

# CQ Researcher

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## Rethinking Foreign Policy

*Should President Bush's approach be abandoned?*

President Bush has instituted several fundamental changes in U.S. foreign policy, notably opting for unilateral action instead of multilateral initiatives and espousing a doctrine of preventive or preemptive war to ward off potential threats. Many Americans applauded the fortified U.S. policies in the immediate aftermath of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks and in the early days of the war in Iraq. With the war now in its fourth year, however, a growing number of foreign-policy experts are saying the Bush doctrines have hurt rather than helped to advance U.S. interests around the world. They want the United States to rely more on allies and multilateral institutions, discard the preventive war doctrine and be more realistic in promoting democracy abroad. Administration supporters, however, hope the president's strategy in Iraq ultimately will bring about a military and political success that will help vindicate his policies.



President George W. Bush delivers his State of the Union address to the new Democratic-controlled Congress on Jan. 23 as criticism of his foreign policy mounts on Capitol Hill and beyond. Vice President Dick Cheney and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi sit behind him.

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# Rethinking Foreign Policy

BY KENNETH JOST

## THE ISSUES

With U.S. casualties rising in Iraq and public approval of his policies falling at home, President Bush got a small bit of hopeful foreign policy news in January from an unexpected source. Iran's stridently anti-American president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, appeared to be losing the confidence of the country's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, for courting confrontation with the United States over its nuclear weapons program.

The semi-authoritative daily *Jombouri-Eslami* — owned by Khamenei — pointedly admonished Ahmadinejad to leave nuclear matters to Khamenei and tweaked him for minimizing the U.N. Security Council's decision in December to impose trade sanctions against Iran for continuing its uranium-enrichment program. "The resolution is certainly harmful for the country," the newspaper said.<sup>1</sup>

Far from treating the signs of dissent in Tehran as encouraging, however, the State Department's spokesman on Jan. 19 blandly repeated the United States' willingness to negotiate with Iran on the nuclear issue. Meanwhile, President Bush was stepping up pressure on Iran by dispatching additional ships off Iran's coast and lashing out at Iran in his State of the Union speech on Jan. 23 for supporting Shiite death squads in Iraq.

The tough talk on Iran pleases administration supporters. "It seems to me the U.S. will be taking a tougher line with Iran, one way or another," Lawrence Kudlow, the conservative CNBC talk show host, wrote on his blog "MoneyPolitic\$."<sup>2</sup> On Capitol



A soldier's boots and a flag-draped coffin dramatize the anti-war message at a rally and march on the National Mall on Jan. 27, 2007. Thousands of demonstrators in Washington and other cities urged Congress to end the Iraq war, which has claimed more than 3,000 U.S. troops and tens of thousands of Iraqi civilians.

Getty Images/Jay Westcott

Hill, however, Democrats were openly critical and even some Republicans voiced concern. "This whole concept of moving against Iran is bizarre," Senate Intelligence Committee Chairman Jay Rockefeller, D-W.Va., remarked.<sup>3</sup>

The emerging debate over Iran — and the full-blown debate over Iraq — are part of an even broader debate going on in foreign-policy circles over the past year. A growing number of experts representing diverse political and ideological backgrounds are saying U.S. foreign policy has gone fundamentally wrong under Bush and that a thoroughgoing change in approach is needed to regain support for U.S. foreign policy both at home and abroad.

Iraq necessarily forms part of the critique. "The focus on Iraq has diverted attention from a wide variety of domestic and global problems that have grown worse in the absence of U.S. attention and leadership," says

Steven Hook, an associate professor at Ohio's Kent State University and lead author of a survey of U.S. foreign policy since World War II.<sup>4</sup>

More broadly, critics charge Bush with repeatedly displaying an arrogant and unrealistic belief in U.S. power and a disdain for multilateral institutions and international traditions. They cite as examples Bush's rejection of some international treaties negotiated during the 1990s, his endorsement of "preventive war" as a national security strategy and his self-proclaimed policy to export democracy to countries in the Middle East and elsewhere.

The result, these critics say, is a backlash of anti-Americanism around the world, even in countries closely allied with the United States. "U.S. policy in recent years

has simply become too ambitious," says Anatol Lieven, a senior research fellow at the New America Foundation, a self-styled "radical centrist" think tank. "It's tried to do too much in too many directions simultaneously, and it's led to a very dangerous degree of overstretching."

A self-described progressive, Lieven joined with conservative foreign-policy expert John Hulsman to advocate what they call "ethical realism." As they wrote in a book-length manifesto in late 2006, ethical realism avoids the pitfalls of either "hard-line realism" or "utopian morality" by recognizing the limits of U.S. power while supporting the moral purpose of U.S. foreign policy to spread freedom and democracy.<sup>5</sup>

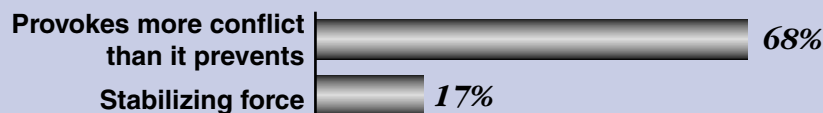
Lieven and Hulsman, now a fellow at the German Council on Foreign Relations in Berlin, criticize in particular the so-called neoconservative school of foreign policy, which advocates the assertive

## Disapproval of U.S. Policies Is Widespread

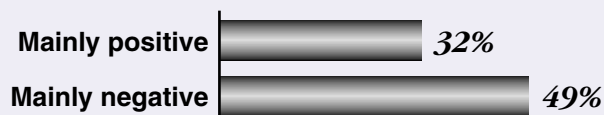
Two-thirds of the more than 26,000 people surveyed in 25 countries — including the United States — think the U.S. presence in the Middle East provokes more violence than it prevents (top graph). Nearly three-quarters disapprove of U.S. policies toward Iraq (bottom).

### What is your opinion on:

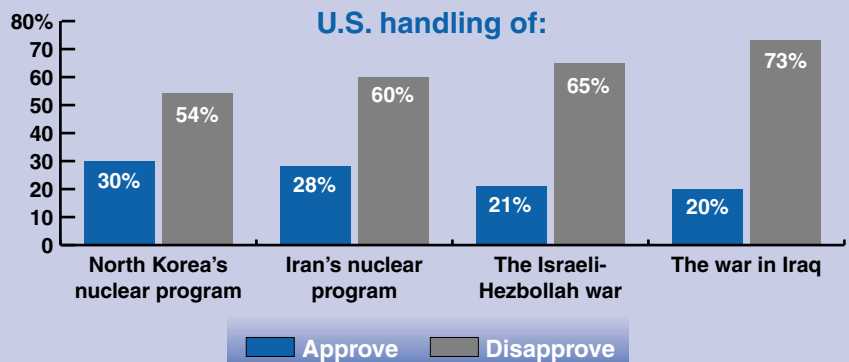
#### U.S. military presence in the Middle East?



#### American influence in the world?



#### U.S. handling of:



Source: The poll was conducted for BBC World Service by the international polling firm GlobeScan; 26,381 people in Asia, Africa, Europe, South America, the Middle East and the United States were interviewed between Nov. 3, 2006, and Jan. 9, 2007

use of American power — including military might — to promote peace, democracy and economic freedom. (See sidebar, p. 108.) “The neoconservatives are impatient with history,” says Hulsman, formerly of the Heritage Foundation. “The idea that we can rush that along is arrogant and wrong.”

A similar criticism of Bush-administration policy appears in the final report of a mammoth review of U.S. foreign policy completed in September

2006 under the auspices of Princeton University’s prestigious Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs. U.S. efforts to “unilaterally transform the domestic politics of other states” have increased anti-Americanism abroad, discouraged cooperation with U.S. policies and weakened the United States’ global authority, write Professor John Ikenberry and Dean Anne-Marie Slaughter, co-directors of the review.<sup>6</sup>

Administration supporters and sympathetic observers reject the critique in its broad sweep and its particulars. “That’s a cartoon version of either the president’s policy or neoconservatives,” says Gary Schmitt, a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute (AEI) who served as executive director of the neoconservative Project for the New American Century from 1997 to 2005. “Neoconservatives aren’t and the president isn’t unaware of the difficulties” of implementing foreign-policy strategies.

“The problem is not the American penchant for unilateralism,” says Michael Mandelbaum, a professor at the Johns Hopkins School for Advanced and International Studies in Washington and author of the 2005 book *The Case for Goliath*. “It’s the limited possibilities for multilateralism because other countries don’t contribute anything. The problem is not that the Americans don’t do too much, but other countries don’t do enough.”

Even though Bush has not abandoned any of his policies, some observers say they see signs of a shift — in tone and substance — in the president’s second term in office. “The administration began to pull back and move toward a previous pattern with greater cooperation, a pullback from the use of force, and a pullback from ‘regime change,’” says Jeffrey W. Legro, an associate professor at the University of Virginia and author of a new book on international strategy.<sup>7</sup>

“The White House has learned some bitter lessons about taking impulsive actions when it comes to military interventions and nation-building overseas,” says Hook. “There is a more pragmatic sense now that the consequences of such interventions are profound, uncertain and of long-term duration.”

