceptable balance between the idealistic impulses of Jefferson and the pragmatic realism of Hamilton. This lack of balance and his decision not to aggressively solicit the support of the American public would set the stage for failure in Vietnam and ultimately cost him the Presidency.

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Henry Kissinger provides a fitting epitaph for the failings of four Presidents and their inability to balance the exigencies of America’s national interest and the pervasive tendency towards idealism in formulating foreign policy.

“America, at any rate, paid a price for its adventure in Vietnam that was out of proportion to any conceivable gain. It was clearly a mistake to have staked so much on ill-defined causes. America had become involved in the first place because it applied literally the maxims of its successful European policy to a region with radically different political, social, and economic conditions. Wilsonian idealism permitted no cultural differentiation, while the theory of collective security held that, security being indivisible, the fabric of the entire international order would unravel if even one strand were pulled out. Too idealistic to base its policy on national interest, and too focused on the requirements of general war in its strategic doctrine, America was unable to master an unfamiliar strategic problem in which the political and military objectives were entwined. Imbued with the belief in the universal appeal of its values, America vastly underestimated the obstacles to democratize in a society shaped by Confucianism, and among a people who were struggling for political identity in the midst of an assault by outside forces.”

Kissinger, Diplomacy, pp. 698-699.
"During the summer of 1990, the world was still in the euphoria over the end of the Cold War and the new more peaceful world that it portended. For 1989 had certainly been the *annus mirabilis* - the miracle year - in which the international order had been remade. The East-West confrontation was over. The communist regimes in Eastern Europe had collapsed, along with the Berlin Wall itself, the greatest symbol of the Cold War. The Soviet Union was in the midst of a profound transformation arising not only from political and economic change, but also from the eruption of long-repressed ethnic nationalism... At 2:00 a.m., on August 2, 1990, the illusions were ripped away. A hundred thousand Iraqi troops began their invasion of Kuwait... And so, the first post-Cold War crisis turned out to be a geopolitical oil crisis."  

Daniel Yergin

Saddam Hussein provides the first wake-up call of the post-Cold War era. When Iraqi President Saddam Hussein invaded the oil-rich sheikdom of Kuwait on August 2, 1990, and shattered the euphoria of the emerging post-Cold War era, the memories of the Vietnam experience still lingered. President Bush was keenly aware of the pitfalls experienced by his predecessors in Vietnam, and, apparently, had learned his lessons.

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well. Unlike Kennedy and Johnson, Bush brought to the presidency a healthy respect for and working knowledge of diplomacy and power politics. Bush, more than any modern President, was prepared to use force as an acceptable instrument of national policy, when vital American interests were at stake, and the benefits of military action outweighed the potential risks. Stating a basic tenet of Clausewitzian doctrine, Bush described his basic approach to foreign policy development and implementation: "We will integrate every available and suitable policy instrument into a multi-faceted approach. That means using negotiations, intelligence, economic strength, and yes, military power."\(^{106}\) Morgenthau would most certainly classify Bush as falling on the Hamiltonian side of the foreign policy spectrum. It should be noted that most of Bush’s inner circle of advisors, especially his National Security Advisor, Brent Scowcroft, were of a like mindset and political predisposition. The importance of “having the President’s ear” should not be underestimated. Scowcroft had almost unlimited access to the President throughout the crisis in the Persian Gulf, and next to the President himself, was the most hawkish member of the Bush inner circle. Andrew Rosenthal, a columnist for the \textit{New York Times}, described the dealings of the Bush inner circle: “These internal deliberations have been conducted in classic Bush fashion, in the smallest circle of advisors. Indeed, the

President and his National Security Advisor, Brent Scowcroft, have spent hours together, often with fishing lines trailing in the Atlantic Ocean off Mr. Bush's speedboat."\(^{107}\)

The decision by President Bush and his advisors to deploy American troops in response to Saddam Hussein's "naked aggression" was motivated almost entirely by the strategic importance of oil and its continued supply to the United States and other western economies. Oil and its accessibility at reasonable and stable prices was of, and still is, of vital importance to the health of the American economy, and had been since the Second World War. Daniel Yergin, president of Cambridge Research Associates states: "Until some alternative source of energy is found, oil will still have far-reaching effects on the global economy; major price movements can fuel economic growth or, ...drive inflation and kick off recessions. Today oil is the only commodity whose doings and controversies are to be found regularly not only on the business page, but also on the front page."\(^{108}\) Yergin continues, saying that the changing geopolitical and geo-economic situation in the aftermath of the Cold War has intensified the strategic importance of oil in the emerging world order. "With the end of the Cold War, a new world order is taking shape. Economic competition, regional struggles, and ethnic rivalries may replace ideology as the focus of international, and national, conflict...but whatever the evolution of this new


international order, oil will remain the strategic commodity, critical to national strategies and international politics.\textsuperscript{109}

It did not take long for worry to become reality. The Dow Jones industrial average closed down 55 points after plunging 120 points in the first day of trading after the invasion of Kuwait.\textsuperscript{110} Some argued that a dollar or two increase in the price of a barrel of crude oil could not possibly wreak the economic havoc that the financial markets seemed to be forecasting, but as a rule of thumb, an increase of five to six dollars in the price of a barrel of middle East crude, which was anticipated if Saddam Hussein’s invasion and annexation of Kuwait was allowed to stand, would result in a rise of about 12 to 15 cents at the gas pumps. Americans argued that the United States should not fight a war over the price of gasoline, but they did not take into account the economic ripple effect that kind of increase would have on an already weakened economy. Each one-cent rise in the price of gasoline means that consumers would spend roughly one billion dollars less on other goods and services.\textsuperscript{111} There should be no doubt that oil and its economic impact were the primary motivation of President Bush and his policy advisors when they decided to use force to pursue their policies in the Persian Gulf.

\textsuperscript{109} Ibid., pp. 24-25.
President Bush and his key advisors were quite candid - almost to their detriment - about basing their decision to send troops to the Persian Gulf on the geopolitical importance of oil, and the control of oil and oil reserves. In a nationally televised speech, President Bush outlined his reasons for sending troops to the Gulf. Tucked in between all the moralistic reasons for standing up to Hussein, is a clear reference to the strategic importance of oil and its effect on the economy. “Our economy imports nearly half the oil it consumes and could face a major threat to its economic independence. Much of the world is even more dependent upon imported oil and is even more vulnerable to Iraqi threats.”

Speaking to Pentagon official on August 15, 1990, the President reemphasized this point: “Our jobs, our way of life, our freedom and the freedom of friendly countries around the world would suffer if control of the world’s great oil reserves would fall into the hands of Saddam Hussein.”

Bush almost made a fatal mistake of justifying the use of military force almost exclusively in terms of national interest, but quickly, and correctly, realized that the American public, according to George Ball, “want sentimental tears with its policies.”

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114 Ball, Diplomacy for a Crowded World, p. 53.
The President and his advisors adjusted their public statements to emphasize more morally acceptable justifications for the Persian Gulf policy to satisfy the Jeffersonian impulses inherent in the American political tradition. In November, when the decision was made to move from a defensive to an offensive posture, his public approval ratings actually dropped, indicating that he had not yet found the proper balance, at least in the public’s eye, between national interest concerns and moralistic justification - the opposite problem Kennedy and Johnson had. Bush mounted a determined and deliberate effort to gain United Nations approval to conduct military operations against the Iraqi army. The primary impetus for gaining U.N. approval was to build a solid idealistic foundation upon which to gain the support of the American public, which he realized was the key to any successful employment of American military forces. President Bush further legitimized his actions in the Gulf by building an unprecedented international coalition playing the idealistic trump card of collective security. To solidify his case with the American people, Bush went the extra mile to secure the approval of Congress - which he never admitted was necessary for him to use force against Iraq. All these actions had the express purpose of getting the positive force of public support behind the military action he was about to take in the deserts of Southwest Asia. Bush, unlike Johnson, understood the validity of Henry Kissinger’s “iron test” of foreign policy, and the vital importance of harmonizing the Hamiltonian and Jeffersonian impulses.
which are inextricably ingrained in the American political experience. Bush triumphed where Johnson failed.

