A study of pre and post Cold War presidential international crisis rhetoric

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A STUDY OF PRE AND POST COLD WAR
PRESIDENTIAL INTERNATIONAL
CRISIS RHETORIC

by

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Bachelor of Science
University of Phoenix, Las Vegas
2001

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the

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ABSTRACT

A Study of Pre and Post Cold War
Presidential International
Crisis Rhetoric

by

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This study examines three speeches delivered by U.S. presidents during times of international crises, Woodrow Wilson’s speech on April 2, 1917, George H. W. Bush’s speech delivered on January 16, 1991, and the speech by George W. Bush delivered on September 20, 2001. Elements of epideictic, deliberative and forensic strategies were applied to the discourse to determine whether the speeches conformed to expectations for presidential international crisis rhetoric. This thesis extends a study completed in 1989 in which Bonnie J. Dow argued that only epideictic and deliberative strategies appear in international crisis rhetoric. In contrast, this study found that, in order for the discourse to be effective, a combination of epideictic, deliberative and forensic strategies must be present in international crisis rhetoric.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

To establish crisis rhetoric as a genre, critics need to examine the full range of such discourse, determine the role of substantive, stylistic, and situational elements, and give attention to the functions of the discourse. With such analysis, generic treatment of crisis rhetoric could be more useful and illuminating. (Bonnie J. Dow, 1989)

In a study published in 1989, Bonnie J. Dow examines speeches delivered by former president Ronald Reagan following the bombing of a U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut, Lebanon, the U.S. invasion of the Caribbean island nation of Grenada, and the Soviet attack on a Korean airliner (295). She concludes that these speeches share situational and strategic elements that she tentatively labels as characteristics of presidential “crisis rhetoric.” However, Dow recognizes that her study, like others that preceded it, is limited by the small number of texts examined and calls for subsequent research to test her conclusions (308). Dow says critics should examine a full range of discourse, including presidential speeches delivered prior to World War II.
Based on the invitation from Dow to investigate other presidential discourse to determine whether this type of crisis rhetoric is a genre, this study examines speeches by three American Presidents given in a time of United States military action to determine whether they share situational and strategic elements that Dow labels as characteristics of presidential crisis rhetoric. The speeches include: President Woodrow Wilson’s April 2, 1917, speech to Congress asking for a declaration of war on Germany; President George H. W. Bush’s January 16, 1991, address to the nation announcing allied military action in the Persian Gulf; and President George W. Bush’s September 20, 2001, address before a joint session of Congress on the United States Response to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

While there are a good number of speeches from which to choose, the scope of this study limits the number that can successfully be analyzed. Therefore, by completing a thorough comparison of Wilson’s speech and both of the Bushes’ speeches to determine whether there are significant differences and/or similarities in the rhetoric, evidence of the shared situational and strategic elements should support the claim that this type of presidential crisis rhetoric is a genre.

This chapter provides a brief overview of the rhetorical presidency and the value of a generic classification of presidential international crisis rhetoric. Then, a justification for the three speeches selected for this study is offered. This chapter concludes with a preview of the following chapters of this study.
The Rhetorical Presidency

Amos Kiewe explains that the rhetorical presidency began with Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson and is based on the popular appeal of the president (xvi). Modern presidents use symbols and images in defining and constructing the reality of situations they want their audiences to accept, and, according to Karlyn Kohrs Campbell and Kathleen Hall Jamieson, “Skillful presidents [. . .] engage in a process of transforming those who hear them into the audiences they desire” (5).

Campbell and Jamieson’s book, Deeds Done in Words, addresses presidential rhetoric that has developed over time. They say that, “Presidential rhetoric is one source of institutional power, enhanced in the modern presidency by the ability of presidents to speak when, where, and on whatever topic they choose, and to a national audience through coverage by the electronic media” (3). They explain that the identity of the institution of the presidency arises out of the discourse (4). In addition, they state that modern presidents have created forms of discourse, or genres, that carry forward policy, mark beginnings and endings of situations, preserve the institution of the presidency, adapting it to changing times and conditions (4).

The Value of a Generic Classification of Rhetoric

A study of genre, according to Campbell and Jamieson, “would produce a critical history exploring the ways in which rhetorical acts influence each other” (1978 26). They say that:

Because rhetoric is of the public life, because rhetorical acts are concerned with ideas and processes rooted in the here and now of
social and political life, rhetoric develops in time and through time. Ironically, the traditional emphasis on individual speeches and speakers as rooted historically in a particular time and place is, in an important sense, anti-historical, because it fails to recognize the impact of rhetorical acts on other rhetorical acts, and it fails to recognize the powerful human forces which fuse recurrent forms into genres which, in an important sense, transcend specific time and place. (1978 26)

According to Campbell and Jamieson (1990), rhetorical genres perform specific functions in specific situations. They say that a genre “persists only as long as it remains a functional response to exigencies” (104). They also say that genres emphasize social and historical areas of rhetoric. Edwin Black (1978) suggests that there are limited situations in which rhetors can find themselves, as well as limitations in how they respond (133). He also says that critics can draw upon historical responses to construct a generic approach to other similar situations (133). It appears from these observations by Campbell, Jamieson, and Black that, by using a generic approach to analyze a particular piece of discourse, critics will be able to understand more fully how a genre has developed over time.

It is also important to consider that when a rhetorical act is identified as a part of a genre, it should, according to Kathryn M. Olson (1993) be “rehistorized” (sic) (299). Olson says that by “rehistorizing (sic) a generic perspective can make a further contribution to the understanding of how the rhetoric of public and social life develops ‘in time and over time’” (300). In other words, rehistorizing can offer insight to the
impact of rhetorical discourse on another rhetorical act, such as what this proposed study hopes to find in the presidential crisis rhetoric of Wilson, George H. W. Bush and George W. Bush.

Also important to the study of rhetorical genre is that genres are subjected to the pressures of changes in expectations of purpose, "and as rhetorical action establishes new precedents, advocates alter and expand existing genres or develop substitute forms better suited to achieve their ends" (Campbell and Jamieson 1990 104). Their example of this type of metamorphosis is found in the chapter on presidential war rhetoric.

Campbell and Jamieson (1978) state that "presidential war rhetoric illustrates both rhetorical continuity and adaptation to altered circumstances" (104). They continue by arguing that throughout the history of the United States, presidential war rhetoric exhibits five fundamental characteristics. These characteristics, according to Campbell and Jamieson are:

(1) every element in it proclaims that the momentous decision to resort to force is deliberate, the product of thoughtful consideration; (2) forceful intervention is justified through a chronicle or narrative from which argumentative claims are drawn; (3) the audience is exhorted to unanimity of purpose and total commitment; (4) the rhetoric not only justifies the use of force but also seeks to legitimize presidential assumption of the extraordinary powers of the commander in chief; and as a function of these other characteristics, (5) strategic misrepresentations play an unusually significant role in its appeals. (105)
A Definition of Crisis Rhetoric and Justification
for the Speeches Selected

The three speeches to be analyzed for this study were chosen because, like those used by earlier critics, they fit into the generally accepted definition of international crisis. Murray Edelman (1977) says that, “the word ‘crisis’ connotes a threat or emergency people must face together” and that it “suggests a need for unity and for common sacrifice” (45).

Michael Brecher and Jonathan Wilkenfeld (1997) also offer a definition of international crisis. They say that,

“There are two defining conditions of an international crisis: (1) a change in type and/or an increase in intensity of disruptive, that is hostile verbal or physical, interactions between two or more states, with a heightened probability of military hostilities; that, in turn, (2) destabilizes their relationship and challenges the structure of an international system — global, dominant, or subsystem.” (5)

Brecher and Wilkenfeld also say that, “crisis is also closely linked to war” (6) and that the “occurrence of war at any point in the evolution of a crisis intensifies disruptive interaction, along with perceived harm and stress” (6). They conclude by saying that, “In fact, war is a subset of crises; that is, all wars result from crises, but not all crises lead to war” (7). Edelman says that war is a response to a foreign threat and that sacrifices are made disproportionately. For example, the groups of people making the majority of sacrifices during war are military personnel and poor people (45).
President Wilson’s speech asking congress to declare war on Germany is one example of how a crisis can lead to war. The events leading up to United States involvement in World War I fit into Brecher and Wilkenfeld’s definition of crisis. American ships were sunk and American lives were lost because of German submarine warfare. Wilson believed it was necessary for the United States, as a newly formed world power, to show its strength and power against a country that he believed did not value human lives and independence. Wilson’s April 2, 1917, speech has not yet been analyzed as a form of presidential international crisis rhetoric and would satisfy Dow’s invitation to study a speech presented prior to World War II. Wilson’s speech will also provide a sample of pre-Cold War rhetoric. Jim A. Kuypers (1997) considers that the Cold War period from 1947 and 1991 is the framing device for presidential crisis rhetoric (15). I argue that Wilson’s speech is a part of the genre of presidential crisis rhetoric and believe my study will prove my argument to be valid.

After the end of the Cold War period, America was faced with “the new post Cold War era” (Foreign Affairs 1990/1991) of peace and negotiation. However, the President was faced with the responsibility to protect America and the world from a dictator with few scruples. President George H. W. Bush was faced with a crisis in the Persian Gulf. For six months prior to the United States’ military action following Saddam Hussein’s attacks on Kuwait, the President worked with other world leaders in the United Nations Security Council to force Saddam Hussein out of Kuwait. This was a time during the “embryonic post-Cold War world order” (Foreign Affairs 1990 – 1991 1), and that domination by a power of an area of the world that held resources “vital to the well-being of the international” (Foreign Affairs 1990 – 1991 1) could not be permitted. President
Bush had begun a secretly approved military operation to bomb Iraq from the air and on the sea that was set to occur in mid-January 1991 (Brecher and Wilkenfeld 1997 317). Brecher and Wilkenfeld state that, “this decision triggered a full-scale crisis for the U.S. because it generated three defining conditions of a crisis — basic value threat, namely the human and material costs of war, finite time, and the higher likelihood of military hostilities” (317). After further attempts to force Saddam Hussein out of Kuwait failed, on January 16, 1991, President Bush announced that military action against Iraq would occur in just a matter of hours. While a number of scholars have analyzed this speech, I will apply Dow’s approach to a generic classification to the text.

Finally, I believe it is important to include an analysis of the speech given by President George W. Bush on September 20, 2001, after the terrorists attacked America. Terrorists had infiltrated the country and attacked the innocent people of the United States on their own soil. On September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and two passenger airlines proved that the United States is not impervious to invasion by people who seek to destroy our country’s quest for peace and power. President George W. Bush was suddenly confronted with encouraging strength in American citizens while dealing with the devastation of lives and collateral damage and making the decision to seek and destroy those responsible for the attacks. On September 20, 2001, Bush addressed the United States Congress and the people of America and the world, announcing America’s intent to destroy any person or country that had any involvement in the events of September 11th. The American people responded as they did in both World War I and World War II; patriotism soared. According to R. Kenton Bird and Elizabeth Barker Brandt, the shock of the attacks on the World Trade Center,
the Pentagon, and two American passenger airlines was even greater than the attacks on Pearl Harbor in 1941. This was a time when United States citizens were confused about what caused the events and wondered about the security of our country.

The selected speeches by Presidents Wilson, George H. W. Bush, and George W. Bush will be analyzed by applying the three factors that Dow calls situational and strategic elements in presidential crisis rhetoric. Again, these factors are (1) response to the situation; (2) the audience’s needs; and (3) the speaker’s purpose (296). Olson says that it is incumbent on the critic to provide evidence of the situation as perceived by the rhetor. This evidence can be drawn from the texts of the discourse and other information concerning the situation examined by the critic.

Whether one is identifying a ‘new’ genre or classifying a rhetorical act as a member of a recognized genre, then, a convincing case that a particular rhetoric (sic) act is an embodiment of a specific genre depends significantly on the critic’s evidence that the rhetor perceived his or her situation in a particular way. The critic’s perception alone that the two situations are similar is insufficient grounds to support the claim that a genre is present. (304)

She continues to caution critics by stating that, “Because different participants (e.g., the rhetor, the immediate audience, later audiences, a critic) may have different, even conflicting perceptions of the rhetor’s situation, it is imperative to elevate one situational perception as authoritative for the purpose of detecting the presence of a genre” (303). Olson also cautions that, “the success of a generic embodiment must be evaluated by examining an intended audience’s response to the rhetor’s choices” (304). In addition,
she says that it is also important to examine how rhetors use historical discourse to benefit their current situation.

Carolyn Miller (1984) offers that for the term “genre” to be useful as a theory or critical approach, it must not simply refer to just any type of discourse. A particular rhetorical genre must be a sound and stable method of classification (151). She continues by stating that genres are “typified rhetorical actions based on recurrent situations” (159).

Miller says that there are specific problems that have not been considered in previous attempts to define a rhetorical genre. One problem, she says, is that the relationship between the rhetor and his/her perception of the situation needs to be understood. Another problem Miller points out is in understanding how (the rhetor’s use of symbolism) and substance (the use of semantics) fuse a generic form together in the situation. A third problem she sees is placing a type of generic discourse on what she calls “a hierarchal scale of generalizations about language use” (155).

Miller provides a rationale for the study of a rhetorical genre. She says:

To base a classification of discourse upon recurrent situation or, more specifically, upon exigence understood as social motive, is to base it upon the typical joint rhetorical actions available at a given point in history and culture. Studying the typical uses of rhetoric, and the forms that it takes in those uses, tells us less about the art of the individual rhetors or the excellence of particular texts than it does about the character of a culture or an historical period. (158)

Examination of the texts for this study should reveal similarities in situation and purpose based on the definition of an international crisis. What the analysis should show
is a difference in response by the audience, both implicitly and explicitly, for each act. In addition, this study should reveal how each of the United States Presidents uses the tradition of the role of the President to rhetorically respond to crisis situations.

With Dow’s invitation to continue the study of presidential crisis rhetoric and the advice of other scholars, such as Olson and Miller, I will examine other works of scholars concerning presidential crisis rhetorical situations, the rhetor’s motives, as well as what scholars say about generic criticism and the function of epideictic, deliberative, and forensic strategies used in presidential crisis rhetoric.

Preview of Following Chapters

Chapter 2, The Literature Review, will include a review and discussion of prior studies concerning presidential crisis rhetoric as a genre, including any current studies of the texts. Since there appear to be very few studies completed by others than Windt, Cherwitz, Zagacki, and Dow, this section may be limited.

Chapter 3 discusses the historical background and rhetorical problems faced by each rhetor during the time leading up to the crisis discourse.

Chapter 4 provides a textual analysis of the discourse by applying the characteristics of crisis rhetoric.