As these debates continue, here are some of the questions being considered:

**Should the United States emphasize multilateral over unilateral initiatives in foreign policy?**

President Bush entered office in 2001 with a marked shift away from the emphasis on multilateralism in U.S. foreign policy under his predecessors, Presidents Bill Clinton and George H. W. Bush, his father. Critics said the change was substantive as well, citing as examples Bush's early decisions to renounce the newly created International Criminal Court as well as the Kyoto Protocol on global climate change.<sup>8</sup>

Bush followed a multilateral strategy in putting together the United Nations-authorized coalition to invade Afghanistan after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. But two years later, he spurned the U.N. Security Council and two important European allies, Germany and France, with his decision to invade Iraq and oust Saddam Hussein.

With the Iraq war now nearing its fourth anniversary, a wide range of foreign-policy experts fault the administration for what they describe as a penchant for going it alone in world affairs. "This administration has lost the respect of the international community because it has failed to understand that American power is magnified and made more authoritative when it is exercised through institutions," says Princeton's Ikenberry.

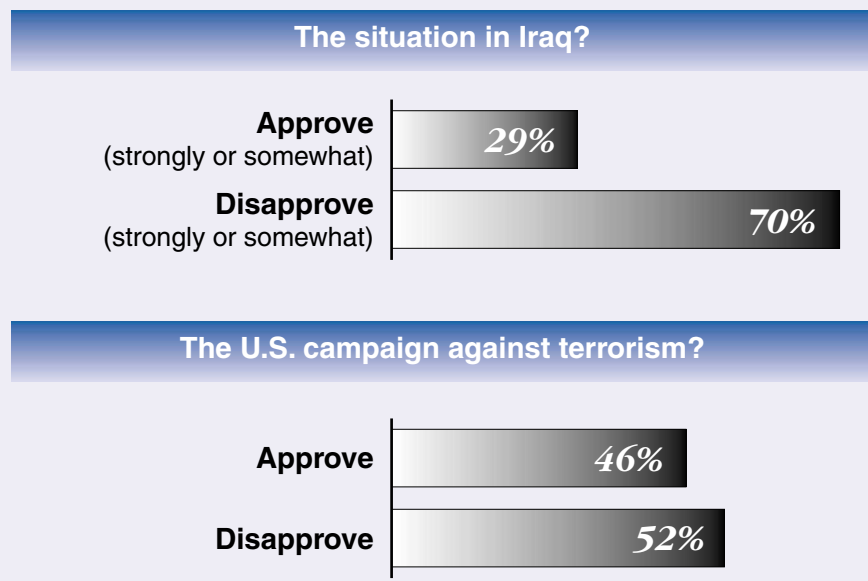
Up until the 9/11 attacks, Bush was "the most isolationist president" since World War II, according to Charles Kupchan, a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations and a professor of international relations at Georgetown University. Now, after having shifted to a more internationalist stance during the invasion of Afghanistan, Kupchan says, unilateralism appears to be re-emerging in administration rhetoric and policies.

Administration supporters say the argument is overstated. "The notion that somehow the United States was going to act unilaterally in world affairs

**Most Americans Oppose Bush Iraq Policy**

*While 70 percent of Americans disapprove of the situation in Iraq, attitudes about the Bush administration's war on terrorism are more evenly divided.*

**Do you approve or disapprove of the way President Bush is handling:**



*Source: Washington Post-ABC News Poll, Jan. 16-19, 2007; based on a random sample of 1,000 adults*

is a straw man," says James Carafano, a defense expert at the Heritage Foundation. "That was never the administration's strategy."

Instead, Carafano says, the Bush administration has tried to put together so-called "coalitions of the willing" — countries willing to join with the United States on a case-by-case basis. But he says the experience in Iraq shows the limitations of that approach and emphasizes instead the importance of more durable bilateral alliances.

"It's ridiculous to call Iraq a unilateral action," Carafano explains. "We've got allies there." The important question, he continues, is "Who sticks with us?" — pointing as examples to Britain, Canada and newer allies such as Poland. "The Poles want

to have a long and enduring relationship with the United States, and they're stepping up to the plate."

Frederick W. Kagan, a military historian and resident scholar at AEI, says the critique essentially focuses on the administration's willingness to take action — as in Iraq — without U.N. approval. "The United States is not obliged to seek U.N. authorization before taking any action in the world at all," says Kagan. "We are not at the stage where any nation has ceded its sovereignty to that point."

For their part, "ethical realism" manifesto authors Lieven and Hulsman both emphasize the practical value of multilateral action in world affairs while acknowledging instances when the United States may have to act on its

own. “There will be cases when America has to act alone, but the contrasting examples of Kosovo and Afghanistan on one hand and Iraq on the other show how infinitely preferable it is to act whenever you can with local allies,” Lieven says.

“You start at the multilateral level and — unlike the Bush administration — make good-faith efforts to get multilateral support,” says Hulsman. “It’s always good to start with that and see if you can get a good deal.” Unilateral action

is indicated, he says, only if the United States cannot get support from within or outside the affected region — “which will be, in practice, never.”

Hulsman credits the administration with putting together an effective coalition in Afghanistan. And Lieven notes that the administration has pursued a multilateral approach in trying to get North Korea to renounce plans for a nuclear-weapons program.

Other experts also say the multilateralist critique of the administration has been overstated. “There’s less difference than meets the eye” with the Clinton administration, according to Richard Betts, a professor and director of the Institute of War and Peace Studies at Columbia University in New York City. “It’s more a distinction of style than of substance.”

But Ikenberry rejects those arguments. “They’re deeply wrong,” he says. “They don’t appreciate the way in which America has signaled to the world that it does not respect institutions and rules that the rest of the world looks to as forms of governance.”



*Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice meets with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in Cairo in October 2006. During a subsequent meeting in January 2007, Rice did not repeat past criticisms of Mubarak’s regime, instead praising Egypt as part of the Middle East’s “moderate mainstream.”*

Getty Images/Khaled Desouki

However the past policies are characterized, a wide range of experts agree that the United States needs to pursue multilateral strategies more strenuously in the future. “It makes sense to have like-minded allies with us on board,” says Karin von Hippel, co-director of the Post-Conflict Reconstruction Project at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington. “When the United States works unilaterally, other countries see it as being arrogant.”

“There clearly needs to be more of a multilateral role as the limitations of U.S. power and leadership become apparent,” says the University of Virginia’s Legro.

### ***Should the United States discard President Bush’s doctrine of preventive war?***

One year after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, in September 2002, President Bush formally set out a new “national security strategy” that explicitly declared the United States’ intention to act “preemptively” when necessary “to prevent or forestall hostile acts by our adversaries.” With the rise of pri-

vate terrorist groups, the White House document explained, the United States would sometimes need to take “anticipatory action to defend ourselves, even if uncertainty remains as to the time and place of the enemy’s attack.”<sup>9</sup>

Bush depicted the idea of “preemptive action” as having a long historical pedigree. And the AEI’s Schmitt likens the doctrine to President John F. Kennedy’s decision to institute a naval blockade of Cuba during the 1962 missile crisis and President Clinton’s unacted-on plans in the early

1990s for a possible strike against North Korean nuclear sites. “It’s something that one has to keep in one’s toolbox of statecraft, but it’s not something that one does easily or often,” says Schmitt.

Most foreign-policy experts, however, read the document then — and still today — as setting out a new “preventive war” doctrine that goes beyond an accepted doctrine of preemptive action against an imminent threat. And with that understanding a wide range of foreign-policy experts view the doctrine as ill-advised, contrary to international law and — if followed by other countries — inimical to U.S. foreign-policy interests.

“The United States has strayed from the international community only to find out that the real problems facing the United States, including global terrorism, cannot be solved in isolation and that the United States — even with all of its strength — cannot go it alone,” says Kent State’s Hook.

Johns Hopkins Professor Mandelbaum calls the administration’s argument “serious” though “not compelling.”

“The logic is that since terrorists cannot be deterred, you have to strike them whenever you can,” Mandelbaum explains. “Second, nuclear weapons change the calculus of international law in that the mere possession of nuclear weapons can be a great strategic setback. Therefore, if you wait for a rogue state to get nuclear weapons, it may be too late.

“There’s something to be said for that argument, but I don’t think it has any chance of establishing itself,” Mandelbaum continues. “Partly because it violates international law too sharply. Partly because the other potential cases — North Korea and Iran — don’t lend themselves to it. And partly because Iraq has gone badly.”

Hulsman and Lieven are firmer in rejecting the Bush doctrine. “Fighting wars of choice is antithetical to ethical realism,” says Hulsman. “You might need those troops somewhere else.”

“In general, the international tradition [of deterrence] works well enough,” says Lieven. “This notion that Iran or North Korea will suddenly fire a nuclear missile at Israel or the United States is absolutely crazy,” because Iran and North Korea know they “would simply cease to exist the next day.”