Some very important lessons are to be learned from the successes and failures of the Persian Gulf War. Both the military and the political leaders were determined not to make the same mistakes that plagued their predecessors in Vietnam. The interaction and cooperation between the Bush and his military commanders was exemplary. The guiding maxim that military action is purely politics by other means was embedded in Bush's approach to the conflict. Once the President had clearly stated his political objectives; the liberation of Kuwait and the protection of Saudi Arabia and the other oil producing nations of the Persian Gulf, he let the generals do their jobs. Unlike President Johnson, Bush did not micro-manage the war effort as LBJ did during his famous Tuesday lunch strategy sessions, but rather decided what the overall political goal of the operation should be and then did his job of building public consensus and support around that goal. The principle failing of the Vietnam conflict was the lack of a clearly stated political objective to guide our actions, measure our success and determine when to disengage. After ten years, fifty thousand American lives, and the disillusionment of an entire generation, the primary objective of the Vietnam War was purely to extricate ourselves, or as Nixon put it, to achieve “peace with honor”. Without the compass of a clearly
conceived and defined political goal based on the national interest, America was doomed to languish in the quagmire of Vietnam.

President Bush would not repeat this fatal error. Armed with a vision of what was to be accomplished, Bush built an unprecedented military force and political coalition of disparate nations, laid a firm foundation of public support, and executed an almost flawless forty-three day aerial campaign and hundred-hour ground assault which liberated Kuwait, decimated the Iraqi military machine, and damaged Saddam Hussein’s nuclear and chemical weapons programs. Once his objectives were met, the president ended the war and sued for peace. Bush had set the goal of getting Hussein out of Kuwait, not the total destruction of his evil regime. His primary purpose was to reestablish an acceptable balance of power in the Persian Gulf, not impose an American prescription for political reform. The president, the military, and the American public knew exactly where they were going before they started down the road to war.

The military also incorporated lessons learned from Vietnam in their approach to the war in the Gulf. General Colin Powell, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, was committed to a doctrine of overwhelming force. His entire strategy was to assemble a force strong enough to guarantee a military success while minimizing Allied casualties. Powell knew all to well that the longer a conflict drags on and casualties increase, the
more difficult it becomes to foster and maintain the public support required to see the conflict through to a successful conclusion. CNN brought the Gulf War into the living rooms of the American public in real time and around the clock. Wars were now fought, not in some faraway country, but right before your eyes in the privacy of your own home. The real costs of military actions, death and destruction, were put in plain view of an increasingly knowledgeable and sophisticated public audience. The people could see the price being paid. Politicians no longer had unlimited expense accounts. The American public would have to know exactly what they were buying and decide if it was worth the price.

The Persian Gulf War had been an impressive demonstration of American military power and President Bush’s skills as a diplomat and politician. But many have argued it was an incomplete victory. Four years after the United States achieved a ‘decisive victory’ over Iraq, the American military still finds itself engaged in an open-ended police action, flying air patrols in northern and southern Iraq. Three and a half years later, some of the same Republican Guard forces that Powell thought had been largely destroyed again menaced Kuwait, resulting in some of the same American military units that took on the Iraqis in 1991 being ordered back to the Gulf to prevent a possible second invasion of Kuwait by Iraq. In response to Bush’s critics, one has to ask what would have resulted if Iraqi forces were completely vanquished and Saddam
Hussein was forced from power. With a resurgent and more pragmatic Iran acquiring more and better weapons from a growing Russian arms trade, what would prove more dangerous to U.S. interests in the Middle East: a power vacuum created by the total dismantling of Iraq’s military and political infrastructure, or a substantially weakened, but still intact Iraq? These concerns were addressed as can be seen in a memorandum from Zalmay Khalilzad, director of policy planning at the State Department to Robert Wolfowitz.

“There is a danger that the overthrow[of Hussein] might be followed by more substantial instability and chaos. This can happen if the armed forces disintegrate and different factions fight each other. Ethnic groups such as the Kurds might declare independence from Iraq. Iraq’s neighbors such as Iran, Syria, and even Turkey might either seize parts of Iraqi territory or establish governments to their liking in areas adjacent to them - in effect partitioning Iraq into several countries. The most dangerous of these would be Iranian occupation of any part of Iraqi territory. And, should Syria and Turkey take over parts of Iraq, it is likely to be very difficult to stop the Iranians from doing the same.

The partitioning of Iraq will not serve our long-term interests. Iraqi disintegration will improve prospects for Iranian domination of the Gulf and remove a restraint on Syria. It will sow the seeds for future wars. Should Iraqi forces begin to disintegrate, we might become the principle power interested in maintaining Iraq’s territorial integrity.”

A more basic question, however, is how far should a military action go? When does a nation declare victory? Bush clearly defined his political objective as the

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115 Memo to Wolfowitz from Zalmay Khalilzad, director of policy planning, quoted in Gordon and Trainer, The General’s War, p. 516.
implementation of United Nations Resolution 686. Once Iraq was expelled from Kuwait, and the ancillary objectives of destroying Hussein’s nuclear and chemical weapons development program, eliminating the SCUD missile threat, and substantially reducing the ranks of Iraq’s crack troops, the Republican Guard, President Bush stopped the war. Bush insisted after the war, “It was never our goal to break up Iraq. Indeed, we did not want that to happen, and most of our coalition partners (especially the Arabs) felt even stronger on the issue.”116 The President had achieved a stunning and impressive victory in the Persian Gulf War. Bush had learned the lessons of Vietnam, but even more importantly, went back to America’s political beginnings to learn the lessons of the Founding Fathers. President Bush’s most important accomplishment was finding a balance between the Hamiltonian impulse of basing foreign policy decisions on the pragmatic realities of national interest, and the idealistic vision of Jefferson that has fueled this country’s most noble achievements.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE UNCERTAINTY OF A POST-COLD WAR WORLD

"In a new era of peril and opportunity, our overriding purpose must be to expand and strengthen the world’s community of market-based democracies. During the Cold War, we sought to contain a threat to survival of free institutions. Now we seek to enlarge the circle of nations that live under those free institutions, for our dream is of a day when the opinions and energies of every person in the world will be given full expression in a world of thriving democracies that cooperate with each other and live in peace."\(^{117}\)

President Bill Clinton

For the third time this century, America is outlining its vision for a new world order. Bill Clinton is carrying on the tradition of his presidential predecessors by painting his vision of the future on an ideological canvas. The end of the Cold War and the collapse of Communism, the defining forces that have shaped world politics for the last forty years, brought with them hope for a new world order. For the third time in the “American century”, the United States trumpeted its desire and commitment to build a

new world order in its own image based on the lofty principles of liberty, self-
determination, human rights and collective security. America’s power is supreme. Yet,
power has become more diffuse and the strategic value of military strength has
diminished. Kissinger persuasively argues that “the victory in the Cold War has
propelled America into a world which bears many similarities to the European state
system of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and practices which American
statesmen and thinkers have consistently questioned. The absence of both an overriding
ideological or strategic threat frees nations to pursue foreign policies based increasingly
on their immediate national interest.”118

Saddam Hussein’s invasion of the sheikdom of Kuwait and the subsequent
Persian Gulf War threw some cold water on the new geopolitical realities into the face of
the ideological wishful thinking of American leaders. The crisis in the Gulf was the wake
up call. The emerging pattern of international relations in the post-Cold War era is much
more in line with Henry Kissinger’s pragmatic assessment of the geopolitical
environment that is evolving, than the idealistic hopes expressed by Bush and Clinton.

The American military is being caught in a vise between the growing number of regional
brush fires and the drastic downsizing that was mandated by the “peace dividend”

118 Kissinger, Diplomacy, p. 805.
realized when the Cold War was won. President Clinton's crusading vision of collective security under the auspices of the United Nations has the military engaged to an unprecedented degree around the globe in numerous and varied policing or humanitarian actions. Coincidental with this feverish operational tempo, the military is downsizing to pre-Vietnam levels. The morale of military members is suffering as they are deployed to remote and hostile locations more frequently and for longer periods of time. Readiness is being compromised as increasingly limited funds are being diverted from equipment maintenance and combat training budgets to subsidize the costs of all these military actions. A reassessment of national priorities in light of this emerging geopolitical landscape is an absolute necessity.