Chapter 5 concludes this study and provides a discussion based on the results of the critical analysis of each of the documents used in this study as they apply to the genre of presidential crisis rhetoric. Questions that will be addressed will include: (1) is rhetorical history being repeated each time a situation occurs where the United States is faced with a threat to its position as the world’s most powerful nation? A number of scholars agree

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that a generic study of discourse is important to discover how rhetorical acts influence one another. If critics observe historical issues concerning crisis rhetoric, situational components will help the critic understand the impact of a rhetorical genre over time; (2) Does the American’s public opinion of the situation and the rhetor affect the intended result of the act?; And finally, (3) are the claims by Dow, Campbell, Jamieson, and others concerning similarities in situation, strategic response and needs of the audience in presidential crisis rhetoric evident in the documents?
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter will examine the definition of an international crisis on which critics have based their studies and how critics explain presidential crisis rhetoric by a review existing literature. A definition of international crisis is important because this type of crisis usually results in military actions or war. The literature that is reviewed in this chapter has been selected because it provides a number of frameworks that can be considered when analyzing presidential crisis rhetoric for a generic classification.

A Definition of International Crisis

Murray Edelman (1977) says that, “the word ‘crisis’ connotes a threat or emergency people must face together” and that it “suggests a need for unity and for common sacrifice” (45).

Michael Brecher and Jonathan Wilkenfeld (1997) also offer a definition of international crisis. They say that,

There are two defining conditions of an international crisis: (1) a change in type and/or an increase in intensity of disruptive, that is hostile verbal or physical, interactions between two or more states, with a heightened probability of military hostilities; that, in turn, (2) destabilizes their
relationship and *challenges* the *structure* of an international system —
global, dominant, or subsystem. (5)

Brecher and Wilkenfeld also say that, “crisis is also closely linked to *war*” (6) and that
the “occurrence of war at any point in the evolution of a crisis intensifies disruptive
interaction, along with perceived harm and stress” (6). They conclude by saying that, “In
fact, war is a subset of crises; that is, all wars result from crises, but not all crises lead to
war” (7). Edelman says that war is a response to a foreign threat and that sacrifices are
made disproportionately. For example, the groups of people making the majority of
sacrifices during war are military personnel, and the poor people (45).

The Definition of International Crisis and Its
Application to Crisis Rhetoric

Prior studies by Theodore Windt, and Richard Cherwitz and Richard Zagacki that
Bonnie J. Dow refers to in her study concern a type of presidential crisis rhetoric that
Windt labels “international crisis rhetoric.” Specificity of this type of rhetoric is
important because crises can take on a broad range of definitions. Windt says that the
term “crisis” became popular during John F. Kennedy’s presidency to describe difficult
decisions Kennedy had to make. Richard Nixon continued to use the term crisis in the
same context during his administration (92) and we hear Presidents using the same term
today.

Windt argues that, “a crisis that does not involve an external military attack on the
United States is a political event rhetorically created by the President in which the public
predictably rallies to his defense” (92). He also argues that tradition and precedents play
a part in the rhetorical act. Windt says that when Presidents declare a situation as a crisis, they first tell the people that a dangerous situation exists and that they, the Presidents, must decide how to address the situation. Secondly, Presidents state that this new situation is a continuation of ongoing serious differences between beliefs and principals. Lastly, Presidents ask the people to take the “moral high ground,” and accept and support the actions they have taken. Windt says that the rhetoric in these types of situations is declaratory (98).

Cherwitz and Zagacki (1986) suggest that the techniques and strategies in presidential crisis rhetoric are of two varieties, justificatory and consummatory. They describe justificatory rhetoric as when the President focuses his remarks on the explanation and rationalization for military retaliation. Consummatory rhetoric, on the other hand, provides a warning or a threat that any future violent acts will be answered. When looking at the language used in both justificatory and consummatory discourse they state that,

both employ deliberate, hard-hitting, offensive language to dramatize perpetration of crises; while attempting to create crisis atmospheres, both seek resolution, eliminating the need for further moves and countermoves which could escalate emergencies to dangerous if not catastrophic levels; and both underscore the importance of American ideals and values, using crises to reinforce and reaffirm the superiority of American democratic principles to aggressive, terroristic and uncivilized attributes exemplified by perpetrators. (309-310)
Cherwitz and Zagacki claim that other differences in the varieties of discourse are found in the tone of the rhetoric. Justificatory rhetoric is “irrevocable, direct and decisive, announcing concrete, definitive” (310) military response to violent actions by a foreign nation. They also say that consummatory discourse is circumspect and “emphasizes the importance of caution, patience, resolve and inner strength in reacting to wrongful deeds” (310) committed by aggressors and the act of patience is depicted as a virtue and not a sign of weakness or indecisiveness.

In a critical analysis of the rhetoric of President Lyndon B. Johnson’s speeches concerning the Tonkin Gulf crisis, Cherwitz (1998) states that, “Although physical moves are usually associated with crisis during conflicts between two nations, it is often the president’s rhetoric that draws attention to the situation, and defines it in such a way that the nation’s response is clearly implied” (100). In his analysis of the speeches presented by President Johnson on August 4 and 5, 1964, Cherwitz says that, “Johnson’s rhetoric created an international crisis” (94). Cherwitz says that in each of his speeches, Johnson’s message revealed a justificatory variety of rhetoric. He also describes the language used in the speech as contributing to the impression of a crisis.

Dow’s study claims that the studies of presidential crisis rhetoric conducted by Windt in 1973, and Cherwitz and Zagacki in 1986, overlook the elements of how different situations that give rise to crisis rhetoric call for different responses. Dow looks at three speeches by President Ronald Reagan: the address in September, 1983 following an attack on a Korean airliner by the Soviet Union; the address on the events in Lebanon and Grenada in October of 1983; and the April 1986 speech following the United States air strikes on Libya (295).
Dow describes these speeches as having occurred because of two different situations. She says that, in the case of the speeches concerning the Korean airliner and the events in Lebanon when United States Marines were attacked and killed by hostile forces, the American public had already perceived that events were a significant crisis before the President gave his address (295). Then, in the case of Grenada and Libya, it was the President’s address stating the action taken by America against the terrorist attacks that resulted in the public’s perception of the situations as crises (295). She goes on to argue that there is an important difference in these two types of crisis rhetoric. In the instance of Reagan’s speech concerning Lebanon, current public opinion was that a crisis existed, yet in the instance of the other two speeches, Reagan’s rhetoric created the crises in order to gain public support for the action taken. Dow then states that there are three factors that vary significantly in different types of crisis situations. These factors are response to the situation, the audience’s needs; and the speaker’s purpose (296).

Dow contends that the study of presidential crisis rhetoric should take into consideration the exigencies giving rise to the discourse, that different situations require different responses, and that crisis rhetoric should be analyzed based on an understanding of how the rhetorical discourse responds to the exigencies created by the situation (295). An earlier article by Lloyd F. Bitzer (1968) supports Dow’s contention.

Bitzer states that the “situation is the source and ground of rhetorical activity and [...] of rhetorical criticism” (6). He claims that there are three components of any rhetorical situation: exigence, the audience, and constraints (6). According to Bitzer, a controlling exigence will serve as the organizing factor in the rhetorical situation. This controlling exigence will specify “the audience to be addressed and the change to be
effected” (7). The audience will consist of those people who can be influenced by the rhetoric and can serve as “mediators of change” (8). The limitations, or constraints as stated by Bitzer, which are a part of the rhetorical situation are made up of “people, events, objects and relations which are parts of the situation because they have the power to constrain decision and action needed to modify the exigence” (8). Bitzer continues by stating, “There are two main classes of constraints. The first is those originated or managed by the rhetor and his method, and the second, those other constraints, in the situation, which may be operative” (8). He also says that the rhetor must know which constraints must be determined as either proper or improper for the situation.

Bitzer’s analysis can be compared to a study conducted by James W. Pratt (1970). Pratt claims that, “Events of crisis should produce rhetorical acts which are related to the situation of crisis” (194), and that the speeches presented during crisis situations should have “distinctive identifiable characteristics” (194). He examines three speeches delivered at different times of “generally recognized international crisis” (195). The speeches were delivered by President Dwight Eisenhower on October 31, 1956, concerning the Suez crisis, President John Kennedy on October 22, 1962, about the Cuban missile crisis, and by President Lyndon Johnson on August 4, 1964, during the Gulf of Tonkin crisis.

Pratt’s analyses of the speeches revealed that Eisenhower and Johnson’s situations shared the same characteristics in that the American audience already knew about the events. Kennedy’s speech, however, did not share the same characteristics because most of the American public probably did not know about the crisis situation, and Americans were hearing about it for the first time. Pratt says that each of the presidents assumed
different roles that affected the type of speeches that were delivered. He claims that both Eisenhower and Johnson assumed the role of "reporter," while Kennedy spoke in the first person and as the President. He continues by saying that,

An examination of the public responses to these speeches – or the critical reactions to them – might also suggest which of these strategies is most effective or appropriate in crisis settings. On the basis of these three speeches, it appears that the speaking characteristics of the president involved and the specific nature of the crisis setting combine to determine the type of speech which will result [. . .]. (202)

Pratt concludes by stating that examining the speeches as a rhetorical genre should add to the process of our understanding of communication during crisis situations (203).

The Argument Against Generic Classification of International Crisis Rhetoric

There are some scholars who believe that classification of presidential international crisis rhetoric as a genre results in ambivalence. Blair and Houck argue that the studies of presidential crisis rhetoric as a genre pose two ambivalences – one concerning the status of the genre and the other concerning the relationship of the situation to the crisis rhetoric (92). They refer to Pratt’s study as evading the issue of what constitutes a genre of presidential crisis rhetoric by merely assuming there are clear cases of crisis rhetoric, and proceed to criticize Windt for assuming the particular genre and simply using his analysis of Kennedy’s Cuban Missile crisis speech and Nixon’s Cambodia speech to support the genre’s characteristics (Blair and Houck 93). They also criticize Cherwitz
and Zagacki for agreeing with other scholars that the genre exists; yet they deny that their study defines a generic classification. Blair and Houck also argue that Dow is ambivalent concerning the generic classification of presidential crisis rhetoric because, Dow argues, not all of the presidential rhetoric relating to crises has been examined (Blair and Houck 94). Turning from the ambivalence in the status of the genre, Blair and Houck discuss the ambivalence in the relationship of the situation to the rhetoric.

Arguing that critics have either considered or assumed that there is a relationship between situation and crisis rhetoric, Blair and Houck offer examples of what critics say about situation. They state that both Pratt and Windt stipulate a limitation of the situation by examining speeches involving international circumstances; Cherwitz and Zagacki studied speeches concerning attacks on American property or people by foreign powers; and Dow examined speeches concerning military attacks on American non-combatants outside of wartime (Blair and Houck 95). Blair and Houck argue that a generic claim of crisis rhetoric cannot be limited to international crises and offer Windt’s characterization of the stages of crisis rhetoric to support their claim. They go on to say that “philosophical arguments over rhetoric’s general situated or situation-generating character at large” (97) cannot support Dow’s claim of two types of crisis rhetoric - rhetorical responses to “real” crises, and rhetorical responses that create crises (Blair and Houck 97). Blair and Houck then offer a solution to what they believe to be difficulties experienced by Windt, Cherwitz, Zagacki, and Dow to generically categorize crisis rhetoric. They say that critics should consider “rethinking rhetorical genre as a critical heuristic” (98) therefore making the generic category a hypothetical premise. In essence, Blair and Houck believe that a generic classification limits how speeches are analyzed.
They state that critics are not “confined to the question: What speeches are contained within this genre? She or he may ask instead: What is this speech like if it is read as a crisis speech?” (99).

Blair and Houck use this premise to analyze Nixon’s speeches on his Vietnamization policy on November 13, 1969, the Cambodian incursion speech of April 30, 1970, his speech regarding mining Haiphong Harbor delivered on May 8, 1972, and three other speeches not related to international events. They treat these examples of “presidential crisis rhetoric as an entreaty by a president to the nation to see itself seriously and immediately threatened and to conduct itself as such” (99), and addressed the issues of situation, perception, and honesty. Blair and Houck found that there were “striking similarities’ (107) in all of the speeches, which seemed to them remarkable because the situations in which they were delivered were not the same.

Three of Nixon’s speeches concerned circumstances in the Vietnam conflict, a fourth speech concerned issues of economic policy, and the last two concerned the Watergate investigation (107). Blair and Houck were able to find one common element in all of the speeches – “either a potential threat to Nixon’s political status or the complete absence of threat to him or the nation. In fact, threats to Nixon’s popularity, ideology, or status in office appear to have been the only ‘crisis’ addressed by these speeches, even though each crisis was couched as a threat to a larger group or principal” (108).

The heuristic approach of simply analyzing speeches as crisis rhetoric has been taken by a number of other critics. Amos Kiewe (1994) compiled a collection of essays that studied presidential crisis rhetoric from Truman through George H. W. Bush that include Blair and Houck’s study. Kiewe supports the notion that critics who have argued for a
generic classification have been challenged. He notes that the purpose of his compilation is to enlighten the student of presidential crisis rhetoric of the role of the president during a crisis situation and to illuminate certain features and patterns of presidential behaviors as the behaviors relate to the speeches. The essays included are representative of a longitudinal study of various discourses of a crisis’s life cycle, or of several crises in one presidency (xv) and depict how presidents construct their responses during crisis situations. Examples of the studies included are: Robert L. Ivie’s “Declaring a National Emergency: Truman’s Rhetorical Crisis and the Great Debate of 1951;” “Eisenhower, Little Rock, and the Rhetoric of Crisis” by Martin J. Medhurst; Enrico Pucci, Jr.’s “Crisis as Pretext: John F. Kennedy and the Rhetorical Construction of the Berlin Crisis;” and Kurt Ritter’s “Lyndon B. Johnson’s Crisis Rhetoric after the Assassination of John F. Kennedy: Securing Legitimacy and Leadership.” Crisis rhetoric of Presidents Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, and two studies concerning the rhetoric of George H. W. Bush are also part of Kiewe’s compilation. Kiewe advises critics to be “cautious not to be constrained by the generic approach and to consider crisis rhetoric as a premise to be used in reading a variety of speeches” (xxxiii).

While Kiewe examines crisis rhetoric during the Cold War Era, Jim A. Kuypers looks at the Post Cold War crisis rhetoric of President Bill Clinton. Kuypers’ study concerns how a president is able to construct a response to a crisis situation without being able to draw from the Cold War meta-narrative in order to frame the situation as an international crisis (3), and how the press can frame the situation so that the public will interpret it “in a specific manner” (10). By implementing Windt’s theory of crisis formation, Kuypers studies how a president uses resources to frame the situation as a crisis. He “takes the
position that the study of presidential crisis rhetoric should not primarily approach an
event as an example of crisis (Cherwitz and Zagacki) or examine a speech/text through a
genre of crisis (Blair and Houck) or suggest a situation is already perceived as a crisis
(Dow 28). Instead, Kuypers' study suggests that researchers would learn more about the
discourse if they examine “the interplay of various texts and contexts that act to alter the
situation and public perception of the situation” (28). Therefore, he says that, “criticism
of presidential crisis rhetoric should be a blend of discursive and material conditions”
(28). Kuypers claims that his study contributes to the understanding of presidential crisis
rhetoric by advancing the notion of the rhetoric “as an inter-animation of text and context
within situational constraints,” (29) as it occurs after the Cold War. The study also
contributes to the understanding of the role of the printed press as it relates to presidential
crisis rhetoric.