In their report, Princeton Professors Ikenberry and Slaughter call for updating the deterrence doctrine by announcing in advance that in the event of nuclear terrorism, the United States would hold the source of the nuclear weapons or material responsible. They also call pre-



*American soldiers patrol outside Kabul, Afghanistan, in December 2006. Following the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, President George W. Bush rallied international support for a U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan to root out al Qaeda and the Taliban. More recently, however, Secretary of State Rice found little support among U.S. allies for sending more troops back to Afghanistan to put down a Taliban insurgency.*

AP Photo/Rodrigo Abd

ventive strikes “a necessary tool in fighting terror networks” but caution that any such actions should be “proportionate and based on intelligence that adheres to strict standards.”

A preventive strike against a country should be “very rare,” used “only as a last resort,” and authorized by a multilateral institution like the United Nations Security Council or a broadly representative body such as NATO, Ikenberry and Slaughter argue. “If we can’t convince even our most trusted allies that our course and policy is wise, then we are going to fail in the longer-term endeavor,” Ikenberry explains.

Iraq casts a cloud over the preventive-war doctrine, but the Heritage Foundation’s Carafano maintains that the conflict is being waged on a different ground: enforcement of the terms of the peace treaty that ended the first Gulf War in 1991. “We agreed to stop combat if Saddam Hussein agreed to do certain

things,” Carafano says. “He never did those things.” Under those circumstances, he says, resuming combat operations is “traditional international law.”

Other foreign-policy experts view the administration’s rationale differently. “The emphasis on preventive war in Iraq was a departure,” says Betts at Columbia. “We’ve done that before, but it was never in the mainstream of U.S. foreign policy.”

Whatever the rationale for the war, experts across the ideological spectrum agree that the Iraq experience makes a future “preventive war” less likely but not out of the question. The doctrine “is down but not out,” says Kupchan at the Council on Foreign Relations. “There will be much greater reluctance

to implement that policy after Iraq.”

“It’s probable that the outcome in Iraq will have a cushioning effect on U.S. action the way that failure in Vietnam did for a while,” Betts says. But, he adds, “I don’t think the outcome in Iraq will turn people off to the idea that we should use preventive action when warranted.”

***Should the United States scale back efforts to export democracy to the Middle East and elsewhere?***

Since the eve of the Iraq war, President Bush has repeatedly advocated promoting democracy not only in Iraq but also throughout the Middle East. With Iraq’s fledgling democracy beset by sectarian violence, however, U.S. policy appears to be deemphasizing the goal in the rest of the region. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice visited Egypt in January 2007 without repeating her past

## World Faces Many Cross-Border Challenges

*Five years after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States, the world “seems a more menacing place than ever,” according to the Princeton Project on National Security. Here are some of the challenges confronting U.S. foreign policy:*

- Americans and Iraqis are dying daily in an Iraqi conflict that some say is moving toward all-out civil war.
- Iran is seeking nuclear weapons, threatening to plunge the Middle East into chaos.
- Al Qaeda and its associated terrorist networks remain a potent threat while other terrorist sponsors, such as Hezbollah, are growing.
- Russia, riding high on rising oil prices, is seeking to reclaim its sphere of influence.
- North Korea is producing nuclear weapons and flexing its military muscle, as South Korea grows increasingly anti-American.
- Sino-Japanese relations are extremely tense; China is building relations with the rest of Asia and Africa in ways that exclude the United States.
- Populist Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez is fomenting a continent-wide anti-U.S. coalition in Latin America.
- Africa remains riven by conflict, poverty and disease.
- Global pandemics, such as avian flu, could threaten millions across continents.
- Climate change could trigger security consequences ranging from natural disasters to a fierce scramble for territory.
- U.S. budget deficits could undermine American global leadership and increase the risks of international financial crises.

*Source: G. John Ikenberry and Anne-Marie Slaughter, “Forging a World of Liberty Under Law: U.S. National Security in the 21st Century,” Princeton Project on National Security, September 2006*

criticisms of President Hosni Mubarak’s autocratic regime. Instead, she praised Egypt as part of the “moderate mainstream” in the Middle East.<sup>10</sup>

Foreign-policy experts across the ideological spectrum agree the Bush administration’s rhetoric raised unrealistic and unachievable expectations about exporting democracy to the Middle East and by analogy to the rest of the world. “History shows that pro-

moting democracy is a long-term process and one that cannot be easily exported from one country to another,” says Hook at Kent State.

“Democracy can be imported, but it can’t be exported,” says Mandelbaum, who is working on a book about democratization due out in fall 2007. “Democracy is more than just elections,” he continues. “It’s a whole set of institutions and practices. You can’t

just install them. It has to be home-grown over time.”<sup>11</sup>

“Exporting democracy is really the wrong term,” says Carafano at the Heritage Foundation. “There is no such thing as nation-building. Democracy really only takes root when it comes from below.”

Advocates of democracy promotion cite the post-World War II reconstruction of Germany and Japan as evidence that U.S. assistance can be instrumental in fostering the establishment of stable democracies. Neoconservatives also point to the U.S. invasions of Grenada and Panama during the 1980s as successful efforts to install governments with democratic forms.

In more recent history, however, Hulsman and Lieven cite less auspicious examples of trying to establish democratic governments as well as uncertain consequences of democratization in terms of support for U.S. policies.

“Haiti, Somalia, Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan and now Iraq,” Hulsman says, listing countries where the United States has intervened since the 1990s. “What have we done in these examples? I keep wondering how many more times we’re going to invade Haiti in my lifetime.”

“Show me a success,” echoes Lieven. He also points to recent examples in the Middle East — such as the Hamas victory in Palestinian elections in 2006 — to caution against expecting fledgling democracies to adopt pro-American policies. “In many countries, the early growth of democracy is intimately tied up with nationalism.”

“There are times when you promote democracy, and it turns out to be problematic,” the AEI’s Schmitt concedes. “But on the whole the general trend is one of optimism and of strategic value.”

Liberal advocates of democracy promotion also view overall U.S. efforts positively. “There are many places around the world where U.S. support for democracy has been beneficial,” says Thomas



Carothers, director of the Democracy and Rule of Law Project at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. He lists Eastern Europe and South Africa among other examples.

“Iraq has given democracy promotion a bad name in the United States and around the world,” Carothers acknowledges. Within the United States, he notes, a recent poll by the German Marshall Fund found that a plurality of Americans — 48 percent to 45 percent — reject the goal of helping to establish democracy in other countries.<sup>12</sup> Meanwhile, the administration’s expansive rhetoric has increased the perception around the world of hypocrisy in U.S. foreign policy, he adds. “Their deeds do not match their words.”

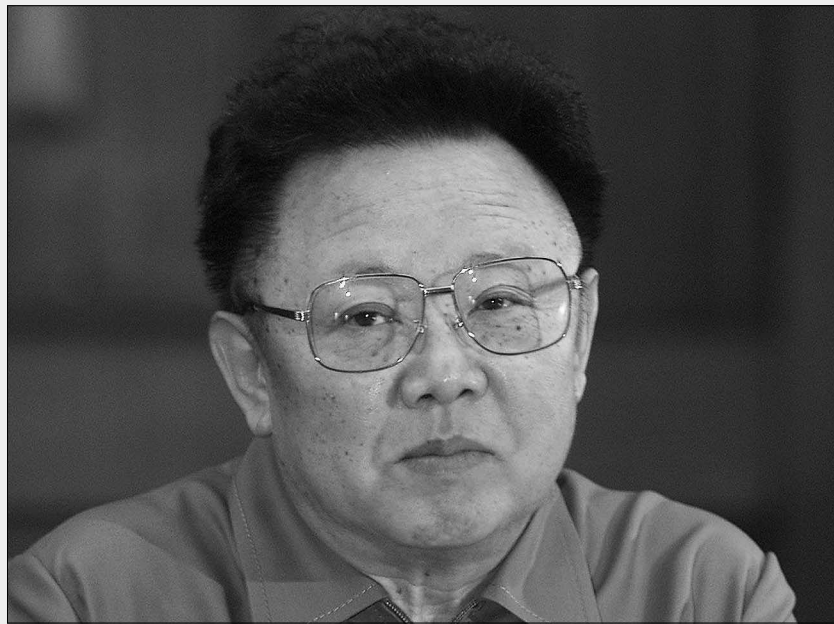
Critics of the administration’s policies question what they see as an after-the-fact adoption of democracy promotion as a goal of the Iraq war. “The war was in the first instance about security, about weapons of mass destruction and about a belief that toppling Saddam Hussein could pacify the Middle East,” says Kupchan of the Council on Foreign Relations. “It turned into a war for democracy once the original justifications for the war had evaporated.”

Whatever the original goals, many experts say the Iraq experience makes similar U.S. adventures unlikely for the foreseeable future. “It sets back exporting democracy at the point of a gun, which is not a bad thing,” says Columbia’s Betts. “We’re going to be a lot more careful of reforming nasty regimes by marching in and tossing them out.”

Other experts, however, expect public support for democratization initiatives to return. “It may be that the United States reverts to a more evolutionary approach to democratization, which focuses on economic assistance and political support for civil society and domestic groups that would enable them to create their own solutions to problems,” says Hook.