The final evacuation of the United Nations peacekeepers from the beaches of Somalia begs the question: why were we there? General Mohammed Farah Aidid and the other Somali warlords are in much the same position as they were when the operation began. $1.6 billion, 38,000 troops brought in and taken out, and 122 peacekeepers killed. Did the pathetic end to the United Nations peacekeeping mission justify these means? Absolutely not! What vital American national interest was at stake? A disturbing proclivity towards idealistically-based foreign policy decisions is becoming a hallmark of the Clinton administration. Bosnia-Herzegovina is no different. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), one of the most successful and enduring military and
political alliances is faltering and is approaching a very precarious precipice. If the Europeans are not willing to involve themselves in the Bosnia crisis, which is in their back yard, how can the United States justify risking even one American life in the name of collective security? Without the military strength and political leadership of the United States, there is no collective security. The United Nations is a panacea for countries looking for moralistic clothing for the naked pursuit of their national interest. Many nations clamor to support these idealistic endeavors, but do so under the umbrella of U.S. military strength and economic power. They reap the rewards of international recognition and respectability at very little expense. The armada of the Americas, so skillfully engineered and orchestrated by President Clinton to assist in the effort to restore democracy to the tiny island nation of Haiti is ludicrous to the point of being laughable. Belize provided a military band and there were no Mexicans policing the streets of Port au Prince!

It has been frequently asserted that the foreign policy of the United States pursues no objectives apart from those of the United Nations, that, in other words, the foreign policy is actually identical with the United Nations. The fact that all the military actions that have been undertaken by the United States in the post-Cold War era, including the Persian Gulf War, have been pursued under the banner of the United Nations would strongly support this deduction. However, it is impossible for the United Nations to
pursue interests apart from those of the member states which dominate the United Nation’s policy-forming bodies. The identity between the interests of the United Nations and the United States can, and should, only refer to the successful policies of the United States within the United Nations through which the support of the United Nations is being secured for the policies of the United States. The United States is the originator of its policies and interests, the United Nations simply legitimizes them.

Now, more than ever, as this great nation approaches the twenty-first century, the truths so evident to our Founding Fathers must once again be revisited. Arthur Schlesinger, in the true fashion of a historian, looks to the future with a foot in the past. "Ideology is out of character for Americans. Dogma does the republic grievous damage, above all, in foreign policy. In thinking about international relations, American would do well to sober up from the ideological binge and return to the cold gray realism of the Founding Fathers, men who lucidly understood the role of national interest and force in a dangerous world and thought that saving America was enough without trying to save all humanity as well."\textsuperscript{119}

The world is still a dangerous place!

\textsuperscript{119} Schlesinger, pp. 67-68.
APPENDIX ONE

CHRONOLOGY OF IMPORTANT EVENTS:

THE VIETNAM WAR

1946.............................France begins the battle against Viet Minh for control of Vietnam.

1949.............................China falls to Mao’s Red Army.


1952.............................President Truman’s National Security Council (NSC) Memorandum states that in Southeast Asia “the loss of any single country would probably lead to relatively swift submission to or alignment with Communism by the remaining countries of this group ... Dominoes would continue to fall because an alignment with Communism of the rest of Southeast Asia and India, and in the longer term, the Middle East ... would progressively follow. Such widespread alignment would endanger the security and stability of Europe.” The Domino Theory is born.

1954

March ..........................The battle at Dien Bien Phu begins.

May 7 ..........................The French lose Dien Bien Phu to Ho Chi Minh and the Viet Minh. The loss of Dien Bien Phu dealt a death blow to French morale. Opposition in France to the war reached a peak, forcing a complete and rapid withdrawal of the French from all of Indochina.

May 8 ..........................Geneva Conference on Indochina. Vietnam is divided between North and South by the 17th parallel. The United States did not sign agreement, but states that it would view a renewal of
aggression "... with grave concern as seriously threatening international peace and security.

July 7 .........................Ngo Dinh Diem is appointed Premier of Vietnam in Saigon.

October 11 ..................The Viet Minh, headed by Ho Chi Minh, formally take over control of Hanoi and North Vietnam.

1955

February 12 ...............The U.S. Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG) takes over the training of South Vietnamese army from the French.


October 23 .................Former Emperor and Head of State of Vietnam, Bao Dia, is deposed by national referendum.

October 26 .................The Republic of South Vietnam is established with Ngo Dinh Diem as president.

1956

July 6 .......................U.S. Vice President Richard M. Nixon visits Vietnam.

1961

January .....................Soviet Premier Nikita Khruschev announces that the Soviet Union intends to support "wars of national liberation."

January 29 ..................Creation of communist-led National Front for Liberation of South Vietnam (NFLSV) announced in Saigon ... "sacred historical task" of NFLSV is to "overthrow Diem - U.S. clique and liberate the South."

May 5 .......................President Kennedy declares at a press conference that consideration is being given to the use of U.S. forces, if necessary, to help South Vietnam resist communist pressures.
May 11 ....................Vice President Lyndon Johnson arrives in South Vietnam. A joint communique on May 13th declares that additional U.S. military and economic aid will be given to help South Vietnam in its fight against communist guerilla forces.

May 16 ....................An international conference on Laos is held in Geneva. 15 nations signed a treaty in which they pledged to recognize a new neutralist coalition government in Laos, withdraw any military forces they held in the country, and to stop any paramilitary assistance to the rival political factions in the country. **North Vietnam is the only country not to sign the treaty.**

August 2 ..................President Kennedy declares that the United States will **do all it can** to save South Vietnam from communism.

October 11 ..............President Kennedy announces he is sending General Maxwell Taylor to South Vietnam to investigate the military situation and to report back to him personally.

December 8 .............U.S. State Department publishes “white paper” that states South Vietnam is threatened by a “clear and present danger” of communist conquest.

1962

February 7 .............Two U.S. Army support companies, totalling 300 men, arrive in Saigon, **raising the total of U.S. personnel in South Vietnam to 4000.**

February 8 .............U.S. Military Assistance Command - Vietnam (MACV) is established.

1963

April 22 .................U.S. Secretary of State Dean Rusk calls the situation in South Vietnam “difficult and dangerous” and says that the U.S. “cannot promise or expect a quick victory”, and that its role is “limited and supporting.”
May 8 ....................Riots erupt in city of Hue in northern South Vietnam during a Buddhist celebration.

June 3 ....................Buddhist demonstrations break out in Hue. Martial law is imposed.

June 11 ..................A Buddhist monk commits suicide by burning himself to death. Further aggravates religious crisis in South Vietnam. Pictures of the monk, burning with hands clasped in prayer, were on the front pages of almost all U.S. newspapers. Storms of outrage broke out in U.S. and Europe when Buddhist suicides began.

August 21 ...............Martial law imposed by President Diem after police and South Vietnamese troops raided a Buddhist temple in Saigon.

August 22 ...............U.S. State Department issues statement deploring Diem’s actions against the Buddhist temples.

August 29 ...............President Kennedy declares, in an interview with Walter Cronkite, that the U.S. is prepared to continue to assist South Vietnam, “but I don’t think that the war can be won unless the people support the effort, and, in my opinion, in the last two months the government (South Vietnam) has gotten out of touch with the people.”


October 2 .................Secretary of Defense McNamara and General Taylor report to the President and the National Security Council. The statement says the U.S. will continue its “policy of working with the people and government of South Vietnam to deny this country to communism and to suppress the externally stimulated and supported insurgency of the Viet Cong as promptly as possible. Effective performance in this undertaking is the central object in our policy in South Vietnam.”

October 27 ...............Buddhist monk burns himself to death in Saigon. (The 7th since June 11).

November 1 ..............Coup against President Diem is successful. Rebels assassinate Diem and his brother Ngo Dinh Nhu. A period of prolonged, chaotic leadership ensued. In two years, South Vietnam endured
ten changes of government and even more changes in the military high command.

November 22..............President Kennedy is assassinated in Dallas. Lyndon Johnson becomes the President of the United States.