A Summary of Framework

Each of the scholars previously noted in this chapter have applied certain theories or
frameworks by which they have attempted to classify the rhetoric. Windt says that
historical precedents play a part in the rhetoric. Cherwitz and Zagacki state that the
rhetoric takes on either a justificatory or consummatory tone. Dow argues that different
situations call for different responses, and it appears that her theory is supported to some
degree by both Bitzer and Pratt. While we have seen how Kuypers implements Windt’s
theory in his compilation of studies, no other research was found that applied the other
scholars’ theories.
In keeping with the purpose of this study to further the research for a generic classification of presidential international crisis rhetoric, I intend to use a combination of Windt’s historical perspective of the rhetoric and Dow’s framework and apply them to the three selected speeches. This study will provide a comparison of situational constraints that may have required certain responses. One of the questions to be addressed is whether or not the situation was a political event rhetorically created by the President as Windt stated. Also, the language used by each of the rhetors will be compared in the attempt to classify the rhetoric in a generic sense. Audience’s responses will also be examined to contribute to the understanding of the effectiveness of the rhetorical response to the situation.

The next chapter of this thesis will be an historical account of each of the rhetorical problems faced by each of the presidents, and will reveal similarities in each president’s situation. Most of the studies concerning international crisis rhetoric have involved the Cold War era. The rhetoric examined in this study occurred prior to and after the Cold War era. This, I believe, will further support the framework of both Windt and Dow for the generic classification of presidential crisis rhetoric.
CHAPTER 3

AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE AND
THE RHETORICAL PROBLEM

The previous chapter introduced a definition of international crisis rhetoric and provided a review of some of the studies offered by scholars to understand the characteristics of presidential international crisis rhetoric. This chapter will provide a brief background of Presidents Wilson, George H. W. Bush, and George W. Bush. Then, the crises and rhetorical problems faced by the presidents will be described to answer the question of how the crises are defined based on situations as stated in the presidential rhetoric.

A Brief Background of the Presidents

Woodrow Wilson was elected to his first term as President of the United States in 1912. With only two years of experience in politics as Governor of the State of New Jersey, Wilson was recognized during his time of being governor as a possible candidate for the presidency (U.S. Presidents xii). Prior to entering politics, Wilson was a scholar. He held a law degree from the University of Virginia, and received a Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins University. Wilson was also an accomplished student of government and wrote two books, Congressional Government and Constitutional Government, as well as a
number of articles published in the "Overland Monthly" in 1904 (Lippman 13). Another notable fact about Wilson is that he studied rhetoric at Davidson College and Princeton University and he "prized rhetorical performance" (Buhite xvi).

While Wilson was adept at composing and delivering substantive discourse due to his schooling, America’s 41st President, George H. W. Bush’s formal educational background is very different. Unlike the scholarly education of Wilson, George H. W. Bush attended the prestigious, private, Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts, and excelled in sports. He enlisted in the United State’s Navy after graduation and served as a distinguished Navy pilot. After his military service, George H. W. Bush enrolled in Yale University as a student of economics, and graduated in 1948. He then became very successful in the oil business in Texas prior to beginning his political career. Bush was elected United States President in 1988 and served one term. As noted on the Whitehouse’s official Web site, his political experience includes serving two terms as the Congressional representative from Texas, Ambassador to the United Nations, Chairman of the Republican National Committee, Chief of the United States Liaison Office in the People’s Republic of China, and the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. He served as Vice President of the United States for President Ronald Reagan from 1981 through 1988. His first born son, George W., followed some of the same paths in the areas of education and in politics.

According to his biographical information available on the Whitehouse official Web site, Whitehouse.gov, George W. Bush, like his father, received his formal education at Yale University. He served as an F-102 fighter pilot in the Texas Air National Guard. He then earned a Master of Business Administration degree from Harvard Business
School, followed by a career in the energy business. The younger Bush’s first entry into politics was working on his father’s presidential campaign. Before entering the political arena as Governor of Texas for two terms, he purchased a baseball franchise and served as the general manager of the Texas Rangers.

While President Wilson was certainly more adept at political discourse than either of the Bushes, the office of the presidency gave each of these men an opportunity to persuade their American publics and members of the federal government to accept their decisions regarding actions taken, or to be taken, in the events of international crises.

The Crises and Rhetorical Problems

Wilson’s Crisis

Theodore Windt says that, “[t]he President’s perception of the situation and the rhetoric he uses to describe it mark an event as a crisis” (92). Upon a review of the situation leading up to America’s involvement in World War I, this concept is evident in Woodrow Wilson’s speech to Congress asking for a declaration of war on Germany.

Up until the attacks on the British Steamer, Falaba, on March 28, 1915, the American public believed that the Great War being fought in Europe would not interfere with American lives. They then found out that an American citizen, Leon C. Thrasher, drowned as a result of a German U-2 submarine torpedoing the Falaba (Tansill 252). On April 28, 1915, an American steamship, the Cushing, was attacked by a German seaplane, and on May 1, 1915, the Gulflight, an American tanker, was torpedoed (Tansill 262). American lives were lost on the Cushing, two crewman of the Gulflight drowned, and the Gulflight’s captain was reported to have died of shock (Tansill 262). Then, two
days after the attack on the Gulflight, a German submarine torpedoed the Lusitania in the waters near Ireland’s southern coast (Tansill 265). With the loss of more American lives, public opinion was mobilized against submarine warfare. Wilson, however, worked diligently to maintain neutrality. The main issue of 1916 was the war. The Democratic Party’s campaign slogan was, “He kept us out of war.” (Whitney & Whitney 235).

According to Francine Sanders Romero, while citizens generally supported Wilson’s position for the United States to remain neutral, “preparedness advocates argued that this stance should not be pursued at the expense of military readiness” (102). Those advocates were urging funding for the military and instituting a draft for personnel. When Wilson ultimately conceded to demand funding for the military, he was criticized for moving the United States closer to entering the war (Romero 102). When Germany continued the attacks at sea without regard to the rights of humanity, Wilson addressed the Congress of the United States declaring Germany’s actions as a war against the United States and its citizens and that Congress must “take immediate steps not only to put the country in a more thorough state of defense but also to exert all its power and employ all its resources to bring the Government of the German Empire to terms and end the war” (Wilson’s 4/2/17 speech, par. 6).

**Wilson’s Rhetorical Problem**

Wilson’s rhetorical problem was to convince the Congress, and then the American public, that he had no choice but to ask for a declaration of war on Germany in order to protect freedom for all people in the world. A believer in the principal that only Congress had the right to declare war, Wilson began his speech with, “I have called the Congress into extraordinary session because there are serious, very serious, choices of
policy to be made, and made immediately, which it was neither right nor constitutionally permissible that I should assume the responsibility of making” (par. 1). His argument was simply stated:

There are, it may be, many months of fiery trial and sacrifice ahead of us. It is a fearful thing to lead this great peaceful people into war, into the most terrible and disastrous of all wars, civilization itself seems in the balance. But the right is more precious than peace, and we shall fight for the things which we have always carried nearest our hearts, - for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own governments, for the rights and liberties of small nations, for a universal dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples as shall bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world itself at last free. (par. 19)

President Wilson described to Congress the events that he believed created the crisis. The fact that American lives were being affected by the actions of a foreign government, and that the motives of the German Government were against America’s values of freedom for all people in the world supported Windt’s conclusion that a crisis situation existed.

George H. W. Bush’s Crisis

Almost 74 years later, American’s were told that the United States would again enter a war on foreign soil. President George H. W. Bush appeared on national television to describe the military action by American forces against Iraq’s occupation of Kuwait. This situation also follows Windt’s characterization of a crisis.
Just as Wilson watched the fighting in Europe escalate, Bush and the American public at large watched tensions build in the Persian Gulf. According to Lester H. Brune (1993), the last two years of the war between Iran and Iraq resulted in the formation of a multinational naval force to ensure that the Gulf’s oil shipping lanes remained open. Under the administration of President Ronald Reagan, the United States and other Western nations provided advanced weapons to Baghdad. Both Iran and Iraq complied with the demand for a cease fire, ending the war in August of 1988. Not all of the Washington leadership believed that Saddam Hussein had changed his radical views. Some believed that he would use military strength against Israel with the weapons America had provided. Brune states that the official policy of the Regan-Bush administration was to continue doing business with Iraq because it would benefit “the U.S. trade balance and strengthen Washington’s pursuit of international restrictions on Iraq’s chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons” (47). This policy continued through the end of Reagan’s administration and into Bush’s early term. There continued to be a division of hard and soft-line factions. Then, on March 22, 1990, the Senate approved the Jerusalem resolution that recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. Congress approved the resolution on the following April 24th. While Bush did not support the resolution, he failed to lobby strongly against it. The American public had no understanding of the issue because President Bush and the State Department continued to recognize Tel Aviv as the capital of Israel. When a delegation of Senators visited Saddam Hussein in Iraq within a month after passing the resolution, Hussein began his campaign to discredit the United States and convince the media that the United States and Israel were plotting against the Arabs (Brune 49).
Hussein continued making fanatical statements against the United States such as the Arab people would suffer because the Soviets lost power to the United States. He stressed that the United States was now the dominant power in the Middle East and that America must withdraw their ships from the Persian Gulf. He also said he wanted the Arab states to pull their financial interests in American and Western European companies and invest in Eastern European companies and in the Soviet Union (Brune 50). The problem that faced the Bush administration was that they had perceived Hussein as a moderate, when in fact they had helped to create a monster that could destroy the Middle East (Brune 52). Saddam Hussein began his campaign of destruction with the attack on Kuwait.

According to an account of Desert Storm compiled by writers, editors, and correspondents of Time Warner Publishing, President George H. W. Bush first heard of the attacks on Kuwait on August 1, 1990 at 6:30 P.M. (Friedrick 11). Crown Prince Sheik Saad al-Abdullah al-Sabah called the American Embassy in Kuwait almost three hours later, asking for help and also asking that his request remain confidential. An hour later he called again to officially ask for help from the United States Government, no longer concerned about public knowledge (Freidrick 11). It was not possible for an immediate response of U.S. Troops because the closest military forces were some 3,000 miles away in the Indian Ocean. While the United States could not immediately respond to the cry for help, President Bush was meeting with his advisors to consider options.

The very next day, President Bush met with reporters in the cabinet room at the White House. Bush delivered a brief statement at a press conference on August 2, 1990, condemning the Iraqi military invasion of Kuwait and stated, “We call for the immediate
withdrawal of all Iraqi forces.” He also informed the press in his statement that he was exercising his authority under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act and had signed an Executive Order freezing Iraqi assets in the United States and prohibiting any transactions with Iraq. Bush stated that the State Department had been in contact with the governments of other countries urging their condemnation of Iraqi aggression, and that it was important for the international community to act together to remove the Iraqi forces from Kuwait immediately.

George H. W. Bush’s Rhetorical Problem

Gallup polls indicated that the American public was highly supportive of Bush’s actions. However, the closer it came to American troops being deployed to fight for the freedom of Kuwait, the polls revealed a decrease in public support. By January of 1991, polls indicated that public support for both continuing sanctions against Iraq and going to war with Hussein was waning. Bush’s approval rate decreased from 70% to 50% (Brune 1993). The biggest problem Bush faced was the public’s fear that this war would be just like Vietnam (Rosenthal 1991, Brune 1993, and Pollock 1994).

In the June 15, 1991 edition of the New York Times, Andrew Rosenthal reported the results of a New York Times/CBS News poll. The poll showed that 58 per cent of the 1512 people questioned approved of how the President was handling the crisis. This group also provided insight to the public’s expectations of the anticipated military action against Iraq. According to the article, most of the people questioned “said that they expected the war to last several months to more than a year, to require heavy combat on the ground, produce thousands of American deaths, and make a major attack by Iraqi
agents within the United States likely” (Rosenthal 1991). President Bush again tried to assure people when he said in his January 16, 1991 speech,

I’ve told the American people before that this will not be another Viet Nam, and I repeat this here tonight. Our troops will have the best possible support in the entire world, and they will not be asked to fight with one hand tied behind their back. I’m hopeful that this fighting will not go on for long and that casualties will be held to an absolute minimum. (par. 16)

President Bush described to the people of America and the world the events that perpetuated the crisis. The actions of the enemy as described by the President in his speech and witnessed by people all over the world via the vast spectrum of available media supported Windt’s conclusion that a crisis situation existed.

George W. Bush’s Crisis

While Presidents Wilson and George H. W. Bush and the American public were able to prepare for the United States involvement in World War I and the Persian Gulf War, President George W. Bush and Americans faced a totally different situation that lead America in to yet another battle. This time it was not about U. S. citizens being attacked on foreign soil. This time it was about America under attack on its own soil without any warning.

On September 11, 2001, the American public watched as commercial airliners flew into the World Trade Center towers in New York City, and another commercial airliner flew in to the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. Then, another commercial airliner went down in a field near Pittsburgh. While the buildings spewed fire and smoke and people ran away from the devastation, fellow Americans and people around the world watched
and listened to the reports broadcast over television and radio. We were living a nightmare in broad daylight.

According to The 9/11 Commission Report (Report) four hijacked commercial planes began their assault on America. The first commercial airliner hit the World Trade Center’s North Tower at 8:46 AM. The South Tower was hit by a second airliner at 9:03 AM. Thirty-four minutes later, a third airliner hit the western face of the Pentagon. Then, at 10:03 AM a fourth airliner crashed in a field near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The total number if people killed by these four separate attacks totaled more than 2,981, surpassing the number of people killed by the attacks by the Japanese at Pearl Harbor in 1941. The United States was under attack by terrorists.

According to the Report, America should not have been surprised, even though everyone in America was shocked at the attack on American soil. Terrorist attacks on Americans had been ensuing for a decade. First there was the attack on the World Trade Center with a truck bomb in February of 1993. Attacks on United States Citizens in Riyadh and Dhahran, Saudi Arabia killed 24 Americans and wounded hundreds of others in 1995.

It was 1997 before the United States intelligence community recognized Osama Bin Laden as a terrorist leader. Bin Laden publicly declared that “it was God’s decree that every Muslim should try his utmost to kill any American, military or civilian, anywhere in the world because of America’s ‘occupation’ of Islam’s holy places, and aggression against Muslims” (Report 2-3).

The Report states that Bin Laden’s group, al Qaeda, killed 224 people, which included 24 Americans, and wounded thousands more people by simultaneous truck
bomb attacks on American embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, in August of 1998. A plot to bomb hotels frequented by American tourists was thwarted by Jordanian police in December of 1999. That same month, U.S. Customs agents arrested a member of al Qaeda at the Canadian border who was trying to smuggle in explosives to use to attack the Los Angeles International Airport. Then in October of 2000, an American destroyer, the USS Cole, was attacked with a motorboat filled with explosives. A hole blown in the side of the ship almost sank the vessel and the explosion killed 17 American sailors. But nothing in the past compared to the “wake-up call” all Americans and the United States government got on the morning of September 11, 2001.