Getty Images/Rodrigo Buendia



Getty Images/Chien-Min Chung

### **Going Nuclear?**

*Iran’s stridently anti-American president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (top), may be losing the confidence of the country’s supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, for confronting the United States over Iran’s nuclear-weapons program. North Korean Leader Kim Jong Il (bottom) may permit the resumption of six-power talks with the U.S., China, Japan, Russia and South Korea. Pyongyang has pressed for bilateral talks with Washington aimed at normalizing relations between the two countries. In early January, both the U.S. and Japan warned of unspecified tougher measures if North Korea conducted a second nuclear test following its first nuclear detonation on Oct. 9, 2006.*

“There’s a robust consensus that encouraging the development of democracy is a very good thing,” says the University of Virginia’s Legro. “Using force to encourage democracy is where things fall apart.” ■

## BACKGROUND

### America Ascendant

The United States began asserting itself on the world stage early in its history and moved toward global preeminence in the two world wars of the 20th century. After World War II, the United States helped establish an array of multilateral and international institutions aimed at preventing future wars and promoting economic stability. It also adopted a policy of “containment” aimed at using diplomatic, economic and military means short of war to counter the challenge of global communism from the Soviet Union and “Red China.” The Vietnam War, the long and ultimately unsuccessful conflict in Southeast Asia, however, prompted a rethinking of U.S. goals and strategies abroad.<sup>13</sup>

President George Washington ended his presidency with a farewell address warning against foreign entanglements, but — as neoconservative foreign-affairs analyst Kagan argues in his book *Dangerous Nation* — the United States was far from isolationist in the 19th century. The young republic invited the War of 1812 by confronting Great Britain over the blockade of U.S. shipping. A decade later, President James Monroe laid down his eponymous doctrine telling European powers to stay out of hemispheric affairs. Kagan depicts westward expansion as a policy of conquest — sometimes peaceful, sometimes not — and the Spanish-American War as a humanitarian inter-

vention of choice that turned the United States into an imperial power.

The United States fought in and won the two world wars in the 20th century despite isolationist public opinion and pronouncements by leaders as both conflicts developed. President Woodrow Wilson campaigned in 1916 on keeping the United States out of the European conflict but asked Congress for a declaration of war barely six months later after German submarines continued to attack U.S. shipping. After the war, isolationist sentiment helped keep the United States out of the League of Nations and on the sidelines as war clouds formed again in Europe.

Like Wilson, President Franklin D. Roosevelt campaigned for re-election in 1940 on the strength of having kept the United States out of the European war. But he had already taken sides in 1939 by allowing Britain and France to buy arms from the United States and collaborating with Britain on the Lend-Lease program early in 1941. After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, Roosevelt asked for a declaration of war and then led the country in an unprecedented military and economic mobilization. The war ended with Germany and Japan defeated, Europe and the Soviet Union ravaged and the United States left standing as the strongest world power.

Before the war’s end, the United States was already adopting a new, explicitly internationalist role in world affairs. It hosted the July 1944 conference at Bretton Woods, N.H., that led to the creation of two largely U.S.-financed international lending institutions: the World Bank to help countries rebuild and the International Monetary Fund to help countries out of short-term currency crises. The United States again took the lead role in the international conference in San Francisco in 1945 that established the United Nations — with a charter giving the United States a permanent and powerful role in its enforcement arm, the Security Council.

Postwar hopes for international peace faded quickly with official and popular concern about an emerging conflict with the Soviet Union. George Kennan, then the U.S. ambassador to Moscow, presciently analyzed Soviet policies in a now-famous anonymously written memo in 1946 that called for the United States to counter the ideologically charged challenge with a policy of “long-term, patient, but firm and vigilant containment.”<sup>14</sup>

President Harry S. Truman adopted that approach with such steps as aid to Greece and Turkey to defeat communist insurgencies, the Marshall Plan to rebuild Western Europe and the Berlin airlift to counter the Soviets’ blockade of the city’s western sectors. Truman also led the United States into the Korean War, which his successor, Dwight D. Eisenhower, ended in 1953 with an uneasy cease-fire and a heavily fortified “demilitarized zone” between the communist North and the pro-Western South Korea.

Through the 1950s, the United States avoided direct military confrontations with either the Soviet Union or China, communist-ruled after the defeat of the U.S.-backed Nationalist government in 1949. In the 1960s, however, Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson came to view the war between the communist North and the pro-Western South Vietnam as a critical test of the containment policy.

The United States committed itself to South Vietnam’s defense, but the U.S. troop buildup — eventually exceeding 500,000 soldiers — failed to repel a Vietcong invasion from the north. After four more years of war and with the pro-Western government still in power in Saigon, President Richard M. Nixon approved the 1973 treaty that ended the war with a cease-fire. Just two years later, however, a new invasion from the north toppled the Saigon government and unified Vietnam under a government communist in ideology and nationalist in sentiment.

*Continued on p. 108*

# Chronology

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## *Post-World War II* **The Allies' victory is followed by Cold War with Soviet Union.**

### **1947-50**

Truman administration lays foundation of "containment" policy to limit Soviet expansion with aid to Greece and Turkey, Marshall Plan to rebuild Europe and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to guarantee security of Western Europe.

### **1950-53**

Korean War ends with cease-fire, North and South Korea divided.

### **1961-73**

U.S. support for South Vietnam against communist North Vietnam leads to major escalation after 1965; protracted war ends in 1973 with North and South divided.

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## *1970s-1980s* **End of Vietnam War brings re-creminations at home, calls for retrenchment abroad.**

### **1975**

Saigon falls to North Vietnam. . . . Helsinki Accords concede communist control of Eastern Europe in return for Soviets' recognition of human rights.

### **1978**

President Jimmy Carter makes human rights a major objective of U.S. foreign policy.

### **1979-81**

Iranian hostage crisis: U.S. Embassy personnel in Tehran held for 15 months, released as President Carter leaves White House.

### **1982**

President Ronald Reagan labels Soviet Union "evil empire," vows to support democracy in communist countries.

### **1983**

U.S. invasion of Grenada. . . . Bombing of Marine barracks in Lebanon kills 241 servicemen.

### **1989**

President George H.W. Bush approves invasion of Panama to oust dictator Manuel Noriega.

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## *1990s* **Cold War ends; U.S. is sole superpower.**

### **1990-91**

First Gulf War: First President Bush forges U.N.-sanctioned coalition to oust Iraq from Kuwait.

### **1993**

President Bill Clinton withdraws U.S. troops from Somalia.

### **1995-96**

U.S. helps broker Dayton Accords to end Bosnian war.

### **1998**

U.S. embassies in Kenya, Tanzania bombed; attacks later linked to al Qaeda.

### **1999**

Serbia halts war in Kosovo after NATO bombing campaign, approved by Clinton.

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## *2000-Present* **President George W. Bush declares "war on terror"; launches wars in Afghanistan, Iraq.**

### **2001**

President Bush renounces International Criminal Court, Kyoto Protocol on climate change. . . . Sept. 11 terrorist attacks leave nearly 3,000 Americans dead; Bush declares "war on terror," launches U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan with U.N. backing. . . . Taliban ousted by November; pro-U.S. interim government installed in December.

### **2002**

Bush labels Iran, Iraq, North Korea "axis of evil." . . . "National Security Strategy" says U.S. will act to "prevent or forestall" attacks by terrorists, other adversaries. . . . Congress grants Bush authority to use force in Iraq.

### **2003**

Bush launches invasion of Iraq with U.S.-led coalition after failing to win U.N. backing; Saddam Hussein ousted, U.S. occupation under "provisional authority."

### **2004-05**

U.S. transfers sovereignty to interim Iraqi government (June 2004); Iraqi national elections (January 2005); insurgency grows.

### **2006**

Iran announces it has enriched small amount of uranium, adds to fears that it seeks nuclear weapons. . . . North Korea announces it has carried out first nuclear test. . . . Democrats regain control of Congress; growing opposition to war in Iraq seen as major factor. . . . Bipartisan commission calls for redeployment of U.S. troops in Iraq, diplomatic efforts to end conflict.

### **2007**

Bush says he will send 21,500 more troops to Iraq to quell sectarian violence; Democrats oppose plan, many Republicans voice doubts.

## Is the Neoconservative Movement Dead?

*That's not the point, say Robert and Frederick Kagan*

Critics of the neoconservative movement are declaring it dead — a friendly-fire casualty of the Bush administration's failures in Iraq and elsewhere.

But two of the people most closely identified with the movement say its views have been misrepresented and its influence on Bush's policies overstated.

"I've always found it odd that people talk about a neo-conservative vision of anything," says Frederick Kagan, a military historian and research fellow at the conservative American Enterprise Institute (AEI). "There is no cohesive neo-conservative movement that gets together with regular congresses and decides what's the neoconservative line."

Like his younger brother, author and think-tank fellow Robert Kagan says he does not even call himself a neoconservative. And he scoffs at what he calls "the absurd conspiracy theory" that a small group of "neocons" outside the government effectively hijacked U.S. foreign policy under Bush.