November 24..............President Johnson affirms U.S. intention to continue its military and economic support of South Vietnam in its struggle against the communist Viet Cong. **U.S. forces in South Vietnam now numbered over 16,000.**

1964

April 25...................General Westmoreland replaces General Harkins as Commander-in-Chief MACV.

August 2...................U.S.S. Maddox is attacked in international waters off North Vietnam coast by North Vietnamese torpedo boats.

August 4...................U.S.S. C. Turner Joy and Maddox are attacked by North Vietnamese PT boats. President Johnson orders U.S. “air action” against gunboats and certain supporting facilities in North Vietnam.”

August 7...................President Johnson sends Congress the Southeast Asia Resolution, or as it is more commonly called, the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution. It stated that the attacks were “part of a deliberate and systematic campaign of aggression that the communist regime in North Vietnam has been waging against its neighbors and the nations joined with them in the collective defense of their freedom.” It resolved “that Congress approves and supports the determination of the President, as Commander-in-Chief, **to take all necessary measures** to repel any armed aggression against the forces of the United States and to prevent further aggression.”

.........................Congress overwhelming apporves the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution: House voted 416 to 0 in favor; the Senate passed it 88 to 2.

1965
February 6 ..................Soviet Premier Kosygin arrives in Hanoi.

February 7 ..................After a bold Viet Cong attack on American installations near the South Vietnamese city of Pleiku, President Johnson authorizes retaliatory air strikes against North Vietnam. Within days, the original idea of carefully calibrated retaliatory strikes against the North was replaced by a program of sustained bombing, which had long been sought after by the military leadership. The bombing campaign was code-named "Rolling Thunder". The President and his personal advisors approved specific target lists during the President's "Tuesday Lunch". President Johnson often joked that the military couldn't bomb an outhouse without his approval.

February 8 ..................Premier Kosygin announces Soviet willingness to aid North Vietnam, if North Vietnam is invaded.

Spring .........................Despite the sustained bombing of North Vietnam, the situation in the South continues to deteriorate. President Johnson has strong public support for his policies in Vietnam: before Pleiku, about 41 percent of the American public approved of his Vietnam policy. After Rolling Thunder began, approval climbed to 60 percent. 83 percent supported the bombing campaign, and 79 percent supported the goal of "keeping the communists from taking over all of Southeast Asia."

March 8 .......................Two U.S. Marine battalions wade ashore on the beaches south of Da Nang in South Vietnam.

April 1 .......................U.S. Ambassador to South Vietnam, Maxwell Taylor attends a meeting of the U.S. Intelligence Board. He remains committed to saving South Vietnam, but brings out reservations about committing U.S. combat troops to South Vietnam. Taylor said that once the U.S. started down the slippery slope, there would be no stopping. He goes on to state that once the Rubicon is crossed, there will be no turning back.

July 21 .......................Secretary of Defense McNamara reported to NSC that the military picture was rapidly deteriorating. He recommended the President send another 100,000 troops to Vietnam by October, and said that
another 100,000 might be needed in early 1966. McNamara also suggested the administration ask Congress for the authority to call up 235,000 reserves.

....................... The President faced a serious dilemma. McNamara's proposal would cost up to $8 billion, but **the President hesitated to mobilize the country behind the war effort because he feared it would endanger his Great Society programs pending in Congress.** he was convinced that any action focusing on the war would undermine the prospects of his domestic programs. **He decided to pursue a policy of guns and butter.** He purposely played down the increasing involvement of the United States in the war.

July 25 ....................... President Johnson meets with key advisors at Camp David to debate what policy to pursue in Vietnam.

July 28 ....................... Instead of a nationally televised speech during prime time, **President Johnson simply disclosed the major troop buildup during a midday press conference.** Even though he secretly approved an increase of 100,000 troops by year's end, with the possibility of 100,000 more in early 1966, **he only referred to an increase of 50,000.** He told reporters that these additional troops did "not imply any change in policy whatsoever." **Thus, many believe President Johnson made the fatal mistake that would lead, ultimately, to his political downfall: he did not mobilize the American public behind this significant increase in the level of the war effort. In fact, he purposely deceived the public by significantly understating the actual troop increases.**

Summer 1965 - end of 1967 ............. U.S. troop strength in Vietnam grew from 75,000 to 485,000. Casualties rose dramatically from 400 killed in action before July 1965 to more than 16,000 by the end of 1966. The American public began to tire of the war. Domestic controversy over the war effort grew steadily. Growing casualties and increasing television coverage of the "first living-room war" began to create pockets of opposition to the war throughout the country.
October 31..............At the “Tuesday Lunch”, McNamara airs his serious doubts over the President’s Vietnam policy. He states that “continuation of our present course of action in Southeast Asia would be dangerous, costly in lives, and unsatisfactory to the American people.” (It should be noted that McNamara was one of the most ardent and persuasive supporters of military action in Vietnam.)

November 1.............The first meeting of what would become referred to as the “wise men” took place. This group of elder statesmen was brought together to debate the war in Vietnam and where it was headed. Members of the group included: Dean Acheson, General Omar Bradley, George Ball, McGeorge Bundy, former Treasury Secretary Douglas Dillon, Supreme Court Justice Fortas, former Undersecretary of State Robert Murphy, Averell Harriman, Henry Cabot Lodge, Maxwell Taylor, Secretary of State Dean Rusk, Secretary of Defense McNamara, and Clark Clifford. All members of this distinguished group of advisors told President Johnson to stand firm in Vietnam. This advice was crucial in strengthening the President’s resolve.

1968

January 19..............Clark Clifford is named as replacement for Secretary of Defense.

January 23..............U.S.S. Pueblo, an American intelligence ship, was seized by the North Koreans. Khe Sahn, in the Northwest corner of South Vietnam, manned with over 6,000 U.S. Marines, is surrounded by a larger number of enemy troops. The largest battle of the Vietnam War appeared imminent.

January 31..............Communist forces begin first major offensive of the war. It was timed to coincide with the start of a truce the North Vietnamese had pledged to observe during the celebration of Tet, the Vietnamese New Year. The Tet Offensive was a stunning military defeat of the North Vietnamese. Inspite of this, the almost universal theme of the media coverage the U.S. and South Vietnam had suffered a disastrous defeat! News media accounts of the Tet Offensive intensified the growing disillusionment with the war by the American public, thereby turning Tet into a political and psychological victory for North
Vietnam. Tet shook the very foundation of the Johnson administration. Gallop polls showed the portion of Americans who thought the U.S. was losing the war jumped from 8 percent (November 1967) to 23 percent (February 1968). The February poll also showed 61 percent of the U.S. public believed the United States was losing ground or standing still in Vietnam.

March 25..................The Senior Advisory Group - “the wise men” - meet again. This time six members favor disengagement from Vietnam, four advocate standing firm, and one straddles the fence. (At the November meeting, all the advisors had supported the U.S. military commitment to South Vietnam.)

..........................President Johnson is deeply shaken by the outcome of the meeting. He later said, “if they had been so deeply influenced by the reports of the Tet Offensive, what must the average citizen in the country be thinking?”

March 31..................President Johnson announces that he will not seek another term in office. He also declares a unilateral halt to all bombing of North Vietnam above the 20th Parallel hoping that Hanoi would take reciprocal steps toward peace.

April 4....................Martin Luther King, Jr. is assassinated in Memphis.

June 4.....................Robert F. Kennedy is assassinated after winning the California primary.

October 31.................Five days before the 1968 presidential election, President Johnson announces that all bombing of North Vietnam will stop and negotiations will begin. Within weeks, Hanoi violated all the conditions on which the bombing halt had been based. The U.S. does nothing. Ho Chi Minh had called our bet, and found out we were bluffing!

1969

January 20.................Richard M. Nixon is inaugurated and becomes the fifth U.S. President in twenty-three years to deal with the dilemma of Vietnam.
February ......................While negotiations are being held in Paris, the North Vietnamese and the Viet Cong launch a major offensive in South Vietnam.

March 18 .....................President Nixon decides to bomb a North Vietnamese sanctuary in Cambodia violating Cambodia's neutrality. The bombing was kept secret. Bombing of communist outposts in Cambodia and Laos continue throughout the spring and summer.