According to an article in the New York Times by David Sanger and Don Van Natta, when the news of the first airliner hitting a tower at Trade Center reached the President, he was about to enter a classroom full of children at an elementary school in Sarasota, Florida. Not knowing it to be other than an accident, he decided to stay at the event. Just minutes later, he was advised of the second airliner hitting the other tower. President Bush remained in his seat listening to the school children read as he received this news and lingered for a few minutes after the children had finished. Then minutes later, appearing before cameras in a classroom filled with teachers, staff and children, he announced to the world the apparent terrorist attack on the World Trade Center. He then said he would be returning to the White House immediately.

George W. Bush’s Rhetorical Problem

Bush had only been in office for just over seven months, and the way he got there was still questionable to many. Bush needed to convince the American public that he was up to the challenge of taking control of this situation and helping the country heal.
R. W. Apple, Jr. provides an analysis of George W. Bush’s election to the presidency in an article in *The New York Times*. He states, “Mr. Bush became the first president since Harrison in 1888 to lose the popular vote but win the Electoral College. Only the intervention of the United States Supreme Court, itself as deeply divided as possible, 5 votes to 4, tipped the Electoral College vote in Mr. Bush’s favor” (par. 3). Janet Elder reported in her article dated December 18, 2000 in *The New York Times* that, according to a CBS News poll, Bush would need to build public support.

Speaking to the American Public from the Texas House of Representatives after the Supreme Courts decision, *The New York Times* quoted Bush as stating, “I was not elected to serve one party, but to serve one nation. [...] Whether you voted for me or not, I will do my best to serve your interests [...] and I will work to earn your respect.” (Sanger).

Coupling the resulting controversy of the election was Bush’s limited political experience. As Sanger also stated, Bush had only traveled abroad three times, not including his numerous trips to Mexico, and would be responsible for dealing with crises in the Middle East, and a division within his own political party concerning China, and Russia’s new assertiveness. So the question after the events of 9/11 was: Was this President capable of strong leadership?

In an October 7, 2001, article in the *New York Times*, D. T. Max says, “In a time of national crisis, words are key to the presidency. Too many and people tune out; too few and they think he is hiding.” This president was not the most eloquent speaker and what he had to say to the world would require careful construction.
Conclusion

This historical review describes international situations that fit in with Michael Brecher and Jonathan Wilkenfeld’s (1997) definition of international crisis. Brecher and Wilkenfeld say that the two defining conditions of an international crisis are a change in the type and/or an increase in intensity of disruptive (hostile verbal or physical) interactions between two or more states, with a increased probability of military hostilities, and a destabilization of their relationship that challenges the structure of a global, dominant international system or subsystem (5). In the case of Wilson’s situation, Germany had become a physical threat to the other neutral and friendly nations and United States, challenging “the principals of peace and justice in the life of the world” (Wilson par. 11). Saddam Hussein’s actions against the people of Kuwait are described by George H. W. Bush as “an affront to mankind and a challenge to the freedom of all” (par. 21). And, George W. Bush describes the attacks on the World Trade Towers and the Pentagon as an act of war against the country by “enemies of freedom” (par. 12).

The next chapter will compare their situations and apply Dow’s theoretical perspective of crisis rhetoric to the texts to illustrate which strategies, either epideictic or deliberative, or a combination of both, are most appropriate based on each of the situations. In addition, I will examine how the rhetoric reflects the personality of the individual and how their audiences react to the discourse.
CHAPTER 4

A TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

The previous chapter presented historical details of the situations and the rhetorical problems faced by each of the presidents. A definition of an international crisis was applied to each situation to determine whether it satisfied the conditions of a crisis. This chapter will apply the characteristic of crisis rhetoric in the analysis of the three speeches selected for this study.

Characteristics of Crisis Rhetoric

Bonnie J. Dow says that different situations require different discursive responses. The discourse can be either deliberative or epideictic depending on the exigence for the discourse and the function that the discourse performs. According to Dow, an important component in the strategies applied to the discourse is the audience's role "in defining the function of crisis rhetoric" (297). Dow admits that situations can also require elements of both epideictic and deliberative strategies in the discourse with one of the strategies taking prominence.

Dow, however, does not take into consideration Aristotle's definition of deliberative oratory. According to Aristotle, deliberative (political) oratory concerns future actions or events (1335) whereas in Dow's interpretation, presidents use deliberative strategies to "establish the expediency of action taken in an effort to gain public support" (296). In
other words, presidents use deliberative strategies to convince the audience that they made the right decision in taking the appropriate action. This explanation would seem to me more like using forensic strategies which, in Aristotle’s definition, defend the actions already taken by presidents. While some would argue that forensic oratory takes place in a court room in front of a judge and possibly a jury, I would argue that the public audience is the jury.

The Method

The method used in this study to analyze Wilson’s and the two Bush’s speeches is to apply epideictic, deliberative and forensic strategies, or a combination of strategies, to the discourse based on the situation the rhetor faced and the needs of the audience. This method should result in a better understanding of whether or not the discourse was successful in meeting the needs of the audience, based on the different situations.

Aristotle explains that the three types of discourses are determined by the listeners of the speeches. He says that ceremonial (epideictic) discourse “either praises or censures somebody,” (1335) and the audience are merely observers. Political speaking (deliberative discourse) urges the audience “to do or not do something” (1335). The deliberative audience Aristotle referred to was made up of legislative bodies. Forensic discourse either “attacks or defends somebody” (1335), and the audience is found in a case of law, for example, a jury. Aristotle also explains that these three types of discourse also refer to three different periods in time. Epideictic speakers are concerned with the present time. Deliberative discourse concerns itself with the future, and forensic discourse concerns itself with the past.
Celeste Michelle Condit (1985) argued that Aristotle’s classification of epideictic rhetoric no longer applied to modern rhetoric because, she claims, all types of rhetoric contain some measure of praise and blame. In order for critics to understand more fully the functions of epideictic rhetoric, Condit assembled a set of shared characteristics of epideictic discourse. These shared characteristics included the three functional pairs of “definition/understanding, shaping/sharing of community, and display/entertainment” (291). This updated definition of Aristotle’s classification of epideictic discourse allows the critic to address the message content of the rhetoric more completely.

A brief discussion of each classification of discourse is provided prior to applying the strategies to the speeches.

Epideictic

According to Dow, the aim of epideictic strategies in crisis rhetoric is to provide communal understanding of what has taken place. She says that until the event is somehow aligned with past experiences, including communal beliefs and values, the community cannot completely understand the meaning of the event (297). Therefore, they must be given guidelines that can help them interpret the experience.

Condit says that epideictic strategies serve three functions for both the rhetor and the audience. These functions include “understanding and definition, sharing and creation of community, and entertainment and display” (284). One element of each pair fulfills needs for the rhetor, and the other fulfills needs for the audience. Condit argues that epideictic rhetoric will include at least one set of these functional pairs. The understanding and definition functional pair is said to “explain a social world” (288). This function, Condit says, plays a critical role in declarations of war, and allows the
rhetor to explain an issue in terms of the audience’s frame of values and beliefs, thereby making the event less threatening and confusing (288). This function also serves to give power to the rhetor.

The functional pair of sharing and creation of community is important in epideictic discourse because human beings need some form of symbolic sharing. Condit says that a sense of community is shaped and maintained by hearing about the community’s legacy and character. When there is a crisis, such as war, epideictic discourse will help the community discover what the event means, and “what the community will come to be in the “face of the new event” (289).

Finally, the third functional pair of entertainment and display invites rhetors to present their eloquence. Condit defines “eloquence” as “a combination of truth, beauty and power in human speech, and is a unique capacity of humanity” (290). Although crisis rhetoric is not at all entertaining, the ability of rhetors to display eloquence also gives them credibility as a powerful leader. Eloquence, Condit says, is the manifestation of the qualities of truth, beauty, power, and humanness. In epideictic speeches, the audience is the judge of the degree of eloquence presented by the speaker.

**Deliberative**

Aristotle calls deliberative oratory “political speaking” (1335). He says that this type of speech urges the audience to take or not take a particular course of action. The speaker “aims at establishing the expediency or the harmfulness of the proposed course of action” (1335) by providing evidence that the results will be positive or negative, he urges acceptance or rejection. Aristotle speaks of actions that occur in the future, not those that have already been taken. In contrast, Dow claims that the aim of deliberative strategies in
crisis rhetoric is to gain public support for the actions already taken (302). This type of discourse, according to Dow, must highlight the “deliberative characteristic of the process, in order to reassure a democratic society that has negative memories of secret wars” (302). In essence, she is not asking the audience to determine what action should be taken, but to support the president, whether or not the audience agrees with the action. This would lead to the idea that the oratory could assume a forensic approach.

Forensic

According to Aristotle, forensic oratory “either attacks or defends somebody” (1335). It is the goal of the orator to establish that the action taken is either justified or not.

Modern presidents who face international crisis use their executive powers to act prior to convincing Congress or the public of the necessity to take military action against an unprovoked attack on innocent people. The ultimate objective is to convince the Congress and the public that their actions were justified.

The examination of each of the texts will show that each of the strategies, epideictic strategies that Dow describes as fulfilling a function of allowing the audiences to understand the events that have occurred, deliberative strategies that urge a specific course of action, and forensic strategies that convince the audience that the only course of action that could have been pursued was justified, are present in presidential international crisis rhetoric.

Wilson’s April 2, 1917, Speech

In my opinion, Woodrow Wilson was the most eloquent of the three presidents whose speeches are analyzed in this study. A scholar of rhetoric, Wilson is credited with changing how presidents communicated with Congress and the American public. James
W. Caeser, Glen E. Thurow, Jeffrey Tulis and Joseph M. Bessette say that Wilson's view of presidential speech is that it should articulate what is in peoples' hearts (9). They state that:

The Wilsonian concept of the rhetorical presidency consists of two interfused elements. First, the President should employ oratory to create an active public opinion that, if necessary, will pressure the Congress into accepting his program: 'he [the President] has no means of compelling Congress except through public opinion.' In advancing policy, deliberative, intra-branch rhetoric thus becomes secondary to popular rhetoric, and the president speaks to Congress not directly, but through his popular addresses. Second, in order to reach and move the public, the character of the rhetoric must tap the public's feelings and articulate its wishes. (10)

Wilson's April 2, 1917, speech to Congress asking for a declaration of war against Germany not only reiterates the events that have lead up to the need for the discourse, but also reveals strategies that Dow says assigns a communal meaning to the events. The beginning of Wilson's speech reveals Condit's definition/understanding functional pair. At the start of his speech, President Wilson describes the events that have taken place over the preceding two months during which German submarines had sunk ships in the Mediterranean. Wilson wanted to keep America out of the war, but there no longer seemed a choice. While innocent American lives were being taken,

Vessels of every kind, whatever their flag, their character, their cargo, their destination, their errand, have been ruthlessly sent to the bottom [of
Dow contends that even though the majority of the audience may not be involved in the crisis, there is still a need for communal understanding because of the confusion created by the events. The nation as a whole needs to understand how the nation will proceed. In addition, there is a need for the discourse to “disassociate the nation from responsibility for the crisis” (297). Wilson points out that American ships, “vessels of every kind . . . vessels of friendly neutrals . . . hospital ships” were sunk, not by ships manned by Americans, but by the Germans.

Wilson describes the infiltration of spies to America at the beginning of the war that were under the “direction of official agents of the Imperial Government accredited to the Government of the United States” (par. 12). It is not America’s fault that it has been put in a position of defending its freedom and democracy, nor is it the fault of the people of Germany “but only in the selfish designs of a Government that did what it pleased and told its people nothing” (par. 12). He tells his audience that the German government has no intent on being a friend to the United States, and that it will “act against our peace and security at its convenience” (par. 12).

Wilson describes neutrality as “no longer feasible or desirable where the peace of the
world is involved and the freedom of its peoples, and the menace to that peace and freedom lies in the existence of autocratic governments backed by organized force which is controlled wholly by their will, not by the will of their people” (par. 8). He reminds his audience that it is not the fault of the German people, but of their government. He says, “We have no feeling towards them but one of sympathy and friendship,” and reminds them that the German government made the decision to take their country to war, “war determined upon as wars used to be determined upon in the old, unhappy days when peoples were nowhere consulted by their rulers and wars were provoked and waged in the interest of dynasties or of little groups of ambitious men who were accustomed to use their fellow men as pawns and tools” (par. 9).

Wilson believed that it was the president’s responsibility to use presidential rhetorical power to instill in the minds of an American community the “meaning of America” (Andrews 132). In many of his speeches to the American public, Wilson “stressed the need for unity and expanded and refined our notions of uniqueness” (132). America was considered a “melting pot” of all nations. Andrews discusses the Americanization movement, describing it as reflecting “a feeling that homogeneity was a prerequisite of true unity and thus true nationhood” (136). Wilson furthered clarified this concept in his speech *The Heroes of Vera Cruz* when he said:

> Notice how truly these men were of our blood. I mean of our American blood, which is not drawn from any one country, which is not drawn from any one stock, which is not drawn from language of the modern world; but free men everywhere have sent their sons and their brothers and their daughters to this country in order to make a compounded Nation [sic]
which consists of all the sturdy elements and all of the best elements of the whole globe. (104)

In his first inaugural address, Wilson defined American standards as those of “justice and fair play” (3). Then, in a speech at Soldier’s Memorial Hall, Pittsburg, on January 29, 1916, Wilson stated, “America was born into the world to do mankind service, and no man [sic] is a true American in whom the desire to do mankind service does not take precedence over the desire to serve himself” (26).

We can identify early in Wilson’s speech the functional pair of shaping and sharing of community. Wilson talks about honor and democracy, and argues that, “only free peoples can hold their purpose and their honour [sic] steady to a common end and prefer the interests of mankind to any narrow interest of their own (par. 10). This passage serves to remind the audience of the American values that Wilson defined throughout his presidential rhetoric. Then, Wilson introduces “a fit partner for a league of honour” [sic] (par. 11) when he talks about how Russian people are fighting for freedom, justice and peace in the world. He asks, “Does not every American feel assurance has been added to our hope for the future [. . .]?” (par. 11) as a result of what was happening in Russia. This gives a sense of sharing to the audience.

What Wilson needed to achieve next was to describe what the role of the United States and its people entailed. He stated, “We are but one of the champions of the rights of mankind” (par. 13). America would fight for world freedom and ultimate world peace, even for the German people. The United States, he says, will continue to, fight for the things which we have always carried nearest our hearts – for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice
in their own governments, for the rights and liberties of small nations, for
a universal dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples as shall
bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world itself at last free.
(par. 13)

Wilson also addressed the fact that many German born people living in the United States
will continue to be treated with friendship and respect. Speaking to the good of the
American people, he describes them as, “most of them, as true and loyal Americans as if
they had never known any other fealty or allegiance. They will be prompt to stand with
us in rebuking and restraining the few who may be of a different mind and purpose” (16).
Yet, he also warns, “If there should be disloyalty, it will be dealt with with a firm hand of
stern repression; but, if it lifts its head at all, it will lift it only here and there and without
countenance except from a lawless and malignant few” (par. 16).