The picture of a well-organized movement dating from the 1960s and unified around a vision of a muscular U.S. foreign policy pursuing peace, democracy and free markets may be

overdrawn, experts and journalists sometimes concede.

"Neoconservatives do not make up an organized bloc — much less a 'cabal,' as is sometimes alleged," *Vanity Fair* Contributing Editor David Rose writes.<sup>1</sup> But the view of Bush's foreign policy as shaped by neoconservatives in and out of government is widespread.

G. John Ikenberry, a professor at Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School of International Affairs, accuses the neoconservative movement of a "radical" reorientation of U.S. foreign policy after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks that he

says "squandered" the United States' moral authority in the world. In their ideology-spanning book *Ethical Realism*, Anatol Lieven and John Hulsman credit neoconservatives with "tremendous success" in making democracy-promotion a central element of U.S. strategy in the Muslim world — but they call the policy a failure in Iraq and Mideast politics in general.<sup>2</sup>

As Robert Kagan explains, the original neoconservatives — literally, "new" conservatives — were one-time liberals and left-wingers who held on to hawkish anti-communist views during

and immediately after the Vietnam War. Decades later, he says, the term has lost its original meaning. "I've never been on the left, and I don't consider myself a conservative," he says in a telephone interview from Brussels, where he writes a monthly column for *The Washington Post*.

In Robert Kagan's view, the post-Cold War neoconservatives are successors to a continuous tradition — detailed in his history of 19th-century U.S. foreign policy — of seeking global influence in pur-

suit of liberal goals. "Neoconservatives did not come along and change American tradition," he says.<sup>3</sup>

In a "statement of principles" in 1997, the neoconservative Project for a New American Century (PNAC) argued that the United States should increase defense spending, "challenge regimes hostile to our values" and accept "America's unique role in preserving and extending an international order friendly to our security, our prosperity and our principles." Signers included such future Bush administration officials as Vice President Dick Cheney, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and Undersecretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz.<sup>4</sup>



Carnegie Endowment (R. Kagan), American Enterprise Institute (F. Kagan)

*Neoconservatives reflect a long American tradition, say Robert (left) and Frederick Kagan.*

*Continued from p. 106*

### America Conflicted

The United States conducted foreign policy from the 1970s on conflicted over the lessons to be drawn from the end of the Vietnam

War. The "Vietnam War syndrome" introduced an explicit aversion to intervention abroad into many foreign policy debates but did not prevent Presidents Ronald Reagan or George H. W. Bush from sending U.S. troops into Grenada (1983), Panama (1989) and — most significantly — Kuwait

(1991). In the 1990s President Clinton adopted "assertive multilateralism" as the watchword for U.S. foreign policy, but critics faulted the administration's actions in such trouble spots as Somalia, Rwanda, Haiti and the former Yugoslavia as either ill-advised or ineffective or both.

"We did a pretty good job of putting that strategic vision on the table," says Gary Schmitt, who served as executive director of PNAC from 1997 to 2005. Schmitt is now a fellow with AEI; PNAC — housed in the same building — is somewhat dormant.

Robert Kagan says neoconservatives supported President Bill Clinton's military interventions in Haiti, Somalia, Bosnia and Kosovo against foreign-policy "realists" and Republican lawmakers who saw no vital U.S. interests at stake. "At the time we had more in tune with Clinton than with Republicans and conservatives," he says.

Today, neoconservatives such as the Kagans and PNAC Founding Chairman William Kristol, editor of the *Weekly Standard*, are among the lonely voices supporting Bush's plan to send additional troops to Iraq. Many others are bailing out, however — as Rose devastatingly detailed in his *Vanity Fair* cover story in January. "The biggest industry" in Washington, Robert Kagan says, are people trying to explain away their previous support for the Iraq war.

Ikenberry, writing with the Iraq war still in its first year, saw the invasion as "the neo-conservatives' crowning achievement" until it "turned into a costly misadventure." The policies, he wrote, were "unsustainable" at home and unacceptable abroad. Today he sees only further vindication: "The failure of the Bush administration is a ratification of the intellectual bankruptcy of the neoconservatives."

Lieven, a self-described progressive, and the conservative Hulsman give neoconservatives credit for seeking to balance realism and morality and recognizing the role of "failed states" in fomenting Islamist extremism and anti-U.S. terrorism. But they say neoconservatives are too willing for the United States to go it alone in world affairs. "The neoconservative idea that we can act alone be-

comes a self-fulfilling prophecy," Hulsman says.

Kagan calls it "absurd" to equate neoconservatism with unilateralism. Neoconservatism, he says, "is all about having allies and having democratic allies."

Other foreign-policy experts see the neoconservatives' influence waning. "The neoconservatives' heyday is past," says Steven Hook, an associate professor at Kent State University in Ohio. But Charles Kupchan, a senior fellow with the Council on Foreign Relations and professor at Georgetown University, says they cannot be ignored as long as Bush remains in office.

"There is no question that what was a unified and quite coherent movement has suffered a loss of influence and internal fragmentation," Kupchan says. "But they're still out there. They're still influential. As long as Bush is president, the neoconservatives' view of the world will remain influential within the administration."

For his part, Kagan goes further and says neoconservative views will be influential in the next administration — even if a Democrat wins the White House. "When the next administration is in office, we're going to have the same debate," he says, "but people will change sides."

"Whoever is in the White House tends to favor the use of power" abroad, Kagan continues. "You can't tell me that Hillary Clinton won't get into the White House and want to meddle" in world affairs.



© Claudio Vazquez

*Neoconservatives' policy fails in Iraq and the Mideast, say Anatol Lieven and John Hulsman (right).*

<sup>1</sup> David Rose, "Neo Culpa," *Vanity Fair*, January 2007, p. 82.

<sup>2</sup> G. John Ikenberry, "The End of the Neo-Conservative Movement," *Survival*, Vol. 46, No. 1 (spring 2004), pp. 7-22; Anatol Lieven and John Hulsman, *Ethical Realism: A Vision for America's Role in the World* (2006), pp. xiv-xv.

<sup>3</sup> Robert Kagan, *Dangerous Nation: America's Place in the World From Its Earliest Days to the Dawn of the Twentieth Century* (2007).

<sup>4</sup> Project for a New American Century ([www.newamericancentury.org/state-mentofprinciples.htm](http://www.newamericancentury.org/state-mentofprinciples.htm)).

In his brief presidency, Gerald R. Ford made a signal contribution to U.S. foreign policy by helping negotiate the Helsinki Accords, the 1975 pact that effectively accepted communist domination of Eastern Europe in return for the Soviet Union's agreement to recognize human rights in the region. President

Jimmy Carter went further in stressing human rights as a keystone of U.S. foreign policy and helped negotiate an historic peace treaty between Egypt and Israel that represented the first recognition of the Jewish state by an Arab nation.

But Carter's foreign policy accomplishments were lastingly overshadowed

by the seizure of 52 U.S. embassy workers by Iranian militants in November 1979, a humiliating crisis that ended with their release the day Carter left office in January 1981. After seeking to defuse Cold War tensions, Carter also ended his presidency with a more bellicose atmosphere after the Soviet

invasion of Afghanistan in 1980.

Reagan came to office as an outspoken anti-communist and an unapologetic former hawk on the Vietnam War. He quickly moved to increase U.S. military spending and sharpen rhetorical attacks on the Soviet Union. On the pretext of protecting U.S. citizens, Reagan sent U.S. troops to oust a Marxist regime in the tiny Caribbean island of Grenada. He also defied congressional opposition to help fund the anti-communist rebels known as contras fighting the leftist government in Nicaragua. Reagan told a succession of Soviet leaders that the Vietnam War syndrome was a thing of the past. When a suicide bomber attacked the U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut in 1983, killing 283 servicemembers, however, U.S. peace-keeping troops were withdrawn from Lebanon, and military intervention abroad was denounced except when America's "vital interests" were at stake.

As Reagan maintained rhetorical pressure on the Soviet Union, the communist government was itself collapsing. Reagan's admirers say the U.S. defense buildup forced the Soviet Union into an unaffordable arms race that contributed to economic stagnation and the country's eventual dissolution. In posthumously published interviews, Ford was quoted as saying the recognition of human rights in the Helsinki Accords played a more important role.<sup>15</sup>



*A military museum in Beijing displays wax models representing the Chinese Navy, Army and Air Force along with a Chinese missile and satellite model. The destruction of a Chinese weather satellite by a Chinese missile on Jan. 12 prompted the United States to reiterate its opposition to any militarization of space.*

AP Photo/Elizabeth Dalziel

Still others say reforms like the economic and political restructuring instituted by Mikhail S. Gorbachev beginning in the mid-1980s would have been adopted eventually without regard to U.S. policy. Whatever the causes, the combination of economic woes and pro-democracy protests in the satellite countries by 1991 brought down the communist empire and reduced the Soviet Union to the present-day Russian Federation.