May 14 ......................In a nationally televised address, President Nixon puts forward a new U.S. peace proposal. The proposal called for a mutual withdrawal of all U.S. and North Vietnamese troops from South Vietnam, and for internationally supervised, free elections to decide the fate of South Vietnam.

June 8 .......................President Nixon meets with President Thieu and announces that the U.S. was withdrawing 25,000 troops from Vietnam - the first reduction since 1961.

July 16 .......................The President sends a personal letter to Ho Chi Minh in hopes of breathing some life into the stalled negotiation.

August 25 ...................Ho Chi Minh coldly rebuffs Nixon's peace proposal, insisting that the United States unilaterally withdraw from South Vietnam and that President Theiu's government be overthrown.

September 3 .....................Ho Chi Minh dies.

November 3 ...................In a nationally-televised speech, the President addresses the question of what a defeat would mean for South Vietnam, the world, and the U.S. He summarizes the reasons for U.S. involvement: to stop foreign aggression and to discourage possible future aggression by a show of U.S. resolve. The speech becomes known as the "silent majority" speech. Telephone polls after the speech indicated a 77 percent approval rating for the President. The approval rate for his Vietnam policy jumped to 64 percent.

1970
April 20 ......................President Nixon announces the withdrawal of an additional 60,000 troops by the end of 1970, to be followed by a reduction of 90,000 in 1971. **The extrication from Vietnam begins.**

April 30 ......................The President announces a ground offensive against North Vietnamese sanctuaries in Cambodia.

June 30 ......................Last U.S. troop departs Cambodia.

1971

June 13 ......................New York Times begins publishing a series of articles on a classified Department of Defense study titled “The History of U.S. Decision-Making Process on Vietnam”. The study was more commonly referred to as the Pentagon Papers. President Nixon decides to block the publication of the Pentagon Papers, stating that the publication of these articles would seriously endanger national security.

1972

February .....................Chinese Summit meeting between Mao Zedong and President Nixon.


May 8  ......................President Nixon announces the mining of Haiphon Harbor and the beginning of “Linebacker I”, an intensive bombing campaign of military targets throughout North Vietnam, including Hanoi itself.

May 22  ......................First U.S. - Soviet Summit is held between President Nixon and President Brezhnev.

June  ......................South Vietnamese troops, without the assistance of U.S. ground forces, begin a counter-offensive. By August, most of the territory lost to the North was recaptured. North Vietnam re-open secret negotiations in Paris.
October 8....................In a secret Paris meeting, Hanoi makes a proposal in which it capitulates on most major issues. Hanoi’s new proposal calls for a ceasefire, followed by an American withdrawal, and an exchange of POWs within 60 days. However, they refused to withdraw their forces from South Vietnam.

October 18..................This new proposal is presented to President Theiu. He strongly resists the proposal and suggests over twenty changes to the draft agreement, seven of which Hanoi would never agree to.

November 20...............Paris talks reconvene. President Nixon instructs Henry Kissinger to work towards an agreement along the lines of the October 8 proposal. The North Vietnamese harden their position and an impasse is reached. Talks recess.

December 4...............Talks reconvene, but Hanoi is even more obstinate. Kissinger and President Nixon conclude that Hanoi has made a conscious decision to prolong the war. The President decides the North needs some incentive to conclude a peace agreement.

December 17..............“Linebacker II” begins. After 12 days of intense bombing in and around the Hanoi area, North Vietnam’s war-making capacity is shattered. Politically, Hanoi’s will to fight is broken.

1973

January 8.................High-level negotiations are reconvened in Paris. Hanoi agrees to basic terms within forty-eight hours.

January 27...............Almost 20 years after the French were defeated at Dien Bien Phu, the Paris Peace Accords are signed, formally ending the longest war in United States history.
APPENDIX TWO

CHRONOLOGY OF IMPORTANT EVENTS

THE PERSIAN GULF WAR

1990

August 2 .....................Iraqi troops storm into the sheikdom of Kuwait.

.........................President Bush freezes $30 billion in Iraqi and Kuwaiti assets.

.........................House votes 416 to 0 to endorse the President’s action to impose trade sanctions and to cut Export/Import Bank credits to Iraq.

.........................Senate unanimously approves a resolution calling for multilateral actions “involving air, sea, and land forces” under United Nations Charter to restore international peace and security to the region.

.........................Soviets suspend military shipments to Iraq.

.........................UN Security Council votes overwhelmingly to condemn Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait, demanding the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of the Baghdad troops from Kuwait, and threatening to impose mandatory sanctions if Iraq does not immediately comply.

.........................West Europeans unanimously condemn Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait with Britain and France joining the United States and freezing billions of dollars of Iraqi and Kuwaiti assets. Western Europe does not immediately impose trade sanctions.

August 3 .....................Powerful Iraqi forces wheel into position for a possible attack on Saudi Arabia.

.........................U.S. asks other members of the United Nations Security Council to endorse its proposal for a worldwide economic boycott of Iraq and occupied Kuwait.
Japan freezes $20-30 billion in Kuwaiti assets.


August 7. Declaring that Iraqi forces massed in Kuwait pose an imminent threat to Saudi Arabia, the United States order the first troops to Saudi Arabia. Operation Desert Shield begins.

The Saudis agree to raise oil production to alleviate growing fears in the world market of possible oil shortages caused by the Iraqi invasion.

August 8. President Bush delivers a televised address to the nation, declaring the the independence of Saudi Arabia and other Persian Gulf states is of “vital interest” to the United States and that a disruption in the Saudi oil supply would represent a threat to U.S. “economic independence”.

Saddam Hussein announces the annexation of Kuwait.


The Iraqi government announces that foreigners would not be allowed to leave Kuwait or Iraq.

August 10. At a summit meeting in Cairo, 12 of 20 Arab countries vote to send troops to help defend Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states. The leaders reiterate their condemnation of the Iraqi attack, the buildup of troops on the Saudi border, and call for the return of Kuwait’s legitimate government.
August 12 .................. Telephone poll: August 9 - 10: Bush receives a 73% approval rating over his handling of the crisis in the Persian Gulf.

.................................. President Bush orders the U.S. military to block exports of Iraqi oil and all imports to Iraq except food, stating that the action was in accordance with and a compliment to the U.N. imposed sanctions.

.................................. Saddam Hussein suggests he might withdraw from Kuwait if Syria pulled out of Lebanon and Israel withdraw from the Golan Heights, West Bank, and Gaza. He also calls for foreign troops in Saudi Arabia to be replaced by Arab forces under U.N. auspices. He calls for the implementation of U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338, and a halt to all resolutions imposed on Iraq after August.

August 13 .................. U.N. Secretary General de Cuellar states that only the United Nations, through the Security Council, could decide to impose a blockade.

August 14 .................. Iraq and Iran reestablish diplomatic ties.

August 15 .................. President Bush tells Pentagon employees that American freedom and “our way of life” would suffer if Saddam Hussein ever gained control of Saudi Arabian oil reserves.

August 18 .................. The U.N. Security Council passes Resolution 664 demanding that Iraq release all foreigners detained in Kuwait and Iraq.

August 19 .................. Saddam Hussein said he would free the detainees (estimated at 100,000) if the U.S. agreed to withdraw from the area, the economic sanctions were lifted, and the U.S. pledged not to attack Iraq. He wanted the U.S. pledge backed by the United Nations.

August 20 .................. President Bush refers to the Westerners detained in Iraq and Kuwait as “hostages”.

August 25 .................. The United Nations gives force to the blockade of Iraq with the approval by the Security Council of U.N. Resolution 665. The
resolution allows U.S. and other nations to halt shipping to and from Iraq.

September 4 ..........Secretary of State Baker tells Congress the Bush administration is planning a long-term military presence in the Persian Gulf even if Iraq withdraws from Kuwait. He outlines a “new regional security structure” to counter future Iraqi military potential. Baker states that the arrangement would probably include an arms boycott of Iraq, further arming of the other Arab states, and a U.S. naval and land force in the area. Baker says the structure would be similar to NATO.