Finally, Wilson advises Congress that there are many sacrifices that will be made by
Americans. He states that while the act of war is frightening, especially for people who
have lived in a peaceful democracy, he believes that “civilization itself” seems to be in
the balance (par. 17). Wilson concludes by repeating the values of the American people
by stating,

We shall fight for the things which we have always carried nearest our
hearts -- for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to
have a voice in their own governments, for the rights and liberties of small
nations, for a universal dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples
as shall bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world itself at
last free. (par. 17)
President Wilson’s speech using the epideictic function of crisis rhetoric also fulfilled Condit definition of “eloquence,” which is evidenced in the press’ assessment of the speech as summarized by The New York Times on April 3, 1917. The Times ran excerpts from 26 newspapers in 18 cities across the United States. A headline from The New York City Tribune states, “No Praise too High’ for Wilson.” The paper is quoted as saying “The judgments of the moment are frequently of but transitory value. Yet, reading President Wilson’s message to Congress at the moment of its delivery to Congress, it seems one of the great documents of history, re-echoing in a new and yet the original spirit, the great words of Lincoln, ‘With malice to none.’” The Providence Journal called the speech “A Most Noble Utterance,” and The Baltimore American called the speech as one of “the most impressive human appeals ever delivered.”

In the effort to convince the Congress to declare war against Germany, Wilson also uses deliberative strategies. He explains that his previous request to Congress on February 26, 1917, that America’s ships arm themselves to defend against any attacks by the Germans at sea, appears to be impractical (par. 5). He further explains that the United States has no choice but to defend itself against attacks by stating, “Armed neutrality is ineffectual enough at best; in such circumstances and in the face of such pretensions it is worse than ineffectual; it is likely only to produce what it was meant to prevent; it is practically certain to draw us into the war without either the rights or the effectiveness of belligerents” (par. 5). Wilson believed that America was better off taking a strong position against the enemy because of its mission to lead and serve mankind in the quest for freedom.

While Wilson used his rhetorical talents to convince Congress to declare war on
Germany, George H. W. Bush faced the challenge of convincing the American public that, in his role as Commander-in-Chief, he had taken appropriate military action in Kuwait. This situation is examined next as we apply the forensic framework to George H. W. Bush's speech.


As presented in Chapter 3, George H. W. Bush's rhetorical problem was the public’s perception that American involvement in an attack on a foreign country by another foreign country would be like America’s long involvement in Viet Nam. President Bush needed to convince the American public that, under the circumstances of the situation, the decision to send American troops to the Middle East is justified and that America would not experience another Viet Nam.

Bush began his speech by notifying the audience of the action already taken on military targets in Iraq and Kuwait. Unlike Wilson, Bush addressed the public through mass media - national television and radio - recounting the activities of Saddam Hussein’s invasion and occupation of Kuwait. He also outlined the diplomatic activities of the United States along with the United Nations, and many other countries to restore order and peace to the Middle East. Bush said that people from other nations also tried to reason with Hussein, to no avail, leaving no choice “but to drive Saddam from Kuwait by force” (par. 4).

He continued his remarks to inform the audience of the military activities occurring in Iraq as he spoke. He furthered the rationale by telling the audience of the intent to destroy Hussein’s arsenal of artillery, and nuclear and chemical weapons, in order to protect the
lives of the coalition forces. Bush also posed the questions of “Why act now? Why not wait?” (par. 7) in anticipation of what he thought the public would ask. Saying that, “The world could wait no longer” (par. 7), he began to explain the situation that required the actions currently in progress, in answer to those questions.

Using an effective technique of repetition, Bush explains what had occurred to reinforce the need to act. He stated:

While the world waited, Saddam Hussein systematically raped, pillaged, and plundered a tiny nation, no threat to his own. He subjected the people of Kuwait to unspeakable atrocities -- and among those maimed and murdered, innocent children. (par. 8)

While the world waited, Saddam sought to add to the chemical weapons arsenal he now possesses, an infinitely more dangerous weapon of mass destruction -- a nuclear weapon. And while the world waited, while the world talked peace and withdrawal, Saddam Hussein dug in and moved massive forces into Kuwait. (par. 9)

While the world waited, while Saddam stalled, more damage was being done to the fragile economies of the Third World, emerging democracies of Eastern Europe, to the entire world, including to our own economy. (par. 10)

While the world waited, Saddam Hussein met every overture of peace with open contempt. While the world prayed for peace, Saddam prepared for war. (par. 12)

The first piece of evidence offered to justify this military action speaks to the basic
values of life in America. Crimes against innocent children are incomprehensible. A
crime against a child brings mothers and fathers together to punish the offender. Then,
Imagine the fear created by the thought of America as we know it the target of a nuclear
bomb! This is another piece of evidence to justify sending troops to Kuwait. Sending
our troops to defeat the enemy was the only choice he had. While not wanting this action
to seem to be about money, Bush did make a plea to the common sense of the people that
our economy was just as much at risk as that of the Middle Eastern countries who were
adopting American values. Finally, Bush portrays Hussein as a war monger and the rest
of the world as a peace loving people.

Bush explains the that the action was rational by saying that, when Hussein was
repeatedly warned by the United Nations to either leave Kuwait or he would come under
attack, "[Saddam] has arrogantly rejected all warnings. Instead, he tried to make this a
dispute between Iraq and the United States of America" (par. 14).

In his attempt to reassure the American public that he did not want a prolonged battle
that resulted in the loss of American lives on foreign soil, Bush said:

Prior to ordering our forces into battle, I instructed our military
commanders to take every necessary step to prevail as quickly as possible,
and with the greatest degree of protection possible for American and allied
service men and women. I’ve told the American people before that this
will not be another Vietnam, and I repeat this here tonight. Our troops will
have the best possible support in the entire world, and they will not be
asked to fight with one hand tied behind their back. I’m hopeful that this
fighting will not go on for long and that casualties will be held to an absolute minimum. (par. 16)

As stated earlier in this paper, American’s feelings against the war in Vietnam were still strong. In the preceding passage, Bush reassures Americans that he is doing everything he can to keep the soldiers safe. Yet, as all people know, lives will be lost, regardless of his instructions to military commanders.

An important part of this crisis rhetoric is to assure the audience that all is being done to make sure that the loss of life will be minimal, and that American soldiers believe in the action. Bush uses remarks from a number of the soldiers to show support for the military action described in his discourse. He says,

Listen to Hollywood Huddleston, Marine lance corporal. He says, ‘Let’s free these people, so we can go home and be free again;’ Listen to one of, our great officers out there, Marine Lieutenant General Walter Boomer. He said: ‘There are things worth fighting for. A world in which brutality and lawlessness are allowed to go unchecked isn’t the kind of world we’re going to want to live in;’ Listen to Master Sergeant J.P. Kendall of the 82d Airborne: ‘We’re here for more than just the price of a gallon of gas. What we’re doing is going to chart the future of the world for the next 100 years. It’s better to deal with this guy now than 5 years from now;’ and we should all sit up and listen to Jackie Jones, an Army lieutenant, when she says, ‘If we let him get away with this, who knows what’s going to be next’? (pars.21 - 24).
This passage speaks to the character of Americans and our beliefs in freedom, democracy, and responsibility as world leaders.

Analysis of this speech revealed that we can add a third framework to the study of presidential international crisis rhetoric. In fairness to Dow, this discourse was delivered after her 1989 study. It does not fit into the definition of deliberative rhetoric because it was delivered after a decision was made and to gain support for having made the decision. However, the next piece of rhetorical discourse offers examples of deliberative as well as forensic and epideictic strategies.

George W. Bush’s September 20, 2001, Speech

On September 11, 2001, America was attacked by a faceless enemy and its citizens were shocked, confused and frightened. We looked to the country’s leader, President George W. Bush, to explain to us why these attacks occurred and what we were going to do next. The President’s speech from the Whitehouse the night of the attacks was weak. A report in the New York Times stated that “advisors to the administration said the speech fell flat, that it failed to meet either the magnitude of the day’s events or the nature of the task ahead” (Sanger and Van Natta Jr.). Bush’s speech writers composed a speech to be read at the National Cathedral three days later, yet it too did not meet expectations. New York Times reporter D. T. Max stated that, “the beautiful speech sounded borrowed coming from Bush’s mouth.” However, the speech that Bush prepared with his writers and delivered on September 20, 2001 to a national television audience and members of Congress was “a fitting response” (Bitzer 10) to the September 11th attacks on America. Americans needed their President to explain the events of September 11, 2001. We
knew that passenger airliners flew into buildings and a field, causing explosions, fire and the loss of lives, but we did not know why and we did not know what to do. We needed answers. Condit says, “Whenever change intrudes into the community’s life, the epideictic speaker will be called forth by the community to help discover what the event means to the community, and what the community will come to be in the face of the new event” (289). Justly, Dow tells us that epideictic rhetoric is a fitting response for a national crisis because “the community has experienced a loss” (297).

According to Condit, epideictic speeches contain elements of praise and blame. “The community renews its conception of good and evil by explaining what is has previously held to be good or evil and by working through relationships of those past values and beliefs with new situations” (291). Bush says,

On September the 11th, enemies of freedom committed an act of war against our country. Americans have known wars -- but for the past 136 years, they have been wars on foreign soil, except for one Sunday in 1941. Americans have known the casualties of war -- but not at the center of a great city on a peaceful morning. Americans have known surprise attacks - - but never before on thousands of civilians. All of this was brought upon us in a single day -- and night fell on a different world, a world where freedom itself is under attack. (par. 11)

The first functional pair of epideictic rhetoric, definition and understanding is evidenced in Bush’s speech. He helps us to understand the situation, not only by acknowledging what happened, but also what was going to happen by including the questions Americans were asking in his discourse: “who attacked our country?” (par. 12),
“why do they hate us?” (par. 23), “how will we fight and win this war?” (par. 27), and “what is expected of us?” (par. 35).

In answer to the first question of who attacked us, Bush begins building a case against a group of terrorists known as al Qaeda and its leader, Osama bin Laden. He tells his audience of the organization’s extreme differences to our community’s values of freedom and peace. Bush states, “Al Qaeda is to terror what the mafia is to crime. But its goal is not making money; its goal is remaking the world -- and imposing its radical beliefs on people everywhere” (par. 13). Then he says, “The terrorists’ directive commands them to kill Christians and Jews, to kill all Americans, and make no distinction among military and civilians, including women and children” (par. 14).

The second question Bush poses is, “why do they hate us?” The answer to this question is not only for Americans, but for people in other countries who share some of the same values. He begins by addressing the American people with, “They hate what we see right here in this chamber -- a democratically elected government. Their leaders are self-appointed. They hate our freedoms -- our freedom of religion, our freedom of speech, our freedom to vote and assemble and disagree with each other” (par. 23). Then, he speaks to his national audience and says, “They want to overthrow existing governments in many Muslim countries, such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan. They want to drive Israel out of the Middle East. They want to drive Christians and Jews out of vast regions of Asia and Africa” (par. 24). He turns back to Americans and says that the terrorists want to end a way of life and by their horrific actions, hope that America will retreat from its position as a powerful nation (par. 25). For me, the answer for America to this question is simply – they hate our freedoms.
It is with Bush’s answer to the third question where I argue that the rhetoric changes its strategy from epideictic to forensic. “How will we fight and win this war?” asks Bush on behalf of the American people. This is the point where Bush tells America and the world what has already been done.

Today, dozens of federal departments and agencies, as well as state and local governments, have responsibilities affecting homeland security.

These efforts must be coordinated at the highest level. So tonight I announce the creation of a Cabinet-level position reporting directly to me - the Office of Homeland Security. Many will be involved in this effort, from FBI agents to intelligence operatives to the reservists we have called to active duty. . . And tonight, a few miles from the damaged Pentagon, I have a message for our military: Be ready. I’ve called the Armed Forces to alert, and there is a reason. The hour is coming when America will act, and you will make us proud. (pars. 29 and 31)

In essence, Bush has just put us on notice that we are, again, at war in a foreign land. He told his audience that the war was not going to end quickly, and it would involve Americans losing their lives in combat. He says, “Americans should not expect one battle, but a lengthy campaign, unlike any other we have ever seen. It may include dramatic strikes, visible on TV, and covert operations, secret even in success” (par. 28).

Bush began making his case early in the speech when he states, “Tonight we are a country awakened to danger and called to defend freedom. Our grief has turned to anger, and anger to resolution. Whether we bring our enemies to justice, or bring justice to our enemies, justice will be done” (par. 5).
Dow says that effective discourse must clearly show that the action is legal, justified by the situation, and prudent (306). Bush points out that all of the evidence gathered points to al Qaeda, the same group that had been indicted for the bombings of the USS Cole and American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania (par. 12). He also states that, “The leadership of al Qaeda has great influence in Afghanistan and supports the Taliban regime in controlling most of that country. In Afghanistan, we see al Qaeda’s vision for the world” (par. 16). Bush makes his point very clear. “Our war on terror begins with al Qaeda, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated” (par. 22). He says later in the speech, “These measures are essential. But the only way to defeat terrorism as a threat to our way of life is to stop it, eliminate it, and destroy it where it grows” (par. 31).

Finally, Bush answers the forth question: “What is expected of us?” He then uses deliberative strategies as he advises Americans “to live their lives, and hug your children” (par. 35) even though there is fear and trepidation. He asks them to “uphold the values of America” (par. 35) to continue supporting the victims of the tragedy, cooperate with investigators, and be patient with tightened security measures. Bush has just reunited the country.

Moving back to epideictic strategies, most surprisingly, Bush also satisfies Condit’s third functional pair of epideictic discourse, display and entertainment. Bush used this strategy to identify with the audience and help them feel a sense of community by a display of compassion. Bush held up the badge of police officer, George Howard, a hero who died trying to save victims of the World Trade Center bombings. Bush says, “It [the badge] was given to me by his mom, Arlene, as a proud memorial to her son. This is my
reminder of lives that ended, and a task that does not end. I will not forget this wound to
our country or those who inflicted it. I will not yield; I will not rest; I will not relent in
waging this struggle for freedom and security for the American people” (pars. 50 and 51).
Condit says that, “Many ceremonial occasions invite the speaker to display her or his
eloquence. ‘Eloquence’ is the combination of truth, beauty and power in human speech,
and is a unique capacity of humanity” . . . The audience is ‘entertained’ by such speech in
a most humane manner . . . allowed to stretch their daily experience into meaning more
grand, sweet, [and] noble . . (290). Equally important, Condit says, is that, “audiences
rightfully take eloquence as a sign of leadership” (291). According to Max, Bush
succeeded in showing the country and the world at large that he was a strong leader. The
speech was deemed “a good and strong speech” by John F. Kennedy’s speech writer, Ted
Sorensen (Max 8).