In December 1989, during his first year in office, the first President Bush sent U.S. troops to Panama to assist a military coup in ousting President Manuel

Noriega, who was facing indictment in the United States for drug trafficking. A year later, Bush responded to Saddam Hussein's August 1990 invasion of Kuwait by working in the United Nations to form a U.S.-led coalition to oust the Iraqi invaders. After a month-long bombing campaign, coalition ground forces moved in on Feb. 24, 1991, and succeeded within 100 hours in liberating Kuwait with only 149 allied servicemembers killed. Bush made the controversial decision not to pursue the retreating enemy soldiers further into Iraq or try to remove Hussein from power.

Clinton inherited an Iraq policy that included U.S. and British enforcement of "no-fly zones" preventing Hussein's government from conducting air attacks on Kurdish areas in the north or on the predominantly Shiite southern region. Despite the United States' enhanced primacy in the post-Cold War era, Clinton also faced an array of vexing foreign policy challenges in trouble spots where U.S.

interests were less than evidently vital and U.S. public opinion less than engaged.<sup>16</sup> Public reaction to the sight of a slain U.S. soldier being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu in 1993 led Clinton to pull U.S. troops out of a U.N. nation-building effort in Somalia. With public support lacking, Clinton stayed out of the humanitarian intervention during the Rwanda genocide. And he wavered on U.S. military intervention in the former Yugoslavia in the face of European and domestic inertia even though he had called for the United States to intervene during his 1992 campaign.

# U.S. National Strategy Landmarks

The United States' "national security strategy" evolved from the Cold War policies of "containment" and "nuclear deterrence" aimed against the former Soviet Union to President George W. Bush's "preventive war" doctrine designed to forestall possible attacks by terrorists or other "adversaries."

## 1947

**Truman Doctrine** Aims to contain communism through economic, military aid to Greece, Turkey.

**NSC 4/A [National Security Council]** Launches peacetime covert actions to counter Soviets' "psychological warfare."

## 1950

**NSC-68** Calls for military buildup, shift to active containment to counter Soviets.

## 1953

**NSC 162/2** Establishes "New Look" national security policy envisioning "massive retaliation" and optional use of nuclear weapons.

## 1961

**NSAM 2 [National Security Action Memorandum]** Authorizes counterinsurgency "for use in situations short of limited war."

## 1963

**"Assured Destruction" DPM [Draft Presidential Memorandum]** Calls for capacity to inflict "assured destruction" of Soviet government, military controls, population centers in event of first strike against U.S. nuclear forces — giving up emphasis on blocking Soviet ability to strike the U.S.

## 1969

**Nixon Doctrine** Looks to treaty partners to assume primary responsibility for providing manpower for defense against aggression.

## 1978

**PD-30 [Presidential Directive]** Makes promotion of human rights a "major objective" of U.S. foreign policy.

## 1980

**PD-59** Calls for flexible use of nuclear weapons in case of aggression against U.S. interests.

## 1982

**Reagan Doctrine** Uses overt and covert aid to anti-communist resistance to roll back Soviet-backed governments in Third World.

## 1992

**Draft Defense Planning Guidance** Broaches plan to prevent emergence of rival superpower; later revised.

## 1994

**NSSUS, "Engagement and Enlargement" [National Security Strategy of the United States]** Promises "engagement" throughout the world, efforts to promote "democratic enlargement."

## 2002

**NSSUS, "Preemption"** Declares intention to act "preemptively" against terrorist groups, other adversaries, when necessary to "prevent or forestall" attacks, even if time and place are uncertain.

Adapted from Richard K. Betts, "U.S. National Security Strategy: Lenses and Landmarks," Princeton Project on National Security, November 2004.

Meanwhile, al Qaeda had formed as a multinational, anti-American terrorist organization and carried out attacks on U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998 and the *USS Cole* in October 2000. Clinton approved a

missile strike aimed at bin Laden in 1999, but it was called off. He left office with plans written — but not acted upon — to retaliate for the *Cole* attack, which killed 17 U.S. sailors and wounded 39 others.<sup>17</sup>

## America Challenged

The second President Bush entered the White House in January 2001 after having criticized Clinton's emphasis

on multilateralism, humanitarian intervention and nation-building, Bush successfully went through United Nations channels in the 2001 war against Afghanistan but invaded Iraq in 2003 without U.N. sanction. Over the next three years, popular support for Bush's policies on terrorism and Iraq fell as clear successes proved elusive. Meanwhile, U.S.-led efforts failed to deter Iran and North Korea from nuclear weapons programs — advanced in North Korea's case, less so in Iran.

Early in his presidency, Bush concentrated on domestic issues while bucking world opinion by refusing to join the International Criminal Court, renouncing the Kyoto Protocol and threatening to withdraw from the 1972 antiballistic missile treaty. In early August 2001, he claimed he had put U.S. foreign policy “on sound footing,” in part by “strengthening our relationships with our allies.” Poll results two weeks later, however, showed that at least 73 percent of those surveyed in four European countries — Britain, France, Germany and Italy — believed Bush made decisions “entirely on U.S. interests” without considering Europeans' views.<sup>18</sup>

The Sept. 11 attacks brought a wave of pro-American sentiment throughout much of the world, including in many Arab and predominantly Muslim countries. While pushing broad anti-terrorism legislation through Congress, Bush also rallied international support in the U.N. Security Council for a U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan to root out al Qaeda and oust its Taliban hosts. A U.S. and British bombing campaign in October set the stage for ground troops and opposition Northern Alliance forces to topple the Taliban by mid-November. An international conference in Bonn laid the framework for an interim government to take over in December, headed by the pro-American Hamid Karzai. He continues to lead the country after having won a presidential election in December 2004.<sup>19</sup>

With Afghanistan seemingly under control, Bush broadened the “war on

terror” in his State of the Union message in January 2002 by linking terrorist groups with what he called an “axis of evil” — Iran, Iraq and North Korea — aimed at destroying the United States. In September, the administration formally unveiled Bush's new doctrine in the 33-page “National Security Strategy of the United States.”<sup>20</sup> After promising to seek international support, the document declared, “we will not hesitate to act alone, if necessary, to exercise our right of self-defense by acting preemptively against such terrorists.”

Many foreign-policy experts were critical. Harvard Professor Graham Allison, a leading expert on national-security strategy, said the doctrine amounted to “a devaluation of deterrence and containment, as if those were 20th-century ideas that are now outmoded.”<sup>21</sup>

Meanwhile, Bush and his national security team had been not so quietly laying plans for a possible invasion of Iraq.<sup>22</sup> With midterm elections less than a month away, Bush won approval from Congress for a resolution authorizing the use of force against Iraq — with or without approval from the United Nations. At the United States' urging, the U.N. Security Council on Dec. 23 declared Iraq in “material breach” of past U.N. resolutions requiring, among other things, dismantling of any weapons of mass destruction. U.S. efforts to get a second Security Council resolution authorizing an invasion foundered in the face of a promised veto from France and reluctance from Russia and other council members. Thwarted at the U.N., Bush on March 20 went ahead and — with a coalition said to include 48 other countries — launched the invasion that overthrew Hussein's government by mid-April.

Over the next three years, the administration's swaggering reaction to the Iraq military campaign — exemplified in Bush's famous declaration on May 1 that major combat operations were over — proved to be premature at best. Meanwhile, U.S. efforts to deter Iran and North Korea from their apparent pur-

suit of nuclear weapons were proving unavailing. Iran announced in April 2006 that it had enriched a small amount of uranium — a critical step toward nuclear weapons. North Korea conducted a nuclear test in October. The administration enlisted support from European countries and Russia on Iran and the East Asian powers of China, Japan and South Korea on the North Korea issue. By the end of 2006, however, diplomatic efforts had not borne fruit.

By fall 2006, the administration's confident claims to be making progress in Iraq were failing to stem the growing discontent in Iraq, in Congress, in foreign policy circles and among the general public. Two broad reviews were underway: one by a bipartisan commission headed by former Secretary of State James A. Baker III and former Rep. Lee H. Hamilton, D-Ind., the other by the administration itself. Both were held back until after the midterm election. Opposition to U.S. policies in Iraq was widely seen as the primary factor in the Democrats' recapturing control of both houses of Congress for the first time in Bush's presidency.

Despite the changed political situation, Bush turned aside the Baker-Hamilton call for a redeployment of U.S. troops and diplomatic engagement with Iran and Syria. Instead, Bush used a nationwide address on Jan. 10 to announce that he would send an additional 21,500 troops to Iraq to try to quell the sectarian violence in Baghdad and elsewhere. ■

## CURRENT SITUATION

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### World of Troubles

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**D**espite Washington's preoccupation with Iraq, China is suddenly bid-

*Continued on p. 114*



# At Issue:

## *Should Congress try to block President Bush's ability to send additional troops to Iraq?*

CQ/Scott J. Ferrell



**SEN. EDWARD M. KENNEDY, D-MASS.**  
**MEMBER, SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE**

WRITTEN FOR *CQ RESEARCHER*, JANUARY 2007

**F**or four long years, President Bush's assertion of unprecedented power has gone unchecked by Congress. For too long, the administration was allowed to operate in secrecy. Not just in Iraq, but also here at home — detentions in defiance of the Geneva Conventions, eavesdropping on people's telephone calls, reading their mail and reviewing their financial records, all without judicial authorization.