September 5 ..........Secretary of State Baker backs off from the remarks he made the previous day. Baker’s remarks elicited criticisms that the United States was attempting to establish a U.S.-dominated alliance in the region that could ultimately ignite more instability in the region.

September 7 ..........Bush and Gorbechev summit meeting begins in Helsinki. The two leaders proclaim that nothing short of the implementation of all U.N. Security Council resolutions will resolve this crisis.

September 10 .........President Bush drops longstanding opposition to Soviet involvement in the peace process.

September 11 .........Bush reaffirms his determination to drive Iraq out of Kuwait. His “Iraq will not be permitted to annex Kuwait” speech before a joint session of Congress sends a strong, clear message to Saddam Hussein that the United States will use force, if necessary, to push Iraq out of Kuwait; and, prepares the American public to the possibility of war.

..........Members of the Senate Armed Services Committee question the administration about who would control foreign contributions to the war and that pledges alone were not enough.

September 12 ..........Iran’s supreme religious leader calls on all Moslems to fight the U.S. deployment of the Persian Gulf.

..........President Bush sends videataped message to Iraqi people.
September 13 .................U.N. Security Council passes Resolution 666 which imposes strict controls on humanitarian food aid to Kuwait.

September 16 ..............Videotape from Bush tells Iraqi people that their leaders have brought them to the “brink of war”.

...............U.N. Security Council votes unanimously to condemn Baghdad for violence against embassies and diplomatic personnel in occupied Kuwait (United Nations Resolution 667), and promises new steps to tighten embargo against Iraq.

September 21 .............President Bush tells congressional leaders the destruction taking place in Kuwait would make it difficult to adhere to the use of sanctions alone to force an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait.

September 22 ............Iraqi issues statement urging its citizens to prepare for the “mother of all battles” and backs it up by expelling Egyptian and West European diplomats from Baghdad.

September 23 ............Iraq states it will attack Saudi Arabian oil fields and Israel if it were “strangled” by economic sanctions.

September 24 ...........The U.N. Security Council passes Resolution 669 which orders the sanctions committee to examine aid requests from countries adversely affected by the embargo of Iraq.

September 25 ............U.N. Resolution 670 passes and establishes an air embargo on Iraq and occupied Kuwait.

September 27 ............President Bush affirms that the United States would certainly respond with military action if Iraq should sanction a major terrorist attack, harm hostages, or attack a U.S. warship or aircraft.

...............House Armed Services Committee passes a resolution endorsing Bush’s handling of the crisis, but carefully avoid giving him open-ended support for military action against Kuwait.

September 28 ............Brent Scowcroft, National Security Advisor, says Kuwait’s “systematic destruction” under Iraqi occupation is shortening the time the U.S. can wait before using military force.
According to intelligence reports, Iraq has developed biological weapons.

September 30. The Washington Post reports some U.S. and Gulf officials are worried that even if the four objectives established by President Bush are achieved, it would be a "hollow victory" because it would leave Saddam Hussein in power and his military intact.

October 1. President Bush addresses the United Nations General Assembly emphasizing that he still hoped there might be a diplomatic solution to the Persian Gulf crisis. Bush appears to be taking a step back from the harsh tone he had been using.

October 3. Yevgeny Primakov, a senior Soviet official, meets with Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz.

October 5. Sabah Salot Kadrot, Iraq's spokesman at the U.N., accuses the United States and its allies of "western imperialism". He offers no indication that Iraq would withdraw from Kuwait.

October 8. 19 Arabs killed and 100 wounded during an hour-long struggle between Israeli police and thousands of Arabs hurling rocks at Jews worshipping at the Al Aka Mosque in Jerusalem.

October 9. The United States, attempting to maintain support of Arab countries, calls for the U.N. Security Council to condemn Israel for using excessive force at the Al Aka Mosque.


October 16. Iraqis hint at the possibility of compromise, but the U.S. rejects the terms saying that there will be no linkage to the withdrawal of Iraq from Kuwait. The withdrawal must be unconditional.

October 17. Senate Foreign Relations Committee demands that the Bush administration obtain congressional approval before initiating any military action. Secretary of State Baker responds to the sharp
exchange stating the administration would “consult” Congress, but
did not feel obliged to get advance approval for the use of force.

October 29..............The Bush administration gives Saddam Hussein an explicit
warning that the United States would not shrink from the “use of
force” if he continued to occupy Kuwait.

November 6..............1990 Congressional Elections.

November 8..............President Bush orders more than 150,000 additional American
ground, sea, and air forces to the Persian Gulf theater of operations,
saying they were needed to provide “an adequate offensive military
option” to drive Iraqi troops from Kuwait. The plan is to have
380,000 American troops in place by early 1991. Bush hopes this
show of force would send an unmistakable message to Saddam
Hussein that the United States had the will to go war, would soon
have the means to go to war, and that a war, if it came, would
inflict terrible damage on Iraq.

November 9..............Secretary of Defense Cheney reports that the Pentagon was no
longer planning to rotate the troops in the Persian Gulf region.
Many fear that President Bush is shortening the timetable for
ending the standoff.

November 10.............The Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, Senator
Sam Nunn, harshly criticizes the administration’s plan not to
rotate troops in the Persian Gulf region. He says the dropping of
the troop rotation plan is a clear indication of the administration’s
decision to speed up the timetable for resolving the crisis.

.............. The Washington Post reports that some Saudi officials indicated
that in the event of a war with Iraq, Iraq’s military capability
should not be totally destroyed because Baghdad provided the
strongest Arab deterrent to Iran and Israel. However, the Saudi
officials wanted Hussein removed from power and Iraq’s capability
to threaten its Arab neighbors destroyed.

November 15.............President Bush, in a CNN interview, states that the withdrawal of
Iraqi troops from Kuwait should be followed by a United Nation’s
effort guaranteeing the elimination of Iraq’s chemical weapons arsenal and a halt to its nuclear development program.

November 17.............In an address to the opening session of the Jordanian parliament, King Hussein criticizes the “double-standard attitude” of the nations claiming to uphold international law in the Gulf while ignoring the plight of the Palestinians living under Israeli occupation.

November 20.............45 Democrats from the House of Representatives file a lawsuit attempting to prevent President Bush from taking offensive military action against Iraq before obtaining authorization from Congress.

November 25.............The Bush administration steps up its efforts to raise American concern about Iraq’s ability to develop nuclear weapons, saying Baghdad might be able to develop the capability within the year. Secretary of Defense Cheney and Brent Scowcroft, the National Security Advisor, state in separate appearances that Iraq’s nuclear weapons development was continuing despite the embargo.

November 28.............U.N. Security Council passes Resolution 677 condemning Iraq for trying to change the demographics of Kuwait. The Secretary General is tasked to safeguard a pre-invasion population register from Kuwait.

November 29.............The United Nations Security Council votes 12 to 2 with 1 abstention authorizing the United States and coalition forces to use “all means available” to expel Iraqi troops from Kuwait if Saddam Hussein does not withdraw his forces by January 15, 1991. U.N. Resolution 678 is an explicit authorization to use force.

November 30.............President Bush offers to have Secretary of State Baker travel to Baghdad to meet with Saddam Hussein.

December 6.............Saddam Hussein promises to release all the hostages in Iraq and occupied Kuwait. Bush responds by saying the release of the hostages will not change his position that Iraq comply 100%, without condition, with all U.N. resolutions.
December 9 ................Iraq releases the hostages from Iraq and occupied Kuwait.

1991

January 9 ..................Secretary of State James Baker, III meets with Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz in Geneva. After nearly seven hours, Baker makes it clear that he discerned no evidence whatsoever that Iraq was willing to comply with the international community's demand to withdraw from Kuwait in compliance with U.N. resolutions.

January 11 ...............United Nations Secretary General Perez de Cuellar makes an eleventh hour appeal to Saddam Hussein in Baghdad with the hope he would agree to withdraw unconditionally from Kuwait and comply with the 12 U.N. resolutions.

January 12 ...............Congress votes to give President Bush the authority to go to war against Iraq. By a vote of 52 to 47, the Senate approves the use of military force. In the House, the vote was 250 to 183 in favor of the Authorization For The Use Of Force Resolution (House Joint Resolution 77, Public Law 102-1).