Condit’s functional pair of shaping and sharing community in epideictic rhetoric is
also apparent in the speech. Bush gives us a sense of community by talking about the
“courage of passengers, who rushed terrorists to save others on the ground,” “the
endurance of rescue workers, working past exhaustion,” “the unfurling of flags, the
lighting of candles, the giving of blood, the saying of prayers,” and “giving and loving
people who have made the grief of strangers their own” (pars. 2-3). He brings to the
forefront American values of strength, freedom and justice. Dow says, “The community
renews its conception of itself and of what is good by explaining what it has previously
held to be good and by working through the relationships of those past values and beliefs
to new situations (289).

Bush’s speech was able to explain to Americans what occurred on September 11,
2001, on American soil, to reunite Americans as a community with shared beliefs and values, and to also persuade the world at large that the actions against the terrorists responsible for the destruction of property in America and the taking of human lives throughout the world was the right course of action. Bush had managed to calm the people of America and establish himself as their leader. According to Max, “Ted Kennedy said, ‘The president’s speech was exactly what the nation needed – a message of determination and hope, strength and compassion’” (7).

Conclusion

This chapter has analyzed three speeches from three United States Presidents who faced three different situations, calling for three different responses. Wilson’s speech employed epideictic and deliberative strategies to convince Congress to declare war on Germany. George H. W. Bush’s speech employed epideictic and forensic strategies to justify to the American people the actions taken in the Persian Gulf, and I have demonstrated that George W. Bush’s speech employed epideictic, forensic and deliberative strategies.

When we apply a specific strategic theory to discourse, epideictic, forensic, or deliberative, we are better able to understand how the discourse responds to different crisis situations, as well as how it relates to the needs of different audiences.

The next chapter will discuss the results of the research and analysis of these three pieces of presidential international crisis rhetoric. Also included is a comparison of the language used by each of the rhetors.
CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Presidential rhetoric has become one of the ways in which our nation’s leaders can become more “human” in the eyes and ears of the American public, and to show their strength as leaders. Presidents use rhetoric to persuade the people to accept their responses or actions to various situations. As previously noted, Karlyn Kohrs Campbell and Kathleen Hall Jamieson stated that modern presidential rhetoric has produced various forms of discourse (genres) that preserve the institution of the office, while adapting it to particular times and conditions (4). During times of crisis, the American public looks to a president for assurance that everything will eventually be alright. Americans want an explanation of what happened, why it happened, and what the president will do, or has done, about it, and what the people will need to do next. How presidents articulate their message to their audience can have either negative or positive affects on their credibility as leader.

The study of presidential crisis rhetoric is important not only for the critic, but also for the rhetor. As Edwin Black points out, rhetors can draw upon historical responses to similar situations. The three speeches analyzed in this study support this concept and assist in answering the first question posed at the beginning of this study. The question was, “Is rhetorical history being repeated each time a situation occurs where the United
States is faced with a threat to its position as the world’s most powerful nation?” Critics are able to understand how this type of discourse is impacted by situational components by using certain strategies in the discourse to create an effective response to the situation.

The purpose of this study was to add to the study of presidential rhetoric presented during times of international crises in order to determine whether the discourses share similar situational and strategic elements that are characteristic of crisis rhetoric as reported by Bonnie Dow in 1987. Dow argues that it is important to clarify the relationship of crisis rhetoric and the classical genres of epideictic and deliberative discourse in order to understand the function of the discourse as it responds to a particular situation (297). This study reveals that presidential international crisis rhetoric uses epideictic strategies in conjunction with deliberative strategies, or with deliberative and forensic strategies, in order for the discourse to be effective.

Each of the situations leading up to the delivery of the discourse analyzed in this study shared the components of an international crisis as defined by Murray Edelman, who states that a crisis is a threat that people must face together, and that a crisis suggests a need for unity and common sacrifice (45). President Woodrow Wilson needed to respond to a situation where innocent Americans were killed on international waters by enemies of freedom. Tensions between America and the German government had been building over the course of three years. When all diplomatic attempts failed to protect innocent people of the world, President Wilson realized that America could no longer allow Germany to destroy America’s basic principles of democracy and the rights of all people to live in peace and safety. His request to Congress to declare war on Germany and support sending troops to help fight for freedom of all people.
Likewise, George H. W. Bush faced a situation where diplomatic attempts to protect Middle Eastern countries safe from military attacks by the maniacal leader of Iraq, Saddam Hussein, failed. When Hussein’s military forces invaded the small country of Kuwait, Bush’s decision to send American troops to defend the freedoms of the innocent people in Kuwait required the president to address the people of America and the rest of the world to explain that he needed to involve the American military in order to protect the basis values of freedom and democracy.

While unlike Wilson’s and George H. W. Bush’s situations of military actions abroad, newly elected President George W. Bush faced a situation involving an unknown enemy attacking innocent people on American soil. The attacks on the World Trade Center Towers in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. were witnessed by the television viewing audience as they occurred. Americans also saw the destruction of another commercial airliner that had crashed in a field near Pittsburg, Pennsylvania. It was some time before President Bush was able to deliver a speech that would help American’s to understand what had happened, why it happened, and what was going to happen next.

Kiewe states that presidential crisis rhetoric characterizes “a unique and dynamic process” (xvii). In order for presidents to display strong leadership qualities during situations of crisis, they need to deliver discourse that offers comfort and understanding, solutions to the problem or problems people will face, unite the people by addressing basic ideals and principals, and offer justification for actions taken (Kiewe xviii). The Analysis of the speeches by Wilson, Bush, and Bush reveals common characteristics of presidential crisis rhetoric, and answers another question posed in this study, “Are claims
by Dow, Campbell, Jamieson, and others concerning similarities in situation, strategic response and needs of the audience evident in the documents?" This question has just been addressed in part. The answer to the remainder of this question is provided in the following synopses of the speeches.

Wilson’s speech to Congress asking for a declaration of war on Germany begins with an account of the events leading up to the need for this piece of discourse. He described the situation to Congress, telling of the attacks on innocent people in international waters near Europe, including killing non-combatant Americans. He reminds Congress that American citizens came from all countries to help shape the nation’s identity, and that America basic values were democracy and peace. Wilson also describes the purpose of being an American – to champion the cause for peace and freedom throughout the world. These portions of the rhetoric serve to unite the people of America. Wilson also explains that America has no choice to go to war to ensure that democracy and peace prevail, and that there will be sacrifices to protect basic human rights. Wilson was confident in the strength of America as a world leader, and that, while he attempted to use diplomatic strategies, the only choice that was left was to join in the battle against an enemy of humankind. It was evident that the rhetoric fulfilled the needs of the audience by the responses from the public as reported in newspapers around the country.

When George H. W. Bush’s discourse was examined, it was found that the situation required the president to not only assure the American public that his actions against Saddam Hussein were justified, but that American soldiers sent to the Middle East would be protected and brought home quickly. America was remembering the war in Viet Nam, and would not support similar involvement by the United States military. Bush had to
convince the public that he had tried everything he could diplomatically to protect the peace in the world. In recounting the actions of Hussein, he played upon the hearts of all Americans by describing the crimes against children and innocent people of a small country unable to defend itself. Bush had no choice but to send help. He effectively assured the American audience that the soldiers who had been asked to fight for the right of human freedom supported his actions. He presented a number of testimonials from the soldiers who were sent to Kuwait to fight for American values of freedom, democracy and responsibility as world leaders. While Bush did not display the eloquence of Wilson, his speech did satisfy both epideictic and forensic characteristics found in crisis rhetoric.

The least eloquent speaker of the three was George W. Bush, and he faced the difficult task of explaining the situation that occurred on September 11, 2001, to a frightened, confused, and shocked America. While most of the people in America and around the world witnessed the events on local and national television, President Bush still had to explain what happened. More importantly, he needed to explain why it happened and who was responsible. Bush also needed to explain to the people what actions America was taking to find the person who committed the act, and at the same time, tell the people in America how to go on living their lives after the attacks. Bush began by describing the unity of people coming together to help the victims of the attacks, and describing the unity of elected officials coming together on the steps of the capital building, not as members of two different political parties, but as Americans. He then introduced what he believed all people would ask him to explain - what happened and why? While he responded to his own questions, he began to create a picture of what terrorism and terrorist were, and how terrorists did not value democracy and freedom and
peace. Then, Bush's strategy changes in order to explain the actions he has already taken to protect America from another attack. He notified his audience that America was again at war in a foreign country, and it was going to last a long time. American lives would be sacrificed for the sake of freedom and justice. He assured Americans that the enemy, who was responsible for other terrorist attacks on American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, and the bombing of the USS Cole had been identified, would be tracked down and eliminated. He again changed his strategy to tell Americans what they needed to do next. He told them to value their families and loved ones, to continue to support and help the victims of the attacks, to be patient with the new security measures, and to continue to believe in the basis values of America. President Bush fulfilled the needs of his audience, calming the people in America and establishing himself as a leader.

Conclusion

Dow argues that crisis rhetoric, depending on the situation, requires the use of either predominately epideictic or predominately deliberative strategies. This study has shown that in each situation, the president used epideictic strategies to explain the situation, but also used either or both deliberative or forensic strategies to make the rhetoric effective. For example, Wilson's speech, eliminating the portions of his rhetoric implemented deliberative strategies to convince Congress to declare war on Germany would have resulted in failure. Likewise, George H. W. Bush needed to persuade the American public that his decision to attack Iraq was in the best interest of freedom for all people. Although this speech included the use of epideictic strategies present in all crisis rhetoric, forensic strategies were used to defend actions he had already taken. Finally, George W.
Bush faced the situation of not only using his rhetoric to comfort American citizens by
the use of epideictic strategies, and of using forensic strategies to explain the actions
taken, his discourse also used deliberative strategies to reunited Americans by explaining
what they should do next.

Dow made the distinction that epideictic rhetoric should not be treated as a specific
genre, but referred to as a certain strategy that serves a specific function, and that
deliberative rhetoric is not limited to discuss policy (308) but is also used as a strategy in
certain situations. However, Dow limited the strategies found in presidential crisis
rhetoric to only those of epideictic and deliberative. This study of presidential
international crisis rhetoric offers evidence that more than one type of strategy may be
required because of the situation leading up to the rhetorical discourse, which is
important in extending the a critic’s approach in analyzing presidential international crisis
rhetoric.

This brings us to the last question presented for this study, “Does this study offer
opportunities for further research?” The answer is yes. The people of America will
continue to experience the consequences of decisions made by our country’s leaders in
Washington, D.C. The United States is currently at war with terrorism, and our country’s
military forces are fighting for the freedom of people in Iraq. These situations will
demand that President George W. Bush continue to reassure people in American and the
world at large that he is doing what is necessary for the good of all people, based on
America’s basic value of freedom for all. Critics of presidential crisis rhetoric will find,
through the study of speeches yet to be delivered, that the discourse will employ
epideictic strategies in combination with deliberative and forensic strategies to fulfill the purpose of the discourse.
President Woodrow Wilson's War Message
Delivered 2 April, 1917

Gentlemen of the Congress:

I have called the Congress into extraordinary session because there are serious, very serious, choices of policy to be made, and made immediately, which it was neither right nor constitutionally permissible that I should assume the responsibility of making.

On the 3d of February last I officially laid before you the extraordinary announcement of the Imperial German Government that on and after the 1st day of February it was its purpose to put aside all restraints of law or of humanity and use its submarines to sink every vessel that sought to approach either the ports of Great Britain and Ireland or the western coasts of Europe or any of the ports controlled by the enemies of Germany within the Mediterranean. That had seemed to be the object of the German submarine warfare earlier in the war, but since April of last year the Imperial Government had somewhat restrained the commanders of its undersea craft in conformity with its promise then given to us that passenger boats should not be sunk and that due warning would be given to all other vessels which its submarines might seek to destroy, when no resistance was offered or escape attempted, and care taken that their crews were given at least a fair chance to save their lives in their open boats. The precautions taken
were meagre and haphazard enough, as was proved in distressing instance after instance in the progress of the cruel and unmanly business, but a certain degree of restraint was observed. The new policy has swept every restriction aside. Vessels of every kind, whatever their flag, their character, their cargo, their destination, their errand, have been ruthlessly sent to the bottom without warning and without thought of help or mercy for those on board, the vessels of friendly neutrals along with those of belligerents. Even hospital ships and ships carrying relief to the sorely bereaved and stricken people of Belgium, though the latter were provided with safe-conduct through the proscribed areas by the German Government itself and were distinguished by unmistakable marks of identity, have been sunk with the same reckless lack of compassion or of principle.

I was for a little while unable to believe that such things would in fact be done by any government that had hitherto subscribed to the humane practices of civilized nations. International law had its origin in the attempt to set up some law which would be respected and observed upon the seas, where no nation had right of dominion and where lay the free highways of the world. By painful stage after stage has that law been built up, with meagre enough results, indeed, after all was accomplished that could be accomplished, but always with a clear view, at least, of what the heart and conscience of mankind demanded. This minimum of right the German Government has swept aside under the plea of retaliation and necessity and because it had no weapons which it could use at sea except these which it is impossible to employ as it is employing them without throwing to the winds all scruples of humanity or of respect for the understandings that were supposed to underlie the intercourse of the world. I am not now thinking of the loss of property involved, immense and serious as that is, but only of the wanton and
wholesale destruction of the lives of noncombatants, men, women, and children, engaged in pursuits which have always, even in the darkest periods of modern history, been deemed innocent and legitimate. Property can be paid for; the lives of peaceful and innocent people can not be. The present German submarine warfare against commerce is a warfare against mankind.

It is a war against all nations. American ships have been sunk, American lives taken, in ways which it has stirred us very deeply to learn of, but the ships and people of other neutral and friendly nations have been sunk and overwhelmed in the waters in the same way. There has been no discrimination. The challenge is to all mankind. Each nation must decide for itself how it will meet it. The choice we make for ourselves must be made with a moderation of counsel and a temperateness of judgment befitting our character and our motives as a nation. We must put excited feeling away. Our motive will not be revenge or the victorious assertion of the physical might of the nation, but only the vindication of right, of human right, of which we are only a single champion.