The president has made clear that he intends to move ahead with his misguided plan to escalate the war. That's the hallmark of his presidency — to go it alone and ignore contrary opinions. The American people spoke out against the war at the ballot box in November. Our generals opposed the escalation. They do not believe adding more American troops can end a civil war or encourage the transfer of responsibility to the Iraqis, but their warnings have gone unheeded. Now Congress is about to consider a non-binding resolution of no confidence in the president's reckless, last-ditch effort to salvage his strategy.

Passage of the non-binding resolution will send an important message about the need for a different course in Iraq, but it's only a first step. The president has made clear that he intends to ignore non-binding resolutions. If we disagree with the president's failed course, it will take stronger action to stop him. We cannot stand by as the president sends more of our sons and daughters into a civil war.

I've introduced legislation to prohibit the president from raising troop levels in Iraq unless he obtains specific new authorization from Congress. The initial authorization bears no relevance to the current hostilities in Iraq. There were no weapons of mass destruction and no alliance with al Qaeda, and Saddam Hussein is no more. The president should not be permitted to escalate our involvement unless Congress grants its approval.

For too long Congress has given President Bush a blank check to pursue his disastrous policy. He should not be permitted to take the desperate step of sending even more troops to die in the quagmire of civil war without convincing Congress why this escalation can succeed. As the constitutional scholars concluded in their recent letter to leaders of Congress: "Far from an invasion of presidential power, it would be an abdication of its own constitutional role if Congress were to fail to inquire, debate and legislate, as it sees fit, regarding the best way forward in Iraq."

We must not abdicate that responsibility any longer.



**SEN. JOHNNY ISAKSON, R-GA.**  
**MEMBER, SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE**

WRITTEN FOR *CQ RESEARCHER*, JANUARY 2007

**P**resident Bush has proposed increasing the number of American troops to serve with Iraqi security forces in securing, holding and building in those areas of Baghdad engulfed in sectarian violence.

The president has laid out a clear and precise plan that absolutely requires the cooperation and support of the Iraqi people and the Iraqi military. I believe that the president's plan is the best opportunity — and quite frankly the last opportunity — for the Iraqi government to create a foundation for political reconciliation.

As the president said in his State of the Union address, "This is not the fight we entered in Iraq, but it is the fight we're in." The president also told Congress that, regardless of what mistakes may have been made, "Whatever you voted for, you did not vote for failure."

While the ultimate success of the president's plan depends on the Iraqis and their government living up to their responsibilities, the opportunity for them to do so depends on our help in securing Baghdad.

Our enemies and the enemies of the Iraqi people watch our actions and listen to our words. Our commander in chief has committed our armed forces to a plan, and the Iraqi government has committed to be a full partner. At such a critical time, when our country is committed to this major battle in the overall global war on terror, the words of Congress should not send a mixed message to our troops, the Iraqi people or our enemies.

While the situation in Iraq is grave, it would turn dire if we prematurely withdraw our forces and withdraw funding necessary to move Iraq forward. During two weeks of hearings, every expert witness — without exception — testified that if the United States retreats or redeploys its troops, there would be catastrophic loss of life, and the potential for a regional conflict in the Middle East would increase exponentially.

As I see it, we have two options: We can choose an opportunity for success or we can choose a recipe for disaster. Our brave men and women in uniform and the people of Iraq deserve to see a successful outcome, and our national security depends on it.

I remain committed to ensuring that the future holds this promise.

*Continued from p. 112*

ding for renewed attention after a quiet but dramatic demonstration that it may have the capacity to destroy American spy satellites in space.

A Chinese missile, launched in the early morning hours of Jan. 12 Beijing time, destroyed a Chinese weather satellite scheduled to be retired. China gave no advance notice of the action and withheld any information about it for a week afterward.

Coming more than two decades after the United States and the former Soviet Union had stopped testing anti-satellite weapons, the Chinese move prompted a State Department spokesman to reiterate U.S. opposition to any militarization of space. Foreign-policy experts differed over China's possible motives, but Council on Foreign Relations analysts observed

that the test showed China "can play with the big boys in space."<sup>23</sup>

The Chinese test was a reminder as well that the United States faces a world of troubles beyond Iraq. China's surging economy and growing military give Beijing greater influence in East Asia than either the United States or Japan, while Russia is seeking to regain influence lost after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Columbia's Betts sees signs of "a re-emergence of great power conflict." Meanwhile, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict shows no signs of abating despite the U.S. efforts to restart a peace process. U.S. policies are unpopular in much of Europe. Venezuela's populist leader Hugo Chavez is rallying an anti-U.S. coalition



*An Iraqi man mourns a dead relative in Baquba on July 12, 2006. At least 44,000 civilians have died since the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, according to the Brookings Institution, and more than 3,000 American troops. The rising death toll has helped to turn U.S. public opinion against the war.*

in South America. And Africa's daunting problems of poverty and disease dwarf any U.S. initiatives to combat them.

In many ways, the array of problems makes the 21st century more difficult if not more dangerous than the Cold War's era of so-called mutually assured nuclear destruction. "In the 21st century, the game of American grand strategy is not a game of chess, but a Rubik's cube puzzle, where a lot of different pieces have to be put together," says Princeton's Ikenberry.

U.S. efforts to back North Korea and Iran away from a nuclear-weapons path reflect the administration's efforts to adapt strategies and tactics in differing geopolitical environments. In North Korea, the

administration has sought to channel negotiations into six-power talks that include China, Japan, Russia and South Korea while Pyongyang has pressed for bilateral talks with Washington aimed at normalizing relations between the two countries. In Iran, the administration deferred to diplomatic efforts by European allies but more recently stepped up U.S. pressure on Tehran — in part because of Iran's apparent support for Shiite forces in the sectarian fighting inside Iraq.

The administration appears optimistic about the prospects for resumed six-power talks with North Korea following meetings in Berlin on Jan. 17 and 18 between the State Department's Asia chief and North Korean diplomats. Christopher Hill, assistant secretary of State for East Asia and Pacific affairs, said the meetings provided a "basis for making progress" in the aftermath of stalemated talks in December. In early January, both the United

States and Japan had warned of unspecified tougher measures if North Korea conducted a second test following its first nuclear detonation on Oct. 9.<sup>24</sup>

The negotiating track appears to be on hold in Iran as the United States combines economic pressure and gunboat diplomacy to gain Tehran's attention on both the nuclear and Iraq issues. Dissatisfied with the relatively weak economic sanctions voted by the U.N. Security Council in December, U.S. officials are trying to pressure foreign governments and financial institutions to sever or cut back financial ties with Iran. The United States in January also dispatched a second aircraft-carrier strike group to the Persian Gulf and beefed

AFP/Getty Images/Ali Youssef

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up anti-missile defenses in two U.S. allies in the Gulf: Kuwait and Qatar. At the same time, officials confirmed that Bush had previously authorized U.S. troops inside Iraq to kill or capture Iranian operatives suspected of taking part in the sectarian violence.<sup>25</sup>

The tough moves against Iran appeared to recognize that — in contrast to economically strapped and diplomatically isolated North Korea — the United States was playing with a weak hand in dealing with Tehran. “Iran is riding a wave of Shiite resurgence, it has oil income, and it continues to have trade ties with European countries, China, and Russia,” says Council on Foreign Relations fellow Kupchan. “Iran is holding a pretty good deck of cards.”

## Clash of Views

As the casualty count for U.S. and Iraqi troops and Iraqi civilians continues to rise, sectarian violence in Baghdad and elsewhere shows few signs of abating. The continuing bloodshed fuels growing domestic opposition to the U.S. role in Iraq, but President Bush is moving ahead with his plan to raise U.S. troop levels there despite looming congressional action to go on record against the plan.

Bush presented the plan in his Jan. 10 address as part of a coordinated strategy with the government of Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki to restore order in Baghdad. In fact, Maliki had actually urged a different plan on Bush in November. Maliki wanted U.S. forces to form a protective cordon around Baghdad while Shiite-led Iraqi security forces tried to quell the Sunni-Shiite conflict.

Even in his address, however, Bush hinted at the tensions between the two governments by stressing Maliki’s promise that his government would not allow “sectarian or political interference” with the efforts to end violence in Baghdad. “If the Iraqi government does not follow through on

its promises,” Bush said, “it will lose the support of the American people.”

Bush passed over any mention of the recommendations to engage Iran and Syria in diplomatic efforts to restore order in Iraq. Instead, he blamed both countries for “allowing terrorists and insurgents to use their territory to move in and out of Iraq” and accused Iran of “providing material support for attacks on American troops.” He promised to “seek out and destroy” networks providing weapons or training to “our enemies in Iraq.”

Bush’s plan drew virtually unanimous opposition from congressional Democrats, which was unabated after the president stood by his proposal in his State of the Union message on Jan. 23. A few Republicans also expressed outright opposition, while several others voiced doubts.