January 14 ...............President Bush signs House Joint Resolution 77 into law.

January 15 ...............United Nation deadline expires. Saddam Hussein remains in Kuwait.

January 16 ...............Coalition air forces begin attacks on military targets in Iraq and Kuwait. "This military action, taken in accord with United Nations resolutions and with the consent of the United States Congress, follows months of constant and virtually endless diplomatic activity on the part of the United Nations, the United States, and many, many other countries." (President Bush in a televised speech).

January 17 ...............The New York Times reports that in a January 12th meeting between Deputy Secretary of State Eagleburger and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzak Shamir, Shamir assured Eagleburger that Israel would consult with the United States before retaliating against Iraq and that Israel's response would be based on the extent of the
damage, the effectiveness of U.S. efforts to destroy Iraqi SCUD launchers, and the ramifications on long-term deterrence of not responding.

January 19 ..................At least two Patriot missile systems are installed in Israel and are to be staffed by U.S. personnel until the Israelis are trained in their use.

....................After extensive talks with President Bush, Prime Minister Shamir agrees, for the second time, to delay a retaliatory strike on Iraq, saying that Israel would wait to test the effectiveness of the new Patriot missile batteries and allied attacks on enemy positions in western Iraq.

....................Foreign correspondents are ordered to leave Iraq. Peter Arnett of CNN is allowed to stay because of CNN’s “proven impartiality”.

January 20 ..................General Schwarzkopf, Commander-in-Chief of all allied forces in the Persian Gulf, announces that allied planes had “thoroughly damaged” Iraqi nuclear reactors, and chemical and biological weapons factories.

....................For the second time in two weeks, Deputy Secretary of State Eagleburger meets with Prime Minister Shamir in Israel. (The United States is making top priority its effort to keep Israel out of the military equation. President Bush realizes the backlash from Arab countries could destroy the fragile coalition he so skillfully built.)

January 22 ..................The U.S.-led military command implements press restrictions requiring reporters to work in press pools under military escort and to submit all reports to military censors. (The press is not happy.)

....................Israel requests an additional $13 billion in U.S. aid to cover the costs of the Gulf War and absorbing the large influx of Soviet Jews.

January 23 ..................Israeli officials state that the political benefits of not retaliating against Iraq outweigh the potential benefits of a military strike.
January 25 ..................Saudi and U.S. spokesmen report that oil has been gushing from the Sea Island Terminal causing a huge oil slick. Officials accuse Iraq of intentionally causing the spill, hoping the oil slick would threaten Saudi desalination facilities and inhibit an amphibious landing.

January 26 ..................Iraqi fighter aircraft begin landing in Iran causing much concern and confusion. Iran reiterates its neutrality stating it will impound the Iraqi aircraft until the conflict has been resolved.

January 27 ..................United States F-111s bomb oil manifolds at the Sea Island Terminal and are successful in stopping the massive oil spill in the Persian Gulf. Saudi officials estimate that 11 million barrels of crude oil had spilled, making it the largest oil slick to date.

January 30 ..................The Bush administration outlines four areas to be addressed in the post-war peace efforts: economic issues, regional security, arms control, and the Arab-Israeli conflict.

February 6 ..................Secretary of State Baker, speaking before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, states that any post-war settlement would have to be built on “five pillars”: a new security arrangement in the Gulf, an arms control agreement, a program of economic reconstruction “to ease the tension between the haves and the have-nots”, a renewed effort to resolve the Arab-Israeli and Israeli-Palestinian conflicts, and a domestic effort to reduce American dependence on foreign oil.

......................In a televised speech, King Hussein of Jordan asserts that the real agenda of the U.S.-led coalition was to “destroy and reorganize the area in a manner far more dangerous to (Arab and Muslim) people than the Sykes-Pinot agreement”. He calls for “immediate and serious” efforts to impose a ceasefire and establish a “responsible dialogue” between Iraq and the United States.

February 7 ..................State Department spokesman Tutwiler announces U.S. plans to reassess the amount of Jordan’s economic aid for fiscal year 1992 in light of King Hussein’s public stance toward the war.
February 9 .......... In a TASS report, Gorbachev warns that allied actions in the Persian Gulf war were threatening to exceed the mandate of United Nations resolutions.

February 13 .......... More than 400 Iraqis are killed when allied planes bomb what Baghdad claim was a civilian bomb shelter. U.S. officials assert that their evidence showed the building to be a command and control facility.

February 15 .......... Iraq issues a “statement of terms for peace” in which it agreed to implement U.N. Resolution 660 (unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait) in exchange for a comprehensive ceasefire and the cancellation of the remaining resolutions, the total withdrawal of all allied forces from the Gulf region, Israeli withdrawal from Arab lands, and a guarantee of Iraq’s sovereign rights.

 .......... President Bush flatly rejects the Iraqi proposal calling it a “cruel hoax”. The President also encourages a civil uprising and the overthrow of Saddam Hussein.

February 17 .......... Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz meets with President Gorbachev to discuss diplomatic options for resolving the conflict.

February 18 .......... Foreign Minister Aziz leaves Moscow with an undisclosed Soviet peace proposal.

February 19 .......... President Bush says the Soviet plan fell “well short” of what would be required to stop the war.

February 21 .......... Iraqi Foreign Minister Aziz delivers Iraq’s terms of acceptance of the Soviet peace plan to Moscow: an Iraqi withdrawal starting two days after a ceasefire, and continuing for an unspecified time, taking place under the supervision of U.N. countries not currently involved in the hostilities; the cancellation of the economic embargo when two thirds of the Iraqi troops are out of Kuwait; and, the cancellation of the remaining U.N. resolutions when the withdrawal was complete. Allied POWs would be released at the time the ceasefire begins.
February 22............President Bush warns Iraq that allied troops would launch a massive ground attack in 24 hours, at 12 noon EST, unless Iraqi troops had begun a withdrawal. Hussein was given 48 hours to evacuate Kuwait City and one week to be completely out of Kuwait.

The Iraqi government denounces the U.S. plan calling it “shameful”.

The Pentagon reports that Iraq had set at least 100 oil wells on fire during the preceding 24 hours.

February 23............Shortly after the deadline (12 noon EST), more than 700,000 allied troops launch a ground offensive into Kuwait and Iraq.

February 24............Allied forces take more than 10,000 Iraqi prisoners, most surrendering voluntarily.

February 26............Iraqi President Saddam Hussein announces that the withdrawal from Kuwait had begun and would be complete by the end of the day.

President Bush responds by saying allied troops would continue to attack Iraqi forces that he said were retreating rather than withdrawing. Bush demands that Hussein unconditionally surrender, renounce the claims on Kuwait, and comply with the 12 United Nation resolutions.

February 27............President Bush announces the allied forces had been successful in liberating Kuwait and defeating the Iraqi army, and orders the allied forces to suspend all attacks as of midnight EST, 100 hours after the ground offensive began. Bush said a permanent ceasefire was contingent upon Iraq’s willingness to comply with all 12 U.N. resolutions, return all POWs and detained Kuwaiti citizens, and provide maps of all land and sea mines.

February 28............Six weeks after the hostilities in the Persian Gulf began, at 12 midnight EST, a truce is implemented. Iraq agrees to follow all 12 U.N. resolutions and to send military commanders to arrange the details of the ceasefire. Allied commanders state that, in addition
to the conditions presented by President Bush on February 27, allied troops would not leave Iraq and Kuwait until Iraq agreed to the destruction of tanks and other Iraqi military equipment left on the battlefield.

March 2

Eleven members of the U.N. Security Council vote in support of Resolution 686 calling on Iraq to release all POWs and detainees, return all stolen property, accept liability for war damages, rescind the annexation of Kuwait, and provide maps of all mine fields to secure a formal end to the war.

March 3

U.S. General Norman Schwarzkopf and Saudi General Kahlid bin Sultan meet with an eight-member Iraqi delegation and agree to the terms for a temporary ceasefire.

Iraqn announces its acceptance of United Nation Resolution 686.

March 4

Uprisings by the Kurds in the north and Shiites in the south are causing the most serious civil unrest Hussein has ever had to deal with.