When I addressed the Congress on the 26th of February last, I thought that it would suffice to assert our neutral rights with arms, our right to use the seas against unlawful interference, our right to keep our people safe against unlawful violence. But armed neutrality, it now appears, is impracticable. Because submarines are in effect outlaws when used as the German submarines have been used against merchant shipping, it is impossible to defend ships against their attacks as the law of nations has assumed that merchantmen would defend themselves against privateers or cruisers, visible craft giving chase upon the open sea. It is common prudence in such circumstances, grim necessity indeed, to endeavour to destroy them before they have shown their own intention. They
must be dealt with upon sight, if dealt with at all. The German Government denies the right of neutrals to use arms at all within the areas of the sea which it has proscribed, even in the defense of rights which no modern publicist has ever before questioned their right to defend. The intimation is conveyed that the armed guards which we have placed on our merchant ships will be treated as beyond the pale of law and subject to be dealt with as pirates would be. Armed neutrality is ineffectual enough at best; in such circumstances and in the face of such pretensions it is worse than ineffectual; it is likely only to produce what it was meant to prevent; it is practically certain to draw us into the war without either the rights or the effectiveness of belligerents. There is one choice we can not make, we are incapable of making: we will not choose the path of submission and suffer the most sacred rights of our nation and our people to be ignored or violated. The wrongs against which we now array ourselves are no common wrongs; they cut to the very roots of human life.

With a profound sense of the solemn and even tragical character of the step I am taking and of the grave responsibilities which it involves, but in unhesitating obedience to what I deem my constitutional duty, I advise that the Congress declare the recent course of the Imperial German Government to be in fact nothing less than war against the Government and people of the United States; that it formally accept the status of belligerent which has thus been thrust upon it, and that it take immediate steps not only to put the country in a more thorough state of defense but also to exert all its power and employ all its resources to bring the Government of the German Empire to terms and end the war.
What this will involve is clear. It will involve the utmost practicable cooperation in counsel and action with the governments now at war with Germany, and, as incident to that, the extension to those governments of the most liberal financial credits, in order that our resources may so far as possible be added to theirs. It will involve the organization and mobilization of all the material resources of the country to supply the materials of war and serve the incidental needs of the nation in the most abundant and yet the most economical and efficient way possible. It will involve the immediate full equipment of the Navy in all respects but particularly in supplying it with the best means of dealing with the enemy's submarines. It will involve the immediate addition to the armed forces of the United States already provided for by law in case of war at least 500,000 men, who should, in my opinion, be chosen upon the principle of universal liability to service, and also the authorization of subsequent additional increments of equal force so soon as they may be needed and can be handled in training. It will involve also, of course, the granting of adequate credits to the Government, sustained, I hope, so far as they can equitably be sustained by the present generation, by well conceived taxation....

While we do these things, these deeply momentous things, let us be very clear, and make very clear to all the world what our motives and our objects are. My own thought has not been driven from its habitual and normal course by the unhappy events of the last two months, and I do not believe that the thought of the nation has been altered or clouded by them I have exactly the same things in mind now that I had in mind when I addressed the Senate on the 22d of January last; the same that I had in mind when I addressed the Congress on the 3d of February and on the 26th of February. Our object now, as then, is to vindicate the principles of peace and justice in the life of the world as
against selfish and autocratic power and to set up amongst the really free and self-
governed peoples of the world such a concert of purpose and of action as will henceforth
ensure the observance of those principles. Neutrality is no longer feasible or desirable
where the peace of the world is involved and the freedom of its peoples, and the menace
to that peace and freedom lies in the existence of autocratic governments backed by
organized force which is controlled wholly by their will, not by the will of their people.
We have seen the last of neutrality in such circumstances. We are at the beginning of an
age in which it will be insisted that the same standards of conduct and of responsibility
for wrong done shall be observed among nations and their governments that are observed
among the individual citizens of civilized states.

We have no quarrel with the German people. We have no feeling towards them but
one of sympathy and friendship. It was not upon their impulse that their Government
acted in entering this war. It was not with their previous knowledge or approval. It was a
war determined upon as wars used to be determined upon in the old, unhappy days when
peoples were nowhere consulted by their rulers and wars were provoked and waged in the
interest of dynasties or of little groups of ambitious men who were accustomed to use
their fellow men as pawns and tools. Self-governed nations do not fill their neighbour
states with spies or set the course of intrigue to bring about some critical posture of
affairs which will give them an opportunity to strike and make conquest. Such designs
can be successfully worked out only under cover and where no one has the right to ask
questions. Cunningly contrived plans of deception or aggression, carried, it may be, from
generation to generation, can be worked out and kept from the light only within the
privacy of courts or behind the carefully guarded confidences of a narrow and privileged
class. They are happily impossible where public opinion commands and insists upon full information concerning all the nation's affairs.

A steadfast concert for peace can never be maintained except by a partnership of democratic nations. No autocratic government could be trusted to keep faith within it or observe its covenants. It must be a league of honour, a partnership of opinion. Intrigue would eat its vitals away; the plottings of inner circles who could plan what they would and render account to no one would be a corruption seated at its very heart. Only free peoples can hold their purpose and their honour steady to a common end and prefer the interests of mankind to any narrow interest of their own.

Does not every American feel that assurance has been added to our hope for the future peace of the world by the wonderful and heartening things that have been happening within the last few weeks in Russia? Russia was known by those who knew it best to have been always in fact democratic at heart, in all the vital habits of her thought, in all the intimate relationships of her people that spoke their natural instinct, their habitual attitude towards life. The autocracy that crowned the summit of her political structure, long as it had stood and terrible as was the reality of its power, was not in fact Russian in origin, character, or purpose; and now it has been shaken off and the great, generous Russian people have been added in all their naive majesty and might to the forces that are fighting for freedom in the world, for justice, and for peace. Here is a fit partner for a league of honour.

One of the things that has served to convince us that the Prussian autocracy was not and could never be our friend is that from the very outset of the present war it has filled our unsuspecting communities and even our offices of government with spies and set
criminal intrigues everywhere afoot against our national unity of counsel, our peace within and without our industries and our commerce. Indeed it is now evident that its spies were here even before the war began; and it is unhappily not a matter of conjecture but a fact proved in our courts of justice that the intrigues which have more than once come perilously near to disturbing the peace and dislocating the industries of the country have been carried on at the instigation, with the support, and even under the personal direction of official agents of the Imperial Government accredited to the Government of the United States. Even in checking these things and trying to extirpate them we have sought to put the most generous interpretation possible upon them because we knew that their source lay, not in any hostile feeling or purpose of the German people towards us (who were, no doubt, as ignorant of them as we ourselves were), but only in the selfish designs of a Government that did what it pleased and told its people nothing. But they have played their part in serving to convince us at last that that Government entertains no real friendship for us and means to act against our peace and security at its convenience. That it means to stir up enemies against us at our very doors the intercepted [Zimmermann] note to the German Minister at Mexico City is eloquent evidence.

We are accepting this challenge of hostile purpose because we know that in such a government, following such methods, we can never have a friend; and that in the presence of its organized power, always lying in wait to accomplish we know not what purpose, there can be no assured security for the democratic governments of the world. We are now about to accept gage of battle with this natural foe to liberty and shall, if necessary, spend the whole force of the nation to check and nullify its pretensions and its power. We are glad, now that we see the facts with no veil of false pretence about them,
to fight thus for the ultimate peace of the world and for the liberation of its peoples, the
German peoples included: for the rights of nations great and small and the privilege of
men everywhere to choose their way of life and of obedience. The world must be made
safe for democracy. Its peace must be planted upon the tested foundations of political
liberty. We have no selfish ends to serve. We desire no conquest, no dominion. We seek
no indemnities for ourselves, no material compensation for the sacrifices we shall freely
make. We are but one of the champions of the rights of mankind. We shall be satisfied
when those rights have been made as secure as the faith and the freedom of nations can
make them.

Just because we fight without rancour and without selfish object, seeking nothing for
ourselves but what we shall wish to share with all free peoples, we shall, I feel confident,
conduct our operations as belligerents without passion and ourselves observe with proud
 punctilio the principles of right and of fair play we profess to be fighting for.

I have said nothing of the governments allied with the Imperial Government of
Germany because they have not made war upon us or challenged us to defend our right
and our honour. The Austro-Hungarian Government has, indeed, avowed its unqualified
endorsement and acceptance of the reckless and lawless submarine warfare adopted now
without disguise by the Imperial German Government, and it has therefore not been
possible for this Government to receive Count Tarnowski, the Ambassador recently
accredited to this Government by the Imperial and Royal Government of Austria-
Hungary; but that Government has not actually engaged in warfare against citizens of the
United States on the seas, and I take the liberty, for the present at least, of postponing a
discussion of our relations with the authorities at Vienna. We enter this war only where we are clearly forced into it because there are no other means of defending our rights.

It will be all the easier for us to conduct ourselves as belligerents in a high spirit of right and fairness because we act without animus, not in enmity towards a people or with the desire to bring any injury or disadvantage upon them, but only in armed opposition to an irresponsible government which has thrown aside all considerations of humanity and of right and is running amuck. We are, let me say again, the sincere friends of the German people, and shall desire nothing so much as the early reestablishment of intimate relations of mutual advantage between us -- however hard it may be for them, for the time being, to believe that this is spoken from our hearts. We have borne with their present government through all these bitter months because of that friendship -- exercising a patience and forbearance which would otherwise have been impossible. We shall, happily, still have an opportunity to prove that friendship in our daily attitude and actions towards the millions of men and women of German birth and native sympathy, who live amongst us and share our life, and we shall be proud to prove it towards all who are in fact loyal to their neighbours and to the Government in the hour of test. They are, most of them, as true and loyal Americans as if they had never known any other fealty or allegiance. They will be prompt to stand with us in rebuking and restraining the few who may be of a different mind and purpose. If there should be disloyalty, it will be dealt with with a firm hand of stern repression; but, if it lifts its head at all, it will lift it only here and there and without countenance except from a lawless and malignant few.

It is a distressing and oppressive duty, gentlemen of the Congress, which I have performed in thus addressing you. There are, it may be, many months of fiery trial and
sacrifice ahead of us. It is a fearful thing to lead this great peaceful people into war, into the most terrible and disastrous of all wars, civilization itself seeming to be in the balance. But the right is more precious than peace, and we shall fight for the things which we have always carried nearest our hearts -- for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own governments, for the rights and liberties of small nations, for a universal dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples as shall bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world itself at last free. To such a task we can dedicate our lives and our fortunes, everything that we are and everything that we have, with the pride of those who know that the day has come when America is privileged to spend her blood and her might for the principles that gave her birth and happiness and the peace which she has treasured. God helping her, she can do no other.

President George H. W. Bush’s Address to the Nation
Announcing Allied Military Action
in the Persian Gulf
Delivered
January 16, 1991

Just 2 hours ago, allied air forces began an attack on military targets in Iraq and Kuwait. These attacks continue as I speak. Ground forces are not engaged.

This conflict started August 2d when the dictator of Iraq invaded a small and helpless neighbor. Kuwait -- a member of the Arab League and a member of the United Nations -- was crushed; its people, brutalized. Five months ago, Saddam Hussein started this cruel war against Kuwait. Tonight, the battle has been joined.

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. Arab leaders sought what became known as an Arab solution, only to conclude that Saddam Hussein was unwilling to leave Kuwait. Others traveled to Baghdad in a variety of efforts to restore peace and justice. Our Secretary of State, James Baker, held an historic meeting in Geneva, only to be totally rebuffed. This past weekend, in a last-ditch effort, the Secretary-General of the United Nations went to the Middle East
with peace in his heart -- his second such mission. And he came back from Baghdad with no progress at all in getting Saddam Hussein to withdraw from Kuwait.

Now the 28 countries with forces in the Gulf area have exhausted all reasonable efforts to reach a peaceful resolution -- have no choice but to drive Saddam from Kuwait by force. We will not fail.

As I report to you, air attacks are underway against military targets in Iraq. We are determined to knock out Saddam Hussein's nuclear bomb potential. We will also destroy his chemical weapons facilities. Much of Saddam's artillery and tanks will be destroyed. Our operations are designed to best protect the lives of all the coalition forces by targeting Saddam's vast military arsenal. Initial reports from General Schwarzkopf are that our operations are proceeding according to plan.

Our objectives are clear: Saddam Hussein's forces will leave Kuwait. The legitimate government of Kuwait will be restored to its rightful place, and Kuwait will once again be free. Iraq will eventually comply with all relevant United Nations resolutions, and then, when peace is restored, it is our hope that Iraq will live as a peaceful and cooperative member of the family of nations, thus enhancing the security and stability of the Gulf.

Some may ask: Why act now? Why not wait? The answer is clear: The world could wait no longer. Sanctions, though having some effect, showed no signs of accomplishing their objective. Sanctions were tried for well over 5 months, and we and our allies concluded that sanctions alone would not force Saddam from Kuwait.
While the world waited, Saddam Hussein systematically raped, pillaged, and plundered a tiny nation, no threat to his own. He subjected the people of Kuwait to unspeakable atrocities -- and among those maimed and murdered, innocent children.

While the world waited, Saddam sought to add to the chemical weapons arsenal he now possesses, an infinitely more dangerous weapon of mass destruction -- a nuclear weapon. And while the world waited, while the world talked peace and withdrawal, Saddam Hussein dug in and moved massive forces into Kuwait.

While the world waited, while Saddam stalled, more damage was being done to the fragile economies of the Third World, emerging democracies of Eastern Europe, to the entire world, including to our own economy.

The United States, together with the United Nations, exhausted every means at our disposal to bring this crisis to a peaceful end. However, Saddam clearly felt that by stalling and threatening and defying the United Nations, he could weaken the forces arrayed against him.

While the world waited, Saddam Hussein met every overture of peace with open contempt. While the world prayed for peace, Saddam prepared for war.

I had hoped that when the United States Congress, in historic debate, took its resolute action, Saddam would realize he could not prevail and would move out of Kuwait in accord with the United Nation resolutions. He did not do that. Instead, he remained intransigent, certain that time was on his side.

Saddam was warned over and over again to comply with the will of the United Nations: Leave Kuwait, or be driven out. Saddam has arrogantly rejected all warnings. Instead, he tried to make this a dispute between Iraq and the United States of America.
Well, he failed. Tonight, 28 nations -- countries from 5 continents, Europe and Asia, Africa, and the Arab League -- have forces in the Gulf area standing shoulder to shoulder against Saddam Hussein. These countries had hoped the use of force could be avoided. Regrettably, we now believe that only force will make him leave.

Prior to ordering our forces into battle, I instructed our military commanders to take every necessary step to prevail as quickly as possible, and with the greatest degree of protection possible for American and allied service men and women. I've told the American people before that this will not be another Vietnam, and I repeat this here tonight. Our troops will have the best possible support in the entire world, and they will not be asked to fight with one hand tied behind their back. I'm hopeful that this fighting will not go on for long and that casualties will be held to an absolute minimum.

This is an historic moment. We have in this past year made great progress in ending the long era of conflict and cold war. We have before us the opportunity to forge for ourselves and for future generations a new world order -- a world where the rule of law, not the law of the jungle, governs the conduct of nations. When we are successful -- and we will be -- we have a real chance at this new world order, an order in which a credible United Nations can use its peacekeeping role to fulfill the promise and vision of the U.N.'s founders.