Opponents focused on two main themes: They doubted that the plan would succeed militarily or that Maliki would follow through with his political commitments. But the authors of the leading Senate resolution to oppose the plan also disagreed with Bush’s decision to spurn diplomatic overtures.

Sponsored by Sens. Joseph R. Biden Jr., D-Del., Carl Levin, D-Mich., and Chuck Hagel, R-Neb., the resolution declared: “The United States should engage nations in the Middle East to develop a regional, internationally sponsored peace and reconciliation process for Iraq.” The Senate Foreign Relations Committee approved the resolution on Jan. 24 by a 12-9 vote — with Hagel joining the committee’s 11 Democrats in voting for it.

Meanwhile, Republican senators are divided. A resolution drafted by Virginia’s John W. Warner with bipartisan support “disagrees” with Bush’s decision, while another — being prepared by Arizona’s John McCain — would set “benchmarks” for progress in Iraq. The full Senate was expected to vote on the issue during the week of Feb. 5, with the House to follow later.

In Baghdad, meanwhile, Maliki is contending with his own problems in a divided government. Maliki presented the security plan to the Iraqi Parliament on Jan. 25 with his strongest pledge to date to crack down on sectarian militias, only to be met by a call from a leading Sunni lawmaker for oversight to make sure that Sunnis were not unfairly singled out. Despite the sharp exchange, the televised session ended with the Parliament voting to back the plan.<sup>26</sup>

To Princeton’s Lieven and Hulsman, Iraq provides a case study of the ethical-realism critique that U.S. foreign policy goes astray when it pursues overly ambitious goals with too little regard for obstacles and too little attention to the need for support from other countries.

Iraq shows “the extreme difficulty of bringing about democracy in a deeply divided society and the difficulty of bringing about short-term economic development in a country with a weak government,” says Lieven. “It also shows that even when an election is successful, it can be irrelevant to the purpose of nation-building.”

Now, Hulsman says, the United States must look to other countries in the region, including Iran and Syria, to achieve any acceptable outcome. “The only way to leave this very fragile state, the only way it stays unitary, is to get the consent of the regional players,” he says. “Any construct we leave will fall apart unless they agree.” ■

## OUTLOOK

### ‘Rebalancing’ U.S. Policy?

From its earliest days, the United States has been a nation with big ambitions. The founding generations saw the American Revolution as an example for other subjugated peoples to follow. Later generations envisioned — and fulfilled

— the nation’s “manifest destiny” to reach from the Atlantic to the Pacific and beyond. Twentieth-century Americans saw a mission to “make the world safe for democracy.”

Ambitions sometimes exceeded the reach. The United States did not annex Cuba or Nicaragua in the 19th century. The Senate turned away from the League of Nations and President Woodrow Wilson’s internationalist vision after World War I. U.S. leaders talked about liberating the “enslaved peoples” of Eastern Europe during the Cold War but sent no help to Hungarians in 1956 or Czechoslovaks in 1968. The first President Bush left the Kurds and other Iraqi opponents of Saddam Hussein in the lurch after the first Gulf War.

Critics see a lesson that they say the current President Bush has failed to grasp: The United States can do only so much in world affairs. “There are opportunity costs in foreign policy,” says Kent State Professor Hook. “The time, energy and resources devoted to one regional trouble spot divert time, energy and resources from other parts of the world.”

Many critics of Bush’s decision to raise troop levels in Iraq are using an analogy from the card game of blackjack to make their point — accusing him of a reckless decision to “double down,” or double his bet in hopes of recouping his losses. Richard N. Haass, president of the Council on Foreign Relations and the State Department’s director of policy planning in Bush’s first two years in the White House, makes the same point with an analogy from the world of business.

By investing more in Iraq, Haass writes in an op-ed piece in *Financial Times*, Bush has failed to do what a prudent investor should do — “assess and rebalance” the U.S. foreign-policy portfolio. Beyond the likelihood that the troop increase will not bring success in Iraq, Haass says, the decision “limits the ability of the U.S. to focus on other matters, be they threats or opportunities. There are only so many troops, dollars and hours in the day to go round.”<sup>27</sup>

Bush and other administration officials continue to profess optimism about Iraq. But Lt. Gen. David Petraeus, Bush’s new choice to be U.S. commander in Iraq, was temperate in predicting success when he appeared before the Senate Armed Services Committee on Jan. 23. “There are no guarantees,” he said.<sup>28</sup>

Administration supporters believe the plan has a chance for success. “Victory in Iraq is still possible at an acceptable level of effort,” the AEI’s Kagan writes in a 47-page report.<sup>29</sup>

Critics, however, say the U.S. military is simply ill-equipped to bring order to Iraq. “The shock-and-awe approach to nation-building has proved to be fatally flawed,” says Hook, referring to the administration’s description of the initial military campaign.

Meanwhile, America’s remaining 25 coalition partners, including Britain, are pulling troops out of Iraq. And Secretary of State Rice, meeting with NATO diplomats in Brussels on Jan. 26, found little support among U.S. allies for sending more troops to Afghanistan, where a Taliban insurgency continues to fester. “The good will that has greased the

machine that is the transatlantic partnership is just not there,” says conservative foreign-policy expert Hulsman.

Some experts expect a post-Iraq retreat from international ventures. “The appetite of the American public for the broad-ranging internationalism of Bush’s first term is clearly drying up,” says Kupchan, at the Council on Foreign Relations. Others are less certain about the impact. “I don’t think it’s likely that the United States is going to retreat into isolationism,” says Betts, of Columbia’s Institute of War and Peace Studies. “But if there’s real failure in Iraq, there will be a marginal tilt toward greater caution.”

Whatever the outcome in Iraq, says the New America Foundation’s Lieven, American policymakers must recognize the need to be realistic in defining U.S. national interests abroad and more cautious in committing U.S. resources. “If your resources aren’t unlimited, you’ve got to choose,” he says, adding: “You should be cautious and prudent when it comes to the lives of your soldiers and the international prestige of your country.”

In the end, Schmitt, the AEI neo-conservative, agrees. “Foreign policy is just made up of principles that have to be prudently applied,” he says. “Sometimes you get it right, and sometimes you get it wrong.” ■

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### About the Author



Associate Editor **Kenneth Jost** graduated from Harvard College and Georgetown University Law Center. He is the author of the *Supreme Court Yearbook* and editor of *The Supreme Court from A to Z* (both CQ Press). He was a member of the *CQ Researcher* team that won the 2002 ABA Silver Gavel Award. His recent reports include “Presidential Power” and “Re-examining 9/11.”

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## FOR MORE INFORMATION

**American Enterprise Institute**, 1150 17th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036; (202) 862-5800; [www.aei.org](http://www.aei.org). Conservative public-policy organization dedicated to research and education.

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A British journalist-author combines a comprehensive overview of post-9/11 world threats with a call for the United States to act as the “cornerstone” of world order while avoiding the risks of “unilateralism.” Harvey is a columnist for the [London] *Daily Telegraph* and author of five other books on international relations. The book was published in paper as *Global Disorder: How to Avoid a Fourth World War* (2004).

**Kagan, Robert, *Dangerous Nation: America's Place in the World from Its Earliest Days to the Dawn of the Twentieth Century*, Knopf, 2006.**

A neoconservative foreign-policy expert and *Washington Post* columnist argues that the United States has played an assertive role in world affairs throughout its history. A planned second volume will cover 20th-century foreign policy. Includes detailed notes, 26-page bibliography.

**Kupchan, Charles A., *The End of the American Era: U.S. Foreign Policy and the Geopolitics of the Twenty-first Century*, Knopf, 2002.**

A senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations and a professor at Georgetown University synthesizes history and current events to argue that as the era of American primacy ends, the United States must work harder to cultivate a sense of “common interest” with emerging centers of power. Includes detailed notes, nine-page bibliography.

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Coming from different political backgrounds, the authors argue that U.S. foreign policy must combine genuine morality with tough, practical common sense. Lieven is a senior fellow at the centrist New America Foundation; Hulsman, formerly with the conservative Heritage Foundation, is at the German Council on Foreign Relations.

**Mandelbaum, Michael, *The Case for Goliath: How America Acts as the World's Government in the Twenty-First Century*, Pantheon, 2005.**

A professor at the Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies depicts the United States' role in world affairs not as an empire or a superpower but as the “world's government.” Includes detailed notes.

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**Ikenberry, G. John, and Anne-Marie Slaughter (co-directors), *Forging a World of Liberty Under Law: U.S. National Security in the 21st Century: Final Report of the Princeton Project on National Security*, Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, 2006; [www.wws.princeton.edu/ppns/](http://www.wws.princeton.edu/ppns/).**

The report advances a series of proposals, including the creation of a global “Concert of Democracies,” to strengthen security cooperation and promote creation of liberal democracy. Slaughter is dean and Ikenberry a professor at the Wilson School.

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**“Lost in the Middle East — American Foreign Policy,”** *The Economist*, Aug. 12, 2006.

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