March 5

Iraq annuls its annexation of Kuwait and agrees to release stolen Kuwaiti assets.

March 7

The first allied soldiers leave the Persian Gulf.

March 13

President Bush claims that Iraq’s use of combat helicopters violated the terms of the ceasefire and warns Iraq against their continued use against anti-government forces.

March 22

The United States Congress votes to rescind $55 million in aid to Jordan, against strenuous objections from the White House, to demonstrate displeasure with Jordan’s seeming support of Iraq during the war.

March 26

Marlin Fitzwater, White House spokesman, asserts that the United States would not involve itself in Iraq’s internal strife despite alleged violations of a U.S. warning not to use combat helicopters against the rebel.
March 27 ..........Kurdish leader Talabani issues an urgent request to the coalition countries to send food and aid to the Kurdish-held northern region of Iraq. Iraqi troops had allegedly blocked food shipments from the south.

April 1 ..........Massud Barzani, head of the Kurdish Democratic Party in Iraq, reports that 3 million Iraqi Kurds had fled into the mountains of northern Iraq to escape attacks from government forces.

April 2 ..........Turkish President Ozal calls for an emergency meeting of the U.N. Security Council to address the developing Kurdish refugee crisis.

April 3 ..........**U.N. Security Council approves Resolution 687 calling for a permanent ceasefire and an incremental termination of sanctions against Iraq** in exchange for Iraqi concessions to include: renouncing terrorism, paying compensation for damage caused by its occupation of Kuwait, accepting the 1963 border agreements with Kuwait, allowing the destruction of all chemical and biological weapons, the destruction of all SCUD and ballistic missiles, and pledging not to acquire such weapons in the future.

April 5 ..........U.N. Security Council Resolution 688 is approved. The resolution condemns the Iraqi government’s oppression of the Kurds and calls upon the Secretary General to investigate the situation in northern Iraq.

..........................President Bush orders the U.S. Air Force to airdrop food, medicine, and blankets to Kurdish refugees in northern Iraq.

April 6 ..........**Iraq formally accepts U.N. Resolution 687.**

..........................The Bush administration warns Saddam Hussein not to undertake any military operations north of the thirty-sixth parallel.

April 7 ..........Iran closes its borders after accepting almost 500,000 Kurdish refugees fleeing Iraq.

..........................Secretary of State Baker visits Kurdish refugee camps in Turkey.
In a speech broadcast on Baghdad radio, Saddam Hussein announces the defeat of the Kurds in the north and the Shiites in the south.

April 8 .......................U.S. forces begin withdrawing from southern Iraq.

April 9 .......................The United Nations Security Council agrees to send the U.N. Iraq-Kuwait Observer Mission (UNIKOM), a 1,440 member observer force to patrol the demilitarized zone between Iraq and Kuwait.

April 11 .......................The United Nations formally declares a permanent ceasefire, bringing the Persian Gulf War to an end.

April 11 .......................President Bush announces the establishment of “informal safe havens” in northern Iraq where aid would be disbursed to refugees inside Iraq. Bush warns Saddam Hussein not to interfere with the humanitarian efforts.

April 12 .......................The U.S. military initiate Operation Provide Comfort, a relief aid campaign in northern Iraq intended to provide food and temporary shelter for 700,000 refugees until other relief agencies can take over.

April 14 .......................United State military forces begin to withdraw from the temporary ceasefire line to the permanent DMZ as required by the U.N.-declared ceasefire as outlined in U.N. Resolution 687.
# APPENDIX THREE

## UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS Concerning the Iraqi Invasion of Kuwait

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESOLUTION #</th>
<th>DATE PASSED</th>
<th>CONTENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>660</td>
<td>August 2, 1990</td>
<td>Condemns Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Demands an unconditional and immediate withdrawal from Kuwait.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>661</td>
<td>August 6, 1990</td>
<td>Orders a far-reaching trade and financial boycott of Iraq and occupied Kuwait.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>662</td>
<td>August 9, 1990</td>
<td>Declares Iraq's formal annexation of Kuwait null and void.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>664</td>
<td>August 18, 1990</td>
<td>Demands Iraq free all detained foreigners and warns of military action if they are not released.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>665</td>
<td>August 25, 1990</td>
<td>Allows U.S. and other allied ships to halt shipping to and from Iraq.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>666</td>
<td>September 13, 1990</td>
<td>Sets tight limits on humanitarian food supplies sent to Iraq and occupied Kuwait.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>667</td>
<td>September 16, 1990</td>
<td>Condemns Baghdad’s violence against foreign embassies and diplomatic personnel in occupied Kuwait.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>669</td>
<td>September 24, 1990</td>
<td>Entrusts U.N. Sanctions Committee to evaluate requests for assistance from countries being hurt by the embargo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution #</td>
<td>Date Passed</td>
<td>Content</td>
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<tr>
<td>670</td>
<td>September 25, 1990</td>
<td>Prohibits all non-humanitarian air traffic into and out of Iraq and Kuwait.</td>
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<tr>
<td>674</td>
<td>October 29, 1990</td>
<td>Condemns Iraq for human rights violations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>677</td>
<td>November 28, 1990</td>
<td>Asks U.N. Secretary General to safeguard a smuggled copy of Kuwait's pre-invasion population register.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>678</td>
<td>November 29, 1990</td>
<td>Empowers coalition forces to &quot;use all necessary means&quot; to expel Iraq from Kuwait. Sets January 15, 1991 deadline for withdrawal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>686</td>
<td>March 2, 1991</td>
<td>Calls on Iraq to release all POWs and Kuwaiti prisoners, return all stolen property, accept liability for war damages, rescind its annexation of Kuwait, and provide maps of all ground and sea mine fields in order to secure a formal end to the war. The resolution maintains the economic and military embargo against Iraq indefinitely.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>687</td>
<td>April 3, 1991</td>
<td>Declares a permanent ceasefire and calls for the incremental termination of sanctions against Iraq in exchange for Iraqi concessions to include: renouncing terrorism, paying compensation for the damage caused by its occupation of Kuwait, allowing the destruction of all chemical and biological weapons, allowing the destruction of all SCUD and ballistic missiles, and pledging not to acquire such missiles in the future.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>688</td>
<td>April 5, 1991</td>
<td>Condemns the Iraqi government's oppression of the Kurds. Calls for the Secretary General to investigate.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX FOUR

THE DECISION MAKERS: THE VIETNAM WAR

The Truman Administration:

Harry S. Truman ------------------------------- President of the United States

Dean Acheson ----------------------------------- Secretary of State

The Eisenhower Administration:

Dwight D. Eisenhower ----------------------------- President of the United States

John Foster Dulles ------------------------------- Secretary of State

The Kennedy/Johnson Administrations:

John F. Kennedy, Jr. ------------------------------- President of the United States

Lyndon B. Johnson ------------------------------- Vice President of the United States (1961-63)

----------------------------------------------- President of the United States (1963-68)

Robert F. Kennedy ------------------------------- Attorney General

Dean Rusk ---------------------------------------- Secretary of State

Robert McNamara -------------------------------- Secretary of Defense

McGeorge Bundy --------------------------------- National Security Advisor

William Bundy ----------------------------------- Assistant Secretary of Defense
The Kennedy/Johnson Administrations (Cont.):

General Maxwell Taylor ------------------- President's Military Advisor (Kennedy)

--------------------- Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff (Johnson)

Clark Clifford ----------------------------- Secretary of Defense (Johnson)
APPENDIX FIVE

THE DECISION MAKERS: THE PERSIAN GULF WAR

George W. Bush-----------------------------President of the United States
Danforth Quayle ---------------------------Vice President of the United States
James A. Baker-----------------------------Secretary of State
Dick Cheney -------------------------------Secretary of Defense
Brent Scowcroft ---------------------------National Security Advisor
John Sununu -------------------------------White House Chief of Staff
Robert M. Gates-----------------------------Deputy National Security Advisor
General Colin Powell----------------------Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
General H. Norman Schwarzkopf ----------Commander, U.S. Central Command
APPENDIX SIX

MAP OF VIETNAM
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