We have no argument with the people of Iraq. Indeed, for the innocents caught in this conflict, I pray for their safety. Our goal is not the conquest of Iraq. It is the liberation of Kuwait. It is my hope that somehow the Iraqi people can, even now, convince their dictator that he must lay down his arms, leave Kuwait, and let Iraq itself rejoin the family of peace-loving nations.
Thomas Paine wrote many years ago: "These are the times that try men's souls."

Those well-known words are so very true today. But even as planes of the multinational forces attack Iraq, I prefer to think of peace, not war. I am convinced not only that we will prevail but that out of the horror of combat will come the recognition that no nation can stand against a world united, no nation will be permitted to brutally assault its neighbor.

No President can easily commit our sons and daughters to war. They are the Nation's finest. Ours is an all-volunteer force, magnificently trained, highly motivated. The troops know why they're there. And listen to what they say, for they've said it better than any President or Prime Minister ever could.

Listen to Hollywood Huddleston, Marine lance corporal. He says, "Let's free these people, so we can go home and be free again." And he's right. The terrible crimes and tortures committed by Saddam's henchmen against the innocent people of Kuwait are an affront to mankind and a challenge to the freedom of all.

Listen to one of our great officers out there, Marine Lieutenant General Walter Boomer. He said: "There are things worth fighting for. A world in which brutality and lawlessness are allowed to go unchecked isn't the kind of world we're going to want to live in."

Listen to Master Sergeant J.P. Kendall of the 82d Airborne: "We're here for more than just the price of a gallon of gas. What we're doing is going to chart the future of the world for the next 100 years. It's better to deal with this guy now than 5 years from now."

And finally, we should all sit up and listen to Jackie Jones, an Army lieutenant, when she says, "If we let him get away with this, who knows what's going to be next?"
I have called upon Hollywood and Walter and J.P. and Jackie and all their courageous comrades-in-arms to do what must be done. Tonight, America and the world are deeply grateful to them and to their families. And let me say to everyone listening or watching tonight: When the troops we've sent in finish their work, I am determined to bring them home as soon as possible.

Tonight, as our forces fight, they and their families are in our prayers. May God bless each and every one of them, and the coalition forces at our side in the Gulf, and may He continue to bless our nation, the United States of America.

Note: President Bush spoke at 9:01 p.m. from the Oval Office at the White House. In his address, he referred to President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Secretary of State James A. Baker III; United Nations Secretaty-General Javier Perez de Cuellar de la Guerra; and Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf, commander of the U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf. The address was broadcast live on nationwide radio and television.

APPENDIX III

President George W. Bush’s Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People
Delivered September 20, 2001

Mr. Speaker, Mr. President Pro Tempore, members of Congress, and fellow Americans:

In the normal course of events, Presidents come to this chamber to report on the state of the Union. Tonight, no such report is needed. It has already been delivered by the American people.

We have seen it in the courage of passengers, who rushed terrorists to save others on the ground -- passengers like an exceptional man named Todd Beamer. And would you please help me to welcome his wife, Lisa Beamer, here tonight.

We have seen the state of our Union in the endurance of rescuers, working past exhaustion. We have seen the unfurling of flags, the lighting of candles, the giving of blood, the saying of prayers -- in English, Hebrew, and Arabic. We have seen the decency of a loving and giving people who have made the grief of strangers their own.

My fellow citizens, for the last nine days, the entire world has seen for itself the state of our Union -- and it is strong.

Tonight we are a country awakened to danger and called to defend freedom. Our grief has turned to anger, and anger to resolution. Whether we bring our enemies to justice, or bring justice to our enemies, justice will be done.
I thank the Congress for its leadership at such an important time. All of America was touched on the evening of the tragedy to see Republicans and Democrats joined together on the steps of this Capitol, singing "God Bless America." And you did more than sing; you acted, by delivering $40 billion to rebuild our communities and meet the needs of our military.

Speaker Hastert, Minority Leader Gephardt, Majority Leader Daschle and Senator Lott, I thank you for your friendship, for your leadership and for your service to our country.

And on behalf of the American people, I thank the world for its outpouring of support. America will never forget the sounds of our National Anthem playing at Buckingham Palace, on the streets of Paris, and at Berlin's Brandenburg Gate.

We will not forget South Korean children gathering to pray outside our embassy in Seoul, or the prayers of sympathy offered at a mosque in Cairo. We will not forget moments of silence and days of mourning in Australia and Africa and Latin America.

Nor will we forget the citizens of 80 other nations who died with our own: dozens of Pakistanis; more than 130 Israelis; more than 250 citizens of India; men and women from El Salvador, Iran, Mexico and Japan; and hundreds of British citizens. America has no truer friend than Great Britain. Once again, we are joined together in a great cause -- so honored the British Prime Minister has crossed an ocean to show his unity of purpose with America. Thank you for coming, friend. On September the 11th, enemies of freedom committed an act of war against our country. Americans have known wars -- but for the past 136 years, they have been wars on foreign soil, except for one Sunday in 1941. Americans have known the casualties of war -- but not at the center of a great city.
on a peaceful morning. Americans have known surprise attacks -- but never before on thousands of civilians. All of this was brought upon us in a single day -- and night fell on a different world, a world where freedom itself is under attack.

Americans have many questions tonight. Americans are asking: Who attacked our country? The evidence we have gathered all points to a collection of loosely affiliated terrorist organizations known as al Qaeda. They are the same murderers indicted for bombing American embassies in Tanzania and Kenya, and responsible for bombing the USS Cole.

Al Qaeda is to terror what the mafia is to crime. But its goal is not making money; its goal is remaking the world -- and imposing its radical beliefs on people everywhere.

The terrorists practice a fringe form of Islamic extremism that has been rejected by Muslim scholars and the vast majority of Muslim clerics -- a fringe movement that perverts the peaceful teachings of Islam. The terrorists' directive commands them to kill Christians and Jews, to kill all Americans, and make no distinction among military and civilians, including women and children.

This group and its leader -- a person named Osama bin Laden -- are linked to many other organizations in different countries, including the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan. There are thousands of these terrorists in more than 60 countries. They are recruited from their own nations and neighborhoods and brought to camps in places like Afghanistan, where they are trained in the tactics of terror. They are sent back to their homes or sent to hide in countries around the world to plot evil and destruction.
The leadership of al Qaeda has great influence in Afghanistan and supports the Taliban regime in controlling most of that country. In Afghanistan, we see al Qaeda's vision for the world.

Afghanistan's people have been brutalized -- many are starving and many have fled. Women are not allowed to attend school. You can be jailed for owning a television. Religion can be practiced only as their leaders dictate. A man can be jailed in Afghanistan if his beard is not long enough.

The United States respects the people of Afghanistan -- after all, we are currently its largest source of humanitarian aid -- but we condemn the Taliban regime. It is not only repressing its own people, it is threatening people everywhere by sponsoring and sheltering and supplying terrorists. By aiding and abetting murder, the Taliban regime is committing murder.

And tonight, the United States of America makes the following demands on the Taliban: Deliver to United States authorities all the leaders of al Qaeda who hide in your land. Release all foreign nationals, including American citizens, you have unjustly imprisoned. Protect foreign journalists, diplomats and aid workers in your country. Close immediately and permanently every terrorist training camp in Afghanistan, and hand over every terrorist, and every person in their support structure, to appropriate authorities. Give the United States full access to terrorist training camps, so we can make sure they are no longer operating.

These demands are not open to negotiation or discussion. The Taliban must act, and act immediately. They will hand over the terrorists, or they will share in their fate.
I also want to speak tonight directly to Muslims throughout the world. We respect your faith. It's practiced freely by many millions of Americans, and by millions more in countries that America counts as friends. Its teachings are good and peaceful, and those who commit evil in the name of Allah blaspheme the name of Allah. The terrorists are traitors to their own faith, trying, in effect, to hijack Islam itself. The enemy of America is not our many Muslim friends; it is not our many Arab friends. Our enemy is a radical network of terrorists, and every government that supports them.

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

Americans are asking, why do they hate us? They hate what we see right here in this chamber -- a democratically elected government. Their leaders are self-appointed. They hate our freedoms -- our freedom of religion, our freedom of speech, our freedom to vote and assemble and disagree with each other.

They want to overthrow existing governments in many Muslim countries, such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan. They want to drive Israel out of the Middle East. They want to drive Christians and Jews out of vast regions of Asia and Africa.

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

We are not deceived by their pretenses to piety. We have seen their kind before. They are the heirs of all the murderous ideologies of the 20th century. By sacrificing human life to serve their radical visions -- by abandoning every value except the will to power -- they follow in the path of fascism, and Nazism, and
totalitarianism. And they will follow that path all the way, to where it ends: in history’s unmarked grave of discarded lies.

Americans are asking: How will we fight and win this war? We will direct every resource at our command -- every means of diplomacy, every tool of intelligence, every instrument of law enforcement, every financial influence, and every necessary weapon of war -- to the disruption and to the defeat of the global terror network.

This war will not be like the war against Iraq a decade ago, with a decisive liberation of territory and a swift conclusion. It will not look like the air war above Kosovo two years ago, where no ground troops were used and not a single American was lost in combat.

Our response involves far more than instant retaliation and isolated strikes. Americans should not expect one battle, but a lengthy campaign, unlike any other we have ever seen. It may include dramatic strikes, visible on TV, and covert operations, secret even in success. We will starve terrorists of funding, turn them one against another, drive them from place to place, until there is no refuge or no rest. And we will pursue nations that provide aid or safe haven to terrorism. Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists. From this day forward, any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime.

Our nation has been put on notice: We are not immune from attack. We will take defensive measures against terrorism to protect Americans. Today, dozens of federal departments and agencies, as well as state and local governments, have responsibilities affecting homeland security. These efforts must be coordinated at the highest level. So
tonight I announce the creation of a Cabinet-level position reporting directly to me -- the Office of Homeland Security.

And tonight I also announce a distinguished American to lead this effort, to strengthen American security: a military veteran, an effective governor, a true patriot, a trusted friend -- Pennsylvania's Tom Ridge. He will lead, oversee and coordinate a comprehensive national strategy to safeguard our country against terrorism, and respond to any attacks that may come.

These measures are essential. But the only way to defeat terrorism as a threat to our way of life is to stop it, eliminate it, and destroy it where it grows.

Many will be involved in this effort, from FBI agents to intelligence operatives to the reservists we have called to active duty. All deserve our thanks, and all have our prayers. And tonight, a few miles from the damaged Pentagon, I have a message for our military: Be ready. I've called the Armed Forces to alert, and there is a reason. The hour is coming when America will act, and you will make us proud.

This is not, however, just America's fight. And what is at stake is not just America's freedom. This is the world's fight. This is civilization's fight. This is the fight of all who believe in progress and pluralism, tolerance and freedom.

We ask every nation to join us. We will ask, and we will need, the help of police forces, intelligence services, and banking systems around the world. The United States is grateful that many nations and many international organizations have already responded -- with sympathy and with support. Nations from Latin America, to Asia, to Africa, to Europe, to the Islamic world. Perhaps the NATO Charter reflects best the attitude of the world: An attack on one is an attack on all.
The civilized world is rallying to America’s side. They understand that if this terror goes unpunished, their own cities, their own citizens may be next. Terror, unanswered, can not only bring down buildings, it can threaten the stability of legitimate governments. And you know what -- we’re not going to allow it.

Americans are asking: What is expected of us? I ask you to live your lives, and hug your children. I know many citizens have fears tonight, and I ask you to be calm and resolute, even in the face of a continuing threat.

I ask you to uphold the values of America, and remember why so many have come here. We are in a fight for our principles, and our first responsibility is to live by them. No one should be singled out for unfair treatment or unkind words because of their ethnic background or religious faith.

I ask you to continue to support the victims of this tragedy with your contributions. Those who want to give can go to a central source of information, libertyunites.org, to find the names of groups providing direct help in New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia.

The thousands of FBI agents who are now at work in this investigation may need your cooperation, and I ask you to give it.

I ask for your patience, with the delays and inconveniences that may accompany tighter security; and for your patience in what will be a long struggle.

I ask your continued participation and confidence in the American economy. Terrorists attacked a symbol of American prosperity. They did not touch its source. America is successful because of the hard work, and creativity, and enterprise of
our people. These were the true strengths of our economy before September 11th, and
they are our strengths today. (Applause.)

And, finally, please continue praying for the victims of terror and their families, for
those in uniform, and for our great country. Prayer has comforted us in sorrow, and will
help strengthen us for the journey ahead.

Tonight I thank my fellow Americans for what you have already done and for what
you will do. And ladies and gentlemen of the Congress, I thank you, their
representatives, for what you have already done and for what we will do together.

Tonight, we face new and sudden national challenges. We will come together to
improve air safety, to dramatically expand the number of air marshals on domestic
flights, and take new measures to prevent hijacking. We will come together to promote
stability and keep our airlines flying, with direct assistance during this emergency.

We will come together to give law enforcement the additional tools it needs to track
down terror here at home. We will come together to strengthen our intelligence
capabilities to know the plans of terrorists before they act, and find them before they
strike.

We will come together to take active steps that strengthen America's economy, and
put our people back to work.

Tonight we welcome two leaders who embody the extraordinary spirit of all New
Yorkers: Governor George Pataki, and Mayor Rudolph Giuliani. As a symbol of
America's resolve, my administration will work with Congress, and these two leaders, to
show the world that we will rebuild New York City.
After all that has just passed -- all the lives taken, and all the possibilities and hopes that died with them -- it is natural to wonder if America's future is one of fear. Some speak of an age of terror. I know there are struggles ahead, and dangers to face. But this country will define our times, not be defined by them. As long as the United States of America is determined and strong, this will not be an age of terror; this will be an age of liberty, here and across the world.

Great harm has been done to us. We have suffered great loss. And in our grief and anger we have found our mission and our moment. Freedom and fear are at war. The advance of human freedom -- the great achievement of our time, and the great hope of every time -- now depends on us. Our nation -- this generation -- will lift a dark threat of violence from our people and our future. We will rally the world to this cause by our efforts, by our courage. We will not tire, we will not falter, and we will not fail.

It is my hope that in the months and years ahead, life will return almost to normal. We'll go back to our lives and routines, and that is good. Even grief recedes with time and grace. But our resolve must not pass. Each of us will remember what happened that day, and to whom it happened. We'll remember the moment the news came -- where we were and what we were doing. Some will remember an image of a fire, or a story of rescue. Some will carry memories of a face and a voice gone forever.

And I will carry this: It is the police shield of a man named George Howard, who died at the World Trade Center trying to save others. It was given to me by his mom, Arlene, as a proud memorial to her son. This is my reminder of lives that ended, and a task that does not end.
I will not forget this wound to our country or those who inflicted it. I will not yield; I will not rest; I will not relent in waging this struggle for freedom and security for the American people.

The course of this conflict is not known, yet its outcome is certain. Freedom and fear, justice and cruelty, have always been at war, and we know that God is not neutral between them.

Fellow citizens, we'll meet violence with patient justice -- assured of the rightness of our cause, and confident of the victories to come. In all that lies before us, may God grant us wisdom, and may He watch over the United States of America.

Thank you.

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